International Handbooks of Religion and Education 5

Helena Miller
Lisa D. Grant
Alex Pomson *Editors*

International Handbook of Jewish Education

Part One

INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF JEWISH EDUCATION

International Handbooks of Religion and Education

VOLUME 5

Aims & Scope

The *International Handbooks of Religion and Education* series aims to provide easily accessible, practical, yet scholarly, sources of information about a broad range of topics and issues in religion and education. Each Handbook presents the research and professional practice of scholars who are daily engaged in the consideration of these religious dimensions in education. The accessible style and the consistent illumination of theory by practice make the series very valuable to a broad spectrum of users. Its scale and scope bring a substantive contribution to our understanding of the discipline and, in so doing, provide an agenda for the future.

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International Handbook of Jewish Education

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Preface

This *International Handbook of Jewish Education* represents a major step in the maturation of a field of human endeavor that stretches back thousands of years yet is entirely contemporary. The editors of these volumes are to be congratulated for assembling a broad and deep series of papers that examine Jewish education from every conceivable perspective in every venue in which it is practised. And for the first time in a volume of this sort, they have gone beyond the United States and Israel, the two major Jewish communities of today, to explore Jewish education as a global phenomenon.

For readers with little familiarity with Jewish education, the chapters in this Handbook provide an introduction to the present moment in this ancient yet modern field of human activity. They will learn about issues facing Jewish schools and about the many and varied settings in which formal and informal Jewish education take place. For readers with an interest in religious education in other faith traditions, this volume provides insights that transcend Jewish education and shed light on the transmission of religious culture more broadly. These readers will read about the philosophical questions confronting Jewish education, and they will learn about organizational structures and perspectives on curriculum and planning that have implications for education in their own faith traditions. And for readers familiar with Jewish education from personal or professional experience, this volume provides a "state of the art hologram" of Jewish education by studying the field from every conceivable angle. By looking at questions of content, at issues in various national contexts, and at persistent challenges facing Jewish education, they can transcend the knowledge they have from their own experience and move to a much deeper, more textured and holistic understanding of Jewish education. All of these readers hold in their hands a gift designed by the editors and crafted by the scholars and practitioners who share their knowledge and wisdom in this Handbook.

Jewish education, the focus of this Handbook, is an enterprise that is as old as the Jewish people and yet entirely contemporary in its forms and functions. The Torah, the Five Books of Moses, is replete with dicta to "teach your children diligently" about the mores of the Jewish people and to "tell your child" the historic narrative of the Jewish people. As a result, Jewish education has topped the agenda of Jews whenever and wherever they lived. Since the destruction of the Second Temple in

the time of the Romans, the Jewish academy, first in Yavneh, later in Babylonia and throughout the Jewish world, became the premier Jewish institution. While other cultures valued philosophers and kings, Jewish culture valued scholars.

In modern times, too, Jewish life has centered around Jewish learning. Emancipation and enlightenment vaulted Jews into modernity and opened secular learning to them in ways rarely possible in earlier times. And yet, Jewish learning remained central to Jewish culture and to the Jewish people. Zionism, the national movement to establish a Jewish homeland in the ancient land of the Jewish people, was propelled by writers steeped in Jewish learning. Reform, the religious movement to modernize and universalize Judaism, was led by thinkers with deep Jewish learning. Modern Orthodoxy, Conservative Judaism and other modernist movements were also guided by Jews for whom Jewish learning was of paramount importance in their lives and their very beings. Even in the Ghettos and camps of occupied Europe during World War II and the Holocaust, Jewish learning continued.

Following the destruction of European Jewry, Jewish communities throughout the world renewed their interest in Jewish learning. In Israel, the new state developed both secular and religious national educational systems. In the United States, American Jews moved to the suburbs and created new educational systems in the congregations they were creating for the new post-War Jewish community. And in the rest of the world, Jewish communities struggled to remake their educational systems in the wake of the two watershed events of the twentieth century, the Holocaust and the founding of the State of Israel.

New forms of Jewish education flourished in the latter half of the twentieth century: Day schools expanded beyond the Orthodox world and established a foothold as an alternative form of schooling to the predominant Sunday Schools and afternoon Hebrew Schools; Jewish camping took its place alongside Jewish schooling as a valued means of educating the young; Jewish studies programs became widespread in universities everywhere; Jewish museums, many but certainly not all devoted to the Holocaust, sprung up in cities throughout the world; and travel to Israel and other sites of Jewish life, history, and culture were offered to teens, young adults, families, and seniors. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, new forms of Jewish education abound within existing organizational structures, in new community-based venues outside the structures of the organized Jewish community, and as entrepreneurial startups founded by enterprising individuals expressing their passions. The inventive spirit behind this flourishing of new forms of Jewish education has barely been tampered by the economic downturn of recent years.

As the institutional forms of Jewish education have multiplied, so too have the tasks assigned to Jewish education. Whereas in earlier times, Jewish schools could focus on the study of the Jewish textual tradition, by the latter half of the twentieth century schools took on many of the functions previously fulfilled by families, neighborhoods, and other community agencies. The main focus of Jewish education—even in schools but certainly in informal programs—shifted from content learning to the development of Jewish identity. Since the family often did not have the tools to support what children were learning and how they were developing in Jewish schools, schools began to re-envision themselves as places for Jewish

learning and growing for the whole family. Since children often did not have other opportunities to celebrate Jewish holidays or experience Jewish prayer, schools took on these roles, too. Since children were saturated by values from the broader culture, schools began to see themselves as places where Jewish values could be experienced and transmitted, even when—and perhaps especially when—those values ran counter to the values of the dominant culture.

Amid this increasingly complex environment comes the current volume. Its breadth is stunning: It addresses the contemporary realities facing Jewish education in all its complexity. Using the tools of a multiplicity of academic disciplines, exploring Jewish education in a wide range of national, religious, and institutional contexts, and addressing a wide variety of elements of the Jewish educational enterprise, these volumes bring together many of the leading scholars and practitioners of Jewish education to illuminate the contemporary state of thought and action in the field.

These volumes ask—and frequently answer—the most provocative questions about Jewish education at the beginning of the twenty-first century. While it might have been tempting for the editors to categorize those questions by academic discipline (e.g., history, philosophy, sociology) or by educational venue (day school, congregational school, camp) or by area of educational activity (e.g., curriculum, teaching, administration), they have rejected easy categorization in favor of a more nuanced approach. In the opening section of the Handbook, they have placed together questions about the relationship of schools to their communities, the ways in which education affects identity and spirituality, how curriculum can be created, the ways in which Jewish thought can affect educational practice, and how understanding history can enrich our understanding of the present. By reading this opening chapter, the reader can develop a textured understanding of some of the major contextual factors that can enrich the ways in which educators conceptualize their work.

The section on teaching and learning which follows raises questions about the teaching of a wide variety of disciplines in Jewish settings. Questions about the teaching of various genres in the canon of the Jewish textual tradition (Bible and rabbinics) form the core of this chapter, and these chapters provide advances in the thinking about these time-honored curricular areas. This section also addresses questions about other content areas not rooted in a single genre of text: Holocaust, Israel, history, and Hebrew language. This section also raises provocative questions about other curricular areas, some like the arts which have been part of Jewish education for at least a century, but others which are quite new curricular topics: environmentalism, travel, and Jewish peoplehood, and digital media.

The third section of the Handbook boldly makes the statement implicit in other sections but quite explicit here: Schooling is not synonymous with education. In American education, a parallel notion is often referred to as the “Bailyn-Cremin” hypothesis. Drawing on the work of noted historians Bernard Bailyn and Lawrence Cremin, this view suggests that many institutions of society, notably the media, family, neighborhoods, and churches and synagogues, participate in the education of children even though they are not part of the apparatus of schooling. This section of

the Handbook presents a variation on the theme in Jewish education: Jewish schools for children and adolescents are joined in the Jewish educational enterprise by a variety of other institutions including early childhood education programs for children younger than school age, universities and adult learning programs for Jews who are beyond school age, programs for parents of school-aged children, and a whole host of venues of "informal education." And Jewish education takes also place in one-on-one mentoring and in special community-wide programs. Of particular note is that Jewish education addresses special issues related to gender and intermarriage as well as the unique needs of special needs learners. The Jewish day school, in its Orthodox and liberal manifestations, is also presented here as a form of Jewish education that goes beyond the norm of Jewish education in the congregational setting. This section makes a major contribution by focusing also on the education of educators, from the "pre-service" stage to ongoing professional development. (Of particular note here is the inclusion of rabbis as part of the education profession.)

Finally, the Handbook concludes with a section devoted to the global character of the Jewish people and, therefore, of Jewish education. While not neglecting the United States and Israel, the Handbook widens its lens by examining Jewish education in Europe, Australia, Canada, Latin America, and the Former Soviet Union. This section is a warning against provincialism to everyone interested in Jewish education.

Readers of this *International Handbook of Jewish Education* will be well rewarded for investing their time exploring the riches it offers. They will be informed about the triumphs and challenges facing Jewish education. They will be stimulated to think about Jewish education in new ways. And most important, they will be inspired by the possibilities Jewish education offers for enhancing the lives of individuals, strengthening the vitality of the Jewish community, and stimulating value-based actions to improve the state of the world we share with the rest of humanity.

Michael Zeldin

Contents of Part One

Introduction 1
Helena Miller, Lisa D. Grant, and Alex Pomson

Section One: Vision and Practice

Analytic Philosophy of Education and Jewish Education: The Road Not Taken 11
Barry Chazan

Community Engagement: The Challenge of Connecting Jewish Schools to the Wider Community 29
Helena Miller

Culture: Restoring Culture to Jewish Cultural Education 47
Zvi Bekerman and Sue Rosenfeld

Curriculum Development: What We Can Learn from International Curricula 63
Roberta Louis Goodman and Jan Katzew

Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence 83
Mitchel Malkus

Gender and Jewish Education: "Why Doesn't This Feel So Good?" . . 99
Tova Hartman and Tamar Miller

Historiography of American Jewish Education: A Case for Guarded Optimism 117
Jonathan Krasner

Janush Korczak's Life and Legacy for Jewish Education 143
Marc Silverman

Jewish Identities: Educating for Multiple and Moving Targets 163
Stuart Charmé and Tali Zelkowicz

Jewish Identity and Jewish Education: The Jewish Identity Space and Its Contribution to Research and Practice 183
Gabriel Horenczyk and Hagit Hacohen Wolf

Jewish Identity: Who You Knew Affects How You Jew—The Impact of Jewish Networks in Childhood upon Adult Jewish Identity 203
Steven M. Cohen and Judith Veinstein

Jewish Thought for Jewish Education: Sources and Resources 219
Jonathan A. Cohen

Philosophy of Jewish Education: Some Thoughts 237
Michael Rosenak

Planning for Jewish Education in the Twenty-First Century: Toward a New Praxis 247
Jonathan S. Woocher

Pluralism in Jewish Education 267
Bryan Conyer

Post Modernism Paradoxes: After Enlightenment – Jewish Education and the Paradoxes of Post Modernism 285
Hanan Alexander

Spirituality: The Spiritual Child and Jewish Childhood 301
Michael J. Shire

Visions in Jewish Education 319
Daniel Pekarsky

Section Two: Teaching and Learning

Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining It 339
Robbie Gringras

Arts and Jewish Day School Education in North America 355
Ofra A. Backenroth

Bible: Teaching the Bible in Our Times 373
Barry W. Holtz

Environment: Jewish Education as if the Planet Mattered 389
Eilon Schwartz

Havruta: What Do We Know and What Can We Hope to Learn from Studying in Havruta? 407
Elie Holzer and Orit Kent

Hebrew Language in Israel and the Diaspora 419
Nava Nevo

History: Issues in the Teaching and Learning of Jewish History 441
Benjamin M. Jacobs and Yona Shem-Tov

Holocaust Education 461
Simone Schweber

Israel Education: Purposes and Practices 479
Alick Isaacs

Israel Travel Education 497
Scott Copeland

Jewish Peoplehood Education 515
David Mittelberg

Life Cycle Education: The Power of Tradition, Ritual, and Transition . 541
Howard Deitcher

Other Religions in Jewish Education 561
Michael Gillis

Talmud: Making a Case for Talmud Pedagogy—The Talmud as an Educational Model 581
Marjorie Lehman and Jane Kanarek

Technology: The Digital Revolution That Is Shaping Twenty-First-Century Jewish Education—A Fleeting Snapshot from the First Decade 597
Brian Amkraut

Travel as a Jewish Educational Tool 615
Erik H. Cohen

Travel: 'Location Location Location' – A Practitioner's Perspectives on Diaspora Jewish Travel 633
Jeremy Leigh

Contents of Part Two

Section Three: Applications

Academic Jewish Studies in North America 657
Judith R. Baskin

Adult Jewish Learning: The Landscape 669
Lisa D. Grant and Diane Tickton Schuster

Congregational Schools 691
Isa Aron

Day Schools in the Liberal Sector: Challenges and Opportunities at the Intersection of Two Traditions of Jewish Schooling 713
Alex Pomson

Day Schools in the Orthodox Sector – A Shifting Landscape 729
Shani Bechhofer

Early Childhood Education 749
Michael Ben-Avie, Ilene Vogelstein, Roberta Louis Goodman, Eli Schaap, and Pat Bidol-Padva

Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point 767
David Bryfman

Gender: Shifting from "Evading" to "Engaging"—Gender Issues and Jewish Adolescents 785
Shira D. Epstein

Informal Education: The Decisive Decade – How Informal Jewish Education Was Transformed in Its Relationship with Jewish Philanthropy 805
Joseph Reimer

Intermarriage: Connection, Commitment, and Community 825
Evie Levy Rotstein

Learning Organisations: Learning to Learn – The Learning Organisation in Theory and Practice 843
Susan L. Shevitz

Limmud: A Unique Model of Transformative Jewish Learning 861
Raymond Simonson

Mentoring: Ideological Encounters – Mentoring Teachers in Jewish Education 879
Michal Muszkat-Barkan

Parents and Jewish Educational Settings 901
Jeffrey S. Kress

Practitioner Enquiry and Its Role in Jewish Education 917
Alex Sinclair

Preparing Teachers for Jewish Schools: Enduring Issues in Changing Contexts 937
Sharon Feiman-Nemser

Professional Development of Teachers in Jewish Education 959
Gail Zaiman Dorph

Professional Development: *Vini, Vidi, Vici*? Short-Term Jewish Educators Trips to Israel as Professional-Development Programs 981
Shelley Kedar

Rabbis as Educators: Their Professional Training and Identity Formation 1001
Lisa D. Grant and Michal Muszkat-Barkan

Special Education: "And You Shall Do That Which Is Right and Good . . ." Jewish Special Education in North America: From Exclusion to Inclusion 1021
Rona Milch Novick and Jeffrey Glanz

Teacher Education: Ensuring a Cadre of Well-Qualified Educational Personnel for Jewish Schools 1041
Leora Isaacs, Kate O'Brien, and Shira Rosenblatt

Ultra-Orthodox/Haredi Education 1063
Yoel Finkelman

Section Four: Geographical

American-Jewish Education in an Age of Choice and Pluralism 1087
Jack Wertheimer

Anglo-Jewish Education: Day Schools, State Funding and Religious Education in State Schools 1105
David Mendelsson

Australia: The Jewel in the Crown of Jewish Education 1125
Paul Forgasz and Miriam Munz

Canada: Jewish Education in Canada 1141
Michael Brown

Europe: Education of Adult Jewish Leaders in a Pan-European Perspective 1155
Barbara Lerner Spectre

Europe: Something from (Almost) Nothing – The Challenges of Education in European Communities – A Personal Perspective . . . 1167
Steve Israel

Former Soviet Union: Jewish Education 1183
Olga Markus and Michael Farbman

France: Jewish Education in France 1203
Ami Bouganim

Israel: State Religious Education in Israel 1219
Zehavit Gross

Israel: Innovations in Secular Schooling in Israel 1235
Yehuda Bar Shalom and Tamar Ascher Shai

Latin America – Jewish Education in Latin America: Challenges, Trends and Processes 1253
Yossi Goldstein and Drori Ganiel

Netherlands – Social Integration and Religious Identity 1271
Henny van het Hoofd

Author Index 1289

Subject Index 1295

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Introduction

Helena Miller, Lisa D. Grant, and Alex Pomson

Jewish teaching and learning have been essential components of Jewish tradition since the earliest of times. The imperative to "teach your children" first appeared in the *Book of Deuteronomy* as part of what later became the *shema*—the most central of Jewish prayers. Rabbinic literature is filled with references to schools and schooling, and to teaching and learning taking place at all levels, and for all ages from the youngest children through adulthood. Indeed, according to the *midrash* (commentary) on Genesis, the first thing that the House of Jacob did, on leaving their home in Canaan, was to establish schools (Genesis Rabbah, 95). It is no accident that Jews are often known as "The People of the Book". Jewish life is lived according to texts, and interpretation of those texts. The varied methods of teaching those texts include the didactic and the experiential, argument and discussion.

The Babylonian Talmud (Kiddushin 29a) spells out the father's obligation to teach his children Torah (Jewish texts), and also to teach them a trade or craft. From this, it can be inferred that in order for the child to develop into an independent adult, secular learning must also be a priority. As the centuries passed, and as Jewish communities around the world interacted with their surrounding environments and increasingly integrated with the modern world, most Jews embraced secular learning and established themselves as among the most highly educated in their respective communities. The story of Jewish education in the twenty-first century is far more complex and diverse depending on a range of historical, geographic, sociological and cultural factors. Indeed, it is these factors and the complexity of the landscape of Jewish education today that provide the rationale for this handbook.

The *International Handbook of Jewish Education* adds to a growing list of substantial volumes that inform and debate issues within religious education traditions and frameworks. The starting point for this book was a conversation in 2007 with Professor Gerald Grace, of London University's Institute of Education, who was then editing *The International Handbook of Catholic Education* (Grace, 2007).

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It seemed that a sister publication for and by the Jewish education community would be a meaningful addition to this family of Springer publications. This volume would complement other faith-based education handbooks that Springer had already published, notably *The International Handbook of Islamic Education* (Daun & Arjmaud, 2005) and *The International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions in Education* (De Souza, Engebretson, Durka, Jackson, & McGrady, 2006).

The purpose of *The International Handbook of Jewish Education* is to interrogate thoroughly the field that is known as "Jewish Education". As can be seen from almost all of our chapters, particularly when browsing the bibliographies, there is much that is universal in any discussion of education and much that Jewish educators owe to the considerable body of writing that explores the general, non-religiously focused educational world.

The work of those authors from general education serves to inform, and in some cases to scaffold, the aspects of Jewish education being explored by our authors. What then gives this book its' Jewish focus? Surely chapters on early childhood education, visions of education, the place of parents within education and a host of other topics find their places as comfortably in a general volume on education? The answer is of course in the particular context and content that this *International Handbook of Jewish Education* brings. This publication is both inward looking and outward exploring. It examines issues that are particular to the Jewish community, analyses educational content that is specific to the development of Jewish identities and explores contexts that are embedded in the fabric of a Jewish life. It also acknowledges the impact of the general educational world. As with the other religion-specific and culturally focused Springer publications, the chapters in this book speak directly to the researchers and practitioners engaged in a niche market—in this case the Jewish community.

The *International Handbook of Jewish Education* adds an important voice to the conversations begun in a number of recent publications which have brought together themes and topics within the field of Jewish education, for example the philosophical *Visions of Jewish Education* (Fox, Scheffler, & Marom, 2003), the sociological *Jewish Day Schools, Jewish Communities* (Pomson & Deitcher, 2009) and the more practical *What We Know About Jewish Education* (Kelman, 1992) as well as *What We Now Know About Jewish Education* (Goodman, Flexner, & Bloomberg, 2008). In this handbook, we examine the full diversity of the current state of Jewish education, from both academic and practitioner perspectives. Our authors, all leading educators within their chosen chapter topics, were asked to overview their fields, comment on the successes and challenges they face, and raise research questions for the future. We also asked our authors, where possible, to add an international dimension to their chapters, to make each chapter globally relevant without losing the integrity of the arguments discussed.

The resulting book acknowledges the broad range of theorists, academics, practitioners and policy makers currently working in the field of Jewish education. Our authors span multiple generations. We have been able to include authors who have made influential contributions to the field, as well as newer and younger voices,

adding to the richness of the material within these pages. A look at some of the chapter bibliographies will show where our experienced authors have influenced the work of up and coming colleagues in the field. A wide variety of authors has also meant a wide variety of styles of writing, and different treatments of subject matter. While broadly keeping within our guidelines, this has resulted in a compelling tapestry of richness. Our authors also span the Jewish denominational spectrum; thus the notion of pluralism, mentioned by many of our authors, is played out in the variety of Jewish backgrounds and expression of the contributors to this publication. We are pleased at the even gender balance of our authors, but sadly, our wide variety of authors is not so well reflected in the diversity of their geographical location. Similar to the demographic composition of Jewry worldwide, more than 80% of all the authors in this publication are based in North America or Israel. One of our hopes is that this book promotes a growing interest in research into, and publication of, high-quality papers and chapters on issues within Jewish education internationally.

The book is organised into two parts and within each part, sections that cluster themes of Jewish education and its processes into a logical format. Our intent is to ensure the internal integrity of each part, as well as to give overall coherence to the wider overview of the entire book. Some of the chapters tackle enduring topics, for example the chapters on Jewish identity, day schools, and informal education. Others reflect timely and pressing issues in the world of Jewish education at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, for example, a focus on the environment and technology. These are also chapters that explore issues of global concern through the lens of Jewish education. We recognise that even in a publication of this size, not every topic could possibly be covered. For example, we would have liked to have included chapters within our geographical section on other centres of Jewish life around the world, in addition to the ones we were able to gather here. We know that despite our best efforts, we did not reach all potential authors who have something important to say on topics of Jewish education not covered within these pages. For these reasons, and because Jewish education is neither static nor complete, we hope that in time, further publications will appear that further develop our themes and explore issues that are missing here.

Section One, “Vision and Practice”, sets the scene and underpins the parts that follow. The articulations of vision in this section, as related to practice, form the rationale for what takes place throughout the educative process. The 18 chapters in this section move from the philosophical to the practical, from theory to policy and from policy to practice. The educational endeavour, which is the core, has encouraged our authors to question and reflect, to research and analyse.

In Section Two, which we have called “Teaching and Learning”, 17 chapters focus on aspects of curriculum, instruction and learner engagement. This section explores both subject matter and the transmission of subject matter, formal and informal curricular opportunities, the cognitive and the affective, and both traditional and contemporary areas of teaching and learning.

Section Three is called “Applications” and the 21 chapters here address the settings and audiences served through Jewish education in its broadest sense, as well

as the trends in the professional development of the educators who serve these sites. As a compilation, these chapters provide the reader with a broad and rich portrait of the wide range of applications for Jewish education by setting, context, mode and audience. Chapters acknowledge that learning takes place in formal and informal settings, and at different ages and stages of life. In each of these contexts, the professional development of the educator is a crucial element for success.

Section Four, which we term "Geographical", reveals to us the extent to which Jewish education emerges at an intersection between the global and local. The 12 chapters in this section provide an opportunity to explore ultimate questions in the social scientific study of Jewry regarding the influence of the local context on the norms, modalities and goals of Jewish education. We conclude from this section that while Jewish education is an international enterprise, in the final analysis it is a local endeavour. Despite the international references throughout many of the chapters in the three Handbook section that precede this one, it is clear that in both its form and content, Jewish education is fundamentally and indelibly shaped by where it is located.

This publication includes 69 chapters and in total 89 contributors. The number of co-authored chapters is particularly pleasing and reflects a commitment to collaboration between colleagues that is quite typical in the field of Jewish educational research. The enthusiasm for honestly presenting and rigorously debating the multitude of issues within Jewish education presented here is a credit to all the contributing authors. For this, we, the editors, owe each of them a debt of enormous gratitude. For us all, the creation of this book has been a journey—the development of our own educational vision—from idea to reality. We set out to produce a record of the state of Jewish education in its widest number of contexts and forms at a particular moment in time. We hope that the resulting book will find its place in the libraries and learning centres, the universities and schools, the agencies and communities across the international Jewish community and in other places where there is interest in how Jews engage with Jewish education. We hope that it sparks debate, makes connections and provides some answers. More than that, we hope to stimulate further questions. We cannot predict the future. An international handbook of the next generation may wrestle with very different pressing issues and concerns. These will reflect the state of the Jewish world of the next generation. What we can hope is that this *International Handbook of Jewish Education* makes some small impact on present generations of teachers and learners.

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Section One: Vision and Practice

Introduction

The concept and content of educational vision has been a key component in thinking about knowledge and the imparting of that knowledge through time. This section of the Handbook includes chapters that explore educational thinkers and thinking that have had the greatest global influence on Jewish educational thought and practice. Vision is of utmost importance within a volume that not only reviews the current state of Jewish education and education research, but also looks to the future. But vision on its' own, whilst it sets the scene and provides an underpinning for the ends and means of a Jewish education, is not enough. The articulation of vision has to relate to practice – it forms the rationale for what takes place within the educative process. This section of the Handbook contains, therefore, a third strand which connects the two elements of vision and practice, and that is policy. Together with planning, policy is a process for guiding change towards desired ends. In the chapters that follow, we see how educational development and change have had impact on current practice and has implications for the future.

In his chapter, Michael Rosenak explores basic distinctions in the philosophy of education, and concludes by surveying some of the key questions asked by philosophers of Jewish educators, namely What? How? Why? The influence of Rosenak's writings goes far beyond the content of his chapter in this Handbook. Within the bibliographies of those who contributed to this section, as well as throughout the rest of this publication, Rosenak features repeatedly, reinforcing his position as one of the most influential Jewish educational thinkers of his generation.

Daniel Pekarsky develops themes concerned with the advancement of educational practice and thinking in which vision is central. He considers what kinds of research might most meaningfully influence practice in Jewish education. He suggests why attention to these matters has been important for the advancement of Jewish life and education and indicates some obstacles that have attended the effort to advance vision-guided Jewish education. He places special emphasis on the ways in which the language of vision, as currently employed, has itself sometimes ill-served those who have sought to communicate its very importance.

A further characteristic of the chapter bibliographies within this section is their emphasis on both Jewish and non-Jewish visions and philosophies. Hanan Alexander, in his chapter, which explores contemporary Jewish education from a post-modern perspective, draws upon, amongst others, Scheffler, Buber, Levinas, Oakeshott and Kant. Buber and Levinas are two of a range of philosophers whose ideas are applied by Jonathan Cohen in his chapter on Jewish thought. Cohen illustrates how insights from modern Jewish thought can enrich discourse and reflection on issues of principle in Jewish education. His focus on education for spirituality should be read together with the chapter by Michael Shire who reviews the research in to the spiritual lives of children. Shire's interest is in exploring how faith can be formed in children by means of a Jewish religious education. This interest leads Shire to identify important questions of purpose and practice for Jewish educators hoping to incorporate visions of the child as a spiritual being.

The role of the analytic philosopher is taken up by Barry Chazan, who argues that the field of contemporary Jewish education needs the voices of Scheffler, Soltis and Bernfeld to restrain it from what he characterizes as its fantasising, illusions and sloganeering. For Chazan, it is clear talking and thinking, of the kind provided by the analytical philosopher, that can help lead to creative innovative efforts and also rein in the excessive, obsessive and exaggerated language and mission with which Jewish educators are bombarded and to which they in turn contribute.

Clarity of thought and voice is a feature of those chapters within this section which explore various aspects of Jewish identity. Gaby Horenczyk and Hagit Hacohen Woolf examine the basic assumption that Jewish education is widely perceived as one of the major means for strengthening Jewish identity and identification. They suggest that a multifaceted approach to the mapping of Jewish attitudes and behaviour – mapping what Jewish identity might mean – can help better define the goals of Jewish education. Stuart Charme and Tali Hyman Zelkowicz also approach Jewish identity formation from multifaceted and multiple process formulations in their chapter, in which they argue for a shift in thinking towards conceiving of identities as being multiple and shifting.

Steven Cohen and Judith Veinstein's chapter on Jewish identity shifts the focus of the discussion on to policy and practice. Their chapter examines the impact of Jewish social networks on identity outcomes. The authors argue for educators and policy makers to recognize and value the nurture of Jewish friendship networks as an explicit act of Jewish education. With social-scientific research having repeatedly demonstrated that well-connected individuals exert more influence on others than do social isolates, the challenge for educators and policy makers is to locate such influential youngsters (and others) and mobilize them on behalf of Jewish interests and Jewish engagement – both for their own benefit, and for that of their surrounding circles of contacts and intimates.

Policy and planning is, as Jonathan Woocher writes in his chapter, typically seen as a rational process for guiding change towards desired ends. He argues that this is an unsatisfactory process with regards to Jewish Education. He introduces the reader to what he terms 'praxis planning', in other words planning that is embedded in action and is both highly improvisational and reflective. Helena Miller's chapter,

which focuses on the changing nature of how Jewish schools relate to, and integrate with, their local and wider communities, takes a different view of policy and planning. She highlights how the prescriptive policies of government and education agencies can strongly influence educational practice. Miller's chapter, which is one of the few in the Handbook to use Britain and British schools as the lens through which to explore Jewish-educational issues, should be read in conjunction with David Mendelsson's chapter on Anglo-Jewish education, found in Section IV of this book (Part II).

In this first section of the Handbook, policy and planning provide a bridge to a series of chapters which look at the practice of education. Roberta Louis Goodman and Jan Katzew explore what they call the 'sacred' practice of curriculum development. At its best a work in *process*, their view is that curriculum development is also a work in *progress*. With curriculum development efforts increasingly being evaluated, often at the behest of funding partners, they propose that research should make these evaluations part of the public domain so that their impact can be magnified. Knowledge is more powerful when it is shared, they say, and we have yet to harness the potential of Jewish-educational assessment – of individuals, institutions and curricular resources.

Mitch Malkus looks at curriculum through the lens of 'integration', a set of ideas and practices that have had great influence on the contemporary Jewish day school. Drawing on research and on his experience as a school head, Malkus explores the factors that contribute to or mitigate the implementation of an integrated curriculum. His chapter, together with Goodman and Katzew's, provides much of the philosophical underpinning for the chapters on aspects of teaching and learning that follow in the next section of the *International Handbook*.

Our relationship to ancient texts is pivotal in so many ways to a survey of Jewish education and three chapters in this section tackle different aspects of this phenomenon. Tova Hartman and Tamar Miller look through a feminist lens at gender and Jewish education, engaging in a study of texts from the biblical and Talmudic periods that focus on narratives of gender and sexuality. They ask questions related to the covering and uncovering of these texts within the education of younger and older students. Jonathan Krasner, in his chapter on historiography, argues that Talmudic and other texts can provide the teacher with an array of opportunities to assess the manner in which they can develop critical thinking in the classroom. Zvi Beckerman and Sue Rosenfeld argue that philosophical and textual perspectives have too long influenced the field of Jewish education. Understanding these perspectives is important, they recognize, but they call for alternative disciplinary perspectives, such as cultural criticism and anthropology, that might shift the focus of Jewish education from the individual to the production of vital cultural contexts.

Janush Korczak, who is well-known for his heroic stand against Nazism during the Holocaust, left a lasting legacy to Jewish and general education. In his chapter, Marc Silverman explores Korczak's legacy to Jewish education. This legacy, he shows, is deeply connected to the concerns of religious, civic, moral and cultural education. Silverman's chapter, whilst seemingly distinct from the foci of other chapters in this section, complements many of them, for example Beckerman and

Rosenfeld's, with its focus on culture, as well as those chapters that explore aspects of Jewish identity.

The language with which we refer to elements in Jewish education often determines, and can help to elucidate, some of the ambiguity of the discourse and research into the subject. Hartman and Miller argue against some of language in the texts they highlight and Bryan Conyer, in his chapter on pluralism unravels some of the controversy and lack of clarity surrounding the term 'pluralism'. He provides a philosophical framework to help both policy makers and educators determine what pluralism could mean in the contexts of their own Jewish-educational organisations. He provides a stimulus to help bridge the gap between theory and praxis. We recommend reading Conyer's chapter in parallel with Woocher's chapter on planning, to add a layer of understanding to how change can be embedded in action.

Of all four sections in this Handbook, the 18 chapters in this section form the least obviously coherent grouping. There is, however, a logical gathering of these topics, whose themes overlap and entwine, sometimes quite unexpectedly. This section moves from the philosophical to the practical, from theory to policy and from policy to practice. The centre is the educational endeavour, which pulls and pushes and encourages our authors to question and reflect, to research and analyse. This section provides both a solid foundation and a springboard for what follows, which is where we delve deeply into teaching and learning, and the applications and geographical contexts of Jewish education in the twenty-first century.

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Analytic Philosophy of Education and Jewish Education: The Road Not Taken

Barry Chazan

Analytic Philosophy of Education

In the early to middle of the twentieth century a sub-field of philosophy known as analytic philosophy emerged mainly in the English-speaking world, spearheaded by such figures as Bertrand Russell, G.E. Moore, Ludwig Wittgenstein, J.L. Austin, and Gilbert Ryle (Glock, 2008; Stroll, 2000). The term "analytic philosophy" assumed multiple meanings including the following: (1) a tradition of doing philosophy which emphasized clarity using logic and focusing mainly on analysis of ordinary language, (2) reservations about the creation of sweeping philosophic systems as the main goal of philosophy, and (3) great attention to how words and phrases are used in ordinary language. The original focus on formal logic and even mathematical-like precision which characterized analytic philosophy at its inception, morphed in mid-century into great emphasis on how words, phrases, and sentences are used in ordinary language (hence it was often known as "ordinary language analysis").

It was this emphasis that attracted a group of British and American philosophers of education who became known as "the analytic philosophers of education." This group was interested in precision concerning specific educational concepts and terms and it resisted imprecise or ambiguous discussions of broad educational topics. In later iterations, analytic philosophy of education (as implemented by such figures as Peters, Flew, Kai Nelson and D.Z. Phillips among others) encompassed topics which heretofore had been treated somewhat gingerly in this approach, e.g. ethics and religion, but they remained loyal to their credo to analyze and not prescribe.

The two shaping figures in twentieth-century analytic philosophy of education are R.S. Peters at the Institute of Education of the University of London and Israel Scheffler at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. These two institutions, together with Teachers College, Columbia University where Jonas Soltis, one of Scheffler's central students served for many years, became major venues of this

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"movement." They spawned a generation of students who included I. Snook, J.P. White, Paul Hirst, and others. This "movement" occupied prominent places in universities and professional societies for over two decades in the mid-twentieth century. However, by the 1980s they were a waning force as a movement. While students of the founding fathers continue to serve as professors of philosophy of education in specific universities and contributed to journals, the movement qua movement lost its collective force in appointments, journals and professional societies. Today while many individuals utilize tools and techniques honed by this group, it is doubtful that anyone identifies with the movement as a movement, and the field of philosophy of education has taken significantly different directions in the last decades of the past century and the first decade of this century.

This Chapter

This chapter focuses on the analytic philosophy of education and twentieth-century philosophy of Jewish education. The chapter has four sections: (1) a brief review of the essentials of analytic philosophy of education through an overview of two classics by Soltis and Scheffler; (2) a look at the one overtly self-defined volume in analytic philosophy of Jewish education, Barry Chazan's *The Language of Jewish Education*; (3) a look at the route Jewish educational thinking took instead of the analytic route; and (4) an argument for the importance of analytic philosophy of Jewish education for today.

Israel Scheffler: *The Language of Education*

As noted, Israel Scheffler was the father of analytic philosophy of education in the United States. He edited an influential reader entitled *Philosophy and Education* in 1957 (Scheffler, 1957) and in 1960 wrote his path-breaking volume *The Language of Education* (Scheffler, 1960). In the Preface he concisely states: "The purpose of this book is through an application of philosophical methods, to clarify pervasive features of educational thought and argument" (p. vii). In the Introduction he distinguishes between two approaches to philosophy of education. The first refers to inquiry into educational questions by the use of philosophic methods. This type of philosophy of education focuses on philosophic method applied to educational issues. The second meaning of philosophy of education refers to the historical study of what has been concluded by inquirers into philosophic questions related to education or by users of philosophic methods to argue what education is.

A third usage he does not cite, but which was rampant in educational studies at that time was philosophy of education as prescribing a systematic, comprehensive set of principles and practices that it regarded as logical, reasonable, objective, and correct.

Scheffler indicates that his work and this book are reflective of the first approach—inquiry into educational questions by utilizing philosophic methods, and this book is the ground breaker for this new approach. In Chapter One he uncovers

the complexity and frequently misleading nature of definitions of education. He speaks of three types of "definitions." "Stipulative definitions" are "pieces of terminological legislation that do not purport to reflect previously accepted uses of the defined term, but rather legislate (or 'stipulate') a certain way a term will be used in a discourse, discussion or book so as to enable a discussion to proceed." For example, a stipulative definition might work as follows: "For the sake of this discussion, we will understand the word 'a Jew' to mean anyone who self-identifies as a 'Jew.' " Such an approach enables discussions to proceed without getting hung up on complex or ambiguous terms every time they surface. "Descriptive definitions," on the other hand, purport to explain or "define" terms by giving an account of their prior usage or accepted meaning. They come to "describe" the way the term has been used by most people. Thus, a descriptive definition might say, "While there have been diverse definitions of the term a 'Jew', many rabbinical authorities have understood a 'Jew' to be someone born to a Jewish mother and who has not opted out of being Jewish by his/her choice." Whereas stipulative definitions are sort of abbreviations adopted for convenience which purport to economize and enable continued discussion, descriptive definitions purport to present definitive explanatory accounts of meaning. The third type of definition in education is the "programmatic." It purports to propose, suggest, and/or require certain educational practices, methodologies, or programs. Such definitions are neither linguistic devices like stipulative definitions nor explanatory devices like descriptive definitions, but rather they are practical prescriptions for action presented in a definitive fashion.

Scheffler's argument is that much of educational discourse is a confusion of these three types and by analyzing such terms as "teaching" and "telling," "educational slogans," and "educational metaphors" he shows how educational discourse often loses much of its clarity and precision or common understanding. Confused talking leads to confused action and analytic philosophy of education believes that clear talking is critical for decision-making. It is not against decision-making or value positions, but it believes such activities can only happen where there is precision of language, commonality of understanding, and clarity of the issues. The unique contribution of this volume is exemplifying the approach by the careful analysis of some critical confused educational terms. (The British philosopher Gilbert Ryle (1949) had already made contributions in this direction by focusing on the term "knowing" which surfaces in this book.)

Jonas Soltis: *An Introduction to the Analysis of Educational Concepts*

Jonas Soltis completed his doctorate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and was one of Scheffler's prize students. He was appointed professor of philosophy of education at Teachers College Columbia University. Soltis had an important teaching and methodological influence on scores of students at Teachers College for several decades. In 1968 he published a brief primer of 117 pages entitled *An*

Introduction to the Analysis of Educational Concepts (a second edition was published in 1978) that turned out to be a minor classic in analytic philosophy of education. The book evolved from his classes on "Introduction to Philosophy of Education" at Teachers College which was a required course for non-philosophers coming from a broad range of fields—curriculum, comparative education, psychology, and nursing—and the book was aimed at providing them with a clear understanding of tools of philosophy which they could apply to their work in education in their diverse spheres. The volume shares Scheffler's core analytic approach and language. It differs in being more focused on tools and techniques rather than the concepts per se being analyzed.

The second edition had seven chapters: (1) Education and Analysis, (2) the Disciplines and Subject Matter, (3) Types of Knowledge and Teaching, (4) Learning, Explaining and Understanding, (5) Teaching Re-visited, (6) Analysis: Its Limits and Uses, and (7) Epilogue: The Pedagogy of Analytic-Skills Development. Soltis' Introduction succinctly summarizes his intent:

> This is a book about education and how to bring clarity to our thoughts ... philosophical thinking isn't making the world over to agree with one's own values or views about things, nor is it just the spinning out of a lot of ideas. Philosophical thinking is careful and controlled thinking directed at clarifying how we think and what we thing about (pp. 1 and 2).

The book was clearly an attempt to make the twentieth-century revolution in philosophy, which placed emphasis on clarifying concepts rather than promulgating worldviews, accessible to a broad range of students pursuing graduate studies in education. It was aimed at getting non-philosophers who care for education to learn a series of skills that will help them better elucidate and explicate concepts and ideas central to whatever work they would do in education. In Soltis' metaphor, it was to give people "the tools" to build a birdhouse rather than to focus on the finished product in itself (p. 3).

The book patiently leads the novice through the analysis of some core concepts of education, e.g., "teaching," "learning," "knowing," "aims of education," and "subject matter" by utilizing some basic tools of philosophy that are essential to explicating the meanings of words we use in everyday life in an often unclear, careless, or polemic manner. The main tools that Soltis' book presents and practices with the novice student include the following:

- Asking prior questions—probing a word or concept by asking questions that uncovers meanings that the word presupposes (e.g., "What assumptions does describing teaching as 'transmission' imply about how people learn?").
- Making distinctions—showing the difference between the meaning of the word in diverse phrases or context (e.g., "the good life" as opposed to "a good meal").
- The use of counter examples—sharpening an idea by pointing to examples that test and refine our concepts by negative instances ("When is a car not a car?").

He introduces three core "strategies" of analyzing educational terms:

1. "Generic analysis" refers to a means of explication that clarifies a concept by identifying its key characteristics. It essentially asks, what features must an X have to be called an X. The answer comprises the "generic" features of X (as in "generic drugs")
2. "Differentiation type analysis" asks what are the basic diverse meanings of X? It charts diverse meanings of commonly used terms such as "good," "to teach," "to learn," and helps us understand what usage others or we are employing in a sentence, speech, or educational program.
3. "Conditions-type analysis" asks what are the context requirements that govern the use of X? This approach attempts to isolate the components that are necessary for us to call something an X, e.g., what conditions are necessary to say that "teaching" has taken place?

Thus, this book basically is a guidebook for the novice to learn to use these tools (basic philosophic techniques) to explicate some educational terms that were very common in those days. Papers written for Soltis' courses were not about "What is the nature of the good life?" or "What are the goals of education?" But, rather "discuss some diverse meanings of the word 'good'" or "describe how different people have understood what the goals of education are."

Soltis engaged in this enterprise both in this book and in his career because he was impressed by the "no-nonsense" of such philosophizing and by the stringent demands it made for clarity and precision in dealing with traditional philosophical ideas (Soltis, 1968, p. xi). He believed that such clarity would enhance the talking, the thinking, and ultimately the practice of educators working in the field.

These two teachers had impact on scores of students in the 1950s–1980s because of the positions they held at two distinguished and geographically well-placed schools of education and also, I believe, because their methodologies were engaging and persuasive to many educators. These two books (and other books they wrote) were in my opinion landmarks. These philosophers and others of their ilk shaped the Philosophy of Education Society for 30 years. Today the books are out of print. There are a few copies available on Amazon and some copies cost $70–100. There are likely few or no departments of education in which these books are used and I suspect that few are the people who even know their names.

The Language of Jewish Education

In 1978 I published a book entitled *The Language of Jewish Education*. The title (used with the permission of Israel Scheffler) was clearly intended to signify the presentation of an analytic philosophic approach as framed by Scheffler to issues in Jewish education.

The book opens with a bombastic statement (quite foreign to the spirit of analytic philosophy of education) that "Jewish education is the great failure of Jewish

life" (p. 15). It then delineates three kinds of problems that characterize Jewish education: problems of fact, problems of action, and problems of understanding. The third category of problems is the subject of this book and the core hypothesis is that it is time to stop searching for simple, recipe-like answers and instead to delineate a clear picture of the problems of understanding as a prelude to a thorough therapy (p. 14). "Problems of understanding refer to the lack of clear thinking about practical problems in Jewish education whose solution is dependent on careful analysis" (p. 17). The book is devoted specifically to four "problems of understanding": (1) aims in Jewish education, (2) indoctrination and Jewish education, (3) is Jewish education moral or religious Jewish education?, and (4) Israel and Jewish education. Methodologically the book is rooted in analytic philosophy of education and one of its supplementary concerns is to show how analytic techniques and research can be applied to a philosophy of Jewish education.

Chapter 1 builds on the Schefflerian taxonomy of diverse usages and misuses of the phrase "philosophy of Jewish education" using examples from a survey of the existing literature of Jewish education. The lack of an analytic philosophy of Jewish education is bemoaned and the book proposes its potential role in ameliorating the field.

Chapter 2 analyzes diverse and confused usages of the term "goals" in Jewish educational theory and practice, attempting to show how people tend to not be talking to each other while seemingly utilizing the same terms. The last brief section of the chapter breaks with the analytic approach when it offers "A normative goal for Jewish education:"

> Jewish education should deal with the confrontation of the Jewish child with Jewish education to enable him ultimately to make a rational and autonomous decision whether to accept or reject that tradition (p. 55).

Chapter 3 is an adaptation of a paper I published in the journal *Religious Education* dealing with Indoctrination and Religious Education (Chazan, 1972). This paper draws heavily on a rich tradition in general philosophy of education (Atkinson, 1965; Gregory & Woods, 1970; Snook, 1972) which had presented a detailed discussion and debate of diverse usages of the word and meanings of the phenomenon of "indoctrination." This chapter led to one of the only two ongoing analytic debates that I am familiar with in contemporary Jewish education (the other exercise of this sort was the Chazan, Reimer, Bryfman debates concerning the term "informal education" (Chazan, 1981, 1991, 2002, 2007; Reimer, 2007, Reimer & Bryfman, 2008)). Rosenak wrote a cogent response to and critique of my approach (Rosenak, 1989), and Alexander wrote an even more intelligent and cogent response to both essays (Alexander, 1989). Once again, this chapter ends with a non-analytic section on what a non-indoctrinary Jewish education would look like (pp. 73–75). Chapters 3 and 4 follow the same pattern by first carefully analyzing the phrases "moral education" and "religious education" and "teaching Israel" and then concluding with a brief normative statement as to what each of these phrases should be or do.

This volume is a clear attempt to adapt Scheffler's and Soiltis' approach and apply it to Jewish educational terms and literature. It comes both to present a

methodology and also to zero in on four very important topics in Jewish education. It is to the best of my knowledge the only volume to ever attempt this specific task. At the same time, even this purportedly analytic book feels obligated to cross-over into the normative realm, ending each chapter with a credo or normative philosophy. (This "normative" quality is subconsciously implied by the dust jacket of the book which shows a schoolbook turned down and up and which is sub-titled "Crisis and Hope in the Jewish School." Such art work and sub-titling is distinctively foreign to the covers and sub-titles of the analytic literature.)

While in further writings I went on to apply this notion of the analytic to other terms (e.g., "informal education") and continued to be focused on educational thinking, I did not pursue a rigid pre-occupation with championing the analysis on educational concepts as my exclusive or even main pre-occupation in the subsequent decades. It may have been a technique I used, but it was not the essential cause that was my mission.

With this volume the story of analytic philosophy of Jewish education pretty much ends. Since Israel Scheffler was a known and distinguished philosopher of education and also a knowledgeable and committed Jew overtly identified with his Jewishness, he involved himself in important Jewish educational ventures mainly by applying his razor sharp mind and methodology to the theory and practice of Jewish education. Moreover, he did supervise several theses on Jewish education (Ron Kronish on Dewey and Jewish education; the late Edy Rauch on day schools; and the late Bennett Solomon on curricular integration in day schools). However, as noted, to the best of my knowledge, the aforementioned volume is the only venture overtly purporting to be analytic philosophy of Jewish education.

Critiques of Analytic Philosophy of Education

As noted, the analytic approach to philosophy of education peaked after a few decades. Its decline is connected to many factors, some related to the norms and culture of academic life, and others related to substantive critiques which influenced its longevity (Chambliss, 1996).

Some critics (professionals and students) argued that analytic philosophy of education quickly degenerates into rather simple word games whereby academics choose a few examples of usages of words and then write detailed essays that focus on words rather than the essential larger questions of education implied in the words. The critique says that this field became an in-house closed network of essays, responses, papers at conferences, and publications for tenure that didn't really address itself to real educational concerns.

This critique was linked to the complexities of teaching the subject which is notoriously difficult. It requires a very talented interactive teacher ideally working with small groups and requiring and then reading many written exercises. Many of those teaching this approach were trained in its philosophic methodology but didn't develop the pedagogy of teaching it. Frequently, philosophy of education classes at

graduate schools were large-lecture classes of heterogeneous students from diverse departments, which was not at all conducive to this pedagogic approach.

Another apparently small but not insignificant-related factor is that students come to philosophy of education classes and/or to schools of education seeking both knowledge and also inspiration. They want to learn and also to be touched and inspired by great ideas, visions, and principles. This is not the domain of analytic philosophy of education. Students in these classes were often engaged in hours of focusing on the differences between "knowing how" and "knowing that" when they were hungry for discussions of big ideas and principles.

In the changing cultural climate of the 1960s, radical students in England and other venues began to feel that Peters and his colleagues and this approach in general was not radical enough (Phillips, 2008). Their complaint was that stogy male Anglo-Saxon academics were hiding from making significant changes in education by focusing on how words are used, whereas what really matters is how practices are changed. This point is perhaps exemplified in a famous phrase that R.M. Hare, one of the most influential analytic philosophers would use to describe a cogent argument: it is one with which "any sane or sensible person" would agree (Hare, 1964). This kind of argument, particularly in the era when post-modernism was beginning to be heard, was a kind of proof that British dons had set their own pseudo-rational criteria of who is sane and sensible which excluded many important minorities such as non-Caucasians, women, and gays and lesbians. The troops of post-modernism and critical theory were approaching the cathedrals of analytic philosophy (Grenz, 1996). Finally, while analytic philosophy of education was nurtured by notions of emotive meaning, Janus faced words, and connotative and denotative meanings, its analyses tended to focus on the objective, rational, and cognitive. Books like C. S. Stevenson's *Ethics and Language* or his *Facts and Values* were influential, but analysts often lost the literary touch and the epistemological breadth of such literary-influenced works when analyzing terms, and analytic philosophy seemed to isolate itself in a kind of in-house very cognitive cocoon (Stevenson, 1944, 1963).

Where Jewish Educational Thinking Went

While analytic philosophy of education was in its years of influence, one might well ask why philosophy of Jewish education wasn't more influenced by this zeitgeist of general education between the 1950s and 1980s. That question is an interesting historical topic related to overall currents in the academic and practical world of Jewish education, and well-worthy of a detailed study. One reason was clear then and remains clear today: Jewish education is driven from within and without by the search for answers, praxis, programs, and solutions. It is a defensive activity forever seeking to ameliorate, and pressured to do so quickly with observable results.

It is easier to point to where Jewish educational thinking did go in the middle to last decades of the last century. The first major thrust of Jewish educational thinking was curriculum, and the major general forces were emergent from the University of Chicago school centrally influenced by the curricular focus of the Tyler-Schwab

nexus (Westbury & Wilkof, 1978). The Tyler-Schwab rationale was a powerful curriculum theory focus that was co-opted by one of Schwab's important students, Seymour Fox, who implemented a Herculean program of curricular reflection over many decades, first at the Jewish Theological Seminary's Melton Center, then at the Hebrew University's Melton Centre for Jewish Education, and then at the Mandel Center in Jerusalem (Nisan & Schremer, 2005). A significant generation of students throughout the world became focused on curriculum—and particularly Schwab's insightful series of essays on "the practical" which became a "Jewish educational bible" and centerfold of Jewish educational thinking.

The second direction that Jewish education took was normative theologizing and normative philosophizing. I use both the words "theologizing" and "philosophizing" because much but not all of this normative writing was rooted in the theological belief that Jewish education should be religious education. I use the adjective "normative" because while some of this work utilized rigorous philosophic methods, it mainly focused on prescriptive presentations aimed at convincing people of what they ought to do rather than explication per se. Once again, led by "the Jerusalem school" shaped by Fox and particularly by Michael Rosenak, the emphasis on Jewish educational thinking focused on setting goals, visioning, and looking to Jewish sources and scholars for direction (Rosenak, 1987, 1995). The most overt statement of this direction is the 2003 volume and project *Visions of Jewish* Education, published by Cambridge University Press, and edited by Seymour Fox, Israel Scheffler, and Daniel Marom (2003). The heart of this volume is six original essays (the products of a multi-year seminar series) by four Judaic scholars, Isador Twersky, Menachem Brinker, Moshe Greenberg, and Michael Meyer with two educational essays by Michael Rosenak and Israel Scheffler. The four Jewish academic figures, each of great repute in their particular Jewish fields, present their normative theories of a traditional, secular, and liberal vision of the educated Jew. Rosenak and Scheffler propose to then translate this into implications for an overall notion of "the educated Jew" (Fox et al., 2003; Pekarsky, 2008).

A third direction in Jewish educational thinking has been teaching and teacher training. This field covers a broad range of interests that include theories of teaching and learning, teacher training, and methodologies of teaching subjects. This direction has clearly been advanced by the work of Sharon-Feinman Nemser both in the years as a general educationist at Michigan State University and her full-time entry into Jewish education as professor and shaping figure of the Mandel Center of Jewish education at Brandeis University (Feinman-Nemser, 2008). Her work is related to the overall influence of Professor Lee Schulman previously of Stamford University, former head of Carnegie Foundation, and shaping figure of the teacher training field in the last decades of the twentieth century. Like Scheffler, Schulman is a general educationist who also cares about Jewish education and has contributed to it.

While there have been other books and essays in philosophy of Jewish education (one of the noteworthy figures being Hanan Alexander), they generally are the works of individuals and do not constitute a "school" or overall corpus of works. It is telling that the comprehensive volume on *What We Now Know about Jewish*

Education (2008) has only one essay—Perkarsky's referred-to-essay on vision-guided education—that in any way approaches what might be called "philosophy of Jewish education." The focus on curriculum, normative philosophizing and theologizing, and teaching and teacher training has pervaded Jewish education in North America as in Israel for several decades.

Do We Need an Analytic Philosophy of Jewish Education?

Much has happened in the world of Jewish education in the current era. We are witness to many more academic positions in departments and schools of Jewish education that already existed as well as the emergence of new positions at Jewish and general universities. A vibrant research network and journal exists. Jewish educational academics present papers at general education conferences and at conferences of Jewish studies. Moreover, the overall interest in Jewish education by the Jewish community and philanthropists has grown significantly (See the chapter "Informal Education: The Decisive Decade – How Informal Jewish Education was Transformed in its Relationship with Jewish Philanthropy", by J. Reimer, this volume).

Perhaps we should end this essay here, marking this brief chapter as nothing more than an episode in the history of the academics of Jewish education. I should like to argue otherwise. The same needs that gave rise to an analytic philosophy of education in the last century exist today in Jewish education today and indeed one might well argue that increased contemporary interest in Jewish education makes the implementation of an analytic methodology even more important today. At a time when Jewish life may be taking Jewish education more seriously, it behooves us even more to create a way of thinking, talking, and writing that is clear, non-jargoned, and which comes to establish conceptual clarity. This is not to deny the ongoing role of normative thinking in Jewish education (indeed, such thinking is probably indigenous to the very work of Jewish education because of the word "Jewish" in the phrase). But no less important at this time would be a twenty-first century analytic philosophy of Jewish education.

Such an analytic philosophy of Jewish education could not simply pick up from where the general movement left off in the 1980s. A contemporary analytic philosophy of Jewish education should continue to focus on the "language of Jewish education"—i.e., the way people talk about "Jewish education." But the words "people" and "Jewish education" need much broader understandings today. "People" should include the discourses and usages of teachers, principals, lay leaders, rabbis, academics, and general educators. "Language" should include a broad range of usages and understandings of Jewish educational terminology. It should pay greater attention to emotive and affective meanings of terms and the reasons for their emotive impact (the most immediate example and probably first topic for analysis is the painfully negative emotive meanings of the term "Hebrew school" or the very phrase "Jewish education"). The analysis of the language of Jewish education can be enhanced by reference to both contemporary Hebrew and classical Hebrew

and Jewish pedagogic language. For example, classical Hebrew words used for "knowing" are very instructive for understanding Jewish perspectives on the aims of education (e.g., *la-da'at*). Contemporary Israeli Hebrew pedagogic terms such as *hinuch, hora'ah, marzeh, moreh,* and *l'ha'aver chomer* each have nuanced and important distinctive meanings which encompass prior assumptions. Furthermore, an analytic philosophy would enhance its value by focusing simply not only on words or phrases but also on issues and topics. We need clear thinking not just about words or sentences, but about types of discourse and categories of problems. Finally, an analytic philosophy of education today would be more effective if it were to work in harmony with aligned fields—social psychology of Jewish identity development, sociology of the Jews, history of Jewish education—rather than if it existed exclusively as an isolated sphere.

The contribution such an enterprise could make is to provide a broad array of practitioners, planners, teachers, policy makers, and philanthropists with clear exposition and delineation of concepts, terms, and ideas so as to enable them to act in a thoughtful manner. Let me give a brief example to illustrate. I recently attended a conference of a talented group of some 30 Jewish educators to deal with the very complex issue of evaluation and "experiential Jewish education." One-day deliberations like this can go many routes and their efficacy is often at a priori risk because of the complexity of the subjects and the diverse languages the various participants bring to the table. The moderator of the day (not an analytic philosopher but an astute university trained academic/practitioner) artfully devoted just enough—but not too much—time at the outset to enabling the various "languages" to be placed on the table before he smoothly obtained agreement on a stipulative definition of "experiential education" which would enable the planners to proceed with what was their main agenda question. In his terms, he was able to put a very controversial term–"experiential education"—in what he called "the parking lot" and utilize an agreed-upon stipulation so as to avoid "road blocks" that might have derailed the day. This is less an example of conceptual clarity and more an example of analytic methodology to advance productive educational discussion.

The value of analytic clarity and methodology is particularly important in the new age of a Jewish education characterized by diverse forms of education, many new ways of talking about Jewish education, and a significant body of philanthropists who have invested great effort and considerable resources into the amelioration of Jewish education. This new world very much needs "clear think" and "clear talk."

Some Concepts to Analyze

It is useful to point to some terms and concepts that are prominent in Jewish educational discourse that are in need of clarification, both to exemplify the case I am trying to make and to begin to set an agenda.

The first term that needs analysis is "Jewish education," since the very term remains ambiguous. Let us look at some of the ways it is understood.

For many people in North America, "Jewish education" immediately implies "Hebrew" or "supplementary" or "religious" school for elementary school children. It has supplementary, religious, and age-defined (usually 8–13) connotations.

For most Latin American, British, Australian, and South African Jews, "Jewish education" refers to all-day educational institutions in which children study both Jewish and general studies.

There are those who do not understand the phrase as aged-defined at all and rather adapt the Maimonidean definition that Jewish education (Maimonides used the words *Talmud Torah*) is life-long studying by Jews of all ages (Kraemer, 2008; Rosenak, 1995; Twersky, 1972).

For an increasing number of people, "Jewish education" is less and less related to schools and more and more associated with out-of-school activities: Birthright Israel, Jewish summer camps, retreats, experiential or informal education American-Jewish World Service or Hillel social action travel programs.

Thus, for some, "Jewish education" refers to an institution, a building, or an age group and for others it is a process, a vision, or an approach not limited by age, geography, or venue.

We could not end this brief discussion of the phrase "Jewish education" without indicating that for many—especially young people—"Jewish education" does not denote anything. Rather it is an alternative linguistic device for expressing the emotional expressions: "boring;" "a waste of time;" "my parents are afraid I'll marry a non-Jew;" or "what you have to do for a bar or bat-mitzvah." According to this pattern of analysis, it is not even a definitional term, but rather an emotive verbalization much like a grunt, sigh, or whine.

So how shall we even begin a discussion of Jewish education? How do we prevent the clear traffic jam that lies ahead of any discussion of the subject without a good conceptual "policeman?" Enter the analytic philosopher of Jewish education.

The second term I would propose for an agenda of analytic philosophy of Jewish education is the phrase "Jewish identity." For well over 50 years now this phrase has become the catch-all phrase for "being Jewish" (sometimes the phrase "Jewish survival" is also used). It has generally replaced such more traditional terms as "*Yiddishkeit*," "*mitzvot*," "*orach hayim yehudi*," "Torah- true Judaism," and "*halacha*" as the end goals of Jewish education. It is interesting that we have replaced classical non-English phrases with either "identity," a purely psychological term (very much influenced by the central psychologist of identity Erik Erikson) or "survival," a biological or sociological term very much influenced by the scientist Charles Darwin and the sociologist Emile Durkheim.

The term "Jewish identity" remains ambivalent even after five decades of discussion and research. There have been some attempts to distinguish between "Jewish identity" and "Jewish identification" (Simon Herman, 1989) as well as some first steps to suggest models of Jewish identity development (Chazan & London, 1990).

Some have defined "Jewish identity" by a list of behavioral actions that a Jew does and attitudes he/she holds; i.e., Jewish identity is activities and beliefs such as attending synagogue services, being a member of a Jewish organization, supporting Israel, believing the Holocaust was a central moment in Jewish history, believing in core Jewish values.

Others have suggested that this "definition" misses a critical internal dimension which is related to a sense of inner self or definition which has been characterized by the notion of "the Jew within" (Cohen & Eisen, 2000). According to this line of thinking, identity is a subjective internal state very much defined by personal feelings, affect, and meaning.

A third approach to the subject is doubtful of the efficacy of the entire notion of "identity." Building on the idea that we live in an age of the saturated self (Gergen, 1991), this approach doubts the very value of the term "an identity" and argues "against identity" (Wiseltier, 1996), opting instead either for an idea of multiple identities or diverse selves that describe who we are.

Thus, this still popular term and apparent goal remains notoriously (and sometimes one wonders if not very consciously) ambivalent. This state is very problematic for educators who do better the more their goal is clearly defined (even if as an end-in-view). It also complicates and even paralyzes researchers of identity who need agreed-upon parameters so as to develop instruments that can measure the intended outcomes. A small sector of Jewish life has quite explicit notions of Jewish identity, e.g., the Orthodox Jewish educational world and the Zionist youth movements. However, the majority of contemporary Jews do not fall into either of these two camps, and therefore the question of what is identity is central to their worlds. Enter the analytic philosopher of education.

A third subject for analysis is the Jewish educational slogan. As Scheffler argued in *The Language of Education*, educational slogans are different than definitions in a number of ways (Scheffler, 1960). They are unsystematic, popular, and usually intended to elicit emotions rather than to induce pondering. Definitions come to clarify; slogans come to arouse.

The field of education seems to be fertile ground for short, pithy, generalizations that evolve into popular "truths" which is what Scheffler meant by "educational slogans." These slogans often become very powerful, but in reality they often are subject to little careful or critical analysis. They somehow swiftly slip into the jargon of common usage as gospel.

It is that very popular and rousing dimension of slogans that suggests the need for a close and critical analysis of them. Because of their power and potential impact, it is important to have a reflective and analytic look at what they are saying. This is not to deny their role; it is rather to monitor their potential misuse.

Jewish educational slogans have blossomed in recent decades. This probably can be attributed to the new attention Jewish education has received in Jewish life and also because of the entry of philanthropists who often come from a world of business, marketing, and finance where the lingua franca of discourse is different from traditional educational language. In that sense, analytic philosophy of education has an important new role to play in contemporary Jewish life.

Let me illustrate this point by analyzing one of the prominent contemporary slogans: "Education is the key to Jewish survival." This slogan appears in rabbis' sermons, federations' campaign materials, foundations' annual reports, and institutions' requests to funding agencies.

The role of the analytic philosopher in such cases differs from linguistic analysis of concepts. In the case of slogans, the task is primarily to determine what kind of

statement the slogan actually is, what type of evidence might answer it, and whether there is any definitive veracity to the statement.

At first glance, the "educational is the key to Jewish survival" slogan would seem to be an historical statement asserting that schools or other educational frameworks established by Jewish communities were the *key* factor in the *survival* of the Jews. One respected historian suggests that this theme has actually not been studied in depth by his field (Chazan, R., 2005) and this would lead one to question whether the statement has historical basis. Periodically, Jewish historians and others have cited factors they consider key to Jewish survival, such as theological beliefs, behaviors, the impact non-Jewish world, social and economic factors, or the Land of Israel. But there does not seem (yet at least) to be a definitive historical study or consensus about the historicity of this slogan.

A second possibility about this slogan is that it is sociological; i.e., it comes to verify that the key to maintaining Jewish existence today is education. This too is unclear and not easily verifiable. The importance of day schools, camps, and Israel trips to adult Jewish identity is often cited as proof of this claim, and there have been several attempts to study correlations and causations between these educational frameworks and adult Jewish identity. But the often assumed "definitive study" that Jewish day schools or other educational frameworks guarantee Jewish survival does not in fact exist. Indeed, Jews seem to have survived precisely in a century of lessened commitment and participation in Jewish education. Thus, while there are some studies which support the slogan, it is questionable whether there is enough validity or reliability to justify categorizing this statement as an authoritative sociological statement.

So what kind of statement in fact is "education is the key to Jewish survival?" A close look at the words of this slogan ultimately suggests that it is neither an historical nor sociological sentence, but rather a normative plaint. The sentence "Jewish education is the key to Jewish survival" is best translated as:

> I (or we) who are making the statement believe and want to convince you that if you really care about the continued Jewishness of your children or the future existence of the Jewish community we believe that you should seriously consider sending them to a day school or to a Jewish summer camp or on an Israel trip and/or you should contribute hefty resources to institutions that implement such programs.

The slogan is actually a normative belief or expression of personal conviction probably aimed at rousing interest, emotion, and support under the guise of a verifiable historical or sociological statement. Normative beliefs are very important in life, but they are no more than that—important beliefs. In themselves they carry no a priori validity or reliability. To use such slogans as fact statements might be good for Jewish causes, but it also might be inaccurate or deceptive. It is the job of the analytic philosopher of education to guard against such frivolity, confusion, or out and out deception.

In an age of increased interest and resources for Jewish education, slogan analysis is not simply word-games; it has important practical implications. We need to be really sure that a sentence on the basis of which great effort and resources

are invested has veracity and is not simply a sales slogan. In the age of Twitter, Facebook, and streaming news on TV screens, life is particularly susceptible to a new language system comprised of a series of slogans. The goodwill of philanthropists and the practice of Jewish education are too important and binding to be guided by unexamined slogans. Even when we might be forced to question some of the most basic slogans (such as whether Jewish education really is the key to Jewish survival), it is out of faith and belief—not cynicism or scepticism—that we are required to do so. It is precisely at such moments of great passion and emotion that we need the detached pondering of the analytic philosopher of education.

A Road To Be Taken

Freud once suggested that education is one of the "impossible professions" (Britzman, 2009; Freud, 1925; Gay, 1988). For Freud, this reflected his deep suspicions about the role of social institutions in general and especially those which purport to "help people" (Freud, 1926). But I have to believe he also said it in the sense that I intend it: working with people and proposing to change them is one of the more complicated occupations there is. This argument is presented in a most interesting fashion by one of Freud's early followers, Siegfried Bernfeld (Bernfeld, 1973), who also was for a time a very involved educator, Jewish educator, Jewish youth leader, and pro-Zionist. In his book *Sisyphus or the Limits of Education*, Bernfeld argues that education has to exist but there is a sense in which its very existence contradicts what it presumes to do and limits its chances of success.

> For the plain fact is that educational theory does not meet the expectations people set on it . . . it gives no clear unambiguous directions, its methods rarely assure success. Its prognosis – often false and never reliable – points to a remote, incalculable future (Bernfeld, 4).

Moreover, educational philosophers of the type who promulgate normative theories "Do their utmost to becloud these plain and simple facts by insisting that teachers not merely instruct but also educate" (p. 5).

Yet, the Bernfeld who wrote this book was a believer in education and for several years a Jewish and educational activist. Indeed, his theory is a fascinating amalgam of contradictory views: belief in youth; doubts about education's efficacy; commitment to ideology; suspicion about education's role; distrust of schools; and commitment to creating better schools. One presumes that it was these beliefs that led him to his general and Jewish pursuits in his earlier years. It was also his commitment to humankind that led him to be the guardian against inaccurate, exaggerated, and sloganistic psychological and educational thinking.

The field of contemporary Jewish education needs the voices of Scheffler, Soltis, and Bernfeld to rein it in from its fantasizing, illusions, and sloganeering. We need clear talking and clear thinking which might help lead to creative innovative efforts and at the same time rein in the excessive, obsessive, and exaggerated language and mission being deposited on the doorsteps of Jewish education. Indeed, Jewish education *is* an impossible profession, and an analytic approach might contribute to

extracting some possibilities from an impossible profession. The good news is that the future will always remain remote and incalculable.

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Community Engagement: The Challenge of Connecting Jewish Schools to the Wider Community

Helena Miller

Introduction

British Jews are facing new and complicated challenges as they grapple with the issues of relating to the world around them in the politically turbulent years of the early twenty-first century. This challenge is not a phenomenon restricted to the Jewish schools of Britain; but the concept of schools and their relationships with the wider community is one which is especially preoccupying the British government and its Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The effect of this challenge will impact all State-funded schools in Britain. Beyond Britain, government legislation also tries to improve cohesion in societies made ever more diverse by immigration. These efforts are rarely without controversy. For example, the law passed in France in 2004 which prevents French school children in State schools from wearing visible expressions of religious identity, including the Muslim *hijab* (head scarf worn by women) and the Jewish *kippah* (head covering for males), provoked a widespread outcry (CBC News 7 September 2004). Supporters of the ban argued that in a secular state such laws help to prevent division in society. Others felt that the legislation eroded their individual rights as citizens.

Unlike in America, and indeed many other parts of the world, Jewish schooling in Britain has a long history of financial support by the State. In 1851, 12 years after the government accepted that schools of a Christian religious nature were eligible for State funding, the government agreed that Jewish schools were permitted to receive grants in the same way that other denominational schools were, provided they agreed to read the scriptures of the Old Testament every day and provided they were also prepared to submit to government inspection (Miller, 2001). Sixty years earlier, in America, in 1791, the First Amendment mandated a legal separation of Church and State and the law established religious pluralism as public policy. As a consequence, religious-affiliated schools were effectively barred from receiving

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State funding, a situation that has remained broadly in force until the present day in the USA (Jorgenson, 1987).

Around one third of the total number of State-maintained schools in Britain are schools with a religious character (approximately 6,850 schools) out of a total of around 21,000 maintained schools. This dual system of maintained schools supported by faith organisations that exist alongside schools without a religious character is therefore at the heart of the school system in Britain. The government continues to support the benefits to society that this system brings both for parental choice and for diversity.

Within this system, approximately 26,000 Jewish children in the UK (60% of all Jewish children) are educated in Jewish faith schools. Within that number, there are 39 State-funded Jewish schools serving approximately 15,000 pupils. A further 1,000 Jewish pupils are educated in mainstream Jewish Independent schools. The remaining 10,000 are educated in 43 strictly Orthodox Independent schools that operate within the *Charedi* (ultra-orthodox) community in Britain, the majority of which are in and around greater London and Manchester.

In Britain and many other parts of the world, debate about the nature of a cohesive society and what it means to be a fully integrated and engaged citizen has led to government legislation, which has changed the nature of how Jewish schools relate to and integrate with their local and wider communities. This legislation, introduced by the Education and Inspections Act (2006), requires all State-funded schools, including all faith schools, to "promote community cohesion", and is intended to build on existing good practice in schools.

This chapter contextualises and explains what is meant by "community cohesion" in British law, and describes how well British Jewish schools already comply with the legislation. It explores to what extent and how schools need to develop in order to comply with the law, by using literature and examples from government and DCSF sources as well as from recent case studies, such as those found in the DCSF publications "Faith in the System" (2007) and the Commission of Integration and Cohesion's "Our Shared Future" (2007). The chapter looks at the extent of implementation of citizenship education in Jewish schools (NFER, 2004) through the inter-related foci of the curriculum, the school as community, and the schools' partnership with the community. It explores whether it is possible to determine if legislating for increased interaction with the community at large does indeed promote community cohesion and a greater tolerance and understanding of the world around us. It looks at successes and challenges, as well as current research (of which there is as yet very little). Whilst the focus will be on Jewish education in Britain, illustrated by examples seen by the author in British schools, this chapter will also incorporate examples of community engagement in other parts of the Diaspora and in Israel, particularly where these examples inform or challenge emerging practice in Britain. The chapter will conclude with concerns related to the development of future policy and a suggested agenda for future exploration and research.

Contextualising Community Cohesion

As early as 1897, Dewey wrote that schools "must represent life, life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in his home, in the neighbourhood, or in the playground". Thus, Dewey gives an educationalist's rationale for making available real-world contexts through which certain kinds of concepts and knowledge are transferred to the student.

The rationale for the British government to focus on community cohesion is a sociological and political one, namely the aftermath of the terror attacks of 9/11/2001, 7/7/2005 and the riots in Northern towns of England in 2001 (Cantle report, 2001). Government interest in faith-based communities and schools is reflected in the development of public policy since the mid-1980s (recorded by, and reflected on, amongst others by Weller, 2005; Worley, 2005; Gilroy, 1993; Bourdieu, 1985).

Goldring (2009) brings a wider, and Jewish, perspective to the context for community cohesion within schools. In addition to community collaboration for the purpose of developing social capital, paralleling the government agenda stated above, she also claims two further strands. First, that linking schools to communities is important because it will enhance learning, specifically learning that will be linked to Jewish identity development, and second that school–community cohesion has the purpose of building and developing the wider Jewish community.

Community cohesion has been defined in terms of "promoting greater knowledge, respect and contact between various sections of the community, and establishing a greater sense of citizenship" (Pearce and Howell, 2004). The emphasis here is on understanding about, as well as having contact with, the community. In addition, the British government has further defined community cohesion as "...what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another" (Migniuolo, 2008).

This last definition explicitly recognises the role of social integration within an overall cohesion strategy, placing a distinct emphasis on society's responsibilities towards new residents. This concept of integration encompasses all existing communities within a general approach to cohesion, oriented around the relationship between citizens and local organisations, against a background of improving quality of life. Key ways of relating to the world around us are further identified by the British government. These include having a shared vision and sense of belonging, focusing on what new and existing communities have in common, and also recognising diversity, and forming strong and positive relationships between people of different backgrounds.

Community cohesion is not a widely used term within schools in Europe and the USA. Community relations, and the notion of "social capital", on the other hand,

are concepts to which many schools refer. Putnam (2000) defines social capital as follows:

> whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to connections amongst individuals, social capital refers to social networks and the norms of trustworthiness that arise from them. (Putnam, 2000, p. 19)

Jewish school and Federation websites in the USA highlight an awareness of the importance of developing good social networks. To take one example, from information provided by the UJA Federation of Eastern Fairfield County,[1] this emphasis on community relations appears to be mostly focused internally on fostering relationships and connections within each Jewish day and supplementary school – between parents, students and staff – and not specifically on engagement with the wider community. Where there is connection with the wider community this most often seems to take place through *tzedakah* – collections of money, and working with charitable causes both inside and outside of the Jewish community.

Different stakeholders in education do not always have shared perspectives in terms of their vision of community. The move towards the increasingly secular state in France, described earlier, illustrates how the government and religious groups clearly differ in their ideas of what such a shared vision would involve. Within the Jewish education community in the UK, it is generally accepted that the meaning attributed to "belonging" is a multi-faceted issue. Many Jewish educators today would argue that, in order to feel able to "belong" to the local and wider community, children first must be securely rooted within their own, Jewish, community. Proponents of Jewish day schools argue that Jewish schooling should develop graduates who are "secure and knowledgeable in their own Jewish identity" (Miller & Shire, 2002). In addition, it is generally accepted by mainstream Jewish day schools that Jewish day schools "should encourage their pupils to engage with, and contribute to, the wider society" (JLC, 2008), although this is interpreted in different ways in different schools.

Jewish schools in Britain, have not, until the twenty-first century, had to address issues such as teaching about other religions, working with non-Jewish children from other local schools, or engaging with the local and wider non-Jewish, as well as Jewish, community. Previously, and in fact going back to the earliest days of compulsory schooling in Britain in the 1870s, Jewish schools were frequently regarded as impeding the process of social integration (Alderman, 1999). Finestein (1986) observes that these schools were regarded as appropriate only where "the foreign poor" lived. They were places where pupils were taught to assimilate, not to preserve cultural and religious knowledge and difference.

An illustration of this strategy can be taken from the Conference of Anglo-Jewish Ministers in 1911 when the Reverend S Levy was recorded as stating that education was enabling Jews to "acquire English habits of thought and character" (Lipman, 1954). The challenge to Jewish schools in the twenty-first century will be to meet

[1] http://www.jccs.org/uja.htm

the government criteria of cohesion without compromising the strongly Jewish ethos and curriculum of schools.

Complying with a Requirement to Connect with the Wider Community

In Britain, since 2002, citizenship education has been compulsory for all Secondary school (11–18 years) pupils and recommended for inclusion in Primary schools (DfES, 2002). The Citizenship Framework (QCA, 2002) has provided a number of key areas to explore through the formal and informal curriculum in schools. These include human rights, social justice and inclusion, sustainability, interdependence and conflict resolution, values and diversity. This framework offers faith-based schools the opportunity to explore wider issues and to encourage students to see themselves not just as members of their own religious community but also as citizens of the world, aware of the wider issues and challenges of global interdependence and responsibility. Since the launch of the Citizenship Framework in 2002, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA, 2000) has provided information and resources to help teachers and their students learn about themselves, society and their impact on, and role within, the wider world.

The provision of citizenship education, within the National Curriculum, did not, however, go far enough in reflecting the reality of living in a multi-faith and multicultural society. Placing citizenship education within the National Curriculum for England and Wales led instead to an emphasis on the acquisition of theory and knowledge, and of testing and assessment, rather than of exploration and engagement. In addition, because the school day was already crowded, many schools interpreted this duty to teach citizenship in a laissez-faire way, relegating lessons to 20 minutes or less during weekly personal, social and health education sessions. The government response to this reality was to increase its commitment to the practices and principles of this challenge by promoting formal and informal relationships both within school communities and between schools and the wider community in which they are situated. The government view, echoed by Goldring (2009), has been that by promoting these relationships, learning will be enhanced through a shared understanding of each other.

Smith (2007) observes that the successes of communities with a good stock of social capital and exhibiting examples of community engagement are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement and better economic growth. He states, however, that there can be significant challenges because communities and schools with high social capital also have the means and sometimes the motive to exclude and subordinate others, because they choose who to engage with, and how and when to engage with others.

In 2006, the leaders of faith communities in the UK published a joint statement which gave an assurance to the government and parents that faith schools will promote community cohesion, "welcoming the duty imposed on the governing bodies of all maintained schools in the Education and Inspections Act 2006" (DCSF, 2006).

The Jewish community in Britain has interpreted this duty in a variety of ways. Examples further on in this chapter show how schools engage with both their own community and the wider community and how they see opportunities for cohesion as a very positive aspect of school life. There are, however, many areas where sectors of the Jewish community do not feel able to comply, and feel negative about, or threatened by, the need to engage with others beyond the Jewish community. The origins of this resistance could be traced back to the *Torah*. In Deuteronomy 12:30, the Israelites are told not to enquire about pagan religions or ask "How did these nations worship their gods?" It was feared that such idolatry might lead to imitative idolatrous practices. If Israel was to be cleansed from paganism, it was best to prohibit the very knowledge of these dangerous ways. Plaut observes that the purpose of this charge was quite clear: in order to establish God as the supreme ruler of all Israel, all other religious practices and ideologies were ruled out of bounds and the very knowledge of them considered inadmissible (Plaut, 1981). Whilst Jewish religious practice is not always determined by literal and direct reference to biblical verses, these concerns have resonated down the years.

Different sectors of the Jewish community have chosen to interpret the duty towards community cohesion, and in particular the duty to teach about world faiths, very differently. In October 2004, the British government published a National Framework for Religious Education to act as a guideline for Education Authorities and other syllabus providers. It encourages the teaching of the tenets of Christianity and the five major religions represented in the UK: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. It sets out guidelines and national standards for religious education for pupils from 4 to 16. At present, the framework is non-statutory and whilst many faith-based schools do teach some aspects of other religions, there is not yet a legal requirement for them to do so. Recent educational reform in the UK has promoted a choice model where faith-based schools are an accepted part of a wider drive to raise educational standards by expanding parental choice. Given the educational policies towards inclusion (DfES, 2006a, 2006b), faith-based schools must reconcile this legitimate parental choice of an education for their children which responds to community, religious and cultural distinctiveness, and balance this with the need for inter-community understanding, tolerance and respect.

The small number of pluralist[2] Jewish schools in Britain do teach world religions within the school curriculum. Teachers, pupils and their parents visit schools and the places of worship of other faiths, to learn from, as well as to learn about their neighbours (Miller, 2009). Orthodox Jewish schools in Britain learn about other faiths in varying degrees of depth, and may exchange visits with those from schools of other faiths, but refuse to visit the places of worship of other faiths. The United (Orthodox) Synagogue sends out guidelines to their schools explaining what may and may not be permissible. One example which caused some sectors of the

[2] "Pluralist" schools do not affiliate solely to one stream of Judaism, accept that there is more than one way of expressing Jewish faith and practice, and this is reflected in the Jewish education and ethos in these schools.

British Jewish community to question their level of contact with the non-Jewish community was where a Jewish school would not take part in an inter-faith initiative which included a visit to a holocaust exhibition because the exhibition was being temporarily housed in a church.

In faith schools, compliance with the duty towards community cohesion is inspected by the denominational inspectorate. In the case of the Jewish schools, this falls to Pikuach, set up in 1996 in response to the government requirement that schools have their denominational religious education inspected using a uniform framework that parallels Ofsted, the national framework for inspecting all State schools. Compliance is a grey area however. Inspectors have to judge to what extent the school exhibits community cohesion, within a context of self-evaluation against their own agreed criteria. There is much room for interpretation and so an orthodox school which learns about Hinduism through a project on "light" during which half an hour (or less) is spent learning about Diwali may still receive a top grade for inspection, depending on the school's own aims and ethos.

Community Cohesion and Engagement Within UK Jewish Schools

In 2006, the British government and the providers of State-funded schools with a religious character came together to "share understanding of the contribution of faith schools to school-based education and to society in England" (DfES, 2006). The initiative, which resulted in a document and various seminars and meetings throughout the country, highlighted "the very positive contribution" which schools with a religious character make as valuable, engaged partners in the school system and in their local communities and beyond.

Parker Jenkins (2009) researched five Muslim and four Jewish schools in the UK to explore the experiences of community cohesion and estrangement/alienation with the wider community. Her findings show the diverse approaches used in maintaining a religious focus in the curriculum and how these overlap with efforts to engage with the wider community at local, regional, national and international levels. Whilst she found that some parents expressed interest in having more inter-faith engagement, the senior management teams in schools expressed concerns over trying to increase levels of community engagement, since they felt that some parents had deliberately chosen the school so that their children did not have to mix with others.

Parker-Jenkins suggests that community "engagement" is a more likely goal for faith schools than "cohesion". She suggests that it is unclear what to cohere around, and whose values should underpin cohesion. Her research has resulted in a "typology of engagement" which may aid and guide schools as they grapple with the issues of relating to the world around them. Based on Gaine (2005) and Booth and Ainscow (2002), her typology is stated as follows:

1. Meaningful engagement: significant interaction through on-going and sustained projects.

2. Sustained engagement: strong evidence of different forms such as knowledge of and interaction with other faiths and/or the wider community.
3. Temporary engagement: perhaps due to one teacher or member of the community but which is not sustained once they have left the school.
4. Tokenistic engagement: a one off event or trip.
5. Superficial engagement: a veneer; weak and of no consequence or significance.
6. No engagement: in terms of curriculum, ethos, contact with others within and beyond the school community.

Each of these categories is, of course, open to interpretation and nuance. For example, is a permanent focus on collecting charity for distribution to non-Jewish charities either in the UK or overseas, qualitatively as engaging as regular meetings and joint projects with children in a neighbouring non-Jewish school? Both are sustained, but the first requires no personal contact, whilst the second leads to relationship building through personal contact. In each instance, knowledge of the wider world can be developed through education, but it is doubtful whether sustained engagement is possible without face-to-face commitment.

Jewish schools in the UK engage the wider community at various levels of intensity between categories two to five. In the current political climate, there is no possibility for State schools of any kind in Britain to be at level six, that is, having no contact with others within and beyond the school community. Even those Jewish schools who feel strongly that they want to have as little as possible to do with the wider community show some weak engagement with people beyond the school gates. Conversely, very few Jewish schools exhibit "significant interaction", although this may be more about having insufficient time and resources than a lack of interest or desire. Community engagement is only one of a multitude of aspects of school life to integrate into the values and practice of a school.

There are many opportunities for community cohesion and engagement within a Jewish school, especially when the "community" is the local Jewish one. Family and community are, of course, key concepts within Judaism. The importance of family and community is stressed within the fabric of the Jewish year. The regular festivals provide opportunities for family-based activities, and learning, preparation and celebration of *Shabbat* brings together the whole school community – parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and governors. One group of Jewish schools in the UK runs "Family Day" on the Sunday preceding Jewish festivals, where parents and students come together to learn as a community.

The Jewish ethos of schools provides ample opportunities for community engagement. A central value running through Jewish teaching is that of giving charity and of helping others. All Jewish schools epitomise this value with their regular collections for charities. Many schools raise money for non-Jewish, local and international causes as well as for Jewish charities. In 2006 teachers from three London Jewish schools participated in a 10-day seminar, one of the outcomes of which was to incorporate values from the Hebrew Bible into their schools. One such value, "you shall rise before the aged – *mipnay sayvah takoom*" (Leviticus 19:32) is now on display in the foyer of the school in Hebrew and English and is interpreted in

practice in various ways, which include helping a teacher carry a heavy load of books to the staffroom, and letting an older passenger have your seat on the bus. These may be considered old-fashioned and outmoded concepts, but they embody the concept of *derech ertez* – behaving in the right way.

The predominant challenges for schools in relation to engaging with the wider community around them are currently located in the areas of curriculum and admissions policy. The content of the National Curriculum poses potential challenges to some Jewish schools, and curriculum selection in some Jewish schools demonstrates differing interpretations of community cohesion in practice (Osler & Starkey, 2005). For instance, in science and English literature, some of the more religiously right-wing Orthodox Jewish schools will not teach what they regard as unacceptable material. Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet", for example, a classic text for public examination for 16-year olds in British schools, is not acceptable to some Jewish schools. Within UK examination syllabi there is currently flexibility to accommodate such restrictions and the Board of Deputies of British Jews acts in the capacity of mediator, liaising with the government and the curriculum bodies to ensure that schools who wish to may continue to choose texts which they feel are suitable.

The structure of the National Curriculum poses further challenges to Jewish schools which look with some envy at their American colleagues who are free to teach a Jewish studies curriculum for half the school day if they choose. In the UK, all State schools, including the faith schools, are bound by a curriculum that legislates the number of hours per week to be spent on National Curriculum subjects. For example, 11–14-year olds in the UK must spend 24 hours per week studying National Curriculum subjects. School leaders have to balance the maximum number of additional hours they feel they can add to the school day with the breadth and depth of Jewish education they wish to offer their pupils. In reality this means that in Jewish schools, the working day is longer than in non-Jewish schools and that additionally strictly Orthodox secondary schools operate a 6-day school week, instead of the national 5-day school week.

Recently, the area of admissions has been a particular challenge to all-faith schools in Britain, not only the Jewish ones. In October 2006 the British government backed an amendment to the Education and Inspections Bill that would have forced faith schools to give 25% of their places to pupils of other or no faith. This measure was intended to promote community cohesion (DCSF, 2006). Whilst it would initially have affected only new schools, there was justifiable anxiety amongst all faith schools that this measure would soon after be applied to already existing schools. The Board of Deputies of British Jews, in conjunction with other faith groups, coordinated a united Jewish community voice, to oppose this sudden call for quotas. The proposal was withdrawn later the same month and the 2006 Education and Inspections Act continued to allow faith schools to give priority to applications from pupils within their own faith. Although the faith schools won this particular battle, it is likely that the relationship between faith schools and the State will continue to be a prominent political issue in the coming years. Ironically, in order to challenge a proposal which would not add to community cohesion, all sectors of the Jewish

community for once came together with one another, and also united with wider faith communities to challenge this bill.

Additional challenges have been recently faced by all mainstream Jewish schools who have had to change their admissions criteria to comply with the UK Supreme Court ruling, made in 2009, which now makes it unlawful for Jewish schools to give priority to children who are born Jewish. In practice, admission to Jewish schools is now seen as a matter of faith and not one of ethnicity. To gain entry to a Jewish school, families have to show evidence of adherence to the faith (Synagogue attendance for example) and not merely birth. This brings Jewish schools' entry requirements in line with other faiths and is problematic for a religion where attending synagogue is not our test of "Jewishness".

The issue of admissions is further complicated by the changing demography of the Jewish population in the UK. State faith schools are required to enrol up to 30 pupils per class, the government recommended number. Schools in parts of the UK where there are declining Jewish populations are unable to maintain their pupil numbers without accepting non-Jewish children. Even in areas such as Greater London, with its large Jewish population (of approximately 200,000 people), there is concern about school enrolment numbers, particularly as projected over the next 10 years. The Jewish Leadership Council Report (2008) suggests that the pool of primary and secondary age children will decline by between 15 and 20% in the next 10 years. In order to address that decline and keep Jewish schools fully enrolled with Jewish students, the report recommends that between 70 and 80% of Jewish children will need to enrol in Jewish schools, a figure much higher than the current rate of between 50 and 60%.

Jewish Schools Engaging with the Wider Community

There is an emerging and possibly new story for the education service in the UK to tell about the way that its engagement with communities has the potential to improve a wide range of outcomes for young people. The concept of "public value" coined by Mark Moore (1995) has gained increasing currency amongst policy-makers and educators as a way of talking about important social products of community aspects of education. Moore argues that public value is developed when educational settings work to improve the wide range of outcomes for young people by engaging with families and communities in educational settings. Examples from Leadbetter and Mongon (2008) show the wider impact on community cohesion of individual initiatives that begin in the school and affect both the school and its local community. Ofsted reports, described in Leadbetter and Mongon (2008), praise the positive effect on students' attitudes, personal development and achievement as well as on their appreciation of and increased confidence in the school by the local community.

Jewish schools in the UK are increasingly aware of the roles they must play if they are to take full part in their local communities, and many examples of successful initiatives can be seen. Visitors from other faith groups, as well as from the local community, are welcomed into many Jewish schools on a regular basis.

For example, the students from one Jewish school in London have regular contact and programmes with the students of the neighbouring Catholic school. The local police, fire officers and shop keepers are welcomed regularly into Jewish schools to develop good community relations and to teach the pupils safe street practice. Jewish schools are well represented in local education authorities' sports leagues, music activities and extra-curricular initiatives.

A further success of cohesion is when partnerships extend beyond the students to initiatives that focus on teachers. For example, through a joint Muslim/Jewish initiative under the auspices of the British Board of Deputies of British Jews, a Jewish nursery school in South London and a Muslim nursery school begin their school year with joint professional development seminars for the teachers of both schools on topics of mutual concern and designed to foster understanding and on-going collaboration.

Jewish school buildings are available for wider community use outside of school hours with activities ranging from sports fixtures, to evening functions, to school holiday play schemes. The design of new Jewish schools specifically has to take heed of the potential for partnering with the community. Architectural drawings submitted to the DCSF on behalf of JCoSS, the new Jewish Secondary school which opened in London in 2010, have had to show clearly which areas of the school will be available for use by the local and wider community both during and after school hours. The Statutory proposals submitted to the local government offices on behalf of the same project in August 2008 were required, by law, to explain how the school will promote and contribute to community cohesion, in other words, they had to show in what ways they will invite the local and wider community into their school and how they will make real connections with the community beyond the school gates.

In the UK, the Jewish community beyond individual schools contributes to the wider society in various ways. For example, an outreach project run by one of the two Jewish teacher-training agencies in London supports non-Jewish teachers who are teaching Judaism in non-Jewish schools as part of their Religious education syllabus. Teachers who may feel insecure about teaching a faith of which they have little knowledge and even less experience are provided with resources and training. The Jewish community also hosts many non-Jewish school groups in its synagogues for programmes which demonstrate and explain Jewish religion and practice.

The Jewish community also provides a focus for one curriculum area that links it to the wider community. The National Curriculum in Britain stipulates Holocaust Education as part of the History syllabus for both 11-year olds and 14-year olds. By 1945, the Jews in Britain constituted the only intact surviving Jewish community in Europe. Many Jewish people in Britain were, however, scarred by the death of European relatives. In addition, many thousands were refugees from European persecution, often as members of the *kindertransport* – unaccompanied children sent from Germany to Britain before the start of the Second World War. The Holocaust Education Trust, the London and Manchester Jewish Museums and the Imperial War Museum are just a few of the institutions in Britain that provide education for the wider community in Britain about this dark period in European history. Outreach

work, as well as the publication of a wide range of resources for teachers, ensures that powerful issues are presented appropriately to young people in Britain. This is as much a challenge as a success, however. The success is that every school child in Britain learns about the Shoah, and the challenge is that this is often the *only* aspect of Jewish life and history that the wider community learns about.

A further challenge is one of balance – of integrating without assimilating. But integration, and playing a full part in society, is a challenge in a wider society. Many local sports and music events for school students take place on Saturdays, and so are, by implication, not only barred to the Jewish schools, but to any religiously observant Jewish family in a non-Jewish school, as it would mean that they would have to break their observance of *Shabbat* in order to participate. The swimming team of one local Jewish primary school was unable to participate in the local authority gala with neighbouring schools because it took place on a Friday evening, after Shabbat had begun.

The above examples illustrate the extent of the challenge for pupils in Jewish schools to become full members of the UK community. Holden and Billings (2007) speak of "parallel lives" (p. 1) to describe the way people in local communities live separately from one another. They identify faith communities as making an important contribution towards building and sustaining cohesive communities across local communities principally by developing local leadership, providing meeting places, and encouraging values and attitudes conducive to cohesion. The mainstream adult Jewish community in Britain has always wanted to play a full role as part of British civil society. Indeed, in every synagogue in Britain, every Sabbath, a prayer is read which acknowledges and blesses the Queen and all the Royal Family. British Jews have always appreciated those occasions when they were welcomed into Britain whilst other countries at best refused them entry and at worst persecuted and massacred them. Many sectors of the UK Jewish community do, however, lead "parallel lives", as indeed do most UK citizens. This is because of where they live, their economic and social status, and their intellectual and cultural backgrounds. The contribution that faith schools can make to cohesion is significant, precisely because they are constructed as communities, and are driven by the values that underpin cohesive communities.

A challenge for those seeking to connect Jewish youth with the wider world is that the Jewish community itself provides an extensive enough infrastructure to meet so many of the needs of Jewish children and their families that their members may never have to venture beyond the community. There are religious, social and welfare institutions, informal youth provision, kosher shops and restaurants. The structure of the Jewish week, life cycle, feast and fast days are time-consuming and secure as well as being potentially restrictive in terms of engagement with the wider world. This resonates with Smith's (2007) observation discussed earlier in this chapter that groups and organisations with high social capital can have a significant downside because the experience of living in close knit-communities can lead to the exclusion of others (2007, p. 2). The challenge for Jewish schools is to develop young people who want to remain within a strong Jewish framework and who feel confident and

comfortable in the wider world. Some schools perceive the challenge as unnecessary or even frightening. Once again, this reflects the difficulty of appreciating the possibilities of integration without assimilation. This challenge though is driven by a government agenda. The State is committed to confirming the ideological stance stated above, which is for schools to develop graduates who are strongly rooted in their own identity whilst playing their full part in the wider world. This is a problem for strictly orthodox schools that seek to develop graduates who are deeply knowledgeable about Jewish text, values and practice, and who principally lead their lives within a strictly orthodox community.

Jewish Schools Engaging with the Community Beyond the UK

Many successful initiatives have linked Jewish schools with the community in Europe and beyond. One such project is a European wide initiative within the Jewish community that aims to link Holocaust education with community engagement. In 2005, the European Council for Jewish Communities launched an initiative to develop a European wide citizenship curriculum which integrates Jewish values and texts into a citizenship curriculum, with particular reference to the Holocaust. This project is still in its initial stage, but with secure funding, it could be an exciting initiative in schools across Europe.

The use of technology could be extensively developed to encourage projects that enable pupils to meet each other across the globe. Rafi.ki (www.rafi.ki.co) is a large on-line community of schools, encouraging pupils to "meet" at on-line conferences, chat to each other on-line, participate in shared projects and build relationships. This virtual community aims to break down religious and cultural stereotypes and build good links between diverse groups of pupils around the world.

Jewish schools in the UK have the potential for links across Europe through biennial education conferences for policy-makers and educators, as well as occasional projects linking schools. A video link during *Hanukkah*, for example, has, in past years, enabled Jewish schools from across Europe to celebrate the kindling of the Hanukkah candles simultaneously. Individual schools make links with one another across Europe and exchanges of pupils and teachers take place. Informal education, through Jewish youth movements, teaches Jewish teenagers about Europe, through the opportunity to participate in study trips and sports competitions, as well as by inviting participants from European countries to join activities based in the UK. Each year, these initiatives and possibilities increase.

The Institute for Community Cohesion in the UK encourages pupils to engage in dialogue with schools in Europe and beyond. Jewish young adults are encouraged to engage in wider and global issues, for example, through Tzedek, a UK Jewish charity dedicated to relieving poverty in Africa and Asia. Jewish volunteers in their 20s spend 2 months at a time helping to build schools, nurse sick people and plant crops. As well as raising money for Jewish charities, Jewish schools raise money for local and global non-Jewish charities.

A particular project sponsored jointly by the "Minorities of Europe" (UK) organisation and Reut-Sadaka in Israel has linked adults from within Europe with a volunteering project in Israel that works with Arab and Jewish young people in schools, youth programmes, art and sports classes, and community projects. The purposes of the project – peace building and community cohesion – are intended to contribute to the "swapping Cultures" initiative in Europe, aimed at teaching young people to trust those of other cultures and religions through contact and joint initiatives. The project in Israel helped directly in the formation of training courses and conferences on community cohesion developed in Eastern Europe in 2007 and beyond (Minorities of Europe, 2006).

Unfortunately, ignorance and mistrust of our neighbours are two of the biggest challenges to building cohesion. Schools need help in learning how to play a role in building a mutual civility amongst different groups as well as ensuring respect for diversity. These are phrases with which no school will disagree but putting such values into practice is not so simple.

An Agenda for the Future

The heading for this section should perhaps be stated as "Whose Agenda?" In the UK, at present, there are competing agendas in relation to community cohesion and engagement. On the one hand, many individuals and groups within the wider British society view faith schools as obstacles to community cohesion or engagement. On the other hand, there are plenty of individuals and groups who view faith schools as a positive force for community cohesion and engagement. In autumn 2008, a new initiative, "Accord", was launched, chaired by a British Reform rabbi, with members from the Christian, Hindu and Humanist communities. The aims of this group were to lobby the British government to end State funding for faith schools and to "operate admissions policies that take no account of pupils' or their parents' religion or belief" (Accord, 2008). According to Accord, it is only then that a society will be able to develop which is tolerant, recognising different values and beliefs. One could argue that a useful and positive model for such an arrangement can be found in the USA where there is a strong and growing Jewish schools network, despite the fact that neither federal nor state government contribute significant funding to Jewish schools. And yet, the difficulties that the Jewish community has in maintaining and developing those schools and the elitism engendered by what is effectively a private school system is not necessarily desirable for the British community to emulate.

The position taken by Accord continues to be robustly challenged by proponents of faith schools. Apart from the educational and social benefits of faith schools, experience suggests that faith schools are no less likely to sustain a strong engagement with those of other and no faith than non-faith schools.

An additional and serious concern is that by ceasing the funding of faith schools, the government also loses hold of any power to ensure their compliance in any respect. Currently, all State faith schools in Britain are subject to the same rigorous system of accountability through both the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted)

and their denominational inspection authority, as are all State schools in Britain. If faith schools lose funding, some will close and some will comply with an open admissions policy and effectively lose their distinct faith character. It is possible that the majority of faith school providers, including the Jewish community, will move their schools into the private sector.

If this happens, there will be three key issues to face. First, there will no longer be any monitoring of curriculum and teaching standards. At present, all State schools are subject to the National State curriculum for its secular studies and able to access support and training from its local education authority. Without such controls, the more religious schools will be able to pick and choose both the content and the structure of secular studies. At present, the government is developing its agenda of collaboration between schools. The 14–19 curriculum provides a particular impetus for increased collaboration between schools. By 2013, it is estimated that all pupils will have an entitlement to this curriculum, which is planned to be delivered within consortia of schools. At present, the government is not making any provision for faith schools to opt out of this plan.

The second issue is financial. The UK is not unique in its financial support of faith schools, but at present, State-funded Jewish schools can expect to receive 90% of all development and running costs, which is considerable. The remaining 10% is raised by parental contributions and support from the Jewish community. If this level of support is withdrawn, then Jewish schooling becomes the choice only of the rich. Many Jewish schools in the USA, for example, do offer financial aid to those of lower income, but for many families there is a stigma in asking for financial help. In Jewish schools in Britain some families with low incomes refuse to ask to be put on the register to enable their children to receive free school meals, due to an embarrassment and dislike of exposing their difficulties.

The third and possibly most worrying issue to face is that by taking faith schools out of the State sector with its constraints and controls, there is little to prevent the establishment of fundamentalist schools. At the very least, the State will no longer have any authority to insist on a community cohesion or engagement policy or action from any faith school, all of which will be in the private sector and outside State influence.

These three issues all highlight the potential dangers in a withdrawal of State funding. On the other hand of course, in most parts of the world, vibrant and creative Jewish school systems do exist outside of the State sector. Yet, in Britain we are used to being within the State system of schooling, not outside of it. Surely cohesion and engagement can happen most effectively from within a system, rather than from outside it.

Visionary and committed leadership is required to drive forward the agenda on community engagement, and this is required of all schools. Jewish schools do demonstrate examples of good practice, but the debate should not be about religion and ethnicity but about education and what all schools should be doing to promote community engagement. Schools should be encouraged to map the different levels of awareness and commitment to community engagement from the different members of the school community.

There are continuing debates about the impact of faith-based schools on community engagement, including from those who promote a secular model similar to that in France (British Humanist Association, 2002). Recent controversies mentioned in this chapter, like the wearing of religious dress, reaffirm the tensions between secular and religious identities and the balance between diversity and uniformity. A future research agenda could go beyond the issues of policy raised in this chapter's final section. The outcomes and impact of community engagement should be investigated. How do we know whether, and to what extent, engagement with people and institutions beyond the school make a qualitative difference to developing young people's attitudes, knowledge and skills? Can the school, on its own, provide the locus of that development? Can change happen without the full partnership of the families of the young people, and of the media, for example?

Current conceptualisation of community cohesion is narrowly focused on a quest for greater uniformity and common values, rather than rising to the challenge of accommodating a diversity of ethnic and religious identities and institutions. There are many examples of successful initiatives and opportunities for engagement. There are also significant challenges. Whilst a small research agenda is underway, as, for example, in the work of Parker Jenkins (2009), the focus for that research has been on *how* we engage, not on the impact of engagement on the individual or on the community. This is an emerging field, which needs far greater exploration in order for us to fully understand its potential.

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Culture: Restoring Culture to Jewish Cultural Education

Zvi Bekerman and Sue Rosenfeld

Introduction

> Given that it explicitly raises the question of its own legitimacy . . . every educational system must produce and reproduce, by the means proper to the institution, the institutional conditions for misrecognition of the symbolic violence which it exerts, i.e., recognition of its legitimacy as a pedagogic institution. (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 61)

Studies that address issues in broad strokes sometimes slip into debatable generalizations. While we are aware of this danger, we believe the issues raised in this chapter need to be accounted for even by those who might not fully agree with the analysis and suggestions we propose. The field of Jewish education is new and research in it scant; our arguments are raised not only from a formal knowledge of the field but also from the many informal venues through which we have learned about what educators, laymen, parents, and students say on this subject. We hope that the concerns and suggestions raised might be useful in any future critical reappraisal of Jewish education.

In the Diaspora, liberal Jewish education—by which we mean the wide variety of day schools and supplementary schools operated by religious and non-religious groups that profess to openness regarding the integration of tradition and modernity—is charged with preventing attrition from Jewish communities, ensuring Jewish continuity, and strengthening Jewish identity (Bloomberg, 2007; Cohen & Kelner, 2007). With such lofty goals, it is perhaps not surprising that liberal Jewish education is thought by some to be failing (Buchwald, 1999; Kress, 2007). These critics see Jewish students, the products of the liberal Jewish education system, as Jewishly illiterate, alienated from Jewish culture, and at risk of losing their Jewish identity. Many parents, too, "blame the schools for failing to really teach their children" (Prell, 2007, p. 26).

In this chapter, we wish to suggest that dissatisfaction with the liberal Jewish education system results more from a misconception of "culture" in general and Jewish culture in particular than from any failure of Jewish educators—and Jewish

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students—to meet their goals. We hope to augment the contributions of the philosophers and textual literates who have traditionally dominated the field of liberal Jewish education with an enhanced perception of culture in the hope that this might offer a better awareness of the activities of Jewish education and contribute to their improvement. We will start with a narrative of Jewish education, after which we will approach schooling and its paradigmatic foundation critically and attempt to restore the concept of culture to its historical sources. We will then develop this restored concept into a methodology—cultural analysis—and demonstrate how it allows us to shift the focus of the educational investigation from the individual (succeeding or failing according to a deficit model) to a more promising objective: the production of vital cultural contexts.

The effort might help educators and leaders to understand that culture is neither a monolithic condition nor a de-contextualized set of discrete skills transferable across all contexts. It is not static but dynamic, an ongoing dialectic rather than an externalized-to-be-internalized transmission. Culture is continuously revealed and constructed; it is not a feeding field for students, teachers, and parents to search for cues so that they may "pass" as recognizable members of their community. Jewish leaders and educators might discover, ironically, that their current understanding of culture is not good for Jewish continuity.

Restoring culture in Jewish education implies that we should halt the present attempts to identify individual failures (whether of students, teachers, schools, or curricula) and subsequently treat these failures as successful adaptations to the present socio-political contexts Jews inhabit. We will use cultural analysis to answer such questions as: Why do Jewish educators and leaders work so hard to create worthwhile educational settings and yet emerge so disappointed? When proceeding in this direction, Jewish educators will be empowered to radically (from *radix-icis*, Latin for roots, an appropriate concept for Jewish education) reconstruct their perceptions of what needs to be done and toward what goals they need to work. We posit that what liberal Jewish educators should strive for is culture as in a biology laboratory. That is, they should attempt to create working environments (cultures) that enable (cultural) growth.

The Narrative: Reflecting on Successful Failure

Researchers have noted a fundamental conflict in the way many Jews regard their place in democratic societies (e.g., Cohen & Kelner, 2007; Pomson, 2008; Sarna, 1998). On the one hand, they want to partake of the benefits of wider society; on the other, they want to preserve and transmit Jewish culture. Thus, we suggest that what is perceived as failure is actually a reflection of these contradictory goals and a successful adaptive achievement to local systemic circumstances. The most compelling account of this phenomenon is Sarna's (1998) paper on the history of Jewish education in America where he depicts it as being concerned with "the most fundamental question of Jewish life: how to live in two worlds at once, how to be both American and Jewish, part of the larger society and apart from it" (p. 9). Specifically, success

at Jewish schools involves acquiring knowledge and activity that if displayed in certain wider social contexts would be considered inappropriate or dangerous. Indeed, Cohen and Kelner note that if they are to attract more Jewish parents, "schools may need to undertake symbolically important activities and practices that display their ability and interest in helping their students function in the larger society" (p. 99). Consider, for example, the potential repercussions—financial loss, social ostracism, accusations of particularity or elitism or racism—when someone adopts a dress code that differs from the dominant culture's—wearing a yarmulke, for instance—or observing the Sabbath in a capitalist economy, or asking for kosher food in a public place, or expressing Jewish communal ethics in an individualistic society.

Less threatening but just as conducive to creating failure is Jewish education's emphasis on texts that are—as currently taught—neither accessible nor relevant to the students' lives. At schools and in in-service training sessions we see youngsters and adults alike struggling with texts—Talmud, Bible, and other historical, ideological, and philosophical works. Students are asked to allow these texts—"classical and contemporary texts that are central to transmission of Jewish civilization" (Geffen, 2005, p. 28)—to become part of their associative worlds, of their cultural resources, when confronting similar situations; in short, they are asked to think about the potential relevance of these texts to their own realities. They are told that achieving Jewish textual literacy will allow them to become proud representatives of their community and partners in securing its continuity, though they are not told how this will happen, nor do they see models of it being done.

While trying to achieve this literacy, students receive continuous explanations by the "experts" (i.e., teachers) as if something prevents them from understanding these texts as they are presented. Because their reading is continuously mediated by the experts, the students' understanding is not of the text but of the experts' interpretation. This interpretation is also a text, but not the one the students have been asked to read. Of course, students are never told this. Thus, the message imparted is that understanding is a complex achievement, that students are not equal to the task of attaining this level themselves, and that the constitutive texts of the tradition that is supposed to be theirs are never accessible to them. We should ask first how texts that are not made accessible can ever become useful or relevant, and second, if we do not believe students to be capable of reaching their own understanding, why make them confront the texts at all?

But this method of textual study imparts a more dangerous message. Many students, so restricted and inept in school, act resourcefully when confronting situations similar to the ones presented in the text they had studied, without needing to refer to the text at all. What the students had been taught in Jewish education was dispensable: Life outside did not require the texts that the Jewish education system felt were necessary. If indeed the world outside the school system had no use for the knowledge being taught, why should anyone learn it? Of course, many times we learn and teach things which, though not of immediate use in our current extra-curricular experience, can become useful in the future for ourselves or our communities. This being true, we still need a better explanation for the fact that students achieve non-learning in spite of the efforts invested by their teachers. The reason may be that

not only does our present environment not require this knowledge, but that the texts and rituals presented in our schools are taught as though they, and by implication, Jews themselves, are a-historical, de-contextualized, and detached from the world. Jewish education often includes a message that Jews and Judaism can—indeed, ought to—exist in isolation, without recognition of and dialogue with the Other, as though the development of the Jewish people is free from contextual influences. Fishman (2007), for example, writes that "Formal Jewish education . . . is especially important for Jews living in open American societies, *in which Jewish identity is not reinforced by separation from other ethno-religious groups*" (p. 183, emphasis added). Fishman's assumption, shared by many who write about Jewish education in democratic societies, is that Jewish culture would be best preserved and maintained in isolation. (Indeed, it is difficult otherwise to explain the investment in building segregated Jewish schools.)

Such a message opposes our common (and empirical) knowledge that communities evolve and "become" through contact and dialogue with other communities (Short, 2005; Valins, 2003); they resist and react and respond to each other. Not only do cultures not spring forth, fully formed, from a vacuum, but they exist in our minds most clearly when they are differentiated from each other. This is true not only for Jews, of course, but for all world categories: They become most fully identified when there exists the possibility of being contrasted to others which can, in turn, be differentiated from them. As Bateson (1979) has stated, it takes at least two things to create a difference: Each alone is—for the mind and perception—a non-entity, a non-being, the sound of one hand clapping. Thus, Judaism does not exist by and in itself; nor is Judaism a quality of individual minds. As our students seem to realize instinctively, Judaism becomes a difference so long as it exists in concerted human activity and thus, in real world like life situations, teaching Jewishness in isolation makes little sense.

Our schools have perhaps forgotten that Judaism, to be relevant, has to be relevant not only to Jews themselves but to the rest of the world. Most importantly, Judaism has to be relevant to the Jews' world, which does not exist in isolation. A further difficulty with the vision of an isolated Judaism, devoid of actions in context and dialogue, is that Jews' claim to identity is based only on their blood ties and lineage, essentialist explanations implying arrogance and racism. If we are interested in change, we should shift the focus of our inquiry from the minds of individual students or teachers to social systems and their politics, to determine why so many Jewish leaders work hard to organize educational systems that make failure worthwhile. A first step in understanding these systems is trying to understand the historical roots of schooling, that technology most preferred by liberal Jewish educators (and other minority group leaders) to strengthen their communities and ensure their continuity.

Schools, Knowledge, Individuals, and Culture

The current educational structure, mass education through schooling, did not appear by chance but rather is closely related to the industrial revolution and the development of the nation state (Gellner, 1983). Both industry and state needed to recruit

masses to their service, masses with basic cognitive and behavioral skills that could serve the needs of the nation state and its economic structure (Goody, 1987). In addition, schools have served in the modern era as an important means by which sovereigns have unified the different local groups inhabiting the areas they had subordinated to their power under one flag, one language, and one narrative. Thus schools are in no way disinterested arenas within which neutral knowledge or skills are transmitted from the minds of specialists to those of passive individuals. In the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), social knowledge and learning are settled in the social, in "communities of practice" that are powerfully differentiated by complex asymmetries. With this in mind, it is surprising that liberal Jews have chosen the school structure as the means by which to secure their future and continuity—a goal seemingly at odds with schools' historical purposes.

Furthermore, Jews already had their own strong, flourishing educational structures. Heilman (1987) describes the centuries' old tradition of study circles in which the learners try to acquire ". . . the ethos and world view of those who in previous generations likewise intoned or studied those words" (p. 62). Tedmon (1991) points out that "*Chavrusa* learning [a traditional format for Jewish textual study] . . . has been in existence for generations" (p. 97). Copeland (1978) maintains that the traditional education system in Jewish communities, *heders* and *yeshivot*, integrated the intellectual with the emotional, in stark contrast to the West's emphasis on the intellectual, which latter emphasis, he says, "burdens, constrains, and impoverishes" (p. 24). With such a long-standing and successful tradition of educational practices, why should Jews look elsewhere?

Of course, it could be argued that their looking elsewhere should surprise no one. Jews, like most minorities in the West, have sought to adopt a preexisting structure—that of the dominant majority—in an effort to achieve success according to the measures of their new social setting (Sacks, 1994). In fact, adopting the ruling powers' educational structures is part and parcel of Jews' (like many minorities') efforts to become Western. Rather than taking pride in the success they achieved by their own communities' standards—the path chosen by many non-liberal, that is, Orthodox, Jewish communities—many liberal Jews have preferred to avoid the risks that non-conformity entails in Western societies, keeping their Jewishness under wraps, fitting in, or "passing" as part of the majority, including embracing the non-Jewish majority's values and narratives. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) well knew the "arbitrariness" of schooling as a method for moving the young into adult positions within the hegemonic spheres. They also recognized the violence that accompanies this imposition of the hegemonic culture on a new/strange human group. They also knew that many (teachers, parents, students, system) are involved in making school a successful controlling system and that they achieve this through the use of varied methodologies and pedagogies.

The keystones of formal schooling's success are its structure and its functionality, both of which are based on and expressive of a particular paradigmatic perspective, one that cannot benefit Jews or any other minority. In other words, schools allow entrance into the reigning hegemony at the price of homogeneity. In fact, schools are a central conduit for the transmission of two interrelated beliefs of the modern Western world: belief in the autonomous self and belief in the objective existence of knowledge to which this self has access, if only properly guided (Holzman, 1997).

For centuries, these above-mentioned elements have underpinned the functioning of schools. When the first schools were created in order to produce a cast of scribes able to sustain the bureaucratic needs of growing, powerful, centralized, urban, economic human enterprises, they developed the three central characteristics which hold to this day (Cole, 2001):

1. The student was trained by strangers, separated from his kin and family.
2. The knowledge slated for transmission was differentiated and compartmentalized into fields of specialization.
3. Learning took place outside of the contexts of its intended implementation, i.e., students rehearsed knowledge "out of context."

Liberal Jewish education, which is interested in finding ways to strengthen and invigorate ethnic/religious identity, community structures, and the individuals' affiliation to them, cannot be served by a system structured around these premises. Neither can such structures lead to an understanding of Judaism as a living tradition that is able to offer answers to real socio-cultural issues.

These three characteristics are among those that reformers have periodically tried to change. However, in spite of the multiple efforts invested in this enterprise, most schools today are still structured like those of antiquity. How can a framework that is premised on distancing the individual from family and community serve to engender Jewish identity and communal integration? How can a structure that conceives of and imparts knowledge in differentiated and compartmentalized chunks serve in the cultivation of Jews who are able to view Judaism and its potential role in the world as a comprehensive whole? And, last, is it feasible to expect that schoolchildren would find what they learn relevant if they are educated in environments in which the acquisition of knowledge is segregated from the places in which this knowledge can be functional and in which the knowledge transmitted does not reflect the knowledge implemented by the community itself in the world outside?

Some Jewish educators agree that those are exactly the central issues which need to be addressed if liberal Jewish education is to succeed in the modern West. They readily point to the efforts being invested today to extend education into the surrounding school community so as to include parents and adults in general, and to the efforts to involve schools in community work so as to achieve a better fit between school and the outside world (Woocher, 1995). While such statements are encouraging, they may not be sufficiently helpful in the long run. This is because these schools and their operation are premised on two paradigmatic features which will not allow the system to be reformed, and reform is necessary if minorities (and Jews are one of these) wish to sustain a level of cultural independence and compete in the interpretative work that shapes the world they inhabit. These paradigmatic features, to which we have hinted above, are what modernity calls "universal cultural values" and those on whom these values are bestowed, "autonomous individuals" (Bekerman & Silverman, 2000; Bekerman, 2001).

Both culture, as a reified identifiable cast of behaviors and beliefs, and the individual, as an autonomous and universal entity, have been the focus of a long

theoretical controversy within high and post-modernity that has successfully demonstrated the link between these features and many of the world's current maladies (Giddens, 1991; Sampson, 1993a; Taylor, 1994). These theoretical developments have pointed inter alia at two educational claims we make regarding our current understanding of culture and individual identity. The first is that culture must be understood as a verb and not a noun—as something which grows and evolves when performed, and then promptly dissolved again into the array of human activity in which it might or might not be reproduced (Bauman, 1999). Second, individual identity must also be conceived as a dialectical process of becoming and shaping through speech and action and dependent on context (Harre & Gillett, 1994; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). Thus culture and individual identity are here conceptualized as evolving processes that depend on language and activity to take on form and existence (Wittgenstein, 1953).

Leaving in place these ruling paradigms of a reified culture and individual identity, together with the practices through which these perspectives are framed within school structures, can hardly be helpful to the education of Jews. The separate and isolated individual might be a good tool for domination, but not for community survival. Similarly, reified and segregated culture might be a good means of offering recognition to the politically correct multiculturalist, but, at the same time, serves to justify and perpetuate the ongoing suffering of minorities, now acknowledged but with their structural subordination left fully intact (Bekerman, 2003). In other words, the multicultural movement has opened spaces for minority cultures but has left them as before, configured in and constrained by a given space and time. Jews, for example, are allotted their space in the UK's Jewish Book Week or New York's Israel Day Parade. Instead of seeing culture as something that belongs to a person and can be internalized, or as a powerful force that shapes the individual from the outside in, the multicultural movement posits a view of culture that is constricted and discrete.

Traditional education research, working within this paradigm, explains much of the problematic encounter of students with education on the basis of families being held captive to a culture (McDermott & Verenne, 1995). That is, a person is "tied" to preconceived notions of what one culture signifies in the minds of outsiders. Culture thus internalized becomes similar to the old and unfriendly concept of race, as when within Jewish circles we hear that so-and-so does not "look like a Jew." Such an understanding of culture removes it from the realm of things we—and our students—can control; it encourages them to be passive objects of their "cultural heritage" rather than actively shaping and controlling it. Such a message—that disempowers students with relation to their own community—can hardly contribute to the creation of sustaining practices, nor can it be termed educational. These paradigms, on which current Jewish educational efforts are based, will, if left unchallenged, hinder efforts to help Jews achieve their declared goal of strengthening a vital and active Jewish identification and of making Jewish civilization a life option.

Reestablishing the concept of culture as a relevant force for strengthening Jewish identity means we must revert to its etymological roots and anthropological

origins. Culture (from the Latin *cultura-ae*) means "work." Biology has maintained this sense when offering cultures as environments for growth and development. Anthropologist Margaret Mead (1942) emphasized the importance of the enculturation processes and was careful to point out that the young, whatever their biological heritage, could become members of any group, despite the dissimilarity between the adopted group and their group of origin. Claude Levi-Strauss (1955) went even further when he posited that any personality type could come into being in any culture because every human can reject the commands of the culture into which he or she was born.

According to these researchers, culture was not something to be known or learned but was an activity conducted in environments with others, coming into existence in ongoing social dialogue and within historical trajectories (Wolf, 1994). Belonging to a culture is not a predetermined, static state of being but one of active identification. Our students' cultural identification is built through their activities, molded and interpreted as classes of cultural work (Jewish or otherwise). Students are not only empowered by such a reconceptualization of culture, but also supported in it by their actual experience with the world.

Cultural Analysis: Culture as Methodology

If we see culture not as a static condition nor as a solitary cause, but the cooperative activity of many, the products of culture are unpredictable and intermittent, making this new conceptualization risky to educators who are more familiar with a stable entity whose consequences are foreseeable. But the shift in this understanding of culture should help educators focus on *process*, not *products*—on the tools, associates, and contexts in which the work is done, rather than on outcomes. So framed, our field of inquiry changes from the traditionally accepted fields of psychology and sociology to a more inclusive and complex pattern of cultural analysis.

Education has relied on both psychology and sociology to locate its shortcomings in the individual. In the former, autonomous minds in isolation are the objects of study (Holzman, 1997; Wenger, 1998). Usually, it is the student who is the target of educational reform, but it could equally be the teacher or the parent. What is central, from a psychological perspective, is that the problems that Jewish education confronts are problems of individual minds. For the most part, Jewish education—unlike mainstream education—has not proceeded along the psychological trail, thanks in large part to parents who would not easily agree to have psychologists ascribe the malfunctions of Jewish education to their otherwise successful children. Paradoxically, their willingness to do so might raise Jewish education to an unparalleled status, since the involvement of psychologists and counselors are accoutrements of "serious," i.e., public education.

Sociology, in contrast, posits that it is not the individual students, teachers, and parents who are the objects of inquiry but rather the conditions in which they were raised: Families and their trajectories are the basis of the problem. Pronouncements like "What can you expect from kids raised in families that don't care?" or "What

can be expected from a school without a vision?" or "This is simply a reflection of the community's values" rest on the assumption that social structures lie at the heart of our educational frustrations, and that each of these structures contains its own cause-and-effect procedure that accounts for the failure of the educational system. Within this framework, the dream is to find a way to organize the Jewish educational system well enough to be able to identify and address the historical and social factors that cause the problems.

Just as sociology widens the scope of inquiry to include all the institutional structures (educational, charitable, political) that are organized for the purpose of benefiting the many, sociology also proposes settings to measure the success or failure of these institutions, such as the percentage of Jews who intermarry, performance of rituals, membership in Jewish social or religious organizations (Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004; Cohen, 2007). Still other structures interpret the measurements, offer solutions, or shape policy, and in the process assuage the Jewish soul with the tacit message that the Jewish community is the product of incommensurable forces—for example, emancipation, industry, and assimilation—that are impossible to challenge or change. In fact, a look back at almost 30–40 years of this process confirms the adage that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Given that the foundations of modern Western Jewish education are imbued with this positivist paradigmatic perspective, fundamental change is a daunting task indeed. The gatekeepers prefer linear, causal explanations with accompanying finite, predictable solutions, whether or not such solutions are successful in the long run. In their view, reform is certainly needed, but we need not worry too much if the reform fails to transform and, after 5 or 10 years, all must be reformed again.

Instead of positing causality and tracing clear historical paths, cultural analysis pays attention to work done in concert and to "the immediate and local meanings of actions as defined from the actors' point of view" (Erickson, 1986, p. 119). When applied to Jewish education, cultural analysis is not about failure or success, nor about who is responsible for these. It does not ask "What's wrong with this picture, and how do we fix it?" but rather "What's really going on in this picture; for and by whom was it drawn?" Cultural analysis asks how we have accomplished our current situations in concert with others. It examines the developing contexts in action, acknowledging in advance that neither a particular agent nor a particular cause can be identified as the driving force.

Rather than relying on the "cause-and-effect" model suggested by the current positivistic paradigm as though this was the only option, cultural analysis asks instead how the arguments of this paradigm were shaped and how they serve the same current situation the experts want (or claim to want) to change. It examines—and challenges—the options, tools, and co-participants available to produce change, not only in the Jewish liberal educational context but within the wider institutional, historical, political, and economic one, not in isolation but in unison.

Clearly, such tactics are daunting, involving as they do the possibility, if not necessity, of social change. They render the scenario of liberal Jewish education infinitely more complex and perhaps unbearably difficult. This approach is not likely to produce such facile (and appealing) "solutions" about the need to revise curricula,

train better teachers, and invest in more schools—solutions which are premised on the understanding of culture we challenged in the previous section of this chapter. Moreover, simply stating that cultural analysis should propel Jewish education in different directions does not guarantee that such an analysis would fare any better, because cultural analysis is also deeply embedded in the cultural conditions it seeks to overcome. But cultural analysis is a deep and lengthy process, the first step of which is to uncover the conditions that promote the current situation, paying careful attention to the roles, goals, and interests of the participants in that setting, and revealing the connections between current solutions and their service in the roots of the problems they purport to solve. Only then can cultural analysis produce more inclusive questions that deepen our present understandings, crossing borders and producing new experimental associations—all necessary preconditions for lasting and meaningful change.

Cultural analysis could pave the way to knowing how to reconstruct, to perceive multiple problematic issues both in the strategies and in the sustaining paradigms within liberal Jewish education. Since the work remains to be done, we can only summarize here some preliminary arguments, beginning with educational strategies.

A Partial Cultural Analysis

Because culture is intimately bound to context, each and every change rearranges all the pieces in a complex puzzle. Regarding Jewish education, we must acknowledge that all the phenomena that worry liberal Jews about their education system have been shaped through history with the active participation of Jews and others. Thus, as it has been constructed, it can be reconstructed. The simple dichotomies of Jew/Non-Jew, Us/Them will not do. We work hard to make the borders between ourselves and others solid and defined, but our experience tells us that borders are both invisible and porous. Does liberal Jewish continuity require measurements on scales of identity? Does it necessitate identifying affiliations? If Jews, like every other cultural category, only exist in difference, then Jews *must* engage in dialogue with others in order to achieve true recognition (Sampson, 1993b), and dialogue with others means risking finding the others more attractive. If continuity is what Jewish education seeks to achieve, it had better find ways to make Judaism no less attractive.

When Judaism is presented as a body of knowledge and a quality of mind rather than a process of creativity and a function of action, there is little chance for any student to become engaged. Students know that in order to become lawyers, doctors, teachers, or parents, they are dependent on reciprocal work built around languages, fashion, performance—in short, a whole set of practices recognizable in context. If they fail to enact this work at the right time, with the right people, in the right interpretative moment, they will risk forfeiting their chosen identities. Most students already realize that they are primarily Americans or Israelis in their speech and behavior but Jews only in their feelings. As we explained above, this is a good

bargain for students who want to succeed in the West—and it is another good reason for succeeding to fail. By failing to learn "Jewish," students are being fully adaptive to a system that has little room for cultural variance in those (typically homogeneous) domains that Western culture deems successful.

Hence Jewish educators must move from focusing on children's failure to achieve sufficient Jewish culture/literacy to studying the cultural settings in which that failure makes sense. By so doing, Jewish educators will find themselves dealing with politics, an arena that sits uncomfortably with one of the bases of liberal Jewish functioning in the Western world: the idea that particularistic cultures should be secluded to the privacy of the individual sphere, far from the public eye (Bekerman & Silberman, 2003; Maoz & Bekerman, 2009). If these cultures must exist in public, they should at least be confined to ritual events. But in spite of the current multiculturalist trends, liberal Jews do not want to become Lubavitchers, playing in the marketplace and making the fact of their Judaism a public act, any more now than they did in the past, and rightfully so. The conspicuous diversity offered by multiculturalism is risky; it offers easy recognition but not necessarily equality, and liberal Jews would prefer that things work in the opposite direction.

A cultural analysis should also question the perception of the learning processes in the Jewish educational system. Learning, we are told by recent theorists (Harper, 1987; Lave & Wenger, 1991; McDermott & Verenne, 1995; Wenger, 1998), is embedded in a myriad of activities that hold a child's attention long enough for something to change so that the next day's activities look different. It is a cumulative process involving the participation of people who have put to use the things learned over time and in multiple settings. Learning thus becomes about the contexts that allow knowledge to be seen as relevant and useful; it cannot be maintained merely as ineffectual memories. But in liberal Jewish education, learning as defined above is not available. What we have instead are students focused (or not) on texts and teachers, and interacting (or not) with each other. Jewish educators should ask whether the rehearsal of assorted rituals or the continuous pounding on texts—potentially valid activities—induces students to become sagacious in the world contexts that surround them; in short, whether or not this and the other activities that take place are conducive to the aims of Jewish education. We need to search either for ways to make the world contexts in which students live amenable to the knowledge teachers teach or, alternatively, for ways to adapt the knowledge Jews value to make it relevant in present contexts.

Again, the Western world is not helpful here in that it seems not to allow for much of Jewish knowledge to become relevant. Perhaps it is the Western world itself that Jews might need to fight rather than their own students and/or teachers! Perhaps we should be asking why dominant cultures are unwilling to accept cultural differences. Rather than ask this question, Jewish liberal schools teach the same type of intolerance, thereby reproducing within Jewish culture the same sense produced by the dominant culture, not realizing that because Jews are not dominant, the results might not benefit them. Paradoxically, while caring about their own within their educational systems, Jewish educators serve the very outside world that denies them. Intermarriage in this case could be seen not as a threat but as an adaptive

response, the dissatisfaction with Jewish education as another adaptive step toward the conquest of present hierarchical positions without passing as defector, and the ghettoization of Jewish education as a secure path toward a successful assimilation.

We will conclude this section by summarizing, in brief, the main points we have raised that run contrary to received theory and practice in liberal Jewish education:

1. The perceived failure of Jewish education has little to do with the quality of individual teachers or students and much to do with the quality of the systems we cooperatively construct.
2. What appears to us as "failure" are actually adaptive moves to local and global systemic circumstances.
3. The adoption of Western positivist paradigmatic perspectives is responsible for the present educational views that guide liberal Jewish educational theory and practice.
4. In order to effect positive change in the liberal Jewish education system, we must revise our basic conceptions of the individual, the culture, and the learning process. We must realize that they are all interactional, contextualized, and dynamic processes rather than isolated, static, and impermeable states.
5. Jews should look for educational solutions in the reorganization of current Western world politics rather than in the limited parameters of their school settings or the solitude of their teachers' or students' minds.

In short, liberal Jewish education has been focused on individual learning, group membership, and school failure. We need to change these views, to acknowledge that learning is not individual, membership does not convey literacy, and schools are not the only settings in which to achieve productive, adaptive, relevant learning.

What, then, can liberal Jews do? They can start by trying to create educational settings that do not achieve success for others (the West and its expectations for the proper functioning of its minorities) and failure for their own, but that address their preferred cultural products in action, in dialogue, and in context. How to achieve this is a more difficult question on which we would like to reflect in the following section.

Cultural Education and the Liberal Jewish Educator

The moment that identity, culture, and education recover their contextual dimensions and dialectical characters, they can no longer be presented in their glorified historical remoteness, nor as static traits or as cognitive properties. Educators who have envisioned traditional cultural literacy, i.e., "mastering a body of knowledge," according to Short (2005, p. 263), as the heart of Jewish continuity can no longer content themselves with presenting texts and rituals in a de-contextualized setting; they must engage learners in interpretive activities that will make these practices relevant to their present environments. If we relocate our educational foci to the

social interactional sphere, with its attendant recognition of complex socio-cultural relations, we must promote not only new educational aims and strategies, but also new models of leaders, teachers, and students who are responsive to the diverse challenges encountered in today's world.

Cultural education, in short, has little to do with the habits we train people to adopt, and everything to do with the environments we build for people to inhabit (Varenne & McDermott, 1998). But the environments we as Jews inhabit must be understood in order to be changed—if change is deemed necessary. Therefore, the first activity we need to inculcate among our leaders and educators is a reflexive process that will lead to a better and more honest understanding of their own social situation and of the powers and processes that were involved in its achievement. Educators and leaders might then stop thinking of Jewish life as a given, a natural event, but as a social construction, the result of human social activity. We might then be able to cease the self-deception we perpetuate by refusing to ask—or having our students ask—the questions about context that should be asked. For example, what is our part in the creation and preservation of the social context for Jews and other minorities? Which of our needs is being served by the present system? To what extent does this system encourage or require that Jews absorb the judgments of the non-Jewish world? What messages do students receive that make them not want to be recognized as Jews? For Jewish educators, exploring these questions will lead to the realization that their failures and successes are not so much theirs but are rather the products of complex webs of relationships taking place within cultural patterns and historical events.

Furthermore, an awareness of the connections between their cultural assumptions and the effects these have on their educational planning will raise Jewish educators' consciousness about the unequal power relationships that are endemic to educational and state institutions, i.e., hegemony at large. Indeed, cultural education attempts to cultivate in minority groups a critical consciousness of their situation as the foundation of a liberating praxis. The greatest enemy of all such groups is the belief that existing beliefs and structures are inevitable, uncontrollable, and necessary.

Imagine a child approaching a teacher and asking, "What is a Jew?" Given present realities, the teacher may be inclined to offer as a response some culturally descriptive and benevolent characteristics of the group. This response might seem appropriate given present reigning epistemologies. However, we believe that in the long run, such a response reinforces—rather than challenges—present perspectives. A better answer to the question would be a correction of the epistemological basis that, though potentially unknown to the child, substantiates his or her question. Thus, we might answer that Jews are not a "what" but a "when" and a "how" (Bekerman, 2009).

Part of becoming active in the world that surrounds us is acquiring discourses with which we can describe, uncover, and cope with the complexity of social phenomena. Language, after all, is what helps us organize experience, and although language is never fixed, social groups develop their own relatively coherent styles that help them "become-in-dialogue." We need to enrich our leaders, teachers, and students alike with descriptive powers, analytical points of view, and critical

perspectives. If we currently "do" Western language but cannot successfully "do" Jewish language, we will not be able to author the world. To understand and become active agents in the world, therefore, liberal Jewish educators need familiarity with a variety of discourses:

- an economic discourse to discuss commodities, supplies, and management;
- an aesthetic discourse to discuss architecture, advertising, and display;
- a political discourse to discuss policies, planning, and discipline;
- a historical discourse to discuss change in organization, consumption, and community;
- interpretive discourses to articulate understandings of those texts that, in concert, constitute vital components of Jewish history and culture.

Language is socially and historically situated: By creating, controlling, and manipulating language, educators can contribute in large part overcoming their present educational circumstances.

One of the consequences of an increased understanding of their current situation in the world is that Jewish teachers and students alike can begin to seek out potential "cracks" in the hegemonic system, to find and create arenas in which their activities as Jews will serve the needs of their community, to work in thoughtful proactive engagement, not in acquiescence to the demands of the outside world. Indeed, if educators see that neither they nor their institutions are predestined to fall into the hegemonic trap, they can participate in proposing and producing alternative symbolic systems rather than passively accepting what is currently on offer.

Adopting and implementing a critical stance will not be easy but has, in other contexts, proven worthwhile. Teitelbaum (1991) described the Socialist movement's resistance as it was expressed in the Sunday schools in early twentieth-century America, in which the texts studied offered competing perspectives to those that were accepted as natural in the dominant society, and through which the participants were able to weigh up their arguments and examine their situation in a new light. Mirza (1999) showed how Black supplementary schools in England facilitated the creation of oppositional meanings that derailed the assumptions of mainstream schooling and, through their very existence, provided evidence of thriving Black communities.

What is not fully clear is whether the liberal Jewish educators involved are, in fact, willing to adopt critical and emancipatory strategies, thereby risking their comfortable position in Western society. (In fact, this might be the most insidious accusation of Western hegemony: that comfortably belonging to its mainstream implies relinquishing the group's sense of authenticity and risks its sense of cultural sustainability). But our existing situation, like any ideology, is not a given nor is it eternal. It is not an abstraction but is the product of socio-cultural practice expressed in speech and action. Working in the way we suggest offers the possibility of challenging the current authorial/hegemonic voice—a modest step in the right direction.

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Curriculum Development: What We Can Learn from International Curricula

Roberta Louis Goodman and Jan Katzew

> *He used to say: "At five [one begins the study of] the Bible. At ten the* mishnah. *At thirteen [one takes on] the [responsibility for] the* mitzvot. *At fifteen [one begins the study of] the Talmud. At eighteen [one is ready for] marriage. At twenty to pursue [a livelihood]. At thirty [one attains full] strength. At forty [one gains] understanding. At fifty [one gives] counsel. . . . Pirke Avot 5:21*
>
> (Kravitz & Olitzky, 1993)

This *mishnah* from Pirke Avot demonstrates that a curriculum for lifelong Jewish learning has been a topic that is as timeless as it is timely.[1] Curriculum, with a Latin etymology that refers to a race course, is the aggregate of education and experience that enables a person to participate in and contribute to a particular community as well as to human society in general. Curriculum articulates desirable learning aims and tries to balance what is real and what is ideal, what is possible and what is desirable to learn, to do, and to be. The topics, texts, and experiences in Pirke Avot 5:21[2] articulate a lifetime curriculum for a Jew. The *mishnah* is foundational and sacred, aspirational and inspirational. Parents were obligated to teach their children about Jewish life. Jewish communities were also mandated to establish schools early in the first millennium of the Common Era. Questions focusing on who, what, how, where, and why to teach have perennially occupied Jewish educators' minds. Responses to these questions are not only educational; they have also been essential and existential to the Jewish people. Curriculum development has helped to enable the Jewish people to adapt and thrive in a variety of cultures from hostile to hospitable.

As it is a dynamic, organic process, curriculum development remains a central focus in Jewish education. It addresses conceptions of the individual, family, group, and society together with the values, purpose, and roles that each hold. Curriculum

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[1] For elaboration, see Maimonides Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Talmud Torah, inter alia.
[2] Note that after the age of 15, the subject matter changes to life experience.

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develops as an iterative process, continually scanning the cultural environment and responding to it—sometimes with affirmation, sometimes with adaptation, sometimes with admonition, but always with translation and commentary.

Curriculum is the core expression of what an educational enterprise believes is significant and worthy. In Jewish education, as in general education, there is a wide variety of curricula: for individual programs and for entire institutions (e.g., school or camp), as well as for a system of learning institutions—internally produced by the institution itself or externally produced by a publisher. Curriculum is a fundamental part of all educational settings—formal and informal. In order to assess the impact of current curricula in Jewish education as well as to consider the communal investment of resources in them, we will consider four questions, a number chosen not at random, but because the four questions operate as a trope in Jewish education, echoing the Passover Haggadah.

1. What are the criteria for excellence in curriculum development?
2. Why is curriculum development so important to Jewish education today?
3. What are the current trends and issues in curriculum development?
4. What curricular challenges loom over the Jewish educational horizon?

What Are the Criteria for Excellence in Curriculum Development?

Tyler, a classical theorist on the topic of curriculum development, writing 60 years ago, identified four fundamental questions that need to be answered in designing any curriculum or plan of instruction (Tyler, 1949):

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

A coherent, thoughtful, well-planned curriculum needs to reflect an institution's vision, incorporate educational experiences likely to achieve this vision, be presented in a clear and compelling way, and identify measures of educational success. These criteria make it possible for any curriculum to be analyzed and evaluated.

"When there is no vision, the people become unruly" (Proverbs 29:18). Vision is not a luxury in social organization. Vision is the foundation upon which identity is constructed and educational vision in particular constitutes the prerequisite for curricular design. Pekarsky (2008) identifies two types of vision that educational institutions should have: an existential vision of what Jewish life looks like and an institutional vision of the educational approach of how to reach that vision. While these concepts may seem lofty, they play themselves out in curricular choices that teachers make about the learning experience. For example, why have apples—how they grow, their colors, texture, and more—become the focus of so much teaching in

early childhood about Rosh Hashanah? In the end, what does an apple really have to do with Rosh Hashanah? What concept or ideas do they convey? What is the purpose of this curricular focus, its connection to the holiday? What else could a teacher and children investigate that would convey a deeper understanding about the holiday? (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998; Moskowitz, 2003) Activities and experiences are not always intrinsically educational. They only become so when they are planned to achieve a desired outcome that is meaningful to the learner and the teacher at least as much outside the classroom as in one. It is fair to ask of any educational activity—so what? This question challenges the curriculum to have a purpose that transcends the time and place of the activity itself. In the absence of a vision, a curriculum may include creative and engaging activities that lack a sense of coherent meaning. Vision provides a context for educational texts and the experiences they engender. Educators can make better decisions about what to teach and how to teach if it is clear why the subject matter is being taught.

A factor that has made assessment increasingly significant in Jewish education is the influence of funders' concern for measuring the impact of a particular educational experience on its learners. The focus is increasingly on what, if anything, the learner is learning from a particular curriculum or educational experience. In response, many educators have moved away from Tyler's approach of first articulating goals (what the teacher aims to accomplish) and behavioral objectives (what the learners will be able to know, feel, or do), leaving assessment to the end to using a backward design method that identifies upfront not just what the learners will learn but also how that learning will be measured. A curriculum development approach that incorporates backward design used by many Jewish educators is Understanding by Design (UBD), as evidenced by its use in settings as diverse as some of the Reform movement's camps and the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland's Project Curriculum Renewal for congregational schools and day schools of all movements. Other methods are used to put learner outcomes in the forefront of the curriculum designing process as exemplified by the "Standards and Benchmark Project," initiated by the Melton Research Center for Jewish Education of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America that helps liberal and community day schools develop *TaNaKh* (Torah, Prophets, and Writings) curricula. The incorporation of learner assessment into the curricular process in these ways brings an increased level of accountability to Jewish education.

Why Is Curriculum Development so Important to Jewish Education Today?

Studies of formal and informal Jewish educational personnel identify two issues that connect to curriculum development:

Issue #1—*There is a lack of qualified, credentialed teachers in Jewish learning settings in education and Jewish studies* (Kelner, Rabkin, Saxe, & Sheingold, 2005, Goodman et al. on Project Kavod 2006, Sales & Saxe, 2002; Goodman,

Bloomberg, Schaap, & David, 2009); Only 19% of teachers in day school, supplementary school, and early childhood hold credentials in both education and Jewish studies (CIJE, 1994). Although most educators participate in some type of professional development, it is questionable if these haphazard efforts adequately prepare them to implement curriculum in their settings (Wertheimer, 2009). The downsizing of central agencies of Jewish education in many communities throughout North America makes one wonder how much funding is going to be available for professional development in the near future and who will be delivering those opportunities that will exist. Our communal investment in teachers belies and defies the widespread acknowledgment that teachers arguably constitute the most important role in translating curricular theory to practice. A history of according teachers high status in the Jewish community is in jeopardy.

Issue #2—*Curricular resources could help compensate for under-qualified teachers if there were opportunities to train the teachers in the use of those resources.* What data exist suggest that curriculum is not consistently provided to formal educators in day schools, congregational schools, and early childhood schools (CIJE, 1994; Tammivaara & Goodman, 1996a, 1996b; Goodman & Schaap, 2006) nor to informal educators (Goodman et al., 2009). Educators report that one of the things that would improve their work conditions is more assistance with lesson planning and curriculum development (CIJE, 1994; Goodman & Schaap, 2006; Goodman et al., 2009; Tammivaara & Goodman, 1996a). Exemplifying this situation is a study of supplementary school educators. When asked what would most improve their job, 30% of the teachers indicated curricular or lesson planning assistance. This was second only to salary, rated at 33% (Goodman & Schaap, 2006). These data suggest that the individual teacher has a major role in devising curriculum rather than implementing it. While any good teacher would be adapting curriculum for his/her students, it appears that too often the teachers are generating and not just adapting curriculum. There is nothing inherently wrong with teachers acting as curriculum developers. However, doing so in isolation can result in one teacher repeating or contradicting what another teacher has taught in a prior class at the same school. Teaching then becomes a game of chance rather than a conscious, intentional choice, and consequently, learning suffers as well.

What Are the Current Trends and Issues in Curriculum Development?

Since few teachers receive fully developed curricula from which to plan their lessons, much curriculum development takes place within the educational setting. The curriculum specialist is arguably the least well-documented human resource in the curriculum development process. Curriculum specialists can also serve as education directors, curriculum coordinators, Judaic studies principals, head teachers,

technology experts, or even volunteer education directors and clergy. For some specialists, working on curriculum is their primary focus and for others it constitutes but a minor responsibility. To a diminishing degree, curriculum specialists exist in central agencies for Jewish education or national organizations. They may be responsible for writing curriculum, working with other educators on designing curriculum, or providing support to teachers as they prepare to implement curriculum. We do not know how many Jewish educational settings have a dedicated curriculum developer, how much time they devote to curriculum development, or their preparation for this role. Furthermore, the overall process of curriculum development is generally opaque, a veritable black box. We can and should strengthen curriculum development throughout the loosely coupled Jewish learning system by building a cadre of educational professionals with curricular training and appropriate status.

Highly developed curricular resources designed for Jewish education do exist. Organizations as diverse as Hadassah, Torah U'Mesorah, JCCAssociation, American Jewish University, Institute of Southern Jewish Life, and many more have published curricula for a wide range of ages and settings. In addition, several of the publishers provide workshops on teaching methodology and consultation on how to use their materials, translating curricular theory to educational practice.

The Internet is having an increasingly profound impact on curriculum development. Whereas specialized personnel or institutional libraries or teacher centers were needed in the past for educators to do research, the Internet provides easy access to contemporary Hebrew and Israeli resources, classical Jewish texts in original languages as well as in translation, and nearly encyclopedic knowledge about Jewish life. The Internet provides the capability for creating curricular resources in synchronous or asynchronous ways around the corner and/or around the world.

The significant advantage of published curricular resources is that they can provide a framework and materials for teachers to use to stimulate learners' thinking and engagement. However, they are not a panacea. Teachers can misuse the textbook as a curriculum rather than a tool to further the educational mission of the learning institution. While many textbooks have teacher guides and some even lay out goals, objectives, and activities or experiences, it is possible that the class is achieving the publisher's goals and not the school's goals. Dorph (2003) has observed two common problems that teachers face when teaching from a textbook or curricular materials. One has to do with confusing the curricular materials or textbook with the subject matter and the other is using the materials as if they were recipes. What Dorph (2003) suggests to remedy these problems is to study the curricular materials by identifying what the material is about, the material's stated purpose, and what teachers and learners must do to reach those goals. Teachers need to adapt curriculum to particular settings, and ideally to individual students.

We selected four examples of curricular initiatives that strive to address the ramified challenges facing Jewish education as we prepare to take stock of the opening decade of the twenty-first century. Each of these initiatives is in some way exemplary and innovative, wide-ranging in its targeted age group, available to a large or Jewishly diverse audience, presented a thoughtful and coherent approach, and is

international in appeal (most of the international examples were originally targeted at US/Canadian audiences):

1. JECEI's (Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative) work with transformation school change that focuses on creating a Constructivist, Reggio-inspired approach to learning and curriculum development
2. The URJ's (Union of Reform Judaism) development of the CHAI Curriculum for elementary- and middle-school-aged children based on the Understanding by Design approach to designing curriculum
3. The work of Tal Am, NETA, and the Proficiency Approach in the teaching of Hebrew to elementary-, middle-, and high-school students based on a variety of theories, research, and standards about foreign language acquisition
4. The work of the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School (FMAMS) in creating a unique approach to curriculum development for adults

We obtained information about the various curricular efforts through a combination of reviewing the materials themselves, researching online applications, reviewing impact studies and other assessments, and consulting with people who designed the curricula.

The presentation of the curricula follows in this order: (1) a synthesis of the key findings of the trends that the curriculum development efforts share in common, (2) a brief description of the curricula, and (3) the unique element(s) that contribute to the conversation about curriculum development.

Synthesis of Key Findings

From analyzing themes in all the curricular initiatives, we identified four significant trends:

1. An emphasis on the interdependency between curricular initiatives and professional development,
2. The dedication of resources to create large-scale curricular efforts,
3. A shift from focusing on teaching to focusing on learning, and
4. A commitment to ongoing assessment of quality in search of excellence.

(1) Interdependency Between Curriculum Initiative and Professional Development

As sophisticated as some of these curricular initiatives are in terms of the materials developed, their success depends on the support to implement the resources optimally in diverse settings. All four of the initiatives strive to integrate the ongoing professional development into their curriculum design, but their effectiveness is notably inconsistent.

The CHAI Curriculum developers provide extensive support materials and a network of educational specialists. They promote the use of webinars and provide workshops on a wide range of educational and Judaic topics that can be adapted for congregational implementation. Professional development for teachers who use the URJ CHAI curriculum is recommended rather than required. This stance is reflective of an ideological commitment to congregational autonomy in Reform Judaism as well as in recognition of limited human and financial resources in attempting to reach in excess of 400 congregational schools. As its research findings indicate (Shevitz, 2009), the already widely used CHAI curriculum would derive additional benefit from more professional development workshops that could be adapted for congregational use.

The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School (FMAMS) uses a combination of professional development and ongoing monitoring and mentoring by the site director to support the curricular materials. The selection of faculty for FMAMS is rather rigorous, a conscious attempt to engage teachers, which begins with a high degree of competence and confidence. This process makes professional development especially challenging since veteran faculty may not be receptive to training.

The Hebrew curricular initiatives depend upon workshops and seminars combined with ongoing mentoring. In some cases, they mandate centralized professional development, which means that the learning environment for the teachers is artificial. Rather than learning in their familiar surroundings, they must adapt the learning and translate it to their "home" setting. In all cases, the curriculum developers recognize the need for professional development. They all make compromises – financial, organizational, and ideological – in order to come to terms with their perceived realities. They each negotiate between the real and the ideal, the possible and the desirable, in an effort to improve the status quo of Jewish learning. They are all works in process and in progress.

(2) Dedication of Extensive Resources

These curricular initiatives are ambitious, extensive, and expensive. The curriculum developers invest thousands of hours and millions of dollars in the hope that their investment will bear dividends in creating loyal institutional clients. These projects were selected for study because they were complex, sophisticated, and far-reaching in terms of educational setting and geography. The costs of the initiatives represented are high in two senses: (1) in developing the curricular resources and ancillary materials and (2) in planning for ongoing professional development for educational leaders and teachers who use the curriculum, thereby translating educational theory into practice. Most of these initiatives rely on foundations, philanthropists, or other sources of funding to support some, if not all of their work. Some have fees for their services (e.g., workshops) or materials. These fees are paid by the educational institution or sometimes through communal institutions like federations or central agencies for Jewish education. The educational institutions in the field share the cost for their paid staff members' time as well as coverage of expenses for attending professional development.

These curricular development efforts place demands on all the partners, and like any chain, each one is only as strong as its weakest link. This process has raised the stakes and expectations of all those institutions involved in serious curriculum development. They are setting a norm for the scale of what teachers and students can expect to be accomplished in Jewish education today. The investment in curriculum development by family foundations, federations, movements, universities, central agencies, congregations, schools, and camps testifies to the growing awareness that Jewish literacy and competency cannot be taken for granted. At stake is nothing less than the future of Judaism and the Jewish people. While past returns do not constitute a guarantee of future dividends, the investment in Jewish learning through curriculum development bodes well for the near term. As curricular efforts need to be constantly updated or new ones initiated to respond to changes in the Jewish community, technology, and society, curricular development costs are likely to redouble.

(3) Shift from Focus on Teaching to Focus on Learning

The shift from focusing on teaching to learning is evident in each of the curricular initiatives. For example, the Proficiency Approach for Hebrew language acquisition begins with trying to identify and then assess what the learner can do. The approach revolves around identifying student outcomes based on adapting established guidelines for Hebrew language acquisition (ACTFL), designing curriculum to achieve these outcomes, responding to learners' needs and learning styles, and monitoring and assessing students' success.

The CHAI Curriculum also brings students' outcomes to the forefront of its curriculum design, most explicitly in the lesson component entitled "evidence of understanding" when the teacher seeks to determine not what s/he taught, but rather what students learned. The CHAI Curriculum's use of backward mapping in an attempt to identify the big questions and ideas related to Jewish life that the learners should acquire is another strong example. This approach is counter-cultural for congregational schools in two respects: (1) its insistence on focusing on learner outcomes and (2) its demand to touch on one's understanding of and commitment to Jewish life rather than just information transmission and retention. Learning experiences to assess students' acquisition of concepts and questions are included in the curricular materials in an effort to focus on enabling the students to make meaning of what they are learning.

The whole concept of emergent or negotiated curriculum in the Reggio-inspired Jewish early childhood schools where the learner is a partner in providing direction to the curriculum is a learner-centric approach. Curricular choices are informed if not made based on these young children's interests and ideas. Teachers need to hone techniques like active listening and observation of children, documenting their learning in order to effectively carry out this curricular approach. Furthermore, central to constructivism is the meaning and significance that the learner associates with an educational experience, what s/he learns from it, rather than some objective or fixed meaning from an outside source.

While the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School does not explicitly state desired outcomes for its learners, graduation is based on "outputs," i.e., attendance at 2 years of sessions. The curriculum is an interactive process among learner, text, and instructor where learners interpret text, share their experiences, and raise questions all in their exploration of Jewish life. This addresses an all too prevalent pattern in adult Jewish learning where lecturing peppered by a question or two, but not real dialogue, is the dominant instructional approach, an approach that emphasizes teaching over learning.

The current focus on the learner among these curricular examples may be a corrective to prior teacher-centered curricular approaches. The distance between teacher and learner has been diminished, if not entirely eliminated. The teacher is "*ahad ha'am*," one of the people. The teacher is a learner as well as a facilitator, researcher, listener, and guide; perhaps more so than an instructor or knower of all answers. This curricular attitude involves an attempt to humanize and personalize education. It is predicated on the non-trivial reality that in an age of choice, there must be learners in order for there to be learning.

(4) A Commitment to Ongoing Assessment in the Pursuit of Excellence

Finally, all of these curricular efforts are attempts to raise quality, expectations, and standards in the pursuit of excellence in Jewish education. They all share some measure of ongoing internal and external evaluation of their effectiveness. These curricular efforts involve field-testing in educational settings with the assistance of teachers and directors. They have advisory committees that provide input in a variety of ways. Some undergo evaluation including by hired outside evaluators. These organizations use evaluation, whether it is feedback from teachers piloting portions of the curriculum or evaluators sharing their recommendations. All these sources of information are intentional parts of the curriculum development process and have the benefit of helping improve the design and delivery of the curricular effort.

Excellence in education is an elusive pursuit, a moving target that requires continuous monitoring – challenging operative assumptions, testing hypotheses, interpreting findings, and assessing experiences. Each of the curricular initiatives has champions and detractors, successes and failures. Each of them can claim justifiably to be of quality. They represent serious, longitudinal efforts to improve the status quo in Jewish learning.

JECEI's School Transformation Process and Constructivism

JECEI (Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative) is a national organization committed to developing schools of excellence for children and their parents through a school-wide 3–4-year intensive holistic transformation process. Consultants, retreats, readings, and accreditation standards all play an important role in fostering these Constructivist schools of excellence. While not solely a process of curriculum development, JECEI's work brings three important concepts to the forefront: (a) the entire school as part of the curriculum of the learning experience, (b) emergent or

negotiated curriculum, and (c) project learning and documentation. At the end of this section, the key challenges of this curricular approach are shared.

JECEI, like other Jewish early childhood schools, has adopted a constructivist approach to learning informed by the work of theorists like Piaget (1967), Vygotsky (1978), and Dewey (1938). Constructivism is “the process by which a [person] constructs a mental explanation for her experience or perception” (Mooney, 2000, p. 97). Knowledge is socially constructed in the ongoing interaction between child and teacher. Constructivism is associated with active learning approaches emphasizing the importance of experience in generating knowledge, children learning from one another, the role of play, learning through inquiry, scaffolding learning, and much more. JECEI has focused on combining the constructivist philosophy of the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, with big Jewish ideas and values and change theory.

The Entire School as Part of the Learning Experience

Among Jewish early childhood educators who have become “Reggio inspired,” a key idea is that the entire school experience and environment are all parts of the curriculum designed to model ideas and values and to facilitate learning and community building among children, parents, teachers, and others. The environment is often referred to as the “third teacher” as children learn through what surrounds them in terms of the social, psychological, and physical environment. Many JECEI schools have redesigned a physical space so that parents and children can spend time with one another, reflecting on the importance of creating a learning community among families, not just children. In one JECEI school, this led to moving walls, adding a fish tank and benches, so that parents could spend time talking to one another, with their children reading books or transitioning to the next part of their day, and preparing for Shabbat through story, song, and blessings. The entire school environment is carefully, intentionally, and aesthetically organized, inviting interaction and bringing the school’s vision to the learning experience for all.

Emergent or Negotiated Curriculum

The approach to curriculum used in Reggio-inspired schools is often called “emergent curriculum,” suggestive of the unfolding way in which the curriculum develops, twists, and turns, based on the children’s inquiry. The word “emergent” does not capture the thoughtful planning that the teachers engage in to create an environment and experiences that foster this type of active learning. Carlina Rinaldi, an important educator and philosopher of the Reggio approach, contrasts *progettazione* with *programmazione*, characterized as predefined curriculum and isolated programs. For Rinaldi, *progettazione* implies a “more global and flexible approach in which initial hypotheses are made [by educators] about classroom work (as well as about staff development and relationships with parents), but are subject to modifications and changes of direction as the actual work progresses (Rinaldi, 2006, p. xi).”

Teachers plan carefully and make curricular choices, but those choices remain open, fluid, and responsive to the children, parents, and community interests and issues, as well as the teacher's own observations and assessment of the learning experience. Children's exploration, interests, and ideas contribute to the direction that the curriculum takes. Teachers are researchers hypothesizing about children's development, observing and documenting children's learning as part of the curricular process that contributes to determining the direction in which to go. The Reggio approach to curriculum development balances being reactive and responsive with being proactive, thoughtful, and structured.

How does *progettazione* occur? Building on an example from a JECEI school, in a class of 4-year-olds, the children did different blessings for different types of food – those that come from trees, the ground, or vines. The children became interested in how new plants grow from the seeds of these different fruits and vegetables. They brought in different foods with seeds or pits like apples, peaches, avocados, and grapes to see how they grow. An important part of this exploration is through dialogue; the thinking, questioning, and responding. What makes these foods so different that we have different blessings? What is needed to create an environment for the seeds or pits to grow? Why do some thrive while the others do not? How do God and human beings partner in creation together? What does the experience of trying to grow these fruits and vegetables make us realize about why we thank and praise God?

Project Learning and Documentation

Two tools for curriculum development and implementation characterize Reggio schools and their inspired Jewish versions in North America: project learning and documentation. Projects are educational investigations often done in small groups that occur over an extended period of time, even as long as the entire school year. These investigations can start with hypothesizing about children's learning, identifying a key theme or phenomenon, responding to children's interests, or reacting to some incident. The centrality of exploration and inquiry is evidenced in the project work that occurs throughout all JECEI schools. In one school, a provocation of teachers putting out film in canisters led to the children taking pictures of the outdoors, to a trip to the library to explore books of artists' expressions of flowers in the outdoors, and to the children carefully selecting water colors to paint their own exquisite flowers. The teachers shared not just the product of the flowers, but more significantly the representation of how the learning emerged and what they learned capturing the children's ideas and reactions in words and photographs.

JECEI schools commonly have documentation of the many examples of the *progettazione* process, such as daily or weekly journals for each classroom, journals of each child's experience – some that "travel" with the child for the length of their time in the school, and panels of a project's evolution. Documentation incorporates the children's voices and perspectives. These various forms of documentation are vehicles for not just sharing the learning process with parents, but more significantly as

a tool for the children and teachers to use to reflect on their ideas and feelings to help set the direction for where they might extend the learning.

Challenges

Being Reggio-inspired has produced several challenges for curriculum development in JECEI schools. Curriculum needs to be developed to a large extent by each school, in each classroom, and each year in response to the cultural, social, collective, and individual values, hopes, ideals, and interests of the children, parents, and educators. How curricular ideas can be shared from school to school to stimulate thinking and collaborating on this approach in a Jewish setting remains a challenge. Teachers need to be knowledgeable about both the educational strategy and Judaism. To achieve this level of quality requires a serious commitment to professional development; this often translates into time and money, which are often both at a premium. JECEI schools must dedicate extensive time for educators to learn and plan. The holistic nature of the Reggio philosophy and approach, viewing the entire school culture as part of the learning experience, and other factors make this a complex form of curriculum development.

Adopting a Curriculum Approach

The URJ CHAI Curriculum and Understanding by Design (UBD)

The CHAI Curriculum was created to strengthen congregational education. Rabbi Eric Yoffie, President of the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ), formally launched the CHAI Curriculum at his Biennial address in December 2001. Lamenting that the congregational school is perceived by so many as failing, he explained why the URJ should invest resources in a curriculum:

> When the synagogue nurtures its school and embraces its children, the children will learn and the school will thrive. . . . religious school serves, by far, the largest number of children for the longest period of time. It is the key that opens the door to the grand adventure of Jewish learning and Jewish life. And we will not rest until our schools are a place where our children hear God's voice and see Torah as a tree of life.

In its 10th year (2009–2010), the CHAI Curriculum has an extensive reach. Approximately 65,000 students in grades 1–7 in the nearly 800 URJ-affiliated congregations with supplementary religious/Hebrew schools learn from CHAI lessons.

The CHAI Curriculum focuses on increasing the knowledge and skills of Reform Jews in the areas of torah, *avodah* (worship), and *gemilut chasidim* (deeds of loving kindness) despite the limited time spent in congregational schooling. The curriculum is a bold move to bring serious text study to elementary- and middle-school-aged liberal Jews. Rather than focus on information, it focuses on meaning, on the big questions and ideas that Jews have pondered throughout the ages.

One challenge in developing curriculum is in finding a format, an approach that not only provides a framework for writing and sharing a curriculum plan, but also captures the purpose of what a Jewish educational institution is trying to accomplish. For this reason, the URJ adopted a curricular approach used in general education, Understanding by Design (UBD), by Wiggins and McTighe that parallels its goals. UBD aims to combine active learning, "hands on" with "minds on" learning that is meaningful, purposeful, and guided by a big idea (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998, p. 21). UBD unfolds in three stages by answering the following questions:

Stage 1: What is worthy and requiring of understanding?
Stage 2: What is evidence of understanding?
Stage 3: What learning experiences and teaching promote understanding, interest, and excellence? (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998, p. 18)

UBD provides a structured format that all educators could learn and follow that is well suited to promoting questioning, meaning making, and engagement with and connection to Jewish life.

In its adaptation of UBD, the following example shows how the URJ has adapted the UBD process. This example presents the elements used in the lesson plans for each 1-hour session:

- Introduction – provides Judaic background for the session focus.
- Enduring Understanding – key ideas are the same for all the lessons within each of the three sections (Torah, *Avodah*, and *G'milut Chasidim*) – e.g., Torah is real to our daily lives: it goes with us wherever we are.
- Essential Questions – these are the big questions that the student should be able to answer to show that they have acquired the enduring understanding – e.g., What does the Torah have to say to me and my world?
- Questions to Be Answered – these are more specific to the actual session content focus, e.g., *M'gilat Rut*/Book of Ruth: Mining the Text for Meaning – What is my own assessment of the meaning of the Book of Ruth.
- Evidence of Understanding – the way in which students will be assessed to make certain that they have gained knowledge of the enduring understanding, essential questions, and questions to be answered. The two sessions on the Book of Ruth included the students creating a Ruth Movie Storyboard reflecting their viewpoint about the meaning of the story.
- Lesson Overview – parts of the lesson.
- Materials Needed – includes any books, pages from student supplement, and supplies.
- Readings: Resources for Teachers – listing of books related to the topical focus.
- Lesson Vocabulary – key terms in either Hebrew or English.
- Lesson Plan – with times designated, includes set induction, learning activities, and conclusion; this section incorporates the way(s) in which the students' understanding will be assessed.

The CHAI Curriculum uses a full range of Jewish texts as a key component of the educational experience that engages the student in exploring Jewish life. It places the student in dialogue with Jewish tradition and Reform Judaism in a deep and dynamic way.

Teaching Hebrew

Hebrew is one subject that is the focus of manifold curricular efforts for all types of Jewish learning environments. That so many curriculum efforts exist probably has to do with the fact that there is a certain sequential, skill-based nature to learning a language that transcends ideological setting. Rather than develop their own Hebrew curriculum from scratch, most teachers seek outside expertise. That Hebrew is a shared interest among such a large number of Jewish educational settings contributes to an economic reality that encourages publishers or organizations to capitalize on the financial potential and foundations to invest resources in this area.

Of special interest are the curricula that have emerged for day schools to teach Hebrew as a communicative language. These include Tal Am/Tal Sela, NETA, the Proficiency Approach, and Haverim B'Ivrit as well as others. These Hebrew programs parallel the growth in day schools including the upsurge in Jewish day high schools.

A significant distinctive characteristic of these Hebrew programs is that the curricula are designed based on research and theories about second language acquisition and learning. Most of them are designed with the assistance of scholars who are associated with a university. Applying research and theories and tapping into this expertise have led to comprehensive and sophisticated approaches to curriculum development.

Tal Sela/Tal Am, for grades 1–6, is used in approximately 355 schools on six continents reaching out to an estimated 27,000 students. Its many materials for teachers and students balance communicative language and Jewish living by focusing on religious and cultural content like the Jewish year, prayer, Torah, and Israel. This program reflects the work done in second language acquisition and heritage language. In particular, Tal Am is influenced by findings from brain research that led to the Total Physical Response (TPR) approach reflected in the songs, movement, and other learning strategies that use the five senses.

NETA, designed for grades 7–12, is used in approximately 90 day schools on four continents reaching out to approximately 13,000 students. NETA has thematic-based materials for teachers and students presented from three perspectives: Jewish tradition, modern Israeli culture, and general world knowledge, e.g., science, math, and literature. The curricular themes are selected based on their interest to teenagers ranging from computers, sports, friendship, and freedom. The NETA curriculum was created by Hebrew language curriculum specialists from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and administered by Hebrew College in Boston (Schachter & Ofek, 2008). One of the curriculum specialists from Hebrew University spent 5 years

in Boston, USA, working with teachers, Hebrew or Judaic curriculum specialists, mentors, and professors connecting theory with practice as it unfolds in the field. Credit-bearing courses to prepare educators to use the NETA curriculum are offered for which participants, many of whom are working toward a bachelor's or master's degree in Judaic studies or Jewish education.

The Proficiency Approach is based on the American Council in Teaching Foreign Language (ACTFL) standards for modern language acquisition defining content standards, what students should know and be able to do (Schachter & Ofek, 2008, p. 279). The development of international standards for Hebrew language acquisition as measured against native speakers was central to launching the Proficiency Approach in Jewish day schools. A Brandeis University professor associated with the Middlebury Summer Language Schools spearheaded this effort. While initially focused on high school and college students, the ACTFL standards and Proficiency Approach are being adapted to classrooms of varying ages around the world. Schools receive assistance so that teachers within 3 years create a curriculum and materials for the school. The curriculum focuses on students gaining active knowledge of Hebrew through the four parts of communicative language – speaking, listening, reading, and writing – with content adapted to the school's vision and learners' interests.

Curriculum in Adult Jewish Education: The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School

Does curriculum development look the same for adult learners as for children? A paucity of information about curriculum is found in the field of adult education. Part of this situation is explicable by noting that adult education is a field of interest to educators from a wide variety of "content areas," e.g., science, the humanities, medicine, law, and education. In addition, teachers or facilitators of adult learning are often viewed as content experts at a high level; leading to a problematic inference that because the content is the primary focus, adult educators do not need help designing learning experiences. Curriculum development is a topic that needs to be considered in adult Jewish education as part of the conversation of engaging Jewish adults in lifelong Jewish learning.

The Florence Melton Adult Mini-Schools (FMAMS) present a unique approach to curriculum development in two respects: first, by their focus on creating a school culture and second, in the approach taken in designing the actual materials for the instructors. The FMAMS school culture is carefully crafted to shape and augment the learning experience wherever it is located throughout the world. The FMAMS operates as a franchise, setting standards or expectations for elements that are part of the school culture while incorporating the local communities' and participants' needs and interests. Whether or not the school culture is considered the content of the curriculum, it does send messages that affect the learning. The entire set-up of the school, from serving refreshments to the role of the site director, is organized to convey that adult Jewish learning is sophisticated, social, valuable, and most

importantly, about Jewish learning and living. The core elements that are part of this culture are articulated to some degree in the contract with its partners and described fully in a handbook given to FMAMS site directors. Directors participate in seminars and receive ongoing support from FMAMS staff in implementing this culture.

The FMAMS is located in numerous countries throughout the world with a large concentration of learners spread throughout the United States. The curriculum is the same for all sites in the Diaspora. Staff members at Hebrew University's Melton Centre write the curriculum with input from directors and learners from around the world. It has undergone several major revisions. The purpose of the FMAMS school is to foster the acquisition of Jewish literacy in an open, trans-denominational, intellectually stimulating learning environment. The curriculum is divided into four courses, each consisting of 30 one-hour sessions. Participants take the full complement of four courses over a 2-year period. The four courses are Rhythms of Jewish Living, Purposes of Jewish Living, Ethics of Jewish Living, and Dramas of Jewish Living Throughout the Ages. Each session has a focus related to the overall theme; e.g., Purposes of Jewish Living has sessions on God, creation, mitzvot, sin, and miracles.

The FMAMS curriculum is designed to "guarantee" a consistent level of quality for the adult learner. The curricular materials are intended to make it possible to use a range of local instructors, such as clergy, Jewish educators, Judaic study academics, professionals in other fields with expertise in a Jewish-related topic, like lawyers or medical personnel, and "learned" individuals.

The instructor receives a thick curriculum guide and the learners receive the texts, including both primary and secondary sources. The curriculum guide contains the following sections for each session:

- Introduction – an overview of the big ideas presented
- Summary of Texts – listing of the texts, both primary and secondary sources included
- Texts and Analyses – the curriculum writer provides analysis of the texts often quoting other commentators or experts, elaborating on a proof text, or providing insight into a word
- Summary of Key Ideas – pulls together the analysis back in terms of the big ideas
- Suggestions for Conducting the Lesson – this provides a step-by-step outline from "set induction" through "closure"; it includes educational experiences led by the faculty member as well as *hevruta* (study in dyads); questions
- Key Terms – definitions of the main terms from a session
- Biographies – when attributed or authored texts are listed, a brief biography of the person is often included, e.g., Maimonides, Heschel
- Suggested Readings – these are additional references that are helpful for preparing a session

This curriculum guide is particularly well suited for the instructor to adapt the materials. The idea is that the curriculum guide provides a common set of texts that the instructors study to prepare for the session. The texts in the curriculum guide are

referred to as "the *hevruta* partner" of the instructor, suggestive of the dialogue between the text and the teacher that occurs prior to that with the learners. These texts provide an opportunity for professional learning and a framework for the session, but this system allows the instructor to make choices about which texts to concentrate on and bring in their knowledge and interests, as well as those of the adult learners, into the conversation. The instructor's adaptation of the curriculum is shared with the learners in the form of a 1–2-page "road map" that identifies key terms, the texts the instructor is focusing on, and key questions both for the entire class to concentrate on and to inform small group *hevruta* style interaction.

This format for curricular materials provided to the instructor has many advantages. The focus on texts leads much more to discussion and active engagement of the learners rather than a lecture. It provides a methodology that is appropriate and enticing to adult learners. As the curriculum guide states, the hope is to "discover ideas and messages that are relevant and meaningful to them [the learners]" (Melton, p. xv). It presents a curriculum with scope and sequence. It addresses a pattern in some adult education offerings where instructors seem ill prepared and offerings seem to wander rather than have a progression and purpose. Furthermore, the preparation of the road map – whether it is copied from the curriculum guide, borrowed from another example on the website, or in most cases, prepared by the instructor – contributes to assuring a high-level session.

What Curricular Challenges Loom over the Jewish Educational Horizon?

Curriculum development is a dynamic, organic, and perpetual process. A curriculum is more than a document. Curriculum grows and adapts to address the needs of learners and teachers, or else it becomes irrelevant and obsolete. A thoughtful plan, even when it is emergent or negotiated, is part of a quality learning experience; curriculum development is fundamentally about this interaction among learner, instructor, and text. As the world changes socially and technologically, and as the vision and purpose of institutions change, so too must new curricula be developed and new teaching and learning processes initiated.

The landscape of Jewish organizations offering Jewish education is growing increasingly diverse, and therefore, the definition of a Jewish educator is expanding too. All of these educators, those working in schools and camps, JCCs, congregations, and central agencies for Jewish education, as well as those working in the alternative or "independent" organizations and programmatic initiatives that are becoming more and more typical of Jewish life, must engage in curriculum development whether they start from scratch or adapt a "prepared" curriculum for their learning experience. Therefore, educational leaders need expertise in curriculum development or at least curriculum adaptation. Even when a teacher is given a comprehensive curriculum with teacher's guide and student resources, the teacher is a translator – adapting the generic materials to a specific case, i.e., to fit the

educational institution's vision, the learners' needs – differentiated learning, and the teacher's knowledge and skills.

Despite the number of curricular efforts that exist, an institution or organization devoted to raising the quality of curriculum development by working with educators on the curricular process remains a desideratum. Jewish education would benefit from an organization that is devoted to supporting curriculum development in its many ways, helping to set the trends for thinking and implementation about curriculum design in a technologically informed environment. Wertheimer (2009) makes a similar recommendation about the need for a resource to aid schools in the curricular process.

The Jewish Education Center of Cleveland (JECC) provides comprehensive support for curriculum development by offering local educational settings the opportunity to undertake a 3-year curriculum planning and implementation process, seminars on curriculum development – most noticeably Understanding by Design, and curriculum lesson and unit planning assistance for local educators. Complementing this is the JECC's Retreat Institute which assists schools in designing retreats including the planned learning experiences. These resources are limited for the most part to the Cleveland, OH area, but they may be worthy of further diffusion. Some programs, such as the Mandel Teacher Educator Institute (MTEI), address curricular issues as part of their methodology. While academic programs in Jewish education include courses in curriculum, these offerings are generally targeted for their degree students and provide a foundation in curriculum development, rather than a concentration in the field. Curriculum development is always a work in process; at its best, curriculum development is also a work in progress.

Final Note: A Research Agenda for Curriculum Development

Additional research could identify models or strategies for curriculum development and implementation in Jewish educational settings. How is curriculum developed or adapted? Who is doing the curriculum development? How do educators go about adapting curricular materials for use in their classrooms? What is the role of professional development in the curriculum development process? The field would benefit from cross-curricular studies and a meta-analysis that leads to theory or model building. Part of this could include looking at the personnel who support the curricular process – Who are they? What training do they have? What roles do they serve?

It may be that curricular development efforts are being evaluated more rigorously, often at the behest of a funding partner. However, often these assessments are proprietary. Research should make these evaluations part of the public domain so that their impact can be magnified. Knowledge is more powerful when it is shared, and we have yet to harness the potential of Jewish educational assessment – of individuals, institutions, and curricular resources. The ultimate beneficiaries of such collaborative evaluation would be the learners themselves and perhaps this awareness will provide the impetus for changing the status quo. Nearly 2,000 years have elapsed since Judah ben Tema established an ambitious array of goals for a lifetime of Jewish learning experiences in the *mishnah*. We are still striving to develop the curricular

resources that will help to nurture and support the Jews who are committed to a lifetime of Jewish learning.

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Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools: The Search for Coherence

Mitchel Malkus

Introduction

Since the French Revolution, when Jews gained rights through individual citizenship rather than by communal affiliation, both elite and common Jews began to rethink their relationship to the secular world. The philosophical discourse concerning the role of the Jew in general society fostered an intellectual climate open to an integrated curricular response in the teaching of Jewish and general studies in Jewish schools. Weisel (1782), an advocate for Jewish cultural and ideological change during the Enlightenment, was the first modern Jewish thinker to address the role of secular studies and their relationship to Jewish learning in the curriculum of a Jewish school. While he does not call for "curriculum integration," in his *Divrei Shalom V'emet* (see Mendes-Flohr & Reinharz, 1980, p. 63), Weisel writes that Jewish schools should teach both *Torat Ha-adam* (general wisdom) and *Torat Ha-shem* (Jewish wisdom). He argues that *Torat Ha-adam*, which existed before the Torah was given, represents knowledge, morals, and behaviors needed for participation in the greater society. In this sense, it is a prerequisite for life and must be included in the Jewish school curriculum.

Writing almost three centuries later, Sarna (1998), suggests that Jewish day schools serve as the "primary setting where American Jews confront the most fundamental question of Jewish life: how to live in two worlds at once, how to be both American and Jewish, part of the larger society and apart from it" (p. 9). While Weisel writes with a clear ideological agenda and Sarna offers a historian's viewpoint, their shared perspective on similar concerns attests both to the significance of the topic and the still unresolved nature of how Jews may live within and embrace democratic, open societies while maintaining their distinct identity. Wertheimer (1999), among others, views the recent growth of liberal Jewish day schools in North America as a sign that Jews are reassessing what it means to be Jewish at the start of the twenty-first century.

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Jewish schools in the United Kingdom have a long history of addressing both religious and secular studies. Pre-dating even Weisel, the first Jewish schools established in the mid-1600s taught mathematics, and English reading and writing, in addition to Jewish religious studies (Black, 1998). This dual curriculum was due to the need for Jewish immigrants to integrate socially into British society after being readmitted to England in 1656.

Today, most non-Orthodox and many modern Orthodox day schools subscribe to a curricular approach that attempts to integrate Jewish and general studies. This approach is rooted in a distinct worldview. Day school conferences and institutes, workshops, and symposia devote significant time to exploring the theoretical groundings of and practical strategies for implementing integrated curriculum. Schools that engage in this curricular approach are concerned equally with their students' Jewish identity development and their relationship to the larger world in which they live. The literature on curriculum integration reveals that there have always been diverse understandings of how the integration of Jewish and general studies is defined (see Malkus, 2002; Solomon, 1978; Zeldin, 1992).

This chapter begins with a review of the theoretical basis for curriculum integration and a presentation of the different definitions of the term within Jewish schools. It then explores how curriculum integration is viewed within a broader context, since the term integration was borrowed from the early-twentieth century progressive education movement. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the scholastic factors that enable integration to occur and those that mitigate against its implementation. That section of the chapter will present examples from both Jewish and general education literature.

A Theoretical Review of Curriculum Integration

While the ultra-Orthodox have always chosen separate education for their children, most of American Jewry in the twentieth century opted for public school as the vehicle for rapid enculturation. This was the case even with some of the leaders and most influential personalities within the field of Jewish education. Samson Benderly and his followers placed Jewish education within the *talmud torah*, those community schools that met in the afternoons and on Sundays. Benderly was a passionate advocate of public education and ascribed to the "Protestant model" of education. He believed that

> morality, universal values, patriotism, civics, and critical skills should all be taught in state-funded public schools to a mixed body of religiously diverse students, leaving only the fine points of religious doctrine and practice to be mastered by members of each faith in separate denominationally sponsored supplementary schools. (Sarna, 1998, p. 11)

However, a large number of Jews became convinced that Jewish identity in contemporary society was not automatic and realized that students needed a certain type of education to nurture their Jewish identity. The *talmud torah*, or supplementary schools, as they came be to be known, did not adequately embrace the complexity of Jewish life in open, democratic societies and, therefore, new all-day Jewish

schools were established. Within this socio-historical context, Jewish day schools negotiated the relationship of American Jewish education to American Jewish life. In the mid-1950s, Greenberg (1957) wrote that an integrated education was essential to the future vitality of Judaism within a modern society:

> America not only permits but encourages its citizens to integrate their personal lives and their lives as distinguishable groups in American society around a religion... to fulfill this historically unprecedented task (the development of a Jewish version of American civilization) we need the help of the day school. (pp. 7 and 10).

While he writes within an American context, and it may be said that the challenges in other countries have been different, Greenberg grapples with the same issue that confronted Weisel, Sarna, and all Jewish educators who take modernity seriously.

A different historical development is evident in the growth, decline, and current revival of Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom. Jewish schools were initially established when Jews were readmitted to England after expulsion and when, later, Jews and other minority groups found themselves excluded from the Church of England schools because of the religious education that these schools required of their students. In these cases, the curriculum in Jewish schools was developed to either assist students with integrating into the social fabric of the United Kingdom or maintain students' Jewish heritage because of the compulsory study of Christianity and the New Testament in state schools (Miller, 2001). Today, Jewish day schools in the United Kingdom have experienced a resurgence, due in strong part to the creation of a multi-cultural society that supports ethnic distinction (Alderman, 1999). As Miller (2001) suggests, this changing historical context has also shaped the integrated nature of curricula in Jewish day schools.

Solomon (1978, 1979) was the first to conduct research into the definitional issues that surround curriculum integration within the context of a Jewish day school. Solomon reviews much of the literature on integration and through the use of literary and linguistic analysis identifies the sacred/secular dilemma, the structure of religious and general knowledge, and the objectives of the day school as the three major "educational and philosophical issues which must be confronted within the process of building an integrated program" (p. 13). At the same time, Lukinsky (1978) developed a typology to identify some of the existing practices within Jewish schools. He began with the "rejectionist" approach that views Western culture as at best a necessary evil and as something that must remain separate from Judaic studies and classes. He labeled a second type as the "*Torah im derekh eretz*" (Torah with the way of the land)[1] approach. In schools that ascribe to this philosophy, Lukinsky observed that the Jew's entry into the secular world is affirmed but always viewed through a Jewish lens. Another point in his classification was the "correlation" model where the Jewish curriculum is offered as an answer to the challenges of the outside world. Lukinsky concluded by suggesting a "mutual affirmation model,"

[1]A philosophy of Orthodox Judaism articulates by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888), which formalizes a relationship between traditionally observant Judaism and the modern world.

where Jewish and general studies share a mutual relationship and have the ability to transform one another.

Similarly, Zeldin (1992) articulates an understanding of curriculum integration that is based on the relationship between Judaism and what he titles the "curriculum of modernity." He writes,

> [T]o clarify our understanding, we can look at the question to which integration is a response: How can the day school prepare children to live as Jews in a modern, liberal, democratic society? Living as Jews would require that children come to understand Judaism as a system of beliefs and practices that reflects a common Jewish experience. This broad understanding of Judaism would then need to be integrated into what children learn to prepare them for life in a modern, democratic society, what we might call the "curriculum of modernity": science, technology, social studies, language arts, and so on. (p. 13)

Zeldin presents four curricular approaches to meet the challenge of integration in Jewish day schools: *parallel* (where students study related topics in different classes with different teachers at the same time), *contextualizing* (where what students study in one discipline is placed within the context of knowledge, skills, or values from another area), *integrated* (where the instructor makes explicit connections between Judaism and the general studies curriculum), and *integrating* (where the instructor aims to assist students in discovering for themselves the relationships between Judaism and the curriculum of modernity). Drawing upon this work, Zeldin (1994) proposes that educators use the concept of "interaction" as opposed to "integration." The very idea of integration, Zeldin argues, carries with it the danger that as we strive to make Judaism warm and comfortable, we "will also make Judaism irrelevant" (p. 5). The concept of interaction holds the promise of presenting Judaism as a unique and distinct way of viewing the world that may be harmonious with the modern world, but which also often challenges the assumptions of modern society. Understood this way, curriculum based on the idea of interaction is "educationally potent because . . . [it] create[s] the disequilibrium that is the catalyst for learning" (Zeldin, 1994, p. 9).

Building on Zeldin's writings, Ellenson (2008) explores the historical context of the shift from integration to interaction through a study of "the contemporary sociological and intellectual currents that have caused a philosophical notion of 'interaction' between minority and majority cultures to emerge" in the post-modern world (p. 246). Ellenson suggests that this interaction model might be applied to classroom situations in liberal Jewish day schools that confront the challenge of educating students to address the complex diversity of the North American world.

Pomson (2001) suggests that curriculum integration may exist on a spectrum of different models. He believes that schools committed to an integrative ideal might benefit from a re-conceptualization of integration, grounded in constructivist notions of teaching and learning. He argues that most Jewish day schools sit somewhere between complete integration and a rejection of the approach. As our contemporary knowledge of teaching and learning focuses on how students create meaning, educators in Jewish schools have an opportunity to re-evaluate an integrated approach to curriculum based on fostering an environment where students have opportunities to actively make individual meaning out of the dual curriculum.

While the term integration is widely used in day school promotional materials, its definitions have often been ambiguous and diverse. In previous research (Malkus, 2001), I identified no fewer than ten different uses of the term as it is presented in schools. Schools that emphasize this approach in their curriculum might be referring, for example, to the relationship between general and Judaic content, the integration of academic skills across the curriculum, the development of dual identities in their students, the way values are taught throughout the school, and how technology and the arts are represented across the different subject areas. One or more of these expressions of "integration" is commonly used in schools, often within the same institution. Scheindlin (2008) has added to this list in arguing for the integration of cognition and emotion within the student as an aspect of moral and spiritual education.

Curriculum integration in Jewish education is not without its critics. Reflecting on his experience at the Rabbi Jacob Joseph School of the 1930s, Scheffler (1995) discusses how the school ignored the potential integration between the general and the Jewish:

> The school said nothing about these oppositions, offered no reconciliations or philosophical rationalizations. It simply incorporated these two worlds within itself and, by offering them both to us as our daily fare, it built them both into our consciousness, bequeathing to us at the same time the ragged boundaries and the gnawing conflicts between them.
>
> Neither the school nor its faculties had any philosophy to offer capable of resolving the two-world tensions they inculcated. They had only the conviction that both worlds were vital. To choose one over the other would be worse than holding on, however uncomfortably, to both. So they left to us the task of working out in the future how to manage what they themselves could not control or foresee. They educated us by juxtaposing the incongruous realms rather than smoothing out the incongruities or offering phony reconciliations. (pp. 85–86)

The bifurcated nature of his early education did not, however, prevent Scheffler from seeking a synthesis between the two cultures he valued equally. He explains that while his teachers, transplanted from the religious culture of the old world, were charged with the task of "transporting the precious plant to new shores," his and future generations were left to synthesize the two worlds they had inherited (p. 172).

More recently, Lehmann (2008) suggests that different subject areas within the school curriculum may be predicated on different models of teaching and learning. Lehmann's study of a modern Orthodox high school reveals that in that context, English instruction was grounded in a discourse of autonomy, while *Ḥumash* was situated within a discourse of authority. Although similar studies of non-Orthodox settings have not been conducted, this critique does call into question many of the assumptions upon which curriculum integration has been predicated in Jewish schools.

Curriculum Integration Within General Education

In general education, the concept of "integration" has its roots in the educational reform efforts of the early-twentieth century that questioned a subject-centered

approach to curriculum. In his works, *The School and Society* (1915/1990b) and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902/1990a), Dewey argues for creating curricula that unify students' life experiences with wider social issues. He claims that education "is a process of living and not a preparation for future living" (Dewey, 1992, p. 364). Dewey was primarily concerned with fostering the school's role in promoting democracy in a society of disparate immigrant groups. Drawing on the work of Dewey and the progressive movement in education, Smith (1921), at the time a student at Columbia University's Teachers College, became the first educator to use the word "integration" as she referred to an instructional approach that would facilitate learning on both the theoretical and practical levels using Kilpatrick's "Project Method."

Hopkins (1935, 1941) writings helped to shape the concept of integration in education. He defines integration as a curriculum "organized around immediate, abiding interests and assured future needs of the learner, utilizing materials selected from all areas of the social heritage regardless of subject division" (quoted in Beane, 1997, p. 27). He goes on to emphasize problem-based learning and collaboration between students and teachers as fundamental to the idea of integration. In all of his writing, Hopkins points out that what distinguishes integration from multidisciplinary approaches is the organizing philosophy of each. Multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary curriculum are both rooted in the mastery of subject matter, while integrated approaches emphasize the personal and social as the primary organizing principles.

The Russian launch of the *Sputnik* satellite in 1957 was an unprecedented event that triggered, by way of reaction, an emphasis in American schools on technical subjects and the structure of disciplines. Bruner's work, *The Process of Education* (1963), emphasized the importance of the "disciplines of knowledge"; he endorsed subject-specific study. As a result of his work, the field of general education shifted away from curricular integration. During the 1980s, most education thinkers and curriculum scholars focused on the analysis of cultural and economic politics in making decisions about content and approach.

Since the 1990s, however, integrated curriculum has returned as a focal point of analysis and explanation. Jacobs (1989) suggests that the exponential growth of knowledge in the last half of the twentieth century, the fragmented nature of school schedules, and the search for relevance in educational programs have all contributed to the emergence of "interdisciplinary" curricula and programs as a primary concern in schools. She defines interdisciplinary as "a knowledge view and curriculum approach that consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, problem, topic, or experience" (Jacobs, 1989, p. 8). Likewise, Beane (1997) advocates that schools move toward a "curriculum design theory that is concerned with enhancing the possibilities for personal and social integration through the organization of curriculum around significant problems and issues, collaboratively identified by educators and young people, without regard for subject-area lines" (p. 19).

The renewed movement to develop curriculum integration in general education has been criticized by supporters of the disciplines of knowledge. Critics of

integrated curriculum argue that the disciplines of knowledge are weakened when schools move away from a subject-separate approach (see Bloom, 1987). Advocates of curriculum integration have responded by pointing out that the subject-separate approach in schools represents a hardening of categories that does not exist naturally in the disciplines of knowledge (Klein, 1990). Disciplines, they argue, are fluid at the edges and often combine with other disciplines. Instead of being opposed to the disciplines of knowledge, Beane (1995) suggests that curriculum integration maintains the integrity of individual subjects while shifting their function from "ends" to "means" within education.

Implementing Curriculum Integration in Jewish Day Schools

The extensive work on curriculum integration in general education provides a background for understanding how this approach is used within the context of Jewish day schools. While Jewish educators often find the philosophical and theoretical arguments for integration compelling, and many day schools articulate curriculum integration as part of their mission statements, the actual implementation of this approach within schools has been a significant challenge. In the remaining sections of this chapter I outline a number of factors that contribute to or mitigate against the implementation of an integrated curriculum in Jewish day schools. For organizational purposes, I have categorized these factors into the following three areas: instructional strategies, curricular factors, and school culture. Instructional strategies represent educational applications through which teachers put integrated curriculum into practice in their classrooms. Curricular factors are specific approaches to curriculum that are essential for implementation and that, in part, re-conceptualize the role of teachers from curriculum implementers to curriculum developers, a central concern for schools that pursue integrated curriculum. Lastly, there are a series of school-wide cultural factors that may either establish a fertile environment for integrated curriculum or, in their absence, serve as impediments to its implementation. Throughout this section, I cite examples from previous field research[2] and share reflections based on my work as a practitioner.

Theme-Based Learning

Integrated curriculum often revolves around a theme, topic, or issue that serves as the center from which inquiry and learning evolves. Theme-based learning breaks down the boundaries of disciplines and allows subject domains to serve as a means for investigating areas of interest to students (Fogarty, 1991). Theme-based learning also has the ability to promote thinking across and between subject areas. A theme may be identified from the subject areas that a teacher wants to cover as a means of connecting different disciplines.

[2] For a fuller treatment of this area see Malkus (2001).

In investigating one school, I saw how the kindergarten used the theme of "The Human Body" to create a context for the study of human anatomy, math, science, language arts, *Tanakh*, art, and questions about God (Malkus, 2001, p. 166). I have also seen this approach utilized at my current school at various grade levels. One first-grade teacher begins the school year with a unit on bees. Through this theme, students study science, language arts, the customs and ideas of the holiday of *Rosh Hashanah*, and Hebrew language. My middle school also employs a theme to organize a yearly one day event titled "Total Teen Expo." A recent theme was "Citizenship = Action" and teachers used the topic to explore being a global citizen, an American citizen, and a Jewish citizen. Teachers used American literature, history, sociology, and classical Jewish texts to explore the theme.

How subject areas are viewed, as ends in and of themselves that may be connected, or as means to understanding larger complex issues, is a matter of much debate among curriculum theorists and has implications for what is taught and understood as knowledge in schools. As Apple (1990) has demonstrated, curricular knowledge and what is seen as "official knowledge" in schools is not neutral, but rather represents conscious and unconscious social and ideological choices. He writes,

> One major reason that subject-centered curricula dominate most schools, [and] that integrated curricula are found in relatively few schools, is at least partly the result of the place of the school in maximizing the production of high status knowledge. This is closely interrelated with the school's role in the selection of agents to fill economic and social positions in a relatively stratified society. (p. 38)

Apple's work clarifies the highly ideological, or as he understands it, "hegemonic" role that knowledge and its uses play in the curriculum. He understands high-status knowledge and how it is used and manipulated to have a macro-effect in maintaining economic and social systems. Apple's view offers a perspective on the acceptance and rejection of integrated curriculum in day schools. While Orthodox Jewish thinkers have called for the development of an integrated worldview (Berkovits, 1962; Soloveitchik, 1983), there have been practically no educational institutions that have consistently epitomized the ethos and principles of these thinkers.

The control of and dominant position of Torah studies within Orthodox schools maintains the high status and preeminence of those subjects and the compartmentalization of religious commitment and secular society (cf. Bieler, 1986). The rejection of an integrated approach to Jewish and general studies might, therefore, be an important tool in maintaining the Orthodox social and communal apparatus. On the other hand, the (theoretical) embrace of integrated curriculum in liberal Jewish day schools could be understood as part of a larger ideological approach whereby Jewish belief and practice may be altered as it comes into contact with secular society. How integrated curriculum is conceptualized is intimately tied to a larger ideological perspective on education in Jewish day schools.

Pomson (2001) and Drake (1998), however, both argue that curriculum integration in schools may be placed along a continuum where progressively greater connections are made between subject areas. While some Orthodox schools may

reject outright the ideological value of an integrated curriculum, many other schools, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox, fall somewhere between rejection and complete integration. This more pragmatic approach to understanding the appearance of integrated studies in schools offers a useful measure when observing curriculum in Jewish day schools.

Core Concepts and Essential Questions

Core concepts and essential questions are what Sizer (1985) calls lines of inquiry that are broad and rich enough for several lessons or a unit. They are few in number, a step toward learning outcomes, and often posted for all students to see. Teachers who teach with an eye toward integration often use questions and concepts in organizing student learning. In this way, core concepts and essential questions serve as important structures in enabling integration.

In one fifth-grade classroom that I visited (Malkus, 2001, p. 169), the teachers created and posted a list of four "Big Idea" questions on one of the classroom walls. All of those questions were related to the "The Role of Humans in Nature" and served as a connective thread for students and their teachers to link each of the units they studied throughout the year. At the conclusion of every unit, both the Judaic and general studies teachers would ask students to reflect on those original questions and the topic that had been covered. While the teachers may not have integrated their lessons and units, they used big idea questions to link what was studied to previous material. When teachers aim to assist students to discover for themselves the relationships between subjects, such an approach is often called integrative curriculum (see Zeldin, 1992).

In research conducted at a Jewish high school (Ingall & Malkus, 2001), Ingall and I observed a discreet unit based on the theme of "Maxims" that sought to integrate literature, history, and the study of the *Book of Proverbs*. We discovered that despite the intention of their teachers, students resisted building connections between subject areas. We found that asking high-school students to integrate was fraught with obstacles, but realized that such resistance may be appropriate to adolescent development. Using the work of Egan (1998), we suggested that high-schools students may "not [be] ready to dismantle the borders, to live with ambiguity and complexity, until they enter the age of 'ironic understanding' which comes at about the age of twenty; if it comes at all" (p. 42).

Team Teaching

The relationship between teachers is another factor at the center of developing and implementing integrated curriculum (Schlechty, 1990). Team teaching is fundamental to schools' integrated programs both in planning and in classroom instruction. When teachers work together, not only can they mindfully plan integrated curriculum together, but they often see relationships between different disciplines that they

had not noticed previously. Some schools have teachers meet together both within grades and across age levels to cultivate an integrated approach both horizontally and vertically within a program (Malkus, 2001, p. 170).

While planning together may be one structure that supports integration, how teachers interact within the classroom is also an important factor to address. When general and Judaic studies teachers work simultaneously in the same classroom, they can seize on opportunities for integration spontaneously. Some schools have made this type of team teaching a hallmark of their educational culture and program. Such an approach raises questions of financial sustainability for schools but offers unique opportunities for integration.

Curricular Flexibility

When curriculum is set and static, it loses the ability to grow and expand organically around themes, core concepts, and essential questions. By contrast, curriculum without direction and boundaries is unfocused, lacks continuity, and has the potential to miss the essential skills that a school expects its students to master. In understanding the balance between flexibility and structure in integrated curriculum, it is instructive to look at the written curriculum of schools. Schools that are interested in integration need to consider how to maintain a balance between written curriculum and flexibility in organizing learning. Ben-Peretz (1990) offers a wonderful distinction between curriculum writers and curriculum developers. She writes that curriculum is often written in a general context for specific age groups of students, therefore, viewing teachers as curriculum *developers* is an essential component for some models of curriculum integration.

One of the trends in post-modern curriculum theory has been to understand curriculum as an open rather than a closed system. It is useful to take note of this movement in curriculum studies as it applies to the notion of flexibility. Doll (1993) uses the conceptual framework of chaos theory and the science of complexity in theorizing what curriculum might look like. In describing post-modern curriculum as "generated not predefined, indeterminate yet bounded . . . and made up of an ever-increasing network," he touches on many of the characteristics that emerge from the schools that use integrated curriculum. It is this kind of response to the complexity of curriculum integration that has the potential to affect how schools view this approach.

Time, Scheduling, and Planning

Sizer (1985) has written about the need to rethink how time is scheduled in schools. Finding time within the school day is one of the primary challenges to implementing integrated curriculum. Educators interested in this approach view traditional forty minute block periods as obstacles to implementing integration in Jewish schools. Cushman (1995) suggests that schools need to "make time a factor supporting

education, not a boundary marking its limits" (p. 1). Flexibility in scheduling coupled with broader teacher autonomy over how the day is structured are two fundamental factors in successfully implementing integrated curriculum.

Shortt and Thayer (1999) explore the use of time and its relationship to student achievement in their work on block scheduling. They conclude that block scheduling "not only improves school climate, but it also increases opportunities for learning and levels of achievement" (p. 76). This research confirms a study on flexible scheduling conducted at the Akiba Hebrew Academy (Schaffzin, 1997) by making a connection between the use of block scheduling and the establishment of an environment open to integrated curriculum. This work, together with research on curriculum integration in Jewish schools, shows the significant role that flexible scheduling plays as one of the factors that may support integration.

Teachers and administrators at Jewish day schools often identify the necessity for teachers to plan together in developing integrated curricula. The lack of time is a major factor mitigating the use of integrated approaches. The primary obstacle to joint planning in Jewish day schools is the availability of both the general and Judaic studies teachers in elementary settings and teams of teachers in middle and high schools. The issue of planning time has been identified as a major hurdle in building integrated curricula in a number of settings (Ingall & Malkus, 2001; Malkus, 2002; Beane, 1997; Drake, 1998; Jacobs, 1989).

Finally, Fogarty and Stoehr (1995) address the challenge of finding time for teams of teachers to plan together. They write that "there must be time to plan, time that is carved out of an already overloaded schedule" (p. 76). Fogarty and Stoehr suggest ten intervals of time when teachers can meet during the school day, such as borrowed time (adding fifteen minutes for four days gains one hour on the fifth day), common time (scheduling block time for teacher teams), and freed-up time (with parent volunteers, senior citizens, or visiting artists creating time). While not all of the ideas they propose may be appropriate for all schools, it is clear that making planning time a priority is an essential element for schools that implement integrated curriculum, because the need for teachers to work together requires them to find time not ordinarily allotted in their daily schedules.

School Culture

In her casebook, *Leadership skills for Jewish educators*, Rosenblum (1993) identifies "the ability to define the vision of an organization and to set goals for it" as one of the primary characteristics of leadership (p. 5). If creating a powerful vision is a central aspect of educational leadership, how that vision is developed and implemented is equally important. Addressing the issue of educational reform, Barth (1990) articulates that the relationships among adults within schools is both the most neglected and crucial area in promoting an atmosphere of learning in schools. When educators share a sense of mission and vision they begin to work together in ways that might not have been thought possible. This sense of dedication to the vision of integration is a hallmark of schools that use this approach. However, beyond vision,

schools have deep organizational cultures that enable them to function in specific ways. The work of Schein (1997) has been instrumental in helping researchers and leaders understand the significance of culture in organizations. Schein views culture as "the accumulated shared learning of a given institution covering behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements of the group members' total psychological functioning" (p. 10). Schein's framework of "shared basic assumptions," common language, and shared conceptual understanding offers a model for analyzing school culture.

Jewish schools that make curriculum integration a major goal need to explore how their school culture either supports or impedes its implementation. Based on Schein's research, the nurturing of a culture of integration with a clear mission, goals, and a concrete understanding of what is meant by integration are the key factors in developing and implementing curricular integration. At my current school, teachers have suggested that having a clear vision of what the school considers to be integrated curriculum and what practical steps the administration takes to foster an environment where faculty are supported are essential and key ingredients in developing integrated curriculum.

When teachers serve as role models for their students, the process of integration is supported in the school. For Jewish day schools that are committed to an integrated approach for their general and Jewish studies, the relationship between teacher and student is a significant factor in the success of this vision. Often, teachers can significantly influence their students through the implicit lessons they teach and through role modeling. Pomson (2000) outlines the important role that general studies teachers can play in shaping the Jewish context of day schools. When students see that their general studies teachers have knowledge, yet they also witness these same teachers speaking Hebrew together, or discussing Jewish topics, that has a profound impact on them. School cultures that stress the personal roles that teachers play in shaping their students' conceptions of life, culture, and religion have an advantage in making integration successful in their schools.

Staffing and Hiring

Finally, staffing is a perennial issue in day schools and one that bears a relationship to integrated curriculum. Schools that integrate curriculum in a deliberate way need to consider what function this approach plays in their hiring practices. In two schools I studied that were identified as being both serious and accomplished in integrated curriculum (Malkus, 2001, pp. 60 and 102–103), the principals look for specific qualities – flexibility, the ability to work with partners, and desire to integrate – as primary characteristics in the hiring choices they make. In addition to the characteristics of openness, flexibility, and being a team player, my research suggested that with respect to the integration of Jewish and general studies, the attitude of the general studies teacher to religion is an important consideration in hiring faculty that work in schools that support integrated curriculum.

Conclusion

In understanding how curricular integration is implemented in day schools, it becomes clear that virtually every facet of a school is affected by this approach. While curriculum integration is a goal of many schools, its recent re-conceptualization is an area that needs to be addressed further. In her extensive investigations toward defining how contemporary Jews express their Jewish identity, Horowitz (2000) suggests that the traditional markers of Jewish involvement and commitment may no longer apply in the twenty-first century. Similarly, Cohen and Eisen (2000) argue that the contemporary construction of Jewish meaning is personal and private and that communal loyalties and norms no longer shape Jewish identity as they did several decades ago. This redefinition of Jewish identity necessarily impacts how Jewish schools view their curricula and how they articulate the philosophical underpinning for engaging in curriculum integration. While Ellenson (2008) and Levisohn (2008) have begun to respond to these sociological developments, many unanswered questions remain. Is curricular integration an effective means of achieving such goals? How does this approach compare with traditional models of curriculum in fostering students who can integrate their dual Jewish and American heritage in meaningful ways? Are certain approaches to integration more effective than others? Ample research is needed specifically on teachers and classrooms in schools that advocate curriculum integration. In addition, while some studies have focused on Jewish schools as the primary units of analysis, further research which highlights the complexities of planning and implementing integration in classrooms is required to clarify the challenges that teachers face.

It is also apparent that curricular integration is not limited to a Jewish context. Beyond the use of integrated curriculum in public and non-sectarian private schools, other private religious and ethnic/cultural schools utilize this approach. Although studies have been conducted in these settings, comparative studies between Jewish day schools and other schools that employ an integrated curriculum would be particularly relevant with respect to dual identity integration. How do other religious groups harmonize and highlight the differences between their cultural and religious heritages and the societies in which they live? Is there a generational difference in how a community understands, implements, advocates, or rejects integration as an educational approach? What are the different rationales marshaled by ethnic groups for engaging in integration? Much work, both theoretical and practical, remains in this important area if Jewish day schools are to utilize integrated curriculum in a serious manner.

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Gender and Jewish Education: "Why Doesn't This Feel So Good?"

Tova Hartman and Tamar Miller

The burgeoning field of gender and Jewish education stands at the intersection of two disciplines: gender and religion, and gender and education. Paying attention to gender in education highlights the importance of education as "gender equitable . . . in which every voice is heard and each girl and boy has an equally wide range of educational opportunities and life choices" (Bailey, 2002). Feminism, as one of the mothers of gender studies, has made a significant impact on Jewish practice and Jewish studies by critiquing texts, traditions, and values. We are now at the stage where many women who previously felt marginalized are able to "Stand Again at Sinai" (see Plaskow, 1990).

Because there has been little systematic research on the intersection between the fields of gender and Judaism, and gender and Jewish education, this chapter highlights what a feminist lens might contribute to this new combination of disciplines. To give color and depth to our discussion, we focus on five narratives concerning Miriam, Rabbi Akiva and his wife (traditionally known as Rachel) Bruria, Hannah, Esther, and Vashti. We have chosen these stories because they are part of the Jewish curriculum in all the denominations and therefore offer an opportunity to explore educational applications of a gendered critical analysis.

Although we appreciate the important strides in gender equity in many Jewish educational institutions, we look beyond, to see what else needs attention. Inspired by the richness of gender studies, we ask in what way the inclusion of girls and women influences both the substance and methodologies of Jewish education. What does it mean today for girls and boys to study texts that are so foreign and offensive to modern sensibilities? For instance, at the beginning of the Bible, the Garden of Eden story (Genesis Ch 3:16) recounts: "your urge shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you." At a later period, Maimonides includes women in the same legal category as slaves, children, the blind and deaf regarding the prohibitions of bearing legal witness (Hilchot Edut 9:1).

If we take gender studies seriously, we are compelled to ask should these traditional texts be taught as anything but the antiquated history of ideas? How does a

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girl feel about herself, her mother, sisters, grandmother, aunts, and the Matriarchs when she studies these texts? Adrienne Rich (1986), in “Blood, Bread and Poetry,” conveys the experience:

> When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing. It takes some strength of soul – and not just individual strength, but collective understanding – to resist this void, this non-being, into which you are thrust, and to stand up, demanding to be seen and heard. (p. 199)

And, let us not forget to ask what are boys’ responses to these authoritative texts? Who are the boys’ heroes and heroines? From the perspective of the teacher, the prime agent of socialization, into what kind of religious culture is she socializing her students?

Women and Jewish Textual Literacy

Given the novelty of gender and Jewish education, we phrase our analysis in the form of questions and recommended directions for further research. We will ask about the nature and substance of the traditional texts we choose in our Jewish educational institutions and what they might teach us about ourselves, relationships, continuity, values, and observance.

Our working hypothesis is that all Jewish education may be enhanced by reworking traditional texts through a gendered perspective. These challenges are present in the Orthodox world not only where texts are heavily weighted toward traditional hermeneutics but also where women and men do not have equal textual access. Many other Jewish denominations tend to pick and choose, and sometimes completely ignore those texts that might offend modern sensibilities regarding gender equality. By applying a gendered perspective, we suggest that Jewish educators can still use traditional texts that feel and look disturbing in the curriculum.

A significant development in Jewish education begins with the change of the status of women as learners of texts in formal settings. For centuries, only a privileged minority of rabbis’ daughters and girls from affluent families enjoyed private tutoring or cautiously received a decent Jewish education “under the table” (see Stampfer, 2007). Historians of Jewish education cite the century-old, revolutionary *p’sak* of Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (better known as the *Hafetz Chaim*) as one of the most important milestones for girls’ Jewish education. In his commentary *Hafetz Hayim Likutei Halakhot to Masechet Sotah (1903)*, he wrote,

> ... nowadays when the tradition of our fathers has become very weakened and we find people who do not live close to the parental environment and especially that there are those who have been given a secular education, certainly it is required to teach them the Bible, the ethical writings of our sages, ... so that the principles of our holy faith will be strong for them. Otherwise, Heaven forbid they may deviate entirely from the path of God, and violate all the precepts of the Torah (trans. Menachem Lorberbaum). (unnumbered)

With this, the original Talmudic prohibition of R. Eliezer regarding women learning Torah and Talmud – "Whoever teaches his daughter Torah is as if he teaches her *tiflut*"[1] (*Masechet Sotah* 21b) – became null and void. The Hafetz Chaim, as the major Jewish legislator of his time, had the authority to respond to changing social conditions with a new enactment regarding women's learning (see Baskin, 1991, 2002; Grossman, 2004; Kehat, 2008). However, even if practice has dramatically shifted, Jewish educators have to contend with the original exclusionary and degrading Talmudic text. What is our relationship to this text? Do we read it just to see how it has evolved? Do we neutralize it? Teach it in parts or as a live text that can still compel our students? Or, should it be deleted from the curriculum completely?

The feminist lens allows us to see inequality and power imbalances regarding women's access to the treasured texts of our tradition; but more importantly, it offers the opportunity to contextualize the prohibition of women's learning and to go beyond the problems that appear to be inherent in the texts. That is, feminist studies remind those of us in Jewish education that women's restricted access to the secrets of patriarchal cultures was rather widespread, if not universal. Jewish texts could be likened to "the magic flutes" in Papua New Guinea (see Herdt, 1994, 2002) from which women were barred. Jewish education can benefit as well from the feminist project that highlights the missing voice of women, the restricted access of women to aspects of the sacred and its implications for the entire culture.

A closer look at the original text of the prohibition of women studying Torah shows that it is striking that the Talmudic discussion takes place in the context of the "bitter waters" (*mei hamarim*), described in Numbers 5 verse 11–23. The "bitter waters" were a test administered to the *Sotah*, the woman suspected by her husband of committing adultery. The intellectual, spiritual, and psychological hoops that a modern reader of this text has to go through are challenging, and so there has been and continues to be a good deal of discussion about the nature of the bitter waters (see Bach, 1997). The ritual is discussed in the *Mishnah*:

> (*Mishnah Sotah 3:4* = b.Sotah 20a) "...When a man brings a wife to the gates and they give her water... She had scarcely finished drinking (the water of bitterness) when her face turns green, her eyes protrude and her veins swell and it is exclaimed, remove her that the temple court be not defiled. If she possessed a merit (a good deed), it causes the water to suspend its effect upon her. Some merit suspends the effect (*zechut tolah lah*) for one year, another for two years, and another for three years. Hence declared Ben Azai, a man is under the obligation to teach his daughter torah so that if she has to drink she may know that the merit suspends its effect. R. Eliezer says: whoever teaches his daughter torah teaches her *tiflut.* (see footnote 1)

R. Eliezer's prohibition is cited in a variety of places in *Halakhic* literature and became predominant practice. His position is that if a wife knows traditional texts, she will be able to know how to get around the law; she will betray her husband and at the same time do a good deed, so that the bitter waters will not take effect by making her "face turn green, eyes protrude, and veins swell." R. Eliezer's claims then, that knowing the law is power and if women knew the law, they would use their

[1] This is typically understood to mean "frivolousness" or "licentiousness."

power in a dishonest, distorted way. In other words, this Talmudic passage reflects both an exclusionary and distrustful attitude toward women.

And so, with his influential *pesak* (binding legal decision), the Hafetz Chaim opened the gateway to radical shifts in *Jewish* literacy. This went beyond offering women access to texts and had important implications to the traditional attitudes toward women in general and to gender relations in particular. The practical changes began in the establishment of the first Beis Ya'acov School for Girls in Kraków, Poland, in 1917, by Sarah Schneirer who trained women teachers and set up similar schools in other cities throughout Europe.[2] Although only biblical texts and non-legal portions of Talmud (*Aggadah*) were permissible to girls, many more texts, such as legal portions of the Talmud and codes of Jewish law were now accessible on a more widespread basis than ever before (Weissman, 1993, 1986–1987; Wolowelsky, 2001). This radical shift changed and continues to change the balance of power and the perception of women as dangerous.

Over the last 35 years, the revolution in girls' learning has included Talmud study available in virtually *all* Jewish schools outside of the ultra-Orthodox world. We recall sitting in the first *Gemara shiur* in the Bet Midrash of Stern College for Women at Yeshiva University in the mid-1970s when Rav Solovetchik, the most influential figure of modern orthodoxy of the twentieth century, came to teach, inaugurate, and authorize young women to learn Talmud. Most of us were intellectually and spiritually elated. We felt that something special had happened and that we were part of a transformation in Jewish history. It felt like issues of gender in Jewish education were laid to rest that day in Manhattan with a quiet but radical revolution.[3]

After the endorsements of girls' Talmud study by Solovetchik and the inclusion of women in Jewish education and public life in all other Jewish denominations, is there anything more to discuss regarding gender and Jewish education? A leading theorist in the field of gender and education, Elizabeth Ellsworth, asks if we have come so far, if a revolution has taken place, "why doesn't this feel empowering" (1994, p. 300). This question resonates with many feminists who are now critically analyzing whether equal access to what was formally prohibited is sufficient for a solution to problems of inequity or invisibility.

Gender Studies and Feminist Theory

Both *liberal* and *radical* feminist theory and practice offer important lenses to understand the challenge inherent in Jewish education and suggest possible avenues of re-engagement. These are no longer purely separate categories, of course, but they

[2]This movement continued after WWII. Elementary, high schools, and 1–3-year seminaries were established in the United States and Israel. The schools' primary purpose was, and to a large extent still is, to prepare students to be good Jews, mothers, and wives. Secular studies are secondary, though still important, particularly in cities where Jewish girls are expected to work outside the home as the primary bread-winners while their husbands learn Torah, especially Talmud, full time.

[3]Although passages of Talmud were taught earlier to girls at the Maimonides School in Boston, which R. Solovetchik headed, this shift at Stern and the beginning of the women's Beit Midrash offered full access to Talmudic learning.

are helpful in developing our research agendas. *Liberal feminism* focuses on gender equity and sameness. Historically, much of the justification for the discrimination against women was based upon the differences between men and women – and such differences were seen hierarchically, where women were inferior, thus justifying their exclusion. In response, liberal feminism advocated equal rights for women. This was based on the premise that men and women have the same capacities for rationality, and therefore deserve equal education and political rights (see Mill (1989/1859); Stanton [1895] 2003). This conversation began over 150 years ago and focused on sameness and not difference to prove that women deserved equal rights.

Liberal feminists worked on many educational fronts in the last 30 years. For example, they initiated major textbook reforms in an attempt to alter "the highly unequal representation of the sexes in text and illustrations, blatant sex stereotyping and generic use of male pronouns . . ." (Tyack & Hansot, 2002, p. 36). Few women were represented in history textbooks, because women were seen as irrelevant to traditional historical foci on politics, wars, and diplomacy. Even as textbooks began to include women, the numbers were comparatively small.

Radical feminism, a later development in feminist theory and practice that bloomed in the early 1970s, addresses matters beyond sameness and equality and asks are there actual differences between boys and girls, how so, what do these differences mean, and do they matter? Is there something essential about the differences between men and women or are differences primarily a consequence of cultural conditioning? By extension, radical feminists ask about the nature of culture, religion, society, and politics; in other words, is what we assume to be natural really so or is it the imposition of patriarchy? Radical feminists ask, if women join the public sphere, what if anything shifts and changes? Do women need to join at all or should they live and create in a "room of their own?" When women write their own stories, and when history becomes herstory, what is the nature of that story? Will they write as others before them or as Helene Cixous in her classic 1976 article puts it, "there is always within [woman] at least a little of that good mother's milk, she writes in white ink" (p. 312).

Radical feminism applied to Jewish education asks, then, how has Jewish education changed in the last 100 years because girls and women have been present? A radical perspective not only asserts that woman should have an equal place in the *Beit Midrash* and equal access to texts, but also asks about the *nature and substance* of Jewish education and teacher training, and which texts we choose to teach both boys and girls (El-Or, 2002; Ross, 2004). It asks whether or how Jewish education can be or has been *transformed* as it takes gender studies and feminist theory and sensibilities seriously.

In the case of Jewish education, radical feminist approaches can only be applied after aspects of liberal feminism, such as equal access, are already achieved. Radical feminism does not align itself with traditional views of difference which insist on a hierarchical placement of men and women where their differences are used to justify the non-equal status of women. Radical feminism celebrates a "Different Voice" that is neither superior nor inferior (Gilligan, 1982).

Canonical stories from Jewish tradition take on an interesting hue as we look through the lenses of radical and liberal feminism. Although most of these narrative

texts appear descriptive, over many years, the stories have become prescriptive. Women, for example, according to the Bible, sewed for the tabernacle as nomads in the desert (Exodus 35:25). In Talmudic literature, this biblical description turns into what women *must* do; in fact, it is who they are and must not transgress beyond. They sew and produce cloth in the desert which then becomes a definitive prescription: *ein chochmat nashim elah b'pelech* (Women's wisdom is only in the spindle-whirl). This is their role and this is where they must stay – within limited opportunities and constricted space. Shalom Rosenblit (d. 2000), an Orthodox rabbi in Jerusalem, brought an interesting twist to this story when he founded a girls' school in the 1970s and cleverly called the school Pelech (spindle-whirl). It was the first school in the Orthodox sector in Jerusalem to teach girls Talmud.

The Importance of Unimportant People

Masechet Ketubot (62b–63a) offers a famous story of Akiva who at age 40 goes off to study Torah leaving his wife for a total of 24 years (Miller, 1976). During that time, he gathers thousands of disciples and he remains famous until this very day. On the face of it, this is a story of hope, about starting again – that one is never too old or too late for education. However, might this narrative also be prescriptive and foundational in terms of the hierarchy of Jewish values and the ideal ways in which men and women are to relate to each other? The Talmudic narrative states,

> R. Akiva was a shepherd for Kalba Savua whose daughter saw that he was modest and of fine character. She asked him: "if I became betrothed to you will you go to the academy and study Torah?" He . . . went off to learn as his wife facilitated and enabled him. R. Akiva . . . sat twelve years in the academy. When he returned he brought 12,000 students. . . As he approached his home he heard a certain old man saying to his wife "Until when will you lead the life of living widowhood alone and impoverished?" She answered him, "if he would listen to me he would sit in the academy another twelve years." He went away for another 12 years and when he returned again, he brought . . . 24,000 students this time. His wife heard of his return . . . her neighbors said to her: "borrow some suitable articles of clothing and dress yourself." She said to them: a righteous one knows his animal's soul." When she reached him, she fell on her face as she was kissing his foot his attendants pushed her away, R. Akiva said to them, "Leave her alone! The portion of torah that is mine and the portion that is yours belong to her."

While this text is used to teach that it is never too late to get an education, for the modern reader, it is embedded in a painful narrative because overt abandonment and impoverishment of a wife is not part of contemporary Jewish lesson plans, her encouragement, notwithstanding (see, for comparison, Erikson's critique of Ghandi's celibacy and its effect on his young wife). R. Akiva's wife's life is nearly invisible, while her long and significant sacrifice is prominent as an emblematic badge of the good wife. Is this kind of relationship a legacy we want to pass on to our students?

Rereading this story, we notice that it is part of a series with five other Talmudic stories about men who leave their wives and families to study Torah. In those narratives, however, tragedies befall one or another of the protagonists – the man dies,

the wife dies, the scholar does not recognize his children, or his wife ends up barren. A classic feminist perspective asks, why has Akiva's story become privileged throughout Jewish history over all other narratives in this Talmudic unit? When we speak about Godly relationships between men and women, why are the other stories almost totally ignored (Rapoport, Penso, & Hartman Halbertal, 1996; Valler, 2000)?

Feminist studies contextualize these stories in the larger patriarchal society where women are taught to be self-sacrificial and that the highest place for them is in the role as enabler, even when it means loneliness and impoverishment for them. The point is that this is not necessarily a Jewish problem, it is a gender problem, generally about why we privilege the "self sacrificial voice" (Gilligan, 1982). Miller (1976) notes:

> Women are encouraged to transform their own needs. This often means that they fail, automatically and without perceiving it, to recognize their own needs as such. They come to see their needs as if they were identical to those of others, – usually men or children. (p. 19)

Prevailing Jewish hierarchies and family values are part of a larger patriarchal culture. A gendered reading of the Akiva story compels us to note the patriarchal system and to question the wisdom of valorizing individual learning at the expense of relationships. Feminist theory also helps us take a look at how women are educated to be the enablers. The social system generally and Jewish tradition in particular, privileged Akiva while the text in fact had many more stories about the grave costs of leaving the family to learn Torah. This story has not merely been passed down to us as one story among many, as one description of one of the great rabbis of our time, but it alone has become a prescription for the ideal man and his ideal relationship.

If this text is to continue to be taught in Jewish educational institutions, it is a good jumping-off point to discuss matters of relationship, mutual caring, domestic responsibilities, and gendered Jewish roles. We would be doing our children a favor if we taught this text not only as an inspirational story for life-long Jewish textual learning but also as a way to engage in a discussion of Jewish family values. It is especially important that it be taught in the broader context in which it is embedded.

Boys Reading Akiva and His Wife, Named "Rachel"

This pattern is common in world-cultures: For Siddhartha, the day his wife gives birth is the very moment he commits to leaving his family's bourgeois life to become an ascetic seeker. Similarly, the ideal western man, according to the psychologist Erikson's notion of the heroic autonomous man without peer, rides off into the sunset leaving family and other relationships behind.

Is the dichotomy of learning versus family necessary? If it is not, might teaching Akiva and Rachel in the usual way actually harm men and boys and not just pain girls and women? The ideal man who goes away to learn and the ideal self-sacrificial woman are dichotomous definitions and prescriptions that go far beyond

the traditional feminist concerns that women's voices have virtually been ignored for centuries (Thorne, 1990).

When boys in school study the story of Akiva and Rachel, do they recognize themselves? Do they want to comply with this grand vision? When the ideal is to leave home, wife, and children, what does it do to them psychologically and spiritually? What parts of their *neshamot* (souls) do they have to cut off and leave behind? Even if the ideal is an aspiration and not a prescription in our tradition, it does guide gender roles and mediates conflict of values. This is one of the challenges of Jewish education; this particular Jewish "alpha man" is not only unattainable for most boys, it is also undesirable for most men and women (Kimmel, 2008; Gilmore, 1990).

To take gender and Jewish education seriously, we need to consider deconstructing its texts, and study the complexity of dichotomous characteristics. In many of the new multi-denominational and even in some modern orthodox schools in the United States, and in Jewish culture generally, we are seeing different kinds of acceptable and broader expressions of gender. While this Akiva story is well known and commonly taught, gender studies underscore the need to reconsider how to teach the variety of ways of being a Jewish man and a Jewish woman.

The Exceptional Woman in Biblical and Talmudic Legacy

Several stories from our tradition that include women are discussed at length by many feminist scholars of religion. We revisit these canonical narratives with an eye toward the educational challenges embedded in them. Liberal and radical feminist lenses shed light upon Jewish educational agendas and research questions. Miriam, Bruria, Hannah, Vashti, and Esther are well-known characters among educated Jews and each story highlights particular educational challenges.

Miriam

Miriam is one of the few named central female figures in the Bible, equated in Micah 6:4 with her more famous brothers: "And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam." In Exodus 15:20, she is explicitly called a prophetess, and she is highlighted, albeit negatively, in the story in Numbers 12, where along with Aaron she speaks critically of Moses, and she (alone) is punished with "leprosy."[4] The nation refuses to de-camp until she recovers. Quite exceptionally for a female figure, even her death and burial are recorded (Numbers 20:1).

Given her prominence in the Bible, it is not surprising that Miriam was one of the first female biblical figures claimed by Jewish feminists. In modern Jewish education and holiday celebration, she has become the focal point of a new ritual.

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[4]Trible comments poetically on Miriam's leprosy: "a searing emotion gets a scarred body," punished by God: "Red hot anger becomes a cold white disease."

Many add a Miriam’s cup of wine to the *Seder* table at Passover, paralleling the more traditional cup of Elijah.

The recovery of Miriam as an important biblical figure represents the influence of liberal feminism on Judaism, including Jewish education, as it highlights her as a prophetess, equal to her brother Aaron. The radical feminist approach goes further, most dramatically represented by Phyllis Trible, one of the founders of modern feminist biblical hermeneutics. For Trible, Miriam is much more than a central biblical figure. Trible adduces important evidence that the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15:1) attributed to “Moses and the Israelites” was originally Miriam’s song. Over time, Miriam’s words were put into the mouth of Moses, relegating Miriam to a “footnote” at the end of the chapter. From the perspective of gendered biblical hermeneutics, this may be an example of how a patriarchal culture rewrites its stories, marginalizes its women, and gives men credit for important activities of women.

Trible’s analysis is compatible with the more traditional liberal feminist analysis, which emphasizes that women too were prophets and leaders in antiquity. But as a radical feminist, she ventures beyond this observation. Trible claims that Miriam, in her maternal role, was *different* from male leaders.

Beyond Miriam’s status as prophetess and poetess, Trible celebrates Miriam’s maternal contribution to the very foundation of Judaism. After all, Moses’ sister plays a central role in saving him from death (Exodus 2:7). From her Christian perspective, Trible connects the birthing of the Jewish people to the central role that the two later Miriams, namely the two Marys, play in the birth of Christianity (the one who gave birth to Jesus and Mary Magdalena who saw him rise). Thus, Miriam is a progenitor of religions, a legacy that Trible insists must be reclaimed (Trible, 1994).

When we strip Miriam of likely ownership of the composition of the Song of the Sea, we give the singing and recitation of poetry rights to someone who stutters, her brother Moses. If we give away her gifts to someone else, then in fact, we lose them. What happens to Jewish tradition when we lose women’s song and generativity as part of its spirit? What happens when the tradition attributes to men what originally belonged to a woman?

Bruria

In the Talmud, Bruria is admired as a scholar. The rabbis admire her for her competence, and she becomes an example of superior knowledge and ability (See Pesachim 62b). This recognition challenges Talmudic norms regarding a woman’s place.

In the next two Talmudic anecdotes, Bruria meets up with a rabbi and student in the Beit Midrash and chides them, perhaps even with a bit of humor, cleverness, and irony (*Erubin* 53b–54a):

> R. Jose the Galilean was once on a journey when he met Beruriah. “By what road,” he asked her, “do we go to Lydda?”

"Foolish Galilean", she replied did not the Sages say this: "Engage not much in talk with women? You should have asked: 'By which to Lydda?!'

Bruria once discovered a student learning and mumbling "in an undertone." (54a) Rebuking him (literally *Batsha bei:* kicked him), she exclaimed: "Is it not written, *Ordered in all things, and sure*: If it is *ordered* in your two hundred and forty eight limbs it will be *sure*, otherwise it will not be sure?"

Bruria is rebuking the student for studying in the disembodied way of the talking heads. She wants him to learn with his whole body and whole being.

In *Berachot* 9b-10, another story:

. . . Some highwaymen . . . caused him a great deal of trouble. R. Meir . . . prayed that they should die. His wife Bruria said to him: 'How do you make out (that such a prayer should be permitted)? Because it is written Let *khata'im* (sins) cease? Is it written *khotím* (sinners)? It is written *khata'im*! Further look at the verse: and let the wicked men be no more, since the sins will cease, there will be no more wicked men! Rather pray for them that they should repent, and there will be no wickedness.' He did pray for them and they repented."

In these Talmudic stories, we do not hear any echoes of the self-sacrificing archetypal woman, but rather of a woman (with a name!) who is famous for her erudition and scholarship. Does this text come to teach us that there is more than one perspective in Jewish tradition? With this, can our students connect to a multi-layered tradition and find themselves within the vast sea of tradition, even while some voices have been louder than others over the centuries?

Historically, women are absent as Torah scholars; however, there were few exceptions. How do we teach the exceptions to the rule? Is Bruria the exception to the rule, to reinforce the rule, or is her legacy to teach the possibility of equality? Or, was the tradition actually less monolithic than later generations presume (see Boyarin, 1993)? To seek subtle undercurrents and shifts in the tradition, feminist scholars often find marginal stories and hushed voices and give them a place of honor or in Bell Hooks (2000) terms, bring these stories and their teachings "From Margin to Center."

From a radical feminist perspective, we listen to Bruria's unique voice as cultural critic not only as an exceptional example of erudition. She admonishes the rabbi, the student, and her husband. She critiques disembodied learning and her husband's desire for others' demise rather than praying for them to repent. Bruria teaches us another way to act in the world.

The educational possibilities in Bruria stories are of course about women's equal participation in Jewish life with equal voice and power; but perhaps more to the transformative point, Bruria offers a model that is a radical critique of traditional ways of studying and behaving. It is significant that it is the Talmud itself that brings a woman – an outsider – to make this possible.

Who are Esther and Vashti?

Megillat Esther [The Scroll of Esther] is one of two biblical books named after a woman and depicts two exceptional women, Esther and Vashti. Although a great

deal has been written about this story, there has been no serious treatment of the curricular implications for how the story might be taught through a gendered lens.

There are two sharply contrasting responses to the Purim story. It is still common to see young girls, year after year, dressed up as their heroine, Queen Esther, the winner of the Persian beauty contest, in their Barbie-like costumes. It is also now common for Vashti to be the new feminist heroine – the first of the "Just say no" Jewish leaders. In that frame, Esther is typically deprecated as the "true" hero is elevated. Vashti, in this new scenario, is the good woman concerned about her dignity and able to make independent strong decisions, while Esther is a pawn in the hands of kings and their men.

Depicting Esther and Vashti as dichotomous characters is simplistic and ultimately not educationally helpful. Truly, there is a great deal of ambiguity in both of these figures, and *Megillat Esther* can be taught by highlighting the complexity of the story in a way that is surprisingly relevant to modern life.

Megillat Esther is very concise concerning Vashti; it simply notes the royal degree, her refusal, and the king's anger (1:11–12):

> To bring Queen Vashti before the king wearing a royal diadem, to display her beauty to the peoples and the officials; for she was a beautiful woman. But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. The king was greatly incensed, and his fury burned within him.

Perhaps Vashti personifies the ultimate feminist who in the face of the humiliation of unjust requests chooses to maintain her dignity and refuses to succumb to the objectifying, offensive whims of the king. In the face of tyranny and humiliation to her body, she stands up and faces the consequences. She knows that conversation is not possible and so just says NO. Fully aware of the repercussions of being exiled or whatever else is in store for female insubordination, she exits (see Gilligan et al., 1988).

As is their hermeneutical practice, the rabbis filled in this terse account in a variety of ways. Typically they assumed that the text meant that Vashti should appear wearing a "royal diadem" and nothing else. But their elaboration of the text goes even further as they explore why Vashti might not want to appear naked. For example, in the Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 12b, we read:

> And Queen Vashti refused . . . . What is the reason she did not appear when Achashverosh ordered her to appear naked? R. Yose bar Chanina said this teaches that she broke out in leprosy, so she did not want to appear naked, In a *baraisa*, a different reason why she did not want to appear naked was taught – the angel Gavriel came and made her grow a tail . . . .

This is quite a remarkable elaboration on the text. While *Megillat Esther* depicts Vashti as simply refusing, the rabbis suggest that she refused because she was embarrassed about her body; something happened to her that day, otherwise of course she would have been happy to come naked. In this rabbinic reading, there is no dignity in Vashti. She does not embody a heroic stance against objectification, but is a narcissistic woman having a bad hair day.

Stripping Vashti of her dignity, the rabbis misread the original text itself, which continues with a royal decree (1:20) that explains her banishment so that "all wives

will treat their husbands with respect." In other words, the text itself understands that Vashti's punishment for her disobedience by her husband, the King, is in order to prevent other women from refusing their husbands' commands.

Esther, on the other hand, is depicted in the Megillah as doing what women are thought of as doing – getting what she wants by using her body, her beauty, her sexuality. She uses all the "sneaky" ways women employ. It appears *as if* Esther succumbs to what is thought of as women's ways, but we would like to suggest otherwise. It may seem like a stretch in a book that is populated with caricatures of women and men who seem to do everything that goes bad between the sexes, but Esther models how a heroine acts when those dependent upon her are in dire circumstances.

Esther carries the fate of the Jewish people on her shoulders – no, in her entire body. She did not have the choice that Vashti had to exit and suffer individual consequences, because Esther had a sense of responsibility for others. She acted in the *only* ways that were available to her as many women before her – through her body, through the "woman's way." It helps to enlist feminist psychology's critique of traditional psychology regarding the latter's inability to distinguish between the way women acted in context and the essence of womanhood; that is, confusing behavior produced by the limited range of possibilities in a patriarchy, with essential character traits.

Are women by nature dependent or are they dependent because punishment for independence is severe?[5] Are women devious by nature? If they have no straightforward power, they must do things in crooked ways. The Purim story, educationally, opens up rich opportunities in the classroom to discuss stereotypes of many disempowered groups who must use non-traditional methods – the only methods available to them – to survive, and are then accused of being "devious."

In other words, it is possible to teach Esther in her context. Imagining that she should have said "no" (like Vashti) to Mordecai's request because she did not want to be humiliated is noble on the one hand, but does not recognize that she would then have abdicated her responsibility to the community. This suggests that though we may celebrate Vashti, she cannot be our only model. She reflects one positive way of being, but we must not celebrate her at the expense of Esther, who did what all traditional women do when the stakes are so high.

The nature of women is not to be prostitutes; but, heroic women, when faced with the suffering of family and community, will do almost anything, even *play* the prostitute. In this way, we do not see Esther through the male gaze; we do not view her as the idealized woman whom we should aspire to emulate; nor do we look down upon her from our place of privilege. When she cannot speak directly, she must act in the ways that are available to her, like all acts of subversion under ethnic or religious persecution (see Strauss, 1988). The challenge for Esther was how to

[5]Likewise, Freud says women overvalue love, but as feminist scholar Karen Horney answers that it is not love they overvalue; it is the prizes from love they need. If women were not able to work, have access to sexual satisfaction or protection *except* in the framework of marriage, then they would put a lot of emphasis on marriage.

save her people. The means by which she achieved this goal – through prostitution of her body – is the classroom conversation we should have with modern Jewish students, even though the story has been sanitized and therefore a woman's heroism made invisible, over time.

Beginning with the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Bible, and in much of rabbinic commentary, the image of Esther is cleaned up. In the Greek Esther, Addition C puts the following into Esther's mouth:

> (16) You know my necessity–that I abhor the sign of my proud position, which is upon my head on days when I appear in public. I abhor it like a filthy rag, and I do not wear it on the days when I am at leisure (17). And your servant has not eaten at Haman's table, and I have not honored the king's feast or drunk the wine of libations.

We do not need to whitewash Esther and to make believe that she is the perfect beauty queen. We must not foster what traditional psychologists or the rabbis did, and claim that what women did was a reflection of their deepest essence. Instead, we must simultaneously look, name, and shudder as we see what behavior they had to choose and we also must be in awe and in gratitude to Esther and to all the brave women who came before us, to our grandmothers, and great-grandmothers who did not have the luxury to "exit," but stayed in horrific situations to nourish and protect others. These are deeply important modern lesson plans.

The didactic strength of *Megillat Esther* comes from the manner in which it depicts gender stereotypes gone amok, since its men too are depicted stereotypically: the caricatured King acts upon his sexual desires; Haman needs all to admire and exalt him; and Mordechai sends the woman to do his work. This story is a particularly good source for exploring issues of gender and relationship, leadership and gender stereotypes, and challenges educators to grapple with powerful covert teachings and dynamics.

Hannah

In the Talmud, Hannah's prayer serves as the very basis for the traditional prayers that we pray today. Tractate Berachot 31a states:

> How many important laws can be learned from these verses relating to Hannah? Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, from here we learn that one who prays must direct his heart towards God; only her lips moved, from here we derive that that one who prays must pronounce the words with his lips ......

The rabbis study and endorse Hannah's prayer for inspiration, guidance, and substance. They analyze every word of her prayer, developing over time multiple laws concerning prayer. Many people pray in the Bible and the rabbis mention them elsewhere in the Talmud as well, but it is very striking that Hannah's prayer is emblematic. Yet, the rabbis of this same sacred text, the Talmud, do not allow women to be included in a quorum, in the community of prayer. If Hannah showed up today, she would not be permitted to be part of a minyan in Orthodox synagogues or schools. This absurdity is historically important and still exists today. An

Orthodox rabbi, in a famous article forbidding women's prayer groups used Hannah as the symbol of the ultimate praying individual (Twersky, 1998). How can Hannah's prayer be the archetype we hold up and honor in traditional Judaism, and yet as a woman she cannot be part of the religious ritual community?

Hannah brings to mind Daphne Hampson (1990), a former Christian theologian who taught theology to men training for the priesthood at an Anglican seminary for 10 years. When she asked to be ordained, she was constantly rebuffed and she left Christianity because of this glaring inequity. Of course, some Jewish denominations fully include Hannah's legacy in their synagogues and would cherish her role as a prayer leader.

The issue in Jewish education from a liberal feminist perspective, however, is broader than who is included in a *minyan* (prayer quorum) and who is not. This matter is not only related to the Orthodox community, but also to the liberal Jewish community that does include "Hannah" in prayer. This is so because Jewish educators have to make sense of a religious mindset that can simultaneously celebrate and marginalize women. In underscoring this tension, we are assuming that Jewish education is not merely studying our past as a history of ideas, namely as how rabbinic patriarchy thought then, but also, as how it informs the present. Our texts speak to us about whether there are values to glean from our tradition and not only whether we corrected the past.

After the Talmudic rabbis analyze every word and action relating to Hannah's prayer, they continue adding words to her biblical prayer:

> "From all the legions upon legions of creatures that You have created in Your universe, is it difficult in Your eyes to grant me one son?". . . . She goes on and pleads: "Master of the Universe Of all that You created in a woman, You did not create a single thing for naught you created eyes to see . . . . and breasts with which to nurse – These breasts that you have placed upon my heart what are they for? Are they not to nurse with? Grant me a child that I may nurse with them . . ." (Berachot 31b)

The rabbis understand Hannah's prayer, directly connected to her inability to give birth, as an expression of her womanhood. Hannah appeals to God's powers in creation, in divine wisdom, and feels that her very being is not fully expressed. Why would God create her as a woman and not enable her to be a mother? Moreover, the two men in Hannah's life did not understand her. Her husband thinks he is as good as 10 children (1 Samuel 1:8), and believes that his presence is a comfort to her; he does not understand the despair and betrayal she feels in a body that God gave her. Eli, the priest, in the face of her mumbling cannot see the intense religious passion of a woman, and relegates it to madness; he is sure she is a drunkard. What is it that the men in her life were not getting? What is the story telling us?

Liberal feminists have helped recover the story of Hannah and have raised the important issue of the place of woman in prayer. Radical feminists ask in addition: What is the significance of being in a particular body? Can men understand women's way of being? By enhancing Hannah's position, making her the prototype for Jewish prayer, the Talmudic rabbis who celebrate and honor her by adding to her *tefillah* seem to be beginning to heal the misunderstanding between the genders that appears glaring in the biblical story (see Adler, 1998; Plaskow, 1990). This can be

a powerfully didactic story for Jewish educators to discuss inclusion and exclusion, compassionate listening to another in pain, non-standard ways of divine worship, and betrayal of one's deepest desires in the context of a religious embrace.

Conclusion

We hope it is clear that the challenges of gender and Jewish education go beyond the following famous poem that provides an epigram for many chapters on gender and education.

> And they shall beat their pots and pans into printing presses,
> And weave their cloth into protest banners,
> Nations of women shall lift up their voices with other women,
> Neither shall they accept discrimination anymore.
> Mary Chagnon, quoted in Sandler (2002, p. 11)

The lenses of liberal and radical feminism are helpful methodological tools for mapping research agendas in gender and Jewish education. They are not, of course, the only possible theoretical frameworks. In her "Introduction" to *The Education Feminism Reader,* Linda Stone (1994) also uses educational, intellectual, and political contexts to look at gender and education. These categories could enhance a study of gender and Jewish education, raising provocative questions for further inquiry.

The *educational context* focuses on "instruction and curriculum, classroom and schooling organization, the relationships of teachers, students, parents and the larger community." (p. 3) For Jewish educators, some questions are related to the multiple goals of Jewish education. Who *is* the educated Jewish man or woman? What should they know? Do boys and girls have an equal range of educational opportunities that feed into Jewish life choices and careers? Is one of the goals of Jewish education to explore hidden voices or to create a gender-neutral education, as much as possible? Furthermore, education is a gendered field and teachers are gendered. How do teachers, as agents of Jewish socialization mediate some of the harsh texts and male-centered stories, and into what sort of family and community are they socializing our children?

In the *political context,* Stone focuses primarily on the agenda of school reform and the leadership that authorizes it. For our purposes here, the dimension of religious leadership and authority is important; that is, who makes the decisions and how? The research questions Jewish educators can ask in this context are: what is the *nature* of citizenship in the Jewish community? Who may lead and how? Who defines who is in and who is out and does the community change with different membership? Are men and women authorized equally to facilitate reform?

Today's *intellectual milieu* includes the effect of post-modernism on Jewish life and academic research. Stone claims that:

> Whatever its label, all agree that the modern search for certainty is over. This change is recognized in the spate of "postisms" often under the broad umbrella called post-modernism. Intellectually, postmodern theorization exhibits the tentativeness and ambiguity of the age,

> the giving up of certainty that is central to the period changes the ways that science and knowledge and their discourse practices are undertaken and considered . . . Knowledge to most is becoming knowledges. (Stone, 1994, p. 4)

For Jewish education, in the context of diversity, we do not have an agreed upon singular truth theologically, historically, or *halakhically*, and we do not even have a definitive answer to the "who is a Jew" question. Post-modern perspectives engage the meaning of Jewish education to individual, communal, and national identities in flux.

These permeable boundaries of identity have enabled the establishment of "alternative *yeshivot*" that emphasizes the arts or nature with expanding notions of gender, as well as Jewish identity. How does this square up with traditional texts and prescribed roles? How are altered power relationships in the variety of Jewish educational settings reflected in the curriculum explicitly? Even the definitions of who is a boy and who is a girl are now part of public inquiry.

If in the past, a definition of manhood was one who had access to special knowledge, what happens when everyone has access to all forms of study and ways of being? What happens to Jewish boys when text study is no longer the defining claim to power and prestige for the 'alpha Jewish man'? How can a boy or man be involved in Jewish life when he does not come close to identifying with this particular type of man? Moreover, where are the rest of the boys who are not in the *Beit Midrash* (or the soccer field)? Do we have questions to ask of the other boys' interests and achievements, both actual and perceived? Who is this new Jewish man?

The field of gender and Jewish education is much larger and more complex than developing gender-sensitive hermeneutics. The educational challenges of gender and Jewish education are more than an intellectual challenge in how to teach text with gender neutrality or as in some schools, in not teaching problematic texts at all. Others say, we should teach them with subversion and resistance but how *do* we teach resistance of sacred texts?

Orthodoxy is often criticized because of the inequality of what boys and girls learn. This chapter attempted to go beyond inequality and underscore the challenge of why "this (*education*) still doesn't feel so good" in all of the Jewish denominations. The issue is much larger than equal access when we take a good look and ask equal access to *what*?

The discussion of gender and Jewish education takes place within the context of a post-modern world still steeped in tradition. The field of gender and education generally sensitizes us to the fact that issues of gender are still very much alive. Even though there is greater equality – such as new interpretation of texts, women's Midrash, women rabbis, and heads of schools – our work continues to uncover the covert messages and covert imbalances of power.

Feminism humanizes and makes it possible to stay in our tradition because we know that the problems of inequality and gender-stereotyping can follow us around in many places, having nothing whatever to do with Rabbinic Judaism. The study of gender and Jewish education helps us re-engage and re-negotiate without an illusion that the rest of the liberal world has given us definitive answers to these issues. This

contextualization, however, does not absolve us from continuing to re-visit and re-mediate the current challenges within the Jewish educational world. As Tractate Avot 2:21 famously notes: "It is not your responsibility to complete the work, nor are you exempt from engaging in it."

Biblical quotations generally follow Jewish Publication Society, Tanakh. Talmudic translations (including Mishnah) generally follow *The Schottenstein Talmud Bavli*.
Apocrypha is quoted from the New Revised Standard Version.

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Historiography of American Jewish Education: A Case for Guarded Optimism

Jonathan Krasner

In his 1998 article, "American Jewish Education in Historical Perspective," historian Jonathan Sarna lamented the dearth of high-caliber scholarship on the history of American Jewish education. He characterized the bulk of existing works as "parochial and narrowly conceived studies, long on facts and short on analysis" (1998, p. 8). Sarna was hardly alone in his assessment (see, for example, Jacobs, B.M., 2005). Nor was his negative appraisal the result of a contemporary academic sensibility. Thirty years earlier, Lloyd Gartner categorically concluded, in his landmark *Jewish Education in the United States: A Documentary History*, that "What has been written on the history of American Jewish education is largely inadequate." Gartner included a seven-page bibliography at the end of the book's introduction, but observed that "less than half the historical works listed here are good." He included a plea for "serious research, within the double framework of American and Jewish educational history" (1969, pp. 33–40).

That the state of the field has arguably changed so little since Gartner wrote in the late 1960s calls into question the value of another survey barely a decade after Sarna's appraisal. Indeed, if my purpose here was primarily to add my voice to the chorus, there would be little value added. To be sure, I share my colleagues' dim assessment. And yet, a survey of recent scholarship provides reason for cautious optimism. While more than a few studies continue to be penned by educational researchers with little training in historical methodology and suffer from what B. M. Jacobs referred to as a "dilettantish" quality (2005, p. 42), a growing number of articles and monographs defy this categorization. They are being written by a small but growing coterie of younger specialists in Jewish educational history as well as an increasing number of generalist American Jewish historians and social scientists, who are studying the development of Jewish education as one of many facets of American Jewish culture and society. Equally noteworthy is the widening focus of these studies to include heretofore neglected or underemployed interpretive lenses and lines of inquiry. The most significant of these engage in educational

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history as a means of exploring the evolution of American Jewish identity and the American Jewish condition.

Historiography as a Tool in the Professionalization of Jewish Education: The Early Pattern of American Jewish Educational History

As Gartner recognized, the deficient quality of American Jewish educational historiography should be understood as a function of a dynamic that similarly diminished the general field of American educational history. According to critics like Bernard Bailyn (1960), American educational historiography suffered from a host of abuses. Most could be traced to the tendency to write educational history from a position of defense, motivated by a desire to gain professional legitimacy.

Tasked with an essentially apologetic errand, the narrative that these writers of educational history fashioned became essential in investing educators with a nobility of purpose. With the stakes so high, educationalists were loath to leave this project in the hands of professional historians. Bailyn mercilessly lampooned these "educational missionaries," who "with great virtuosity... drew up what became the patristic literature of a powerful academic ecclesia" (1960, p. 8). In his view they were guilty of a multiplicity of sins. In particular, they could not resist the urge to read present interests and meanings into the past. As a result, their work was laced with anachronisms.

Taking the writing of history largely out of the hands of historians also served to isolate the historiography of American education from the wider field of American history. Moreover, the overriding concern with locating antecedents to contemporary systems and institutions caused the writers to define their subject narrowly. In particular, they made little distinction between schooling and education, devoting their attention almost exclusively to formal settings. The overriding subject of these histories was the triumph of the public school system. Education, as defined by Bailyn, involved "the entire process by which a culture transmits itself across generations," and was not merely within the purview of schools (1960, p. 14).

The transition from antiquarian musings to bona fide educational history in Jewish education may be traced to the 1918 publication of Alexander Dushkin's Columbia University Teachers College doctoral dissertation *Jewish Education in New York City*, by the New York Bureau of Jewish Education. Primarily devoted to a survey of the contemporary educational scene, the volume also included an almost 150-page historical study based almost exclusively on primary sources. Even today, Dushkin's work stands out for its thoroughness. Both sections remain invaluable sources of data for contemporary historians. Yet perusing the historical chapters brings to mind Bailyn's criticism of the educational history of his day: "The facts, or at least a great quantity of them are there, but they lie inert, they form no significant pattern" (1960, p. 4).

In one respect, this criticism is unjust, as the narrative is propelled by an unambiguous teleology, namely, the celebration of the Bureau and its indefatigable

director, Samson Benderly. Jewish education prior to 1881 is treated as mere prelude to the proliferation of educational institutions of varying configurations and ideological loyalties during the period of great Eastern European Jewish migration. To the extent that Dushkin's narrative exhibits a modicum of drama, it comes with the Bureau's effort to professionalize the educational field and to organize out of the prevailing chaos a modernized supplementary school system. "The year 1910 marks the beginning of a new era in Jewish education in New York City," Dushkin declared. "The 8 years which followed were more productive in the creation of new schools, and in the improvement and coordination of old ones, than any previous period in the Jewish educational history of New York" (1918, p. 90).

Dushkin's narrative followed an outline suggested by Mordecai Kaplan and Bernard Cronson's 1909 report on the state of Jewish education in New York City, which originally recommended the Bureau's establishment as an arm of the New York *Kehillah*, a communal self-governing body that operated from 1909 until shortly after World War I. Kaplan and Cronson surveyed the range of Jewish educational agencies, highlighting the poor conditions and low quality of education that prevailed in most schools. They noted the lack of a standardized curriculum, a mechanism for teacher quality control or a coordinated system of organization and financing, and successfully urged the *Kehillah* to step into the vacuum (Kaplan and Cronson, 1949, pp. 113–116). Dushkin's history reads as a vindication of *Kehillah*'s efforts.

As a member of the Bureau's staff and a protégé of its director, Dushkin was hardly a disinterested party to the events about which he was writing. Just as contemporaneous general educators made the ascendancy of public education their central theme, so, too, did the writers of American Jewish educational history craft a narrative that climaxed with the triumph of the principle of community responsibility for Jewish education as epitomized by the proliferation of a federation-supported network of central educational agencies and the growth of the communal Talmud Torahs.

Like their counterparts in general education, Dushkin and his colleagues were also heavily invested in endowing their traditionally disparaged field with an air of legitimacy. Their strategy involved creating as much distance as possible between themselves and the teachers and institutions outside of the Bureau's orbit. The traditional *khayder*, the private one-room school, was the subject of especial disparagement, in part because it exemplified the immigrant educational mindset and defied efforts at standardization, but also because it provided the most serious competition to the communal Talmud Torah schools that the Bureau co-opted. The itinerant teachers who operated these establishments were a favorite object of ridicule by progressive and Hebraist teachers alike.

Dushkin's gaze was fixed almost exclusively on formal institutional settings, thereby reducing education to schooling. Interestingly, a theoretical chapter at the beginning of the book hinted at a more expansive view. He offered an operating definition of American Jewish education as "the process of enriching the personality of American Jewish children, by transmitting to them the cultural heritage of the Jews, and by training them to share in the experiences of the Jewish people, both past and

present," and characterized it as a process of "mental and social adjustment" (p. 26). Yet even in this chapter he was quick to equate social attitudes with systems. To his credit, however, Dushkin cast a wide net in his volume. He considered a broad range of educational institutions, venturing into the fields of pre-school and higher education, and even flirting with informal education in his discussion of the Bureau's extension activities. He provided relatively judicious if comparatively perfunctory treatment of the Yiddish folk schools and mostly Reform Sunday schools, although he personally had little use for either institution as safeguards of Jewish continuity.

Along with Emanuel Gamoran's erudite 1924 two-volume history of Jewish education in Eastern Europe and North America, *Changing Conceptions in Jewish Education*, Dushkin's study set the pattern for a generation of Jewish educational historiography. As Gartner intimated, much of it was "pedestrian," expedient, and rarely rose to the level of these two classic works. Weaknesses became magnified, including the lack of a comparative frame of reference and the relative inattention to schools that did not share a cultural Zionist orientation. Over time, the master narrative was sharpened, reaching its apogee in the later historical essays of Leo Honor, an early disciple of pioneering Jewish educator Samson Benderly, and Judah Pilch's 1969 edited volume *A History of Jewish Education in the United States*.

Although both men were generally careful, they were not beyond the occasional resort to hyperbole in the interests of heightening the drama of their narratives. In one memorable example, from a 1952 article on elementary education, Honor asserted that "the negative and harmful influences" of the watered-down Sunday schools and the backward-looking *khaydarim* provoked "a hue and cry… in one community after another during the first decade of the twentieth century, and a growing realization developed that something must be done to put an end to this intolerable condition" (Gannes, 1965, pp. 60–61). In fact, documentary evidence suggests that to the extent that immigrant dissatisfaction with the state of Jewish education existed, few were sufficiently exercised by prevailing conditions to take any action. In New York, the impetus for reform came largely from the professionals, who had a difficult time winning support from the masses, and was financed by the wealthy as a means of social control and amelioration (Goren, 1970). As for the Sunday schools, while their lamentable state became a recurring subject of discussion at the annual conventions of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, efforts at intensification and standardization were generally unsuccessful (Marcus, 1993, pp. 594–611).

In the 1940s and 1950s the outlines of a counter-narrative began to congeal, as reflected in the writings of Teachers Institute professor and textbook author Zevi Scharfstein, who portrayed Benderly and his followers as unnecessarily quick to make concessions to the dominant culture. As a result of a willingness to compromise their standards and dilute their educational program they became inadvertent agents of a rarefied American Jewish culture, he argued (1960–1965; Scharfstein, 1955). Early proponents of the revisionist view, including Boston Bureau of Jewish Education superintendent Louis Hurwich, tended to be ardent Jewish nationalists who despaired at the apparent failure of a small but dedicated immigrant-dominated Hebraist movement to make deep and enduring inroads on American soil. Their

perspective was shared and elaborated by a younger generation that came to prominence in the 1960s and 1970s when the communal agenda was shifting from facilitating integration to concern about assimilation. The standout voice in the group belonged to Walter Ackerman, a Harvard-trained educator who wrote historical and other educational studies over the course of a half-century, while serving in a variety of positions, including camp director, day school principal, and university professor and administrator. Not coincidentally, Ackerman was a product of the Boston Talmud Torah system and Boston Hebrew College, where he internalized the maximalist educational philosophy of Hurwich and his successor Benjamin Shevach (Band, 1998; Reimer, 1995, pp. 279–301; Ackerman, Alexander, et al., 2008).

Despite its dissenting ideological perspective, the revisionist history resembled its older counterpart in important ways. It was written primarily by educational practitioners rather than professional historians and functioned as a rationalization for their work in the field. The focus continued to be on schools, although other educational institutions, particularly camps and community centers, garnered some attention. Finally, it was uneven in quality, and of negligible quantity.

The Turning Point in Jewish Educational Historiography

By the time Gartner was writing in the late 1960s, a reformation was well underway in the field of general educational historiography. Spurred by a scathing report issued by the Committee on the Role of Education in American History of the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education, it was spearheaded by Bailyn's study of education in the colonial period and exemplified by Lawrence Cremin's masterful three-volume *American Education* (1970, 1980, 1988). A similar transformation in the writing of American Jewish educational history was slower in coming. With the possible exception of Gartner himself, whose scholarship includes a seminal essay on Jews and public school education (1976, pp. 157–189), prior to the 1970s there were no American Jewish historians eager to take up Bailyn's cause. Jacobs pointed out that with a few notable exceptions, like Jacob R. Marcus, American Jewish historians took little interest in educational history. He postulated that the lack of attention was a function of their disconnection from Jewish schools. Unlike American historians who were intimately involved in the so-called "history wars"—the public school curricular debates relating to teaching of history and social studies—American Jewish historians had little to say about Jewish history instruction in supplementary and day schools (Jacobs, B.M., 2005, p. 38). This disparity can be attributed to two factors: the focus of formal Jewish education on the elementary and middle school grades, when students are developmentally ill-equipped to engage in critical historical study, and the relative youth of American Jewish history as a recognized sub-field of Jewish history. American Jewish historians harbored a lingering sense of disciplinary inferiority, which probably discouraged them from tackling perceived "soft" topics, like the history of the professions.

Gartner's (1969) documentary history, which included an introductory essay outlining major themes in American Jewish educational history, encouraged scholarly activity. So, too, did Pilch's edited history, published the same year, which provided a useful if conventional narrative framework and included extensive footnotes. Pilch assembled an eclectic group of writers, including the historian Hyman Grinstein, a scholar of the colonial and nineteenth-century New York Jewish community; educator and sociologist Uriah Z. Engelman, whose knowledge of the contemporary educational scene was enhanced by his involvement in the 1959 national Jewish education survey; and education professor and scholar of modern Jewish thought Meir Ben-Horin (Pilch, 1969).

The choice of Ben-Horin to write on the decisive period between 1900 and 1940 was inspired. The European-born and European-educated Ben-Horin was able to maintain critical distance from his subject. Ben-Horin accurately portrayed the Jewish educational establishment's embrace of a supplementary educational system as an attempt to balance the dual imperatives of American integration and Jewish survival, rather than an abdication to unfettered Americanization. He reminded readers that the organization in the early twentieth century of an extensive day school system modeled upon the Catholic parochial schools was an economic and political impossibility. At the same time, however, he faulted the establishment's inability "to go beyond the recognition of opportunity and to envisage 'trans-fusion' " (Pilch, 1969, p. 55).

Ironically, Ben-Horin's personal biography—his coming of age in Nazi Danzig, his avid Zionism and eventual departure for Palestine in 1937—also contributed to the chapter's weaknesses. His analysis fell short in its comparative lack of attention to the devastating impact of the Depression on the Jewish educational system and its impulse to read the era retrospectively in the light of the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel. If most Jewish educators turned a blind eye to "the speed and the fury of nazidom's 'gathering storm'" (p. 55), as Ben-Horin charged, they were certainly not alone. As for his contention that they failed to grasp, "the passion and the muscle of European Jewry's efforts on behalf of Jewish statehood in Palestine ever since the issuance of the Balfour Declaration in 1917" (p. 55), it implied a unanimity of purpose and action on both sides of the Atlantic that simply did not exist. The upbuilding of Palestine before the 1930s was viewed by most observers as a fledgling and quixotic enterprise and the prospects for Jewish statehood seemed doubtful to all but the most enthusiastic Zionist partisans. In fact, cultural-survivalist Jewish educators in the United States were often far ahead of the majority of their constituents, in their dogged commitment to a cultural Zionist curriculum that prioritized Modern Hebrew instruction.

Jewish Education and the Creation of an Americanized Judaism

It was Arthur's (Goren, 1970) *New York Jews and the Quest for Community: The Kehillah Experiment, 1908–1922* that broke considerable ground and set the pattern for more recent works incorporating educational history into treatments of wider

topics. Goren devoted two chapters to a study of the Bureau of Jewish Education, which comprised a centerpiece of the *Kehillah*'s program. Goren contextualized the Bureau's philosophy and activities within the political, social, and cultural currents of the 1910s. His research not only demonstrated how the *Kehillah*'s educational work provided its leaders with an opportunity to elaborate and propagate their cultural-survivalist theories of Jewish communal life, it also revealed how the *Kehillah*'s activities were blunted by various rejectionist elements within the Jewish community (1970, pp. 86–133). [On the New York Bureau of Jewish Education see also, Winter (1966).]

Goren was trained at Columbia University by social historian Robert D. Cross, whose scholarship on the history of American Catholicism accorded considerable attention to religious education. Cross's research interests and his sympathetic attitude toward Bailyn's plea to transform educational history no doubt influenced Goren's approach. His influence, in turn, is clearly visible in the work of Deborah Dash Moore. Her studies of second generation New York Jews (1981) and the growth of the Jewish sun-belt communities in Los Angeles and Miami (1994) both incorporate educational history into their broader narrative. The former volume, in particular, made education a central focus of inquiry, and pointed to the formative role that both secular and religious education played in shaping the collective consciousness of interwar Jewry.

If Moore used the sociological category of generation as a lens through which to explore the shaping of urban American Jewish identity, her graduate school colleague at Columbia, Jeffrey Gurock, chose to explore similar themes through the case study of a single neighborhood, Harlem. Both Moore and Gurock agreed that the Jewish "love affair" with the city gestated first in the ethnic neighborhood. Unlike earlier Jewish neighborhood studies which focused primarily on institutions, like Alter Landesman's volume on Brownsville (1969), Gurock's work emphasized group social dynamics, in particular, the tensions between the working-class immigrants, who attempted to recreate the spirit of the Lower East Side ghetto, and the upwardly mobile, acculturated "alrightniks," who sought to distance themselves from old-world and ghetto values without relinquishing their Jewishness. As Gurock demonstrated, a primary arena for this inter-group squabbling was the Jewish school. Institutions like the Uptown Talmud Torah and Rabbi Salanter Talmud Torah became incubators for an Americanized modern Orthodoxy; sites where the "first efforts were made to separate the essence of traditional Judaism from its old-world shell." But the efforts of acculturated and newly affluent lay leaders to introduce a modernized educational program in cooperation with the Bureau of Jewish Education provoked fierce resistance from the traditionalists. Gurock pointed out that a similar struggle played out within the much smaller segment of the community that chose to reject public school education and the supplementary Talmud Torahs in favor of all-day Jewish schools (Gurock, 1979, pp. 86–113).

In their challenge to the prevailing sociological model of immigrant assimilation popularized by scholars like Ernest Burgess and Louis Wirth, Moore and Gurock spotlighted institutions that promoted ethnic identification, including educational settings. Their example was followed over the next two decades by historians like

Jenna Weissman Joselit (1990) and David Kaufman (1999), who amplified, refined, and gently critiqued their pioneering work. Kaufman explored the genesis and development of the synagogue center, questioning the prevailing view that it first emerged from the experiments of Jewish Center founder Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan and Institutional Synagogue leader Rabbi Herbert Goldstein. Among the institutions that he viewed as a forerunner was the Central Jewish Institute, a communal school center that was brought to life during World War I by two Benderly disciples, Isaac Berkson and Albert Schoolman. Joselit explored the solidification of New York's modern Orthodox identity in the interwar period and included a chapter on the transition from community Talmud Torahs to modern all-day schools. She too used CJI as a case study, pairing it with the Ramaz School, the modern Orthodox day school that purchased CJI's building in the mid-1940s.

More recently, the history and significance of CJI as an agent of Americanization and ethnic identity construction and perpetuation was considered by Miriam Heller Stern (2007) and Jonathan Krasner (2009, pp. 411–467). Stern, who was trained at Stanford University's School of Education, also wrote an insightful reappraisal of the Benderly era utilizing analytical templates that she borrowed from the work of leading historians of American public school education, David Tyack and Larry Cuban (2004, pp. 16–26). Krasner (2011) wrote a reconsideration of the development on American Jewish education in the first half of the twentieth century, including the rise of the bureau system, the impact of progressive education of Jewish school curricula, and the transition from a communal to a congregationally based supplementary school system. He also published a three-part series on the history of *Jewish Education*, the journal that served as the primary organ for Benderly's protégés. The journal played a central role in creating a national community of like-minded educators, providing a platform for debate on the major issues and educational trends of the day as well as a venue for the sharing of programs and pedagogies (2005, pp. 121–177, 2005, pp. 279–317, 2006, pp. 29–76).

Accommodation and Resistance as a Theme in Orthodox Educational Historiography

Gurock's magnum opus, *Orthodox Jews in America* (2009) is a model for the seamless integration of educational history into a synthetic American Jewish historical narrative. Other scholars who study the Orthodox community, including Etan Diamond (2000) and William Helmreich (1982) also have devoted considerable attention to education. This is hardly surprising given the central role that Jewish education has assumed in virtually all segments of the Orthodox world. As Haym Soloveitchik elucidated in his seminal essay "Rupture and Reconstruction," in recent times the prevailing "mimetic" style of education that centered on the Jewish home has been replaced by a text-centered formal style of education that takes place primarily in the *yeshiva* (1994). Soloveitchik demonstrated that the

ascendancy of the text-centered model had far-reaching implications for Orthodox Jewish ritual practice and cultural life.

The growth of Orthodox *yeshiva* day schools is one of the most important sociological trends of the post-War era. Jack Wertheimer pronounced it "the most significant factor in the revival of Orthodoxy" (1993, p. 130). The history of the day school movement was treated by Alvin Schiff (1966) and Doniel Zvi Kramer (1984), but it was only in more recent studies, including Gurock (1989), Diamond (2000) and Seth Farber (2004) that the phenomenon was analyzed using the categories of social class, geography, and gender. Diamond explained that post-War Orthodox day schools served two crucial social functions: They "provided an arena for the expression of Orthodox Jewish religious suburbanization" and were instrumental in "transmitting the styles of religious suburbanization to the second and third generations" (2000, p. 89). As Soloveitchik observed, this new Orthodox culture was characterized by rigorous observance and conspicuous material consumption.

Two of the trailblazing modern-day schools, the Ramaz School in Manhattan and the Maimonides School in Boston, were actually established prior to World War II, in 1937. Farber's treatment of the origins and development of the latter institution, founded by the venerable modern Orthodox leader, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, emphasized how American mores influenced Orthodox culture. Two of the defining features of these modern-day schools were coeducational classes and advanced Talmud instruction for girls and young women. Both innovations were controversial, and debate continues today as to whether Rabbi Soloveitchik, in particular, viewed coeducation as an expedient concession or a matter of principle. Regardless, these features served to separate Ramaz and Maimonides from more traditional day schools and *yeshivas*, highlighting how adherents to Orthodoxy would continue to define themselves based on their responses to the challenges of modernity; liberals would chart a path of accommodation, while traditionalists would insist upon resistance.

As Farber and Gurock demonstrated, the modern Orthodox day schools were recognized by their supporters as a break from the European-style *yeshiva*; their mission was to train Jewishly literate laypeople who were completely at home in American society, as opposed to the traditional *yeshivas*, which devoted themselves to shaping an intellectual elite. To this end, the schools would offer a secular education that rivaled the best private schools and a rich variety of extra-curricular sports, clubs, and cultural activities. They also refrained from holding classes on Sundays. Ramaz's founder Rabbi Joseph Lookstein readily acknowledged that the schools were intent upon removing from the students "the consciousness of being different." There was little or no compunction about emulating "the ways of the Gentiles" (Farber, 2004, p. 87; Gurock, 1989, pp. 42–44, 62).

On the opposite end of the spectrum from Ramaz and Maimonides were the educational institutions that strove to recreate the spirit of great Lithuanian and Polish *yeshivas*. In the interwar years, the standout institution was Mesivta Torah Vodaath in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, which was led by Rabbi Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz. The center, meanwhile, was occupied by the Mizrachi movement and the community that coalesced around the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological

Seminary (RIETS) and Yeshiva College in Washington Heights. The competing cultures and the interactions between these schools were captured nicely in Gurock's portrait of interwar Brooklyn (2002, pp. 227–241, 2009, pp. 184–198) and his volume on Jews and American sports (2005). Mendlowitz also founded Torah U'Mesorah, the National Society for Hebrew Day Schools (Kramer, 1984).

Formal education for girls was relatively neglected in the *yeshiva* community until the post-War years. It was not until 1937 that an American affiliate of the European Bais Yaakov girls' schools was opened in Williamsburg. However, the system grew rapidly in the decades after the Holocaust. Historical research into this phenomenon is a significant lacuna, which promises to be filled by the work of Leslie Ginsparg, who is in the midst of completing her doctoral dissertation at New York University. Yeshiva education for girls was likewise becoming normative in more centrist segments of the community. In 1948, Yeshiva University established the Central Yeshiva High School for Girls, and in 1954 opened Stern College for women. By the 1960s, girls made up over 40% of children studying in all-day Jewish schools. In addition to the growing number of coeducational day schools, 14 girls' schools were operating across the country by 1963 (Gurock, 2009, p. 211). Newfound interest in girls' education among the centrist and rigorously Orthodox reflected growing communal fears not only about the inadequacy of home-based socialization, but also the embourgeoisement of the Orthodox community.

The *yeshiva* community was considerably strengthened and diversified by the influx of European refugees in the years immediately preceding and after World War II. Significantly, the rigorously Orthodox began to branch out geographically. Although Brooklyn and Washington Heights attracted many newcomers and continued to serve as hubs of Orthodox life, significant refugee communities and august *yeshivas* were established across the Hudson in Lakewood, New Jersey, and in more remote cities, including Cleveland, Ohio, and Baltimore, Maryland. "For all of them in their holy quests to recapture the past, yeshiva education, of the separatist variety was a *sine qua non*," Gurock concluded. "Thus in the first post-War decades, these aggressive aggregations of foreign-born Orthodox Jews began building a network of schools designed to keep America out of their children's development to the fullest extent that the law allowed" (2009, p. 216).

A New Lens of Inquiry: The Impact of Gender on Jewish Educational History

The use of gender as a lens to explore issues in Jewish educational historiography was hardly limited to studies focusing on the Orthodox community. Indeed, gender studies opened entirely new lines of inquiry as well as shedding new light on seemingly exhausted topics. Standout studies in the past two decades include Dianne Ashton's volume *Rebecca Gratz: Women and Judaism in Antebellum America* (1997) and Melissa Klapper's *Jewish Girls Coming of Age in America, 1860–1920* (2005). Both scholars presented identity formation as an ongoing process of

negotiation. Moreover, their interests included both the history of Jewish girls and women and the construction of Jewish girlhood and womanhood.

It is no accident that Gratz founded the first Jewish Sunday school in Philadelphia, the same city where the Protestant American Sunday School Union emerged. An appreciation for Gratz's educational work is considerably enhanced by Ashton's use of a comparative perspective, particularly her reading of the sources in the light of Anne Boylan's scholarship on the Protestant Sunday schools. Under Ashton's microscope, Gratz's Sunday school likewise becomes an enlightening case study of the impact of gender on curricular development. Under the influence of Gratz and her all-female staff, the school's curriculum came to reflect the values of Victorian culture and feminized religion, particularly "the importance of domestic piety, the heart's longing for and devotion to God and God's loving-kindness." Even the choice of Biblical texts, which was heavily weighted toward stories with prominent female characters, suggested a womanly influence (1997, pp. 149–169).

Equally fascinating is Ashton's treatment of the role that Gratz and the Hebrew Sunday School played in shaping a "domesticated" American Judaism. Ashton located Gratz within a subculture of upper- and middle-class white women who participated in and helped to legitimate "domestic feminism," the use of "a rhetoric of domesticity" to legitimate vocations beyond homemaking and childrearing. In effect, the domestic realm was expanded to include a range of voluntary organizational work, including teaching in the Hebrew Sunday School (1997, pp. 19 and 22–23).

Klapper's book, which explores the construction of American Jewish adolescence among girls in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, similarly approaches education as a social phenomenon, a process of enculturation and acculturation. To be sure, the schools—both public and Jewish—were important settings for this type of learning and Klapper dedicates considerable attention to both. But so were the myriad other places where girls and young women lived their everyday lives. Indeed, with the working-class family economy often unable to support secondary schooling, let alone university, alternative educational venues took on an exaggerated importance in working-class children's lives, particularly as they struggled to Americanize. Klapper devoted an entire chapter of her volume to "Alternative Forms of Education for Working-Class Girls," by which she meant to include the Anglo-Jewish press, recreational institutions, settlement houses, night schools, and specialized institutions like orphanages and working girls' homes (2005, pp. 105–142, esp. 107).

Like Ashton, Emily Bingham (2003), and other scholars of the American Jewish women's experience, Klapper was attuned to the intersections between gender and class. To become an American Jewish woman was synonymous with internalizing middle-class values and gender norms. Ultimately, however, whether her protagonists were bourgeois or members of the "upwardly mobile working class," their common endeavor involved finding a balance between tradition and modernization. Adding her voice to those of Moore and Gurock, Klapper averred that the pathways to acculturation and assimilation were hardly uniform and seldom linear (2005, pp. 109 and 235–239).

Education as Enculturation and Socialization: Reading the Sources

Klapper's work was also distinguished by its attention first and foremost to descriptive sources, produced by the girls themselves—diaries, memoirs, letters, scrapbooks, etc.—rather than the prescriptive sources that usually capture the attention of cultural and gender studies scholars. She was careful not to treat American Jewish "girl culture" monolithically (2005, p. 1–5). Of course, as Klapper herself acknowledged, prescriptive materials played an important role in the education process. Riv-Ellen Prell (1999), Joselit (1994) and others have been attuned to the impact of representations in books, newspapers, and magazines on socialization and the shaping of American Jewish identity in youth and adults. Children, meanwhile, were encouraged to take their cues about Jewish holiday observance from the pages of Jewish children's books, including Sadie Rose Weilerstein's 1935 *The Adventures of K'tonton*. Simultaneously, at a moment when the movement was re-embracing traditional rituals and ceremonies, Mamie Gamoran was similarly instructing a generation of Reform Jewish children (Krasner, 2003, pp. 344–361; Grant, 2010). Somewhat older children and youth were able to turn to the pages of Jewish educational magazines, which served a significant educative function. Sue Levi Elwell (1986, pp. 240–250) and Naomi Cohen (2004, pp. 1–35) have written on this subject, but the topic is ripe for further research.

Another line of inquiry has been to analyze the representations of insiders and outsiders in Jewish textbooks (Krasner, 2002). While it is difficult to accurately gauge the impact of schoolbooks on their student consumers, in part because teachers play an important mediating role when the books are used in formal classroom settings, they often govern what students learn, as teachers look to them to set curriculum and organize subject matter. Their power is only enhanced by the general public's tendency to treat them as authoritative (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 5). Moreover, as distillations of the values, stories, and culture that a society itself considers essential to transmit to the next generation, textbooks provide an important perspective on the socialization process. In the case of American Jewish textbooks, images of archetypal others, like Christians and Arabs, as well as depictions of various Jewish sub-groups who were negatively viewed by the social and cultural elites provided a foil. They enabled the authors to frame Jewish distinctiveness contextually and discursively, in opposition to a countertype. Simultaneously, by defining the boundaries of the in-group, they played an important role in promoting a sense of *Klal Yisrael* (Jewish unity).

Another important contribution to the literature on textbooks is Penny Schine-Gold's examination of the role of children's Bible's and Bible story collections in shaping the identities of second- and third-generation Jews of Eastern European descent (2004, esp. 96–208). Schine-Gold's work emphasized how the Bible replaced the Talmud as "the binding text of Judaism and Jewish education" (p. 206). She further reflected on the books' application of moral and character education in a Jewish context. Jacobs' study of social studies curricula (2005) also contributed

important insights into the motivations and objectives of early twentieth-century progressive Jewish educators.

All of these historians ultimately interpreted their sources in light of the American Jewish integrationist agenda that guided the mission of mainstream educators, reflecting upon the difficulties that authors and pedagogues experienced in applying the tenets of progressive education to Jewish education, particularly given its traditional emphasis on text learning. Rona Sheramy's history of Holocaust education in Jewish settings (2001), which focused on the past half-century, likewise stressed how educational narratives are shaped by the wider community and national discourse. Their work contributes substantially to a literature that until the 2000s was distinguished primarily by a pair of articles by Ackerman on Jewish history and Israel studies textbooks (1984, pp. 1–35, 1986, pp. 4–14). Of course, as mentioned above, the limitation of all of these studies was that they shed only limited light on what was actually taught in the classroom. Klapper's observation that, "the most rewarding history may lie in the intriguing spaces between representation and lived experience," is indubitably on target (2005, p. 4).

The New Focus on Youth

In focusing her attention on adolescent girls, Klapper was anticipating a recent upsurge in scholarly interest in Jewish youth. At an October 2008 conference entitled "Jewish Youth and Social Change," which was convened at the Center for Jewish History, participants were charged with no less as a task than the rethinking of American Jewish history through the use of youth as both a subject and an interpretive category.

Of course, youth is not an entirely new subject. For example, American Jewish historians have long been cognizant that young people made up a disproportionate number of immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe. Susan Glenn wrote compellingly of how immigrant girls and young women were socialized by the garment industry sweatshop and the trade union. Her point was reflected evocatively in a poem she quoted that was penned by one of the young factory workers:

> I would like to write a poem
> But I have no words.
> My grammar was ladies waists
> And my schooling skirts. (Glenn, 1990, p. 2)

Ruth Gay wrote of the young immigrants as "unfinished people." Many left their home towns and villages before they were old enough to intensely imbibe its traditions, folkways, and culture, yet most arrived when they were too old to become seamlessly integrated into American society. As such, they were a transitional generation (2001, pp. 4–5).

Similarly, Sarna (1989, 1995) and others (Pearlstein, 1993; Rogow, 1993; Schwartz, 1991) have taken note of the role of American-born young people in

Philadelphia and New York in spearheading a Jewish revival in the late nineteenth century. Many of the institutions that emerged from this renewal movement were broadly educational in orientation, including the *American Hebrew* (1879), the Jewish Publication Society (1888), the American Jewish Historical Society (1892), Gratz College (1893), the Jewish Chautauqua Society (1893), and the National Council for Jewish Women (1893). In its early years, the revival was associated with the burgeoning Young Men's Hebrew Associations (1870s), the forerunner of the Jewish Community Centers. The median age of the revivalists was about 25, although some like Cyrus Adler and Henrietta Szold were in their teens when they first became active. It is worth remembering that until the post-War era, the term "youth" was commonly used to refer to people under 30.

Prell's contribution to the growing discourse on youth focused predominately on camping (2006, 2007, pp. 77–106). She argued that in the aftermath of the Holocaust, rabbis, educators, and other Jewish professionals tried to shape the Jewish youth in the 1950s and early 1960s into a "redeemer generation." Jewish educational summer camps, which grew in number and popularity in the 1940s and 1950s (Sarna, 2005), and in which Jewish values and culture could be lived as well as taught, were recognized as an ideal venue in which to mold a "saving remnant."

The earliest serious scholarly work on the history of Jewish camping was Daniel Isaacman's unpublished doctoral dissertation (1970). More recently both Ackerman (1999, pp. 3–24) and Zola (2006, pp. 1–26) provided useful introductions to the history of organized Jewish camping, including its debt to the Young Men's Christian Association—Young Women's Christian Association camps, the Fresh Air movement, and American scouting. The history of the first Americanized Jewish culture camp, Cejwin (1919), is treated by Stern (2007) and Krasner (2011). Sarna's essay (2006, pp. 27–51) in the Lorge-Zola volume focuses on the "crucial decade" from 1941 to 1952, which witnessed the founding of many influential educational camps and heralded a golden age of Jewish camping. According to Sarna, the 1940s was a turning point in the history of the Jewish camping movement, as the focus shifted from philanthropic and community-based camps to privately owned camps catering to the wealthy and educational camps associated with denominational groups or cultural institutions.

A growing historical literature on Jewish educational camping has focused primarily on the non-Orthodox denominational camps. The best histories of the Conservative movement's Ramah camps are arguably a pair of articles by Shuly Rubin Schwartz (1987) and Ackerman (1999), which focus on the early years, and Michael Brown's (1997, pp. 823–854) overview of Ramah's development through the 1970s, which appeared in *Tradition Renewed*. The Lorge-Zola volume, *A Place of Our Own* (2006), which constituted the major contribution on the history of Reform camping, focused primarily on the first Reform camp, Olin Sang Ruby Union Institute, in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. One particularly interesting essay in the volume, by Judah M. Cohen (2006, pp. 173–208), focused on the critical role that music and song-leading played in creating the culture of the Union-Institute camps, and how the camp music ultimately influenced the development of Reform synagogue liturgical music.

Outside of the histories of Cejwin, Ramah and the Union-Institute camps, the scholarship on educational camping is considerably thinner. The standouts are Moore (1999, pp. 201–221) and Bruce Powell (2003, pp. 171–184) treatments of Shlomo Bardin's founding of the Brandeis Camp Institute. Full-scale histories of the Hebrew-speaking and Yiddish-speaking camps and Orthodox camping remain to be written.

Neglected Areas of Research

Sparse as the history of Jewish camping may be, it is substantial when compared to the literature on other settings for informal Jewish education. With the exception of the Intercollegiate Menorah Association (Greene, 2011; Joselit, 1978, pp. 133–154; Korelitz, 1997, pp. 75–100; Fried, 2001, pp. 147–174), little of note has been written on the history of American Jewish youth organizations since Samuel Grand's dissertation in 1958, although, J.J. Goldberg and Elliot Kling's sourcebook on Habonim (1993) is useful. Nor has the "Israel experience" or Eastern European youth trip phenomena been treated historically, although a growing sociological and anthropological literature (see, for example, Kelner, 2010; Mittelberg, 1992, pp. 194–218; Helmreich, 1995, pp. 16–20; Heilman, 1999, pp. 231–249; Kelner, 2003, pp. 124–155; Sheramy, 2007, pp. 307–325; and Saxe & Chazan, 2008) should prove useful to future researchers. Adult education has fared only marginally better. Among the great experiments in adult education were the Jewish Chautauqua Society (Pearlstein, 1993) and the havurah movement (Prell, 1989). Sarna's recent overview of the history of adult education (2005, pp. 207–222), pointed to three periods of heightened activity prior to the present day: the 1840s, the late nineteenth century, and the late 1930s–1940s. Following Robert Peers' theory, Sarna asserted that adult education tended to flourish in periods of great social change.

Another area that has received scant attention is the history of Yiddish-speaking schools. At their height, in the 1930s, the Yiddish schools enrolled about 10% of those children receiving a Jewish education (Fishman, 2007, p. 271). But they have been the object of considerable misconception, wittingly or unwittingly perpetuated by Zionist and religious educators, which, in turn, resulted in their marginalization by scholars of education. Two recent articles by David Fishman (2007, pp. 271–285, 2009) and Tony Michels history of Yiddish socialists in New York (2005, pp. 179–216) have begun to fill the void. Our knowledge of the history of Yiddish schools in North America promises to expand with Fradle Freidenreich's new volume *Passionate Pioneers: Yiddish Secular Education in North America, 1910–1960* (2010).

Likewise, the history of non-Orthodox day schools, including community schools, has been largely neglected. While these schools account for only about 20% of day school enrollments (Schick, 2004, p. 1), until recently they comprised the fastest-growing segment of the day school pie. Valerie Thaler's history of Akiba Academy in Philadelphia (2008) and M. Schreiber's study of the origins of the Agnon school in Cleveland (1970, pp. 66–79) are among the few available case studies.

Scholarship on Higher Education

One area of educational history that has received considerable attention in recent years is higher education. Jewish Studies has undergone a veritable revolution over the past half-century, and it is only natural that its phenomenal expansion would attract the interest of historians. In 1945 there were only a dozen full-time faculty positions in Jewish studies at American universities. By the time Arnold Band published the first broad treatment of the growth of Jewish studies, in 1966, the number had grown to over 60 (1966, pp. 3–30). Despite this impressive growth, practitioners of Jewish studies still considered themselves to be pioneers (Neusner, 1985, p. 41). By the end of the 1980s Jewish studies scholars were operating in an entirely remade landscape, with over 600 academic positions in Jewish studies (Band, 1989, p. 17). The proliferation of Jewish studies courses and departments on college campuses was accompanied by rising student enrollments, translating into a growing audience for Jewish education.

The early history and mainstreaming of Jewish studies in American universities was explored in depth by Paul Ritterband and Harold Wechsler (1994). Edward Shapiro provided a concise but useful summary of post-War developments, including the founding of the Association for Jewish Studies in 1969 and the general burgeoning of Jewish studies between 1965 and 1985 (1992, pp. 71–88). Among the more focused studies, of particular note is Shuly Rubin Schwartz's account of the publication of the Jewish encyclopedia (1991), Robert Liberles' intellectual biography of Columbia University historian Salo Baron (1995) and Harriet Pass Freidenreich's focus on the mainstreaming of Jewish women academics (2007). The historical resistance of English literature departments in particular to the appointment of Jewish faculty is explored in a pair of books by Susanne Klingenstein (1991, 1998). Among the stories that have not adequately been told is the contribution of Brandeis University to the promotion of Jewish scholarship, particularly through its recruitment of refugee scholars Nahum Glatzer and Alexander Altmann.

If by the 1980s Jewish studies were firmly ensconced in the university, scholars were not entirely sanguine. To be sure, concerns that the field was growing too quickly to safeguard the quality of scholarship and instruction (Cohen, 1970, p. 144; Fox, 1986, p. 143) were eventually put to rest. But these gave way to new anxieties, including the apparent marginalization of Jewish studies in the new multicultural academy (Horowitz et al., 1998, pp. 116–130). A perennial concern was the conflict that many Jewish studies scholars felt between their commitment to academic rigor and their concern for Jewish survival. This problem was only magnified and complicated by the influx of huge contributions into Jewish studies programs by funders who were primarily concerned with shoring up Jewish students' religious and ethnic identities (Shapiro, 1992, pp. 83–84).

Until the second half of the twentieth century, the loci of the Jewish scholarship in North America were the non-Orthodox seminaries. As Wechsler and Ritterband explained, "seminaries provided an alternative to intellectual exclusion from universities," and by the 1910s were widely viewed as the most promising venue for

Judaic scholarship. But even before they were eclipsed by the universities in the post-War era, they were hobbled by withering criticism from respected quarters in intellectual circles and the academy. Among the complaints against the seminaries were middling academic standards, narrow scholarship, curricular superficiality, and petty faculty politicking. Members of the Jewish Theological Seminary faculty contributed to their own marginalization within the American academic world (as well as the Conservative movement) by publishing much of their scholarship in Hebrew (Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994, pp. 139–147; Meyer, 1992, pp. 63–67; Sarna, 1997, pp. 67–68).

Significant anniversaries were judged to be opportune occasions for thorough studies of the largest rabbinical seminaries. The first of these surveys appeared in 1976 to mark the centennial of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Historian Michael Meyer set the standard for his and the subsequent volumes with his commitment "to tell the story of the HUC-JIR with utmost honesty, including the failures and the unpleasant wrangles no less than the accomplishments and expressions of unity, the struggles for power no less than the lofty idealism" (Meyer, 1992, p. 3). Gurock's history of Yeshiva University, with its meditation on that school's ongoing efforts to negotiate the tensions inherent in its *Torah U'Mada* philosophy, followed in 1988. The latest and most ambitious effort, dedicated to the history of the Jewish Theological Seminary, was the two-volume collection of essays *Tradition Renewed* (1997), edited by Jack Wertheimer, which appeared in that institution's 110th year. Comprised of 40 essays by an array of scholars, some of whom have no direct connection to the institution, the collection was almost universally hailed for its breadth, depth, and level of candor. Historians of Jewish education and religion will find much of interest in the chapters devoted to the institution's history and relationship with the movement and the wider Jewish, religious, and academic communities. Of particular interest will be Kaufman (1997, pp. 565–629), Alan Mintz (1997, pp. 81–112) and Virginia Lieson Brereton's (1997, pp. 737–765) studies of the history, culture, and influence of Teachers Institute, Schwartz (1997, pp. 293–325), Robert Liberles (1997, pp. 329–351), Harvey Goldberg (1997, pp. 355–437) and Sarna (1997, pp. 53–80) articles on the Seminary's faculty, Rela Mintz Geffen's study of Teachers Institute alumni (1997, pp. 633–653), and David Ellenson and Lee Bycel's (1997, pp. 525–591) analysis of the evolution of the rabbinical school curriculum.

The association of Teachers Institute with the Seminary and the crucial role its longtime dean Mordecai Kaplan played both in the areas of training and articulating a vision and a rationale for American Jewish education accounts for the disproportionate attention to this institution in the historical literature (Kaufman, 1997, pp. 611–612). In formulating his vision, Kaplan derived inspiration from both Schechter and Benderly. He liked to think of TI as born of two parents, the Seminary and the *Kehillah*. "If Kaplan was ideologically located midway between Schechter and Benderly, then the Teachers Institute would similarly be situated as the connecting link between the greater Jewish community and the insular Seminary, between the downtown masses and the uptown (rabbinical) classes," Kaufman observed

(582). Considerable light is shed on the early years of TI in biographies of Kaplan (Scult, 1993) and Seminary professor Israel Friedlaender (Shargel, 1985), as well as Kaplan's diaries, which were edited and published by Mel Scult (2001).

Of course, TI was not the only Hebrew teacher-training school. By the 1930s there were ten Hebrew teaching colleges, including four in New York City and one each in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. The earliest of these schools was Gratz College, in Philadelphia, which opened in 1887. Its history was recounted by Diane King (1979) and Jerome Kutnick (1998, pp. 321–348). The impact of Boston's Hebrew College was explored by Ackerman (1983, pp. 16–26) and Reimer (1995, pp. 285–307), while the general phenomenon of Hebrew teaching colleges was surveyed by Ackerman (1993, pp. 105–128).

The Jewish experience in the United States also intersects in significant ways with the history of American education more generally. Of especial concern has been the impact of social anti-Semitism on admissions at elite universities during the interwar years, and the eventual easing of restrictions as anti-Semitism declined in the decades after World War II. Books by Marcia Graham Synnott (1979) and Wechsler (1977), explored the legacy of discrimination at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Columbia. The most recent contribution to this literature, Jerome Karabel's *The Chosen*, covered similar ground but was considerably enhanced by the availability of new documentary sources (2005).

Conclusion

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is reason for guarded optimism about the future outlook for American Jewish historiography. Historians of the American Jewish experience increasingly appear to recognize education not only as a process of cultural transmission, but also as an expression of culture and an engine of cultural production. Some of the most prominent voices in the field have devoted considerable attention to education in their personal research and have encouraged their graduate students to explore topics with an educational history component or focus. Other scholars, in related humanities and social science fields like literature, anthropology, sociology have enriched the discourse with interdisciplinary studies that sometimes introduce novel categories of inquiry. At the same time, the slim ranks of Jewish educational historians have lately grown to include a few promising scholars who trained in history of education programs at schools of education. Conference programs at annual conferences of Jewish studies and Jewish education reflect the growth of scholarship in the modest but steady inclusion of panels devoted to the history of education, even if the conveners sometimes prefer to frame the scholarship in other terms, like childhood, youth, and gender. Journals like *American Jewish History* and the *American Jewish Archives Journal* occasionally publish in educational history, while a revitalized *Journal of Jewish Education* promises to enhance the stature of the field.

No doubt the increased consideration from these various quarters has been reinforced by the growing level of attention and financial support that education has lately enjoyed from federations and prominent philanthropic foundations. At least one of the latter has also had a direct impact on scholarship. As one young scholar observed at a recent conference of the Network for Research in Jewish Education, the lion's share of responsibility for the small but discernable increase in the number of Jewish educational historians and sociologists must be credited to the Wexner Foundation Graduate Education Program, which almost single-handedly subsidized their education.

Another encouraging sign was the inclusion of an essay devoted to the history of American Jewish education in the recently published *Columbia History of Jews & Judaism in America*, edited by Marc Lee Raphael (Klapper, 2008, pp. 189–216). This thoughtful thematic essay, along with Wertheimer's wide-ranging, sociologically focused overview of the past half-century of Jewish education in the 1999 edition of the *American Jewish Year Book* (1999, pp. 3–115), and a brief overview of recent scholarship by Gil Graff (2008) constitute the first serious attempts at historical syntheses since Pilch, 1969 volume. While it is overly optimistic to interpret these publications as a sign of increased commitment to the field of Jewish educational history, they seem to indicate that the rising profile of education on the Jewish communal agenda can produce a modest trickle-down effect.

Despite these encouraging developments, the field has hardly found secure footing. With fears of contracting resources and fewer faculty positions in the years ahead any tentative gains may well be transitory. Even the current state of affairs is hardly satisfactory. Only a single faculty position in the history of Jewish education currently exists at the various schools and programs of Jewish education. Few if any courses in the history of Jewish education are included in university Jewish studies programs, and education rarely even commands a single session in most American Jewish history survey courses. Meanwhile, educational foundations have thus far expressed little interest in supporting historical studies, preferring instead to funnel their money into applied research that promises to have a direct impact on student outcomes. Perhaps they can be enticed with more articles like Sarna's exploration of the late nineteenth-century Jewish "great awakening" (1995) and Zeldin's consideration of nineteenth-century day schools (1988, pp. 438–452), both of which mined the history for contemporary policy implications. More established sources of funding for Jewish historical research have meanwhile declined to consider proposals focusing on education. In short, the traditional disregard for educational history as trivial and lightweight continues to hold considerable sway.

And so, historians of Jewish education find themselves in a Catch-22 situation: Only unremitting advocacy, perseverance, and the sustained dissemination of first-rate scholarship will ensure the consolidation of the tentative gains of the past few years. Yet, until the history of American Jewish education achieves widespread recognition within the communities of scholars and benefactors, and faculty positions are secured, the quality of the research will continue to be uneven.

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Janush Korczak's Life and Legacy for Jewish Education

Marc Silverman

Introduction

Janush Korczak (1878–1942) is renowned worldwide for his heroic stand of non-violent opposition to the Nazis' decision to liquidate the Jewish ghetto of Warsaw (July–August 1942) and deport all the Jews in it, including the children, to the death camp of Treblinka. Korczak refused to accept the offers made by close friends or admirers that would have afforded him escape from the ghetto and from the fate awaiting his fellow Jews. His decision to stay with his charges, the hundred and more orphans and the staff of the Jewish orphanage he had headed since 1912, and to accompany them through all the travails, including death, that deportation would hold for them was as unequivocal as was his refusal to consider escaping from the ghetto (Bernheim, 1989, pp. 137–146; Lifton, 1988, pp. 325–346; Perlis, 1986, pp. 208–217; Regev, 1996, pp. 195–208).

The ethos of accepting radical responsibility for the welfare of others, of lending support to the weakest sectors of the Warsaw ghetto population out of profound compassion for all that lives, breathes, creates, and suffers, and the uncompromising search for justice and truth as essential components of humanity are expressed powerfully in the final chapters of Korczak's life. However, this rather exclusive focus on his Warsaw ghetto years (1940–1942) and his heroic and tragic end in Treblinka do not give him, his work and works the attention they so richly deserve.

In fact, Korczak was one of the outstanding humanist educators of the twentieth century in the Western world; indeed, some would say he was the most outstanding (see Kohlberg, 1981). In the Polish-Jewish orphanage he headed for 30 years (1912–1942) and in the Polish one in which he served as its head educational supervisor (1919–1936), he developed and implemented a rich array of educational practices, methods, and frameworks later dubbed the Korczakian system. This "system" enabled deprived and abused children, who came from dysfunctional families and suffered from considerable social pathologies, to undergo significant self-reformation during their residence in the orphanage over a period of 6–8 years.

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In this chapter I propose that the following four major features of Korczak's educational works are strongly relevant to, and can be incorporated into, Jewish education worldwide today:

1. *God-wrestling* (Waskow, 1978)—"Implicit religion" plays a central role in Korczak's own personal search for the meaning of life and toward leading a meaningful life. His religiosity is articulated in many of his literary, reflective, and pedagogical works, and it underlies and significantly influences his educational approach and practices:
2. *The "humanization" of the world*—Lending true "weight" to human, animate, and inanimate others is the hallmark of Korczak's "brand" of humanism. Paraphrasing Dostoyevsky, Korczak traveled on the lending respect to real persons in their respective concrete, physical, and mental particularities including "the–person-coughing–next-to-you-on-a-bus" road of humanism. He never traveled on its "easy to love humanity" road. His humanism expressed itself in a highly egalitarian ethos. Democracy, reciprocity, mutuality, cooperation, partnership, sharing, and gracious dialogue were the cornerstones of the human social and interpersonal relationships he constructed, implemented, and sustained. Ever striving toward self-improvement and improvement of the world—increasing care, concern, fairness, and justice in human beings' interrelationship and relationship to the world—was the ultimate cultural–educational goal and project of his life-work.
3. *Character and moral education*—Korczak was an outstanding, indeed exceptional social pedagogue, a character educator and an educator toward ethical fairness and justice. Analysis of the network of interrelated educational practices, methods, and frameworks he devised and implemented in the two orphanages referred to above demonstrates the realization of a moral education embedded in and realizing an integration between justice-seeking and care-lending types of ethic.
4. *Types of modern Jewish identity and identification*—As a person of Jewish origins, strongly educated in and highly acculturated to Polish culture and patriotism, Korczak's struggle with his Jewish identity is an engaging story in itself. In many ways it emblematizes strongly acculturated European and Western Jews'—including Anglo-American ones'—struggles with this existential issue in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Of no less significance, Korczak's "non-Jewish Jewish identity" was composed of integration between his Jewish solidarity and his uncompromising concern regarding decisive perennial existential—personal, social, and political—issues facing humanity. This concern was a highly proactive one which expressed itself in his untiring attempts to contribute to their resolution.

Singling out these four features from Korczak's life and legacy as the ones most significant to Jewish education worldwide today is based on my understanding of Jewish education and of the major challenges it faces. This understanding comprises the following main assumptions:

Religious education—Irrespective of their specific approaches to the Jewish historical religious tradition, most if not all Jewish educational frameworks include in their curriculum learning about, and/or experiencing Jewish religious ideas and rituals. Talking about, relating to, and "wrestling" with God is one of the constitutive features of Jewish culture and civilization throughout the ages. Affording opportunities and offering tools to Jewish learners to address these religious existential issues plays an important role in formal and informal Jewish educational frameworks and settings.

Political–civic education—Jews understand themselves and other peoples understand them as a particular people holding at once their own particular religion and contending, at the same time, that their religion–ethnicity ultimately holds universal meaning for all of humankind. Confronting the internal tension between religious–ethnic centricity and a world-embracing humanism has played a central role in Jewish life throughout the ages. Consequently, Jewish education needs to and does include important features of political–civic education. Specifically, in the context of the Jewish democratic state of Israel, the nature of the relationship between its Jewish and its democratic dimensions is the main political–civic question Jewish education needs to address; in the context of Jews living in diverse nation-States throughout the world as citizens and as a distinct ethnic or cultural–religious group in these polities, Jewish education needs to address the latter's nature and the extent its political structure and policies are congruent with Jewish perspectives on them.

Moral education—"We will do and then we'll hear/understand" (*Na'aseh ve'nishma*); and "our hearts—habits and tendencies—follow in the footsteps of our deeds" (*ha'levavot nimshachim achar ha'ma'asim*) are at the core of Jewish conceptions of ethics. Consequently, as in the case of God-relating, irrespective of their specific approach to them, Jewish educational streams and frameworks include moral education as an important component in their educational program.

Cultural-identity education—The interface between the Jews' and other peoples' cultures has been and remains a perennial theme throughout world history. Today, as in previous historical periods, Jewish education is called upon to develop ways to realize a satisfactory integration between Jewish culture and general cultures.

I now turn to presenting in detail Korczak's approach to these four cultural and educational issues. Following this presentation, I will explore possible direct connections between his approaches and the concerns of Jewish education today.

Korczak's Religious Humanist Social–Pedagogical Legacy

Implicit Religion

Opening

An examination of Korczak's writings and life experiences, from his youthful through his mature and older adult years, discloses the consistent presence of an interrelated number of basic religious existential senses and sensibilities in his

experience and understanding of the world. A considerable number of these sensibilities are expressed in the two passages from Korczak's semi-autobiographical work *Confessions of a Butterfly* published in 1914:

> *January 20*
> This morning I really prayed the way a human being should pray. . . I was completely aware of what I was saying, not so much in the words, but in my thought and spirit. Only this type of praying can strengthen a person; only this type of praying becomes a reflective being. The other type of praying can be likened to the ramblings of a beggar on the church's steps (As I now experience infinite harmony in God I'm no longer surprised this Being has no beginning and no end. The cosmos and the stars, not the priest, lend testimony to me of the "Creator of worlds" existence). I've created for myself a new type of faith. Its direction is not yet entirely clear to me; but I know it is based on the purity of the human spirit. It claims God exists. What's God's nature? Human reason does not have an answer to this question. Behave fairly and do good deeds, pray not to petition God but in order to never forget Him because we can see God in everything. (Korczak, 1999, pp. 146–147)

> April 10
> . . . I'm afraid of the dark, afraid of hallucinations, I'm more afraid of the emotional than of the visual ones: If a cold, bony twisted hand suddenly reached out to catch me I would not be able to stand it. Books seem to make me nervous but they protect me from something even worse. I have come to deny and reject ritual practices. But I still believe in God and prayer. I preserve them because it's not possible to live without them. It's not possible that human beings are a mere accident. (ibid., pp. 156–157)

The following religious sensibilities, assumptions, or contentions can be derived from these two passages:

1. God, a Supreme Being, exists.
2. The strong sense of this Being's existence is derived from human encounters with nature.
3. This Supreme Being is infinite and is experienced and conceived of in terms of re-presenting an infinite harmony.
4. Human reason cannot comprehend the nature of this Infinite Being.
5. This Supreme Being's presence can be experienced by human beings in everything.
6. The presence of God is experienced mainly in ethical behavior and in prayer.
7. The praying experience befitting humans as rational–reflective beings should be a purely spiritual personal one; it should not resemble a business-like transaction where the attempt is made to trade off the spiritual wares of faith for the sake of receiving material goods.

Creation

With the help of passages from works he penned in other periods of his life, I develop and explore these sensibilities further. Korczak's conception of God and of this Supreme Being's relationship to the world is articulated most clearly and powerfully in his essay on the first year of the human infant "Bobo" (Polish term meaning baby). This essay also published in 1914 combines rich insightful empirical comments on an infant's mental and motor development in its first year of life

with rich poetic metaphors and philosophical reflections on the process and meaning of life. Bobo, the human infant, is at once a real human infant and a metaphor of human life and human life forces in general (Korczak, 1999, pp. 68–70).

Korczak places Bobo within the context of the creation of the world. In its primordial stage, Korczak envisages the world as having been in a state of chaos; atom-like particles exist separately and unrelated to each other in this chaos. The actual creation of life and Bobo within it takes place when God calls out to these atoms and commands them to relinquish their separate estranged existence from each other and to join themselves together in cooperative interdependent relationships (ibid.).

Creation and not the particular-historical revelation of any specific explicit religion, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, etc., is the centerpiece of Korczak's implicit religiosity. Korczak experiences and perceives divine revelation through "Creation" and human phenomena emerging out of it. In Korczak's eyes these human phenomena intimate God's presence in the world:

- Human longings, aspirations, and need to pray for a better life and world;
- Human strivings to realize goodness in the world;
- The respect, love, and support human beings can and often do lend to human others (as well as to animate and inanimate ones).

These human signals of the divine presence are articulated most powerfully in the prayer book Korczak composed after his mother's death in 1920 and in the parable "How God took to His feet and ran away from the sanctuary the townspeople built for Him" which appears in the play, *The Asylum of the Insane*, he penned in 1931.

Korczak's Book of 18 Prayers

Korczak entitled the prayer book composed of 18 prayers he penned and collected together *A Person with Her/His God: Prayers of People Who Do Not Pray* (1921/1922; Korczak, 1996a). The title as well as the subtitle of this collection provides some insights regarding Korczak's sense of God's presence and of his response to it. *A Person with Her/His God*—It is not humanity with its God or human beings with their God but an individual singular human being with her/his God. Implicit here is the supposition that God's presence in the world is experienced and conceived within the concrete, particular, subjective context of each and every human individual's life. *Prayers of People Who Do Not Pray*—The paradox in this subtitle intimates that the prayers in this prayer book are prayed by people who pray and the people to whom this prayer book is addressed are also people who pray. However, these praying people do not pray in conventional traditional religious places, and their prayers are not and cannot be found in particular, historical, institutionalized fixed canonized liturgy.

In these prayers, Korczak takes great liberty employing ironic, playful, and at times radical and shocking anthropomorphic imagery in his prayers' God-talk and in his images of God in general (see below). This tendency apparently stems from

the uncompromising anthropocentric nature of his implicit religiosity or religious humanism. Since rational–critical reflective human beings cannot possibly gain access into the essence of the infinite Supreme Being as the young girl states in her prayer to God "I know man's mind is too tiny to comprehend God, it's like a drop in the ocean" (Korczak, 1996a, pp. 23–24), the best they can do is to "imaginare" this Being in terms of the human at its best—of humanity in its finest actual achievements and highest aspirations. Many of Korczak's prayers are shot through with such imaginerings—like this one of the young woman who prays the prayer of "Playfulness":

> But after all, You are not only present in a human being's tears but also in the lilac flowers' scent. You are not only in the heavens but also in a kiss. Sadness and longings arise after every festivity. Embedded in these longings like in the mist are mom's face, whispers from the homeland, a human other's plight, and the fate of Your secret, God. (ibid., p. 26)

Summarizing these points, we can say Korczak's God is human beings' Wise and Closest Friend of Friends who ever lends them support and encouragement to grow, flourish, and create, and to accompany and do good to the world and to all others in it, to human ones especially, and to human children most especially.

Korczak's Parable About God

In the seventh scene of Korczak's play, *The Senate of the Insane* (Korczak, 1996a, pp. 59–100), the "old man," one of the more sane patients in this fictional insane asylum, shares a legend about God with a young boy named Yazik (nicknamed Yank). This parable is rich, intricate, and full of daring and delightful images, humor, and irony. Tying together the many threads and themes in it and interpreting these offers the following major insights regarding Korczak's conception of God and his response to this Being's presence:

- *God's wisdom and human beings' recalcitrance*—Images characterizing God as very old, lonely, tired-out, sad, and disappointed abound in this parable as they do in Korczak's prayer book. God speaks directly to the multitude of people gathered around him only once. God issues the following command consisting of seven words to them: *My children—love each one their neighbor!* (ibid., p. 78). Both the command and the Commander are very ancient and in great age lay great wisdom—the wisdom of many generations. However, despite this wisdom and its ancient pedigree, human beings all-too-often neither accept nor practice it! They do not let God's real and true Presence "in" —into themselves. It is precisely here, in the in-between between the "presence" of this eternal command of loving one's neighbor issued to human beings throughout the ages and their unwillingness to follow and fulfill it that God's profound "feelings" of exhaustion, sadness, disappointment, and despair emerge.
- *Acts of loving-kindness and justice*—God's travels, encounters with people, temporary dwelling places, and self-transformations intimate Korczak's understanding of what this singular command entails. It can be formulated through mirroring the Rabbinic hermeneutic model of *Imatatio Dei* (*Sifre'-Devarim*, 49) while introducing specific ideas of Korczak into it:

Just as God lends respect and deep affection to inanimate and animate non-rational beings in the natural word—forests, forest berries, lilacs, the Sun, stars, the Vistula river, lightening bugs, sparrows, larks, etc. —so too humans should lend such respect and love to them. And just as God cares deeply about, lends compassion and assistance to common and simple folk (workers, soldiers, church-goers), to poor, weak, oppressed, and outcast members of society in general and to children in particular, so too humans should lend such care, accompaniment, and assistance to them.

Ever striving to develop interpersonal and social sensitivity to the "trials and tribulations" of human others and an active orientation to lending assistance to them, to the weak and oppressed among them in particular, and most particularly to children whom Korczak considered as the outstanding members among these latter types of people, is the true way to imitate God's Presence in Creation and to realize this Being's single and singular command.

Jewish Education: Implications and Applications

As stated in the opening section above, most Jewish educational frameworks include learning about and experiencing Jewish religious ideas and ritual in their curriculum; "God-talk" and "God-relating" are part and parcel of their educational programs. Consequently, lending Jewish learners concepts and tools to address religious existential issues is an important objective of most formal and informal Jewish educational frameworks and settings.

Korczak's life story, his educational work and his final march with the children of the Jewish orphanage are deeply embedded in his implicit religious sense of the world. Both the prayer book and the parable on God can be considered true gems of implicit religiosity. The prayers in this prayer book could be studied toward and within student prayer services. These prayers could encourage students to compose their own "personal" prayers. A careful considered reading of Korczak's parable could increase the religious sensitivity of the students and generate serious discussion among them on the nature of God and this Infinite Being's presence in the world.

Korczak's implicit religion can serve Jewish education in two main ways: (1) as a vehicle to inspire Jewish learners to deepening the inwardness of their existent observance of the historical–traditional precepts and practices of Judaism as a historical–particular explicit religion and/or (2) as a vehicle toward the development of these learners' growth as free, critical–rational, and ethical human beings who care deeply about the world and actively engage in trying to improve it.

Religious Humanism and the "Humanization" of the World

Opening

Korczak derived the basic components of his political and pedagogical orientation from "Warsaw positivism" (Frost, 1983). This positivism was held by a group of Polish intellectuals, academics, social activists, and educators in Warsaw who saw

themselves and were seen by others as positivist, progressive liberals, or socialists. Korczak met the members of this circle during his student years in Warsaw University's medical school (1896–1904). He came to admire many of them. Their personalities, ideas, and actions exercised considerable influence on him, and he took part in many of their social, cultural, and educational activities (Cohen, 1988; Eden, 2000; Perlis, 1986).

Their ideas and deeds are clearly discernible in Korczak's version of humanism. The main features of this circle's humanism and Korczak's intensification of them are:

- The improvement of the lives of the oppressed, impoverished, and weakest sectors of Polish society is conceived as the ultimate end of social, cultural, and educational work. The target population of this circle's work was Polish common folk, mainly members of the working class; in distinction from them, Korczak's target audience was children. He considered them as a greatly and unfairly ignored underprivileged and oppressed social class in general; and he considered the homeless or abused among these children as the most oppressed sub-sector among them.
- "Organic work"—work from the "bottom-up." This circle contended that social reform and improvement can be best realized through specific and concrete forms of social–economic and cultural–educational work and legislation. This path of social–positivist reconstruction of Polish society organically entailed daily, patient, hard, getting-ones'-hands-dirty practical work.
- This circle's members' political orientation was liberal or socialist. They identified with social–progressive political trends and parties, and were opposed to revolutionary Marxist ones.

Korczak's political orientation was social–democratic. However, he refused to become a member of the "Social–democratic party of Lithuanian and Polish workers" with which he identified. Strong echoes of this circle's members' distrust of ideologies, theories, and programs, and their insistence on people's actual doings as the litmus test of their ethical stature can be heard in Korczak's familiar quip about political parties and their platforms: *Rain water is pure but becomes filthy upon its passage through the street-drains* (Perlis, 1986, p. 17).

Were we asked to devise a caption that would encapsulate the ethos of this circle of activists, the following possibilities come to mind: *We are what we give (to others); To live is to give and to give is to live; Not our theories but our practices—doings and deeds—constitute and define us*. The litmus test of a persons' humanity is the way they actively relate to human others in real-life conditions. Another decisive criterion for the assessment of a persons' humanity is their authenticity, honesty, and integrity as these are articulated in their efforts to practice what they preach.

The correlation between Korczak's words and his deeds is truly exceptional. Few would contest the claim that honesty, sincerity, authenticity, and integrity were among the most decisive characteristics expressed in and constituting his personality and character. Underlying and lending form and shape to this ethos is the principle

of respect to human beings as persons—lending genuine respect to all human beings in their respective real, concrete, physical as well as historical–cultural particularity. This humanism expressed itself in a highly egalitarian ethos. A firm commitment to democratic, egalitarian, and dialogical human relationships and interrelationships, uncompromising advocacy of equal rights for the downtrodden, and a strong opposition to relationships based on forms of hierarchies are among the decisive political–cultural ramifications of this ethos.

Korczak's educational work was based on this radical egalitarian ethos. In one of the last entries in his Warsaw ghetto diary entitled "Why I collect dirty dishes," he insists on lending equal respect to menial and intellectual tasks, and to the persons who do either or both of them. In his own words:

> I carry on a struggle to make sure that in the orphanage there shall be no work called delicate or ordinary, smart or stupid, clean or dirty—work fit for dainty young ladies and for the plain crowd. The orphanage should not have members doing exclusively physical or mental work. . . I respect honest working people. Their hands are always clean for me and their opinions I weigh at the price of gold. (Korczak, 1972, p. 166)

Korczak struggled against dichotomous conceptions of human beings that maintained antagonistic divisions between the physical, the affective, the intellectual, and the behavioral dimensions of human personality and tasks of life.

Jewish Education: Implications and Applications

There are two major ways Korczak's humanism and his tireless efforts to humanize the world can be meaningfully applied to Jewish education today:

1. Engendering Jewish learners' political awareness and encouraging them to become reflective and critical of the sources of social–economic inequality, to consider the ethical implications of different and oft-opposing political theories, parties, and movements, and to take proactive stands toward realizing ethical policies and opposing unethical ones is one of these ways. Korczak's firm commitment to democracy and to democratic-socialism always out-weighed his strong Polish patriotism and nationalism. His affirmation of the latter as a decisively important framework of human belonging was predicated on the assumption that it would serve as an instrument through which to realize humanistic–social–democratic values. Korczak's attitudes and deeds can assist toward facilitating the development of Jewish learners who will actively lend priority to realizing the humanistic–democratic over Jewish national or ethnic or religious ethnic aspirations and values when they are clearly in conflict with each other. In Israel this would mean civic education that insists on democracy as the qualifier of Israel's Jewishness; and among Diaspora Jewish communities this would mean placing social–economic justice as a sine qua non-component of a Jewish education worthy of its name.
2. As Kohlberg (1981) suggests, Korczak refrained from imposing his exceptionally high ethical–humanist standards on the children and educational staff in his

charge. However, this admirable self-limitation does not prevent us from viewing his life and work as a model of humanity at its highest expression and level. Korczak's life is a powerful expression of the contention that our humanity is constituted by what we give to others and not by what we get from them. Korczak's life can inspire all those who learn about it and for Jewish learners, in particular, to develop and adopt altruistic attitudes and deeds to others. Indeed, there is an interesting ideational correlation between Korczak's view of lending help to others as a self-understood human duty or obligation and the Jewish view of *tzadaka* (the Hebrew term for lending assistance to an oppressed human other), not as a special allowance, not as charity, but as *tzedek* (Hebrew for justice).

Character and Moral Education

> To cultivate the goodness that does exist, despite peoples' weaknesses and inborn negative instincts, such goodness indeed does exist. Are not Trust and the Belief in people precisely the goodness that we can cultivate and foster as an antidote to the badness we sometimes cannot eliminate, and whose growth we are barely able to curtail through very hard and concentrated effort. (Korczak, 1978, pp. 255–256)

> When I consider the facts in an unbiased fashion without any illusions, I believe educators primarily need to know: To lend full forbearance to every child in every case. The meaning of "to understand every thing" is to lend it forgiveness [...] Educators [...] are called upon to adopt in their hearts and for their own sake a compassionate stand in their judgment of children's misdeeds, failings and culpability [...] children act wrongly—sin—out of ignorance [...] because they succumbed to temptation, to an other's manipulation [...], because they could not find a way to act differently [...]. Those who are angered and agitated by children for being what they are, for being as they were born or as their experiences have taught them to be, are not educators. (ibid., pp. 253–254)

Opening

Korczak developed and implemented a rich array of educational practices, methods, and frameworks in the orphanages he led that were later dubbed the Korczakian system. This system achieved considerable success in engaging deprived and abused children (ages 8–14) from dysfunctional families, who suffered from considerable social pathologies, in processes of ethical growth, that led to significant improvement in their relationships to themselves and others over the usual 6 year period of their residence in the orphanage. The extensive success Korczak realized in the reformation of these children from potentially anti-social and criminal to fair-minded, fair-playing young adults, justifiably earns him distinction as an exceptionally gifted moral and character educator.

What were the most salient features of Korczak's social pedagogy? The two quotes above from Korczak's short and seminal essay "Principles and Action—Theory and Practice" (1924–1925) articulate in a nutshell his understanding of the overarching aim of education and his basic educational approach toward its realization. As the first intimates, educating children's character in the wholeness of their personalities in the present and encouraging their will toward goodness are the

quintessential aims of education. In Korczak's eyes true education worthy of this name is moral education.

In the light of this aim and these tasks, the basic question educators are called upon to address is: Through what processes can the will toward goodness be advanced and the will to badness reduced and re-channeled to more constructive life-building directions? Korczak himself was keenly aware that it is much easier to pose this question than it is to locate adequately compelling responses to it. The main difficulty in finding such responses stemmed from what he perceived to be the in-built limitations and frailties of humankind. The educational approach he developed to address the latter can be called "Compassionate reformation." Its fundamental meaning is well conveyed in the following lines taken from the well-known Tranquility prayer, penned by the Protestant existentialist theologian, Reinhold Neibhur:

> Dear Lord—Please grant me the fortitude to accept those things not in my power to change; the courage to change those things in my power; and the intelligence to be able to discern between these two. (Ring, 1985, p. 184)

Response-ability, the ability to respond in compassionate reformation to the difficulties and aspirations of their charges, is the hallmark of good educators. Korczak constructed and implemented an interrelated web of educational practices, methods, and frameworks that fostered an ethos of "compassionate re-formation" among all the members of the orphanages' community—its children, educational and administrative staff. The most outstanding among these practices and frameworks were *the children's parliament and law court*; this court's *constitution*; the *apprenticeship* system; *gradated citizenship status; ethical-improvement wagers and growth charts; work assignments, units, and points*, and others. Each of these frameworks independently and through their interrelationship engendered educational processes that assisted members of the orphanage community to learn to relate to each other through the prism of an ethical ethos that integrates between a relational–caring ethic and a rational–cognitive justice-seeking one.

These educational processes work themselves out through three interrelated sequential steps that will be presented and discussed in terms of the nature of the children's law court, its constitution, and its proceedings. Similar steps unfold in most of Korczak's educational methods, practices, and frameworks. However, an explication of these is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Step 1: Educational Forgiveness

Korczak insisted that the education of children must be achieved *with* them and *through* genuine dialogical cooperation between them and their educators. He translated this principle by establishing self-governing frameworks with "real teeth" in which children were called upon to undertake responsible roles and to perform genuine tasks. Among these frameworks, the children's law court he established and the constitution he penned for its proceedings were his favorite. Through it he hoped to find a "constitutional system" of education and to become a "constitutional educator" (Korczak, 1996, pp. 224 and 264). Staff members and not only children were

subject to the proceedings and rulings of the law court according to its constitution. Such an equality-for-all constitutional framework strongly militated against the possibility of educators projecting their own needs, wants, and whims onto their educatees and of their adopting dominating-despotic relational modes toward them.

The constitution Korczak composed has no laws defining right or wrong, and good or bad deeds. The deeds' rightness or wrongness is first defined by the plaintiff, the child who accuses another child of committing a misdeed against her. Then, the court judges—four children who had not been accused of an offence over the previous week, and one educator in an advisory but no-vote capacity—are called upon to determine the extent to which this misdeed is indeed wrong and the extent to which its perpetrator is responsible and deserves blame for its commission. Consequently, the ethical nature of a deed is defined in relational, inter-subjective terms by the plaintiff and the children and staff member who serve as judges in the court.

Taking a considered look at this constitution's preamble will shed light on this first step as well as on the next two that follow it. Here is the full text of the preamble:

> *If a person does something bad, the best thing to do is to forgive her.* If she did something bad because she did not know better, she now already knows this. If she did something bad unintentionally, she will be more careful in the future. If she does something bad because she finds it difficult to adjust to norms unfamiliar to her, she'll try harder to adjust to them in the future. If she did something bad because she was tempted by others, from now on she will not pay attention to them.
>
> *If a person does something bad, the best thing to do is to forgive her, and to wait for her to mend her way in the future.*
>
> However, at the same time, the law court has an obligation to protect the quiet from being treated unfairly by the pestering and pushing ones; it has an obligation to protect the weak ones so that the strong ones will not be able to rise up to bother them; it has to protect the conscientious and industrious ones so that the neglectful and lazy ones won't disturb them; the law court has to make sure that order will be maintained, because disorder mainly hurts the good, quiet persons with a conscience.
>
> The law court is not justice but it is called upon to aspire towards realizing it; the law court is not truth but it is devoted to seeking it. (Korczak, 1996, pp. 224–225; translation from Hebrew, M.S., emphasis added)

Taking a look at the first two of the four passages comprising the full text of this preamble, it is important to note that the phrase "If a person does something bad, the best thing to do is to forgive him" appears twice. This repetition suggests that Korczak considered such forgiveness as a constitutive postulate of the very possibility of engaging in moral educational work with children. Indeed the substance of the second passage quoted from Korczak's essay "Principles and Action—Theory and Practice" heading this section (see Section "Character and Moral Education" p. X) is very similar to that of these two passages from the preamble.

A deep respect for children as persons combines together to create forbearance for their misdeeds. This forbearance is based on an attitude of compassionate understanding regarding the diverse conditions and circumstances that diminish children's capacity to do good things or increase their capacity to do bad ones. Korczak views this forbearance as an imperative, commanding ethical respect for the pupil's

"given" presence, and not as a special favor. Furthermore, blaming a child for the way he genuinely "is" not only demonstrates a lack of respect toward his personhood but also strongly militates against any possibility of the child reconsidering specific pernicious aspects of his behavior. Angry accusation locks the "gates of mending one's bad ways" through which educatees could enter; while educational forgivingness unlocks and opens them widely.

To sum up, the first step on this compassionate reformation path entails lending genuine respect to children as persons and adopting an attitude of educational forgivingness toward them in their present "presence." Proceeding now from this first step and taking note of another crucial passage in this preamble, we arrive at its second step.

Step 2: Offering Mending-One's-Way(s) Opportunities

The last clause of the key sentence discussed above in its second appearance warrants attention: "If a person does something bad, the best thing to do is to forgive him, and to wait for her to mend her way in the future."

The forbearance Korczak proposes is not meant in any way to grant a do-wrong free pass to the child. Instead, the understanding acceptance of the bad deed is predicated upon the hopeful notion that in the future when an opportunity for the child to repeat this bad deed presents itself again, she will "mend her way" and refrain from committing it again. The Korczakian system abounds with "offerings" of second, third, fourth, and more improving-behavior opportunities, such as, children entering into a wager with Korczak regarding a negative behavior they wanted to overcome (ethical-improvement wagers); raising one's citizen's status in the orphanage by virtue of having become more socially cooperative (upgrading citizen status); and many more.

Suffice to say, the abundance of opportunities to mend one's way in Korczak's network of frameworks clearly demonstrates that his hope of his charges accepting response-ability for mending their ways was neither pious nor empty. On the contrary, it was based on his conscious, creative, wise design of a relatively inexhaustible array of *mending-ones-way* opportunities: individual and social tasks and frameworks that became practice fields for improving oneself and one's relationship with others.

Step 3: Not Just Caring but Just-Caring

Interpreting the last passages of this preamble will lead us to the third and final step in Korczak's approach to and practice of moral education. In the very last sentence of this preamble, Korczak states explicitly that the pursuit of justice and truthfulness is the motivating force underlying the children's court. These sentences and those preceding it suggest that in Korczak's conception of moral education, interpersonal, and social relationships should not be based just on relational caring but also on a caring and concern for just relationships. In light of this, the third step entails encouraging children not just to care for each other but also to care about conducting relationships between themselves and others that are just.

Consequently, educational forgivingness is not only predicated on the hope of children mending their ways in the future but also limited by considerations of justice. There are borders which the respect of children-as-persons and educational forgiveness should not traverse: Respect and forgiveness cannot permit the development of an unjust social climate in which the aggressive, mischievous, and irresponsible children become stronger while the cooperative, industrious, and responsible ones become weaker.

The pursuit of justice provides the grounds on which the diverse "self-improvement practice fields" are built and it underlies and shapes the children law court's constitution and proceedings. Constructing these practice fields on these grounds and this paradigm assisted children to learn and internalize rational ethical principles of give-and-take, effort and outcome, input and output.

The many interactive social frameworks, in which the children engaged, encouraged them to pursue knowledge and understanding of themselves and of others, and to exercise moral reasoning based on rational, critical reflection, and judgment, on the one hand, and compassion for and beneficence to others and themselves, on the other hand. It is therefore responsible to argue that Korczak's theory and practice(s) of the moral education of children can be identified and located in the "in-between" between a care-lending and justice-seeking ethical ethos. There are two subject matters, "subjects" that matter deeply to Korczak, in the context of his educational project: lending respect to children as persons, and the pursuit and establishment of justice in their interpersonal and broader social relationships. Constructing a holistic educational environment anchored in an integration between a relational ethic and a critical–reflective one is at the very core of Korczak's system of moral education.

Jewish Education: Implications and Applications

The cultivation of *Midot* (the Hebrew term for qualities of character), *Derech Eretz* (the Hebrew term for etiquette, good habits, and manners), personal, and social–ethical behavior in Jewish learners usually plays an important role in Jewish educational frameworks. Polish and Israeli schools whose leadership is strongly committed to assisting their learners to internalize the two ethical "r's" of respect and response-ability (Lickona, 1996) in conjunction with their realization of the three traditional cognitive "r's" of schooling ("righting, reading, and rithmatic") have employed key components of Korczak's system in their schools' climate and culture. There is strong anecdotal evidence that these components are among those that have indeed facilitated the ethical growth of these schools' teachers and learners (Bernholtz, 1988; Hecht, 2005).

In light of this evidence, a strong case can be made to call upon Jewish educational leadership today who genuinely seek to practice moral education to study Korczak's system in depth, and to consider which components in this system could prove to be significant in different Jewish educational settings.

Types of Modern Jewish Identity and Identification

As Yitzhak Perlis, one of the important Israeli-Jewish biographers of Korczak's life and legacy, contends, Janush Korczak was born assimilated: he was broadly and

deeply acculturated into Polish culture (1986, p. 224). Korczak's Polish national–cultural identity was quite natural to him. In contrast to the naturalness of his Polish identity, Korczak's Jewish identity was a matter of constant existential struggle and choice. These dynamic–existential–volitional dimensions of Korczak's "Jewishness" are perhaps at the inner-most core of the relative abundance of competing and often opposing interpretations of the nature and place of Korczak's Jewish origins in his national–cultural as well as religious identity (Arnon, 1962; Eden, 2000; Bernheim, 1985; Cohen, 1988; Lifton, 1988; Mortakovich-Oltzakova, 1961; Perlis, 1986; Regev, 1996; Zaks & Cahana, 1989).

The salient differences between Korczak's biographers' understandings of Korczak's Jewishness can be located in their respective interpretations of the ever-increasing extent of solidarity Korczak demonstrated toward his Jewish sisters and brothers in Warsaw from the 1930s onward up to his deportation to the Treblinka death camps in August, 1942. In the way of one example, Perlis, who openly acknowledges the depth and strength of Korczak's Polish acculturation and the existential, dynamic, and volitional nature of his identification with Jews and of his own Jewishness, argues that Korczak advanced from a position of assimilation to one of Jewish solidarity, and then to one of complete Jewish identification and ultimately to one of a total return to the Jewish people as the true constitutive source and force of his national identity (Perlis, 1986, pp. 23 and 224).

There, indeed, is strong historical–empirical evidence for the existential volitional nature of Korczak's Jewishness and that his connection with and active participation in the lives of Warsaw's Jews from the early 1930s up to his death in 1942 intensified and thickened significantly. At the same time, there is barely any evidence to support the latter two interrelated claims that Perlis registers:

- The Jewish people were the true source of Korczak's national identity.
- In the unceasing support he lent to his fellow Jews in the ghetto period in general (1940–1942) and especially in his accompaniment of the Jewish children under his charge into the train cars bound to Treblinka, Korczak returned completely to the true Jewish foundation of his national identity.

Coming from the opposite direction, there is considerable evidence to support the claim that Korczak's national identity remained Polish and that his increased solidarity with his Jewish sisters and brothers stemmed from a web of interrelated sources other than an awakening of his Jewish origins and a reclaiming of his "primordial" Jewish national origins. Foremost and first among these was the escalation of anti-Semitic forces in Polish society and in government policies in the 1930s. Korczak was ever being turned back onto and into his Jewish origins by these forces. Due to his ultra-humanistic world-embracing ethos and outlook, he chose to actively demonstrate loyalty to the group undergoing severe persecution. It can be said that more than Korczak returned, he was turned back into the Polish-Jewish community in Warsaw and into the fledgling pioneering communities in Palestine in particular; in short, being turned, Korczak re-turned.

It was the following features of Korczak's version of humanism that made the fortification of his solidarity with Jews, including his adoption of certain selected

Jewish religious and national practices, the only possible path he could take: authenticity, sincerity, straightforwardness, honesty, and integrity; lending respect, love, and real-life accompaniment to all of the world's creations; a powerful faith in the ever-possible ethical corrigibility of human beings—evil in the world is real but it can be overcome. Recognizing and accepting his Jewish origins as a distinct part of himself and his identity as he always did, how could he possibly be insensitive and uncaring to the weak and oppressed among the children, sisters, and brothers of the religion into which he himself was born, and in a web of events and circumstances of unheard oppression and suffering?

Indeed, a strong case can be made that it was Korczak's Jewishness, his situation as a Jew living among a Polish-Catholic majority society hostile toward all the national minorities living within it and especially the Jews among the latter that inspired his ultra-humanism. In his article on the prominence of European intellectuals of Jewish origins in modern European society (1991), Paul Flohr argues that it is not mere coincidence that a disproportionate number of persons of Jewish origins are found among European intellectuals who developed innovative ways of understanding human beings and human society. On the one hand, these European intellectuals' situatedness as persons of Jewish origins engenders in them an especially powerful drive to master the high culture of the European nation-State in which they reside. Many of them indeed often succeeded in achieving this mastery and thereby became a part of the cultural elite. Korczak's knowledge and understanding of Polish culture was outstanding, and the mastery, richness, and creativity of his Polish language are renowned.

On the other hand, at the same time, their Jewish origins also inspire in them a relatively invisible floating sense of alienation between themselves and their more naturally rooted national colleagues. The existential awareness of being at once a part of and apart from the respective societies they inhabit affords them a less accommodating and more innovative, often radical perspective on these societies and their respective cultures.

As we learned, Korczakian humanism was directly influenced by the humanism prevalent among the Polish circle of intellectuals with whom he identified. In the discussion of his humanism, I suggested that what makes it unique is the radical nature of its inclusiveness on the one hand and its boundlessness on the other. In the context of the conceptual framework Flohr offers, it makes sense to postulate that it was likely Korczak's own situation as a Polish intellectual of Jewish origin that underlies the radical nature of his humanist ethos.

The foci of Korczak's concerns were securing the rights of children as human persons and their well-being, irrespective of the color of their skin, ethnicity, race, and religion. Korczak's exceptional humanism, expressed in all his work and works, centered on "repairing the world by repairing education, most importantly the education of children." He combined his endless engagement in trying to realize this repair with loyalty to his Jewish brothers and sisters and proactive solidarity with their plight, oppression, and suffering during the period before and during World War II. In a manner that may at first glance appear contradictory, the historical distortion that is embedded in attributing undeserved importance to the Jewish components of

Korczak's national identity leads to a devaluation of his radical inclusive and boundless humanism. This humanism comprised the very praiseworthy courageous and unbending solidarity with Jews, especially Jewish children, that Korczak, indeed, did demonstrate.

Jewish Jews who view themselves as full-time twenty-four-hours–seven-days-a-week Jews can derive significant religious or cultural national pride out of the fact that Janush Korczak, this truly exceptional humanist and social pedagogue, is a human being of Jewish origins.

Jewish Education: Implications and Applications

Affording Jewish learners the possibility of conducting a relatively in-depth study of the vicissitudes that Korczak underwent in the process of his working out for himself and others, the place and role of his Jewish origins in his identity will lend them insights regarding their own personal confrontation of the place of Jewishness and Judaism in their own identities. Such a study, if properly designed, will also provide critical–reflective conceptual tools to explore the tensions, challenges, dilemmas, and limitations contemporary Jews ever face between their loyalty and commitment to Judaism, the Jewish people and Jewish life and between their loyalty and commitment to the culture and life of their fellow citizens in the respective nation-States they inhabit as well as to transnational, world-global culture and life.

In one of the entries in the diary he kept between May/June and August, 1942, in the Warsaw ghetto, Korczak writes:

> My life has been full of difficulties but also quite interesting. Indeed the life I've led is precisely the life I prayed to God and asked Him to lend me when I was a young boy: Grant me Lord a difficult but beautiful, rich and majestic life. (1972, p. 151)

As this chapter hopefully provides strong evidence, Korczak's life was indeed a rich, meaningful, and majestic one. Hopefully, too, it demonstrates that educators in general and Jewish educators in particular can learn a great deal from Korczak's humanist, social–pedagogic legacy; and that furthermore they can implement these learnings into the curriculum, culture, and climate of Jewish schools and educational institutions worldwide today.

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Jewish Identities: Educating for Multiple and Moving Targets

Stuart Charmé and Tali Zelkowicz

"I am in love with being Jewish," declared Diane Troderman, a former board chair of JESNA (Jewish Education Service of North America) recently.[1] Judaism, she explained, gives meaning to everything in her life, influences her everyday decisions and actions, and inspires her to do work that will strengthen and enhance the Jewish identities of other people. Many Jewish educators have chosen the work they do precisely because they share this deep emotional attachment to the fact of being Jewish and an appreciation of its centrality in their lives. So it is natural for them to wonder what went "wrong" in the cases of people whose relationship to being Jewish is a less central or less intensive part of their identities. Was there something flawed or inadequate in their Jewish education? Did their families lack a strong commitment to Judaism? Why didn't a strong Jewish identity take root?

The Survivalist Frame

For many years, the language of crisis and loss has pervaded discussion of Jewish identity. The tone has often been one of lamentation over what is seen as the weakened, eroded condition of Jewish identity in America, laced with nostalgia for a purportedly more authentic and vital form of Jewish life in the past. According to one common narrative, Jewish immigrants arrived in the USA with strong Jewish identities and no American identities, and within several generations many of their grandchildren sported strong American identities and weak Jewish identities, lacking in Jewish literacy, values, or commitment. In a narrative focused on waning Jewishness, Jewish identity formation is urgent and crucial, since, hopefully, it will offer a protective shield against the threat of the non-Jewish world, particularly the dangers of assimilation and intermarriage.

Yet, such an approach can be unrealistic in its search for an antidote for the impact of modernity on Jews and Judaism. The weakening in traditional religious

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beliefs and communal insularity are not recent "problems." They reflect a process that dates back at least several centuries, when the impact of the enlightenment and emancipation transformed the relationship of Jews to both their own traditions and culture and also to the wider secular world and culture. The weakening of the power of tradition and the new element of individual choice in constructing religious and ethnic identities is a fact of modern civilization (Berger, 1979).

For many educators and communal leaders, interest in Jewish identity formation has been driven by deep and abiding concerns about Jewish survival and by visions of the strong Jewish identities that will somehow safeguard this survival. When survivalist aims and anxieties about collective Jewish life are ascendant, educational leaders and teachers often turn to Jewish identity formation in a frantic effort to discover what "works" for making and keeping Jews Jewish, not just throughout childhood and adolescence, but into adulthood. In the process, educators can easily become distracted from the ongoing, unfolding educational processes of Jewish identity formation in the present and be more focused on a larger mission of saving Jews and ultimately Judaism.

Hoping to build Jewish identities that will endure throughout the lives of their students also puts Jewish educators in a significantly different situation from teachers of secular subjects such as mathematics. For math teachers, there is no investment in creating lifelong mathematicians out of each and every student, nor in expecting them to socialize with and marry other mathematicians, nor in raising the next generation of young mathematicians. In contrast, students are well aware of the special expectation of Jewish education to influence their life choices now and into the future, and this can be a tension in the teacher–student relationship that teachers of other subjects do not face. Jewish education seeks to instill a long list of values and behavioral attitudes. To offer just a few examples, Jewish teachers generally want and need their students to learn Hebrew, give *tzedakah,* light Shabbat candles, love Israel and go there, celebrate all the holidays, learn about their history, interpret ancient Jewish texts to make them relevant today, say prayers, give *divrei Torah*, date Jews, marry Jews, join Jewish organizations and institutions, attend synagogue and life cycle events, observe or at least grapple with *kashrut*, etc.

Inevitably, researchers have tried to measure the level of Jewish identity by calculating the amount of traditional religious practices like fasting on Yom Kippur, lighting Shabbat or Hanukkah candles, or keeping kosher. In doing so, it became easy to assume that those who do more have "stronger" Jewish identities, and those who do less have "weaker" Jewish identities. But such measurements generally tell us only who is more *traditionally* religious in their practice. It is risky and misleading to assume that a person who observes more Jewish ritual is "more Jewish" than one who observes less, or that such a person can be described as having a *stronger* Jewish identity. Too often, the chosen criteria for measuring Jewish identity produce a range of scores in which the "strongest" Jewish identities are found among Orthodox Jews and "weakest" among reform, reconstructionist, and unaffiliated Jews. Yet, such evaluations will always be relative to one set of prescriptive criteria or another. Whose blueprints for normative Jewish identity should be accepted and on what is their authority based?

Changing Paradigms for the Study of Jewish Identities

Not surprisingly, despite vast amounts of research on American-Jewish identity in the last 40 years, individual researchers have not been able to agree on just what Jewish identity is, much less how it is formed (Cohen, 1988; Goldscheider, 1986; Herman, 1977; Himmelfarb, 1974; Horowitz, 1999; Liebman, 2001; Perry and Chazan, 1990; Prell, 2000; Sklare & Greenblum, 1967; Tennenbaum, 2000). For many of them, the utopian dream has been first to devise a precise and systematic yardstick of Jewishness against which Jews' identities could be diagnosed, and eventually to concoct a Jewish educational elixir capable of recreating these identities for future generations, thereby guaranteeing the survival of the Jewish people. Social psychologist Bethamie Horowitz, a researcher of adult Jewish identity formation has described this research paradigm of Jewish identity in America as preoccupied with the question "How *Jewish* are American Jews?" in contrast to what we could be asking, which is "*How* are American Jews Jewish?" (Horowitz, 2002, p. 14, emphasis in original).

It is important for both scholars and educators alike to be aware of the criteria they employ to determine what counts as legitimate expressions of Jewish survival and how those criteria inform their work. After all, what does it look like to have a "strong Jewish identity," when Jewish identity, like other aspects of personal and collective identities, occupies differing amounts of space, time, and emotional commitment in the lives of different people? If every Jew "packages" his or her Jewish identity in a slightly different way, Jewish educators and Jewish identity researchers alike must wrestle with the question of how to determine what counts as authentically, legitimately, and ultimately generatively Jewish.

Some have talked about the relocation of the boundary between Jewish and non-Jewish and a reconfiguration of what counts as "authentic Jewishness." Sylvia Barack Fishman (1995) calls this process "coalescence" or an "incorporation of American liberal values such as free choice, universalism, and pluralism into the perceived boundaries of Jewish meaning and identity." In addition, increases in numbers of conversion, intermarriage, and international adoptions mean that the "non-Jewish" world is not just "out there"; it is now an element found within Jewish communities, families, and within the identities of individual Jews. The result may represent not necessarily the dilution or erasure of Jewish identity but rather a complementarity and synergy between Jewish identity and the wider cultural context in which Jews live. American-Jewish historian Jonathan Sarna described the most fundamental question of American-Jewish life as "how to live in two worlds at once, how to be both American and Jewish, *part* of the larger American society *and apart from it"* (1998, pp. 9–10, emphasis added). Yet, these two worlds are increasingly hard to differentiate in many people's identities.

Jews today are constantly juggling a variety of social identities which may be triggered by different contexts. People will constantly modify their identities, consciously and often unconsciously, with different elements becoming strengthened, weakened, revised, abandoned, and reconstituted, in response to a mix of innate qualities and a range of social influences, such as ethnic and cultural

background influences. For some Jews, old recipes are being abandoned and new ones discovered.

After studying differences among college students from different college settings, Sales and Saxe (2006) observe, "... students will speak of their 'identities' as opposed to a singular identity. They are vegans, ecologists, artists, Zionists, conservative Jews, lesbians, and so on ... any efforts to stimulate Jewish life on college campuses must be flexible, adaptable to vastly different college settings and different types of Jewish students." Thus, as Jewish history unfolds over time, the manifestations of Jewish identity have likewise evolved, mutated, fragmented, and been deconstructed and transformed in a kaleidoscope of possible Jewish identities that are negotiated in relationship with a person's other identities and in relation to one's socio-historical realities. To the extent that all the categories of religion, culture, and peoplehood are defined and constructed in a variety of ways, the result is that those who try to find out what Jewish identity is or who try to measure it, are more likely to come face to face with the multiple forms of Jewish identities, cultures, and spiritualities.

Since the late 1990s, a shift has taken place from pre-ordained inventories quantifying *how Jewish* the American-Jewish community is to a more fluid investigation into the diverse constructions of Jewishness that have emerged among American Jews. The shift has major implications for how Jewish educators might approach their highly complex task of helping learners of all ages to develop their Jewish identities. In the remainder of this chapter, we aim to describe how the paradigm shift represents an alternative to solely survivalist orientations for Jewish identity formation and offers new ways of conceiving the relationship between Jewish education and Jewish identity building.

The Problem of Authenticity: What's a Real Jew?

Every period of Jewish history has involved struggles over who controls expressions of Jewish identity. As power and authority shift, or rather flow, between the elite (educators, rabbis) and the folk (students, congregants) in new and unprecedented ways, culturally accepted norms of what constitutes standard content and canon become contested arenas. In short, what counts as tradition, who gets to decide, and why?

Today, the leaders of liberal Jewish day schools of all denominations seek to live in both Jewish and American cultural worlds simultaneously and to search for new ways of negotiating their multiple and competing loyalties and allegiances to American and Jewish values and worldviews. By combining both Jewish and secular general studies curriculum in one education, they face identity dissonances daily. Often, the integrationist goal of bringing together general, American values with Jewish teachings comes to a screeching halt when it comes to American holidays like Valentine's Day or Halloween. Despite the fact that few Jewish students or parents find participation in these common American customs and holidays worthy of concern, formal and informal administrative policies that discourage open

discussion and observance of Halloween and Valentine's Day exist at many Jewish day and supplemental schools. Some educational leaders express their concern about possible pagan and Christian roots and want to create Jewish schools as "a space where students and parents will not have to feel the pressure to engage in secular or non-Jewish traditions" (Hyman, 2008, p. 128).

Such policies attempt to *protect* Jews from dissonance and reduce or eliminate a sense of conflict with the "outside" culture that American Jews, especially liberal ones, regularly face. But an educational culture that aims primarily at reducing tensions and conflicts becomes irrelevant, in time, to the real needs, concerns, and identities of Jews in the contemporary world. Issues related to Israel and Zionism, for example, have become increasingly complicated for American Jews who are trying to balance multiple and often competing values of peoplehood, history, and language, along with social justice for all nations and freedom for all peoples. The moment that educators become apologists for a single perspective on secular/religious tensions in Israel or on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, they have abandoned the necessary engagement with tensions and complexity of these issues and they make the error of identifying Jewish identity with only a limited range of ideological options.

The same can be said about the necessary educational approach to vast numbers of Jews for whom belief in God and/or Jewish ritual observance may be the locus of tension and ambivalence within their Jewish identities. The paradox of Jewish identity is that it can thrive in the presence *or absence* of particular beliefs or practices that may be considered indispensable to some Jews. Neither atheism nor lack of interest in traditional Jewish observances should ever be treated as disqualifications for Jewish identity or evidence of educational failure. There will always be tensions and dilemmas in Jewish identities as individuals navigate dissonances that surface at the interface between local and global, particularist and universalist, rationalist and spiritual, and secular and religious dimensions of Jewishness.

New educational approaches might explore the educational value of these tensions and contradictions as a central and creative task of being a Jew in the midst of a broader cultural world. For Jewish educators in twenty-first century America, in particular, curricular experiences will be most powerful when they are designed to (a) acknowledge the friction created by multiple and competing categories of Jewish and American, (b) normalize the tensions as potentially creative and productive, (c) engage with colleagues and students in ongoing, open, and collaborative dialogue about their various experiences of those tensions, and (d) articulate existing and possible new strategies for coping with, and even using, the tensions.

The study of Jewish identity has gradually begun to track the empirical experience of being Jewish rather than any one researcher's prescribed or hoped-for ideals of Jewish identity formation. Jewish identity research has had to catch up with newer theoretical and methodological innovations that have radically revised ideas about religion, culture, and identity (see cultural studies theorists from as early as the 1990s, such as Stuart Hall et al., 1992, 1996; Ulf Hannerz, 1991; bell Hooks, 1992; Cornel West, 1990). Like all cultural identities, Jewish identity is something that is constantly in motion. As Stuart Hall notes, "Cultural identity ... belongs to the

future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history, and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation" (Stuart Hall et al., 1992 cited by Hooks, p. 5). Identity formation is a process of becoming, a journey without a clear itinerary or destination.

As individual Jews and individual Jewish communities have begun choosing and constructing their own Jewish religious practices, Jewish traditions, and ultimately Jewish identities, it makes little sense to develop and defer to standard inventories against which Jewish identity can be measured. To understand that different people make sense of their own Jewish identities in different ways is to make the shift from asking "How Jewish are American Jews?" to asking "*How* are American Jews Jewish?" (Horowitz, 2002, p. 22).

Tradition and Spirituality

If teachers acknowledge that contemporary Jewish identity formation processes are contingent, provisional, variable, tentative, shifting, and changing, then what could possibly be the appropriate *content* to teach, and how should one teach it? What exactly constitutes an adequate understanding and experience of Jewish tradition? Jewish educators must still make selections among endless possibilities of classical texts, modern literature, ethics, laws, practices, histories, holidays, and values from which to teach. Teachers must still determine specific teaching goals and observable, measurable learning objectives. Indeed, educational integrity is marked, in part, by the very content choices teachers make and by the thoughtful rationales in which those choices are grounded. This important educational task must not be abandoned even as "tradition" itself is destabilized through ongoing redefinition.

How should educators now approach the issue of tradition? Certainly, tradition provides a degree of emotional comfort and belonging, even in the absence of intellectual commitment to the religious basis for individual ideas or practices. It offers a set of sacred guidelines that religious leaders use to sustain community, build identity, and make meaning of human life. However, to raise the question of *how* people are Jewish, rather than how Jewish they are, requires a reevaluation of our understanding of tradition. To be sure, most people think of tradition as that which is passed down, intact from the past. As such, it provides a window into the world of one's ancestors. For many people, this connection to the past provided by tradition is an important anchor to their identities. From this point of view, one might consider the enemy of tradition to be innovation and change, since any alteration of tradition from the way things were done in the past is tantamount to a loss of who one is or was. Tradition has often been construed in a conservative way that identifies real, authentic Judaism with immutable and authoritative texts and practices from the past.

Scholars who write about tradition, however, go to great pains to challenge the static view of tradition as fixed and unchanging. For example, Judith Plaskow (1991) began her feminist reinterpretation of Judaism, *Standing Again at Sinai*, by trying

to reclaim tradition as a feminist value and by challenging the view that feminism and Jewish tradition are inevitable adversaries. She rejected the idea that Jewish tradition is monolithic and static, something that can be accepted or rejected, but which remains relatively constant over time. Rather, she proposed a view of Judaism as a "complex and pluralistic tradition involved in a continual process of adaptation and change – a process to which I and other feminist Jews could contribute" (1991, pp. ix–x). Tradition is anything but stable or static. Rather Jewish identity rests upon an endless reappropriation of tradition by each generation of Jews.

When new or revised ritual practices are introduced, they are often resisted and criticized by so-called traditionalists as illegitimate innovations that violate tradition. The concept of tradition is thus intimately intertwined with that of authenticity. It is precisely during periods of dramatic change that those who oppose such change will raise the banner of tradition and challenge changes as inauthentic and dangerous. Over time, nevertheless, ways of being Jewish that at first were seen as inauthentic or too innovative can take root and become part of the lived experience of new generations who know nothing but them. Women rabbis, for example, might still disturb some Jews who consider themselves "traditional," but they are probably far outnumbered by those who accept this development as a legitimate element in Jewish tradition. Today's more fluid forms of Jewish identity are better supported by an appreciation of the intrinsic flexibility of our cultural traditions.

The search for personal meaning through Jewish identity also means that it is now necessary to consider Jewish identity not only as a potential ethnic identity and religious identity, but also as a spiritual identity. While religious identity is a collective, social identity, reflected in a sense of belonging to a specific group of people and history, spiritual identity may or may not involve this sense of belonging. Many people now report a weak sense of religious identity but a strong sense of spiritual identity (Templeton and Eccles, 2005, pp. 254–55). Indeed, it is often when traditional religious beliefs and practices seem inadequate that people turn away from the collective for personal meaning making. "This mature spiritual identity usually develops in private as individuals give new personal meanings to traditional religious beliefs or seek out what is personally sacred in other ways" (Templeton and Eccles, 2005, p. 255). How these relatively new concerns with Jewish spirituality will affect methods of Jewish education has yet to be determined.

Beyond Survival: Toward New Understandings of Jewish Identity Formation

When Jewish identity formation is analyzed apart from anxieties about survival, what emerges is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that requires interdisciplinary analysis. For example, psychologists need to consider the developmental connections between Jewish identity and the developmental tasks and challenges that occur in identity over the life cycle from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. Regrettably, Jewish education has not seen a serious attempt at this since Perry London and Barry Chazan's 1990 article, *Psychology and Jewish Identity*

Education. Social psychologists must look into the dynamics of inter-group and intra-group relations (such as beginning with the now classic work *Jewish Identity: A Social Psychological Perspective* (1970), by Simon Herman; and the more recent 1998 study by Bethamie Horowitz titled, "Connections and Journeys: Shifting Identities Among American Jews"). Quantitative sociologists have had perhaps the loudest voices, and have plotted connections between aspects of Jewish identity and long-term demographic trends,[2] but recent work in the sociology of Jewish education employs qualitative methodologies (such as studies of Jewish identity formation through adult education by Lisa Grant and Diane Tickton-Schuster, 2005, for example). Anthropologists must continue to explore the lived texture of the processes of Jewish identity formation through ethnographic explorations (see, for example, Heilman, 1998; Prell, 1989; Schoem, 1989; and Meyerhoff's classic and exquisite work in 1978).

In addition to the social scientists, scholars in the humanities also provide valuable knowledge about Jewish identity formation. Philosophers will ponder what Jewish identity may tell us about the characteristics of identity in a post-modern world (Charmé, 2000; Goldberg & Krausz, 1993) and educational philosophers such as Fox, Seymour, Scheffler, and Marom (2003) deal with content, curricular ideals, what could and should be at the core of what is taught, and why. Finally, historians of Jewish education such as Jonathan Krasner are increasingly filling in gaping

[2] At least since 1976, a long sociological tradition of "impact studies" exists that has attempted to relate the effect of Jewish education in childhood to levels of Jewish identification in adulthood. Some of the earliest of these include, for example, Geoffrey Bock's *The Jewish Schooling of American Jews: A Study of Non-Cognitive Educational Effect*, 1976; Harold Himmelfarb's *Impact of Religious Schooling: Effects of Jewish Education*, 1974; and Steven M. Cohen's "The Impact of Jewish Education on Religious Identification and Practice" (Jewish Social Studies) 1974. Cohen and others have continued this quest throughout the decades with articles such as Steven M. Cohen's "Jewish Education and Its Differential Impact on Adult Jewish Identity," in Jack Wertheimer (ed.), *Family Matters: Jewish Education in an Age of Choice* (University Press of New England), 2008; Steven M. Cohen's highly charged and controversial work "A Tale of Two Jewries: The 'Inconvenient Truth' for American Jews'" which warned of dire decline in American Jewish identity as a direct result of intermarriage (Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation) 2006; and Steven M. Cohen and Ari Y. Kelman's less survivalist-driven study called *Cultural Events and Jewish Identities: Young Adult Jews in New York* (UJA NY) 2005. Also, in 2005, Jack Wertheimer introduced an important policy paper, a metaphor which entered into the field of Jewish education, called *Linking the Silos: How to Accelerate the Momentum in Jewish Education Today* (Avi Chai Foundation). Calling for the linking of silos of Jewish educational settings and initiatives, Wertheimer's research team consisited of Steven M. Cohen, Sylvia Barack Fishman, Shaul Kelner, Jeffrey Kress, Alex Pompson, and Riv-Ellen Prell. They explored the relationship between pre-school attendance and later Jewish educational experiences and the impact of parents' Jewish schooling on children's Jewish education, of parents' Jewish youth group experience and children's Jewish education, of parents' Israel travel as students on their children's education, and grandparents' observance upon their grandchildren's education. Focusing on Jewish camp and Israel travel experiences, Amy Sales and Leonard Saxe published the report *Limud* [learning] *by the Lake: Fulfilling the Educational Potential of Jewish Summer Camps* (Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University), 2002; and Leonard Saxe et al.'s produced a study called "A Mega-Experiment in Jewish Education: The Impact of birthright Israel" (Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies, Brandeis University), 2001.

holes in our knowledge of the field's development, major influential factors upon Jewish identity formation, and radical transitions and recurring trajectories. In order to approach the complexities of Jewish identity formation in the twenty-first century, Jewish educators must turn to scholarship from multiple disciplines and scholarship that is not framed by survivalist motivations alone.

Psychological Approaches

In the field of psychology of religion, a long-standing research practice has explored different *ways of being religious*. If religiosity were merely a switch that is either in the "on" or "off" position, it might be measured by simple checklists of beliefs or activities that a person may or may not believe or do. But religiosity manifests itself in a variety of ways, and psychologists have tried to identify some of the different ways it may function in a person's life. Although most of this research was designed with Christians in mind, the basic principles apply to Jews as well.

Gordon Allport, one of the most important figures in this area, developed ways of measuring what he described as "extrinsic" and "intrinsic" forms of religion (Allport, 1950). By "extrinsic" religion, he wanted to highlight the ways in which some people approach religion in instrumental and utilitarian ways. They participate in religion for the sake of various secondary benefits, such as the social status provided by religion, a sense of belonging to a particular group, a sense of security, etc. By intrinsic religion, Allport intended to describe people whose commitment is to the religion itself, people who genuinely live it in their daily lives. These are not mutually exclusive categories but dimensions of religion that may be more or less salient in different people. When religion is approached in this way, the list of one's beliefs and religious behaviors is less important than the attitudes motivating a person (consciously or unconsciously). Accordingly, Jews who join synagogues and/or observe traditional Jewish rituals mainly because they think it is "good for the Jews" to do so have a different relationship to Judaism than those whose main concern is the personal meaning they derive from their involvement in Judaism.

Subsequent researchers noticed limitations to Allport's categories, which tend, like much research on Jewish identity, to use more conservative, traditional forms of religion and morality as the primary yardsticks for religion and are thereby apt to miss other forms of religion that may be present today. In response, Daniel Batson developed measures for identifying a different way of being religious, which he called the "quest" orientation (Batson & Ventis, 1982). What is important about people who engage their religion in the quest mode is that they tend to be dissatisfied with traditional answers, values, or practices. Instead, the quest orientation highlights the process of searching, as opposed to the mechanical repetition of childhood religious doctrines or practices, or conformity to the consensus of the religious community. For people in a religious quest mode, there is a heightened awareness of the tentativeness and incompleteness of religious answers, of the importance of doubt as a part of the quest process, and of the urgent need to deal with existential questions (Batson and Ventis, 166). In Batson's research, interviewees who agree

with statements like "Doubting is an important part of being religious," "As I grow and change, I expect my religion to grow and change," and "Questions are far more important to my religious experience than answers" are not regarded as weaker in their religious identities than those whose religious identities are not rooted in such questions.

By focusing only on traditional belief and practice, research on Jewish identity has often missed this and other equally important dimensions of Jewish religiosity. One can imagine, for example, Jews who disagree with statements about the importance of adhering to Jewish law, keeping kosher, or accepting traditional beliefs about God, and who agree with the idea that doubting and questioning are important elements of their Jewish identities, and that their Jewish identities will continually change as they change throughout their lives. They may be asking questions about how Jewishness is related to their overall sense of identity or who they really are.

Jewish Identity Formation and the Human Life Cycle

Jewish identity also needs to be examined in light of the different ways it may manifest itself at different points in a person's life. Some researchers describe Jewish identity less as a fixed thing than as a journey (Horowitz, 1998) or an unfolding spiral (Charmé, Horowitz, Hyman, & Kress, 2008). The work of developmental psychologists raises two additional issues: first, how does cognitive development affect a person's understanding of religion, particularly in childhood and adolescence, and second, how does Jewish identity interface with other kinds of developmental challenges throughout the course of life?

In one of the earliest studies of Jewish identity, developmental psychologist David Elkind (1961) confirmed the stages of cognitive evolution in Jewish children's understanding of aspects of being Jewish. Using a series of questions including "What makes you Jewish?" "Can a dog or cat be Jewish?" "Can you be Jewish and American at the same time?" "How do you become a Jew?" Elkind showed that children's understanding of Jewish identity goes through predictable Piagetian stages. For younger children, the understanding of Jewishness as a quality is fairly concrete and rigid, externally determined by one's family. Somewhat older children learn to define Jewishness in terms of different behaviors. Finally, as children approach adolescence and mature in their ability to reason more abstractly and symbolically, their understanding of the meaning of being Jewish becomes more complex and abstract.

Work by cognitive psychologists of religion have repeatedly shown the ways in which children's understanding of their religious identities are quite different from that of their parents, even though both may be saying and doing similar things. Ronald Goldman, another researcher who uses a Piagetian model of cognitive development has raised the question of just what children understand about religious ideas they are taught during childhood. In most cases, magical and literal views of religion persist until about age 13 (Goldman, 1964). Educationally speaking, this is problematic if not tragic, since age 13, or the age of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, is often the end of formal Jewish education for many Jewish children.

How does this situation affect the Jewish identity of older adolescents and young adults? For those whose Jewish education continues and provides transition to a more abstract, complex, symbolic view of Jewish texts and rituals, a more mature form of Jewish identity is possible. On the other hand, for those whose view of Judaism remains at the magical and literal level, there are two common possibilities: they may continue to accept this form of Judaism as true and suppress doubts or questions about it, or they may feel alienated from ideas which become increasingly dissonant with their evolving views of the world and reject them outright (Goldman, 1965).

Adolescence is probably the period of life when there is not only a huge physiological growth spurt, but a psychological one, as well, in relationship to personal identity. Erik Erikson considered identity to be the main developmental task of adolescence. Cognitive development allows children a more mature understanding of their identities, and their growing independence enables them to evaluate and internalize various social roles and identities. It is a time when a person begins to commit to particular elements of his or her identity, which includes religious, ethnic, and other group identities. This commitment requires a period of searching and experimentation (Erikson, 1980). For this reason, a genuine commitment to one's religious and ethnic identity (or identities) involves more than merely reproducing the identities of one's parents.

Jewish identity consists of more than personal religious beliefs and family traditions. It also includes the formation of a Jewish ethnic identity, which defines one's relationship to a larger group, the Jewish people. Like other parts of identity, Jewish ethnic identity emerges in stages and includes both cognitive and affective dimensions. At first it may be unexamined or taken for granted, but further personal explorations of the meaning of group membership produce various forms of commitment and/or resistance to that identity, positive feelings of belonging, identification with Jewish history, particularly recent parts involving the Holocaust and the modern state of Israel, and participation in group traditions (cf. Phinney, 1990).

Feminist Approaches

One of the important insights of feminism as it developed its analysis of women's issues and identities has been the realization that there is no "generic" woman's identity, that women's identities are inflected by factors of race, class, culture, ethnicity, religion, etc. Jewish identities are no different. In his classic study of Jewish identity, Simon Herman wrote: "Nowhere in the world does Jewish sub-identity exist in isolation as an individual's exclusive ethnic identity. It is everywhere linked with another ethnic sub-identity with which it interacts and by which it is influenced" (Herman, 1970, p. 43).

In the last generation, feminism has not only changed the roles for women in Judaism, it has explored the unspoken world of women's Jewish identities. Until recently, most research on Jewish identity in general and children's Jewish identity in particular has seemed blind to possible gender differences in the emergence,

development, and maintenance of Jewishness. The failure to find gender differences in Jewish identity, however, may be a result of neglecting to investigate all aspects of the issue. Cohen and Halbertal note that even similar Jewish identity outcomes may conceal different underlying processes. Men and women may arrive in equal numbers at certain Jewish identity destinations, but they get there by different routes (Cohen & Halbertal, 2001, pp. 39–40). Anthropologist of American-Jewish life, Riv-Ellen Prell, questions whether Jewishness can truly be measured by conventional lists of beliefs and activities. She argues that if Jewishness is a gendered and relational concept, then Jewish men and women have not experienced their lives in identical ways.[3] More recently, too, sociologist Debra Kaufman discovered significant gender differences among groups of young Jews. Kaufman found that young Jewish women tended to describe their identities in more gendered and relational terms than Jewish men their age, who saw themselves in more individualistic terms (1999, pp. 11–12, 1998, pp. 54–55). Jewishness for women is more deeply embedded in social relationships, particularly those with parents, children, friends, and community.

When the question of gender was explicitly posed to Jewish children, girls were found to be more sensitive to issues of equal rights and sexism, more ambivalent about their proper roles, and more aware of the contributions of Jewish women, while boys were more likely to defend more traditional gender roles in Judaism and to be less familiar with important Jewish women (Charmé, 2006). Neither educators nor researchers should assume that gender differences are a non-issue in understanding the Jewish identities of children.

Faced with the reality of Jewish identity formation as an unfolding, unpredictable process and activity that is inextricably connected to the array of one's other multiple and competing identities, Jewish teachers educate multiple moving targets. There are at least three realms in which new understandings of contemporary Jewish identity formation could represent a major paradigm shift for Jewish education. These three include Jewish education's pedagogical methods, educational cultures, and its overall capacity for trust.

Pedagogical Methods

Jewish teaching that focuses more on processes than outcomes would create classroom and learning settings well-positioned to preserve critical rigor in the intellectual and emotional "play" of concepts and ideas. Students would be given the same opportunities to dismiss a *midrash* as bearing the weakest proof-texts, challenge a course or institution's particular ideological orientation to Israel attachment

[3] See, for example, Prell (1988) ethnography, "Laughter that Hurts: Ritual Humor and Ritual Change in an American Jewish Community," where Purim becomes a keen window into painful gender inequalities and unnamed taboos within a learning community. Prell demonstrated how that community's ritual celebration of Purim revealed tensions regarding gender roles and religious authority in a group that consciously described themselves as officially and proudly egalitarian.

as historically problematic, or interrogate the various theologies represented by Jewish liturgies, as they are to denounce the Shakespearean play *Romeo and Juliet* for its flat plot and undeveloped characters. Students and teachers would be willing and able to determine excellence in their topics of Jewish content through a rigorous assailing of the subject matter, asking genuine questions and providing genuine answers. Sometimes these indictments could be contained within Jewish tradition, but sometimes they would not. Moreover, the task and responsibility for defending and redeeming Jewish tradition and applying it to contemporary life, would belong increasingly to the students, and not primarily, or at least not solely, to the teacher. Identifying excellence in a subject matter also involves the capacity for identifying mediocrity and the ability to support those evaluations with compelling and informed analytical explanations. In order to foster rigorous processes of Jewish identity formation in their students, Jewish teachers will need to strengthen their self-awareness about their own Jewish identity tensions to avoid being either apologetic or defensive as they model and facilitate thorough explorations and examinations of their content.

Educational Culture

The problems facing Jewish identity formation do not lie simply in how it is being taught, however. Profound educational change will come when institutions move beyond the important work of teachers in developing new methods and curriculum. It will also require a culture change at the institutional level in which the qualities of resilience and rigor, strength and "durability" are nurtured.

While it may at first appear counterintuitive, teachers' willingness and ability to poke intellectually critical and analytical holes at their subject matter does not weaken their authority. Similarly, the judicious use of humor and jokes which can permit expression of both hostility and love that teachers and students alike may experience toward the subject matter, also need not compromise the learning. Such acts do not need to become tantamount to self-deprecation or disrespect of the learning process. In fact, they often achieve precisely the opposite effect (Hyman, 2008, p. 151). The rough and rigorous treatment of a course's content demonstrates the resilience, strength, and permanence, both of the subject matter and the teacher. It can also communicate to the students that they, themselves, are worthy and trustworthy investigators of that content. The capacity for critical distance from one's subject matter area creates a classroom culture well cushioned to absorb, survive, and *use* productively the many normal hostilities and anxieties that are a part of identity-building work. When teachers feel confident enough that their course content can not only survive, but thrive from rigorous and ongoing critique from within their fields, they are transforming learning environments into "durable educational cultures."

Often, the best examples of durable Jewish educational cultures are found at summer camps and youth groups. This is because in those settings, the leaders are most willing to consciously and purposefully encourage participants—campers, CITs,

counselors, and advisors alike—to create, appropriate, and perpetuate their cultures. Members of those communities often learn that they are enfranchised voices who can create the norms and rituals of camp and youth group life. As a result, they tend to have forums for open and critical discussion about what matters and what counts in constructing their Jewish identities, even if they do not label it as such. These durable Jewish cultures are most able to withstand and absorb the hostility, frustration, and disillusion that children as well as adults can experience with regard to being Jewish. Camp cultures allow for play, humor, and even a modicum of mockery, which all contribute to the necessary cushion of experimentation and risk-taking that a culture that is not obsessed with its own survival can sustain.

Without needing to tip-toe around loaded and formally unaddressed dissonances, teachers of general studies are free and obligated to create classrooms where one need not tread softly at all. In fact, general studies teachers and students jump and stomp around in their subject matter knowing that it has survived many previous teachers and students poking at it, and that it will continue to survive many more teachers and students engaging with it, long after them. The central, orienting difference is that general studies classroom cultures tend to exhibit the features of educational durability, so important for the dynamic activity of identity building, while Jewish studies classroom cultures are often fraught with fragility. Although more formal Jewish educational cultures, such as schools, are probably better at imparting specific Jewish knowledge and skills, they tend to lack capacities or productive strategies for responding to students who say "I hate this, this means nothing to me, I resent being here," not only with their words, but also with their actions.

However, the ongoing activity of identity formation thrives in rigorous, risk-taking, and safe learning cultures. Thus, consciously working toward creating learning cultures of durability rather than fragility could become powerful messages to students that they, their teachers, and the subject matter can and will survive rigorous engagement. Indeed, creating cultures where it is not only acceptable and normalized to name and examine one's Jewish identity tensions, but where there are also strategies developed collaboratively for coping with these tensions, could produce a new kind of Jewish educational culture that is based more on creativity than anxiety.

Trusting and Entrusting the Students

Jewish educators must let go of the urge to control the *outcomes* of their students' Jewish futures. Instead, they can hold on closely and carefully to their students' collective *processes* of grappling with Jewish subject matter, trusting and entrusting students with their own future outcomes. This may be the most difficult and profound shift necessary for making it safe and inviting enough for students—children and adults alike—to take personal risks and participate willingly and genuinely in the meaning-making conversations that ultimately contribute to productive, durable, identity building.

It is not likely that avoiding or distrusting formal, public exploration of loaded and complex topics will make them disappear. Avoidance may even intensify the counter-productive aspect of the dissonances, making them seem more dangerous and threatening. Simply admitting that there are multiple and competing visions for what constitutes Jewish literacy and serious Jewish learning need not compromise Jewish identity building, and may even be necessary for it. Official and unofficial cultures that could make it easier and possible for students and teachers alike to find the language to talk about any and all dissonances openly may allow the dissonances to be used, rather than magnified and dreaded.

Lingering in the Conflicts

As educators and academics continue to analyze the multi-dimensional character of Jewish identity formation, they must take care to linger in the *conflicts* and *contradictions* of identity formation, and not rush into homogeneous harmonies. Jewish educational approaches that focus on reducing or eliminating the dissonances that are generated by multiple and competing cultures, values, and worldviews have left us with little understanding about the conscious and unconscious strategies that Jews develop to negotiate these tensions. Whether these tensions have an impact on the apparent quantitative and qualitative decline of American-Jewish life that many sociological studies have reported will require further analysis. However, as researchers broaden their conceptions of Jewish identity formation in the design of new research, we can begin to learn about a much wider set of issues than those focused on in much of the current research on Jewish identity.

First and foremost, the field of Jewish identity research is starving for methodological approaches that can appreciate and document identity formation as a series of multiple and moving targets. We need tools capable of studying processes in flux, and over time. In other words, the field needs more ethnographic research and more systematic, longitudinal studies. With greater attention to both of these approaches, separately and together, and through an embrace of the reality of identity conflicts and dissonance which this chapter has addressed, a number of intriguing specific directions for future research emerge:

1. Cultural differences and tensions related to Jewish identity appear, of course, in interfaith families. How each member in such families affects the Jewish identity formation of the others is an important area to investigate. Yet, we bear precious few qualitative studies that could teach us how families and institutions navigate these multiple and competing constructions of theology, ritual, history, heritage, and authenticity.
2. The relatively new definitions of, and interest in, “Jewish spirituality” and “faith development” have yet to be thoroughly studied, but they undoubtedly are important considerations for methods of Jewish education.
3. Research literature on heritage tourism has already begun to explore the meaning of travel to Israel for Jewish identity, particularly the impact of Birthright trips

(Kelner, 2001). However, we still need much more knowledge about what it can mean to make pilgrimages to a "homeland" during this time when all nostalgic and mythic assumptions about Israel are contested and under revision. At the same time, we also need to consider how and why Jews choose to take vacations to other places like Thailand or Italy and what it can mean to people to be in those places, as Jews.

4. Jewish identity formation must be considered in the context of the full range of young people's various identities, Jewish and non-Jewish. As children weave in and out of explicitly Jewish settings like supplemental or day schools, their involvement in Jewish education needs to be examined in the context of the full range of children's supplemental activities, from soccer to ballet to fencing. How does each of these activities fit into a Jewish child's overall identity and how is limited time apportioned and prioritized among the variety of activities they participate in?
5. Those children who do attend religious school or Jewish day school will likely find themselves receiving Hebrew instruction from native Israeli women whose cultural backgrounds, values, and approaches to Jewish education may be quite different from what Jewish-American students are accustomed to in other classes. We do not know how students' associations with Israel and Hebrew are influenced by the differing backgrounds, cultures, and teaching styles of their teachers.

If we are to better understand the Jewish identities that both influence and are influenced by formal Jewish educational efforts, we will need to ask about the tensions, gaps, and contradictions; in short, the dissonances, inherent in Jewish identity formation. As more research of these sorts emerge, Jewish educators will have richer qualitative data that could inspire curricular and pedagogical experimentation that is attuned to the range of sociological and psychological tensions that contemporary Jews face. Jewish educators will have access to new conceptual models, language, and specific vocabulary with which to think about the complex craft of teaching for Jewish identity formation.

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Jewish Identity and Jewish Education: The Jewish Identity Space and Its Contribution to Research and Practice

Gabriel Horenczyk and Hagit Hacohen Wolf

"Ethnic identity could be maintained through education"—this statement seems self-evident, even trivial, to Kwon Young Gun, director of the "Overseas Korean Foundation." More and more diaspora groups are turning to ethnic education in order to foster a sense of ethnic belonging and to bring their members closer to their heritage and to their homeland. Many of them are turning to Jewish educators for advice and guidance, assuming that the Jewish people have succeeded in strengthening their Jewish identity through Jewish education.

This chapter examines this basic assumption and proposes a conceptualization and mapping of the Jewish Identity Space as a tool for better understanding, exploring, and applying aspects related to the relationship between Jewish education and identity. The Jewish Identity Space defines the various aspects and manifestations of identity and behavior in terms of five levels of inclusiveness (personal, family, community, local, and global) and of three components of identity and its expressions (affective, cognitive, and behavioral).

The area to be surveyed is large, with a varied landscape, and no clear boundaries. Theories, conceptualizations, and research reviewed and proposed in this chapter will draw primarily from the discipline of psychology—primarily social and developmental. It should be noted that the areas of Jewish education and identity (and the connection between them) have been informed primarily by sociological and educational theory and research. We believe that our psychological perspective will contribute to the expansion and refinement of the conceptualizations and methodologies by developing and importing new constructs, distinctions, and measures.

We will start with a brief review of the research, focusing on the two causal directions of the relationship between education and collective identity—one that examines the impact of ethnic identity on educational outcomes and the other, less explored, that investigates the effects of education on ethnic identity. This will provide the basis for our summary of the research in the area of Jewish education and identity, and a discussion of the diverse conceptualizations of the variables included

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in the different studies. We will then propose an overarching framework—the Jewish Identity Space—for the mapping and design of research in the area.

Collective Identity and Educational Outcomes

As indicated recently by Feliciano (2009), the influence of ethnic identity on educational achievement has been the subject of much research, but little attention has been paid to the effects of education on ethnic-identity formation. In one of the few studies in this direction, Ng (1999) compared Chinese-American children who attended a heritage school program to Chinese-American children who did not receive education in their heritage language and culture. Her findings showed complex patterns of relationship between Chinese language fluency and ethnic identification.

The vast majority of research, however, focuses on the effects of ethnic/minority identity on educational achievement. Fuligni, Witkow and Garcia (2005) summarized research conducted among African-American students, documenting positive relationships between ethnic identity and a variety of educational outcomes: academic performance, academic efficacy, educational motivation, higher levels of college enrollment, and general academic adjustment. They report findings of their own study showing that, regardless of their chosen ethnic labels, adolescents from diverse cultural backgrounds who considered their ethnicity to be a central aspect of their selves and felt positively regarding their ethnic identity were more positive about education, tended to like school, found their studies more interesting, and believed in their value for their future. Another study (Huynh & Fuligni, 2008) found that adolescents with higher levels of cultural socialization reported higher levels of intrinsic and utility values of school. Along similar lines, Altschul, Oyserman, and Bybee (2006) report that racial-ethnic identity—in its various aspects—is associated with better academic achievement. Ethnic identity was also found to moderate the negative effects of low-socioeconomic status on academic achievement (Ong, Phinney, & Dennis, 2006). Research evidence also suggests that American-Latino students with strong ethnic identity are more likely to capitalize on parental support to excel academically (Cabrera & Padilla, 2004). More recently, Supple and his colleagues (2006) found that adolescents reporting higher levels of ethnic affirmation are rated higher by their teachers in terms of grades, cooperation, and schoolwork. On the other hand, ethnic-identity exploration and resolution were unrelated to school performance and behavior. This finding calls for a careful examination of the differential effects of the various dimensions of ethnic identity, a suggestion that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Thus, most research evidence provides strong support for the view that group affiliation is protective, facilitating minority youths' development of positive achievement beliefs and subsequent academic adjustment. They are largely inconsistent with the "disidentification" perspective on African-American youth, according to which adolescents who recognize societal inequity in economic and social mobility for their group tend to conclude that education has little value for their

future personal and professional lives. Strong group identification, then, results in the development of oppositional identities around education and academic values (Chavous et al., 2003).

In the acculturation psychology literature, various studies have examined the relationship between acculturation attitudes and school adaptation among members of immigrant and minority groups. The prevalent finding is the one showing the adaptational advantage of the "assimilative" orientation—one that favors the new society and culture while rejecting ties with the former/minority heritage (van de Vijver, 2005). Horenczyk and Ben-Shalom (2001) provided support for their "cultural identity accumulation hypothesis," showing that among immigrants to Israel from the former Soviet Union, the more positive cultural identities ("Russian," Israeli, and/or Jewish) held by the adolescent the better his or her psychological and school adaptation, regardless of the specific combinations of cultural identities.

Jewish Education and Identity

Research regarding Jewish education and identity has focused almost exclusively on the effect of various types of Jewish education on Jewish identity—conceptualized and measured in a variety of ways.

The components of the studies in this field can be classified into three categories—predictor (or independent) variables, predicted (or dependent) variables, and intervening variables. It is important to note that, notwithstanding the fact that the various studies refer repeatedly to the same measures, quite often researchers use the same labels for indices with different conceptual or operational meaning.

The predictors or independent variables are generally the educational experiences, divided into formal and informal education. The variables used in studies of formal Jewish education include the extent of exposure to Jewish education, i.e., number of hours, number of years of study in Jewish education (Bock, 1977; Himmelfarb, 1974); the "intensity" of education, i.e., none at all, minimal, moderate, substantial (e.g., Goldstein & Fishman, 1993); the type of education, i.e., day schools, private tutor, partial, and Sunday school (Cohen, 1995; Rimor & Katz, 1993); timing of education, i.e., participation in Jewish education in the early/later years of schooling, Jewish education during the high school years (Schiff, 1988; Schiff & Schneider, 1994b). Variables in informal education include participation in trips to Israel, youth movements, summer camps of religious institutions, and Zionist youth movements (e.g., Cohen, 1995).

The predicted or dependent variables are usually those related to Jewish identification, measured in the studies through a variety of indices that may be broadly classified into a number of categories: (1) *General Jewish practices* (observance of customs and rituals), such as lighting Shabbat candles, Chanukah candles, participation in a Passover seder, observing kosher laws and fasting on Yom Kippur, not having a Christmas tree at home (Goldstein & Fishman, 1993), carefully adhering to private religious practices such as buying kosher meat, using separate dishes, not

carrying money on Shabbat (Rimor & Katz, 1993), Sabbath observance—Kiddush on Friday night, going to synagogue on Shabbat, and refraining from traveling (Schiff & Schneider, 1994b). (2) *The intellectual and artistic area*—reading, studying and accumulating Jewish books, listening to Jewish music and purchasing Jewish art (Himmelfarb, 1977), and Jewish knowledge (Schiff, 1988). (3) *Social and community Jewish involvement*—involvement in informal social networks with other Jews (Bock, 1977), membership in Jewish organizations, synagogue membership, volunteering for and donations to Jewish causes, subscription to Jewish periodicals, living in a Jewish neighborhood or the desire to live in a Jewish neighborhood, and participation in JCC activities (Rimor & Katz, 1993; Goldstein & Fishman, 1993; Lipset, 1994). Horowitz (2000) suggested measuring "Jewish engagement" by means of seven modes of behavior, including language, memberships/interactions with other Jews, participation in social organizations (e.g., synagogue or Jewish Federation membership), preserving cultural traditions, and political activity. In addition to these indices there may also be included, under the heading of "Jewish involvement," attitudes toward social issues such as mixed marriages (Lipset, 1994), as well as visits to Israel and participation in JCC activities (Lipset, 1994; Rimor & Katz, 1993).

An overview of the indices used for measuring Jewish identity in studies of the relation between identification and Jewish education points to the use of indices based primarily upon intellectual aspects of identity (knowledge of Jewish culture and history), social aspects (involvement with Jewish people and Jewish causes), and on rituals (maintaining customs). Glock & Stark (1965) classic classification of religiosity includes aspects missing from the list of indices, like those that focus on beliefs, feelings, and spirituality. We shall deal with these aspects further on in the chapter. In addition, most of the indices used to measure Jewish identification are indices with "traditional" content (i.e., connected to the Jewish religious tradition, such as Jewish holidays, Shabbat, mezuzah, kashruth, Yom Kippur, etc.), and only a few of them are indices of the "national" content of Jewish identity (i.e., indices that do not stem from the Jewish religion, such as—"ingathering of the exiles," "Holocaust," "self-defense," etc.).

Chapter "Jewish Identities: Educating for Multiple and Moving Targets" by Charmé and Zelkowicz, in this volume, sees these types of indices as reflecting a "survivalist" perspective of Jewish identity that has tended to narrow the field's theoretical conceptions and resulting in largely static and monolithic formulations. They argue for an approach that conceives identities as being multiple and shifting processes that people practice and rehearse, and propose to take into account new or revised ritual practices, spiritual aspects of Jewish identity, and developmental processes and changes throughout the lifecycle.

Intervening Factors

With the increase of research on the effect of Jewish education on Jewish identity, a number of researchers argued that these studies failed to take into account variables that may influence the very decision to send children to the various frameworks

of Jewish education, first and foremost among them—the family environment and parental Jewish identity. It was suggested that, in effect, the studies did not measure the influence of Jewish education but rather the influence of the family and its lifestyle (Cohen, 1995; Philips, 2000; Schoenfeld, 1998). Additional variables likely to affect the relationship between Jewish education and identity that were examined in some of the studies are gender, Jewish lifestyle and observance of mitzvoth in the home, birth in another country, and the stream of Judaism in which the respondents grew up (Goldstein & Fishman, 1993). Philips (2000) focused on mixed marriages, and argued that analyses of Jewish education must take into account, in addition to Jewish parentage, variables such as generation (third, fourth), connection to the synagogue, and family income.

A methodological clarification is needed here. Some of these intervening factors can be seen as confounding variables – variables extraneous to the study that are likely to influence the outcome variable, and become a source of "corruption" (Black, 1999). We would like to suggest that some of these additional variables affecting identification outcomes (such as Jewish family variables) should be looked at in terms of their intervening role in the Jewish education – Jewish identity relationship. These variables can play two major types of roles—moderating and mediating. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a variable may be said to function as a *mediator* to the extent that *it accounts for* the relation between two variables, while a *moderator* is a qualitative or quantitative variable that *affects the direction and/or strength* of the relationship between two variables. Let's take, for instance, the variable of the number of Jewish friends. This variable can play a mediating role: Jewish education impacts Jewish identity via its effect on the Jewish social network. Very likely, mediation will be partial rather than full, with other internal and external factors also accounting for the relationship between Jewish education and identity. As to moderation effects, we could examine the moderating role of Jewish observance at home on the Jewish education – identity relationship. It could be the case that education affects identity more (or perhaps only) when the level of home Jewish observance is low as compared to a high level of home Jewish observance.

Selected Findings from Studies on Jewish Education and Jewish Identification

Most studies report positive correlations between the length and quantity of exposure to Jewish education and various indices of Jewish identification, but also point to differences between various types of Jewish schools in terms of their influence on Jewish identification: Day schools have been consistently shown to strengthen Jewish identity, including connections with other Jews and Jewish behaviors (Cohen, 1995; Lipset, 1994; Rimor & Katz, 1993; Schiff & Schneider, 1994a, 1994b) and they are the most influential of all the kinds of education. According to Rimor and Katz (1993), there is a positive relationship between the number of years of Jewish education and general Jewish identification, expressed in synagogue attendance, community involvement, and religious behavior. Moreover,

Schiff & Schneider (1994b) noted that Jewish education has a greater impact when it continues beyond high school.

Chertok et al. (2007) found that graduates of Jewish day schools exhibit greater involvement in Jewish life on campus than graduates of private and public schools, as expressed in the following indices: involvement in formal Jewish studies, observance of holidays, participation in courses on Judaism, programs on the Holocaust, Israel and Jewish culture, community work under the auspices of a Jewish organization, knowledge about Israel or informal celebration of Jewish holidays with friends. Graduates of an Orthodox background are generally more involved in Jewish life on campus and in observing rituals. In addition, it was found that Jewish day schools, especially those with a non-Orthodox orientation, succeeded in influencing the sense of civic and social responsibility of their students and that the graduates of Orthodox schools expressed a greater obligation toward the Jewish community, in addition to universal values of civic responsibility and social involvement.

Only a few studies were conducted on supplementary schools. In one of these, children viewed their studies in the regular school as much more important than those in the supplementary school, and did not want to spend additional hours in a Jewish school (Schiff, 1988). Cohen (2007) summarizes the scarce evidence in the impact of supplementary Jewish education, concluding that the effect may be somewhat positive, negligible, or even somewhat negative.

According to Himmelfarb (1974), it is not the kind of education (i.e., day school or other) that is the factor influencing Jewish identification, but rather the quantity of the exposure to Jewish education and for what length of time this education continues. Bock's study (1977) supports this assertion, and suggests that the number of hours of Jewish instruction is the best predictor of Jewish identification as expressed in greater religiousness, more involvement in informal social networks with other Jews, a feeling of more knowledge of Jewish culture, and greater support of Israel. Himmelfarb (1974) claimed that at least 3,000 hours of religious education is necessary in order for Jewish schools to have a lasting impact. Since this condition is practically non-existent, Himmelfarb argued that the Jewish education of approximately 80% of the Jews in the United States is not effective. However, later on, Himmelfarb (1977) noted that Jewish schools have a non-negligible influence on the observance of customs or on the intellectual-artistic area of reading, study, and accumulation of Jewish books, music, and art. However, as indicated earlier, some research did reveal impact, albeit limited, of part-time supplementary Jewish education (see Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004; Cohen, 1988, 1995).

The studies reported so far were conducted almost solely in North America. Quantitative data on Jewish education and its relationship to Jewish identity from outside North America is scarce. Chapter "Latin America: Jewish Education in Latin America—Challenges, Trends, and Processes" by Goldstein and Ganiel, in this volume, attributes the lack of studies on these topics in Latin America to the absence of community or academic research institutions working on Jewish studies in general, and on Jewish education in particular due to the low awareness on the part of the community leadreship about the value of research. Among the few investigations of Jewish education in the Spanish-speaking world is a comprehensive

study currently underway of Jewish schools in Argentina—the Mifné project—coordinated by Yaacov Rubel. Jmelnizky and Erdei (2005) report findings from a survey showing that the major consideration of parents in Latin America for sending their children to a Jewish school is academic excellence. But the study also reveals a high level of consensus among Jewish parents regarding the positive effect of Jewish schools on the Jewish identity of the children. Interestingly, this belief is also shared by the Jewish parents who do not send their children to Jewish schools. Goldstein concludes his analysis by arguing that nowadays the Jewish school is not merely an agent of socialization for Jewish values and identification with Israel, but also plays a significant role in the preparation of the student for professional success and upward social mobility, as well as acculturation to the local-national environment—echoes of a new era characterized by values of diversity, pluralism, and social integration (Chapter "Latin America: Jewish Education in Latin America—Challenges, Trends, and Processes" by Goldstein and Ganiel, this volume).

Research on Jewish education and identity in Europe is also very limited. Cohen (2009) examined the connection between the kind of school (Jewish, general, and non-Jewish private) and family values among Jewish families in France. He found that traditionally religious families at times choose to send their children to public schools and non-religious families at times choose to send their children to Jewish day schools. However, beyond everything else, families that send their children to private Jewish schools are more religious and more connected to Israel, put more emphasis on the family, the community, and religious belief, while families with children in non-Jewish education place an emphasis upon universal values of autonomy and hedonism.

Criticism of the Studies

The expansion of studies on Jewish education and identity is accompanied by various types of criticism that challenge the conceptualizations underlying the studies or their conclusions. As we mentioned above, some of the criticism is methodological and relates to confounding variables (such as Jewish lifestyle at home) that may exert stronger effects on Jewish identification than does Jewish education (see also Chapter "Jewish Identity: Who You Knew Affects How You Jew: The Impact of Jewish Networks in Childhood upon Adult Jewish Identity" by Cohen and Veinstein, this volume). In order to overcome this criticism, a number of studies were carried out that controlled for various possible intervening variables, such as family background and gender, and a high level of correlation was still obtained between Jewish education and aspects of Jewish identification such as community ties (Cohen, 2007), Jewish involvement, knowledge of Jewish culture, and connection to Israel (Dashefsky, 1992). As to the type of education, it was found that day schools have a relatively high influence, whereas no differences were found between those learning in supplementary Sunday schools and those who did not receive any Jewish education at all (Cohen, 1995). In addition, it was found that Jewish identification

is enhanced by informal educational activities—youth movements, summer camps, visits to Israel, and especially the combination of all of these. Indeed, such informal education was found to be more effective for youth than any form of formal education (with the exception of day schools). In other words, even partial education provided in the high-school years and combined with informal education provides a rather significant influence from the perspective of Jewish identity (Cohen, 1995; Dashefsky, 1992).

Notwithstanding these studies, researchers point to additional variables that were not examined as intervening variables and that are likely to significantly affect Jewish identification, such as—previous experience at home, the subjects' perception of their parents' Jewish commitment, the emotional climate at home, etc. (Charmé, Horowitz, Hyman, & Kress, 2008). In addition, Chertok et al. (2007) note that in all of the studies that were surveyed there is no solid evidence of a direct causal relationship between a formal Jewish school and various indices of adult Jewish identity. According to them, in order to prove such a connection there would be a need for random experimental conditions, which is of course impractical, or a longitudinal study, for which funding is largely unavailable.

Schoenfeld (1998) raised additional methodological problems, that were not addressed up to now, in the examination of the relationship between Jewish education and identity: the vast internal differences between various types of Jewish education (e.g., Orthodox day schools are totally different from non-Orthodox schools), the use of different variables in order to measure a particular aspect of Jewish identity, whereas, in effect, various components of Jewish identity should be measured since Jewish identity is multidimensional; biases caused by the evaluation of modern-educational projects ("experimental effect"); the absence of attention to the dynamic of identity and to the fact that Jewish identity can change over the course of a lifetime; and the absence of sufficient attention to the changing environmental contexts and the inter-generational differences that render the traditional indices that were used in the past to measure Jewish identity less relevant at present (see also chapter "Jewish Identities: Educating for Multiple and Moving Targets" by Charmé and Zelkowicz, this volume).

From a different angle, Wertheimer (2005) challenge a number of assumptions underlying Jewish education, such as that an institution of a particular type can address various educational needs; that schools are the sole educators of children; that outside of the Orthodox world identification with a particular stream in Judaism has little importance; that efficiency is the best way to strengthen Jewish education and that duplication is a wasteful and incorrect use of expensive resources; and that it is only the family that determines whether Jewish education will succeed. They contend that the success of Jewish education in bringing about Jewish identification depends upon a variety of factors, including the social and community contexts in which the child or adolescent grew up; simultaneous and/or accumulative participation in a variety of Jewish educational frameworks; the availability to the parents of educational choices and their belonging to a particular denomination, which itself influences their educational decisions; the parents' perception of themselves as agents of Jewish education and the mutual influence of parents and

children on one another from the perspective of Jewish involvement. According to their assertion, in view of the multitude of internal factors and connections between them, Jewish educational leaders must find ways to connect between formal and informal educational programs, between families and schools, between educators of different kinds, and between central community organizations supporting Jewish education.

The primary current criticism of the conceptualization of Jewish identity and identification is grounded in post-modern conceptualizations arguing against the modern conception of Jewish identity as a relatively clear and stable entity, with clear boundaries based upon known demarcations between "Jew" and "non-Jew," and positing clear criteria for "strong" or "weak" Jewish identities (Charmé et al., 2008). According to Kress (Charmé et al., 2008) most studies ignore the fluid, dynamic, and changing nature of post-modern Jewish identity, characterized by interplay with many other identities which a person has (Charmé et al., 2008), and new dimensions that have lately penetrated the experience of Jewish identity, i.e., synchronic and diachronic diversity.[1]

According to this perspective, these changes in the conceptualization of identity in general, and Jewish identity in particular, mandate adjustments in the underlying assumptions of the studies. Instead of relying on normative linear models of Jewish identity according to which there is a need for accumulation of Jewish experiences throughout childhood and adolescence in order to achieve a strong Jewish identity, Charmé et al. (2008) argue for a spiral model that relates to the post-modern era in which other cultures and identities in a person's environment may influence his or her personal identity more than his or her Jewishness does. The new Jewish identity may find expressions in various ways, unique to each person, notwithstanding characteristics shared with others, and develops with time in a non-linear manner, by returning over and over to the fundamental Jewish questions, albeit in different contexts, throughout a lifetime. The spiral image also challenges the essentialist view of identity. According to Yair (2006), the linear model also includes the assumption of accumulative experiences and is largely appropriate to formal education, whereas those who support the decisive influences of informal Jewish education rely, explicitly or implicitly, on the assumption of transformative experiences.

These claims are consistent with the assertion of Cohen and Wertheimer (2006) that increases in indices of Jewish identification (such as membership in a synagogue or Jewish community center, observance of customs such as Passover seder, lighting Shabbat candles, etc.) do not necessarily point to an increase in the feeling of ethnic solidarity of Jews or their feeling of peoplehood, but rather are consistent at times with the disappearance of such feelings of identification. The researchers interpret this as a result of the changes that occurred in recent decades in the perception of Jewish identity by Jews in the United States, from the perception that it

[1] "Synchronic diversity" refers to the multiple forms of Jewish identities that comprise the "Jewish community" at any particular moment. "Diachronic diversity" looks at the phenomenon of Jewish identity as a journey over time (Charmé et al., 2008).

expresses identity of a collective with a shared culture to the perception of an identity with personal, individual, private significance (Cohen & Eisen, 2000). Along these lines, Horowitz (2000) suggested a relatively new variable in research on Jewish identity—namely, the degree of integration between the Jewish part of the individual's identity and the whole person, i.e., an examination of the relative weight of Jewishness (being Jewish) as compared with other significant areas in the person's life (leisure, work, family).

In addition, the post-modern approaches challenge the "natural" and self-evident basis of belonging—a basis that was perceived as unassailable. In other words, a primordial discourse is being replaced by a constructivist one (Burr, 1995; Nagel, 1994), and identities that in the past were conceptualized as ascribed are currently perceived as being a matter of choice. Just as discourse about sexual identity became a conversation about gender, so the constructivist revolution has also not passed over ethnic identity in general, and Jewish identity in particular (Horenczyk & Bekerman, 1999). Therefore, research must relate to the fact that identity, which in the past was perceived as congenital and "ascribed," becomes an "achieved" identity.

It seems that this critique mandates re-examination of the assumptions underlying the studies seeking to explore the connection between Jewish education and identity. For example, Charmé et al. (2008) detail the implications of such wide-ranging changes in the concept of identity. First, a more dynamic research perspective regarding identity is necessary, in order to recognize changes in identity over a lifetime. Second, conclusions regarding Jewish identity cannot be drawn from behaviors or activities reported but rather the self-understanding of a person regarding the place of Judaism in his life/experience must be examined independently of the normative Jewish image—"good" or "bad"/"strong" or "weak." In addition, research methods are needed to enable expression of multiple Jewish "selves" in different contexts.

In order to capture the rich and multifaceted nature of contemporary ethnic identity in general, and Jewish identity in particular, we wish to propose a broad conceptualization informed by theoretical development in the social psychology of collective identity. This framework, we suggest, will allow for better mapping and research on the relationship between Jewish education and identity.

A Social Psychological Perspective on Jewish Identity: The Jewish Identity Space

As a theoretical construct, identity has a rich tradition that offers a wide variety of possible meanings. These are grounded in different disciplines, such as philosophy, sociology, and anthropology (Baumeister, 1987, 1995). In most of the literature in the field, such as that described above, concepts of "identity" and "identification" are used synonymously, with no clear distinction between them. Identification with a group appears in some of the studies as "social identity," "group identification," "group identity," "in-group identity," "intra-group identity," or "group commitment" (see, e.g., Brewer & Kramer, 1986). Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) propose an overarching term—collective identity or identification

> shared with a group of others who have (or are believed to have) some characteristic(s) in common . . . This shared position does not require direct contact or interchange with all others who share category membership; rather, the positioning is psychological in nature. (p. 81)

Some researchers have conceived Jewish identity as an ethnic identity (see, e.g., Dor-Shav, 1990; Elias & Blanton, 1987; Elizur, 1984; Herman, 1970, 1977). Phinney (2003) defined ethnic identity as:

> a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one's identity or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group. Ethnic groups are subgroups within a larger context that claim a common ancestry and share one or more of the following elements: culture, phenotype, religion, language, kinship, or place of origin. Ethnic identity is not a fixed categorization but rather is a fluid and dynamic understanding of self and ethnic background. (p. 63)

Different researchers emphasize distinct components of ethnic identity. Some focus upon attitudes and emotions: Ethnic identity as the ethnic component of social identity; self-identification as a member of a group; a sense of belonging and a sense of commitment; a feeling of shared values; the attitude of a person toward his or her group and his or her membership in the group; and ethnic involvement (social participation, observing cultural customs, and holding cultural positions). Some conceptualizations place the emphasis on the cultural aspects of ethnic identity, such as language, behavior, values, and knowledge of the history of the ethnic group (Deaux, 1993; Phinney, 1990).

Along similar lines, Tur-Caspa, Pereg, and Mikulincer (2004) proposed an integrative model of Jewish identity dividing between three types of components: (1) factors that influence formation of Jewish identity, such as values and beliefs, inter-family relationships and relations with Jews and non-Jews, characteristics of the Jewish community, etc.; (2) components of Jewish identity, such as religion, community, Israel, "the Jews," "the goyim," history, etc.; and (3) expressions of Jewish identity, such as the performance of mitzvoth and rituals, marriage patterns, connection with the State of Israel, etc.

We would like to put forward, as a starting point, a rather "pared-down" and inclusive definition of Jewish identity. Jewish identity, we suggest, *is the attitude of the individual towards Jewishness, towards Jews, and towards his or her own Jewishness*. This definition makes no reference to specific contents or to the normative implications of the person's Jewishness. Jewish identity profiles are likely to differ in terms of contents as well as in the extent to which the person feels a duty to express his or her Jewish identity. It is up to researchers to examine these variations in contents, and the relationship between Jewish identity (which is conceived here as an attitude or a conglomerate of attitudes) and Jewish behavior.

The three major components of Jewish identity within our definition (attitudes toward Jewishness, Jews, and one's own Jewishness) are likely to be interrelated—as is the case with other facets of Jewish identity and identification mentioned in this chapter. But for our purposes, as social psychologists and educators, it is the discrepancies among the various aspects of Jewish identity that require theoretical, empirical, and educational attention, such as to students with positive attitudes toward Jews, but less favorable attitudes toward Judaism, or students with a positive attitude toward Judaism but without feeling a personal connection to their

Jewishness. These increasingly common patterns call for educational approaches rich and multifaceted enough in order to confront complex identity dilemmas.

For the purpose of mapping components of Jewish identification, we can then adopt the well-known distinction between three components of the attitude – affective, cognitive, and behavioral (or behavioral intentions) (Ajzen, 1982). Ashmore et al. (2004) also make use of this distinction, classifying the various dimensions of collective identity into cognitive elements (e.g., self-categorization, explicit and implicit importance), affective elements (e.g., attachment and sense of interdependence), and behavioral elements (e.g., behavioral involvement and social embeddedness).

In the wake of this, we can define three *components of Jewish identity* according to three principal groups of questions: (1) *The affective/emotional dimension*—what does the person feel about his Jewishness—is he happy that he is Jewish? Is he proud of his Jewishness? What does the person feel about other Jews and about the Jewish people? Does he feel that there is an internal connection between himself and other Jews? What closeness does he feel toward them? (2) *The cognitive dimension*—does the person place herself within the Jewish people? Does she view herself as a typical member of the category? What is the degree of importance that she attributes to her belonging to the Jewish people? Does she have a positive or negative position regarding her belonging to the Jewish people? Does she carry within herself the narrative of the Jewish people? What are the beliefs and opinions that the person has regarding her Jewishness, Jews, and the Jewish people? Does she hold beliefs and opinions regarding the ways in which Jews need to act? (3) *The behavioral dimension*—what are the behavioral inclinations in the private sphere and in the public sphere, which express his cognitive and emotional relationship to other Jews? Toward the Jewish people? Toward belonging to the Jewish people? What are the explanations that he supplies for such behavioral tendencies?

In addition to the components of identity, Brewer and Gardner (1996) distinguished between three *levels of identity*, according to the level of inclusiveness of the identity: (1) *Personal identity*—relating to the person as a unique individual, her attributes, her personality, her inclinations, without reference to other people; (2) *interpersonal identity*—relating to the person's belonging to small groups with whose members of she/he has daily interactions (such as family, work team, etc.); and (3) *collective identity*—relating to the person's belonging to large groups or abstract categories (such as political tendencies, interest groups, etc.).

Each of these levels of identity can be related to each of the components of collective identity: affective, cognitive, and behavioral. In the context of Jewish identity, in our opinion it is possible to derive four levels of identity from the model of Brewer and Gardner: personal Jewish, two levels of interpersonal Jewish (family and community levels), and collective-global Jewish.

In addition, a comprehensive analysis of contemporary Jewish identity would benefit from the inclusion of a fifth level, namely the local level. This level has not been accorded appropriate attention in the theoretical and research literature until now, but is becoming increasingly prominent in current global Jewish discourse.

The "diaspora" discourse emphasizes the local connection as one of the components that not only describe, but also fashion, the place and experience of the ethnic group. This primarily involves not only the group that is scattered, but it can also be applied to a group residing in its homeland. Jewish identity in the United States has unique characteristics and this is true as well with respect to Jewish identity in France or in Argentina. Each of these identities is the result of historical, demographic, and intra-Jewish cultural processes, but its fashioning was and is also significantly influenced by social and cultural forces in the non-Jewish context in various places. In this vein Aviv and Shneer (2005) argue against the widespread viewpoint according to which Jews throughout the world have "legs" and not "roots," and they advocate researching the ways in which Jews of today fashion identities, not as people in the diaspora—lacking a home—but rather as people rooted in unique places and connected to them.

In this manner, the inclusion of the local level in the mapping of the identity space will enable an examination of the differences between various geographic and cultural contexts in the nature and extent of various expressions of identity. It will also direct us to a measuring of local intra-diaspora connections in the broad framework of Jewish identity and identification. The local level also enables a separate location, in the theoretical analysis and the empirical studies, of the Jewish-Israeli identity that with time becomes more distinct than the identity fashioned in other places in the world (Ben-Rafael & Ben-Chaim, 2006; Cohen & Liebman, 1990).

From the integration of both dimensions, the components of identity (affective, cognitive, behavioral) and the levels of identity (personal, family, community, local, global) we can sketch the identity space (as presented in Table 1) which allows for a multidimensional and multilevel mapping of Jewish identity and its possible behavioral manifestations.

The multidimensional model enables an examination of various issues in the discourse of Jewish identity, as theoretical questions as well in an empirical manner. For example, through use of the model, variables used in the social-psychological studies of Jewish identity from the 1960s and onward in Israel and in the diaspora may be mapped, as is demonstrated in Table 2. The placement of the variables in the table is tentative at this point and may offer a basis for further discussion and refinement. It should be noted that our proposal for a multidimensional mapping of Jewish identity is supported by studies showing how different facets of ethnic identity have differential relationships with psychological and educational outcomes (e.g., Chavous et al., 2003).

Table 1 The identity space

Level	Affective	Cognitive	Behavioral
Personal			
Family			
Community			
Local			
Global			

Table 2 Examples of Jewish identity variables in the identity space

Component level	Affective	Cognitive	Behavioral
Personal	• Motivation for Jewish continuity • Feeling of ownership of Jewish sources	• Perception of Judaism as relevant to everyday life • Knowledge of concepts in Jewish sources	• Observance of customs (fasting on Yom Kippur, Passover seder, celebrating Jewish holidays) • Visiting Israel • Integrating content from Jewish culture in creative works • Volunteering for Jewish causes
Family	• Feeling of connection to roots • Feeling of pride in family tradition	• Self-perception as a link in the generational chain • Familiarity with values of the family culture	• Preserving customs in the home (lighting candles, Kiddush, kashruth) • Holding family ceremonies connected to the life cycle and the cycle of the year
Community	• Feeling of belonging to the community	• Involvement or initiating of social projects in the community	• Synagogue/JCC membership • Initiation and participation in activities connected to Jewish culture
Local	• Pride in local Jewish institutions	• Familiarity with local Jewish institutions • Knowledge of local Jewish history	• Contribution to local Jewish causes • Membership in local Jewish organizations • Membership in Jewish clubs
Global	• Feeling of connection and brotherhood with Jews throughout the world • Feeling of belonging to the Jewish people • Emotional involvement with Israel	• Familiarity with Jewish traditions in the world • Positive and negative positions regarding Jews/the Jewish people • Learning about Israel in the past and in the present	• Making contact with Jews throughout the world • Donation to non-local Jewish causes • Visiting Israel • Contributing to Israeli causes

The suggested conceptualization can generate basic and applied research on various aspects and issues related to Jewish identity and Jewish education. A study conducted by Wolf (2004) examined aspects of Jewish identity using a complex and rich conceptualization based on a number of important distinctions: (1) a distinction between classic measures of social identity derived from group membership (ascribed identity) common to all kinds of identities, and cultural measures unique to Jewish identity (cultural identity); (2) a distinction among cognitive, affective, and behavioral measures; (3) a distinction between measures of national

content, measures of traditional content, and those based upon a variety of facets of Jewish identity (cultural, religious, anti-Semitic, political, etc.); (4) a distinction between identification with the category (the Jewish people) and identification with the members of the category—contemporary Jews; and (5) a distinction between identification with the Jews in Israel and identification with the Jews outside of Israel. The study's findings supported the multidimensional perception of Jewish identification and statistically identified a number of factors underlying the complex construct of Jewish identity, such as (1) "feelings towards the Jewish people and the importance of its continuity," (2) "centrality of Judaism in life," (3) "ideology regarding the essence of Judaism," and (4) "connection to Judaism and Jews outside of Israel."

Conclusions and Implications

Jewish education is considered to be one of the major vehicles for fostering a sense of belonging and commitment to Jewishness and to the Jewish people. Most evidence suggests that continuous and extended participation in Jewish educational programs (formal and non-formal) tends to contribute to the strengthening and maintenance of positive Jewish identity.

In this chapter, we referred to some of the conceptual and methodological criticisms raised regarding studies in this area and the conclusions derived from them. It is widely claimed that the measurement of Jewish identity in many of these studies fails to capture the diversity, richness, complexity, and fluidity of Jewish identity in these times throughout the Jewish world (see also Chapter "Jewish Identities: Educating for Multiple and Moving Targets" by Charmé and Zelkowicz, this volume).

It is possible to see the "fluidity" of identity in general, and of Jewish identity in particular, that researchers refer to as stemming, among other things, from only a partial look that focuses each time on another aspect of identity, and as a result, of this resulting in the conclusion that identity is changing, fragmented, and inconsistent in our times. In our opinion, an inclusive approach that accounts for the various aspects and dimensions comprising identity would permit a more complex and appropriate view of identity. Those concepts common to the post-modern discussion of identity, such as "fluidity," "instability," "fragmentation," and "inconsistency" will be replaced by the notion of gaps between various dimensions and aspects of identity or transition from one particular identity profile to another.

Informed mainly by theory and research in social and cultural psychology, we proposed an overarching framework for mapping Jewish identity concepts and variables, and for exploring and describing Jewish identity patterns. The suggested Jewish Identity Space makes room for complexity and richness by enabling the examination of profiles and the analysis of possible discrepancies.

Thus, the multidimensional model of the Jewish Identity Space enables the examination of various issues in the discussion of Jewish identity as theoretical questions,

as well as empirically. For example, the model can help to examine and describe the prevailing and developing patterns of connections between the various components of identity, and to provide empirical answers to questions such as: To what extent is the behavioral expression of Jewish identity related to other internal aspects? What characterizes those who have an internal expression (emotional and/or cognitive) but not behavioral, as opposed to others whose Jewish identity is reflected in their behavior? The model will also enable a more differentiated examination of the differences between different groups in Jewish identity—there can be differences on certain levels but not on others, in certain components but not in others, or even in unique combinations of components and levels. The conceptualization of Jewish identity through the proposed model allows, and even calls for, the sharpening of theoretical questions and to the integration of empirical findings from various studies in the Jewish world. This will enable comparison between these studies, and the identification of missing information calling for additional research.

Beyond this, the distinction between the various components of identity enables, e.g., an examination of the differential effects of various educational variables. For example, it may be that supplementary education is more directed—and/or more effective—for strengthening identification at the community and local level, whereas day school education is likely to have more significance on the personal and family level. It may be that accumulated experiences may lead to more significant outcomes in the aspects connected to the cognitive and behavioral components while experiences that constitute turning points are more directed to the emotional component, etc. These distinctions have particular importance in these times, when financial dictates compel restrictions on the educational scope of programs. Policy makers in this area have to be more modest—and especially more aware—of the goals they set for themselves, according to a well-thought out order of priorities, which can be assisted by the distinctions enabled by a model like this. Obviously, there is no expectation that all of the factors will be simultaneously examined in one study, however, if we aspire to multidimensional and comprehensive understanding, our aggregate knowledge must relate to most of these aspects.

In summary, our suggested conceptual model can enrich the toolbox available for the study of Jewish identity and the ways in which Jewish identity is—or is not—influenced by various types of Jewish education. Those who assert that current conceptualizations are inadequate for an understanding of "post-modern" Jewish identity usually do not expect systematic socio-psychological models to provide new tools and measures that are appropriate. We suggest that a multifaceted and context-sensitive approach to the mapping of Jewish attitudes and behavior can provide research—and also other domains of Jewish-identity discourse—with these necessary tools. We also believe that such a conceptually diverse and pluralistic approach can help to better define the goals of Jewish education—not uniform goals for all kinds of Jewish educational interventions or programs, but rather specific, focused, and achievable objectives.

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Jewish Identity: Who You Knew Affects How You Jew—The Impact of Jewish Networks in Childhood upon Adult Jewish Identity

Steven M. Cohen and Judith Veinstein

The Well-Established Impact of Jewish Education

The long-term impact of Jewish education upon adult Jewish identity in the United States is well established. Studies that date back until the early 1970s (e.g., Bock, 1976; Cohen, 1974, 1995a; Dashefsky & Lebson, 2002; Dashefsky, 1992; Himmelfarb, 1974, 1979; Fishman, 1987; Goldstein & Fishman, 1993; Grant, Schuster, Woocher & Cohen, 2004) have validated, in broad terms, the effectiveness of Jewish education upon adult Jewish identity. In one form or another, the studies find that several instruments of Jewish education (e.g., schools, camps, youth groups) exert a positive influence upon the levels of several indicators of adult Jewish identity (e.g., ritual observance, communal affiliation), and that this relationship holds up even after taking into account several parents' Jewish engagement and other background factors. In other words, to take an illustration, day school alumni are more likely to attend Shabbat services, even after we recognize that those who went to day schools as children also were more likely to be raised by parents who themselves went to Shabbat services. The link between Jewish education, in its many varieties, and Jewish identity outcomes, and their many varieties, holds up even after we recognize that those with more and better Jewish educational experiences were raised by parents and in communities that also contribute to their chances of higher levels of Jewish involvement in adulthood.

Not all instruments of Jewish education (supplementary schools, day schools, Israel trips, etc.) exert equal influence upon all adult identity outcomes. Day schools in particular stand out as exerting the most profound influence on adult Jewish identity outcomes (Cohen, 1988, 1995a, 2007; Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004). Supplementary schools before Bar/Bat Mitzvah exert little impact and one-day-a-week schools seem to even promote intermarriage later in life, probably by reinforcing the weak Jewish commitment of the youngsters whose parents provide them only with a one-day-a-week education. At the same time, positive effects (not

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quite in the range of day schools) are associated with other forms of Jewish education: supplementary school in the teen years and youth group participation (Cohen, 1988, 1995, 2007; Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004), trips to Israel (Mittelberg, 2007; Sasson, Saxe, Rosen, Selinger-Abutbul, & Hecht, 2007; Saxe & Chazan, 2008; Saxe, Sasson, & Hecht, 2006; Saxe, Sasson, Phillips, Hecht, & Wright, 2007) and attending Jewish overnight camps in the summer (Cohen, 2000; Keysar & Kosmin, 2002, 2005; Sales & Saxe, 2002, 2003). Still other studies point to the long-range impact of Jewish pre-schools, as well as to the lasting effects of taking Jewish Studies classes and participation in Hillel or other such campus-based activities.

The effects not only vary by educational instrument, they also vary by the outcomes measured. An early paper in this tradition, for example, pointed to the greater impact of school on knowledge of Hebrew as contrasted with positive feelings about being Jewish (Cohen, 1972), emblematic of what may be schools' greater impact upon Jewish knowledge as compared with Jewish commitment. A study of applicants for Wexner fellowships demonstrated a link between type of Jewish education and type of Jewish professional career aspiration. Day schools seem to be more associated with Jewish Studies professors-in-the-making; Jewish camps from the denominational movements may be especially effective at producing future rabbis; and youth group participation seems to produce a large number of Jewish communal professionals (Cohen, 1995b).

In short, we may still have questions about which sort of Jewish education produces what sorts of outcomes for which types of Jews. But we ought to regard the question as to whether Jewish education matters in terms of fostering strong Jewish identity in the long run as a settled issue, albeit one demanding ongoing investigation and further elaboration.

In contrast, we have little direct investigation of another major aspect of Jewish socialization: Jewish social networks in childhood. Above and beyond everything else we may know about people's childhood lives, do their levels of Jewish engagement measures as adults depend in part upon their parents and friends, even after we statistically account for the impact of their Jewish education?

We do know that children of two Jewish parents score far higher than those with just one Jewish parent on almost all measures of Jewish identity (Beck, 2005; Cohen, 1998, 2006; Fishman, 2004), be they related to belief (attitudes), behavior, or belonging, be it formal or informal. (Throughout this chapter, we regard "Jewish identity" as embracing not merely what one feels; but it is also about behavior, knowledge, formal ties with communal institutions, and informal ties with family, friends, and neighbors. For some, Christian identity may be primarily about faith; for us, Jewish identity is about so much more.) We also know that current levels of Jewish friendship are related to current levels of other forms of Jewish engagement. And we know that a mounting body of evidence points to the impact of social networks in powerful and unexpected ways. For example, a recent study that examined the spread of obesity during a 30-year period among friends, siblings, and spouses concluded:

> A person's chances of becoming obese increased by 57%... if he or she had a friend who became obese in a given interval. Among pairs of adult siblings, if one sibling became obese, the chance that the other would become obese increased by 40%.... If one spouse

> became obese, the likelihood that the other spouse would become obese increased by 37%. (Christakis & Flower, 2007, p. 370)

More directly related to this topic, a recent study of longitudinal data on the shaping of religiosity among American adolescents reported: "We found that parents and friends strongly influenced the religious service attendance habits of adolescents and that these, as well as school context, shaped how important religion is in adolescents' lives" (Regnerus, Smith, & Smith, 2004, p. 27; see also Uecker, Regnerus, & Vaaler, 2007). Research on the Jewish engagement of Birthright Israel alumni in North America points to the power of friendship in numerous ways, including influencing the chances and nature of participation in programming for Jewish young adults:

> The alumni we interviewed repeatedly told us that social network factors play a prominent role in decision-making about what programs they will and will not attend. Moreover, analysis of the alumni survey underscores the significance of having friends who also attend activities. In the survey data, participation in specific activities is highly correlated with having friends who participated in those activities. Indeed, between one-fifth and one half of the variance in attendance can be traced to the friendship circle phenomenon. Although this does not prove causation, since alumni may go to a program because their friends go, or the friends may go because the respondent went, it does indicate that participation is strongly tied to network factors. (Chertok, Sasson, & Saxe, 2009, p. 24)

If family and friends influence the chances of growing obese, to say nothing of adolescent religiosity, they also figure to influence the chances of growing up Jewish. Judaism and Jewishness are socially determined, socially constructed, and socially supported. Hence, social networks should be especially valuable in shaping and sustaining Jewish engagement. For good reason the Rabbis placed a premium upon family, community, and institutions, to say nothing of the group character of Jewish prayers, rituals, and ceremonies.

What About Jewish Social Networks?

In light of the proven power of education to influence adult Jewish identity outcomes, one wonders whether social networks exert the same sort of impact upon adult Jewish identity. Analytically, the issue is complicated by the empirical overlap of three major components that undoubtedly come into play in shaping Jewish commitment: parental engagement, Jewish education, and Jewish social networks. Thus, people whose parents were religiously observant and communally active are also likely to report more intensive Jewish educational experiences. The more engaged parents are also more likely to be in-married and to bestow more extensive Jewish friendships on their children. Likewise, Jewish education and Jewish networks are related: people with more extensive and intensive Jewish educational experiences are more likely to derive from in-married homes and to develop Jewish friendships in their childhood and adolescent years.

The overlap in parents' engagement, Jewish education, and Jewish networks in adolescent years raises questions about which factor is genuinely producing positive

Jewish identity outcomes in adulthood. Does education appear to "work" because education is linked to stronger Jewish social networks? Do people who have experienced strong Jewish networks exhibit higher levels of Jewish engagement later in life simply because their parents were unusually engaged or because they experienced more extensive and intensive Jewish educational experiences? In short, what really makes the difference later in life: Is it parents, Jewish education, or Jewish networks? Or, is it all three? (The answer: It is all three.)

Moreover, "Jewish identity" is far from a unitary concept. While no clear consensus defines its boundaries or its content, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and observers readily agree that it is multifaceted, consisting of several dimensions and expressions. The choice as to which dimensions to emphasize is not simply a scientific exercise, but one influenced by time, place, and ideology. The features of Jewish identity that may be considered more important or most relevant can (and should) differ for younger Jews and older Jews, for Jews in the early twenty-first century versus those in the mid-twentieth century, Jews in the US as opposed to those in other countries, and for Jews who see themselves as religious or secular, Orthodox, Conservative, Reform or post-denominational. As an example, whether one belongs to a national Jewish organization may be a useful sign of engagement for older Jews today or most adult Jews 50 years ago; but it is a less compelling indicator for today's Jews in their twenties and thirties. For them, whether they read Jewish-oriented blogs and websites may be a statistically and substantively indicator of underlying Jewish engagement—and was, of course, simply unavailable to almost anyone during much of the twentieth century.

Fully recognizing these conceptual, problematic, and operational difficulties, we believe that common to members of the contemporary American Jewish population are certain shared dimensions or expressions of Jewish engagement. Among them are:

- Jewish social networks—in-group friends and in-marriage,
- ritual observance—be it the most popular rituals that are observed by vast majorities of American Jews, or some of the more traditional practices observed by minorities of American Jews,
- communal affiliation—of which synagogue membership is the most widespread and the affiliation measure that is, empirically, the most efficient predictor of other measures of Jewish engagement, and
- self-ascribed importance of being Jewish

These measures bear different relationships with different characteristics of the Jewish population. That is, major axes of social differentiation, such as age, gender, social class, family status, socioeconomic status, region, and Jewish ideology, vary in the extent to which and the manner in which they matter for different dimensions of Jewish engagement. The unmarried, for example, score especially low on measures of communal affiliation, but they resemble their married counterparts with respect to several important Jewish feelings (Cohen & Kelman, 2008). To take another example, younger Jews score especially low on measures of Israel

attachment (Cohen & Kelman, 2007), but they score not much lower than their elders with respect to celebrating the most widely observed Jewish holidays.

Similarly, the studies of Jewish education have found quite understandable and meaningful variations in the impact of Jewish educational experiences. Not surprisingly, Israel trips produce a much bigger bounce in attitudes with respect to Israel attachment than they do for other measures of Jewish engagement.

Given the variety of Jewish identity measures, the variation in their relationship with external variables, and the differential impact of Jewish education upon different measures of Jewish identity, we would not be surprised to find the same patterns with respect to Jewish social networks. That is, the presence of Jewish friends in childhood and having two Jewish parents rather than one should affect Jewish engagement in adulthood in varying ways, depending upon the measure of Jewish identity.

Is this supposition true? Do childhood Jewish social networks exert an effect upon Jewish identity that can be observed decades later, even when taking into account parental characteristics and the Jewish educational experiences they underwent as children? That is the core question this analysis seeks to answer.

The Data, the Measures, and the Analytic Strategy

To systematically examine, perhaps for the first time, the impact of childhood Jewish social networks upon adult Jewish identity, we turned to the (American) 2000–2001 National Jewish Population Study (Kotler-Berkowitz et al., 2003). For conceptual clarity, we limited our analysis to those who:

- were age 25–64, and who
- were unquestionably Jewish (dropping those regarded as simply "Jewish connected"), and to those who
- were raised at least partially Jewish or had at least one born-Jewish parent (i.e., we dropped the converts to Judaism and those who switched to Jewish identity without undertaking formal conversion under rabbinic auspices).

These criteria limited our respondent pool to 2,064 potential respondents, reduced even further by random non-response to the survey questions we drew upon for the analysis.

The Measures

To measure *Jewish identity outcomes in adulthood*, we focused upon seven particular measures:

- proportion of close friends who are Jewish (32% report that most are Jewish);
- in-marriage, that is, the proportion of those married who are married to a born-Jew or convert to Judaism (67% in this sample);
- observance of more popular rituals, consisting of attending a seder, observing Chanukah, fasting on Yom Kippur, and High Holiday service attendance (47% perform three or four of these);

- observance of more traditional rituals that is, at least monthly service attendance and, regularly lighting Sabbath candles (32% do at least one);
- synagogue membership (46% affiliated);
- communal affiliations, consisting of membership in synagogues, JCCs, and other Jewish organizations (47% with no affiliations, 28% with one, and 25% with two or more);
- subjective feelings about the importance of being Jewish, as measured by the answers to the question, “To what extent is being Jewish important in your life?” (47% answer, “very”).

We examined both Jewish education in childhood and Jewish social networks in childhood, separately and together. We defined *childhood Jewish educational experiences* as a combination of Jewish schooling and informal Jewish educational experiences, consisting of participating in Jewish camping, Jewish youth group, and a teen trip to Israel. We experimented with different configurations so as to maximize the impact of the Jewish education measure on the outcome variable and derived the following categories:

- Day school attendees (13% of the weighted sample)
- Attended “Hebrew school” of any frequency 7 or more years (15%) [other terminological equivalents: “religious school,” “Talmud Torah,” “supplemental school.”]
- Had some informal Jewish experiences, but did not attend day school or Hebrew school for 7 or more years (34%)
- Had no informal Jewish experiences but some formal Jewish education (18%)
- No formal Jewish education and no informal Jewish experiences (21%)

For *childhood Jewish social networks* we experimented with various combinations of parents’ in-marriage and the number of friends in high school who were Jews, leading us to create the following four categories:

- Parents were in-married and the adult respondent had all or mostly Jewish friends in high school (36%)
- Parents were in-married and half of the respondents’ friends were Jewish in high school (16%)
- Parents were in-married but the respondent had just some or no Jewish friends in high school (33%)
- Parents were intermarried (15%)

Throughout our analysis, we controlled for *socio-demographic* and other variables in order to ensure that differences in the adult Jewish identity measures were, in fact, attributable to childhood social networks and/or Jewish educational experiences, and not to the demographic variables with which they may be correlated. We experimented with a variety of possibilities, settling upon a parsimonious list that could adequately represent the impact of the Jewish education that took place in

the parental home (we take the view that parents, by their very nature, function as Jewish educators and that the home provides children with motivation, knowledge, connections, and all elements of Jewish education), and current circumstances that are known to influence the expression of Jewish identity. The three factors relating to the *parents' Jewish engagement* for which we controlled were comprised of the following:

- Denomination raised
- No Christmas tree in the home when the respondent was about 10 years old
- The frequency with which Shabbat candles were lit when the respondent was about 10 years old

The socio-demographic characteristics for which we controlled consisted of the following:

- Gender
- Age (25–64)
- Education
- Income
- Family type: unmarried with no children, married with no children, single parents, parents of young children, parents of school-aged children, empty nesters, and widow(er)s.

The Findings

Childhood Friends Linked to Most Adult Outcomes

First, we present the extent to which childhood social networks are linked with expressions of adult Jewish identity, without dealing with the matter of causality or other related factors. As can be seen in Table 1, those raised by two Jewish parents and who had mostly Jewish friends in high school received the highest adult Jewish identity scores on every measure. That is, they had the highest rates of Jewish friendships as adults, were more likely to be in-married, more likely to observe popular and traditional rituals, more likely to be synagogue members and members of other Jewish institutions, and were more likely to feel that being Jewish was an important part of their life. Those respondents with two Jewish parents and about half of their friends were Jewish in high school outscored respondents with two Jewish parents and no Jewish high school friends, who, in turn, outscored respondents whose parents were intermarried.

Of note is that childhood friends matter considerably. With respect to their adult Jewish outcome measures, those with one Jewish parent closely approximate the scores of those whose parents were in-married but reported mostly non-Jewish friends. The only large gap is with respect to in-marriage, with children of the in-married with few Jewish friends reporting more in-marriage than their counterparts who were raised by intermarried parents (58 vs. 44%). But on all other measures, the gaps are small.

Table 1 Childhood social network means, unadjusted

	Jewish friends now	Jewish spouse	Popular ritual observance	Traditional ritual observance	Synagogue member	Jewish affiliations	Importance of being Jewish
2 Jewish parents, most/all J HS friends	63	80	83	34	60	50	84
2 Jewish parents, ½ Jewish HS Friends	47	68	80	22	48	42	79
2 Jewish parents, none, some Jewish HS friends	35	58	69	16	39	33	73
1 Jewish parent	32	44	64	15	36	30	74

At the same time, for today's adults whose parents were in-married, the friendships they had decades ago, in childhood, influence Jewish identity measures today. For these grown children of the in-married, we may compare those who had mostly non-Jewish high school friends with those who reported having mostly Jewish friends in high school. For the two groups, synagogue membership moves from 39 to 60%—friendship patterns years are linked with synagogue affiliation today. The results are even more dramatic in terms of the proportion reporting that most of their current friends are Jewish: 35 versus 63%—again, friendships then are associated with friendships today. The link with in-marriage is telling as well: 58% for those with mostly non-Jewish friends in their high school year to 80% who had mostly Jewish friends. More Jewish friends then (in high school) mean more in-marriage today.

Another way to look at these findings is as follows. Among the children of in-married parents, the chances that one's child will intermarry was only 20% for those with mostly Jewish friends in high school; but it more than doubles (to 42%) for their counterparts with mostly non-Jewish friends.

As noted above, assessing the impact of childhood Jewish social networks requires removing the effects of parents' Jewish engagement, and current socio-demographic variables. Using Multiple Classification Analysis, we examined whether the effects of childhood social networks on adult Jewish identity would remain substantial after controlling for all of the covariates: denomination raised, no Christmas tree in home at age 10, the frequency of lighting Shabbat candles at age 10, gender, age, education, income, and family type (note that at this stage, we do not take into account Jewish education).

As can be seen in Table 2, the differences between each of the childhood social networks groups became narrower on the measures of adult Jewish identity, but

Table 2 Childhood social network means, adjusted for covariates

	Jewish friends now	Jewish spouse	Popular ritual observance	Traditional ritual observance	Synagogue member	Jewish affiliations	Importance of being Jewish
2 Jewish parents, most/all J HS friends	61	77	79	27	53	44	82
2 Jewish parents, ½ Jewish HS Friends	48	70	81	26	50	44	80
2 Jewish parents, none, some Jewish HS friends	37	60	71	20	43	37	74
1 Jewish parent	33	47	69	20	43	36	76
Eta	.467	.264	.236	.215	.198	.201	.198

in every case, they remained substantial. The patterns demonstrated that higher childhood socialization scores are associated with higher levels of Jewish identity in adulthood, even after controlling for the covariates. This pattern was again consistent across every measure of adult Jewish identity—friendship and marriage patterns, ritual observance, affiliation, and subjective feelings—demonstrating that childhood social networks are, in fact, a significant predictor of Jewish identity in adulthood.

Next, to place the results with respect to childhood Jewish social networks in context, we performed the same analysis for Jewish educational experiences. We examined the link of the respondents' childhood Jewish educational experiences with the same adult Jewish identity measures. We present the mean scores for each of the outcomes by level of Jewish education (Table 3), and we control for other variables in Table 4.

These findings reveal some both expected and some curious patterns, as follows:

1. Day school alumni generally outscore all the others. The effects of having attended a day school are most pronounced for in-marriage; less pronounced for Jewish friends, traditional ritual observance, and synagogue membership; and negligible for popular rituals, communal affiliation, and the subjective importance of being Jewish.
2. For most intents and purposes, we find similar outcomes for two groups: those who went to Hebrew school in their adolescent years, and those who stopped Hebrew school, but had some informal Jewish education in adolescence.
3. On many measures, in particular in-marriage, those with no Jewish schooling outscore those with minimal Jewish schooling. This non-intuitive finding occurs

Table 3 Jewish education means, unadjusted

	Jewish friends now	Jewish spouse	Popular ritual observance	Traditional ritual observance	Synagogue member	Jewish affiliations	Importance of being Jewish
Day school	67	91	91	58	75	60	92
Hebrew school, 7+ yrs	48	63	86	23	53	46	81
Some informal exp, did not attend Day or Heb 7+	47	66	76	22	48	42	79
No informal, some formal J ed	36	51	64	10	37	31	69
No informal or formal J education	42	66	62	15	30	24	74

several times in the research literature for these two groups at the lower end of the education scale. Perhaps minimal Jewish education that does not continue or "take" serves to bring together those with weaker parental backgrounds and weaker commitment and actually reinforces their diminished interest in things Jewish.

Table 4 Jewish education means, adjusted for covariates

	Jewish friends now	Jewish spouse	Popular ritual observance	Traditional ritual observance	Synagogue member	Jewish affiliations	Importance of being Jewish
Day school	59	85	81	42	59	48	85
Hebrew school, 7+ yrs	48	61	82	24	50	45	80
Some informal exp, did not attend Day or Heb 7+	48	66	76	24	49	42	80
No informal, some formal J ed	39	54	67	13	41	35	71
No informal or formal J education	44	72	70	19	41	32	77
Eta	.319	.262	.333	.398	.267	.267	.267

Table 5 Social network means, adjusted for covariates, including childhood Jewish education

	Jewish friends now	Jewish spouse	Popular ritual observance	Traditional ritual observance	Synagogue member	Jewish affiliations	Importance of being Jewish
2 Jewish parents, most/all J HS friends	60	75	78	25	52	43	81
2 Jewish parents, ½ Jewish HS Friends	48	71	80	26	50	43	80
2 Jewish parents, none, some Jewish HS friends	38	62	72	22	45	38	75
1 Jewish parent	33	46	70	20	43	37	77
Eta	.467	.264	.236	.215	.198	.201	.198

The findings so far clearly indicate that both childhood social networks and Jewish educational experiences affect how respondents manifest their Jewish identities as adults. We tested whether childhood social networks would remain a powerful predictor of adult Jewish identity if we also controlled for the respondents' childhood Jewish education.

As can be seen in Table 5, even after controlling for childhood Jewish educational experiences, childhood social networks remained a significant predictor of adult Jewish identity. In fact, the same patterns seen earlier again emerged across all categories of adult identity measures. Those respondents with higher levels of childhood social networks also had higher levels of adult Jewish identification even after controlling for a host of socio-demographic variables, denomination raised, and childhood Jewish education.

We also examined whether the effects of childhood Jewish education would be diminished if we introduced childhood social networks as a covariate into those regression equations. That is, would childhood social networks reduce the impact of Jewish education on adult Jewish identity? The answer, illustrated in Table 6, is clearly, no.

Even after introducing childhood social networks into the equation, the earlier patterns remained. Childhood Jewish education remained a significant predictor of adult Jewish identity across all of the identity measures.

These analyses demonstrate that both childhood social networks and Jewish educational experiences influence several measures of adult Jewish identification, even when taking into account parental Jewish engagement and current socio-demographic characteristics. But which factor is more important? Is it social

Table 6 Jewish education means, adjusted for covariates, including childhood social networks

	Jewish friends now	Jewish spouse	Popular ritual observance	Traditional ritual observance	Synagogue member	Jewish affiliations	Importance of being Jewish
Day school	53	83	80	41	57	47	84
Hebrew school, 7+ yrs	48	60	82	23	50	45	80
Some informal exp, did not attend Day or Heb 7+	48	67	76	24	49	42	80
No informal, some formal J ed	42	57	68	14	42	36	71
No informal or formal J education	47	73	72	19	41	32	77
Eta	.315	.259	.329	.404	.268	.267	.270

networks or Jewish education? And when, for what measure of adult Jewish identity, is one more important than the other?

Figure 1 illustrates each variable's overall measure of impact (measured by the Eta coefficient—a measure of impact that ranges from 0 to 1.00, much like a correlation or standardized regression coefficient) on each of the measures of adult

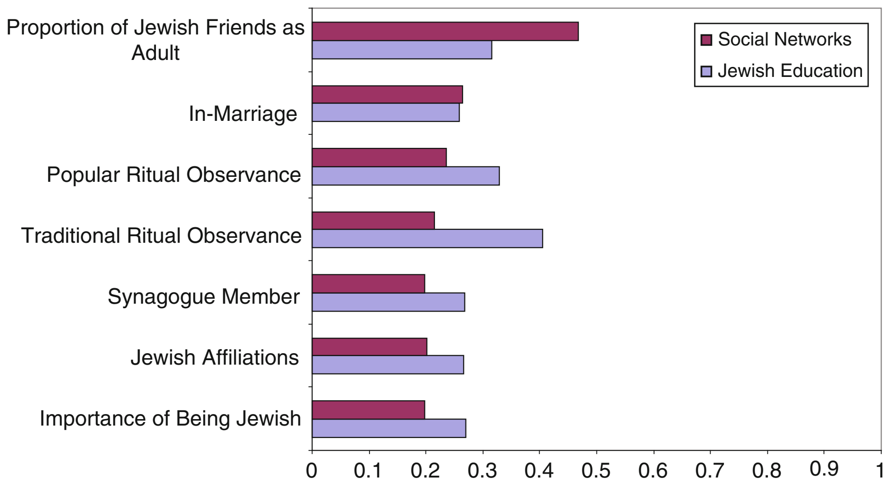

Fig. 1 Overall measures of impact (Eta) for childhood social networks and Jewish education on measures of adult Jewish identity

Jewish identity. By comparing the coefficients for social networks and education, we learn that childhood social networks exert a greater impact upon adult Jewish friendship. For predicting in-marriage, the two childhood experiences are about equally important. In contrast, the impact of childhood Jewish educational experiences is more pronounced upon ritual observance, communal affiliation, and subjective Jewish identity in adults. Nevertheless, the differences in impact are small, with social networks coming close to Jewish education on all adult outcomes with the exception of traditional ritual observances where the education lead is substantial.

Conclusion: Networks Work

In summary, both of these childhood indicators—social networks and education—play an important role in adult Jewish identity, independently of each other. Above and beyond Jewish education, having Jewish friends (and parents) in the childhood years matters especially for having Jewish friends later in life, and to a lesser extent, for in-marriage, and for all other measures of Jewish identity. While Jewish education generally matters more than networks, in all instances except for the more traditional rituals, childhood Jewish friendships and having two Jewish parents are almost as important, if not sometimes more important.

We can reasonably infer that Jewish education, like all forms of education that take place in a social context, exerts its impact in part by creating, sustaining, and reinforcing Jewish friendships. And we need to recognize that Jewish friendships, apart from Jewish education, exert an independent effect upon adult Jewish identity outcomes. In fact, these results echo the position one of us took a few years ago with respect to in-marriage, but which can be extended to other expressions of adult Jewish engagement:

> The role of Jewish education in promoting in-marriage is fairly well-recognized in Jewish communal circles. In contrast, the equally powerful (if not more powerful) influence upon intermarriage of proximity to other Jews, Jewish residential density, and association (informal ties among Jews—friends, neighbors, co-workers, and the like) has received far less recognition than this domain deserves.
>
> Who one happens to meet or know has as much to do with the chances of marrying a Jew as does one's Jewish commitment and education. Jews living in areas of high density (with lots of Jews relative to the surrounding population) are more likely to marry Jews. Thus, Jews in Nassau County (for example) report lower intermarriage rates than those in Suffolk, while Jews in Philadelphia report lower rates than those in, say, Denver. Also linked to more in-marriage is having had more Jewish friends in high school and college, which is a corollary of living in areas with high Jewish residential density. Zip code may in fact be more predictive of in-marriage than Jewish education in that people still date and marry those they live near. (Cohen, 2006, p. 17)

Moving beyond intermarriage to adult Jewish identity more generally, the implications for educators and other practitioners are quite clear: The impact of Jewish education can be augmented by the creation and sustenance of strong Jewish social networks. If so, then mere Jewish association, such as that which may be brought about by Jewish neighborhoods, organizations, or Jewish Community Centers, can

play a valuable role in building Jewish social networks, Jewish community, and lifelong Jewish engagement.

Over time, the boundaries and content of "Jewish education" have shifted in line with the changing understandings and changing needs of the Jewish people. This analysis has demonstrated the influence of Jewish social networks in childhood upon Jewish identity in adulthood. But, of course, the lesson is broader: Jewish social relationships (marriage, friendships, neighbors, co-works) operate to nurture, sustain, and encourage Jewish engagement of all sorts. This scientific realization (well known to the Rabbis or old) comes at a time when Jewish social relationships (again: marriage, friendships, neighbors, and co-workers) have been in sharp decline over the last several decades. These circumstances, then, argue for a broadening of the very concept of "Jewish education" to embrace the formation and bestowal of Jewish social networks. If part of what a Jewish education and Jewish educator are expected to do is to teach commitment to Israel, or the importance of *Tikkun olam* (repairing the world) or the virtues of text study, so too should their explicit mission now incorporate the bestowal of Jewish friendship networks upon youngsters (and adults) who are decreasingly likely to find them on their own. For Jewish marriage, friendship, and community are not only instrumentally valuable (they promote and buttress other forms of Jewish engagement), they are also intrinsically valuable to the Jewish life, tradition, and culture Jewish educators seek to perpetuate and enrich.

The research agenda pertaining to Jewish social networks is rich, and parallels the agenda pertaining to social networks in general. A very fundamental question concerns where, and when, and how are networks and identity indicators causes and effects—or chickens and eggs. What leads to what and when and how? A related question concerns how are networks formed and how can Jewish educators help form them at various stages of life—childhood, adolescence, undergraduate years, young adulthood, and beyond? Finally, just as social scientific research repeatedly has demonstrated that well-connected individuals exert more influence on others than social isolates, the question for researchers is to determine the extent to which and the manner in which centrally located and engaged (or unengaged) Jews influences their circles of relationships. And the challenge to educators is to locate such influential youngsters (and others) and mobilize them, in particular, on behalf of Jewish interests and Jewish engagement—both for their own benefit and for that of their surrounding circles of contacts and intimates.

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Jewish Thought for Jewish Education: Sources and Resources

Jonathan A. Cohen

Introduction

In recent years, a noteworthy proliferation of descriptive, empirical research has shed a great deal of light on the way Jewish education is actually conducted in various settings: denominational and non-denominational, day school and supplementary, formal and informal. The growth of academic research in Jewish education has also generated a felt need for a more rigorous consideration of the *ends* of Jewish education – the "oughts" that might orient educators with regard to the purpose of their practice, as they become more knowledgeable about the situation as it "is." It is this need that has informed both the composition and the reception of the well-known anthology and commentary: *Visions of Jewish Education* (Fox, Scheffler, & Marom, 2003) – a rich compendium of plural conceptions of the educated Jew conceived and coordinated by my esteemed teacher Seymour Fox, of blessed memory. The mentor to whom I owe my personal initiation into the field of the philosophy of Jewish education, Michael Rosenak, has made the ends of Jewish education his primary academic focus in foundational books such as *Commandments and Concerns* (Rosenak, 1987) and *Roads to the Palace* (Rosenak, 1995).

Fox, together with Israel Scheffler and Daniel Marom, asked premier Jewish scholars and thinkers such as Isadore Twersky, Moshe Greenberg, Michael Meyer, and Menachem Brinker – to explicitly set forth their conceptions of the educated Jew. Rosenak drew upon modern Jewish thinkers such as Buber, Heschel, Liebowitz, and Soloveitchik as resources for the articulation and justification of his own vision of "Jewish Religious Education in a Secular Society." Both of these projects have yielded rich fruit and I strongly recommend these works for Jewish educational leaders who perforce cannot avoid being concerned with the clarification and formulation of ends. Another approach to Jewish educational thought (one that I have been concerned with in my own work) involves "thinking through" issues of principle occupying Jewish educators today through the eyes of Jewish thinkers who represent different worldviews, even if those thinkers did not necessarily address

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those issues directly. The aim of this pursuit is to present Jewish educational leaders and policymakers with plural perspectives on fundamental issues, perspectives derived from the work of recognized philosophers, theologians, and scholars. It is my hope that this kind of inquiry can enrich contemporary discourse on the overall aims of Jewish education.

The kind of question that will posed in this chapter, then, goes something like this: If I were Mordechai Kaplan, or Martin Buber, or some other outstanding modern Jewish thinker, and I saw things the way they see things, and a certain issue of principle that has been perplexing Jewish educators today were placed at my doorstep – how might I conceivably think through that issue? How might I thereby offer a measure of guidance to educators who are searching for orientation in their work?

For example, if we were to focus on some of Schwab's famous educational "commonplaces" (Schwab, 1964, pp. 5–6), with regard to the *learner*, should the ideal student or the ideal graduate of a Jewish educational institution possess a disposition for "spirituality?" Is "spirituality" a good thing? What do we mean by this term, one that has become something of a Jewish-educational buzzword? Should we judge our success or failure in Jewish education by the degree to which we foster "spirituality" in our students? What might thinkers like Julius Guttmann or Emmanuel Levinas have to say about this issue, if we were to confront them with it?

Concerning the commonplace *subject matter*, is the Jewish traditional literature that many of us are laboring to impart and illuminate actually "translatable" to young people whose consciousness has been shaped by modernity and post-modernity? Can ancient texts, permeated with values, mores, and conceptions so different from our own be "translated" for us without being distorted out of all recognition? If such "translation" is at all possible, what is "lost" and "gained" in such translation? Can we translate Jewish traditional texts in a way that preserves their "authenticity" while still being "relevant" (Rosenak, 1986, pp. 35–45, 1995, pp. 98–100)? What might scholars and thinkers such as J.B. Soloveitchik and Martin Buber have to say about this issue?

Schwab always emphasized that a full educational deliberation should include discussion of all four commonplaces. Toward the end of his career, he even came to feel that the commonplace *teacher* was perhaps the most neglected of the four (Schwab, 1983). He therefore thought it particularly important not to pass over the commonplace *teacher* in any deliberation meant to issue in practical decisions. The limited scope of this brief chapter, however, will allow us to treat only two commonplaces (the "learner" and the "subject matter"). For an extended treatment of Schwab's fourth commonplace – the *teacher* – I refer the reader to my article "Subterranean Didactic: Theology, Aesthetics and Pedagogy in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig" (Cohen, 1999a). As far as the commonplace *milieu* is concerned, I am planning a paper comparing the views of Yeshayahu Liebowitz and Menachem Brinker on the issue of Jewish "peoplehood."

In the framework of a handbook, I am also not able to give an account of how I arrived at my interpretations of the thought systems under discussion. I can only provide a brief summary of the relevant views of the thinkers I have chosen to

"mine" for insights into Jewish educational issues. Interested readers are directed to the bibliographical items presented at the end of this chapter, wherein both the methodology and the canons of interpretation used to reach the conclusions offered here are extensively discussed.

Julius Guttmann and Emmanuel Levinas on "Spirituality"

Jewish thinkers and sociologists advise us of the recent decline of ethnic solidarity and "visceral Judaism" as primary characteristics of Jewish identity among contemporary Jews (Cohen & Eisen, 2000). In this generation, individual Jews are often said to be seeking out experiences of "spirituality," joining groups that offer the promise of "spiritual experience," rather than groups that place a premium on collective action for "national" causes. Talk about "spirituality," however, tends to be vague and unfocused. It is often difficult for people who are enthusiastic about it to give a coherent account of it. What exactly do we mean by "spirituality" and how is it different from other kinds of consciousness or feeling? Does "spirituality" entail certain beliefs or commitments, or is it a catch phrase for pleasant experiences with religious overtones? What might education for spirituality require from the learner or can any and all "get the spirit" if only the right mood is set?

Searching for guidance on some of these questions, let us turn to two towering Jewish thinkers of the twentieth century – Julius Guttmann and Emmanuel Levinas. Julius Guttmann is perhaps the less known of the two, since Levinas' fame as a world-class philosopher and as an original Jewish thinker has been growing in recent years. Guttmann, however, can and should be regarded as one of the premier scholars of Jewish philosophy in the twentieth century. After heading the Academy for the Science of Judaism in Berlin in the 1920s and early 1930s, he made his home in Jerusalem in 1934, where he was professor of Jewish philosophy at the Hebrew University until his death in 1950. His famous book, *Philosophies of Judaism* (Guttmann, 1964) published in German, Hebrew, and English, remains a foundational text for anyone who wishes to gain entry into the field. Guttmann, however, was not only a scholar of Jewish philosophy. His writings, though written in a scholarly vein, reveal a thinker with a definite philosophical position of his own. I believe his insights into what is today called "Jewish spirituality" can serve as a paradigm and a resource for Jewish educators who are seeking to understand what "spirituality" is and how to educate toward it.

First of all, Guttmann would probably prefer the term "religiosity" to "spirituality." Guttmann was of the opinion that religiosity is a universal human potential. All people, so he thought, have an innate disposition to connect with some supreme "Other" regarded as the ultimate source of Being and Value. Just as human beings have a natural capacity for rationality and the making of intellectual distinctions (true and false); just as they are endowed with an innate moral sense (that allows them to distinguish right from wrong) and with a native aesthetic sense (by way of which they separate the beautiful from the ugly) – so too are they endowed with the capacity to experience a religious dimension within which they sense the difference

between the holy and the profane. Religiosity, then, for Guttmann, is not a psychological crutch (as the Freudians might have it) or an avenue of escape from the material causes of the human condition (as the Marxists might claim). It is rather a natural, healthy state – reflecting the best and the highest in human consciousness (Guttmann, 1976, pp. 11–38, 61–80).

For Guttmann, there are two basic modes by way of which human beings have been, and can be, "religious." One mode he called "mystic-pantheistic" and the other he called "personalist." Religiosity in the first mode involves some kind of desire for unity with the Absolute. The Ultimate Reality is thought or felt to be inside one, or one senses oneself to be a part or an aspect of it. This mode is mystical because it posits an ultimate unity to all Being, with all separation and distinction regarded as temporary or illusionary. It is pantheistic because it ultimately regards the world and the human as part of the oneness of God. The world and the human may have temporarily separated from Him, but they are destined to reunite with Him. Such reunification can be accomplished in different ways. Some variations of this mode see the reunification as taking place within the realm of the intellect. For Maimonides, for example, the human mind, gradually gaining knowledge of the rational essences and principles underlying nature, unites with the mind of the author of nature – God. Others see this reunification as taking place by way of some kind of extra-rational experience.

It is the "personalistic" mode of religiosity that Guttmann regarded as most typical of Judaism, although many Jewish thinkers, as well as whole Jewish communities, may have deviated from it in varying degrees in the course of Jewish history. Personalistic religiosity implies that God and the human remain distinct from each other always, confronting each other as integral, separate beings. God is conceived after the model of a willing person, one who makes moral demands on humans. He may confront us as a powerful king or an exacting judge, or He may meet us as a merciful father. Humans are charged not to seek unity with God, but rather to actively respond to His moral call. Only the realization of His moral will in the world can bring human beings closer to Him. Such an experience of intimacy, however, is discretely "religious," and represents a dimension beyond the ethical sense of having fulfilled a moral duty for its own sake. It is a blissful experience of communion with a supreme person, an experience that has a similar structure to, and yet transcends, the inter-human realm (Guttmann, 1964, pp. 3–10, 1976, pp. 93–101).

Religious "readiness," then, is not something that has to be manufactured in the learner. All people have an innate "readiness" for the religious relation. What, then, could be considered as religious maturity from a point of view derived from the thought of Julius Guttmann? Mature religiosity, from Guttmann's perspective, involves the coexistence and interaction of two dimensions: one "subjective" and "personal" (sometimes expressed by way of strong emotions) and another "objective" and "critical" (expressed by way of cognitive analysis and reflection). The religious relation can beget a sense of trust and faith in the goodness of God and the world. This can issue in strong feelings of love for the God who has given us our being as well as the wherewithal to enact His moral will. Such a relation, however, can also beget fear of the awesome and demanding side of the Divine. Such

feelings can erupt suddenly, and it is of their essence that they are not calculable or controllable.

Although no religiosity could be authentically "personal" and "subjective" without such a spontaneous, emotional dimension – so, too, no mature religiosity would be complete without a rational-critical dimension. For Guttmann, the rational and moral aspects of human consciousness play an active part in the constitution of the religious domain itself. For God's word to be appropriated by human beings who retain their integrity, it must pass through those prisms and categories by way of which humans autonomously judge things as true or false, good or bad. Indeed, these capacities have been bestowed upon us as a gift from God himself. They have been bestowed, however, in order that we might use them autonomously. The rational-critical capacity helps us to distinguish between the various "objects" toward which we might be tempted to direct our penchant for worship. It also helps us to realize when we are experiencing truth, goodness, beauty, or holiness – and when we are not. These "filters" protect us against idolatry, "false prophecy," and self-delusion. Mature religiosity, then, for Guttmann, involves both emotional spontaneity and rational reflection. In fact, it could be said, perhaps paradoxically, that the mature religious person is possessed of a kind of "reflective spontaneity" (Guttmann, 1955, pp. 299–301; Cohen, 1991, pp. 135–138, 336).

To be a Jew in the quintessential sense, then, for Guttmann, means not to be an adherent of the law, or to be a believer in a certain doctrine or to be the proud member of an ethnic group. It actually has to do with what is today called "spirituality," but in a very specific sense. It means partaking in a certain quality of subjective, personalistic religious intimacy with God, yet one that is dependent for its realization on the enactment of God's moral will. While awarded in response to ethical action, religious intimacy itself takes place in a realm distinct from the ethical.

From an educational point of view, the potential to draw near to God and to experience oneself in a relation with Him resides in every person. Religion does not subsist *outside* the learner, with the task of education being to somehow place it *inside* the learner. Religion preexists *inside* the learner, though perhaps in a latent or dormant state. Educationally, then, we can say that religion is not "instilled" in a person, as perhaps obedience to the law or the assent to a doctrine can be "instilled." Religiosity – as Guttmann understands it – is "drawn out" of a person. Education would not involve inculcation from the outside, but rather the creation of an environment that would be congenial to the growth and expression of an inner capacity (Cohen, 1991, p. 344).

Much more could be said, of course, regarding Guttmann's understanding of religious experience and the educational implications that could be extrapolated from it. We nonetheless turn, at this point, to another thinker whose views on "religiosity" and all that goes with it were very different from those of Guttmann – Emmanuel Levinas. Levinas' conception of religious maturity was quite different from that of Guttmann, and unique in the world of modern Jewish thought. In one of his more incisive articles on Jewish themes, Levinas calls Judaism a "religion for adults." In that article, as well in other essays that appear in the collection called *Difficult Freedom* (Levinas, 1990), Levinas offers insight into what he considered a mature

religiosity, as distinct from modes of religiosity that he regarded as either "childish" or "adolescent."

Levinas, in contradistinction to Guttmann, expressed a marked aversion to all attempts to stake out and characterize a discrete area of experience known as "religiosity" or "spirituality" (whether "awe" in the presence of the "numinous" or "ecstasy" in the presence of the "sacred"). For Levinas, this tendency represented a "childish" need to be gathered up and comforted by an all-encompassing presence – a "womblike" experience that has the effect of turning one's attention away from the immediacy of human need and the difficult trials of moral decision making. Levinas did not believe that the universal yearning for the Beyond represents humanity at its best – as Guttmann did. For Levinas, it represents an escape from the arduous task of active service directed toward vulnerable, suffering human beings. Absolute responsibility to the other human being – expressed in actions that penetrate the most "petty" details of life – is the only posture wherein even a trace of the transcendent may be intimated (Levinas, 1990, pp. 14–16; Cohen, 2002, pp. 353–354).

In mid-twentieth-century France Levinas already observed Jews flocking to forums where they can "savor metaphysical anxiety and the presence of the Sacred in social quietude" (Levinas, 1990, p. 248). This kind of "spirituality" seemed to him to be taking the place of what had traditionally been regarded as Jewish activity par excellence: arduous training in the details of the Talmudic law (for Levinas, the quintessence and ramification of ethics) with a view to applying them to the most prosaic areas of life. He believed that the current trend is rooted in an immature mode of religiosity, one that derives from an inability to postpone gratification. People want instant and unmediated "spirituality" – issuing perhaps in intense feeling but without a great deal of cognitive or ethical rigor. One of the virtues of the mature, educated Jew, then is "the virtue of patience," the "ability to wait and suffer" (Levinas, 1990, p. 155) through the inevitable frustrations of the life of ethical service. "Religious" education, then, would not involve the "drawing out" of a universal propensity for the "spiritual," but rather rigorous training and exercise in those intellectual and ethical disciplines that might prepare (and fortify) the individual for the enactment of his/her primordial and incalculable ethical responsibility.

The above description of Levinas' educational ideal might be read as a critique of certain tendencies within what is sometimes referred to as "liberal" Judaism. Other characteristics of his worldview, however, could be read as a critique of tendencies more commonly observed in "traditional" circles. For example, another expression of religious immaturity for Levinas can be found in certain Jews' sense of "chosenness," wherein they feel that they are somehow "better" than other people. Many people, it would appear, need, like children, to feel that their group is better than other groups. This provides them with the motivation to continue to belong to the group, and to make the sacrifices necessary to keep the group going. Levinas, however, interprets the experience of chosenness in an entirely different way. For Levinas, to sense oneself as "chosen" means that within a specific ethical situation, *I know that there is no one else who can enact responsibility for the other in the precise way that I am called upon to do.* I am irreplaceable in my responsibility. Only I can carry the burden of the other, actually "substituting" for him, as if it

were my own. Though I must substitute for him, as far as this particular situation of encounter is concerned, no one can substitute for me (Levinas, 1997, pp. 88–125). To sense oneself as chosen, then, is not to consider oneself essentially superior. Nor is it to feel (as Freud did, for example) that one's Jewish side is one's best side. It is to be aware of oneself as "singled out" to come to the aid of this particular person at this particular time in this particular way.

The mature, educated Jew, then, is also one who sees himself/herself as both personally "chosen" and as a member of the "chosen people," namely that people that have responded to the call to embody the posture of ethical irreplaceability in the world. The fully mature ethical person understands himself/herself as bound to the service of the other whether or not the other feels and acts in the same way. The ethos of service is asymmetrical and not dependent on reciprocity. So, too, to be a Jew is to join those who collectively represent the orientation of disinterested service as a living possibility. This individual and collective "being-for-the other" is the only way that "mere being," dedicated only to self-preservation, can be transcended. It is therefore the only legitimate locus for anything that might be termed "spirituality."

In *Difficult Freedom* and elsewhere, Levinas also confronts "religious" dispositions that appear to him as characteristic of adolescence. What Barry Holtz has called a "hunger for wonders" (Holtz & Rauch, 1988, pp. 74–76) would probably be seen by him as originating from an adolescent fascination with the bizarre and the mysterious. Levinas would likely diagnose this hankering for the holy as resulting from the kind of alienation and ennui that often propels young people to search out exciting new stimuli (Levinas, 1990, pp. 100–101). In his view, it would probably be better to foster a different kind of "heightened awareness" in young people: namely a hyper-attentiveness to the needs of the other, and a willingness to do unconventional things in order to aid the vulnerable and the downtrodden.

As is well known, adolescents can fall prey to an excess of either individualism or conformism. In religious communities, over-individualism can sometimes take the form of a penchant for religious virtuosity or idiosyncrasy. People who believe that they are "special" or "different" seek out what Levinas has called a personal "tete-a-tete" with God, far from the madding crowd of community and tradition (Levinas, 1990, p. 248). On the other hand, compulsive conformism to the details of communal practice can often dull the individual conscience. Such obsessive observance has the effect of diverting a person from his/her individual "calling" to serve the other in ways that only he or she can.

The romantic virtues of "spontaneity" and "naturalness" have also been associated with the ethos of adolescence. Praise is reserved for those who have the "courage" for uninhibited self-expression, while those who structure their lives around routines are considered dull and uninteresting. The ethos of mediation cultivated by the Torah, on the other hand, encourages one to pause between one's wants and one's deeds (Levinas, 1990, p. 288). The rituals of Halacha inject a measure of formality and distance into human discourse – restraining the desire for immediate experience and fulfillment. Such is a "religion for adults."

In sum, for Levinas, Judaism, as a "religion for adults," does not thematize "religion" as such. In contradistinction to Guttmann, Levinas did not see a discrete kind

of "religious experience" as the effect or reward of ethics. For him, only *within* the very fabric of the ethical gesture itself (the orientation of "being there" for the other) can any trace of the transcendent be intimated. Only human acts of succor testify to the possibility of the moral transcendence of reality as it is. God does not "appear." He does not "make things right" in history. He does not "dish out prizes, inflict punishment and pardon sin" (Levinas, 1990, p. 143). The only revelation we can experience comes to us in and through the needy countenance of the other person, whose vulnerable face commands us to protect him/her from violence.

Educators who have been exposed to Levinas' "adult" version of Judaism sometimes complain that it is too demanding, and that the posture of infinite responsibility can lead to feelings of unremitting guilt and inadequacy. Such feelings, they say, paralyze the will rather than motivate it. Remarks such as these must be taken with the utmost seriousness, since those of us who are dedicated to education must confront not only the "essence" of a philosophical worldview, but also its psychological and developmental implications. In responding to remarks such as these, I have often found it useful to distinguish between psychological guilt and existential guilt. It could very well be that in preparing young people to bear the kind of existential guilt that is one of the hallmarks of the human condition for Levinas, it might, at least initially, be necessary to cultivate a sense of adequacy rather than inadequacy. Readiness to take on the burdens of maturity, including the consciousness that one is never done with one's moral responsibility, must be preceded by feelings of security and capability (Cohen, 2002, pp. 359–360). Whatever the case, this is an example of the kind of educational discourse that might issue from a serious consideration of the views of a thinker like Levinas in the context of Jewish education.

Soloveitchik and Martin Buber on "Translation"

Turning now to the commonplace "subject matter," I propose a further consultation with modern Jewish thought as a resource for thinking about another important educational issue. Above, I asked what are some of the typical dispositions of the mature Jew as we see him/her. What difficulties might we encounter in trying to cultivate these dispositions? At this point I ask what is the nature of this traditional corpus we feel committed to transmit. Is this tradition given to "translation" to the "language" (the cultural ethos or the underlying worldview) of the contemporary Jew?

With regard to these questions, two extreme positions are possible. One is that the Jewish tradition is ultimately "untranslatable." Therefore, any attempt to "translate" the tradition into terms more understandable, palatable, or congenial to modern consciousness necessarily entails violating it. To do this, one would have to distort the tradition to such a degree that it would no longer be continuous with itself. Educationally, the only "solution" to this problem would be to represent the tradition in its "original" dimensions as authentically as possible, hoping that it might inspire those who are fortunate enough to "see the light." Modern Jews who wish

to link up with tradition would have to undergo, whether overtly or covertly, some kind of "conversion," thereby leaving their modern assumptions behind.

The other extreme position would be that the "translation" of tradition is eminently possible and presents no fundamental problem. Judaism and, say, contemporary humanism, are ultimately identical and no great changes in form or content need be made in order to demonstrate this identity. When we consider these two alternatives, however, many of us working in Jewish education have an intuition that the situation is, to say the least, somewhat more complex than either of these two extreme positions would allow.

Two important modern Jewish thinkers, J. B. Soloveitchik and Martin Buber, also sensed that the issue of translation cannot be approached with an either/or attitude. They believed (each is his own way) that the tradition could be *partially*, if not entirely, translated such that moderns could genuinely appropriate at least some aspects of it (Rosenak, 1995, pp. 132–133). Neither the tradition nor the contemporary Jew need sacrifice their authenticity in order for this to come about.

Soloveitchik maintained that certain aspects of the tradition are legitimately and even eminently translatable. Others, however, are not. Buber, on the other hand, believed that the tradition is not really divisible into a "translatable" and a "non-translatable" part. His view was that any aspect of tradition considered by moderns would have to be "translated" in order for it to be appropriated without intellectual or personal dishonesty. On the other hand, he also believed that moderns, if they genuinely wish to reconnect with the tradition, would also have to "translate," or reinterpret, *themselves*. On the one hand, traditional texts would have to be re-understood so that they could speak to contemporary Jews and still retain their integrity. On the other hand, however, modern Jews would also have to expand their worldview and open themselves to new insights that tradition makes available without relinquishing their modernity (Cohen, 1996, pp. 173–181).

Soloveitchik's position on this issue is based on the famous distinction he makes between "Adam 1" and "Adam 2" in his well-known essay "The Lonely Man of Faith" (Soloveitchik, 1992) – a distinction that derives from a close reading of the first three chapters of Genesis. "Adam 1" represents the rational-technological side of human beings – that aspect that strives to improve the status of the human race vis-à-vis nature. Through civilization and culture, human beings aspire, in the words of Leo Strauss (1997, p. 154), to become the "masters and owners of nature." To this end, human beings commute immediate empirical experience into scientific concepts and networks of interaction – like "waves," "particles," "causes," and "correlations." These concepts and networks help human beings understand the world as a set of intelligible regularities. Constructing the world in this way enables us to predict the course of natural processes, to intervene in them if possible, and thereby bring nature under a measure of control. Mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology – all these matrices – assume the kind of predictability that makes technology possible. Technology, whether in the form of new medicines or new engineering techniques, helps to change the status of human beings from victims to masters of nature. According to Soloveitchik, the mandate to do this is given by God Himself,

who, by way of those famous passages from Genesis, commands us to “rule” the world and to “conquer” it.

Adam 1, however, is typified not only by scientific-technological rationality, but also likes to take stock of his achievements and place them in a larger, philosophical perspective. He wants to be convinced that his pursuits have absolute sanction, not only by passively accepting the Biblical mandate, but through the use of his own reason. To this end, he has recourse to philosophy and theology, by way of which he tries to understand his divinely instilled motivation in rational, systematic terms. In order to do this, he has to “translate” the givens of religious experience (which he is not willing to accept blindly) and the givens of Scripture (which he is not willing to accept on mere authority) into terms and concepts that make sense in his rationalized world. After much reflection, he finds that he *needs* religious concepts, like God and the Transcendent, in order to lend dignity and legitimacy to his own pursuits. For example, he finds that there is an amazing correlation between the concepts and causal links that he constructs in his mind and the way that nature actually “behaves.” This is not self-understood, since there is no concept, either immanent to the human mind or immanent to the world that could explain why reality seems to respond to our rational construction of it – so much so that we can even create technologies that domesticate it to a certain extent. If the correlation between human thought and the patterns of nature is to be rationally and systematically understood, a third, “transcendent” concept is needed – the concept of God. For Descartes, for example, the concept of God underwrites the connection between human thought and the workings of the world. The living God of religion, then, “translates out,” for Adam 1, into the guarantor of the possibility of science and technology.

Another important example of “translation” mentioned at length by Soloveitchik is one that he learned from the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant. The “conquest of nature” for the “relief of man’s estate” (Strauss, 1989, p. 88) cannot take place under conditions of anarchy and moral disintegration. Society must be ordered; moral and political norms must be given absolute sanction. But, just as it is not self-understood that there is a real correlation between thought and nature, so it is not self-understood that there is a real correlation between moral norms and nature. It is not at all clear that this world, and human society within it, is amenable to ethical reconstruction. A third, transcendent concept is needed here as well, in order to guarantee the possibility of moral progress.

Both of the above concepts of God – as guarantor of the parallel between thought and reality and as guarantor of the possibility of the application of moral norms to an indifferent world – are examples of “translation” at its best. When Adam 1 engages in “translating” the immediacy of faith into God-concepts that give absolute sanction to the projects of science and ethics, he is doing no less than performing the will of God. God Himself enjoins that human beings “translate” primordial religious experience and language into concepts that enhance his projects. This is true, however, only if “Adam 1” doesn’t get carried away with these projects, and doesn’t forget that there is another side to his humanity – equal to if not more important than his quest for a civilized, dignified life.

"Adam 2" does not "advance" and "conquer" in order to become the "theoretical and practical lord of his life" (Strauss, 1987, p. 13). His mode is rather one of "retreat," wherein he tries to experience reality in its "original" dimensions. He is concerned more with the unique moment of meaning – something like the poet or artist, and not so much with recurring patterns. Looking, say, at a waterfall, he would not immediately think of its contribution to the water supply, or of its potential as a source of electrical energy. He would rather perceive it precisely as it appears in the moment – in its unique configuration and in its own right. His gesture is, as the Bible says, one of "service and protection."

He is also very different from Adam 1 in everything that has to do with human relations. Adam 1 relates to other human beings first and foremost as work partners. He can be neighborly, collegial, civil, and even convivial – but he is not concerned with the other in his/her own right, in his/her individual uniqueness. He might be capable of cooperation for common, pragmatic ends, but not of genuine empathy for the unique suffering of the other, or of a willingness to sacrifice himself for the other's sake.

Ultimately, the hallmark of Adam 2 is his primordial faith commitment, an orientation that grows out of his sensitivity to the ultimately problematic character of the human condition. Adam 2 has come to understand that the grand achievements of civilization do not relieve his sense of existential loneliness, meaninglessness, and inadequacy. He senses that he has been "thrown" into existence without his consent and that his death will be similarly arbitrary. He is not sure if he can really make any "mark" on the world before he must leave it. While all people experience thoughts and feelings like these, each of us undergoes them in a radically individual way, one that cannot really be appreciated by others. Such experiences often lead us to "close up" and distance ourselves from others, as we become preoccupied with our own anxieties and uncertainties.

The living God, however, so testifies Soloveitchik, approaches the human being in her solitude, and offers her the gift of love and existential confirmation. After the experience of God's turning, the individual gains the strength to come out of herself and offer the very same gift of love and existential confirmation to others. God has whispered to her: "I am here for you. Your life and its course are of concern to me." By dint of this experience, she is now empowered to approach other human beings with the same message. The miracle of human self-revelation to others comes as the result of the miracle of God's self-revelation to us.

Such experiences, so believed Soloveitchik, are "untranslatable" into the common discourse of contemporary Westerners. True, all humans are possessed of the potential to act, feel, and think as both Adam 1 and Adam 2. In modernity, however, the ethos of Adam 1 has become dominant and the orientation of receptivity, retreat, and sacrifice characteristic of Adam 2 has become dormant. "Men of faith" cannot really "translate" their faith experience into the pragmatic, utilitarian language of moderns, and so they end up being rejected, ridiculed, and misunderstood. This situation, for Soloveitchik, is ultimately irremediable and tragic – although people of faith are enjoined not to waver in their testimony.

As far as education is concerned, then, the Adam 2 aspect of the Jewish tradition cannot really be "translated" to moderns, as long as moderns cling to their compulsive preoccupation with rational control. Moderns can only "get" that aspect of tradition that speaks to their need to domesticate nature. Tradition, then, is only *partially* translatable to contemporary consciousness. Yes, the living God can also be understood as a concept – one that can support the modern project of civilization. Yes, the idea of God can be shown to be rationally plausible and serviceable. This gesture, of translation, however, most certainly does not exhaust what the tradition is trying to get across. To open oneself to the mysterious God who comes out of hiding in order to bestow His infinite love on human beings, thereby enabling them to genuinely empathize with others – one would have to set aside crucial aspects of one's modern identity and mind-set. At this point, an educator would seem compelled to ask: If this aspect of the Jewish tradition is "untranslatable," how could it conceivably be communicated to others? A possible answer to this question might be: Perhaps education by example, whereby singular individuals and groups simply live out their faith unself-consciously, might have a chance of inspiring others to dedicate themselves to the service of God and other human beings – more than any attempts at "explanation."

Martin Buber can also serve as an important resource when considering the issue of the "translatability" of the tradition. As mentioned above, Buber did not believe that some aspects of the tradition are in principle translatable while others are not. He wrote for those of his contemporaries who could not authentically relinquish the modern categories by way of which they make sense of the world. He hoped, however, to influence his readers such that they would not dogmatically discount ancient Jewish texts as a resource for insight into the human condition. For people like this, Buber believed, the encounter with tradition would have to have a different structure. He was convinced that *any and all aspects* of the tradition had the potential to "speak" to even the most culturally assimilated Jew, if he/she did not close himself/herself off to them in principle. Yet, in order for this to happen, a process of mutual reinterpretation would have to take place. As sometimes happens in situations of true dialogue between human beings, mutual openness to the other's point of view can bring about a basic transformation in the perspective of both speakers. In genuine dialogue this happens, perhaps paradoxically, without either of the parties losing their basic identity and self-understanding.

Buber applied this dialogical model to the encounter between modern Jews and ancient Jewish texts (Cohen, 1999b; Kepnes, 1992). The Bible, for example would have to be reinterpreted such that it could enter the thought world and value structure of the modern person without losing its "Biblical" character and identity. The modern person would have to reinterpret the his/her own possibilities of thought and feeling in order to open himself/herself to the Biblical horizon. Yet he/she would have to do this without losing his/her sense of self as a modern person.

We can watch Buber applying this dialogical approach in practice if we examine the manner in which he interprets the Biblical notion of miracles – a notion that remains distant and remote for many moderns (Buber, 1998, pp. 74–79). When one reads the Bible, one is struck by the manner in which God intervenes in the

workings of the world in accordance with His purposes. While the Bible may not have a concept of "nature," like the Greeks, it certainly does have a notion of the cycle of the seasons and the typical "ways" of the different creatures. This regularity and stability is enjoined by God Himself when He promises, after the Flood, that the cycles of "planting and reaping, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease" (Genesis 8:22). Yet we find that in the Biblical narrative, God overturns these regularities when He so wills. Many moderns, who have been reared on an all-pervasive naturalism and empiricism, find these narratives downright incredible. Those of us who have been taught, whether explicitly or implicitly, to always seek a "natural" or a "historical" cause for events – however strange or unusual those events might be – find it very difficult to trust Biblical miracle stories. Many of us tend to see this issue in a dichotomous fashion. Either the Biblical account is "right" and "accurate," and then we must sacrifice everything we know about nature and history, or our modern naturalism and historicism is "right" and "accurate," and then we must relegate the Bible to the doubtful category of myth and fable. Such a situation leaves the Bible in an ultimately "untranslatable" state (Buber, 1998, pp. 13–19).

Buber, however, believed that there is a genuine way out of this quandary. For this to happen, however, the Bible has to be "translated" such that its message is made available to moderns while its core testimony remains intact. Similarly, moderns have to "expand their consciousness" so that new insights can be admitted while remaining true to their modern orientation. As far as Biblical wonder narratives are concerned, a new conception of the miraculous – one that is neither supernaturalistic nor naturalistic – must arise out of the dialogue between the Bible and its modern readers. In his famous book *Moses*, in the chapter called "The Wonder on the Sea," Buber claims that the receding of the sea at the time of the Egyptians' pursuit of the people of Israel was a thoroughly natural and historical event, one that scientists or historians could give an account of by all the methods at their disposal. This, however, does not exhaust the significance of the event. For Buber, the meaning of an event, for those who experience it, is part of its character as an event. The salvation on the sea was an event of cardinal and foundational significance for those to whom it occurred, and for their descendants. For this reason, the event was experienced as pointing beyond itself. It was not the *physical* dimensions of the event that were of ultimate importance, but its *ultimate value* for those who bore witness to it. The "Wonder on the Sea" finally guaranteed the salvation of the Israelites from the "House of Bondage" and gave them the wherewithal to build a society that could become, metaphorically, a "Home for God."

For Buber, the "Wonder on the Sea" is not only a "historical" event that represents a record of "what once happened," it is also paradigmatic. It exemplifies "what always happens" when so-called natural events become "transparent," such that individuals or whole peoples experience a transcendent guiding hand in and through the intelligible causality that is perceived to inform them. Biblical miracle stories, then, when addressed to us as moderns and genuinely heard by us as moderns, are not "extraterritorial" events, immune to the matrices and networks of causal relations that make the world understandable to us. They are simultaneously

"immanent" and "transcendent" – immanent in that they are intelligible by rational means and "transcendent" in that we can likewise experience them as pointing to a beneficent will.

"Partial translation," then, for Buber, would not involve distinguishing between aspects of the tradition that are congenial to modern consciousness and aspects that are not – as it would for Soloveitchik. For Soloveitchik, moderns legitimately get some dimensions of tradition in "translated" form, while others are closed to them unless they "demodernize" themselves. For Buber, all dimensions of tradition must undergo "translation" if they are to be "heard" by moderns, and this is as it should be. Moderns qua moderns do not suffer from a congenital theological disease, making it impossible for them to "hear" the address of the divine in its "original" dimensions. Any dialogue partner, even God speaking through the Bible, must meet his interlocutors on their own ground, and not expect them to divest themselves of the scientific and historical "lenses" that structure their world.

From a certain traditional perspective, it might be said that Buber, by "filtering out" the supernatural dimension of miracles, has given moderns "only" a "partial translation" that "loses" an important part of the "original." Buber would answer, however, that this seeming "partiality" actually contributes to greater "wholeness" on two fronts. First, with regard to contemporary readers, by rejecting the naturalist-supernaturalist dichotomy, one allows a "core" insight of the Biblical sensibility to "speak" in a manner that can be "heard" and understood by moderns as whole persons. Second, it could well be that the very same move actually lets the "original," pristine Biblical teaching shine through, namely that the events of individual and collective life, as we know them, are carriers of transcendence – speaking to us in our here and now. "Partial translation," then, in the Buberian sense, should not be understood as a "negative," quantitative subtraction but rather as a "positive," qualitative shift – enhancing the meaning-making capacity of the Bible rather than restricting it.

Educators working under the aegis of Soloveitchik's conception of partial translation (division of tradition into translatable and non-translatable components) would necessarily have to conceive of their charge and go about their business in a different way from those who follow Buber's conception of partial translation (modified understanding of all for all) (Cohen, 1996). A student of Soloveitchik would first set about determining whether a certain piece of "subject matter" (a text, an attitude, a value, a skill) – is "translatable" to moderns. He would then know whether he can leave his students' modern mind-set intact when trying to transmit it or not. If he is working with an "untranslatable" aspect of tradition, he will not really be able to ultimately "explicate" or "justify" it. At best, he will be able to authentically live out his faith position against all odds, and hope that his students might react positively to his own courageous self-consistency.

For a "Buberian" educator, on the other hand, nothing Jewish should in principle be considered strange to the modern qua modern. Conditions for dialogue would have to be created, however – so that the text is in a position to "open itself" to modern students (through reinterpretation) and students are in a position to "open themselves" to the text (by allowing for a possible shift in their own

self-understanding). These conditions do not arise of themselves. In order that they arise, teachers might have to invest a great deal of time and energy in dispelling stereotypes, demystifying reigning theories, and questioning ideologies that prevent students from seeing the textual "other" in a charitable or sympathetic light. They will also have to foster an atmosphere of "creative reading," such that traditional texts are seen to address the modern sensibility without selling themselves short. While the above points represent only some very general educational guidelines, they most definitely do valorize certain kinds of educational practices, while calling others into question.

Conclusion

Within the framework of this chapter, I hope to have allowed the reader an initial acquaintance with certain normative perspectives drawn from the works of modern Jewish thinkers. These perspectives were treated with a view to highlighting their possible import for educational issues relating to two of Schwab's four commonplaces. My main questions were as follows: (1) Should a disposition for "spirituality" be regarded as an essential characteristic of the educated Jew (learner)? (2) Can ancient, religiously oriented texts be "translated" so they resonate with the sensibility of this-worldly moderns (subject matter)?

As I hope to have shown, the contribution of Jewish thought to these discussions can be twofold. From the perspective of what Michael Rosenak (1987, pp. 15–47) has called "normative" philosophy of Jewish education, it is obvious that different thinkers have different and often conflicting worldviews on the issues of "spirituality" and "translation." The same word or buzzword can be the carrier of very different norms, visions, and values. It is important to distinguish between these plural visions on given issues so that educators might clarify where they stand on them. From the perspective of "analytic" philosophy of Jewish education (as exemplified in Chazan, 1978, pp. 58–76) the question that has been the focus of my attention has been what do we mean when we say "spirituality," or "translation." The two perspectives overlap, in that thinkers with different normative worldviews often give the same terms very different meanings. The making of clear distinctions between the rival meanings of terms avoids those "dialogues of the deaf" that so often plague educational discourse.

As mentioned above, I have been able to touch on only two out of four of Schwab's commonplaces. In partial compensation for this limitation, I hope also to have shown that insights relevant to a particular commonplace (i.e., translatability of subject matter) can have repercussions for other commonplaces (i.e., teaching as creating conditions for dialogue). At this concluding point, I remind the reader that plural normative insights regarding questions such as the dispositions of the educated Jew and the translatability of Jewish subject matter, however they might enlarge our awareness of Jewish educational possibilities and desiderata, are not sufficient to inform a genuine educational deliberation. Educational ends deriving from normative worldviews must be brought into contact with empirical readings

of the very same commonplaces. In any deliberation that is to issue in responsible decision making, plural formulations of the ends of Jewish education, as derived from the works of our best Jewish thinkers, should and must be brought into contact with the growing empirical knowledge that Jewish educational research has been providing us with in the course of the last generation. How do young people today actually experience what they call "spirituality?" How do teachers "translate" texts in practice, and what is their hidden philosophy of translation? Only if research into possible Jewish "oughts," of the kind briefly illustrated here, interacts with the growing reservoir of research on the condition of the Jewish "is," do we have a chance of moving that "is" in the direction of some "ought," however conceived.

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Philosophy of Jewish Education: Some Thoughts

Michael Rosenak

Introduction

A close friend and professor of Jewish education, the late and lamented Professor Joseph Lukinsky, liked to tell the story of a boy in prep school who is being taught there to play baseball. In his daily e-letters home he describes how he and his friends are learning all about the game. They are given lessons on how to hold the bat, the modes of throwing a ball, the appropriate foot movements, and even a brief history of the game. On the fifth day of studies, the boy happily reports to his family: "Everybody here is very excited. Tomorrow they are going to let us actually play baseball."

In beginning with this story I take a risk: many of my readers may turn the page to the next subject, for this witticism may convince them that philosophy of education, and all the more so, philosophy of Jewish education, is not a serious affair, that it is worthy of sustained interest mainly for doctoral students in "Education."

There are a number of reasons for this disdain:

(a) We may note that education, Jewish or otherwise, is known as a practical enterprise. Educational philosophy may be useful to a certain type of scholar who has been habituated to explore such spurious matters as the relationship between education and the world of theory and who thinks that there is some profound value in acquiring ever clearer conceptions of the "field" while spurning all interest in the practical wisdom associated with it. "Real" teachers tend to be scornful of such "theorists" who seem to keep their distance from actually *doing* something, that is, from *educating*! So why would practitioners of such down-to-earth enterprises like law, medicine, *and education* wish to theorize about them? It would seem that the very idea of theoretical reflection upon such practical pursuits undermines the desire and ability of educators (for example) to hone their expertise and to make their practice more useful in dealing with the issues at hand. In other words, it can plausibly be argued that "the field" in

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which educators work is distinguished by non-theoretical habits of practice. In line with the habits of practice, the task at hand is to learn vital facts, to set goals, to identify problems that impede reaching these goals, and, hopefully, to solve them. Hence as a good physician treats disease, and as a good attorney faithfully defends a client, so too does a skillful and wise teacher educate! We all know, at least so it is said, what that means.

(b) Furthermore, even if we admit that it is legitimate to cultivate a reflective and philosophical element in education, so that there may be "well educated persons," why specifically a Jewish one? After all, the very term "philosophy," in the classic-educational context, points to what is universal in education and comes into play wherever there is an engagement with thought and reason. Certainly one can argue for discourse on Jewish education on religious grounds or on the basis of historical memory or social consciousness and identification. Yet, many scholars will insist that such frameworks, though they deal with ideas, are not "really" philosophical. They maintain that only if Jewish educators relinquish the authority of memory and turn wholeheartedly to reason, as exemplified by such thinkers as Aristotle and Plato and Dewey, they may legitimately be called philosophers or the disciples of philosophers. These savants think that religious, ideological, and other ways of thinking that smack of indoctrination cannot be called philosophical in the normative and classic senses of that term. Yet for most teachers to give up these ideologies would be tantamount to relinquishing that which is most essentially Jewish about Jewish education!

Should, or can, teachers do this? Or would it, perhaps, be legitimate for them to say that Jewish education plays by different rules and that the vocabulary in which it speaks is unique unto itself?

Normative and Analytic Philosophy of Education

To deal with such questions we need to distinguish between two types of activity in which educators are engaged and about what they argue. At the risk of oversimplifying and "over-theorizing" we may say that some educators speak in the language of normative philosophy of education while others have an analytic philosophy of education. Though there is controversy about what these terms connote exactly, we may differentiate between them as representing two schools of thought and practice, two ways of doing education and thinking about it.

The normative-philosophical scholar, the classic Jewish one no less than others, considers the great minds of philosophy, like Plato and Maimonides and Kant, to have taught us, by their far-ranging discourse on the nature of human life, of knowledge, and of reality as a whole, what, why, and how to transmit the "goods" of culture to the young generation. Hence because they are philosophers, these sages may be expected to deal extensively with the issues of how to transmit wisdom to the young. Indeed they may claim that they, more than more-practical educators, cultivate a vision of the educated person. They are necessarily philosophers of education; they set norms for noteworthy and worthwhile human existence, norms that should

be made accessible to coming generations; they discuss in depth the nature of human beings and ways to cultivate exemplary men and women on the basis of some ideal, some vision. Normative philosophers of education are considered by their followers to be mentors of humankind with regard to the issues they consider most central in human existence. For those who accept their leadership, their philosophies are philosophies of education; education itself thus corresponds to inquiry into human existence. Having written extensively on wisdom, the philosophers give prescriptions for becoming and being; having delved into knowledge, they can be expected to teach us of what knowledge consists; and having thought extensively on education and its principles, their thought is said to lay foundations of educational vision. Vision, they say, is truly the rock on which philosophy of education is built.

But why should there be a philosophical Jewish vision? Is philosophy not, ideally, the same for everyone? And if it is not, is it still philosophy?

To illustrate this problem: When we speak of Greek philosophy do we mean that certain ideas that arose in Greece could only have originated there, for Greek philosophy is Greek by its very character and in a broad cultural sense. Or, do we mean that much great philosophy was (historically) Greek by chance? In this case, a great thinker need not feel deprived if he does not carry a Greek passport. In this case, the Greek origins of this philosophy are irrelevant to its teachings.

Speaking of Jewish philosophy: Can we say, with the medieval Jewish thinker Rabbi Yehuda Halevi and his followers, that there is a sense in which outsiders cannot fathom Jewish philosophy completely for it is founded upon the prophetic character of the people of Israel? Or should we say that just as there is no German or French physics so there is no specific Jewish philosophy. So, what, in the latter case, can be understood by philosophy of Jewish education?

Normative Philosophy of Education

Let me attempt to clarify these terms—analytic and normative philosophy of education—that we have now brought into our discussion. We must remember that discussion of such terms as "Jewish philosophy of education" reflects not only various definitions, but also diverse purposes ascribed to education. Such terms are not as self-understood as the reader was given to understand in the previous passages. In fact, especially in modern times, many educators find themselves irritated by what sounds like "high falutin" verbiage that, they claim, serves the cultural and even the social needs of the "ruling class" who "sell" ideological notions designed to serve their interests. For them, what we have said here is "ideology;" a flawed and subtly dishonest intellectual pursuit. So, we find, philosophers of education who make normative statements, as philosophers, as to "who is the educated person" and how such persons should be instructed in wisdom; how to be taught to live by the moral and cultural and educational ideas and ideals of her society and culture. Thus, it is claimed, the Jewish products of normative education are to *know* the norms of their civilization, to have *mastered* them, and to endeavor *to live* by them.

Is this a bombastic slogan or a profound truth? Normative philosophers can be expected to defend such a statement, for it is part and parcel of teaching us to distinguish between good and evil, as between worthy knowledge and trivia, and to expect from the agents of education that they transmit their knowledge and their insights to the learners. To carry out their mission, normative teachers can be expected to turn to thinkers who they find congenial to their own worldviews and from whom they wish to learn the uses of philosophy in educational practice. For example, an educator may discover in the dialogical writings of Martin Buber (1963), on the one hand, or in the sociological approaches of Mordecai Kaplan (1967), on the other hand, two differing philosophical views of (human and Jewish) life and differing views of worthwhile knowledge. In studying these diverse sources and their prescriptions for education, we come across philosophies of education; different conceptions of worthwhile activity, and different views of the educated person and of God.

Analytic Philosophy of Education

By way of contrast to those philosophers of education who make normative statements, there are those who dismiss such normative concerns and practices as no more than ideological beliefs and commitments disguised as "self-understood" and sublime truths. Such "truths," they say, are, in fact, grounds for indoctrination and thus they are instruments for robbing children of the autonomy that is their right and, ultimately, their duty. (Here, of course, the normative educator may ask: But isn't this a normative statement in itself?)

Now, analytic philosophers of education will agree that educators should cultivate autonomy, without which independence and clarity of thought are precluded. They might agree among themselves, normatively, that our children will benefit from an education that fosters autonomy. But, as analytic philosophers, they will ask what exactly *is* autonomy? How do diverse thinkers understand the concept? What allegedly makes one statement more or less "ideological" than another? What is an "ideological" statement? What is the difference between "philosophy" and "ideology?"

The normative thinker will frequently claim that she too is describing, clarifying, distinguishing, and analyzing. But philosophers who "do" analytic work maintain that their way of doing philosophy of education is uncomfortable with "large" questions and metaphysical discourse. They do not look to any oracle that answers ultimate questions and tells us how to educate children in the light of ultimate verities. The analytical philosopher of education presents his field of study as one that analyzes the terms and practices of education, not shying away from such fundamental yet complex questions as: What is the difference between educating and teaching? When does the teaching of values become brain washing? What is indoctrination? Who accords it a negative connotation, and for what professed reasons? And yet, the chief concern of the analytical philosopher is not to answer the question of "what is the good and how might it be transmitted," but the question: "what does X mean when he uses Y?"

All these questions are raised in the course of engaging in a practical pursuit in which the distinctions between success and failure seem self-evident. Either the goals, say of reading and writing, or assembling the parts of a motor have been achieved or they have not. What is the need here for detached theory? These are questions that might trouble the analytic philosopher.

In response to this, a normatively oriented teacher will maintain that one is called upon to determine what is the philosophical basis of one's practice, and to consider what good it serves? To this, the analytically oriented educator could conceivably answer that lack of clarity here can lead to confused thought that endangers the spirit and threatens free society. When leaders cannot distinguish between dictatorship and lawful society, or between freedom and anarchy, demagogues will have ample opportunities to replace freedom with tyranny. How to educate toward understanding such matters is the central question of philosophy and of education. The analytic thinker is also uncomfortable with the idea that all Jewish education is by definition normative and impervious to the analytic thought which asks, in the Jewish classroom as elsewhere: "What is really going on here – and why?"

The normative philosopher wishes to cultivate a moral person and he is much concerned with what constitutes such a person and decent society. But in the course of trying to locate the essence and the value of philosophy of Jewish education, we have also discovered problems such as, what are the meanings ascribed to a particular word or phrase (as used by educators), and, what is involved in deciding when education is really something else (for example, indoctrination or "training")? These are analytic questions, questions that have to do with the clarification of terms and the making of distinctions.

An Immoral Society?

A pithy example of the tension between normative and analytical inquiry and educational thought concerns fictitious research findings made in a particular city. It appears that despite normatively inspired efforts in the schools there to teach values, achievements have been sparse indeed, practically non-existent. It appears that 90% of the pupils in that city's school system have cheated on examinations in the past, and would do so again wherever feasible; in fact most pupils do not see it as a moral issue!

The city's leaders and educators express deep shock at these findings. From a normative point of view, they deduce that the children in this city's schools have not had enough formal and informal education on moral issues; apparently the time and effort devoted to values education, as well as the allocation for moral education, is totally inadequate. More concentrated efforts to educate the children seem called for. Moral education is apparently a more difficult task than previously held to be.

An analytically oriented educator who has been invited to this conversation listens not only with some exasperation, but also with amusement. She asks herself: what assumptions are these leaders making about the relationship between classroom hours on moral education and the actual behavior of children and between

what children perceive as the real issues and problems in their own lives? How do teachers in this city claim to be identifying the real problems and what do they think could count as solutions to these problems? On what basis should pupils think that the "answers" given by the adults oblige them? What do these teachers think makes pupils act "immorally?" What, indeed, do they consider immoral and why? Can we assume on the basis of their "shock" that they never cheated and would counsel their children never to do so?

Clearly our two educators, the normative and the analytic, are hardly speaking the same language here!

Now I return to the first paragraph of our reflections. "Today we are going to actually play baseball!" Meaning: Having talked at length about some basic categories of philosophical-educational thinking and even some of philosophy of education, we can now move our discussion to where the action is. Finally, we arrive at Jewish education and the philosophy of it. Our previous discussion should have made it clear that it is not an easy task. Can there be Jewish education without norms? What makes education Jewish? Can there be Jewish education without religious instruction?

In attempting to clarify these and related queries we must keep in mind that philosophy of education is in the category of "philosophies of . . ." It is like, for example, philosophy of law, or philosophy of aesthetics or philosophy of religion. That is, it consists of systematic reflection on a specific field or phenomenon or aspect of human activity and experience though it is itself not an integral part of that being reflected on. Hence, one need not be a jurist to be a philosopher of law or an artist to unravel problems of aesthetics or a moral person to teach moral philosophy. The discussion on these topics may present itself as analytic, for example, the philosopher being studied is likely to claim that there are various ways to interpret and understand what is going on in the field; what scholars who are dealing with these topics think, and of course, what teachers think they are doing.

These topics all bring into view areas of research, for they provide rich sources for possible answers to the manifold questions that educators must confront: For example: By which "picture(s)" of the world do most people today conduct their lives? What knowledge is most important and useful to persons educated to a given worldview? What do they see as happiness, what as truth? What made them think how they do? What made them what they are "essentially" and true to what they are? What do people in today's world mean by educating to virtue? Can one educate to virtue? Is the observance of mitzvoth and its teaching an example of virtue? When people speak of values are they referring to some substance "out there" or of discovering what they value? In the Jewish community, a community that traditionally has valued texts, what is the authority of text in diverse views? What is the role of textual commentary in an educational system that values text? What, if anything at all, should be learned from others and where should lines be drawn between "us" and "them?" When are the others within ourselves as well as beyond our selves in a state of confrontation with "us?" How are various views of Jewish education explained and justified? Should lines be drawn between modern culture

and Judaism? Do they speak the same language, and if so, what strains are placed on "loyalty" (if modern culture is normatively accepted and even demanded)? How much openness is desirable, for given publics, and how much commitment? What do we mean by commitment? What are distinct yet diverse normative answers to such questions in various Jewish settings?

Judaism, Education, and Philosophy

These questions and many others that we might legitimately present for discussion and analysis are all, in our context, aspects of reflection on Judaism. This makes sense for before there is philosophy of Jewish education specifically, there is a specific subject "that invites reflection," that is, both Judaism and Jewish experience themselves. But what do we understand by the term "Judaism?" Is using this term already an indicator of a position? (That is, is a school that teaches "Judaism" more or less inclined to teaching Bible with medieval commentary than one which teaches "the Jews" and their civilization?) What ideological justifications for their diverse positions may diverse thinkers present to curriculum writers?

All the above questions are intended to show that while what we may call the language of Judaism is likely to contain accepted "terms" and (seemingly) common "assumptions" that are identical or extremely alike, non-philosophers, be they ever such excellent teachers, are seldom clear as to what may be meant by the basic terms being used until we grasp what various thinkers and educators understand by them and do with them. Different thinkers organize the material being studied differently. Thereby they enrich our grasp of a particular model, or a particular "story" of Judaism and its transmissions, and its discrete visions.

In all cases the curricular task placed before philosophers of Jewish education is to present a picture of Jewish life or of Judaism that tells a story that can be understood within "the community" and that delineates the community by the story/stories it tells. This story must be portrayed for education in a manner that hangs together by virtue of the educational, cultural, or theological prism through which a "picture" is being presented. Through study of the picture and using the tools it provides, it expands and enriches what education can do. On the normative level there will be more vision, and on the analytic level, where the practitioner learns to become a more thoughtful educational practitioner, there can be more understanding of what is being taught.

Let me be specific. The heritage of Judaism is multifaceted and it tells various stories that interlock: historical, religious, cultural, and existential.

The great complexity of Judaism, as both an historical and "national" phenomenon, on the one hand, and a "religious," one on the other hand, invites diverse approaches to Jewish education. For example, concepts such as "nation" and "religious" suggest examining varying relationships that are plausible between them. The analytic thinker is likely to ask questions that arise from modern Jewish identity while the normative one will ask how to maintain the vision in light of the variety of challenges and paradoxes that arise from Jewish modernity, challenges that (may)

undermine the normative bases of Jewish education or, conversely "reconstruct" Jewish life and education as believed to be needed.

These questions may be presented as three short queries: *What? How? Why?*

First, *what* should we transmit to the young? What do we want them to know and experience? What constitute priorities in our times? Is the acquisition of languages more important in our view of the good life than scientific expertise? Are the skills, aptitudes, and actions cherished by one's (Jewish) particular culture more central and pressing than the skills of a universal technology and its diverse "fields?" Is Talmud more important than modern Hebrew literature, or vice versa? While the shelves of culture are always stock full, they demand constant replenishment as a result of ever changing realities that demand attention and present new challenges. What, then, should be removed or taught in a cursory manner?

To complicate this matter: we often find ourselves changing our perceptions of what is most important. Which skills do we want students to master and how do we defend our choices of what is to be taught and learned? What is to be deleted from our syllabus and what do we find worthwhile or essential?

Our first question, then, asks us to carefully consider what we need on already (and always) crowded shelves; it tells us what we cannot do without.

The second question, "How?" directs us to pedagogic concerns. How are the valued materials to be acquired or mastered, and what are the difficulties in this transmission that are affected by who we and our pupils are, and what they and we have previously experienced. Here we also must consider the diversities around and within us, and the different problems they pose: for identification and identity. How is this transmission of values, goods, and abilities to be achieved? What must teachers know, what kinds of people should they be? When does the teacher constitute a role model, and when does she threaten children's autonomy by the perhaps unavoidable transference of her presence that demands, sometimes silently and even stealthily, that they become like her? If it is agreed that Talmud study is important, how may the impediments to understanding its (mostly Aramaic) language be overcome?

If the second question raises the pedagogical question, *how* are the aims of the education, the desired outcomes, to be achieved, the third question (which the normative philosopher of education considers to be the main one, and the only pristinely philosophical one for it requires radical decisions on the nature of human beings and their being brought into the human family) focuses on the word, "why." Here we are called upon to justify our choices and priorities on philosophical grounds. The key concern of educational philosophy is with the questions, "Why should I teach this set of texts or values and not others? What are the plausible justifications for my chosen educational policy?" I venture the thought that here considerations, assumptions, and discourse, for Jewish educators, will be essentially Jewish. Here the word "Jewish" refers the learner back to Jewish study and reflection. After all, the Jewish philosopher of education wishes to examine how Judaism and Jewish experience can "make a difference" in the individual who is being educated, in the communities that

we wish to have reflect Jewish civilization and in the world to which Judaism and the Jews have something to say.

Clearly we may expect large disagreements here and on various levels: Why study "sources:" because they are interesting, or because they are Torah? What makes education Jewish? Why be Jewish? This question of "why" troubles Jews of our generation far more than the other two. The entire educational structure rests on an answer or answers given to them, for in a free society there is no self-evident social reality that makes it possible to dismiss this question as simply theoretical or as pristine philosophy, or for that matter, sociology or psychology.

This situation is the converse of the pre-modern social reality. Our ancestors were not much troubled by the question, "why?" They had a clear picture of what the normative world was, which of course was important for within it alone there was true meaning; they knew that God had given the Torah to His people. Present troubles and suffering were certain to end when the Messiah came and vindicated Jewish stubbornness in waiting for the redemption of Israel and of the world. They all knew that Israel was a people living alongside others, whether in friendship, or in a state of unease or fear; they knew that Jews were a distinct and distinctive people, not a part of the civilization of others, though there could, at times, be a meeting of minds. But as Jews, they naturally did different things and they did them because they were Jews, and had been educated as Jews. As an American-Jewish educator of the twentieth century, Maurice Pekarski, once said: "Our parents did not keep kosher. They were Jews and so they ate only kosher food." For most people, being educated, before Enlightenment and the (sometimes illusionary) Emancipation, education meant socialization. Eating only kosher food came naturally: everyone did it. Those who didn't because they were not Jews, or sinners, didn't count.

Today it is different. To keep kosher is to have made a decision—to eat only kosher food, or at least to maintain a kosher home. But clearly there is disagreement about the act of doing it and what it means and why one should or should not do it. Moreover, not only don't Jews agree but they are not of one mind as to what they are agreeing about! Are they carrying out religious obligations, as members of a "kosher keeping" community; do they see themselves as directly commanded by God to observe His commandments; or are they pledging allegiance to an ancient history? The possibilities and their educational manifestations are innumerable and they all require, finally, turning to the first two questions and what is behind them, such as the question, what are some ways to solve the paradoxes of human life?

I have begun a conversation in philosophy of Jewish education. We have found that, at times, it is normative and at times analytical. Which is the right way? It seems to me that a philosopher of Jewish education might answer this question with other ones: Does your study include deliberation on hopes and visions? Does it build on a conception of the human being? Is it grounded in a view of a Jewish life that is worthy of continuation and transmission? Does the discussion and study point in a

direction that suggests how to proceed toward the resolution of real problems? And as a religious philosopher of education I would add: Is this Jewish life, which is at the core of both the practice and the theory, conducted for the sake of Heaven? Or as some might prefer to state it: Does it all really make a difference?

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Planning for Jewish Education in the Twenty-First Century: Toward a New Praxis

Jonathan S. Woocher

The following scenario is all too familiar. A major challenge or opportunity has been identified. Perhaps it is a school seeking to increase enrollment, improve its educational program, and/or strengthen its financial condition. Perhaps it's a community that wants to engage unaffiliated populations or redesign supplementary education. Or, perhaps it's a national commission or a consortium of organizations that seeks to recruit and retain more highly qualified Jewish educators.

If these actors follow a traditional pathway, a planning process will be launched. There will be meetings, probably some data gathering, perhaps interviews with stakeholders. Options will be identified, strategies articulated, and specific action steps laid out. The planning group will issue a report with objectives, recommendations, timetables, perhaps a multi-year budget.

And then .... Well, usually something happens (though not always). But, what unfolds is rarely what is in the plan. The first few steps may proceed smoothly, but then, more often than not, things get off course. Unexpected developments overtake the plan—the departure of a key actor, urgent exigencies, resistance and inertia, a new leader with different ideas. Recommendations prove unworkable or bring results other than those anticipated. New problems demand attention. Eventually, often sooner, rather than later, the plan is off the table and on to a shelf, its objectives at best partially realized, the entire process a disappointment.

This has been the story of Jewish educational planning in North America over the past few decades: much effort, modest results. The question is: how can we do better? This chapter is an attempt to answer this question, to lay out a conceptual and practical framework for Jewish educational planning in the twenty-first century.

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Planning and Change

Planning is about making orderly change.[1] Planning attempts to guide the flow of what might otherwise be chaotic events, laying out a course for getting from here to there, from the current situation to a desired destination or goal. Planning seeks to make that journey a smooth, orderly, and predictable one, to make change a relatively benign process. Planning is not only an exercise of reason, but also an act of faith—of faith in rationality's ability to shape the course of unfolding events. Planning affirms that by using our rationality, by following an orderly set of steps—amassing information, applying insight and analysis, and organizing activities in a logical sequence—we can increase the likelihood that we will arrive at our intended destination and get there in one piece.[2]

The problem, though, is that things often do *not* work out as they should. Although almost no one expects planning to unfold perfectly, the gap between what rational planning promises and what occurs is frequently substantial.[3] Part of this gap may be attributable to poorly implemented planning processes. But, we would suggest that there is a deeper problem: the rational model of planning is itself flawed. This is certainly the case, we would argue, for planning in Jewish education, for a number of reasons that we will outline below. The ultimate question then becomes: is there a better model, a way of planning that holds greater promise of leading to desirable change? We believe there is. But first, a look at why rational planning does not work for Jewish education is in order.

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[1] In his book, *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*, Henry Mintzberg cites a number of different definitions of planning: "Planning is action laid out in advance" (G. C. Sawyer); "Planning is the design of a desired future and of effective ways of bringing it about" (R. L. Ackoff); Planning is "those activities which are concerned specifically with determining in advance what actions and/or human and physical resources are required to reach a goal" (N. Snyder and W.F. Glueck). All of these definitions emphasize the idea of planning as projective, as attempting to set and control the direction of change (Mintzberg, 1994, pp. 5–13).

[2] For an example of this kind of orderly and sequenced planning process applied to the domain of Jewish education/identity, see JESNA's *Handbook on Planning for Jewish Continuity* (Shluker & Isaacs, 1995). The Handbook outlines eleven steps in the planning process: initiating the process, organizing the planning effort, understanding community needs, visioning, choosing a planning strategy, identifying goals and objectives, designing/adopting programs to meet goals and objectives, planning for program evaluation, implementing programs, evaluating programs, continuing continuity planning.

[3] Mintzberg devotes a lengthy chapter in his book to the considerable evidence that conventional rational planning simply does not produce the results that its proponents expect from it (Mintzberg, 1994, pp. 91–158). Douglas Reeves, writing about educational change, offers an equally blunt critique: "Perhaps the most pervasive myth in change leadership is that planning – particularly complex, large-scale, and supposedly 'strategic' planning – leads to effective change …. [T]he evidence for that proposition is absent not only in education but in the business world as well" (Reeves, 2009, p. 42).

The Planning Context in Jewish Education

Planning is as much a part of North American Jewish education as it is in other aspects of our lives.[4] Teachers plan lessons; schools plan curricula; institutions plan new initiatives; communities plan how to allocate resources among diverse programs and settings. As a field, Jewish education is growing increasingly sophisticated in its use of planning and of a host of techniques that may be part of the planning process. It is no longer uncommon to read and hear about planning processes in Jewish education that employ quantitative data gathering and analysis, focus group interviews, values clarification activities, logic modeling, scenario building, benchmarking, and other "state of the art" methodologies. Schools and other educational organizations now create and update strategic plans on a regular basis, and growing numbers of institutions engage in market and business planning. Local communities, through their federations and central agencies, undertake planning around "macro"-issues like how better to engage broad populations in Jewish learning or how to deliver educational services to front-line institutions more effectively. Nationally, major foundations, organizations like PEJE and the Foundation for Jewish Camp that serve particular sectors of the educational system, religious movements, academic institutions, and trans-denominational umbrella agencies like the JCC Association and JESNA are all involved—singly and together with others—in planning to address issues of educational quality, access and affordability, personnel recruitment and development, capacity-building, and the like (Cousens, 2008).

There is no reliable data on how much is spent each year on Jewish education—for North America, estimates range between $2 and $4 billion (Sales, 2006, p. 2)—but it is clearly substantial. Worldwide, Jewish education engages millions of individuals as learners, teachers, administrators, and funders. The Jewish community and Jewish people place great hope in Jewish education. There is ample evidence that the more Jewish education an individual receives, the more likely it is that she or he will be engaged in a wide range of Jewish activities and will be motivated in turn to educate her/his children.[5] Thus, it is no wonder that Jewish education is almost universally regarded as critical to the continuing vitality of Jewish life.

However, the environment in which North American Jewish education is operating is both challenging and changing. Social changes over the past 30 years

[4]The discussion that follows deals only with Jewish education in North America. Readers who are knowledgeable about Jewish education in other communities are invited to consider the extent to which the description and analysis offered here apply to those communities as well.

[5]Many studies have documented the effects of Jewish education on adult Jewish identity, including the most recent large-scale study of the American-Jewish population, the National Jewish Population Survey 2000–2001. The summary statement in the NJPS report on The Impact of Childhood Jewish Education on Adults' Jewish Identity reflects the findings generally: "Many, but not all, forms of Jewish education exert measurable, positive impacts upon almost every form of Jewish identity examined here" (Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004, p. 17).

have reshaped Jewish identity, making it more fluid, more diverse, less insular. Technological changes are transforming how we work, play, communicate, and learn. A large majority of Jews continue to take Jewish education seriously, and they want a greater voice in the kind of Jewish education they and their children will receive. Recent decades have seen many positive developments in North American Jewish education—long-term trends like the steady growth of day schools, intensive efforts to strengthen and transform supplementary schooling and summer camping, and the emergence of new phenomena like Birthright Israel and Jewish learning tied to social and environmental activism. At the same time, a group of seemingly intractable problems—a chronic shortage of top-flight personnel, inconsistent and often mediocre quality, steep declines in participation during the teen years, lack of coordination across modes and settings, inefficient and inadequate funding—persist and have clearly limited Jewish education's potential reach and impact.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Jewish education is seen today as a domain in need of change. And this belief, in turn, has given new urgency to the question of how we can use planning to help identify and effect the changes that are required. Unfortunately, Jewish education is also a domain that resists efforts to plan effectively. Perhaps no area in Jewish life is as highly fragmented and localized. Thousands of institutions and programs provide Jewish learning—schools, synagogues, camps, centers, and a myriad of organizations that embody virtually every Jewish interest and ideology imaginable. The vast majority of these are entirely autonomous, free to educate whom and how they see fit—and to compete with one another for the right and resources to do so. Because they often disagree on the ends of Jewish education—the goals toward which we should strive—it is difficult to get them to cooperate on the means—the steps to be taken to reach these goals. Even internally, many educational organizations operate less on the basis of well-thought out plans than some mix of good intentions, personal beliefs and preferences, and instinct.

Further, efforts to plan effectively in Jewish education are often thwarted, or at least complicated, by factors in the environment, both Jewish and general. Alongside the hopes invested in Jewish education is a persistent skepticism about its ability to realize these hopes and an accompanying devaluation of those who actually do the work in the field. This ambivalence (which affects education in general) expresses itself in both a casualness about planning (how valuable is it, really?) and a tendency toward what might be termed "hit and run" planning—quick forays that are not rooted in deep knowledge of the field nor followed by consistent attention to what comes afterward. Above all, planning in Jewish education is often held hostage to the overall economic condition of the field that is consistently undercapitalized. As a result, ambitious plans are often doomed by the lack of resources to implement them, further weakening the impact of traditional planning efforts.

The Search for a Planning Paradigm

The key question we wish to explore is, therefore: Given the environment in which Jewish educational planning takes place, what models of planning make sense and are likely to help us reach the ambitious goals we have set for Jewish education?

To answer this question, we need to consider a little more deeply the nature of the Jewish-educational system itself. In a seminal article published in 1991, Susan Shevitz introduced the concept of Jewish organizations and organizational systems as "organized anarchies." This concept was developed to describe organizations characterized by multiple, problematic, and/or unclear goals; under-developed technologies for reaching those goals (operating mostly on the basis of trial and error, past precedent, and ad hoc preferences and inventions); and highly fluid participation (Cohen & March, 1986). An organized anarchy might be imagined as a game in which a myriad of players coming in and out almost at random kick multiple balls toward different goals on a shifting field using different rulebooks (Shevitz, 1991).

This is an apt description of how the game of Jewish education is played, both within and among institutions. Take a typical supplementary school. Although it may have a set of nominal goals, it is likely that parents, teachers, administrators, synagogue leaders, clergy, and students all bring very different values and personal objectives to the table that influence their conduct far more than the articulated goals. Parents want their children to have an enjoyable experience while they come to appreciate their Jewishness and pick up the skills necessary for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Teachers want to cover the material they've been assigned to teach, keep order, and feel that they're helping to transmit the Jewish tradition as they understand it. Administrators want the school to run smoothly and be well-regarded by parents, the Board, and the Rabbi. The Rabbi in turn wants to be known as having a "good school" and to have a personal relationship with students, but may not be able to invest the time and energy required to have a consistent and positive influence on what goes on.

At the same time, it is frequently unclear how to translate any of these objectives effectively into an educational program that can actually produce the outcomes it seeks. What curriculum, what schedule, which types of teachers, what activities for children and parents, will work best? Schools lack the rigorous empirical data to make these kinds of decisions, so they fall back on opinions that may or may not be well-informed. And, for all the participants (with the possible exception of the educational director), involvement in the school is likely to be a sometime thing—intense for brief periods when something personally important is at stake, but otherwise minimal and intermittent. At the end of the day, decisions in such a setting are not likely to be the result of rational planning, but rather of circumstance and serendipity.

On the communal level, the situation is likely to be even more anarchic. Ideological divisions compound normal institutional differences. Participation in collaborative decision-making is even more inconsistent and self-interested. Solutions to system-wide problems are even less obvious, and the knowledge and abilities needed to identify and implement them less likely to be available. These characteristics combine to make conventional models of planning highly problematic. As Shevitz concludes: "The uneven participation, unclear technology, and multiple goals that characterize an organized anarchy suggest that a linear, rationally-based planning model will prove frustrating to even an able practitioner" (Shevitz, 1991, p. 197).

Another useful lens through which to view planning in the Jewish-educational system is provided by Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal in their work on leadership, organizational development, and change (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Bolman and Deal argue that every organization and every change situation needs to be viewed through four "frames:" the structural, the human resource, the political, and the symbolic. The structural frame is the domain of conventional rational planning in which one seeks to manage the environment, set organizational goals, and put in place the structures and procedures necessary to pursue these successfully. A structural view assumes that organizations have the information, technology, and control systems needed to move steadily toward their objectives.

What Bolman and Deal demonstrate, however, is that this way of understanding and managing organizations is at best partial, and unlikely to be effective in the real world except in rare cases. The other dimensions of organizational life operate on the basis of different "logics"—the need to deal with the individuals who comprise the system and their personal aspirations, abilities, and anxieties; the reality of power relationships and conflicting interests that need to be negotiated; the human desire for rituals and symbols that inspire, provide confidence or comfort, and build community. These logics determine what happens in an organization as much (or more) than formal structural arrangements, official goals, and codified procedures.

What this means is that planning and effecting change cannot be a strictly rational process, at least if by that we mean a process that focuses almost exclusively on the structural frame. The other frames must be given their due, and these introduce all sorts of "non-rational" forces and considerations into the mix, ranging from what people involved are actually capable of doing (think, under-trained, part-time teachers in a supplementary school) to the deeply felt, almost ritualized attachments that institutions develop to specific arrangements or practices (think, the idea that every synagogue must operate its own school).

Jewish education is clearly an arena where all four dimensions of organizational life are powerfully at work and color the way in which planned change endeavors must be approached. We might look, for example, at an issue prominent on today's American communal educational-planning agenda: the effort to "link silos" more effectively. Essentially, this effort seeks to make it easier for Jewish education's "consumers" to move along a pathway of connected educational experiences, with the aim of both extending educational participation (as one experience leads to another) and intensifying its impact (taking advantage of a documented "multiplier" effect as educational experiences accumulate). In order for this to happen, it is clear that institutions need to become both more "customer-centric" in their approach, facilitating awareness of and access to a range of educational options, and more willing to and adept at "handing off" participants to other providers for reinforcement and continuation of their educational journeys.

Looking at this issue through a structural frame, we can envision arrangements that would need to be made for better data gathering about consumers and their preferences, expanded marketing, sharing of information, and perhaps a new coordinating position in the community. But, if the "plan" stopped here, it would be unlikely to succeed. Digging deeper we would see the following:

- Educators are neither trained nor rewarded for guiding individuals toward other educational experiences.
- Institutions worry about holding on to their constituents and about the ideological differences that color their educational offerings.
- "Consumers" may feel disoriented when confronted with too many choices, and seek settings where they can feel "at home" and well-supported.

Viewed through all four frames, "linking silos" turns out to be more difficult than it initially appears and to require a "plan" that is attuned to a multitude of non-rational and even cross-cutting factors (does building a strong familial identification with one setting, say a summer camp, increase or decrease the likelihood that they will seek out other settings?). Bolman and Deal's "four frames" perspective allows rational planning a place in our efforts to make change in Jewish education; but, it warns us that planning in practice must be broad and flexible enough to deal with non-rational factors not as annoying intrusions, but as essential elements of the organizational context.

Looked at in another way, the example of "linking silos" helps us to see yet another reason why conventional planning is poorly suited to the Jewish educational environment. In their work on leadership, Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky differentiate between "technical" and "adaptive" challenges (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). Technical problems have known solutions (albeit sometimes difficult to implement), but adaptive challenges are complex and often fuzzy. Meeting them requires not the exercise of expertise or authority, but the engagement of individuals with diverse views and values in a process that involves learning new ways of doing things. Adaptive challenges, Heifetz and Linsky suggest, have a number of characteristics in common:

1. There is a gap between aspirations and reality.
2. Progress requires responses outside the organization's standard repertoire.
3. Narrowing that gap will require difficult learning.
4. Part of the learning will require distinguishing, among all that is valued, what is essential to be carried forward and what is expendable, which will involve loss.
5. The losses often involve learning to refashion loyalties and develop new competencies.
6. Painful choices must be made between competing loyalties and values.
7. The people with the problem are both the problem and the solution. Problem-solving responsibility must shift from authoritative experts to the stakeholders.
8. Adaptive work requires a longer time frame than technical work.
9. Adaptive work involves experimentation.
10. Adaptive challenges generate disequilibrium, resistance, and work avoidance (Cambridge Leadership Associates, 2005).

This fairly describes, I would argue, the context for doing effective planning in Jewish education. While some challenges may be purely technical, even apparently

simple ones—like coming up with a schedule for religious schooling that maximizes participation, satisfaction, and learning—frequently turn out to be far more complex than they first appear to be. Consider the choice of whether to hold supplementary school classes on Sunday morning or on Shabbat (leaving aside for the moment the many other options, like flexible scheduling with "on line" schooling, that might be imagined). The factors that come into play here are manifold: how Jewish schooling is seen in relation to other dimensions of Jewish religious and synagogue life; parental preferences and expectations; the potential impact on the curriculum and on what may or may not be done in the class; what is being asked of teachers; the use of physical facilities and space; the symbolism of seeing a large community of learner – worshippers in the synagogue on Shabbat; and a host of others. The decision of when the religious school should meet *is* an adaptive challenge that will undoubtedly awaken strong emotions, require difficult choices, and—if handled well—both incorporate and result in a great deal of individual and institutional learning.

When we shift the focus from the individual institution to the communal stage, the prominence of adaptive challenges becomes even clearer. We simply do not know today how to do most of the things that we earnestly wish to do, whether it be to keep a majority of young people involved in Jewish learning past Bar or Bat Mitzvah, to strengthen their attachment to Israel and the Jewish people, to make effective use of new communications technologies, to recruit and retain an adequate supply of quality educators, or (as above) to get institutions to cooperate and share information. The real challenge in confronting these "big" issues lies, as Heifetz and Linsky would have it, in the need for individuals and institutions to go beyond their customary repertoires of behavior, to be both patient and flexible, to learn lessons as we go and apply these, and for those affected to "own" the problems and the solutions. Conventional planning is not irrelevant to meeting adaptive challenges, but neither is it sufficient nor especially well-suited to this work.

We might ask at this point: If the Jewish educational "system" is something other than the rational system that traditional planning imagines and is designed for, what kind of system is it, and can we derive any additional guidance from theory in the attempt to identify a framework for planning that is likely to be successful?

There is a theory that enables us to better understand Jewish education as a system amenable to planning—as long as the planning model itself grows out of that theory: complex adaptive systems theory.

Complex adaptive systems theory—also called simply "complexity theory" and sometimes (less accurately) "chaos theory"—originated in the scientific community to describe and study a variety of phenomena ranging from weather patterns to cellular biology to artificial intelligence. Social scientists as well began to use complexity theory to better understand the operation of everything from single businesses to entire societies (Baltram, 1998; Coveney & Highfield, 1995; Lissack & Roos, 1999; Waldrop, 1992). The core of complexity theory is its recognition that systems are made up of multiple actors who in their interactions continuously affect one another, thereby changing the behavior of the system as a whole, and that these changes, while following certain patterns, are not predictable or controllable in advance. That

is, the system adapts and evolves, but not in a simple linear way. It is this element of "patterned indeterminacy," straddling the border between order and chaos that gives complex systems their vitality.

Drawing on a synthesis of literature in the field, we can identify a number of characteristics of complex adaptive systems that are relevant to understanding the Jewish-educational system and the behaviors that typically characterize it:

1. *Unpredictable lines of development.* Elements of the system and the system as a whole often display unexpected behavior. The future cannot be simply extrapolated from the past (examples might include: individuals who dramatically change their beliefs and behavioral systems (e.g., *ba'alei teshuvah*), the rapid growth of day schools in the late-twentieth century; the disruptive effects of unexpected events—the death of a key professional, an economic downturn).
2. *Sensitive dependence on initial conditions.* This is the famous "butterfly" effect, where the movement of a butterfly's wings in Japan eventually leads to a tornado in Kansas. In more general terms, micro-interactions often determine macro-effects. Feedback loops may lead to larger and larger changes, rather than to equilibrium (examples: the impact of a chance meeting with a rabbi on an individual's trajectory of Jewish development; the multiplier effects of a chain of educational experiences).
3. *Emergence.* Complex behavior and new phenomena emerge from the interaction of agents, even when the individual agents are following relatively simple rules of action. Parts get recombined to make new wholes that cannot be reduced to those parts (example: how the typical patterns of post-war suburban synagogue life, the 1960s political and cultural environment (including the draft), and experiences at Jewish summer camps, combined to give birth to the *Havurah* movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s).
4. *Holarchy*. Systems are nested within other systems. Wholes at one level are parts at another, and vice versa (example: the ecology of almost any synagogue, where, e.g., the school is nested within the larger institution, which is itself nested within a community and a movement, and where each system affects the others in complex ways).
5. *Self-organization*. Order emerges from within the system, rather than being imposed upon it. Order is achieved as a dynamic "coherence" or "alignment," rooted in shared purpose and identity, rather than as a uniformity among the elements of the system. Coherence is often achieved in the form of the following:

    1. *Attractors*—"basins" toward which many elements of a system appear to gravitate as a "natural" consequence of their individual trajectories (examples: the drawing power of a charismatic leader who may draw together individuals with diverse backgrounds and sensibilities; an idea "whose time has come" [Zionism, feminism]).
    2. *Networks*—frameworks for the exchange of energy and information which help to achieve/maintain coherence in the absence of hierarchical structures (example: the early success of the Coalition for Alternatives in Jewish

Education in the 1970s and 1980s in drawing together disparate and otherwise unconnected individuals and institutions who shared a commitment to creating "alternatives" in Jewish education).

6. *Bifurcations*. Systems may "split" at certain key points in their evolution, with two (or more) dynamic, but relatively stable, "sub-systems" emerging that continue to develop along separate pathways while remaining in communication and (frequently) dynamic tension with one another (example: the domains of day school and congregational education).
7. *Co-evolution*. The system and its elements change in continuous interaction with one another and with their environment. Complexity theory posits that systems continually face new challenges and opportunities thrown up by the environment as "peaks" that can either be scaled or ignored (e.g., the situation of teen trips to Israel after the success of Birthright Israel). To maximize their survivability and robustness, the system and its elements typically need both to "exploit" nearby opportunities (e.g., synagogues that incorporate healing services in order to engage those seeking spiritual support in times of difficulty) and to "explore" more distant possibilities (e.g., creating entirely new organizations to give expression to young Jews' concern for the environment).
8. *Learning as the process that allows for successful adaptation.* In natural systems, variability and natural selection determine outcomes. In human systems, the ability to learn from experience and to communicate the results of this learning across system boundaries is frequently the key to maintaining robustness and survivability (example: the success of some synagogues in remaking their educational programs as a result of participating in projects like the Experiment in Congregational Education, NESS [Nurturing Excellence in Synagogue Schools], or La'atid: Synagogues for the Future) (Woocher, 2001).

The idea of Jewish education as a complex adaptive system and the use of complexity theory as a framework for approaching issues of change and planning for change are not nearly as radical as they may initially appear. A rich literature has developed in recent years applying complexity theory to change in the business and social sectors. And, perhaps the leading academic figure in the world of educational reform, Michael Fullan, has grounded his recent work on change in the public education sector in complexity theory. As Fullan writes:

> The jury must surely be in by now that rationally constructed reform strategies do not work. The reason is that such strategies can never work in the face of rapidly changing environments. Further, rapid change is endemic and inevitable in postmodern society – a system which self-generates complex dynamics over and over and over again. (Fullan, 1999, p. 3)

Whether we approach the Jewish-educational system through the lens of organized anarchy, Bolman and Deal's four frames, Heifetz and Linsky's adaptive challenges, or complexity theory, we end up with essentially the same conclusion: Those who aspire to bring positive change to Jewish education will not be able to do so via conventional rational planning. The system, and the challenges it faces, simply do not lend themselves to this approach. The planning processes in Jewish education that

often attract the greatest attention—national commissions, local strategic plans—are probably least likely to have a significant impact, because they misconstrue how change takes place and the way in which "planning," i.e., the activities that planners typically undertake, can actually shape such change. It is not the activities per se or the skills and techniques used in carrying them out that have rendered much Jewish-educational planning problematic, but the *framework*, one drawn from conventional rational planning models, in which these have often been employed.

Yet, change clearly is needed, and some measure of planning must guide that change if it is to achieve the results we seek. So, we need a different model of planning, one attuned to the nature of Jewish education as a complex adaptive system and to the adaptive challenges it faces in the twenty-first century.

A Planning Praxis for Twenty-First Century Jewish Education

The alternative model of planning that we propose is one that is firmly embedded in the "doing" of Jewish education, what might be called "praxis planning." "Praxis" refers to the practical application of a science, art, or skill—doing that is guided by a body of learning. We call the type of planning being advocated here "praxis planning" because the emphasis is not on theoretical constructs or even on the outcome of the planning process (i.e., the "plan"), but on the process itself—on "planful doing," if you will. In such planning, the key elements are going on continuously and simultaneously: value-determination, observation, reflection, direction-setting, testing, recalibration, theorizing, and exploring, all at the same time.[6] Classical planning certainly also involves seeking and using feedback as one moves through the plan. But, praxis planning goes a step further: Rather than creating a plan of action, implementing it, and modifying it (if need be—which it almost always is) along the way, praxis planning is the process of actively addressing an issue with an objective in mind, but no certain sense in advance of how to get there, and using a broad range of analytic, imaginative, and relational skills to gradually steer the process ever closer toward that objective.

A variety of metaphors have been proposed for this type of endeavor. In an early article on the topic of school change (which can serve in many ways as an exemplar of a wide set of planned change endeavors in Jewish education), Shevitz, borrowing from Thomas Sergiovanni, used the metaphor of "surfing," as opposed to "pitching," to describe the process whereby one must "ride the waves" in order to make change (Shevitz, 1992). In a later article revisiting the topic, she adopted a musical metaphor from Orlikowski: Like a jazz ensemble, we need to learn to "improvise,

[6] This is similar on an organizational level to what Schon urges as the appropriate model for professional practice on an individual level. Schon's concept of the "reflective practitioner" calls for the same type of continuous thoughtful but open monitoring of the situation at hand in order to achieve one's purposes (e.g., teaching or healing). Reflection-in-action becomes the primary driving force for forward movement, and it allows for surprise and improvisation. But, it is also a discipline that must be learned and refined (Schon, 1983).

not conduct" (Shevitz, 2008). We might employ a third metaphor, as well, that of sailing: The sailor works with the elements of the situation—wind, currents, sails, rudder, crewmates—to steer toward a destination, constantly monitoring the variables, tacking when necessary, occasionally getting wet, using both intellect and instinct, and hoping to avoid capsizing along the way. The good sailor is planning constantly as she or he goes, but knows that in the end, what matters is the sailing, not the plan.

This type of planning is both empirically grounded and improvisational. It is empirically grounded in that it demands faithful attention to what is actually going on in real time as new actions are introduced. It is improvisational in offering actors the freedom to change what they do as needed in order to keep the process moving toward its goal.

Regardless of which metaphor we prefer, the point in all of these comparisons is the same: effective planning in Jewish education is not about moving ahead in a straight line or seeking to control the unfolding of events. It is about artfully steering events as they unfold, being hyper-aware of the environment in which these events are unfolding, and being agile enough to keep things on course by changing direction when necessary. This approach to planning is firmly grounded in what we know today about social and educational change. The literature about change and how to make it—in schools, organizations, communities, even countries—is vast and constantly growing. Increasingly, however, a consensus is emerging that sees change, even in systems that are more "tightly coupled" and less anarchic than is Jewish education, as an organic process with emergent properties that rarely proceeds in a linear or pre-determined fashion.

Fullan, in his trilogy of volumes on *Change Forces*, articulates a number of "rules" to guide educational change-makers.[7] These emphasize the need to treat change "as a journey, not a blueprint" and as a guided collective endeavor, not one that can be imposed from without (or simply left to "happen" from within). In the third book of his trilogy, Fullan suggests the following as "common sense" principles for educational reformers:

- Start with the notion of moral purpose, key problems, desirable directions, but don't lock in.
- Create communities of interaction around these ideas.
- Ensure that quality information infuses the interaction and related deliberations.
- Look for and extract promising patterns, i.e., consolidate gains and build on them (Fullan, 2003, p. 23).

These ideas provide planners with useful guidance as to the particular and unique contributions they can make to a change process. The classical tasks of defining problems, identifying potential directions for solutions, mobilizing stakeholders,

[7] The lists, each consisting of eight "lessons," can be found in Fullan (1993, pp. 21–22, 1999, p. 18, 2003, p. 24).

providing good information to guide deliberations, and monitoring results to ascertain the effects of action all remain relevant. What is different is the context in which they are employed—one in which planning does not take place prior to and above the action, but as an integral part of it.

In their book, *Getting to Maybe: How the World is Changed*, the authors Frances Westley, Brenda Zimmerman, and Michael Quinn Patton, focus on social innovation through the lens of complexity theory. They argue that successful social innovators do so not like “generals on their horses” and are rarely guided at the outset by some grand strategy. Rather, they see a situation calling for change, take some tentative steps, and, if they have correctly intuited the patterns that are causing the problematic situation, find that the steps they take become “attractors” around which new patterns of interaction grow. Westley, Zimmerman, and Patton describe the key elements in this process of social change as

- “standing still”—observing, thinking, analyzing, pondering, and acting in order to understand deeply the system and the situation one is trying to change
- engaging potential allies, including those who may represent oppositional power, and building networks
- getting in the flow—letting the power of emergence and the networks that have been created carry the work forward and generate strategies
- accepting the inevitability of failures and using them as opportunities for new questions and new learning
- finding the moment when a small success is ready to become a system-wide transformation, the moment when “hope and history rhyme” (Westley, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2006, p. 188).

This process cannot be expected to unfold smoothly or in predictable ways (we are talking about complexity, after all). But, it is a process that is amenable to human guidance, if not control. There is a critical need for thoughtful “steering” at many points along the way—from the initial vision of what must be changed (and the passion to pursue it), to the deep analysis of the patterns that prevent change, to the forging of relationships, to the design of structures and processes (like “developmental evaluation”) that enable learning and the emergence of refined strategies, to the effort to sustain and expand successes even while being open to still more change. As described by Westley, Zimmerman, and Patton, social innovators are assuredly not conventional “planners,” but the skills they employ are ones that Jewish educational planners needs to embrace if they are to be effective in guiding the changes they seeks to make.

Experience with change initiatives in the Jewish educational world lends support to this understanding of change and of the role that “planning” and planners can play in it. Recent research conducted by JESNA’s Lippman Kanfer Institute looked at lessons learned from a dozen major congregational-educational change initiatives. The research identified eight lessons about the change process that held with great consistency across the initiatives and that can likely be extrapolated to Jewish educational change processes in general:

1. Substantial change takes time and does not proceed smoothly.
2. It is important to take action and be ambitious.
3. In a systemic approach to change, vision, action, reflection, and conversation feed off one another to drive the process forward.
4. Getting the (right) people engaged and empowering them is critical.
5. The change process is powered by and largely about learning.
6. Quality outside assistance can help the process tremendously.
7. Because change is complex, a multi-pronged support system is necessary.
8. Financial resources can help "lubricate" change (JESNA, 2008b).

As in Fullan's understanding and that of the authors of *Getting to Maybe*, this research emphasizes change as an organic, emergent process, but not one that simply unfolds haphazardly. There is a bias for action and experimentalism in this approach (Fullan early on advocated for a motto of "ready, fire, aim" [Fullan, 1993, p. 31]), and certainly a strong belief that those in the best position to design change are those who will implement it and be affected by it. But, there is also a clear role for expertise, for good information, for brainstorming options, for building consensus, for close monitoring—i.e., for the things that "planners" do. Fullan warns against believing that change can happen from the bottom up alone (Fullan, 1993, p. 37), and the clear record in congregational-educational change initiatives is that outside guidance and support is generally critical to the success of the change process.

But, the other side of the story is equally important: To be effective, planning must be part of the change process, not apart from it. To try another metaphor: Effective planning is more like operating a GPS system in a car, where the route is recalculated as needed to take account of decisions made and eventualities encountered along the way, than it is like drawing a route line on a map in advance of the journey. The latter may be needed to get started. It is even useful to have available as a reference point. But, unless the trip is a very simple one—which most journeys in Jewish education are not—the line on the map is as likely to impede the journey as to advance it if one tries to stick to it regardless of intervening events and emerging preferences.

What does this type of planning look like in practice? Unfortunately, serious case studies of Jewish-educational planning in general, much less of this type of adaptive "praxis" planning, are few and far between. However, the type of planning that we have been advocating is not entirely new. It is already being practiced in at least one important arena, that of congregational-educational change. The literature on synagogue change offers a number of examples of how individual congregations have pursued change in ways that honor the complexity of the change process and of the environment in which it unfolds. These accounts and many of the key lessons from these change efforts, for example, that change requires a vision of potentiality, but must unfold organically, that learning is the key driving force of change, and that participants must be empowered and equipped to take ownership of the changes being prescribed, lend support to the model for planned change proposed here (Aron, 2000, 2002; Reimer, 1997; Shevitz, 1991, 1992, 2008; Aron, Cohen,

Hoffman, & Kelman, 2010; Aron, Lee, & Rossel, 1995; Hoffman, 2006; JESNA, 2008a, 2008b; Wolfson, 2006).

When it comes to descriptions and analyses of educational planning and change efforts at the community and national levels, we face an even greater dearth of examples to cite. As noted earlier, large-scale planning efforts like the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, whose report, *A Time to Act*, was issued in 1990, and local commissions on Jewish Continuity that operated in many communities often attracted considerable attention at the time. However, little follow-up has been done on the actual effects of these planning efforts, nearly all of which followed a traditional model.[8] A recent review of Jewish educational activity in seven communities across the United States done by Jack Wertheimer (2007) mentions only a handful of educational-planning initiatives in these communities (even though each has undertaken initiatives of varying scope in recent years), thereby providing perhaps inadvertent evidence of the overall lack of impact of such planning on educational activity (with a few notable exceptions, such as Boston, Massachusetts). Thus, we are left to imagine what a praxis planning process of the type we are advocating *might* look like at the community level.

Here, for example, is how a Jewish federation and/or central agency for Jewish education seeking to increase the number of teens who are involved in Jewish formal and informal learning and other activities through their high-school years (a not uncommon goal today) might mount such a planning process: The agency (or agencies) driving the planning process might begin by articulating the vision (initially for itself) in clear terms: every Jewish teen involved in some personally meaningful Jewish activity. Then begins the fun: The agency would undertake a wide ranging set of conversations—with teens themselves, with organizations already offering programming for Jewish teens (synagogues, youth movements, JCC, Chabad, Jewish Student Union, Community Hebrew High School, etc.), with youth workers, with parents, with public and private school personnel, with organizations working successfully with youth in the wider community—listening and learning. What engages teens? What turns them off? What are the characteristics of successful engagement opportunities? What roles does social networking play? What are the constraints and concerns that need to be dealt with?

An inventory of existing opportunities would be created and data about current patterns of participation gathered. Current providers might be brought together for a candid discussion about their successes and failures, their dreams, the gaps they see, what would be needed to engage more teens. At this point, a leadership group for the effort would emerge—a "coalition of the willing," individuals from a variety of

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[8]My own sense, based on a fairly extensive, but non-systematic, monitoring of these planning processes and as the chief staff person for one national commission (the Commission on Jewish Identity and Continuity, convened by the Council of Jewish Federations in the mid-1990s), is that these commissions produced a number of new initiatives in the short-term, and perhaps contributed to, even as they reflected, an overall cultural shift in the Jewish community over the longer term, but rarely were successful in catalyzing and guiding substantial change. That is, few if any came close to meeting their ambitious goals.

settings who clearly evidence a passion for this challenge, a readiness to experiment with new approaches, and a willingness to work collaboratively.

Experimentation would then begin. An initial set of ideas would be implemented—not a "master plan," but a few new initiatives that seem most promising. These might be new programs and engagement opportunities, imagined by the leadership group or brought to the table by entrepreneurs (some of whom may not even wait for "permission" to do their thing), or additional investments in existing activities. Some might come from teens themselves. The initiatives might involve new partnerships or ways of leveraging and connecting programs and resources.

The progress of these initiatives would be intensively monitored, at the outset not to judge their success or failure, but to see what patterns begin to emerge: Is anything changing? If so, what and for whom? What new issues are coming to the surface (perhaps a need for different kinds of personnel; perhaps a need to "track" teens as they participate in different activities and effect smoother "hand-offs" from program to program; perhaps the need to reach out more aggressively to teens who are unresponsive to what is currently available, but have their own ideas for things that would work for them)? It may take some time for these patterns to become clear, so patience and urgency need to be held in tension. Once patterns do appear, they provide cues for where to go next. Initiatives that seem to offer little promise are dropped. Promising ones are tweaked. New ones get added to the mix. Assessment is continuous, as are conversations with all of the stakeholders. A shared commitment to learning and a mix of patience and persistence drive and guide the process.

It is unlikely that the initial vision of "every teen meaningfully engaged" will be fully realized (truly big visions rarely are). But, hopefully, out of this type of process real change will take place. The change is likely to be messy, with a number of things going on simultaneously and not always in perfect harmony. A key role of the leadership group, however, is to keep everyone focused on the vision and to interpret the unfolding events in a way that makes them coherent to those involved—to identify where progress is being made, to suggest how the pieces fit together (and in so suggesting, probably help them to in fact fit better). In this model there may never be a "plan," i.e., a consolidated blueprint of everything that is to happen, but there will be constant planning, judgments made in the course of events concerning what has happened, what it means, and where to go next. This is planning that can work in the real world of Jewish education, with its multitude of actors, ideas, and interests.

Over the next few years we hope to see major initiatives in various domains of Jewish education and try this type of "praxis planning" to see if it can indeed help in solving some of the field's most persistent problems and in meeting the high aspirations we hold for Jewish education. Several of the large agenda items we have mentioned—the quality personnel shortage in the field, the need to create a more accessible and seamless system—would seem to lend themselves well to being addressed through the kind of experimental—analytic—collaborative—open-ended process that we have described.

Regardless of how Jewish educational planning proceeds over the coming years, it is incumbent on us to initiate serious research on planning and change efforts in arenas beyond the synagogue. This research agenda should include the following:

1. Case studies of planning efforts at a number of different levels (institutional, communal, national)—What approaches were employed? How did the process unfold? What happened as a result?
2. Attempts to understand the factors that make for successful planning—How important are such elements as the planning model employed, the scope of participation, the use (or non-use) of "hard" data, process facilitation by experts, time allocated, leadership, etc.?
3. Action research—using new approaches, like that advocated in this chapter, and monitoring the process for lessons learned. The model of praxis planning that we have proposed is well grounded in the literature on change and in what we know about the characteristics of Jewish educational and communal life. But, we have no evidence of its feasibility or efficacy as an alternative to conventional planning.

We return at the end to the roles of reason and faith in planning. Both, we would argue, remain at the core of what planning is and what it must be. Even in a complex and unpredictable world, reason, properly understood and applied, is critical to our efforts to bring a measure of order out of potential chaos. The reason we employ is not one that limits itself to the logic of cause and effect or seeks to impose order at the expense of stifling the unexpected. It is a measured and mature reason that understands that disorder can also be good, that out of it emerges novelty and new patterns of organization. Our faith too is different. It is not faith in the power of reason per se, but in the possibilities that are inherent in any situation if we are both committed to change and trusting of ourselves, our fellows, and nature's thrust toward self-organization.

The sensibility we need today in our planning is in the end, we would suggest, a very Jewish one. It recognizes both our power (we are created in the image of God) and its limitations (but we are not God). It affirms that as we do (*na'aseh*), we will come to understand more deeply (*v'nishma*). And, it trusts that Jewish education—and the world—can be made better, one deed (*mitzvah*) at a time.

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Pluralism in Jewish Education

Bryan Conyer

Introduction

Pluralism is a deceptive term – on the one hand, it is easily and often applied to nearly any field of study from astrophysics to zoology. On the other hand, it is a complex term with some obvious and subtle significance for each of the areas to which it is applied. Over the last two decades, many Jewish educational institutions including rabbinical seminaries, adult education programmes and Jewish Day Schools have adopted pluralism as one of their core values. These institutions are located primarily in the USA, but also can be found in Australia, Canada, England, Israel and Mexico, amongst others. Parallel to and preceding this development of pluralistic Jewish educational institutions is an abundant scholarship primarily debating the theoretical relationship between pluralism and Judaism and its implications for contemporary Jewry. Furthermore, a Google search of "Jewish + pluralism" reveals a plethora of newspaper and magazine articles, Jewish organisations, speeches and blogs that dedicate time, space and resources to promoting and exploring pluralism within Judaism, indicating that it has become part of the vernacular. Despite this increased usage of the term within the Jewish world, the practical consequences of adopting pluralism as a central organisational value remains virtually unexplored. Despite growing interest, the first empirical research appeared only as recently as 2006, and continues to be published in small numbers.

By drawing upon general academic literature regarding pluralism, as well as research specifically on Jewish education and pluralism, this chapter will attempt to bring some clarity to the term primarily from the perspective of theory, while focusing upon its implications for praxis, with Jewish education remaining the focus. This overview is intended to support the visioning process for any pluralistic Jewish education organisation, as well as to stimulate thought amongst the teaching faculty and policy-makers who ultimately retain responsibility for bridging the gap between vision and practice.

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Three Broad Applications of Pluralism

As the term pluralism is a concept with a multiplicity of meanings, scholars have called it "ambiguous" (Shamai, 1987, p. 97) and even "maddening" (McLennan, 1995, p. 7). Consequently, within the many conversations about pluralism in a Jewish context, different parties unknowingly emphasise one meaning of the term over another, thereby creating confusion, frustration and even conflict, all the while neglecting other meanings. In his brief overview of pluralism, McLennan (1995) identifies three broad and interrelated categories which help to articulate how the term is generally applied: the methodological, political and socio-cultural. A brief description of each of these categories will provide some clarity and insight into the hidden complexity that underlies the concept. It will also highlight some of the implications that pluralism has for Judaism and Jewish education and allow individuals to purposefully distinguish between all three areas. Each of the examples provided throughout this chapter is drawn from actual challenges faced by Jewish pluralistic educational institutions.

At a methodological or philosophical level, pluralism is often the antonym for monism, a philosophically grounded and absolutist belief that there is only one unifying entity, value or substance such as God or Truth, or that there is only one valid methodology for accessing that single Truth. Several examples can help to illustrate this. For instance, in Jewish terms, it asks the questions whether and how Judaism can be validly represented through the prism of each of the major denominations, or whether there is only a singular Judaism. In Jewish educational terms, when teaching *Tanakh* (the Bible), should a pluralist school be teaching biblical criticism or only traditional rabbinic commentators? Finally, in practical terms, should an educational institution allow a student who is Jewish by patrilineal decent to read the blessings over the Torah that affirm the particularistic identity of Jews, when there are other students in that same *minyan* (prayer quorum) who reject patrilineal descent and therefore that person's Jewish status?

At the political level, pluralism is often used as an ideology that strives to recognise and protect the rights of individuals and groups. In this context, pluralism is often discussed through the labels of multiculturalism and interculturalism, and refers to the prism through which a corporate body considers its responsibility to its constituents, including whether power is distributed primarily along a horizontal or vertical axis. In this regard, pluralism encapsulates liberal notions of individualism, including the right to choose, associate, dissent and self-growth, each deemed to be a critical quality for the maintenance of democracy (Dewey, 1968; Feinberg, 1996; Mill, 1991). In Jewish terms, political pluralism considers when one individual's conception of Judaism is being privileged over another person's conception of Judaism. In Jewish educational terms, when does the organisation change its Jewish practices and standards to reflect or accommodate the desires of its student and parent body, and when is the student expected to change his or her practices to fit with that of the school? In practical terms, if the family of a student supports their child playing competitive sports on Shabbat as being consistent with their Jewish identity,

should a Jewish pluralist school provide the opportunity for that student to do so or does the pluralist school have a right or responsibility to say 'no'?

At a socio-cultural level, Horace Kallen, a German-born, American Jewish sociologist popularised the concept of pluralism when he coined the term Cultural Pluralism (Kallen, 1915). This was a theory designed to counter the Melting Pot ideology that then prevailed in the USA. The notion of Melting Pot argued that the cultural heritage of America's migrants needed to be amalgamated into and replaced by a newly emerging and homogenous American identity (Zangwill, 1909). In other words, diverse identities are valued only to the degree that they are willing to contribute to the creation of a new, common and uniform identity, all the while relinquishing themselves. Cultural Pluralism opposed this idea and linked the right to maintain one's particularistic identity with the protection of personal autonomy, and by extension, democracy. Cultural Pluralism argued, therefore, that an individual could simultaneously maintain multiple identities, and hence maintain his or her particularistic ethno-cultural micro identity while being loyal to the macro culture. The Melting Pot and Cultural Pluralism provide two distinct models for responding to socio-cultural plural populations.[1] In Jewish terms, are there specific Jewish behaviours, beliefs and values to which all Jews must subscribe? In Jewish educational terms, is the pluralist institution responsible for maintaining the self-defined Jewish identity of the family or transforming the Jewish identity of the student to something different? At a practical level, when a pluralist institution offers *tefillah* (prayers), is it preferable for it to always offer choices that reflect the existing practices of the surrounding synagogue communities or should it offer only one common prayer option? If only one prayer option, which customs and traditions should it follow?

Hence, these three categories provide a cursory overview of how pluralism is applied, influencing the domains of ritual, values, beliefs, cultural norms, policy creation and more, each an area of significance for Jewish education. At the lowest common denominator, each of these applications of pluralism shares an acknowledgement of diversity at many and varied levels. Any institution committed to pluralism needs to determine in which of these three categories it intends to be pluralistic – the methodological, political and/or socio-cultural.

Common Considerations of Pluralism

When considering the broader scholarly discourse surrounding the meaning and purpose of pluralism, certain central and interconnected considerations become apparent. For pluralistic Jewish educational institutions to fully consider and articulate the implications of adopting pluralism as a defining value, they first need to determine whether they intend to be pluralistic in the methodological, political or

[1] Many other models also exist. See Walzer (1997) for examples of political arrangements that facilitate cultural pluralism, Appleton (1983) for socio-cultural models and Sleeter and Grant (2003) for socio-cultural models within an educational context.

socio-cultural domains, and then they need to address each of these other common considerations as well.

1. Internal or external pluralism: Pluralism can be external, referring to the relationship between independent phenomena, as well as internal, referring to diversity within the same phenomenon. In the first context, questions relating to Judaism and its ability to recognise, coexist, critique and even validate another religious tradition are considered (Rosenak, 1984; Sacks, 2002; Stone, 2003). In the second, an intra-Jewish context is created, whereby the diverse groups that comprise Judaism consider their ability and the desirability to coexist (Borowitz, 1987; Greenberg, 1985; Rosethal, 2004). These relationships can occur at only a methodological level, whereby theological and value differences are emphasised; a socio-cultural level, where their co-existence as social groups are explored; or at a political level, whereby they protect, support or diminish the rights and social standing of the other.
2. Category formation: Category formation refers to identifying the parts that are to comprise the whole. If pluralism refers to the recognition of diversity, it is imperative that there is clarity regarding the composition and characteristics of the diversity. Category formation is a subjective process whereby a distinctive marker or a set of markers is utilised to identify a common attribute around which a category can be formed (Turner, 1987). This selection of the marker has significant implications for how a pluralist system understands its inner-diversity and which of its internal components are recognised, prioritised or ignored. For example, a pluralistic institution that emphasises denominations to represent Judaism's inner-pluralism uses denominations as its primary marker. Consequently, in a curriculum on Jewish bioethics, it may choose to include material that articulates each denomination's theological perspective on the issue at hand. By selecting such a marker, the school may unintentionally emphasise this methodological expression of pluralism, while underemphasising the socio-cultural expression and its considerations of factors such as national heritage (American-Jew, Russian-Jew or Ethiopian-Jew) and its influence upon a student's self-understanding of Judaism and his/her community's attitudes to such socially contentious matters. Research repeatedly identifies national heritage as exercising a significant influence upon Jewish identity, in a manner that is not necessarily consistent with denominational divisions (Ament, 2004; Rutland & Gariano, 2005; Waxman et al., 2007). Category composition, therefore, significantly impacts the way in which an organisation is able to articulate, recognise and represent its pluralism, including which categories of pluralism are ignored or prioritised.
3. Qualitative definition: On the one hand, pluralism is used as a descriptive, phenomenological term whose purpose is to acknowledge that methodological or socio-cultural diversity is present. Within the Jewish community, this may include the recognition of the presence of diverse denominations as well as the distinct racial, linguistic, national, gender and socio-economic groups that comprise the community. Susan Shevitz (2006) labels this as demographic

pluralism. At times, being acknowledged is sufficient and very important. On the other hand, others argue that for pluralism, merely being acknowledged is inadequate. For them, pluralism also requires an embrace of a concurrent values dimension that evaluates the diversity as being an inherent good that is worthy of cultivating (Dewey, 1968; Feinberg, 1996; Skeie, 1995). Additionally, many maintain that for a plurality to become pluralism certain attitudinal prerequisites must be present, including tolerance (Mittleman, 2001) and a reciprocal willingness to dialogically engage with others (Ingram, 2004), amongst others. When this values and attitudinal approach relates to the existent demographic plurality, Shevitz (2006) labels it as coexistence pluralism. When this approach relates to an intellectual process that generates new thoughts and understandings about Judaism, through an encounter with diverse viewpoints and social arrangements maintained by Jews throughout history, Shevitz (2006) labels it as generative pluralism. It is only through the embrace of this values and attitudinal dimensions, which permits an active engagement with pluralism at a political level, that existing power structures are then open for discussion and evaluation.

4. Pluralism and goodness: Pluralism is usually presumed to be a positive liberal value that is inherently good. However, is pluralism a guarantee of goodness? At a political level, pluralism has been used as an ideology to protect a dominant social group's own interests, often when it feels threatened by the presence of diversity (Bullivant, 1984; Gollnick & Chinn, 2002). When used in this way, certain social groups and their corresponding values and beliefs are consistently privileged over others by giving its members easier access to socially valued goods, including positional power, education or financial assets (Walzer, 1983). The decision to privilege these groups is usually justified by a values-based ideology or theology and is reflected during category formation, when an individual or organisation chooses the constituent components of their pluralism. It is inevitable that this choice will often accord with the worldview of the dominant group, thereby inadvertently or intentionally excluding or partly delegitimizing other potential groups. For example, when a visiting dignitary visits the *Knesset* (Israeli government), arguably a representative of Israel's plurality, it is customary for only the males who comprise the official choir to lead the singing of *HaTikvah* (Israel's national anthem), thereby excluding the other two-thirds of the choir's membership who are women (Alfon, 2008). This arrangement is designed to be inclusive and respectful of the needs of Israel's Ultra-Orthodox community whose understanding of Judaism prohibits a woman's voice from singing in public. If the Knesset chose gender as its primary marker for its pluralism, rather than "religious", the outcome of this same decision would be different. Most probably, the women would have sung, while the Ultra-orthodox would have been excluded. A pluralistic Jewish organisation needs to consider when their pursuit of pluralism is, inadvertently or intentionally, alienating a segment of the Jewish community, and whether that alienation is consistent with its value structure. When reviewing the standards of Jewish practice within the organisation, are certain groups more frequently privileged over

others? Furthermore, which Jewish identities and values does the Jewish Studies curriculum emphasise, leave out or understate when representing Judaism?

5. Relativism: Relativism is often perceived by critics as the unavoidable methodological consequence of pluralism. Relativism maintains that the perceived integrity of any one phenomenon is diminished when it is deemed to be as good as any other. Peter Berger, the influential sociologist of religion and modernity, explains that relativism is an inevitable problem of the post-modern condition where each person is confronted with an endless array of choices around which they construct their own personally meaningful narrative (Berger, 2006). This value-neutral position of post-modernity establishes relativism as a fact. Norman Lamm, while President of Yeshiva University, made this concern explicit within a Jewish context. When considering the ramifications of the traditional notion that there are "seventy faces of Judaism", Lamm maintains that:

> a pluralism that accepts everything as co-legitimate is not pluralism, but the kind of relativism that leads to spiritual nihilism. If everything is kosher, nothing is kosher. If "Torah" has an infinite number of faces, then it is faceless and without value or significance. (Lamm, 1986)

While the proponents of pluralism reject the notion that relativism is a necessary and inevitable problem of pluralism, they do recognise that it is an ongoing challenge. They argue that the capacity to maintain a personal identity or to hold a particular set of values or beliefs does not preclude others from doing the same. Dissent is compatible with pluralism and even a necessary prerequisite (Sartori, 1997). Hence, at a methodological level, Isaiah Berlin, the eminent philosopher of values pluralism, argues that in a plural society competing values will always be present and human beings, in order to be free, need to be able to make personally meaningful choices by rejecting possible choices (Hardy, 2002). These choices may be made in accordance with one's moral conviction, and even though these choices may change over time, "principles are no less sacred because their duration cannot be guaranteed (ibid, p. 217)." Rabbi Irving Greenberg, the scholar and Orthodox rabbi whose lifework is a commitment to Jewish pluralism, reinforces this sentiment:

> Pluralism requires a higher level of internal conviction so that one's convictions are not undermined by allowing for the existence of other valid but alternative truths or systems. This enables believers to function at a higher level of choice. (Greenberg, 2006, p. 44)

David Hartman, the Jerusalem-based scholar, an Orthodox rabbi and an advocate of Jewish pluralism, makes this clear within the Jewish context:

> it is important that we learn that respect for others' points of view does not imply relativism. One can simultaneously maintain that the way one lives reflects the truest interpretations of Judaism and yet respectfully recognise that this position is not held by all Jews. (Hartman, 2001, p. 199)

Hence, the counter-arguments to relativism as a problem demands a conception of a methodological pluralism whereby individuals and ideas must be willing to permit the coexistence of differences without necessarily agreeing with them.

6. Parameters of pluralism: Flowing directly from the above concerns is a question regarding how a pluralist system, which strives to be inclusive, establishes limits. While few scholars maintain that pluralistic systems are ideally able to be inclusive of everything (Watson, 1990), the majority recognise that no one pluralist system can be entirely universal. McLennan notes that there is "a point at which healthy diversity turns into unhealthy dissonance" (1995, p. 8). As has been previously discussed, limits are inevitable and consciously and unconsciously imposed by the selection of the marker used to identify the parts that comprise the pluralistic whole. The challenge remains, how to consciously and purposefully determine where to establish those limits.

   At a practical level, Greenberg maintains that "pluralism means more than allowing others to do and believe things which one cannot accept. Pluralism implies that people must accept limits for the sake of living together" (1988, p. 25). This would include what Berlin calls negative liberties, those pragmatic constraints that prevent an individual doing whatever he or she wishes, so that individuals are able to live within a group (Hardy, 2002). This includes the rejection of the right to harm others even though one may have the means and opportunity to do so. It also includes the right to compel our children to receive an (Jewish) education, sometimes against their will. Connolly, a professor of political science, argues that "the limit point is reached when pluralism itself is threatened by powerful Unitarian forces that demand the end of pluralism" (2005, p. 67). Accordingly, when considering conceptions of political pluralism, any attempts to diminish the right to dissent, associate, choose or self-growth cannot be tolerated or included within the pluralism. Kekes (1993, 2000), a philosopher of moral pluralism, argues that the adoption of absolutist standards lies outside of the parameters of any pluralistic system. For him, pluralistic systems need to constantly reassess what they regard as acceptable, by binding themselves to external measures that can be used for determining their validity. These external measures could include deeply held moral convictions, such as the prohibition against murder or support of egalitarianism. It is imperative, however, that these external measures are also constantly re-evaluated, as their meaning changes over time and within shifting contexts.

   Hence, pluralistic Jewish educational institutions must be able to establish and identify parameters for their pluralism – at a methodological, socio-cultural and political level. This includes determining which ideas, standards and values cannot be compromised, and which groups and individuals can and cannot be included so that the essential character and integrity of its Jewish community and pluralism will not be undermined. In addition, the process used to determine the integral qualities of the institution must itself be open to revision.

7. The maintenance of unity: Another key concern relates to the question of whether it is possible to maintain a sense of unity within a system that focuses upon diversity. Group identity traditionally focuses upon a cohesive, overarching and unifying quality such as Jewish, Secular or Israeli. Pluralism reassigns the focus from this one unifying quality to one that focuses upon divisions within a group. The concern is that this change of focus leads to a fragmentation and

weakening of the whole.[2] How do the Jewish people remain a people when the focus is on the multitude of differences within them – denominational, racial, linguistic, gender, religious observance level, socio-economic and more? Advocates of political and socio-cultural pluralism maintain that those individuals who persist in this argument are usually from the dominant social group and are attempting to protect a status quo that continues to privilege them (Banks, 2005; Bullivant, 1984; Howard, 1999).

Many scholars are unperturbed by this accusation as they maintain that individuals work together in groups in order to achieve a greater good that requires their interdependence (Levey, 2007). Yet this existential challenge of group coherence is very challenging for Judaism, Jewish education and pluralism. What greater good is achieved when pluralism within Judaism is both encouraged and embraced? What greater good is served by actively nurturing greater homogeneity within Judaism? If pluralism is the preferred greater good, then how does a school allow its constituents to share in its understanding of what is the greater good?

8. Process of pluralism: The continuation and maintenance of a values-based pluralism requires a purposeful and deliberate process to do so. For example, at a socio-cultural level, individuals, students and teachers need to be given opportunities to consciously explore and identify their own heritages and values constructs (Howard, 1999) while schools also need to cultivate purposeful spaces that permit meaningful social engagement between distinct groups (Eck, 1993). Racial, linguistic, denominational, national, economic and other differences must be explicitly acknowledged within a classroom, in a non-prejudicial way, so that their influence upon these students can be fully acknowledged, rather than unwittingly ignored (Schofield, 2005). At a methodological level, students should be exposed to diverse biblical interpretive traditions (Tanchel, 2008) and learn to recognise their own biases and the biases of others (Banks, 2005). At a political level, students need to be taught how knowledge and societal arrangements are subjectively constructed, and learn to critically evaluate and then reconstruct them in a more equitable manner (Banks, 2005). If Jewish pluralist institutions do not want to leave their pluralistic convictions to chance, they need to determine their preferred process for nurturing and maintaining them.

As can be seen, pluralism is a fluid concept that easily weaves a multilayered and multi-textured quality through methodological constructs, political considerations and socio-cultural identities. While pluralism can function as both a process and a product, its visible expression will ultimately reflect the conscious and unconscious specificities of each organisation's unique context. Consequently, while these eight theoretical concerns described above are shared by all pluralistic systems, the way that each pluralistic system chooses to respond to each will provide it with its unique quality and character. This spectrum of differences becomes clearly apparent

[2] For example, at the political level, see Schlesinger (1992).

when considering the many voices within Judaism that contemplate the relationship between Judaism and pluralism, and ultimately, how the concept of pluralism shapes the educative process of an institution of Jewish learning.

The Jewish Discourse

There are a myriad of voices within Judaism that consider the theoretical relationship between Judaism and pluralism. While most scholars who write on the subject are self-described supporters of pluralism, they hold conflicting definitions of pluralism and insist upon very different limits for it. There is also a general consensus that the inner-plurality of Judaism is categorised primarily, if not exclusively, according to the denominations and that Jewish pluralism is deemed to serve the greater good of preserving and strengthening *klal Yisrael* (Community of Jews). These arguments tend to fit into two broad categories – the theological–philosophical and the sociological. Each of these arguments describes the preferred visions for the three pluralism categories – the methodological, the political and the socio-cultural.

The majority of scholars who speak from a theological–philosophical perspective present themselves as a spokesperson from within a particular denomination. At the heart of their discourse is a challenging methodological question deliberating upon whether pluralism is an authentically Jewish construct and whether pluralism can be congruent with Judaism. Predictably, Orthodox Judaism finds pluralism to be the most challenging as it views itself first and foremost as representing an understanding of Judaism that is bound by *halacha* (Jewish legal and ethical system) with an authority structure that determines appropriate ways to interpret the *halacha*. Hence, the political construct of Orthodox Judaism maintains that any aspect of Judaism that works outside of this *halachik* framework stands accused of being outside of authentic Judaism (Eisen, 2005; Lamm, 1986; Wurzburger, 2001). Following this logic, the current Chief Orthodox Rabbi of the Commonwealth, Jonathan Sacks (1993), maintains in his important study on intra-Jewish pluralism, that there is no *halachik* sanction for the existence of denominations within Judaism, and they are, therefore, incompatible with Judaism. Hence, Orthodox Judaism is regarded as being synonymous with the only authentic expression of Judaism.

While normative Orthodox Judaism rejects denominational pluralism, its socio-cultural responses acknowledge their presence, and they fall upon a spectrum. On one end is the eminent *halachist*, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, who in his *Igrot Moshe* (*Halachik* rulings), prohibits any meaningful interaction with non-Orthodox Judaism.[3] On the other end are Orthodox Rabbis David Hartman (2000, 2001) and Irving Greenberg (1981, 1988) who find halachically sanctioned ways for the various denominations to co-exist. In between are a plethora of rabbinic authorities who see the need for meaningful interactions with non-Orthodox Jews as Jews, sanctioned by the axiological imperative *klal Yisrael* – the unity of the Jewish people,

[3] See Kellner (2008), chapter "Curriculum Integration" for further exposition on this.

without sanctioning their understanding of Judaism (Eisen, 2005; Lamm, 1986; Wurzburger, 2001).

While denominational pluralism is theologically problematic, normative Orthodox Judaism does not dismiss pluralism from Judaism per se, but does limit its influence. For example, Sacks (1993, 2002) maintains that pluralism is compatible with Judaism's interpretive tradition, the established methodology for determining valid answers and Judaism's willingness and ability to engage in inter-religious dialogue, all conditioned upon them being consistent with valid *halachik* precedent. Any Jewish educational pluralistic institution that intends to include Orthodox Judaism within its pluralism needs to be cognisant of these perspectives.

Reform Judaism has always had an easier time with pluralism. As a non-*halachik* system built between the poles of autonomous choice and communitarian considerations (Ellenson, 1999), methodological and socio-cultural pluralisms are assumed. For example, the most recently adopted platform of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (Principles for Reform Judaism, 1999) includes the term pluralism to broadly reject monist conceptions of Truth and to affirm cultural and religious diversity within Judaism. Reform Judaism's relationship to political pluralism is usually expressed in relation to combating Israel's Orthodox majority's monopoly upon Jewish public decision-making (Regev, 2005), which excludes both them and the Conservative movement from receiving public funds, access to decision-making and other social goods.

The Conservative movement regards Judaism as being bound by *halachah*, yet affirms the simultaneous co-existence of multiple halachik systems (Dorff, 1991; Gordis, 1990; Rosethal, 2004). Like the Reform movement, it strongly supports methodological and socio-cultural pluralisms, made clear by the inclusion and repetition of the word "pluralism" in its statement of principles, *Emet v'Emunah*[4] (Gordis, 1990). In this context, pluralism is used to refer to the affirmation of divergent viewpoints within Judaism, the array of individuals who are consulted prior to an official Rabbinic law and standard being rendered, and the prerogative of congregational rabbis to determine which of the endorsed laws and standards are to apply to his/her community. Again, consistent with the Reform movement, political pluralism is also used to decry the monopoly upon Jewish public decision-making within Israel by Orthodox Judaism. In other words, the Conservative movement wants to see a changed power structure to enable it to be more equitably represented.

Methodologically, Conservative Judaism, like Orthodox Judaism, struggles with non-adherence to *halachah*. Hence, while Orthodox Judaism is critiqued for being too rigid in its application of *halachah*, *Emet v'Emunah* critiques Reform Judaism for giving too much latitude to the individual. Yet, two influential scholars and rabbis, Elliot Dorff (1996) and Neil Gillman (1983), both on the committee that wrote *Emet v'Emunah*, provide a theological basis for authenticating these other relationships to Judaism.

[4]Literally translated at "truth and belief" though the statement is never translated in Conservative Movement publications.

The sociological voice within Judaism is usually descriptive of the growing socio-cultural and demographic plurality within Judaism, without attempting to prescribe an ultimate methodological form for it. Sociologists often demonstrate how theological considerations remain a concern for the elite of each denomination, but not for the broader membership of their communities (e.g. Ament, 2005). The sociological voice usually focuses on the growing influence of individuation upon Jewish identity (Cohen & Eisen, 2000), the fluid and changing nature of those individuated identities (Horowitz, 2003) or the growing racial and cultural diversity within Judaism (Tobin, Tobin, & Rubin, 2005). While Tobin et al. (2005) draw upon this to promote a political ideology that encourages a broad tent approach for recognising Jewish status, other sociological thinkers emphasise the changing assumptions underpinning Jewish identification to which Jewish education must adapt if it is to effectively engage such pluriforms of contemporary Jewry.

Hence, Jewish theological–philosophical and sociological scholarship provides a plurality of responses to Jewish pluralism at a methodological, socio-cultural and political level, while also negotiating each of the eight common considerations of pluralism in its own unique way. In turn, each offers a theoretical paradigm for at least one conception of Jewish pluralism.

Visions for a Pluralistic Jewish Education

The advantage and need for clearly articulated visions for Jewish education is not new (Fox, Scheffler, & Marom, 2003; Pekarsky, 2006). When pluralism becomes a foundational value for a Jewish educational institution, it unavoidably becomes at least one component of the guiding vision for that institution. Emanating directly from the concerns of pluralism and Judaism are voices that strive to articulate diverse visions for pluralistic Jewish education. Feuerman (2000) represents a view that is consistent with normative Orthodox methodological and political pluralism. In response to the acclaim of the growth of Pluralistic Jewish Day Schools, he encourages these schools to establish a tripartite model for their Jewish education. The first track would be available for all Jews who are recognised by Orthodox Judaism as being Jewish. The second is a conversion track for those who desire that their Jewish status, currently not sanctioned by Orthodox Judaism, be recognised as such. The third track is for those students whose Jewish status is not sanctioned by Orthodox Judaism and having no interest in being recognised as such. In other words, Feuerman uses Orthodox conceptions of *halachah* as the primary marker by which Jewish pluralism would be organised. In this model, Orthodox Judaism serves as the dominant group and retains the authority to establish, nurture and maintain the value structures by which the phenomenological pluralism can be managed.

David Hartman offers an educational vision that begins with an acknowledgement of Jewish socio-cultural pluralism. He maintains that if Judaism is unable to build bridges between its inner-plurality, it is "in danger of splitting Israeli society and of creating sectarian forms of Judaism in the diaspora (Hartman, 2001, p. xiv)". His central educational concern is the alienation that many facets of the community

experience towards Jewish tradition. His solution is to transmit a Judaism that retains its own integrity, and speaks to a broad spectrum of contemporary Jews. Hartman encourages, therefore, an education system that uses as role models the rabbinic sages who struggled with their understanding of Judaism such that they were forced to reconsider pre-existing beliefs. In other words, reiterating the notion that both – one's Jewish commitment and understanding of Judaism – constitute a dynamic process built upon deliberate choices. In order to bridge the gap between halachically observant and non-observant Jews, they must be taught to share the same spiritual language. Hence, he encourages the curriculum to develop a common language that can simultaneously convey particularistic Jewish understandings of concepts while also conveying meaning to those who subscribe to more universal values. In other words, a *mitzvah* would be spoken about in regard to its inherent ability to advance justice, as well as exposing students to normative *halachik* practices and their diverse inner spiritual workings. This approach would allow Jews from different backgrounds to participate in the same learning programme with the potential to positively shape all students' characters, and when a student is committed to a *halachik* lifestyle, inform that student's *halachik* choices. Hence, it would allow all students to share *halachik* aspirations without insisting upon *halachik* prescriptions, as well as provide students with insights into the methodological pluralism of Judaism's interpretive tradition and its commitment to the uniformity of *halachik* practice.

Michael Rosenak (1987, 2003) expands upon Hartman's socio-cultural concern for the need for a shared language of understanding between Jews with different orientations. For him, the contemporary lived experience of Jews makes pluralism an inescapable part of Jewish life. His fear, like Hartman's, is that the different groups of Jews will become alien to one another. Pluralism, therefore, is not a choice or a luxury, but a necessity for the maintenance of the Jewish people. Rosenak maintains that the challenge for Jewish education is to create a curriculum that encourages students to cultivate a relationship with both the external (outward expressions) and the internal (subjective experiences) dimensions of Judaism. In a post-modern context, each individual will ultimately determine a personally meaningful balance between the internal and the external, thereby establishing an inevitable pluralistic context. Methodological pluralism is, therefore, also unavoidable. Rosenak maintains that the best way to create a Jewish education that meets the needs of all Jews is to identify the common elements that link each expression of Judaism. He does this by identifying 10 common characteristics of an educated Jew, regardless of how that person understands and lives out his/her Jewish identity. These characteristics include being literate about Judaism, having the competencies to represent one's own understanding of Judaism, a willingness to defend *Klal Yisrael* – the whole people of Israel with its disagreements, allowing honest critique to co-exist with loyalty, and a desire to solve problems facing the Jewish people. If these educated Jews, with their pluralistic conceptions of Judaism, are to be able to communicate with one another about Jewish matters at a practical level, then a common communal agenda must be identified. Rosenak suggests that the first common element of this agenda is the study of sacred literature, with each Jew retaining the space to

interpret and engage with the text in diverse ways. The second is the development of a common sacred vocabulary for Jewish life, again, permitting different conceptions of the meaning behind this vocabulary. For example, Shabbat must begin on Friday night and end on Saturday evening, but how one observes Shabbat remains the prerogative of the individual. Rosenak does not attempt to prescribe what this sacred vocabulary shall be, but encourages the educational community to jointly create it. The third challenge is to create common practices between communities, which he recognises as being the most "sticky" area. If this is to work, all participants need to be flexible and continue to negotiate what is appropriate "for everyone has to pay a price for community" (2003, p. 194). Hence, a reciprocal willingness to create the space for others to be different from oneself is an ongoing assumed value within Rosenak's work. His final common element is the goal of identifying problems and addressing them.

Empirical Research

The majority of the work cited so far is theoretical in nature, indicative of the literature currently available on Jewish Pluralism and Education. Yet, the gap between the theory and praxis of pluralism is slowly being narrowed through the emergence of a small number of case studies, many still ongoing, and seeking to better understand the lived experiences of pluralistic Jewish educational institutions. Most of these focus upon Jewish Day Schools that adopt pluralism as a guiding ethos. Some case studies provide insight into the larger issues influencing pluralistic Jewish educational organisations, while others focus primarily upon the way that pluralism shapes the pedagogical process of such an institution.

Kramer (2000), the executive Director of RAVSAK, the network of pluralistic Jewish Community Day Schools, found that most heads of Jewish Community schools, as well as their teachers, have no formal training to prepare them for working specifically in a pluralistic ethos. Pekarsky (2006) demonstrates how a school vision that includes pluralism can meaningfully inform the pedagogical choices for every facet of a school. Grant et al. demonstrates how pluralism facilitates meaning-making in adult learning (2004).

Ben-Chorin (2006) and Conyer (2006, 2011, forthcoming) observe that Jewish educational institutions that identify pluralism as a central value do not articulate a consistent or coherent meaning of the term for their organisations at a methodological, socio-cultural or political level. Conyer (2011, forthcoming) demonstrates how the social milieu of an institution influences the prevailing understandings of pluralism in that institution. Pluralism also assumes different purposes in Jewish Community Day Schools over time. In three disparate schools, while pluralism was initially an espoused value, it was usually confined to the socio-cultural fact that the student body included a diverse array of Jewish backgrounds. Pluralism, at this time, assumed a utilitarian role, principally enabling the school to market to and attract a broad range of potential fee-paying students. Consistent with this, accommodating denominational distinctions remained the primary focus of the school curriculum

and policies. With the passage of time, however, each school purposefully transitioned in its relationship to pluralism from one of pragmatic acknowledgement of having a diverse student population to one where pluralism assumed a values and attitudinal dimension. This impacted upon diverse facets of the school's programme, including an expectation that attitudes such as tolerance for difference be required of all school members. This shifting relationship led to different conceptions of pluralism and competing pedagogical visions existing within the same school.

This absence of a clear definition forces the employed educators in all institutions to inductively develop an understanding of the term. These educators then use this inducted understanding to influence their curriculum construction, preferred teaching methods and other pedagogical choices. While Ben-Chorin focused upon *madrichim* (facilitators/guides) within an Israeli adult informal education programme, and Conyer is focusing upon how different stakeholders (policy-makers, faculty, students and parents) within and between Jewish Community Day Schools in California and Australia develop an understanding of pluralism, and how that understanding then influences their interpretation of pedagogical decision-making within the school, this similarity is significant. Ben-Chorin's study ultimately posits *midrash* (genre of textual interpretation) as an effective mode for pluralist pedagogy. *Midrash* permits a pluralistic discourse that enables individuals to construct personal meaning, helps to establish a language to convey pluralistic concepts and provides an inherently Jewish form for the pedagogy of pluralism.

As part of the attempt to gain further clarity regarding the way the term pluralism is being used, Kay (2009) focused on the ideological understandings of pluralism within two US Jewish Community Day Schools on the East Coast. He observes that three primary concepts of pluralism prevail. He calls these: (1) Atmospheric – where the school culture facilitates the co-existence of difference; (2) Informational – the transmission of information pertaining to diverse approaches to Judaism; and (3) Interactional – where purposeful engagement between diverse individuals is encouraged. He also proposes that the successful implementation of pluralism within these schools occurs only when context-specific limits are acknowledged and respected, whether determined by historical, external or internal factors.

Shevitz and Wasserfall (2006) and Wasserfall and Shevitz (2006) have focused on the process of pluralism in Jewish educational institutions. They observed how a Jewish Community High School socialised its students to understand its conception of pluralism and how that school constructs a cohesive sense of community amidst a culture that emphasises differences. Their focus, as with Ben-Chorin, was upon the chosen language of the teachers and the concepts they conveyed, and the way that public rituals were negotiated. This school emphasises pluralism as a process, which it calls cognitive pluralism; that is, the intellectual ability to simultaneously consider multiple perspectives, correlating with methodological pluralism. The school also references "engaged pluralism", a presumption that students must be seriously engaged in the pluralistic conversations, including offering critiques of both their and other people's ideas, correlating again with a methodological pluralism. A significant part of this process is establishing what the school's secular teachers call the creation of a "safe enough" space in which such a risky pluralistic ethic can exist.

When students and staff are open to new ideas, they call this “generative pluralism”. Consistently, the research regarding each of these self-defined pluralistic Jewish educational institutions was upon methodological and socio-cultural pluralism of the student body, the learning process and how Judaism was represented. Hence, research is beginning to provide some understanding of how pluralism is being understood and utilised within Jewish education, with many areas of understanding still waiting to be investigated.

Research Agenda of the Future

Theoretical deliberations upon pluralism in Jewish education continue to dominate the available literature. Only a small amount of empirical research considers specifically how pluralism influences Jewish education, problematising the ability to generalise from any conclusions. With the proliferation of such institutions around the world, it is critical that a more comprehensive research agenda be pursued. To date, there has been a focus on only one institution in Israel, one in Australia and six in the USA. There is significant scope for additional descriptive research to identify the internal dynamics of what is happening within other Jewish pluralistic institutions, in other parts of the Jewish world, in a comparative manner as well. With the proliferation of pluralistic institutions of Jewish learning within Israel, this is of particular importance. All existing research employs qualitative methodology. Quantitative studies utilising larger sample size will help further contextualise the qualitative research and provide a broader picture. The existing research suggests that most pluralistic institutions emphasise methodological and socio-cultural understandings of pluralism. It is important to understand why the Jewish expression of pluralism within education has chosen to understate the political understanding. As there is little pedagogical training available specifically to prepare teachers for a pluralist Jewish education, it would be important to identify which pedagogical tools educators employed in pluralistic institutions believe are most impactful, while also consulting the students on the impact they believe they have. None of the existing research has yet been willing to do an efficacy study. A study observing how students, families and a school’s employees change their understandings and attitudes towards pluralism within Judaism over time will provide insight into whether this new pluralism agenda is impacting the individual in the desired manner. Finally, it is important to understand how pluralistic Jewish educational institutions address each of the eight common considerations discussed above.

Conclusion

While Jewish educational programmes that self-define as pluralist still comprise a minority of Jewish educational options, they are a growing minority. Pluralism as a concept is as capable of being intellectually infuriating as it is stimulating, emotionally explosive as it is inspiring, and practically a provocateur of endless problems

as it can be a utilitarian solution to other challenges. Pluralism can exist as a liberal, universalistic concept or it can be adapted to articulate a particular value, existential or historical lens through which to understand Judaism. This chapter has attempted to offer any person concerned with Jewish education and pluralism an opportunity to bring clarity to the many possible meanings of the term and sensitivity to the promise and challenge that it can offer too.

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Post Modernism Paradoxes: After Enlightenment – Jewish Education and the Paradoxes of Post Modernism

Hanan Alexander

Introduction

Postmodernism in the broadest sense is concerned with how discourses of power saturate and corrupt every aspect of our lives, our pursuit of knowledge, our interpretations of the world and of human conduct, our understanding of language and law, the stories we tell ourselves and our children about who we are and how we ought to live and the religious, cultural, artistic, and other forms in which we express them, our interpersonal and gender relations, our sexual attitudes and orientations, and our institutions of personal and social governance. Those who embrace this complex array of attitudes, suspicions, questions, and analyses ask us to be aware of the myriad ways in which we dominate one another and to consider whether or to what extent we can conceive social relations that ameliorate if not all, then at least some of the most egregious effects of this domination. The term is most often associated with a strand of what Isaiah Berlin (2001) called 'Counter-Enlightenment' that includes such intellectual descendents of Friedrich Nietzsche (1989, 2005) and Karl Marx (1970, 2008) as Michel Foucault (2001); Jacques Derrida (1998), and Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984) who oppose forms of oppression embedded in Enlightenment thought. The prefix *post* in the term *post*modern, and other related terms such as *post*-structural, *post*-colonial, and *post*-Zionist, may be understood more properly as 'counter' than 'after,' since these critiques do not necessarily signal or bring about the end of the trends they criticize. Proponents of modernism, structuralism, colonialism, and Zionism continue to thrive and respond to their critics even as putative power relations hidden in their thought and practice are disclosed by what Paul Ricoeur (1977) dubbed the 'hermeneutic of suspicion.'

This sort of analysis has much to contribute to our understanding of Jewish education in Israel and the Diaspora today since Enlightenment ideas have heavily impacted the most influential ways in which the Jewish condition is currently conceived and transmitted across the generations. However, the postmodern concern for

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the corrupting influences of power is more useful in exposing than alleviating domination. According to this sort of analysis, for example, each of the three responses to Enlightenment that have most influenced contemporary Jewish education—liberal religion, ultra-Orthodoxy, and secular Zionism—embraces unproductive assumptions about power, one concerning autonomy, another law, and a third national sovereignty (Alexander, 2003a). Addressing these difficulties, however, requires an ethics that makes a distinction between appropriate and inappropriate power eschewed in postmodern thought but found in softer post-, in the sense of counter, Enlightenment orientations. Proponents of such alternatives, including Emmanuel Levinas (1969, 1998, 2003), Michael Oakeshott (1962), and Isaiah Berlin (1990), conceive moral agency in terms of particular histories, languages, and cultures not universal reason, and favor receiving others over asserting the self.

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section 'The Dynamics of Enlightenment and Jewish Education' I discuss how Enlightenment assumptions about autonomy, law, and sovereignty have influenced contemporary Jewish education. The second section, 'Postmodernism and Contemporary Jewish Education,' considers why postmodern discourse might lead one to be skeptical of these assumptions, and the third section, 'Three Paradoxes of Postmodernism' considers some paradoxes inherent in this sort of skepticism. The final section 'Post-Enlightenment Jewish Education' explores how Jewish education might address this postmodern critique.

The Dynamics of Enlightenment and Jewish Education

Contemporary Jewish life is shaped by the eighteenth-century intellectual revolution known as Enlightenment which challenged the assumptions of medieval Mediterranean society. This society was based on the idea that the laws which govern how we ought to conduct our lives were created by the same God and so have the same authority as those which govern the physical universe. Political power comes from God, so leaders anointed by those who represent Him should govern according to His will. In Europe this meant rule by Christians and in North Africa and the Middle East by Moslems. Jews were a protected minority in both Christian and Moslem societies based on laws inherited from the Romans and so lived as distinct corporate entities. However, the structure of medieval Jewish life was fundamentally the same as that of its Christian and Moslem counterparts; the power to determine what to believe and how to behave was vested in religious authorities. To be educated in each case entailed coming to confess one or another of these faith traditions, the truth of which is sustained by revelation if not also by reason (Wolfson, 1977, pp. 17–38).

Enlightenment changed this by asserting a new form of skepticism according to which we are to accept only those statements about how we ought to behave or organize society and how the world works that pass an objective test (Gellner, 1992). Moral and intellectual authority, in this view, rests in the autonomous individual not a transcendent God; and the question of whether to accept the dictates of scripture should be decided on the basis of reason built, according to the great Enlightenment

philosopher Immanuel Kant (1969, 1994), into the structure of human thought. This set the stage for a new sort of liberal democratic politics sometimes called Emancipation that allocates to the citizens of a society rather than those closest to God the right to choose leaders, public policies, and personal life paths. Education according to this perspective entails the cultivation of personal autonomy, not religious faith, based on one or another account of rationality. This challenged the political power and spiritual influence of Christianity in Europe and of Islam in North Africa and the Middle East. It also undermined the corporate identity and religious faith of Jews who were now offered citizenship in secular states independent of their faith or ethnic origins and empowered them to choose whether or in what ways they would continue to adhere to the beliefs and customs of Judaism.

Three responses to Enlightenment have come to dominate contemporary Jewish education. Liberal religion essentially accepts it, while ultra-Orthodoxy and secular Zionism to one degree or another reject it (Alexander, 2003a). Liberal religion, which includes Progressive, Liberal, Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, and to some extent modern Orthodox Jews, accepts Enlightenment and Emancipation by authorizing individuals rather than rabbis to determine how Jewish life ought to be lived, thereby acknowledging one degree or another of personal autonomy; and by embracing citizenship in the liberal democratic state, thereby deemphasizing the corporate aspect of Jewish identity. Jewish education should assist individuals in negotiating the tension between rational autonomy and traditional heteronomy, in this view, by providing them with information about and experience of Jewish tradition so that they can choose for themselves how to participate in Jewish religious and cultural life. Those on the more liberal end of this spectrum place a greater emphasis on personal autonomy and so subject the beliefs and practices they are prepared to inculcate to one or another rational test. Nineteenth and early twentieth-century liberals (e.g., Cohen, 1995) tended to believe, with Kant (1989, 1997), that the exercise of personal autonomy involves applying a universal rationality whereas their mid to late twentieth-century counterparts (e.g., Kaplan, 1981) were influenced by the great American philosopher John Dewey (1916, 1997) who thought that intelligent choice must take into account a person's own felt needs. This emphasis on the individual in Jewish life resulted in religious innovations such as changes to the worship service, or recognition of a child as Jewish whose father, but not mother, was born a Jew, or inclusion of women or homosexuals into synagogue leadership. Those on the more traditional end (e.g., Heschel, 1967; Soloveitchik, 2000), on the other hand, tend to believe that people can only make intelligent choices when exposed to classical rabbinic Judaism, which is sufficiently attractive if properly introduced to inspire the individual to adopt most or all of a traditional Jewish lifestyle.

Modernity, however, is comprised not only of Enlightenment ideas and Emancipation politics but also of reactions against them. Isaiah Berlin (1997, 2001) referred to these trends as the Counter-Enlightenment. Many of them are rooted in G.W.F. Hegel's critique of Kant. Whereas Kant believed that all reason originates in the very structure of human thought, prior to experience with 'things-in-themselves,' Hegel (1995) held that reason is embedded in that very experience, expressed in the historical evolution of national culture and language. Through a

process of dialectical criticism in which each generation critiques the ideas of its predecessors, human society slowly corrects its mistaken beliefs and comes to be liberated from error. The society that represents the ultimate end of this process embodies Absolute Freedom. These Hegelian ideas have been interpreted in many complex and conflicting ways across the political spectrum. Those who envisage this freedom as embodied in a particular national culture are sometimes called right-leaning Hegelians, even if they also embrace the sort of economic egalitarianism often associated with the left, while those who combine liberty conceived as a cosmopolitan or universal ideal with egalitarian economics are usually called left-leaning Hegelians.

One right-leaning Counter-Enlightenment trend entails a rigid account of faith, sometimes called fundamentalism, or among Jews ultra-Orthodoxy, which takes one particular interpretation of sacred scripture as the literal word of God and so also, as with Hegel, the absolute truth. All forms of Jewish Orthodoxy—neo-Orthodoxy, modern Orthodoxy, religious Zionism—tend to embrace rabbinic exegesis as the correct understanding of the Hebrew Bible and are ambivalent to one degree or another about Enlightenment ideas (Salmon, Ravitzki, & Ferziger, 2006), but ultra-Orthodox Judaism is distinguishable by its complete rejection of Enlightenment and Emancipation altogether (Sofer & Stern, 1996). Christian fundamentalists read the Hebrew Bible (what they call the Old Testament) in light of a literal interpretation of the Christian Bible (their New Testament) and Moslem fundamentalists read the Hidath (a form of Islamic midrash) as if it were the literal meaning of the Koran. Ultra-Orthodox scholars tend to embrace what is sometimes called a positive theory of law, which holds that the unequivocal meaning of a legal text is to be found within a legal tradition alone without reference to any external sources offering other moral, political, or legal perspectives (Austin, 1995). This position in legal philosophy actually emerged under the influence of scientific and historical positivism, or the view that the truth about nature, society, and history is only to be discovered within the confines of empirical rationality (Dilthey, 1989). This is an Enlightenment idea that seeks precise and definitive results to legal deliberations similar to those found in the empirical sciences. However, in the ultra-Orthodox context this view takes on a decidedly Hegelian meaning that texts can only be properly deciphered within the organic context of the cultures and traditions in which they were written. Jewish education according to this view involves inculcating adherence to an insular, rigid, and absolute account of positive Jewish law, born of a deep suspicion that Enlightenment ideas will result in the ultimate demise of the Jewish people and of God's plan for the redemption of the world.

A second Counter-Enlightenment tendency, which held particular sway over important trends within Zionist thought, involves a messianic (some would say chauvinist) form of nationalism that views a particular culture as the end of history or the embodiment of ultimate ethical ideals. This sort of thinking is often associated with right-leaning Hegelianism even when it is combined with left-leaning egalitarian economics such as that of the kibbutz movement or other embodiments of labor Zionism (Sternhell, 1998). According to this view, the establishment of the State of Israel constitutes the culmination of Jewish history in which the values of

the Hebrew Bible are to be translated into a modern national culture. This is to bring about a resolution of the so-called Jewish problem—how Jews could become citizens of non-Jewish societies and yet remain Jews—and the consequent problem of anti-Semitism—the hatred of Jews because they are different—by normalizing Jews as citizens in their own state. The new secular state should also signal an impending end to human (or at least European) history. By translating the ethical ideals of the Hebrew prophets into a biblical form of humanism—Buber (1997) called it Hebrew humanism—the new secular state would serve as a 'light unto the nations.' This spirit is seen in the writings of most leading political, labor, cultural, and revisionist Zionists (Hertzberg, 1997, pp. 199–389, 556–571). It is also embraced in one form or another by both religious *Zionists* who combine strict religious Orthodoxy with commitment to Israel as a secular Jewish state as well as religious *nationalists* who interpret the Jewish return to Zion as a literal harbinger of the messianic era and envisage an Israeli Jewish society that reflects positive Jewish law much like the ultra-Orthodox (Hertzberg, 1997, pp. 390–427). Secular Zionism then does not reject Enlightenment ideas altogether, but only the view of Emancipation politics that Jewish life as a minority culture could thrive in large diverse democracies, since the public square of such a society will always favor the majority. Cultural survival on this view requires political sovereignty. Jewish education then must entail learning to embrace the State of Israel as the embodiment of ancient Jewish values translated into a modern national culture.

Postmodernism and Contemporary Jewish Education

As heir to left-leaning Hegelianism, postmodernism is critical of both Enlightenment and right-leaning Counter-Enlightenment thought. It combines the skepticism of Hegel's disciple Karl Marx (1970, 2008) concerning the unequal distribution of power embedded in economic, political, and social relations with that of Friedrich Nietzsche concerning the possibility of any grand narrative adequately explaining the meaning of human existence. Like Hegel, Marx believed that historical progress was motivated by social conflict. However, unlike is predecessor, he understood this conflict in economic rather than intellectual terms. Those who control the production of wealth also control the ideas used to justify its unequal distribution. Marx called these sorts of ideas 'ideologies.' All societies are divided between haves and have-nots, on this view, and the former use their power to force the latter, often by means of schooling, to believe that the current circumstance in which some are weak and others strong is as it should be. Marx dubbed the material or economic conditions that create power the 'basic structure' of society, and the 'false consciousness' or ideology used to justify them its 'super structure.' The task of social criticism, in this view, is to bring about liberation from these illusions by divulging how they serve the interests of those in charge in order to promote a redistribution of wealth and power.

Neo-Marxists such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002), and Antonio Gramsci (1991) also believed that liberation from

false consciousness and redistribution of power is possible. However, they placed a greater emphasis than Marx on the importance of ideology in producing as well as justifying and maintaining power. The ideological super structure of society is not merely a passive by-product of its economic basic structure, they argued; the right ideas can also serve as a source of power. They called this view 'critical theory,' which discloses the ways that some cultures, languages, and political ideas dominate others, a process they called hegemony, and advocated that liberation requires the equalizing of cultural as well as economic resources. Marxist and neo-Marxist thought is sometimes called modern critical social theory because of its belief in an 'objective' ideology that could bring about a utopian end to social conflict. Postmodernism, however, was also influenced by Nietzsche (who like Hegel has been interpreted as both an advocate and an opponent of absolute power). This led many to abandon the optimistic attitude of modern critical theory that liberation from the corrupting influence of power can be achieved for the more pessimistic view that discourses of power are present in all human endeavors.

Consider how Michel Foucault (2001) might assess the role that autonomy has come to play in liberal religious Jewish education. Foucault's post-structuralism rejected as naïve the Marxist and neo-Marxist position that the adverse effects of unequal power relations can be ameliorated by properly understanding the political–economic structure of society. Acknowledging the errors of one's ideology only leads to another which is no less erroneous. In liberating the peoples of Eastern Europe from oppression by the Russian Czars, for example, the Bolsheviks did not eliminate the adverse consequences of domination but transferred them from one regime to another. All epistemological and moral claims entail power relations. These are embedded in complex networks of belief and practice that justify and maintain regimes of domination built into our very conceptions of self and society. The task of social inquiry in this view is to illumine discourses of power, not social laws or structures, which are the genuine and often hidden forces that explain human behavior.

From a post-structuralist perspective the liberal idea that Jewish education can provide knowledge relevant to making informed choices about Jewish life based on universal rational standards, as Kant would have it, or personal felt needs, as Dewey proposed, is an illusion. The 'knowledge' transmitted as well as the 'choices' made, indeed even the very idea that people are capable of free choice, cannot be separated from the power relations in which they are embedded. Liberal Jews tend to combine an appreciation for traditional rabbinic knowledge with a desire for objective historical understanding. Classical rabbinic interpretations might be combined in a Bible curriculum, for example, with various forms of historical criticism. According to Foucault's analysis, however, both entail domination. The former is tied to the power that the rabbinate exercises over Jewish life and the latter to European colonialism which imposed a belief in objective history on Jews in order to dominate their culture by means of one form or another of 'rational' discourse. Both are nothing more than false ideologies. One replaced the authority of biblical religion with that of the rabbis and the other the power of rabbinic tradition with Enlightenment knowledge.

Even the view that an individual person has the capacity to choose freely is embedded in Enlightenment power-discourses, since the idea of a self unencumbered by socio-economic class, culture, or language, is unimaginable other than in the context of Kant's and Locke's liberalism that reflects the interests of modern secular society.

Or consider how Jacques Derrida (1998) might evaluate the positive account of Jewish law associated with ultra-Orthodoxy. Derrida applied skepticism about power relations similar to that of Foucault to the meaning of language and the interpretation of texts. There is no essential relation between signifiers—linguistic symbols such as words and phrases that purport to say something about human experience—and that which they allegedly signify, he argued; rather any assertion that language means this as opposed to that is an act of domination imposed upon someone trying to understand it. The task of interpretation on this account is not to uncover the intentions of an author or speaker or meanings embedded in the linguistic or conceptual context in which something was written or said but to deconstruct the techniques used by writers and commentators to impose meanings on readers, in order to liberate them from traditional hermeneutics and open up new possibilities of understanding.

This process is not unlike *midrash*, rabbinic literary interpretation, which admits the possibility of eisegesis, or reading new meanings into a text, in addition to exegesis, the discover of meanings already present within a text, except, as mentioned above, ultra-Orthodoxy has tended to read the Hebrew Bible in a closed manner as if this ancient *midrashic* eisegesis is its correct exegetical interpretation. From a deconstructionist perspective, however, any attempt to close the meaning of a text or limit the possibility of new understandings is a morally perverse act of domination that undermines the inherent freedom of the reader to find in the text whatever meaning he or she deems appropriate. The idea that Jewish education should promote a heteronymous commitment to a limited set of religious rituals and customs tied to so narrow and authority-seeking reading of sacred texts is deeply problematic, on this account, since in an effort to secure the control of a particular brand of rabbis over Jewish life, it attributes a limited interpretation to biblical and rabbinic sources that cannot withstand criticism.

Or consider how Jean-Francois Lyotard (1984) might respond to central themes in Zionist education. Lyotard associated what he called 'the postmodern condition' with an incredulity toward meta-narratives or grand theories, that human history progresses in a linear fashion, for example, or that everything can be known by means of science or everyone liberated from domination. We have ceased to believe in all-encompassing stories of this kind, he argued, since they impose a single interpretation of reality on everyone regardless of whether it conforms to one's own experience. Hence, we have become alert to the incompatibility of rival aspirations, beliefs, and desires, to different cultures, identities, and world views, to our participation in a diversity of inconsistent ways of life. Postmodernity is characterized in this view by an abundance of micro-narratives, 'regimens of meaning,' or competing identities. We live in a multiplicity of semantic communities, according to Lyotard,

distinct and often incommensurable systems in which meanings are produced and rules for their circulation created.

The difficulty with Zionist education, on this account, is that it has all too often sought to impose a single, linear, and in many instances messianic meta-narrative according to which the trajectory of Jewish history is ultimately and inevitably toward a return of the Jewish people to political sovereignty in the land of Israel (Gur-Zeev, 2003). But this homogeneous story does not allow for the many complexities of Jewish history, the variety of languages Jews have spoken, the diversity of religious and cultural lives in which they have expressed their connections to other Jews, sacred texts, and God, or the multiplicity of localities and communal structures in which Jews have lived and in many instances continue to live (Boyarin, 1997). Nor does it ring true to many Jews today, even those who among their many identities choose to affiliate as citizens of Israel. Indeed, some would argue that by eschewing the traditional Jewish ambivalence toward power and placing it at the center of collective Jewish existence, Zionism has exacerbated not ameliorated anti-Semitism, and by secularizing and nationalizing fundamentally religious forms of cultural expression Zionism has not redefined traditional Jewish values for a new age but robbed Jewish life of its most essential ideals, beliefs, and practices.

Postmodernism is sometimes associated with the term post-Zionism, which includes a variety of sociological and historical critiques of Israeli society based loosely on critical social theory (Silberstein, 1999). However, post-Zionism has also been influenced by post-colonial ideas that Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard did not necessarily endorse. Zionism is a hegemonic ideology, according to the post-colonial critique, based on nineteenth-century European nationalism that imposed itself on the indigenous Arab people of Palestine with the assistance of the British who were granted a mandate to rule the region by League of Nations—predecessor to the United Nations—in 1917. This ideology was created for the purpose of controlling the local Arab population by inserting European power into the region. Zionism on this account is a form of colonialism, the corrupt power relations of which seep into every aspect of the Israeli state. The task of any sort of education worthy of the name ought to be liberation from the oppression imposed by this hegemonic regime not its proliferation (Gur-Zeev, 1999). The difficulty with this view from a postmodern perspective lies in the presupposition that Zionism is somehow unique in the evil domination it has perpetrated against the Palestinian Arabs and that liberation from oppression of this kind is possible. This privileges an Arab over a Jewish narrative concerning who is indigenous to the land that lies between the Jordon River and the Mediterranean Sea, which could itself be understood as an oppressive act. One does not need to adopt such a naïve faith in the possibility of liberation or one-sided reading of the meta-narratives that have sought to dominate the region to acknowledge the monistic and power-centered character of Zionism (Alexander, 2000, 2006). This is not to say, of course, that postmodern analysis has nothing to say concerning power relations among Jews and Arabs, rather acknowledging that liberation from one regime of meaning is likely to lead to subjugation under another affords a more balanced look at the myriad ways in which they have sought to dominate one another over time.

Three Paradoxes of Postmodernism

Both postmodern and modern critical social theories shine light on forms of domination that might otherwise go unnoticed. The brief illustration offered above makes plain, for example, that each of the three most influential Jewish responses to Enlightenment, which form the conceptual basis for contemporary Jewish education, imposes regimes of meaning in ways that assert power over others by restricting rather than enhancing the capacity of students to find meaning in Jewish life. But if modern critical social theory failed to acknowledge that liberation from one false consciousness leads only to another, the postmodern position suffers from at least three defects that stem from its departure from its modern predecessors. I have called these the fallacies of excessive determinism, relativism, and authority, though they might also be called paradoxes since they reveal contradictions inherent in postmodern thought (Alexander, 2003b). Each paradox raises doubts about postmodern critiques of liberal autonomy, positive law, and Jewish national sovereignty, respectively.

One paradox, which undermines the postmodern critique of liberal autonomy, is concerned with the relation between power and perspective in postmodern thought. Modern critical social theories supposes a tight connection between context and consciousness according to which beliefs and behaviors are conditioned by the forces ruling one's life at any given time. While one is under the sway of false consciousness, the dominant ideology is imposed. When one has been liberated from falsehood and comes to realize that one's true interest lies with this or that disenfranchised group, a new ideology takes its place. Although critical theories expect that one can come to recognize the ways in which a dominant ideology is oppressive, this is only from the position of a perspective in which socio-economic and cultural power is distributed equitably. At no point in this process are beliefs and behaviors chosen; they are always determined by one orientation or another. This is as true for the powerful as the powerless, since on this theory those who dominate are themselves corrupted by the evils of the oppression they perpetrate and are all too often unaware of the ways in which their own hegemonic ideologies compel them to believe and behave as they do.

It is the recognition of this fact that led postmodern theorists to abandon what they saw as the naïve optimism of modern critical social theory for the more pessimistic view that we can never escape domination. Under these circumstances, however, it is hard to know what to make of the ethical critique of oppression inherent in postmodernism or its moral preference for the disenfranchised, since neither the rulers nor the ruled are actually the agents of their own actions, which are determined by socio-economic, cultural, and other power-related interests. Yet, if false ideologies not people are responsible for oppression, why should people be held accountable for their attitudes or actions? The naïve optimism of modern critical theory at least allowed for the possibility of a better society in which power interests would be equalized and people free to choose their own life paths. However, on the postmodern view which holds that liberation from one false consciousness leads only to another, there is no escape from the determining effect of power interests

and so no way to hold agents accountable for their actions. What could it possibly mean, then, to say that it is wrong to dominate or oppress another person? The postmodern critique of liberal autonomy undermines its own concern for the morally corrupting influence of power, therefore, even while it highlights that very influence.

A second paradox, which raises questions about the postmodern critique of legal positivism, concerns the postmodern assertion that knowledge claims are tainted by the impulse to dominate, since they assert that evidence *compels* one to believe this and not that. On the postmodern view beliefs cannot be reduced to raw data independent of one regime of meaning or another. Power interests are embedded in the very ways in which we formulate what we count as data, not to mention how we go about collecting it or arranging it to draw conclusions. The difficulty with this position, however, can be seen when we apply this same sort of analysis to the assertion that all knowledge claims entail power relations, by asking whether that assertion itself is not also embedded in power relations. Should we not challenge the epistemological authority of this assertion along with all the rest? But if we are to be skeptical of the very postmodern concern for the ways in which power seeps into all knowledge claims, the epistemological status of postmodern analysis in its own right is called into question, which leads, in turn, to the paradoxical conclusion that the postmodern critique of ultra-Orthodox legal positivism as arbitrary act of domination is itself such an oppressive act.

A third paradox, which relates to the postmodern critique of Jewish sovereignty, is connected to political authority. Drawing on a tradition that goes back to Plato, postmodern theorists tend to view power as absolute. Power is evil, they argue, so the weak should be privileged, and since power relations cannot be neutralized, this means enfranchising them. But this not only infects them with the corruption entailed by power, it disenfranchises those who were once in charge, placing them in the position of weakness that was held by those who have now been elevated into the dominant position. This is a recipe for never-ending conflict. Why privilege the weak if it means transforming them into a version of those who oppressed them, which is the only option available to the postmodernist since he denies the possibility that power relations can be equalized? If everything is saturated with power there is no room for justice, since privileging the weak over the strong itself entails an exercise of unjustifiable power. In order to conceive a just society, there needs to be a realm that allows for the possibility of normative right, not mere political might, which is precisely what postmodernism denies in its critique of modern critical theories. Power is not always evil. Most of us would like the police to respond with an appropriate use of force, for example, if our home has been burgled. A chief challenge of political education is to distinguish between the just and unjust exercise of force. From the fact that Zionism entails an assertion of Jewish power, therefore, it does not follow that the establishment of Israel moves Jews or Zionists from the category of the powerless and righteous to that of the powerful and evil, which has led some to reject the legitimacy of Israel as an expression of Jewish sovereignty. Rather Zionist education ought to cultivate an ability to distinguish between the just and unjust exercise of Jewish power.

Post-Enlightenment Jewish Education

How then is it possible to acknowledge the strengths of postmodern analysis in Jewish education, particularly when it comes to highlighting inappropriate uses of power, without succumbing to these paradoxes? One answer can be found in critiques of Enlightenment that do not flow from left-leaning Hegelianism but that offer alternative accounts of autonomy, law, and sovereignty (Alexander, 1995).

Consider, for example, how Emmanuel Levinas (1969, 1998, 2003) might respond to the liberal concept of autonomy. Like Hegel, Levinas was a phenomenologist. He believed that knowledge is derived from the phenomena of human experience which cannot be separated from the contexts of history, language, and culture. He did not learn this from Hegel, however, but from Edmund Husserl (1999), who was not interested in hidden power relations. The difficulty with both modern and postmodern critical theories, according to a Husserlian perspective, is that they conceive liberation or the lack thereof as objects over against experiencing subjects. Marxists and neo-Marxists believed that the equalization of power relations constitute an objective standard, independent of concrete human experience, against which all ideologies could be judged, while their postmodern critics decried this very quest for objectivity as hopelessly naïve and unattainable. However, Husserl thought that this whole subject–object discourse was incomprehensible, since all that can ever really be known is experienced within the consciousness of a perceiving subject. Knowledge begins according to Husserl with the experience of receiving another into one's self, not the assertion of a rationally autonomous self, as with Kant, or the critique of domination hidden in that assertion, as in Marx, neo-Marxism or postmodernism. It was Levinas, the student of Husserl, who recognized that 'receiving the other' is first an ethical act and only secondarily epistemological. Ethics, on this view, not epistemology, is first philosophy. Hence, though it is well known that Derrida was influenced by Levinas, the latter stopped short of some of the paradoxical conclusions reached by the former. But it was Levinas, the student of Talmud, who realized that this other rather than self-centered ethic is deeply rooted in the Hebrew Bible as read by the rabbis.

Self-determination—autonomy or agency—is to be found on this account in receiving not asserting, contracting not imposing, acknowledging the other not centering on the self. Moral independence is achieved by entering into relation with another subject in an intimate I–Thou moment experienced as a 'meeting' or 'dialogue' in which, to use Buber (1970) words, the other fills the firmament, not by confronting a subject with an object to achieve an instrumental purpose. In a subject–subject encounter we set aside interest in order to receive the other with no end in view other than the meeting itself. The result is neither 'objective' nor 'interested' knowledge, but a form of insight into oneself and others achieved by a letting go, at least in part, in order to receive another subject. Parker Palmer (1983) called this self-knowledge as one might be perceived by another, by God or a beloved friend. It is a form of what Israel Scheffler (1983) called personal as opposed to propositional or procedural knowledge. Nel Noddings (1984) called it 'engrossment' (p. 30), a process in which the one-caring receives the feelings

of the one-cared-for, which confirms in each an elevated sense of self. Terence McLaughlin (1984, 1985) dubbed it 'autonomy-via-faith,' in contrast to Kant's 'autonomy-via-reason.' It is characterized by the Hebrew notion of *emunah*—belief or trust in another person, rather than the more rational Greek *pistis*—belief that something is the case on logical or empirical grounds (Buber, 1951). The appropriate response, Levinas pointed out, blurs autonomy and heteronomy in a felt sense of responsibility for or duty toward the other, not an individual right to choose for oneself. Here is an ethic that can distinguish between the just and unjust exercise of power, according to the extent to which it involves acknowledging a responsibility for the other (Alexander, 2010a).

Or consider how Michael Oakeshott (1962) might assess the sort of legal positivism that has come to characterize ultra-Orthodoxy. Like Hegel, Oakeshott was critical of the false idea that human affairs can be adequately captured by means of abstract and rigid concepts and techniques such as those taught in empirical science and by both universal liberals and critical social theorists. All of these are but convenient techniques for summarizing more complex manners, customs, symbols, and stories by means of which people live with others. The summaries he called technical and the lived complexities practical knowledge. One can be formulated in propositions, rules, principles, directions, and maxims; the other exists only in the human relations in which communal life is conducted and is shared by means of practical traditions not theoretical doctrines. Oakeshott traced the source of this fallacy to a preoccupation with certainty by the likes of Descartes and Bacon, but it, in fact, goes back to Plato's preference for theory over practice and his idea that power should be vested in those whose belief is free from error.

Ironically, the rigidity that legal positivists attribute to the interpretation of law and ultra-Orthodoxy to religious tradition belongs more properly to the rational principles born of 'arid technique' (Oakeshott, 1962, p. 31), which entered into religion in response to Greek philosophical rationalism (Kellner, 1999). A tradition of practice is not an inflexible manner of doing things. 'It is neither fixed nor finished; it has no changeless centre to which understanding can anchor itself' (Oakeshott, 1962, p. 128). Some parts may change more slowly than others, but none is immune from change. What accounts for the continuity of tradition on this account is the diffusion of authority between past, present, and future, in which nothing that ever belonged is completely lost. Change within a tradition of practice emerges gradually not abruptly, by means of undirected evolution not preplanned revolution, in part through contact with other viewpoints; and the engine of this change is found in the ways in which individuals engage culture in order to create themselves.

Selves are historical achievements, not rational or legal abstractions. Each human being is self-made, not out of nothing, but from a self-understanding acquired by learning to recognize oneself in the mirror of a cultural inheritance, that 'reaches us, as it reached generations before ours, neither as long-ago terminated specimens of human adventure nor as an accumulation of human achievements we are called upon to accept, but as a manifold of invitations to look, to listen, and to reflect' (Oakeshott, 1989, p. 29). It is in joining conversations that connect past and present

to future, deciphering artifacts that have been handed down and creating new ones to pass along, speaking the languages and appreciating the literatures of a culture that a particular biological body, or locus of psychological or sociological traits, becomes a recognizably human life (Alexander, 2008). The relevant educational issue concerns a faith's openness to learning from alternative perspectives, not the uniform authenticity of its beliefs (Alexander, 2005).

Or consider how Isaiah Berlin would relate to the issue of national sovereignty. Rationalism tends toward universal political theories in which power is allocated to those who have achieved self-control by freeing themselves from error. Kant's 'autonomy-via-reason' is an example. Traditionalism of the sort embraced by Oakeshott inclines toward political pluralism in which power is vested in those who resist the impulse to impose themselves on others, which is an alternative sense of self-control born of relations to individuals, community, history, or God, similar to McLaughlin's 'autonomy-via-faith.' Berlin (1990) called one positive, the other negative liberty; the former has to do with self-definition or control of one's destiny, the latter with the absence of constraints on, or interference with a person's actions. Berlin had deep reservations about the former because of the tendency among those who advance positive accounts of freedom to distinguish between one's actual self that acts in the day-to-day world and some occult entity referred to alternatively as a 'true' or 'real' or 'higher' self of which a person might not be fully aware. Thus, it is argued that although one's empirical self may indeed feel free, one's true self may actually be enslaved. As Berlin (1990) put it so aptly, 'once I take this view, I am in a position to ignore the actual wishes of men or societies, to bully, oppress; torture them in the name, and on behalf, of their "real" selves, in the secure knowledge that whatever is the true goal of man (happiness, performance of duty, wisdom, a just society, self-fulfillment) must be identical with his freedom—the free choice of his "true", albeit often submerged and inarticulate, self' (p. 133). It should come as no surprise, then, that Berlin (1997, pp. 1–24) leveled this critique against the potential authoritarianism inherent in left-leaning Hegelianism upon which the postmodern critique of the Zionist quest for Jewish power relies.

It may be surprising, however, to learn that Berlin's reservations concerning the excesses of positive liberty were addressed no less to the monist moral and political theories of Kant and Locke than to critical social theorists. Liberalism is normally associated with pluralism, grounded in the right of citizens to choose a concept of the Good over any particular goods they may prefer. This assumes that they can pick freely based on relevant reasons (Brighouse, 2005) and engage in reasonable deliberation to adjudicate disagreements (Rawls, 2005). However, Berlin followed Hegel in holding that our choices are not always as free nor our deliberations as reasonable as they might appear, since the very idea of rational evaluation is itself historically situated; and though preferring negative freedom, he recognized it too as an historical achievement which tends toward its positive counterpart when transformed into a doctrine that strives for comprehensive influence over the lives of citizens. Thus, he counted as a fairly extreme version of positive liberty the concept of rational autonomy and the pursuit of liberal toleration as a universal ideal found in Kant and Locke.

Berlin parted company with Hegel, however, especially his left-leaning followers, when it came to the idea that choices can be genuinely free only when we strive to equalize power relations. The ultimate source of human power, Berlin argued, lies in the presumption that people can step outside of their current circumstances to choose a new path, despite all of the influences upon them or the forces stacked against them. This is so precisely because our circumstances are not given and even though our choices cannot be based on one view or another of universal reason (Gray, 1996). His views were thus closer to communitarians such as Alastair MacIntyre (1989) and Charles Taylor (1991), who held that there is no way to assess rational evaluation other than by appeal to the very rational standards in question, which without a satisfactory justification of rationality may be reduced to expressions of mere personal feeling. This confuses freedom with caprice and isolates people from one another as they center increasingly on themselves. Meaningful assessment must be based on values that emanate from beyond the self, linked to historically contingent communities, traditions, or cultures in which people live.

Like Oakeshott, Berlin was a value pluralist. He believed that there are many incommensurable cultures founded on distinct and often conflicting values and ideals. The task of political theory is to consider ways for peoples of distinct difference to live together in peace, within one society or across national boundaries, not to impose a particular conception of liberty on all as a universal ideal. John Gray (2002) called this the other face of liberalism. Berlin agreed with Oakeshott that our identities are formed in the mirror of inherited traditions, from which it follows that each person is entitled to receive or engage her own cultural tradition in the public square, without imposing it on others or having another's imposed on her. Here is the justification of national sovereignty, in acknowledging the other not asserting the self (Tamir, 1995). But we can only truly respect a culture different from our own when we have engaged our own cultural inheritance (Alexander, 2010b).

A post-Enlightenment view of Jewish education acknowledges unproductive power relations inherent in the conceptions of personal autonomy, positive law, and political authority that inform contemporary Jewish education without succumbing to the paradoxes of postmodernism. It does this by reconstituting the significance of self-determination, traditional practice, or national sovereignty, as receiving the other rather than asserting the self, by engaging a dynamic not a dogmatic tradition of practice, in the public as well as the private sphere. This entails coming to understand myself, both past and present, and being prepared to assume responsibility for my future. It also requires coming to understand others who are different from me, both past and present, and recognizing that it is they, not I, who should assume responsibility for their future. Following Jonathan Sacks (2003), and in contrast to pedagogies of the oppressed which tend to place responsibility for one's plight on social structures or power relations rather than on oneself, I have called this the pedagogy of difference. Whereas modernity tended to sever the organic links between self, tradition, and sovereignty in Jewish education, and the postmodern critique exacerbated this tendency toward disintegration, this post-Enlightenment view provides the basis for a possible reintegration of these fundamental ingredients of Jewish life.

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Spirituality: The Spiritual Child and Jewish Childhood

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Introduction

Since the early work of James Fowler (1981) in faith development there has spawned a vast array of research and studies in the area of children's spirituality, religious development, theologies of childhood and educational approaches to religious growth. For Jewish educators, however, questions and concerns abound about defining children's spirituality in a Jewish context as well as understanding the roles of the Jewish educator in enhancing it. Jewish educators have offered critiques of both the definition of spirituality and the intended outcomes of spiritual education (Bekerman, 2003; Gottlieb, 2006). However, in some settings, spiritual development has become a normative feature of children's education even resulting, for example, in its assessment of attainment in British schools by the Office of Standards in Education (National Curriculum Council, 1993).

Prompted by this newly developed field of educational development, Jewish educators need to ask questions about the nature of educating for religious growth and spirituality and the relationship of religious development to religious learning and practice. Specifically they will want to know how the faith of the child can be characterised and expressed in Jewish terms. What conceptual tools can be used to best understand the nature of the spiritual child? How can faith be formed and nurtured authentically in Judaism and how can young people be personally enriched and their faith enhanced through Jewish religious education?

Literature concerned with the religious development of children can be broadly categorised into three groupings. The developmentalists (Fowler, 1981; Goldman, 1964; Oser & Scarlett, 1991) understand faith change as a sequenced process of development that is characterised by predetermined stages of faith which are universal and invariant. Since these stages are described as structural, relating to a process of 'making meaning' relevant to all human beings, a number of Jewish educators have applied faith development theory to Jewish education (Blumberg, 1991; Goodman, 2003; Shire, 1987). Though providing new and useful ways of

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understanding religious development, faith development theory has been criticised extensively especially for its use of stage development and its claims to universal structural processes.

A second generation of studies arose in the 1990s (Berryman, 1991; Coles, 1990; Hay & Nye, 1998) that sought to understand religious identity and spiritual expression in childhood as expressed by children themselves. These studies focused on the spiritual awareness expressed by children and the inherent nature of the child as a naturally spiritual being. Though largely ignored by contemporary Jewish educators, these studies reflected some of the expressions of Jewish childhood described earlier in the century by Solomon Schechter (1938); Martin Buber (1979) and Janusz Korczak (Cohen, 1994). Their writings reflect an approach that values the whole child and focus on the nature of childhood in its theological and psychological dimensions.

Finally, a third strand to this investigation of the spiritual lives of children has focused on a concentration of theological works about childhood particularly in Christianity but now more and more in an inter-religious framework (Bunge, 2001; Jenson, 2005; Mercer, 2005; Miller-McLemore, 2003; Yust et al., 2006; Shier-Jones, 2007). Some Jewish educators responding to this Christian framework have attempted a description of Jewish theological understandings of childhood spirituality (Sasso, 2001; Shire et al., 2006). Drawing upon the classical Jewish sources, a theological understanding of the child as blessed is seen, as well as conceptions of childhood as a highly intimate sacred relationship. The key indicators of this perception are 'learning' and 'goodness' both of which are categorised as the 'spiritual tasks of childhood'.

This chapter will review the major findings in each of the three paradigms and describe the attempts by Jewish educators to refine and apply them to Jewish education. It will draw together the often-competing theories regarding the spiritual nature of the child and provide a comprehensive overview of the most important thinkers in this field. Due to the large majority of studies having taken place outside Judaism, it is important that the reader understands the general scope of the field but specific reference to Judaism will be made in each case. Finally the chapter will suggest further ways this area can be studied and researched in Jewish education, and will provide a summary of the educational approaches that are suggested by the theories.

Spiritual Development

What is meant by spiritual development? Is it different from spirituality, religious development or religiosity? There is little consensus about the nature and scope of this particular dimension of life. Where there is research, it has situated itself within the field of the psychology of religion. The originator of this field of study combining theological enquiry with psychological development is Professor James Fowler of Emory University in Atlanta. Fowler's theory of faith development is summarised as follows:

> Faith may be characterised as an integral, centring process underlying the formation of beliefs, values and meanings that (1) give coherence and direction to people's lives, (2) links them in shared trust and loyalties with others, (3) grounds their personal stance and loyalties in relation to a larger frame of reference and (4) enables them to face and deal with the conditions of human life. The stages of faith aim to describe patterned operations of knowing and valuing that underlie our consciousness. (Fowler, 1991, p. 56)

Fowler uses a broad definition of the word faith. Rather than limiting faith to religious belief, Fowler denotes a process of making meaning which is shared by all human beings. Faith is therefore a process of trusting and structuring meaning making that incorporates belief but goes beyond it.

Fowler conducted research interviews with hundreds of people from a variety of different backgrounds, ages, sexes and religious affiliations. From these interviews, he derived six stages of faith through which an individual passes though he contends that the higher stages are present in only certain highly developed individuals. These stages are structural; they characterise the inner operations by which a person makes meaning of the world. These stages are claimed to be common to all people. Though the content of the stage will change from individual to individual, Fowler suggests that all people at the same stage compose meaning in a structurally similar manner. The stages are sequentially ordered with each stage incorporating the processes of the one before while adding to it in a new dimension. Each stage has its own integrity so that stage four is not categorised as more faith-full than stage three, rather it has developed in a qualitatively new way. The transition from stage to stage becomes apparent when the individual is no longer able to make meaning using their familiar processes and seeks to move beyond them. These transitions are often triggered by life crises where new ways are sought to understand painful and difficult circumstances.

The faith of the young child (Stage 1: intuitive-projective faith) is one in which meaning is made intuitively and by imitation. Knowledge and feeling are fused and formed by significant people in the child's life. Here the importance of sensitive and caring teachers who foster trust in the child is important as are the images, stories, and symbols which are formative at this stage. Fact and fantasy may be undifferentiated leading to imaginative and creative images of God. Religious meaning is associated with concrete images and symbols. At the stage of schooling (Stage 2: mythic-literal faith), the child is conscious of being part of a larger group than just his/her family as the child engages with the stories, myths and values of a religious tradition. These can be particularly understood in very literal terms as God is portrayed as the ultimate powerful being or force. Stage 3 (synthetic-conventional faith) according to Fowler is conventional in that the individual is anxious to respond to the expectations of significant others. There is a strong tendency to rely upon institutional authority as the holder of religious authority. Symbols become more deeply understood allowing for symbolic meaning to become important. A personal relationship with God can be expressed and a sense of community is valued. Religious feelings are deeply felt but tacitly held before they become examined more critically later on. This is the time for confirming a religious identification and belonging to a community or religious heritage.

As the congruence of this position breaks down in the adolescent who questions authority, there comes more of a position of individual choice with regard to meaning making, authority and belief. Stage 4 (individuative-reflective) coinciding with Piaget's formal operational thinking becomes more inner dependent in which a way of making meaning is more personally chosen and self-consciously different from the religious identity of others. Prayer and spiritual feelings can take place in any location not necessarily connected to a religious institution. Ritual shared with like-minded individuals is preferred over a large community. Stage 4 faith diminishes the power of the concrete symbol in favour of the central idea it represents. The person ready for transition in young adulthood finds that their faith is excessively reliant on their individual consciousness. This leads to an awareness of the purely personal perspective of truth and meaning without regard for a historical or community-based conception.

Stage 5 (conjunctive faith) combines what one knows and trusts from within, with the perspectives of others even from outside one's own community of faith. In stage 5 there is a universal perspective to one's faith as well as a return to ritual and symbol as sacred roles and objects. At this stage the symbols of a religious tradition have deep meaning resonant in their historical and contemporary identification. Often individuals can infer new meaning in the role of these symbols and rituals.

The final and most comprehensive stage according to Fowler (Stage 6: universalising faith) is seen in someone who has the ability to perceive paradoxes in life and yet create unity in their spiritual life combining a particularistic religious tradition with a universal humanitarian outlook. Fowler suggests that this is rare in human beings and only some exceptional individuals achieve it.

Fritz Oser & Scarlett (1991), Swiss researchers in religious development and moral reasoning, drew upon similar strands in developmental psychology as Fowler particularly from the work of Piaget and Kohlberg. Oser's approach to developmental stages was to propose a hierarchy of religious behaviours dependent on the ever-developing religious judgements of individuals. For Oser, religious judgement is how people construct their own religious meaning. To understand this particular feature of religious behaviour, Oser posed a series of dilemmas to individuals based on core religious issues such as making promises to God, responding when bad things happen to good people and counting one's blessings. The response to these dilemmas produced patterns that demonstrate how people structure their solutions to religious problems and challenges. According to Oser there are five stages which are similarly hierarchical, sequenced, and universal. For Oser a higher stage is a more reasoned construction of the relationship between God and human beings. Movement from one stage to the next is not automatic as the structures of thinking within the stages are stimulated through life experience. The stages are however universal in that they occur in all peoples regardless of religious background. For Oser, each individual structures his or her reasoning in a similar manner though at different stages.

The work of faith development in the United States and Switzerland, coupled with the work of spiritual development in the United Kingdom as part of the Religious Education National Curriculum has prompted much debate about the nature of spirituality in education. This has resulted in philosophical reflections on

spirituality and psychological approaches to learning for the development of spirituality. This bringing together of theology and developmental psychology marked the innovative uniqueness of the faith development school. These approaches, including those of Canadian writer Clive Beck (1989) and British writer Kevin Mott-Thornton (1998), all attempt a universalist approach to the nature of spirituality. This approach widens the definition of spirituality so as to allow those without a religious heritage or affiliation to accept the notion that one can be spiritual without being religious. However, such a universalist and syncretistic approach blurs the significant differences between religious traditions and often assumes a Western rationalist position where the cognitive predominates over the affective.

Critiques of these developmental theories take issue with the normative linear structure of a stage theory that leads to an endpoint that is highly individuative, rationalist and universalistic. The predominant feature of Jewish religious life is the increasing nature of one's obligation to community.

Where faith is defined as leading to a universal norm, it does not take into account such specifics within differing religious traditions. For Judaism, the corresponding Hebrew term for faith, *emunah*, denotes a relationship of trust between God and humankind, one in which trust is put into a transcendent reality with the expectation of a covenantal relationship in return. However, *emunah* is not merely an idea. It is expressed in Judaism through the performance of *mitzvoth.* These *mitzvoth* become the ways in which Jews act out *emunah* in the world. The relationship to God is developed by the deepening consciousness of the *mitzvoth*. However, mere performance will not necessarily engender a spiritual awareness. Medieval philosopher Bachya Ibn Pakuda (1978) in eleventh-century Spain already warned of a life based on *mitzvoth* that had no inner significance. He called for priority to be given to 'Duties of the Heart' that underpin and make meaningful the traditional practices of faith. If this inner dimension is not nurtured then the external commandments cannot be properly fulfilled. It is necessary therefore to have intention (*kavannah*) in carrying out the *mitzvoth*.

Jews have been uncomfortable with the use of the word 'spiritual' when it has been related merely to a series of inner spiritual virtues. For Jews, spiritual awareness without explicit religious expression is incomplete. Martin Buber therefore used the word 'religiosity' to describe a spiritual openness within a religious tradition. For Art Green, Jewish religiosity is described as 'striving for the presence of God and fashioning a life of holiness appropriate to such striving' (1987, p. xii). Jewish spiritual life is thus a continual task of creating holiness even in the most mundane of daily acts as Jews seek to build a life of holiness for communities and for individuals.

Educational Implications for Spiritual Development

Jewish educators place significant emphasis on the key issues described by the developmentalists. They recognise the vital role that spirituality as a form of meaning making takes in the lives of individuals and the inner structural operations that operationalise such meaning making, during childhood especially. This entails

Jewish educators being able to discern the pathways and expressions of an inner religiosity in their students and to have the capability to nurture their development. They would be sensitive to the transitions of spiritual change in their students' lives and engage with them in religious decision-making and judgment that reflects current core understandings of their own religiosity. They would be attuned to the dissonance that occurs between inner and outer expressions of spirituality, particularly as students enter adolescence. Educators would need to have the means to reintegrate a religiosity of mind, spirit and heart as a centring thread in their lives.

This inner expression however needs to be matched and integrated with external religiosity as lived through a Jewish life and language. Jewish education today is mainly concerned with the transmission of knowledge, the development of ritual skills, the formation and strengthening of Jewish identity and the affirmation of values. It deals little with the nature of religious experience, the development of religious growth or the field of spirituality in general. It has found these areas of religious education difficult to promote in a modern secular society with teachers and parents ambivalent about their own religiosity, let alone about transmitting it to others. Jewish education has primarily been concerned with the outer dimensions of religion; the historical, social and theological forms of religious expression. It has been less concerned with elements of spiritual experience such as trust, awe and love especially beyond early childhood. Where it has focused on inner dimensions, it has not considered the relationship between inner and outer dimensions. Aspirations for graduates of Jewish educational programmes often focus on evidence of knowledge, pride of association and expression of moral values. Where spirituality is included, it is often regarded as a separate entity, perhaps expressed in music or experiences removed from the home and synagogue such as camping or Jewish travel.

However, religiosity is a vital component of Jewish life and experience; as such, it needs to be integrated into the very fabric of Jewish education. Many Jewish educators are uncertain as to how it can be translated into educational objectives incorporated into the curriculum of Jewish educational settings. One of the key issues for Jewish education is how to make spiritual development an explicit objective of educational programming. Roberta Louis Goodman (2003) posits three implications for Jewish education that emerge from the developmentalist approach to spiritual development:

1. It is necessary for the Jewish educator to facilitate the learner's relationship with God. Our educational curricula need to incorporate God explicitly into the curriculum of the educational setting within which we work. It is our responsibility as educators to bring our tradition and its texts to bear on this relationship.
2. Jewish educators should recognise the potential of religious education to enable students to develop their understanding and relationship with God. We therefore need to provide learners with the experiences and subject matter that will facilitate this development.
3. We need to engage in this educational activity throughout the lifetime of our students since it is a changing and developing experience for them. It is a lifelong activity for making meaning.

When Jewish educators come to understand the nature of faith and spirituality as a core human activity expressed through inner and outer forms of meaning making, ritual, symbol, values and language, they will come to know the ongoing search and the means for human growth of all of their students.

The Child as Spiritual Being

A second generation of studies of children's spirituality focused on the expressed spirituality of children themselves, seeking to determine the particular characteristics of the phenomenon in its own natural state. David Hay and Rebecca Nye took a grounded theory approach (Hay & Nye, 1998) in using data collected from interviewing children to guide the construction of a theory that best described how children themselves described their spirituality. They started with the presupposition that the world into which children are socialised (modern Britain, in their case) is often destructive of their spirituality and that children become reluctant to use traditional religious language and symbol to express their spiritual life. Hay and Nye proposed three interrelated categories to describe this self-definition, including (1) awareness sensing as a means to understand present experience; (2) mystery sensing pertaining to wonder, awe and imagination; and (3) value sensing referring to the moral sensitivities of the child. Hay and Nye noted high levels of consciousness exhibited by the children in all of these categories. Nye coined the term 'relational consciousness' to describe a quality of children's spirituality that expresses:

> An unusual level of *consciousness* or perceptiveness, relative to other passages of conversation spoken by that child. (Authors italics) (Hay & Nye, 1998, p. 113)

She further explained this as

> Conversation expressed in a context of how the child related to things, other people, him/herself, and God. (Hay & Nye, 1998, p. 113)

Here the nature of children's spirituality is not divided by age or stage of development. In describing 'relational consciousness', Nye stresses that consciousness implies a degree of awareness in children that allows them to appreciate the wonder of their own mental ability. She goes on to define 'relational' as occurring not in a narrow awareness of those nearest but in a much broader context that allows children to consider their relationship to all sections of their life experience including their personal relationship to the world and to God.

In contrast to Fowler, Nye warns against judging spiritual development in a linear fashion that looks for stages of progress. She urges judgements to be conducted in a more feminine mould that would allow for development 'around collaboration, reciprocity and co-construction' (Hay Nye, 1998, p. 9). Carol Gilligan (1982) had previously identified a clear male gender bias in the theoretical assumptions made by Kohlberg and Fowler in positing an individuative faith as more highly developed than a relational faith.

Two particular characteristics stood out in Hay and Nye's research. The first was the individuality of each child. Relational consciousness was described as a personal

signature that pertained to that child. Hay and Nye concluded that educators need to attend to each child's personal style and expression of spirituality if they are to discern their spiritual pathway. The second feature was children's ability to draw upon religious language to make meaning of their discussed experiences. This ability was present despite the fact that many of the children they studied had little or no religious knowledge of a faith tradition. The ability of children to engage in profound philosophical reflections concerning ultimate meaning and value demonstrated the powerful nature of the spiritual child. Hay and Nye pointed out the danger of suppressing this personal signature and capacity for philosophical reflection through use of religious teachings from an organised faith tradition.

Elaine McCreery (1996) entered into conversations with young people that did not involve specific 'God talk' but rather discussed their perceptions and understanding of the world, including birth, death, school, television, etc. She was interested to see the ways in which children themselves used language to express their spiritual understandings and insights. She argued that these personal narratives, constructed out of personal experience, become the framework with which children construct their own spiritual awareness.

Tobin Hart (2003) identified five spiritual capacities through which children's spirituality seems naturally to flow: wisdom, awe/wonder, the relationship between self and other, seeing the invisible and wondering in relation to ultimate questions. Hart maintained that children have a capacity greater than adults to be open to the deep perceptions and wonder in life leading to great joy and insight. Importantly, Hart also argued that young children are not self-centred in this capacity but rather capable of natural empathy and compassion which they express through care and concern for others. Hart therefore posited children as natural philosophers. Though they may not have adult logic and language, Hart considered that children have a capacity for consideration of existential questions of value and meaning.

The emphasis on the individual child and their singular inner life is reflected in the earlier work of twentieth-century Polish educator and humanitarian, Janusz Korczak. Putting himself in the position of the child, he wrote revealingly

> Our language is limited and hesitant (so it seems to you) for it is not completely grammatical. Because of this it seems to you that our thinking is confused and our feelings shallow. Our beliefs are naive for they are not based on bookish learning and the world is so wide . . . we live as a nation of dwarves vanquished by giants, by priests who derive their coercive power from the occult. We are an abused class, which you would keep alive in exchange for tiny concessions and very little effort. We are very very complex creatures – taciturn, suspicious and close lipped and the scholar's glass and eye will tell you nothing if you do not believe in us and sympathise with us. (Korczak, 1988)

In his book *When I shall be little again*, Korczak described the mental life of a child in the course of a day. 'He is an Eskimo and a dog, chasing and fleeing from pursuit, a victor and an innocent victim of circumstance, a loving friend and a frustrated mate, a philosopher and a painter, a sportsman and a dreamer' (Korczak, 1988, p. 90).

Korczak dealt with each child individually, recognising his or her special talents and interests and needs. It is for this reason that he rejected any attempt to impose

accepted predetermined forms of living and society on the child. He feared the kind of conformity that breeds uniformity, diminishing the individual worth of each child. He strove to discover the optimal conditions for a child's development and growth.

Korczak's view was that childhood is not a period preparatory to life but an essential and integral part of life itself which cannot be measured by its usefulness for adulthood, but is absolutely valued for itself:

> Clumsily we think of the years as of greater or lesser maturity; (yet in truth) no day is immature. There is no hierarchy of age and pain and happiness, hopes and disappointments cannot be graded. (p. 13)

Educational Implications for the Child as Spiritual Being

Placing children at the centre of their own spiritual experience is a key feature of this genre of studies. Jewish educators must get to know the child fully, and understand his or her spirit and unique understanding of the world. They are to acknowledge and respect the child's own perspective while helping the child discover the beauty and sublime values that are within him or her.

A particular methodology for the development of awareness, mystery and value sensing was established by Jerome Berryman (1991) in his work on 'Godly Play' as scriptural story telling within a liturgical framework. *Godly Play* is an innovative approach to biblical story telling that seeks not so much to tell stories in order that children will 'know' them, but as a spiritual action for finding meaning, identity and God through 'wondering'. The pedagogical ideal of this approach is that, from the earliest age, children are invited to experience and become increasingly aware of the spiritual call within sacred stories and of their own deep response as something naturally afforded by religious narrative. *Godly Play* was developed as an outcome of the work of Maria Montessori combined with a contemplative reading of sacred texts (lectio divina). In Berryman's analysis, this is a return to the nonverbal, relational communication system that is foundational to spirituality and with which children started before shifting to a reliance on language. The inner child thus experienced is full of energy, creativity, spontaneity and is deeply centred.

Godly Play uses specially created artefacts and symbolic objects to enable a trained storyteller to powerfully engage children (and adults) in the wonderment of the Hebrew Bible including stories from the Tanach, the lives of the Prophets and some Psalms. It might be considered much more than an 'Encounter' with the text. *Godly Play* is not merely an educational method, but a means also to enact the theology and liturgy of a religious tradition. The time spent together in *Godly Play* is an enactment of a liturgical experience as much as it is a telling of a story. In a similar manner, the Shabbat morning Torah service serves as both liturgical and scriptural in the experience of the worshipper.

Jewish education needs to balance opportunities for spiritual experience with expectations of children. Jewish educators should not only listen to children and their spiritual experiences, but listen for them. As educators begin to hear their students' spiritual narratives, some will be philosophically profound, others

unsettling to the perception of adults. All of them will be singular probing questions about the nature of life. This searching is an expression of a child's spirituality and their identity. Educators may encourage children on a philosophical quest but words cannot fully express a spiritual experience, suggesting that play, creativity, stories and music are essential elements of a spiritual education. Rather than encouraging children to become adults, educators should value them as being children.

> The emphasis should not be on teaching children correct or orthodox doctrine about God. Rather the emphasis should be on enriching children's vocabulary and through conversation developing images and concepts which will enable children to grapple at their own level with the issues and experiences involved in God-talk. (Hull, 1990, p. 15)

Relational consciousness of self, others and God needs to include spiritual feelings, thought, attitudes, actions and even fantasies of each individual child. It is about not limiting expression about spirituality to religious vocabulary solely. Third, it is about wonder and wondering, curiosity and openness, mystery and awe such that the child's perceptive abilities in these areas may be crystalline only to be potentially diminished by exposure to closed religious instruction.

Theologies of Childhood

A third approach to understanding the religious views of children and childhood has been prevalent in Christianity through Catholic teachings on Catechesis and Christian doctrines of theological education (Groome, 1980; Moran, 1983). Questions that such theologians ask include: What is God saying to us in the existence of childhood, in the necessity that life must begin with childhood and that all peoples must enter into a time of formation and education? To whom do children belong and who should determine their future and growth?

Childhood therefore is seen not merely as a stage to pass through as the developmentalists would have it, but rather a state of being profoundly spiritual 'a part of our being before God' (Shier-Jones, 2007, p. xii). Theologians of childhood believe that there needs to be a fuller understanding of this state of being and how religion can contribute to the way childhood is shaped and formed. Here there is a distinction to be made between children and childhood. There has been very little theological speculation, especially in Judaism, on the nature of childhood, though thought has been given in the tradition to the moral and spiritual status of the child. The following exploration of a Jewish theology of childhood is compared and contrasted in part with Christian theologies.

The Blessing of Children and the Blessings Children Bestow

The blessings of childhood are reflected in Christian and Hebrew readings of the Hebrew Bible. From a Christian perspective, children are viewed as gifts from God, a sign of God's blessing and a source of joy to parents and the community (Bunge, 2001; Jenson, 2005; Shier-Jones, 2007; Watson, 2007). However, they are also depicted as capricious, ignorant and in need of strict discipline. Children are

also considered a great gift in Judaism. Parents who produce children are considered to be blessed and there are many and varied customs and ceremonies to introduce a child into the Jewish community. Just as children are received as a blessing, they, in turn, bless their own parents as well as the larger community as indicated in the concept of *Zechut banim* – through the merits of the children, the parents deserve honour.

The distinct nature of the spirituality of children in Judaism is therefore expressed as a purity of nature and a potential for the highest aspiration of holiness and goodness. Treasured and cherished, Judaism values children and childhood as perhaps the most pure form of being created in God's image (*b'zelem elohim*). A classic passage from the *midrash* illuminates the incomparable status of the child in the very act of God's revelation:

> When God was about to give the Torah to Israel, he asked them, will you accept my Torah? And they answered, we will. God said, give me surety that you will fulfill its ordinances. They said let Abraham, Isaac and Jacob be our pledges. God answered, but the patriarchs themselves need sureties . . . . Then Israel said, our children shall be our sureties. God said such as these pledges I will indeed accept. Straight away the Israelites brought their wives with their children, even infants at the breast, even babes yet unborn. And God gave them power of speech even to those yet in the womb. He said to them, I am about to give your parents the Torah, will you pledge yourselves that they will fulfill it. They said, we pledge ourselves. Then God rehearsed command after command and to each in succession the children promised obedience. (*Tanhuma Vayiggash)*

This favours comparison with Christian attitudes to children as a blessing and childhood as a sacred and protected state. Marcia Bunge (2001) quotes Christian theologian Kahl Rahner as saying that children have value and dignity in their own right and are fully human from the beginning. They are to be respected, have reverence given to them, held in sacred trust and to be protected. Rahner sees childhood as not just one stage of existence but as a spiritually mature state which is the potential of all human beings and in which there is an attitude of infinite openness and wonder. Talmudic aggadah gives emphasis to this understanding of childhood when stating that childhood is a garland of roses. One rabbi states that the very breath of children is free of sin (Shabbat 119a) while the Jerusalem Talmud pronounces, 'Better are the late fruits we ate in our childhood than the peaches we ate in our old age' (*J.Talmud Peah* 87:4). Children are regarded as the hope for the future in that they have been entrusted to parents as a Divine gift.

What then is the theological purpose of children in the scheme of creation? A famous story from the rabbinic tradition seeks to affirm the purity of God's realm while acknowledging the task of humanity as being growing and learning creatures: Newborn children are contrasted with angels and lowly beasts of the field:

> On the second day of creation, God created the angels with their innate goodness. Then God created beasts with animal instincts not knowing right or wrong. Since God was unhappy with these extremes, God created humanity who would combine characteristics of both angel and beast in order to have free will to follow his good or evil inclination. In order for free will to be truly exercised, the child is made to forget all that he or she has learned as an unborn soul. Before it enters the world, an angel strikes it on the upper lip and all knowledge and wisdom disappear. The ridge in the upper lip is the result of this stroke. (Seder Yezirat HaValad)

From investigation of attitudes in the *Midrash* based on biblical narratives of the childhood experiences of Joseph, Samuel and David, we can see emerge a state of childhood being treasured for a special role. Childhood is seen as a condition of purity and deep spiritual connection especially through awe and wonder of God's creation and Divine purpose. Biblical stories about children demonstrate their ability to see what others cannot as in Joseph's dreams or Samuel's call in the Temple. Childhood is a state treasured in the young and one to be fostered even into adulthood. Invoking the prophet Elijah, harbinger of the Messiah at a boy's circumcision demonstrates that each newborn has the potential to change the world and bring it to completion and perfection. The sublime notion of harmony and perfection as described by the prophet Isaiah incorporates a young child playing with a wolf and lamb, leopard and goat and lion and calf at the end of days.

Ritual and Moral Obligations of the Child

However, there is no single picture of childhood in Judaism and the promotion of childhood to an elevated status in the *aggadic* (narrative) literature is balanced by the *halachic* (legal) treatment of children as minors. Minors do not have obligations or responsibility in contrast to adults. *Halachaic* restrictions are placed on what children can be obliged to do ritually; they are treated differently within Jewish law and practice from adults, particularly in regard to obligations in the public domain. However, there is a strong understanding that the purpose of childhood is to carry out the commandments and learn to enter the world of duty and religious obligation.

The thirteenth-century scholar Maimonides viewed children as unaware of the knowledge of good and evil so that parents are given a fundamental obligation to instil the values which will lead them to choose well while they are yet young. Therefore, children cannot fulfil the commandments for which they have no sense of their moral rightness. These early years are precisely to set children on the right moral path of life based on knowledge of the unique nature of children and their innate qualities and character. Tradition then holds that only at the time of Bar Mitzvah does the 'moral inclination' – *yetzer hatov* – enter the soul (Ecclestiastes Rabbah 69). Now the adolescent is able to make a positive choice in carrying out the commandments and becomes obligated to a greater or lesser extent depending on gender. The spiritual elements of the soul are now in place to carry out the Jewish task of learning and living as an adult.

Study and Learning as Quintessential Childhood Activities

The vital role of learning in fulfilling the purpose of childhood and finally entering the adult world is richly described in Jewish literature. The elaborate ceremonies developed from early rabbinic times continue to this very day with influences from all the cultures and countries in which Jews have lived. The traditional approach to

learning was to start with the study of Leviticus and its sacrificial order. The rationale for this priority was that just as sacrifices are pure, so are children . . . 'therefore let the pure learn about the pure' (Leviticus Rabbah 7:3). Children are seen as pure of heart and mind and therefore regarded as potential for ultimate service to God through the priesthood. This is echoed in the story of Samuel who is indentured to the High Priest in the Temple by Hannah, his mother, in thanksgiving for his long awaited birth. His innocence as a child is emphasised in God's call to him in the Temple being the only one who can hear God's voice. Only a child's receptivity has the ability to perceive God's presence and respond to a call for duty and lifetime of service. Samuel as he grows and develops becomes the paradigm for the child's potential as Priest and Prophet teaching others through wisdom and moral conscience.

This innate insight of the boy Samuel leads to the downfall of the High Priest's dynasty and its replacement by prophecy. It is a challenging and potentially transformative state of being. The Christian writer David Jenson (2005) when commenting on Jesus' challenge to his disciples to 'become like children' in the Gospel of Mark (9:37) is not suggesting a comfortable escape into sweet romanticism, but rather it is to open eyes to the violence that surrounds them and to reconnect with God who protects and 'saves'. For Jensen, childhood is not something outgrown, not a time that has been completed but rather a time that remains and indeed comes back to the individual. To enter into childhood is to enter into a state in which the individual is open to expect the unexpected. Learning to become more like children will mean becoming more curious, frank, challenging, hopeful and eager to relate and communicate (Herzog, 2005).

Childhood as Symbolic of God's Relationship with the Children of Israel

The description of the covenanted people in Jewish literature as 'the children of Israel' places these views of childhood on a theological plane. This understanding of childhood (as distinct to the status of the child) becomes reflective of the Divine–human relationship. Even though the People of Israel are often depicted as failing in their duty to fulfil God's mission, nevertheless their status as child to a Divine parent is never questioned. This concept emphasises the unconditional love of parents to children. As children are the fulfilment of their parents' hopes, so Israel is the crowing glory of God's creation. When Rabbi Akiva living under Roman occupation in Judea describes man's belovedness by virtue of being created in the image of God, he emphasises the nature of the child–Divine relationship.

> Beloved is Man for he was created in the image of God. Beloved are the people of Israel for they are called the children of God. Beloved are the People of Israel for a precious tool was given to them with which the world was created. (Mishnah Avot 3:14)

Within humanity as a whole, the Jewish people occupy a special position as the 'children of God'. This love for children is enduring and eternal. Even when children

cease to behave, they are still their parents' sons and daughters. Similarly Israel's special position is one that does not change according to Israel's behaviour.

> *You are children to the Eternal One your God* (Deut 14:1). When you conduct yourselves as children you are called children. When you do not conduct yourselves as children, you are not called children. These are the words of Rabbi Judah. Rabbi Meir says: In either case you are called children as it says '*They are foolish children*' (Jer 4:22) and it says '*Children in whom there is no faith*' (Deut 32:20) and it says '*A seed of evildoers; children acting corruptly*' (Isaiah 1:4). Instead therefore of saying 'you are not my children', it shall be said to them '*children of the living God*'. (Hos 2:1) Talmud Kiddushin 36a

The varying conceptions of childhood in Jewish literature encompass a view of children as a blessing but with ritual and moral obligations to grow in learning and in goodness. This is the quintessential task for childhood and entails 'learning to be righteous' (Shire et al., 2006). Childhood is also seen as symbolic of the human – Divine relationship particularly in the relationship of the children of Israel to a parent God. This theological construct is reflective of the way in which the rabbis viewed the exalted and pure nature of childhood.

Educational Implications for a Jewish Theology of Childhood

Judaism's view of learning is not just as a means to train children but to educate them to be engaged in a higher purpose. Thus, the Hebrew word for education is *hinukh* – dedication or commitment. Knowledge of Torah does not necessarily lead to commitment or engagement. Rather, living a life of religious sensibility with a duty to others is the determinant of the pious Jew. For Judaism, education is essentially an ethical activity. Studying, practicing and celebrating Torah is what leads to spiritual renewal and commitment to God's moral purpose for all. The Jewish notion of education is not instrumental in that it seeks to achieve something extrinsic to the learner, rather it is spiritual in that it offers God's vision of goodness for all (Alexander, 2004). Children learning and studying are therefore elevated to the highest connotation and their teachers are perceived as the very guardians of the world in which they live and a security against evil:

> Rabbi Judah Hanasi sent Rabbi Hisda, Rabbi Assi and Rabbi Ammi to traverse the cities of the land of Israel in order to appoint Bible and *Mishnah* teachers. They came to a city and they found no teacher of Bible or *Mishnah*. They said; bring us to the guardians of the city. So they brought them to the senators of the town. They said, 'are these the guardians of the town? They are the destroyers of the town'. Who then, they said, are the guardians of the town? They said the teachers of Bible and *Mishnah*, as it is said; *Unless God guards the city, its watchmen stay awake in vain.* (Psalm 127:1) Pesikta D'Rav Kahana 15:5

Understanding this role for Jewish educators is to conceive of Jewish education as a powerful and compelling task enabling learners to fulfil Judaism's highest aspirations. Childhood becomes a state of being to be cherished and nurtured on which is built a lifetime of insight and formative perception. Robert Coles in deep conversation with four Jewish children saw them being 'soulful in the ways they reveal themselves as spiritual beings' (Coles, 1990). For Coles, spiritual awareness is a

universal human predisposition though he did not see this in the same terms as the developmentalists. Coles did not draw theories from the spiritual portraits of the children or generalise to all children. He did however identify a common trait in Jewish children of 'righteous humility' that he felt marks a Jewish spirituality in children:

> In years of work with Jewish children, I have encountered such moments over and over again to the point that I feel it makes up an aspect of the righteousness those children keep espousing, describing, urging upon one another. At its best this is a righteousness that avoids the fatal deterioration of self-righteousness precisely because it is not accompanied by professed certainty. I know exactly what the Lord wants and why he wants it and anyone within my sight or sound of my voice had better take heed. On the contrary, as these four children kept reminding us all "God doesn't let on all his plans but He'd like us to show we trust Him and the best way to do it, is by doing some good while we're here". (Coles, 1990, p. 266)

These Jewish conceptions of childhood encompass a powerful potential to grow in wisdom and goodness. Judaism understands childhood to be both formative and life-long and indeed a paradigm for the holiness and moral purpose of life and symbolic of the human – Divine relationship itself.

Questions for Further Study

Jewish education has drawn upon the general research about the spiritual child and childhood over the past 30 years adopting the language of religious development and spirituality. It has not only adapted some of this research to a Jewish milieu, but also remained sceptical about its place in normative Jewish education. The very definitions of spirituality and spiritual education as appropriate to Judaism continue to draw criticism from Jewish educational thinkers and practitioners.

However, the evolving critique of developmental psychology and the emerging field of childhood studies as an academic discipline demonstrate that the nature of a spiritual life in childhood is worthy of greater understanding. Jewish educators themselves are responding to the common culture of spirituality and seeking to find ways to appropriately and 'Jewishly' incorporate it into Jewish educational settings. Some of these ways may look back to former Jewish methodologies of encouraging piety or enhancing spiritual experience. Others may seek to devise new and appropriate methodologies for Jewish spirituality in education. The following areas of study would provide the field with greater clarity; they would contribute operational definitions and would increase confidence in the place of spirituality in Jewish learning environments:

1. Further study is needed on the wide variety of opportunities for spirituality in Judaism in order that these are authentic expressions of an education for religious growth. Here the question needs to be asked, 'What is the relationship between Jewish religious commitment and inner spiritual awareness?' Concern is often expressed about the evaluation of educational programmes as to their success in enhancing Jewish spirituality? What are the means to assess religious

commitment and spiritual awareness? In light of the need to educate for spiritual awareness, how are educators to be prepared and trained for the work of spiritual pedagogy?
2. Many of the studies mentioned above emphasise the need to listen to and for children's spirituality. Further studies directly with Jewish children would highlight ways in which Jewish childhood is experienced and spiritual issues addressed. What are the formative influences that promote spirituality and how is this to be fostered and nurtured through Jewish educational experiences? Anecdotal evidence suggests that informal-educational settings more readily contribute to heightened spiritual awareness but little is actually known about this. Questions also remain about the predisposition of some children more than others to spirituality and the comparative nature of their sensitivities.
3. The theological construct that suggests Jewish education is essentially 'learning for righteousness' requires further investigation, especially as to the connection between the variables of 'learning' and 'goodness'. What is the connection, if any, between spiritual development and moral development? Does Judaism have a uniquely expressed relationship between Jewish education and commitment? In what ways does Jewish education impact on a developing spiritual and moral Jewish childhood?

These further areas of study may enable Jewish educators to more fully incorporate religious development, the child as spiritual being and Jewish theologies of childhood into their practice. They may also challenge current conceptions of Jewish education as primarily seeking to achieve transmission of a heritage, the construction of identity and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The new and rich field of inquiry of the spiritual child may transform Jewish education itself.

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Visions in Jewish Education

Daniel Pekarsky

Introduction

The basic idea, the context, and the animating concerns. Significantly influenced by earlier work on the part of the late Professor Seymour Fox (e.g., Fox, 1973), who was long a lone voice crying out in the wilderness, the last 15 years in the field of Jewish education have featured an interest, more widespread and popular than usual, in the possibility that attention to questions relating to the nature, significance, and purposes of Jewish life is profoundly relevant to the formulation of an adequate agenda for contemporary Jewish education in settings that range from schools, to adult education programs, to so-called informal education programs (e.g., those found in Jewish Community Centers, summer camps, and Israel-experiences). The intuitive idea behind this turn can be articulated both positively and negatively. Positively, the idea is that the use of educational programs and institutions as vehicles for enhancing the robustness and vitality of the Jewish people and Judaism under contemporary conditions (what is sometimes referred to as *the continuity agenda*) is unlikely to be serious and effective unless these initiatives are animated by inspiring educational purposes that speak powerfully to the nature and significance of Judaism. Negatively, the idea is that too often Jewish education has failed to do anything of the kind, being instead a mish-mash of under-developed strands (history, holidays, Bible, *Tfillot* [prayer], Israel, etc.) that are not united by any larger sense of the point of the enterprise.[1] Practiced in this way, as long as the learners are satisfied and come back, the enterprise goes along unchallenged. But even when it proves successful in this limited way, it may well be, as some thoughtful observers have come to believe, that the absence of meaningful content often undermines the long-term effectiveness of Jewish education as judged by the criterion that educators

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[1] Similar critiques that emphasize the thoughtless incoherence of the enterprise and the negative consequences for quality-education have also been made in relation to general education. See, for example, Powell et al. (1985) for discussions on this matter.

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and communal leaders often take to be bottom-line: whether Jewish life continues to engage the hearts and minds of contemporary Jews who have gone through this kind of an education. Too many of them, it is feared, end up leaving the orbit of Jewish life altogether or engaging with it in increasingly marginal ways (Commission on Jewish Education, 1990).

In the period under consideration, a number of people who identify with this critique have championed the idea that a key dimension of any effort to improve things demands acquainting contemporary Jewish learners, both children and adults, with the profoundly important ideas and practices that are at the heart of Judaism at its best and revealing to these people the potential of these ideas and practices to enrich their lives. This belief has suggested an educational agenda designed to infuse powerful Jewish ideas into the heart of Jewish education; and this agenda has, during this period, often been identified with variants of the term *vision*. As will be discussed below, reliance on this term to flag the relevant concerns and insights is problematic, the reason being that there is a vast literature in arenas that span business, politics, organizational development, and the like, as well as in general education that uses terms like "vision" and "visioning" in extremely varied ways and contexts. I will return to this matter briefly below, but it is pertinent to note at the outset that I will not attempt to discuss all or even most of this literature on this occasion, although some of it may overlap the concerns of this chapter. Rather, I will focus on the relatively narrow set of concerns already intimated, and to be further explained below, with emphasis on the way they have influenced recent debates and research in Jewish education. Moreover, I will adopt as a basis for discussion a version of the vision-lexicon that is grounded in the concepts of *educational vision* (Fox, Scheffler, & Marom, 2003) and *existential vision* (Pekarsky, 2006, 2007)—concepts that I have found particularly useful in exploring and writing about the terrain in question. Generally speaking, an *existential vision* is a *conception of Jewish life at its best* in its individual and social dimensions, one grounded in beliefs about the nature, significance, and/or purposes of Jewish life—ideally, beliefs that are the product of serious reflection that is informed by profound understandings of Jewish ideas, texts, and culture. An *educational vision* is a *thick conception of the entirety of the educational process that is organized around an existential vision*. It is an educational conception that embodies and reflects beliefs concerning the way to encourage the most important and authentic learning (as interpreted through the lens of the relevant existential vision) in the kinds of learners one is likely to encounter (along dimensions like age, background, outlook, interests, motivations, preconceptions, and knowledge-base) in the particular cultural, technological, and economic environment in which the educational process is going to take place. Related to these ideas, *a vision-guided program/institution* is one that embodies, down to its details, an educational vision in the sense just specified; or, more modestly, it is an institution or program that is engaged in a continuing but serious effort to become more fully organized around such a vision, always on the lookout for ways to reduce the gap between actuality and ideal. It is noteworthy that some organizations that are vision-guided in one of the preceding senses (and some would say the best of them!) are also characterized by a willingness to periodically reconsider the adequacy

not just of their strategies but also of their most basic purposes and even of their existing guiding existential vision.

Obstacles to progress and a reformulation of the core issues. The agenda of theoretical and practical activity suggested by the challenge of establishing vision-guided education in the sense just intimated has been hard to unfold for more than one reason. For example, not only are some educators and others concerned with Jewish education sometimes intimidated by the challenge of thinking about questions of basic purpose, it is sometimes also difficult to convince them that attention to these matters has the power to advance educational practice in important ways. Historically, they have been more likely to respond positively to those who promise techniques that will keep learners excited or tools that will enhance effectiveness in teaching particular skills and bodies of subject matter. Although less likely at present than in many other periods, exploring questions relating to core Jewish ideas and how views that are responsive to these questions are pertinent to the work of educators has often been viewed as a frill—window-dressing that may adorn "mission-statements" but that is largely a distraction from the serious enterprise of making, implementing, and evaluating educational decisions. Less harshly, due to a variety of circumstances, even when not viewed as a frill, activities organized around such explorations tend to be pursued intensely but only episodically and briefly; and while the conclusions may be of interest, other circumstances and concerns typically interfere with serious efforts at translation into practice.

As already intimated, another obstacle to advancing our thinking about guiding visions in the sense specified above, and one on which I want to focus in this context, is that terms like "vision" and "mission" get used in so many different ways within different research and professional communities within and beyond the world of Jewish education that their capacity to point us toward any particular set of concerns may be dissipated. Thus, in contrast with the cluster of ideas that I have been pointing to with terms that use the word "vision," we find some people using the term to refer to an *organizational* ideal—what our institution needs to become if it is to most effectively and efficiently realize its mission. Even more commonly, we find the term "vision" used by many people as shorthand for a conception (ours or someone else's) of *anything*—be it teaching, a congregation, a school, a curriculum, etc.—*at its best.* There is, of course, nothing inherently wrong with the latter use of the term; indeed, it may do something valuable to the extent that it signals to readers or hearers that the speaker is discussing "the something" in question as it is at its best, i.e., that we have moved into a normative or evaluative context. But to the extent that "vision" gets used in this way, its ability to serve as a shorthand for any specific set of concerns (in the ways that people like the author have sought to use the term "vision" to direct us to concerns relating to the whys and wherefores of Jewish life as they figure in education) is drastically weakened.[2]

[2]For a rich discussion of the ways in which definitions, and more generally, language, can both illuminate and confuse educational discourse, see Scheffler (1960).

I make this point for two reasons. The first is to urge that when the reader comes across references to "vision" in conversation, in research, or in other arenas, he or she should recognize the need to seek clarity (through questions or attention to context) about the way the term is being used. The second is to suggest that those interested in focusing the field of Jewish education on the concerns I am indicating with the terms "existential vision" and "educational vision" may want to consider the possibility of dropping the term altogether. The reasoning for this view is straightforward: When language, which is supposed to be a tool that facilitates communication, has the opposite effect—that is, when a term regularly invites confusion and an inordinate amount of energy regularly needs to go into getting beyond this confusion (with no enduring effects beyond the immediate context), it may be reasonable to consider abandoning the term and finding other ways of getting at the matters one wants to address. Indeed, in the present instance, it may well be possible to address the matters that are central to my discussion without recourse to the term "vision." And as a way of re-emphasizing and more fully specifying the terrain in which I am interested in this chapter, I will, before proceeding, now suggest what the pertinent questions would look like if they were articulated without relying on the term "vision":

1. *Basic purposes and outcomes*. In the service of what important and intrinsically desirable Jewish end-states (at the level of the individual and the community) should Jewish education be designed? Related to this, what guiding dreams and aspirations will give the leaders of Jewish educating institutions the energy and the sense of direction to go forward with their various challenges in the face of obstacles and distractions, as well as reasonable criteria for judging success in its most important sense?
2. *Rationale for basic purposes and outcomes*. *Why* are the outcomes identified in #1 important to encourage? Based on what considerations, Jewish and other texts, ideas, values, etc., should they get singled out as the most important things for us to achieve? *For example*: Are these purposes and hoped-for outcomes more *Jewishly authentic* (in a sense that would require a defensible explanation) than alternative guiding purposes that might be proposed? In what/whose authority are they grounded? More basically, how do a person's views on these matters reflect his/her *personal stance*—what the person stands for—in relation to the indispensable heart and soul of Jewish life?
3. *The practical value of clarity of purpose*. What are the ways in which the achievement of clarity concerning #s 1 and 2 can effectively guide the formulation of aims for, as well as the practices of, Jewish educating institutions like schools and camps and in domains that encompass curriculum, pedagogy, hiring, budget allocations, and educational evaluation?
4. *Creating a change-friendly cultural and organizational infrastructure*. What organizational and cultural considerations, processes, activities, resources, obstacles, etc. need to be attended to if, in any given setting, an overall approach to education is to emerge that is animated by profound purposes and is otherwise sound? And what do educational leaders (professional and volunteer) need to be

able to understand, to be able to do, and to do—what kinds of people do they need to be—if they are to attend to these matters effectively under real-world conditions without burning out in the process?

5. *Ownership of the change-agenda and process*. What constellation of stakeholders in an educating community/congregation needs to "own" or identify with answers to some or possibly all of the matters alluded to above in order for these answers to foster the progress of the educating institution in an effective and ethically justifiable way? Through what kind of activities or processes might such shared understandings (the requisite sense of shared ownership or buy-in) emerge?
6. *The field of Jewish education's need for leadership in this domain*. [For those interested in advancing the agenda of work intimated in the preceding questions by cultivating appropriate kinds of educational leaders, the following question becomes critical:] What kinds of people should be recruited to transform Jewish education so that it is genuinely organized around clear, important, and inspiring purposes? Related to this: By means of what kinds of materials, questions, inquiries, strategies, and activities can these change-agents be helped to achieve sufficient sophistication concerning the matters identified above to proceed effectively with this work?
7. *The skeptic's question*. Is it really true that the practice of education would profit from attention to all of the foregoing questions on the part of educational leaders, programs, and organizations? Are there times and situations in which systematic attention to some or all of these matters is unnecessary or counter-productive?

It may be clear but, in case not, worth noting that the set of concerns I have tried to identify without reference to the "V"-word are equally relevant to education outside the Jewish context—a world in which comparable confusion complicates discussions of "vision." But this matter is beyond the scope of this chapter. My more modest intention in identifying these concerns in the ways that I have is not to illuminate the challenges of general education but to specify the constellation of concerns that I want to explore. And having now done so, I will be using the term "vision" as a short-hand for these concerns.

Against this background, I move on now to indicate some of the more significant streams of research that have been emerging in the terrain under consideration. I will then go on to consider some additional research-challenges that need attention if the field of Jewish education is to take full advantage of the potentialities opened up by the recent interest in encouraging practice that is more vision-guided.

Research Directions to Date

1. *The need for and the nature of guiding visions: conceptual/theoretical pieces.* Some of the research in this domain has sought to clarify the concept of vision and, more importantly, to make the case for educational visions that are grounded in profound ideas concerning the whys and wherefores of Judaism and the Jewish

people. Those writing in this stream of research (e.g., Fox, 1973; Fox et al., 2003; Levisohn, 2005; Marom, 2005; Pekarsky, 1997, 2007; Katzman & Marom, 2007) have focused on the way attention to these matters can bring educators and the communities they serve to an energizing appreciation of why the enterprise of Jewish life and education is worth investing in and the many ways in which this appreciation, if grounded in understanding, has the power to guide and give coherence to educational practice and evaluation. Attention to these matters has also given rise to a variety of related conversations concerning, for example, the sources of worthy visions, the ways in which philosophical ideas might meaningfully be translated into practice (if "translated" is really the right word), whether attention to vision is always necessary or desirable, and various ethical matters that relate to the role of leaders, ordinary people, and others in identifying core religious and/or other ideas that should guide education in a particular community.

2. *Competing visions.* A second line of research has been organized around the challenge of articulating and making available to those deliberating the future of Jewish education powerful but competing understandings of what is most important and worth preserving in Judaism and the Jewish people—understandings which differently embody (interpret, assign value/significance to, prioritize, etc.) key concepts like God, Torah, Israel, Diaspora, and the Jewish people. The concern that has given rise to recent research in this area is twofold. On the one hand, decisions of educational leaders and their communities concerning an appropriate vision to guide their educational efforts should be based on more than activities of simple values-clarification and consensus-building; for too often these activities are grounded in relatively uninformed, idiosyncratic or conventional preconceptions and platitudes concerning the nature of Judaism that the decision makers happen to bring with them by virtue of immersion in a particular community. They should, so it is alleged, have the chance to encounter and wrestle with profound ideas that may challenge and take them beyond their existing understandings.

   On the other hand, those deliberating this important matter should not be limited by any single philosophical or other perspective on Judaism that someone—some authority or expert—has predetermined. Rather, this liberal perspective holds that informed choice demands an awareness of more than one serious alternative. On the way to a decision concerning the aims of Jewish education, people should have the chance to embark on a process of thoughtful deliberation that is grounded in an examination of more than one potentially powerful perspective on the nature and significance of Jewish life. The most significant project in this domain to date is embodied in *Visions of Jewish Education* (2003), in which world-class scholars like Professors Menachem Brinker (2003), Moshe Greenberg (2003), Michael Meyer (2003), Michael Rosenak (2003), and Isadore Twersky (2003) thoughtfully lay out informed visions of Jewish life and education representing very different religious and other perspectives, all of them anchored in Jewish culture. Accompanied by discussions of the ways in which commitment to any one of these visions can illuminate the challenges and the

design of practice, this book has been playing an invaluable role in helping relevant constituencies that are concerned with strengthening Jewish education in the twenty-first century understand why and how attention to questions of vision can enhance the quality and outcomes of practice.[3]

3. *Examples of vision-guided institutions.* In the spirit of "one picture is worth a thousand words," a number of pieces have been written that attempt to vividly portray specific vision-guided educational programs and institutions (Fox with Novak, 1997; Pekarsky, 2006).[4] Such case studies are intended to convey, at one and the same time, what a guiding vision is, what it might mean for this vision to be embodied in every nook and cranny of institutional life, as well as the power of such a vision to offer those charged with determining the direction of education in a particular context an invaluable, non-arbitrary basis for decision making and evaluation. The animating hope is that, in combination with theoretical pieces that make the case for the practical value of investing time and energy in thinking about "the big questions," such case studies will catalyze a desire on the part of educational institutions and their leaders, as well as those shaping policy for larger communities, to consider embracing a serious "educational visions" agenda.
4. *The process of change.* Attention to the social processes through which new visions emerge and come to be shared, embodied, and institutionalized is, of course, essential if an educating institution is to move toward a vision-guided identity and reality. It is therefore not surprising that another stream of recent and continuing research focuses on the process of change in its social, psychological, and organizational dimensions, often with attention to the role of "the change-agent" in the process (e.g., Aron, 1998, 2000, 2002; Marom, 2003; Schein, 2005, 2009). This work has significantly illuminated the cultural and social realities that need to be taken into account in seeking to encourage the emergence of a focused community agenda that encourages and supports enthusiastic buy-in and its meaningful implementation in an actual organizational setting. This body of research draws from theory but also from a number of change-initiatives, from which researchers continue to learn down to the present. Like some of the work pointed to above, this work was prefigured in some of Fox's early work. In particular, following his own teacher, Joseph Schwab (1970), Fox, in his article "The Art of Translation" (2003), reiterated his view, also stressed in his other writings, that some of the best ideas of all in education, both Jewish and general, have failed to significantly influence practice because of insufficient or naïve attention

[3]Powerful guiding visions have also been articulated in relation to the challenges of general education in the United States. See, for example, Dewey (1901); Noddings (1984); Schrag (1995); Nussbaum (1997).

[4]Though not as plentiful as one might imagine, there are also examples of vision-guided institutions in the world of general education, some of which have been written up. The most famous is the school developed by John Dewey in Chicago at the end of the nineteenth century (Mayhew & Edwards, 2007; Dewey, 1901).

to the creation of the cultural, organizational, and intellectual infrastructure that meaningful implementation would demand.[5]

Challenges in Need of Attention

For those (like the author) who believe that the recent, relatively general, interest in matters relating to guiding educational visions is an important but fragile step forward, this is not a moment for complacency—especially since the promise implicit in this development has a long way to go before it is significantly realized, and there is a danger that the interest in vision will prove a passing fad. Below I identify a number of matters that need attention in the field, and on the part of researchers and others, if the desired progress is to be made.

From initial desire to vision-guided practice. As already suggested, in part due to publications that have emerged in the last 20 years and other efforts at conveying the need for guiding visions in Jewish education, many educators and lay leaders have come to believe that attention needs to go into developing and actualizing existential and educational visions with the power to guide practice in their communities and institutions. But because the work is hard and delicate, there is a danger that an institution (or community) that undertakes it on its own and unaided will prove unsuccessful. Among the many worrisome possibilities are the following: the effort may never move beyond a very superficial level; or the process may surface underlying tensions in the community or organization in ways that prove paralyzing or otherwise counter-productive; or it may, for various reasons, lead to a process-undermining sense of frustration or demoralization. To proceed effectively with the challenge of developing and implementing a guiding vision in a way that allows for the necessary kinds of shared ownership and that makes good educational sense may often require a thoughtfully designed, evolving process that is guided by sophisticated good sense. A major part of this challenge is practical: making available to institutions and especially to those who would lead change-efforts the intellectual and human resources that will support, enrich, and guide their efforts. But this practical challenge itself demands continuing research concerning both the best ways to navigate the change-process and the kind of scaffolding that will help those who have decided to embark on it. Marom's *Limud Halimud* [*Learning Learning*] (2008) offers an example (in Hebrew) of an effort to create such scaffolding in an Israeli context.

This may be the appropriate moment to emphasize the need for a particular kind of research (and practice) agenda, the core elements of which were separately discussed in the preceding section. On the one hand, there has been research

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[5]Prominent among thinkers outside of Jewish life who have been concerned with the organizational challenges associated with meaningfully introducing powerful ideas into practice include Edgar Schein (1992) and Peter Senge (2006), although it is important to add that Schein, like many others who write on this subject, pays less attention than one might hope to the work an organization needs to do to identify a *worthy* vision (a topic to which I return below).

focused on how to navigate the change process in light of organizational and cultural realities. On the other hand, as also noted earlier, a recent research stream has focused on the identification of varied content-rich visions of Jewish life and education at their best, as well on the associated challenge of identifying a fruitful process for engaging those who are leaders at institutional and communal levels in a serious encounter with these visions, in the service of their arriving at inspiring, content-rich, and profound visions that can guide their efforts. Unfortunately, these two research streams have not sufficiently spoken to each other, and there is a need for dialogue and research that crosses this troubling divide. Specifically, there is a need to think about how to encourage organizations struggling to be more vision-guided not just to devote more, and more content-rich, attention to the challenge of thoughtfully arriving at visions that are rich in powerful Jewish ideas that are also resonant with contemporary needs and sensibilities, but also to do so in ways that are simultaneously sensitive to organizational and cultural realities and needs. Research that focuses on this challenge may play a useful role in helping organizations achieve practice that is meaningfully vision-guided.

A significant part of the needed research would seek, with careful attention to the challenges of practice, to integrate two of the research-streams referred to above: the one concerned with a community's effort to thoughtfully identify and embrace a compelling existential vision (i.e., an understanding of the aims of Jewish education that is anchored in a profound and inspiring conception of the nature and significance of Jewish life) and the one concerned with the cultural and organizational considerations that need to be attended to if an institution/community is to successfully actualize this guiding idea in its practice.

If vision-guided practice is to become more than a dream or a very occasional exception to the rule, it is important that researchers and others pay serious attention to the role of lay people (i.e., the nonprofessional volunteers—especially leaders but also the rank-and-file individuals who are the heart and soul of educating institutions, congregations, and communities) in the move toward vision-guided practice. Too often, the professionals who occupy roles of communal and educational leadership have viewed lay people with mixed feelings: on the one hand, they need their money, their enthusiastic advocacy, and their active participation; on the other hand, there has, historically, been a tendency to view them as being (with significant exceptions) unsophisticated if not ignorant, Jewishly and/or educationally. Fortunately, this situation has begun to change. For one thing, communal and educational professionals have come to realize that the lay community brings a wealth of practical and other kinds of wisdom and expertise to questions of Jewish life and education. Second, even if the older stereotypes contained a measure of truth, through important cultural changes in the Jewish community the lay leadership in contemporary Jewish life has been developing increasing sophistication concerning the nature of Judaism and the challenges of Jewish life. Third, those concerned with change have come to realize that the lay community—both leaders and others—can only become effective ambassadors for new ideas if they genuinely appreciate and have a sense of ownership in relation to these ideas—which may only come about

if they play a non-perfunctory role in the institution/community's effort to identify the core ideas that will guide it.

These and other circumstances have begun to foster an important and salutary change in attitude with respect to the role of lay leaders in the process of moving toward vision-guided education. But the promise implicit in this change is unlikely to be realized unless greater clarity is achieved concerning the following basic question: What *is* the appropriate role of lay people in the process of determining the aims and design of a vision-guided educational program or institution? There are both pragmatic and ethical dimensions to this question. Pragmatically, the question is this: If the enthusiastic desire for vision-guided change is to effectively travel a journey that includes the identification of a worthy vision around which to mobilize knowledgeable and enthusiastic support, and an effective effort to actualize it in a meaningful way, what understandings, attitudes, inputs, and involvements are necessary on the part of lay leaders? Ethically, questions cluster around matters like: Who (morally speaking) *should* be deciding on behalf of whom what the guiding Jewish educational vision of an organization or community should be? Whose views should the vision reflect? To what extent, if any, should the views of rabbis and educational leaders carry more moral and intellectual weight in the process than those of others members of the community, and what is it ethical for rabbis and other professionals to do in order to encourage adoption of their favored views? These matters would benefit from the work of thoughtful researchers who are both savvy about organizations and contemporary Jews *and* sophisticated and concerned about ethical matters.

A corollary of this is the need for serious inquiry concerning the way to educate the leaders and the educators who will be called on to encourage and guide vision-guided educational change and practice. Fortunately, a number of significant Jewish educational leadership programs and educator-preparation programs have been seriously engaging with the challenge of educating professionals who will have the requisite competencies and attitudes to do meaningful work in this territory, and some have been writing about what they are learning (e.g., Nisan, 1997; Saks, 2008). Continuing practice-enriched research in this domain will be invaluable. And because, as already suggested, lay leaders must play a central role in the advancement of vision-guided practice, research that illuminates what professionals need for this work needs to be complemented by research, some of it based on past experience and on imaginative pilot projects, that helps the field think about ways in which to encourage and prepare talented *lay leaders* to engage in fruitful ways with the challenges of vision-guided change and practice in their domains of leadership.

The challenge of truth. My discussion of this matter is indebted, most immediately, to conversations with my teacher Israel Scheffler and, more generally, to what might be described as the Socratic perspective on the journey toward human well-being. As is well known, Socrates (e.g., Plato, 1969) took great pains to distinguish his educational agenda from that of the sophists, as he understood them. From his perspective, the sophists were individuals skilled in arts like rhetoric, public speaking, and advocacy who advertised themselves as capable of transmitting these skills to others so that they could more effectively convince others of whatever they

wanted to convince them. “We have a powerful weapon,” the sophists (as viewed by Socrates) proclaim, “and, for a price, we will pass it on to you to use for whatever purposes you want.” To Socrates, this was a superficial and morally repugnant use of language and the human capacity to reason: The challenge, he urged, was not to help people learn how to convince others of their views, but to help them figure out whether their views could withstand genuinely critical scrutiny, to help them move closer to the truth, and, most importantly, to help them acquire the attitudes and intellectual tools that would encourage them to continue on a serious pursuit of true ideas. All of this flowed, of course, from Socrates’ conviction that whether or not our beliefs are true (or grow closer to the truth than they have been) makes all the difference, and that it is possible, if not to arrive at final truths in any particular inquiry, to arrive at more adequate beliefs and to realize that one has continuing work to do.

Located within this Socratic tradition, Scheffler (unpublished comments, made in a Mandel-sponsored seminar at Brandeis University, 2005) has pointed to the danger that those championing the idea of vision in Jewish education will limit their efforts to helping educators to clarify their guiding educational commitments and to identify relevant implications for educational practice and evaluation. Not that these efforts are, in his view, unimportant; but they should not displace or compromise another key dimension of what might be called “vision-work.” This dimension is organized around the question “Is the vision—the guiding set of intellectual and moral commitments that you champion and want to use as a basis for influencing the lives of individuals and communities—really defensible? Does it pass the test of truth?”.

Scheffler and others associated with this view are not naïve about the difficulties of addressing these matters. Among other things, they realize that achieving reasonable epistemological and/or moral warrant for one’s ideas cannot be accomplished via any kind of single, obvious procedure, or that it can be established in a knock-down, irrefutable, and permanent way, such that further critical deliberation is beside the point. Indeed, serious questions can and should be asked concerning the criteria that a truer, more defensible, more worthy view would need to satisfy, and the kinds of activity and inputs that are likely to give rise to views that satisfy these criteria. But this is precisely the point I want to emphasize. Serious philosophically grounded research is needed that will illuminate this question—research that can help those who seek to guide Jewish life and education to struggle with the question “How can we best assure ourselves that the key ideas we champion are worthy?”

A related research question concerns why it is that those charged with guiding Jewish communal life and education—including many of those charged with cultivating educational leaders—often shy away from serious engagement with these basic questions concerning the intellectual and moral warrant for the agendas they believe important. More than one possibility suggests itself: is it, for example, because they fear or believe that there is no way of making progress in the direction of truth and worthiness—that, in the spirit of relativism, all views are on a par and that the most anyone can reasonably hope for is that they will become clear enough to guide practice in a systematic and/or consistent way? Is it because it

will be thought socially awkward, insensitive, offensive, or divisive to put serious challenges to people who have struggled to articulate their heart-felt understandings and commitments—understandings and commitments that may be inseparable from their personal identities? Or might it be because the social and/or cultural powers-that-be have settled views about the commitments to be emphasized and do not want to create situations in which these views, like others, will be submitted to genuinely critical thinking that might call the worthiness of these views into question? Perhaps none of these hypotheses is meritorious, and perhaps, to different degrees in different circumstances, some or all of them are—and, of course, there might be other hypotheses that we have not identified. Research into these matters, in this case not philosophical but perhaps sociological and social psychological, may have significant potential to illuminate some of the field's difficult, practical challenges.

The dance of theory and practice. Debates concerning the best way to organize Jewish education are often contaminated by an undercurrent of tension. At the risk of caricature, here is how the situation might be described: On the one side, a cultural/intellectual elite made up of people whose lives have been profoundly shaped by a lifetime of immersion in and inquiry concerning significant spheres of Jewish culture sense that in the typical situation, well-intentioned, but poorly educated practitioners set about the education of new generations of Jews in hackneyed, conventional ways that reflect ignorance, misunderstandings, and criteria of success that have more to do with keeping learners satisfied and coming back than with any more serious agenda. As far as this elite is concerned, Jewish life will be more vital, robust, and meaningful if Jewish education is organized around the kinds of powerful Jewish ideas to which they have access—ideas which, unfortunately, have been marginalized, if not completely lost sight of, by those usually charged with the challenges of Jewish education. Hence, their strong desire to influence the field. It is important to add that, in many cases, the hope animating these people is not that their particular beliefs concerning the nature of Judaism and its major challenges will be adopted but that those who will shape the direction of practice will decide their fundamental direction based on a serious encounter with a range of possibly competing ideas. The point—and the challenge as understood by those who have championed the need to infuse Jewish education with serious ideas—is to ensure that the work of Jewish educators is informed by profound (*relevant* and *authentic* are often code-words here) Jewish ideas that go beyond what, so these critics believe, those who typically set and enact the agenda for Jewish education can be assumed to possess under contemporary cultural circumstances.

On the other side, practitioners sometimes resent what feels like the smug and patronizing (top-down) attitude of the other group. Not only, they feel, is this elite of intellectuals out of touch with the challenges of practice in the contemporary world, they do not recognize that the practitioners and lay leaders often embody in their hearts, minds, and work profoundly important intuitions concerning the nature and direction of Jewish life and education—an idea captured in the phrase "the wisdom of practice" (and of ordinary people). Associated with this outlook is the belief that long before the intervention of the elites, practice was already (as it continues to be)

saturated with profound ideas—ideas that may be as worthy if not more worthy than those that these patronizing intellectuals bring to the allegedly boorish masses.

In the spirit of John Dewey (1901, 1963), the unhealthy tension just described calls on those interested in improving Jewish education to consider the possibility that important truths lurk in both perspectives just articulated, and that serious inquiry would help us understand what these truths are and how they might be meaningfully honored in our approach to the field's development. More generally, there is a continuing need to better understand the nature and value of a fruitful *interplay* in education (both Jewish and general) between practice, on the one hand, and the world of big ideas and theory, on the other. In the effort to respond to this need, university-based researchers, in particular, would do well to take more account than we usually do of the views of thoughtful philosophical conservatives like Michael Oakeshott (1962) who believe that the world of practice is much richer with finely integrated and invaluable, if not always articulated, ideas and intuitions than intellectuals and others typically realize. In entitling this section "The dance of theory and practice" I mean to suggest as an hypothesis for this inquiry that the relationship between theory and practice in Jewish education is, at its best, a dynamically changing non-hierarchical, web-like interplay of ideas and practice, enriched by continuing evaluation that regularly introduces the need for adjustments, big and small, throughout the entire system. As those familiar with the relevant fields can attest, these ideas have long been articulated within domains like the philosophy of science and ethics, and they have also been sometimes been voiced in Jewish education by thinkers like Fox and Schwab. But precisely because these ideas are, at a cost to progress in Jewish education, often only honored in the breach, they need continuing attention on the part of researchers and others whose work may have the power to influence Jewish communal life and education. Their challenge is to help interested individuals and organizations think productively about how to overcome the generally false and counter-productive divides between theory and practice, "intellectuals" and "practitioners," and "visionaries" and "implementers."

Conclusion

This chapter has been guided by several purposes. One of them is to identify a constellation of ideas that relate to what I have referred to as existential and educational visions, and I have tried to suggest why attention to these matters has been thought important for the advancement of Jewish life and education. I have also sought to indicate some obstacles that have attended the effort to advance vision-guided Jewish education, with special emphasis on the ways in which the language of vision, as currently employed, has itself sometimes ill-served those who have sought to communicate the importance of the terrain in question. Against this background, I have sought to identify major directions of recent research, as well as to signal some directions worthy of further inquiry. Since I identify strongly with the idea that Jewish education needs to be organized around guiding visions that give pride of place to powerful ideas concerning the potentialities and significance of

Judaism and Jewish life, I also believe strongly that the challenges herein identified deserve serious attention. As many readers may know, we live at a time when many thoughtful people are proclaiming that Jewish educational practice and policy are insufficiently driven by *empirical* data concerning what Jewish education looks like "on the ground" and the effects of different variables, practices, and policies on educational outcomes, and I fully agree about the importance of these kinds of empirical research. At the same time, it is important that we not lose sight of the need for continuing research, much of it more philosophical, that focuses on questions of basic educational purpose, including the matters raised in this chapter and associated with the concept of guiding visions.

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Section Two: Teaching and Learning

Introduction

Teaching and learning are the essential processes of education. The chapters in this section explore the nature of teaching and learning in Jewish education from 14 different perspectives, focusing on aspects of curriculum, instruction and learner engagement. Our authors have explored elements of curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted and as an attempt to achieve certain ends in the learners. There is also a strong thread running through these chapters which shows the relevance of curriculum as process. Curriculum is not just a physical set of objectives but rather the interaction of teacher, learner and knowledge. While the emphasis throughout is on current educational models, these chapters also look at the possibilities and challenges of change and development. Throughout, the chapters explore teaching and learning through the lens of Jewish-educational research.

A recurring theme in these chapters is the impact of aspects of teaching and learning on the individual lives of the learners. Whether it is through learning a language with the intent to facilitate integration into society, as Nava Nevo explores, or through the growing interest in Jewish life-cycle education, as examined by Howard Deitcher, it is clear that the themes in these chapters play a critical role in shaping individual Jewish lives. As both Nevo and Deitcher show in their analyses of subject matter structured by shared commonplace components but conceived for widely different curricular purposes, the context of Jewish education (in Israel and the Diaspora, in orthodox and liberal religious settings) makes as sharp a difference to the content of Jewish education as do the needs of the learners in view, whether children or adults.

Our relationship to community is also explored in other chapters of this section of the *International Handbook*. Several authors touch upon the relationship between Jewish-travel education and community. Travel in general, as a Jewish-educational tool in contemporary-Jewish education, is explored by Erik Cohen. More specifically, Scott Copeland observes the centrality of Israel travel in the development of Jewish communal life. Similarly, in another chapter on travel, Jeremy Leigh draws on empirical research to address elements of community. This perspective is challenged by David Mittelberg, who argues for Jewish peoplehood education, asserting

that today, Jewish youth seem to feel in little existential need to belong to the Jewish collective, whether local or national. Hence, he argues for focused attention on Jewish-peoplehood education in order to cultivate a stronger sense of belonging. Mittelberg's peoplehood paradigm has some resonance with Leigh in that both consider how travel can instil in young people a need for belonging. Both Leigh and Mittelberg also pose research questions designed to move this particular discourse forward. In turn, they respond to difficult questions posed by Erik Cohen in earlier important work in this field. Copeland and Mittelberg both also cite Michael Rosenak's works, whose philosophical explorations of both the paradigm of Jewish peoplehood and the thick cultural context around community show a variety of interpretive possibilities. For Jewish students and teachers coming to Israel, exposure to the tough issues facing Israeli society, with all of their complexities and heterogeneity, is a challenge towards engagement with the possibilities of exploring Jewish and non-Jewish literatures in debate. Jewish peoplehood fuels the continuing search for shared meaning within the current ambiguity and ambivalence that Jews face both in Israel and abroad.

Travel gives us an opportunity to recall the past and link that past to our present through experiential means. In their chapter on teaching Jewish history, Benjamin Jacobs and Yona Shem-Tov look at how recalling, reviewing and remembering the past plays a central role in most Jewish schools. They are interested in the formal curriculum and their chapter focuses on the main orientations towards Jewish history education today – identification, group citizenship, moral response, integration and adjustment, and intellectual pursuit. Again the two themes of individual Jewish identity and community identity feature in their work.

Holocaust education is frequently placed within the history curriculum, although it is considered a field of inquiry on its own. In her chapter, Simone Schweber explores the current state of Holocaust education and asks what might Holocaust education do if conceptualised not from the standpoint of building nations or concretising collective memory but as a project of global citizenship and human understanding. Again, the notion of what it means to be part of the Jewish people and where Jews situate themselves among other peoples resonates with themes explored by Mittelberg, Cohen and Leigh.

Part of the challenge of looking outwards and placing the Jewish community within the wider community in a teaching and learning framework concerns the approach taken towards religious plurality in Jewish schools. Michael Gillis acknowledges that teaching other religions as an integral part of Jewish education is an uncommon practice, both in Israel and most of the Diaspora. In many countries, the reality of plurality has prompted a re-thinking of the teaching of religion in general education. Using Israel, Britain and America as the sites through which to explore this issue, Gillis argues that not only is there no incompatibility between learning about other religions and Jewish education, but also that such learning can be viewed as a necessary part of a Jewish education.

Subject matter knowledge acquisition is a central aim of education and Barry Holtz explores the nature of Bible education in contemporary Jewish education through an examination of the history of Jewish Bible interpretation, reflecting the

content of Bible teaching. He explores these distinctions by researching various curricular projects and pedagogies. His chapter concludes by looking at research which draws upon work in pedagogical content knowledge and specific orientations to subject matter, exploring the implications of this scholarship for Bible teaching.

Using a model for encouraging critical thinking in Talmud pedagogy indicates to students that such a mode is internal to Jewish tradition. The chapter by Marjorie Lehman and Jane Kanarek shows how rabbinic texts can be interrogated and put into conversation with one another, and how through Talmud study students can question their teachers. Questions provoke anxiety, and debate fosters intellectual growth. But, at the root of this inquiry is a desire to embed rabbinic tradition in the hearts and minds of its participants. When this model is followed, whereby conversations are rooted in a set of authoritative texts, students are asked to learn to speak a specific language and to think along with a particular tradition.

Whilst cognitive curricular areas traditionally focus on intellectual growth, as expounded by Holtz, Lehmann, and Gillis, the arts provide questions and concerns for both Jewish education and educational research. In this section of the *International Handbook*, two chapters explore contemporary issues relating to Jewish arts education. In the first, Robbie Gringras explores what he terms as the 'seam-line' between education and art. He explores the questions and concerns that engage educators interested in creating culturally significant meaning, encoded in an affecting and sensuous medium. Using song, literature and poetry to illustrate his argument, Gringras suggests, from his place within Israel, that art can be a significant aspect of any Jewish curriculum, particularly in the informal sector.

Ofra Backenroth takes a different, and Diaspora-oriented, perspective as she focuses on the value of the arts in the formal Jewish education system, where, in the context of a dual curriculum, they must wrestle for time and budget. She examines the goals, content and methodology of how the arts are being taught in today's Jewish day schools in North America. Both she and Gringras call for a continuum of curricular integration, where the teaching of the arts ranges from arts as discrete disciplines to multidisciplinary integration.

Finally, this section focuses on two aspects of teaching and learning that are very much twenty-first-century additions to the field, namely the environment and technology. Of course, an interest in caring for the environment has been a Jewish concern since the earliest times. In the Bible, in *Bereshit* (Genesis 2:15), humanity is called upon as stewards put on this earth to look after it, but in the twenty-first century, caring for the environment has taken on new and acute significance. For Eilon Schwartz, that there is no academic field of Jewish environmental education today, mirrors the peripheral status of environmentalism within the Jewish-educational establishment, and within society in general. Shwartz proposes that like so many shifts in educational theory and practice, change in public consciousness and political will not come from the top-down, but from the bottom-up. It will come from a growing field of educational innovators whose central challenge will be to take their intuition as to what needs to change, and transform it into a reflective educational practice. The Jewish future, he suggests, depends on the collective ability to re-imagine educational and communal institutions, and to build a Jewish community

where continuity does not begin and end at the Jewish doorstep as if Jewish existence lives apart on the only planet on which humanity has been created to live.

Brian Amkraut's chapter is no less grounded in a sense of the current historical moment. Amkraut writes about the digital era and shows how perspectives on Jewish continuity in general and approaches to Jewish education in particular are now, and will continue to be, shaped by a new world in which traditional notions of authority, community and identity are challenged and redefined. As Schwartz does in his chapter with reference to environmentalism, Amkraut argues that embrace of new technologies does not only call for extending the subject matter of Jewish education, it calls for thinking anew about its purposes and practices, texts and contexts.

In summary, this section of the *International Handbook* explores both subject matter and transmission of that subject matter, formal and informal curricular opportunities, the cognitive and the affective, and traditional and new areas of teaching and learning for the Jewish education academic and practitioner. It promises to engage theorists and practitioners, scholars and students.

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Art: Educating with Art Without Ruining It

Robbie Gringras

Introduction

In education circles it has become fashionable to state that "Art is a text." This is a deceptively problematic statement. It signals, on the one hand, the educator's admirable desire to broaden horizons and to allow for non-prose and non-academia to play a role in the educative process. In this sense, the statement is to be welcomed. On the other hand, as T.S. Eliot pointed out, "Form is content, and content is form." The form of the statement, its language, reveals its hidden message. While granting art some educational "status" by naming it as text (as opposed to an irrelevant ornament!), at the same time describing art as "text" co-opts art as a form of education. According to this formulation, art is not something else entirely, it is "just" another kind of text. This is problematic, because it encourages a misunderstanding of the nature of art and its ambivalent relationship with education. We as educators need to work a little harder before we so smoothly grasp art to our bosom.

So how should we understand art? What is it about art that makes it a different "animal" from education? How may we navigate the differences between the two, in a healthy way?

We might sketch out the parameters of our work by trying to understand what it is we mean by "art." The academic and artistic worlds abound with definitions of art. All of them contain differing amounts of truth, many are obscure, several incomprehensible, a few simplistic, others deep. In the end we should draw on the definition that helps us move beyond the philosophizing, and into work. A suggested beginning is a definition of art offered by Richard Anderson:

> Art is [1] culturally significant meaning, [2] skilfully encoded in an [3] affecting and sensuous medium. [my numbering] (Anderson, 2004)

This definition, that may be split into three distinct values, offers us an accessible way to understand the unique nature of art and points to the role of the educator in developing the receptive audience. The definition does not offer a sealed

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contradiction-free litmus test of what is art. It calls for judgment and exploration of how these values may be interpreted in our work in Jewish education.

Culturally Significant Meaning

The educator's first choice when working with art in an educational context is to decide what song, or book, image, or film, contributes to the overall educational aim. In Jewish education, what guidelines do we have for ourselves when searching for something of culturally significant meaning? We might perhaps set a baseline for a piece of art that contributes something significant to Jewish culture. In so doing, we begin the process of narrowing down our options, while, at the same time, opening up a can of worms. For when was the last time anyone succeeded in defining Jewish culture in any inclusive and persuasive way?

While not presenting an overarching cultural theory, Asaf Inbari wrote an article several years ago (Inbari, 2004) critiquing the way in which Israeli culture detaches itself from what he would define as Jewish culture. He takes a swipe at two "camps," and in so doing reveals our goal. He suggests that Jewish culture should address the experience and understanding of Jewish life in the present, while taking into account the traditions and approaches of the past. Those cultural "cultivators" who are unable or unwilling to make this connection should be understood as being outside Jewish culture:

> The cultivators [of Jewish culture] understand the present as the continuation of a living flow. Time, for them, is a river, not a puddle . . . The neglecters, on the other hand, stagnate in the puddle of mono-dimensional identity, secular and religious. . . The former live in a present with no past, and the latter in a past with no present. Both of them spend their lives throwing mud at each other from the bottom of the puddle. (Inbari 2004)

An ultra-orthodox approach to Jewish culture, that would prefer automatic reverence for past expressions of culture without addressing the present day context, is, in Inbari's understanding, living "in a past with no present." The more secular Jew who creates with no reference to past Jewish expressions is "living in a present with no past."

That which has culturally significant meaning addresses the connection between the Jewish past and present. The music of Jeremiah Lockwood's New York-based Sway Machinery (Machinery) is a fascinating example of art that splashes noisily in the river of Jewish culture. Lockwood's style combines the craziness of a David Byrne, his grandfather's chazanut (cantorial singing), and the challenging doom-laden tone of a Maggid on drugs. Lockwood's contribution to Sway Machinery draws on detailed and loving research into Jewish cantorial traditions, and a post-punk klezmer-like fusion.

Some would easily classify Sway Machinery's music as firmly in the "river" of Jewish culture. An extremely talented and internationally acclaimed Israeli pop star, Asaf Avidan (Avidan), creates Janis Joplin-like rock laments. Yet, he sings in English and makes little reference in content or style to anything Jewish or for that matter, Israeli. Far from being in the puddle or the river, we might say that

Asaf Avidan does not feel the need to even get his feet wet... But a song by Mook E (a well-known Israeli performer) asks more questions of us. *The Earth Weeps* (Mook E) laments immoral behavior, and, in particular, man's detrimental impact on the environment. Musically, the song is a mixture of folk protest and rap. The language is Hebrew, peppered with occasional phrases that refer to a shared Jewish past ("We were once slaves/Apparently so we will remain"). According to a simplistic expectation of a Jewish song that it either sound like synagogue or klezmer, then Mook E's song is not "culturally significant" for us. But if we were to ask to what extent the song swims in the flow of the Jewish river of culture, we might emerge with alternative and more fruitful answers.

Important here are not clear-cut differentiations, but the dimensions of the argument. "When a tradition is in good order it is always partially constituted by an argument about the goods the pursuit of which gives to that tradition its particular point and purpose... A living tradition ... is a historically extended, socially embodied argument" (MacIntyre, 1981). When we begin to argue about the location of a piece of art in the river or the puddle of Jewish culture, one can be confident our tradition is alive!

Extending the Canon

Inbari also frees us from the assumption that a Jewish text or artifact must be so defined according to the extent to which it draws on *Torat Yisrael*. *Torat Yisrael* is a phrase that refers to Jewish traditional practice, learning, and text. A Jewish piece of art in this sense would be one that draws on or makes specific reference to *Torat Yisrael.* The more mature among us may cite Leonard Cohen's adaptation of the *piyut* (hymn) *Unetane Tokef* (Cohen), while the under 30-year-olds would draw our attention to Matisyahu's song Jerusalem (Matisyahu) ("If I forget you, let me right hand forget what it suppose' to do ...").

Inbari suggests that there is another source of inspiration for Jewish creativity: that which emerges not necessarily from *Torat Yisrael*, but from Jewish *experience.* When Primo Levi wrote about the Holocaust, he did not necessarily make reference to the Torah. And yet a creation that speaks to the experience of Jews in the world, this is a text of *Am Yisrael*—the People of Israel—and as such, Inbari would suggest, has its place in the river of Jewish culture.

Limmud Jewish Education Conference in the UK once famously hosted the Israeli funk/rap band HaDag Nachash. Though the performance was a great popular success, the leadership of Limmud was ambivalent about the band's place at the conference. They felt the music was "not Jewish enough"—that it spoke to the Israeli experience, and not to the Jewish world. Limmud's leadership at the time saw *Torat Yisrael* as the key identifier for Jewish music. Inbari would push them to check themselves. Bearing in mind that Israel is the Jewish State, populated by a significant majority of Jews, might not art created from and about this context be seen as emerging from *Am Yisrael*?

Choosing According to Priorities

Having developed a broad definition of what we mean by art that is culturally significant, and expanded our horizons beyond *Torat Yisrael*, we can feel confident we will choose the "right" pieces of art to present to our students. We shall work with art that has "culturally significant meaning."

The next question is to what extent does this cultural significance present itself in the experience of the art itself, and how much should the educator impart?

If the educator is mainly interested in encouraging the student to interpret the piece of art individually and freely, with little necessity to refer to the cultural significance of the art, then one need not necessarily impose any criteria. But if we are suggesting that there is learning to be done from an encounter with a piece of art, then we need to enter into the *discourse of meaning* that is constructed through a partnership between the artistry and the audience. Some art, such as popular film, ventures deep into the discourse of meaning, in that it will add narration, emotional soundtracks, full scenery, and make-up. Other art is performed live, with the possibility of a mutual dialog over the event developing with the audience as it unfolds. Other arts, such as the plastic arts, will often leave far more room for the interpretation of the audience.

Teachers, who wish their students to understand the cultural significance of the art with as little mediation from the educator as possible, should choose art forms that are most active in the discourse of cultural meaning about the work itself. For example, the opening scene of *Fiddler on the Roof* (Tradition) provides the viewer with an historical, sociological, economic, and religious context to the trials of Tevye, the central character in the story. The narrative form and clear use of camera work indicate to us that Tevye is our central character, through whose tribulations we are expected to experience the film, and the music—both sung and background—works to influence our emotional preferences. Exposition and contextualization is built into the art form itself. As a result, ignorance of Eastern European Jewish life is no barrier to an audience picking up the cultural significance of the film.

By contrast, a Chagall painting offers hints, but does not enter into the contextual conversation in anything like such a proactive way. An outsider or newcomer to Jewish culture would gain little of substance from certain Chagall paintings, without some form of explanation or information external to the painting itself. For example, a well-visited site celebrating Chagall's work refers to The Blue Violinist (Chagall). The interpretation of this ethereal and celebratory *Fiddler on the Roof* that is offered by the site's creator makes absolutely no reference to Jewish culture, other than the acknowledgment that the background features a Jewish village (Paintings). Without an educator or Jewish art critic pointing out the almost direct visual reference to Shalom Aleichem, the uninitiated would have no reason to assume a Jewish aspect to the painting. By contrast, the same art lover would not be able to leave a screening of *Fiddler on the Roof* without knowing a great deal about Jewish shtetl life—for the genre is far more active in the discourse of meaning.

Culturally Significant Meaning—Summary So Far

Our choices of art can thus be guided by Inbari's river/puddle "rule of thumb," so that we may choose art that is culturally significant to our Jewish educational aims. Our choices also may be guided by the extent to which we search for art forms that are more or less involved in the discourse of their own meaning.

Once these choices have been made, we are then faced with the key challenge for the educator: when, in what fashion, and to what extent do we wish to explicate for our students the cultural significance we judge the piece of art embodies? How much do we feel we need to "feed" our students with context, or information? How much information or processing is enough? When should this work be done—before, during, or after experiencing the art? What pedagogy should we use?

We shall address all these questions later, after having tackled the other two key phrases in Anderson's definition: "skilful encoding," and "moving and affecting." Appreciation of these two phrases will aid us in our decisions.

Skillfully Encoded

When an observant Jew enters a house, she does not make a speech about her connection to the history of the Jewish people. She does not quote from Deuteronomy, nor does she attempt to explain her emotional connection to her Jewish roots. She most certainly does not express her fear of demons, her belief in the divine, or talk about the feeling of security she has on entering a house that may not be her own. She probably would not tell us all about the tenth plague in Egypt. She will simply reach out her hand, touch it gently to the decorative mezuzah on the doorpost, and then kiss her hand.

This evocative combination of movement and the visual arts that says so much with such concision and beauty is an excellent example of "skilful encoding." Beyond the physical skills involved in the calligraphy of the rolled-up text, the design of the mezuzah casing, and the development of Jews' touching the mezuzah and then kissing their hand—the gesture itself skillfully refers to deep expressions without spelling them out in harsh prose. Touching a mezuzah and kissing one's hand has symbolism and depth: It leaves room for interpretation, for individual intention, for the echoes of history. As such, an educator attempting to explain this gesture to a non-Jew, or to a student from a non-observant household, would need to do a significant amount of *de-coding* in order for the full cultural significance of the gesture to be made clear. The gesture

> ... has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded... A beholder who lacks the specific code feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colors and lines, without rhyme or reason ... The "eye" is a product of history reproduced by education. (Bourdieu, 1984)

The work of the educator when dealing with art is to "reproduce" this "eye" with our students. It is not our work to choose to present our students with art that needs no "eye." Too often we are tempted to work with art that is literal, explanatory,

mono-dimensional—in short, that which Anderson would tell us is not art at all! We must first take care to choose a piece of art that has skillfully encoded its meaning, displaying talent, craftsmanship, and concision.

Next, we must begin to assess what "code" is lacking on the part of our students, and establish strategies to impart these "codes." Clearly one form of code might be language. A rhythmic poem by Yehuda HaLevi, the dense overwhelming language of the book of Job, or the expansive prose of Amos Oz, are encoded in the first instance by their being in the "code" of Hebrew. But, of course, beyond such easily identifiable codes we must uncover those concise evocations that are such only to those who are familiar with the cultural settings in which they are presented.

In Yehuda Amichai's poem, *An Arab shepherd is searching for his goat on Mount Zion* (Amichai) there is more encoding than just the Hebrew. For example, to the educated Jewish ear, Amichai's brief yet telling reference to the Passover song *Had Gadya* (One Goat) is rich with echoes of mortality, violence, family, and Jewish tradition. A simple "translation" of the meaning of the two Aramaic words does not unlock their code. Art is often more a celebration of "that which is not said" (Berger, 1995) than of what is expounded fully.

Great art is enriched and fired with such "skilful encoding." A stroke of a brush that references a past master, the use of a particular idiom that conjures an era, a wordless glance that speaks beyond words. These are what make art so evocative since they open doors to shared human and cultural experiences, without forcing one to enter. It is this gentle invitation to interpretation that makes good art so inviting and powerful. As educators choosing to work with art, we must value our sense of such "skilful encoding." Not all that is immediately explained and unequivocally defined is inviting. Rather than searching to present only the most "accessible" art (read: "poorly or barely encoded"), we must explore pedagogical techniques for giving our students their own access to the appropriate code.

John Berger, when exploring the idea of narrative, points out what Walter Benjamin had noted several years earlier: The value of a story is measured by its distance from "information." Berger writes about story, but as Jewish educators concerned with the connection between that which is taught and the Jewish identity of the learner, we might read "story" as "art in education":

> No story is like a wheeled vehicle whose contact with the road is continuous. Stories walk, like animals or men... Every step is a stride over something not said... All stories are discontinuous and are based on a tacit agreement about what is not said... when a story makes sense of its discontinuities, it acquires authority as a story. (Berger, ibid.)

As educators, our concern will always be to make sure that our students are able to "fill in the space between the strides." At the same time, we must never forget that the engaging power of the art lies precisely in the fact that it does "leave space." This space between expression and meaning frees us to make assumptions, to draw contradictory conclusions, and to insert ourselves into the interpretation. This invitation to create meaning from a piece of art is what allows the student to feel "ownership"—another way of saying that the story emerging from the piece of art has become part of the student's own story.

Here the tension comes clear. On the one hand, we wish the art experience to leave room for the student to "fill in the space" from his or her own experiences and understandings for the experience to be personal. On the other hand, we wish for the student to appreciate the codes that the artist is using, so as to share interpretations of the art with all the Jewish world, and not just themselves. How do we de-code the art so the student may find the Judaism beyond it, without removing all "space" for the student to find themselves?

How Much Code Is Needed?

Internationally renowned theatre designer E. Gordon Craig was famously reported to have asked: "How many trees must be on the stage, in order for there to be a forest?" Here we would seem to be asking ourselves a similar question. How much code must an educator give to the students in order for them to be able to both understand and enter into this piece of art? For both questions, the answer is in the eye of the beholder. The educator needs to carefully assess the piece of art and the students before making the call.

The moment we choose to bring this question to the forefront, we are already on the right track. A few more additions to our glossary might now be of use. In *Gifts of the Muse* (Kevin F. McCarthy), a research paper into the arts commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, the writers are very careful to draw a distinction between what they term the instrumental benefits of the arts, and what they term the intrinsic benefits of the arts. For our purposes in Jewish education we might translate this as art *lo lishma* (for education's sake) and art *lishma* (for art's sake). We are working with art so as to maximize its intrinsic effect as art (for art's sake—*lishma*), and as an instrumental educational tool (for education's sake—*lo lishma*).

It would seem that when we lack code for interpreting art, this lack can affect both aspects of the experience, *lishma* and *lo lishma*. Having said this, we can usefully differentiate between the two different kinds of code required. Generally speaking, the code required to enhance the experience *lishma* needs to be given either before or during the event. The code required to enhance the event *lo lishma*—can wait until afterwards. For example, when contemplating which elements of code would be required for students watching Episode two of the Israeli TV series *A Touch Away* (Ninio, 2006), a group of Greater Washington educators agreed that brief background on the characters and English subtitles were required before and during the screening. Without these essential codes, students would not have "enjoyed" the screening (*lishma*). Only after the screening would the educators have chosen to explore other cultural codes embedded in the film (*lo lishma*), such as the multilayered comment of the secular Russian immigrant actress who remarks that Bnei Brak reminds her of a performance of *The Dybbuk*. . .

Why are we so concerned about when and how much code should be given? Because the intrinsic values of a piece of art—wonder, imagination, beauty—can too easily be destroyed by "over-teaching." Once we acknowledge that a piece of art, in order for it to be experienced as such, must be presented in "an affecting and

sensuous medium," we also acknowledge that we must be careful to do no harm to such qualities.

Skillful...

Here may be a useful juncture to address the key difference between what we might call *kehilla* arts and *kahal* arts. As we mentioned earlier, *Kehilla* arts rate the value of the arts exercise according to the *experience of those doing the arts* (workshops, hands-on crafts, etc.). *Kahal* arts rate the value of the arts experience according to the *experience of the audience*. The artists and the educators are rare, who are able to serve both forms at the expense of neither.

Depending upon which kind of art is foremost, *kahal* or *kehilla*, the educator's search for the "skilful" is affected. The skill involved in Rembrandt's biblical representations is very different from the skill required (and displayed) in the work produced by Jo Milgrom's students, for example. As the introduction to her book *Handmade Midrash* (1992) advertises, many of her *kehilla* exercises assume "no skill . . . on the part of the participants, because the goal is not to create fine art but to give visual form to thought."

Without this *kehilla/kahal* differentiation, the difference between the quality of process and the quality of the product is confused. Either too much emphasis is placed on the quality of the product when kids are painting biblical interpretations in order to understand the text or too little attention is paid to the skill of performers of a dance piece, simply because it might be about the book of Ruth. . . .

Affecting and Sensuous Medium

Here we move into dangerous territory. That which is affecting and sensuous may be intangible. It may touch our students beyond their intellect or, in a sense, "by-pass" their critical faculties. This is the danger and opportunity of the arts. If we are unwilling to embrace and work with these dangers and opportunities, we should not introduce art into our educational work. It is far cheaper and easier to use well-written textbooks. But if we are working with arts, and wish to take advantage of them, we would do well to enhance the impact of this affecting and sensuous medium.

Practical Reconsiderations

This demands an intellectual and practical reorganization. Practically speaking, in order to maintain the affecting and sensuous qualities of the art, we need to create appropriate conditions. Some educators are notorious for wasting the potential impact of the arts. For instance, an Israeli song may be presented as the translated lyrics on a page without playing the music itself. A film will be screened in a room

that is fully lit. When looking at a poem, we must make sure it is read out loud competently by someone who is able to honor the rhythms and sounds. A song needs to be played on a good sound system or sung by a good singer. A film should be screened with a high-quality projector, onto a screen and not a dirty wall. We can all add to this list.

Educators may well bridle at these examples. Surely, these issues might be unavoidable, they may say. They may be caused by the environment or the budget? Yet the same educators would never expect a test to be taken without paper, nor a textbook to be read without a readable text available, nor a lecturer to speak softly. We need to alter the way we assess our "minimal requirements" for working with the arts. Since part of what the arts offers to an educational experience is the quality of enchantment, we educators should take care to provide the conditions for the magic to take place.

The words to Eti Ankri's hit song *Millionim* (Ankri, 2004) read as a searing political poem about the gaps between rich and poor. "And there are millions like me rolling around the streets . . . mortal folk/With no money—not worth a dime/Today it's me/tomorrow it's you/No money—not worth a dime."

It is only in listening to the gentle half-reggae rhythms of the song itself, or even watching the video clip as this beautiful woman rides around the streets of Israel on the back of a wagon smiling and strumming her guitar, that students may appreciate how the song is far more than just its words. *It is complex, self-contradictory, full of rage and love. Like life* (Rory McLeod—UK folk hero—would always introduce every one of his seething furious protest songs with: "This is a love song. . .").

In addition to a practical reorganization, we must also rethink our pedagogy with these qualities of "affecting and sensuous" in mind. The following scenario is familiar to many:

> The movie ends. The credits begin to roll, and the audience is wiping away its tears. Suddenly the fluorescent lighting is turned on, a table and chairs are dragged onto the stage, and the panel discussion begins. The audience is not only blinking at the harsh lighting. It is blinking in shock at the rude awakening from an entire emotional world that has gripped them for more than an hour. The audience stumbles into the academic discussion, as if still shaking off an evocative dream, or nightmare. (Anderson 2004)

There are many logistical reasons why we find ourselves forcing a discussion or a panel immediately after an arts event. Either the lesson is about to end or the audience is likely to go home. We would suggest there are several reasons why this is detrimental to the affecting and sensuous experience the audience has gone through, and then we will question the benefit of such discussion at all.

As Anderson suggests, an art experience is affecting. Its touch can knock an audience off-balance. The more one interferes with this imbalance, the more one interrupts or weakens the enchanting power of the art, the more we help our students gain their feet. In so doing, in reducing the spell-like influence of the art—through poor physical conditions or through halting its reverberations too early—we mistakenly think we are acting as responsible educators. "The questions have been raised," we assure ourselves, "the issues have been exposed," we congratulate ourselves, "and now the learning can begin."

What we have in effect done is to attempt to separate the content from the form. Indeed, in enforcing this separation before the experience has even dimmed, we are attempting to subjugate form to content. We are such faithful servants of ideas and information. We persuade ourselves that *the way* in which these ideas have reached our students is of little significance. In this we may be overestimating our students and underestimating the art experience. It may be precisely the way in which the material has communicated itself, it may be precisely the sublime light, sound, characters that have set fire to the interest of the student. Without allowing these "introductory aesthetics" to play a role, the ideas may not stay with the student as much as we would wish. It is almost as if we have used the arts to engage the student in an issue, and then immediately work to make sure that the arts were not *too* engaging.

We might liken a powerful arts experience to a gust of wind in autumn. A culturally significant, skillfully encoded, affecting and sensuous experience has rushed through us like a swirl of wind in a pile of dry leaves. Our thoughts and emotions are blown about in a whirlwind of confusion and passion. The educator's first instinct will be to rush to offer the student tools to catch the leaves, to offer the student contextual boxes in which to place them, and even encourage the student to disregard some awkward leaves that blew far. Yet, the longer it takes for the "leaves of experience" to settle in our souls, the more the student realizes that a new context, a new understanding is required in order for the settling to begin, the more likelihood there is of a deeper learning to take place. A kind of learning that affects not just the students' knowledge base or tear ducts, but that affects and shifts their identity.

Following this image, it should be in the interests of the educator to encourage the leaves to take their time in settling, to allow the final breeze of the art experience to continue to swirl as long as possible, so that the final settling can have greatest long-term impact on the Jewish identity of the student.

The Downside of Paraphrasing

Another unfortunate by-product of forcing a discussion after a piece of art is that we risk undermining the art through paraphrasing. As Martha Nussbaum comments on literature: "If the writing is well done, a paraphrase in a very different form and style will not, in general, express the same conception" (Nussbaum, 1992). Here once again we see that the affective form of the art is part and parcel of its nature. When stripped of its affective form, when "translated into terms the students can understand," the art is not necessarily an experience understood. It may be only an experience flattened.

Nussbaum expresses more generously what Susan Sonntag suggested: "Interpretation is the revenge of the intellect on art" (Sonntag, 1966). For some with more developed artistic sensibilities, some prosaic plodding discussions of art can feel like an attack.

Answering the Unanswerable

Some might suggest that our desire or need as educators to "follow up" an arts occasion is less because we wish to provide a platform for people to share and respect each others' varied responses, and more because we feel the need to assert some authority over the discourse of meaning. In a sense, we may be feeling that a non-discussed piece of art is one whose interpretation is "out of control."

Yet, what are we to do when we plan to discuss a piece of art that raises questions for which there are no answers, or for which we know no answer?

I once performed my show *About the Oranges* to a mixed group of senior Jewish educators and members of the organization Rabbis for Human Rights (*About the Oranges* is a disturbing comic tragedy about an encounter between a Palestinian suicide bomber and an Aliya Shaliach (Gringras, 2004–2009)). In the discussion following, one of the participants said, "I'm looking at that banner you have at the back of the stage. It's a classic Israeli flag, with words encouraging people to make aliya. But on the stage in front of that message you're presenting us with a picture of the pain and the suffering involved in living the classic Zionist dream. In short," he summed up accurately, "this show is asking a question here. It's a question about the price of Zionism and aliya. And personally," he smiled quietly but without embarrassment, "I'm not sure that's a question I would know how to answer. I don't know whether that's the kind of question I'd be comfortable with, if it arose with my students."

It would seem that many educators are comfortable with the idea that their role is to stimulate questions. But perhaps *only those questions for which they themselves have answers.* Sometimes it has felt that the greatest opponents of *About the Oranges* in the educational world have been immigrants living in Jerusalem. This might be because of all places, Jerusalem and its surroundings paid the highest price of the last Intifada. Living in Jerusalem, one was far more likely to meet people who had lost loved ones, far more likely to fear for one's own safety and that of one's children. Given this daily reality, there are perhaps certain core questions that one's heart asks oneself every moment of the day, but that one's head is desperate not to hear. *Was it worth it?* whispers the heart. *Maybe this was all a terrible mistake?* weeps the soul.

It may be that the value of the arts lies in its ability to give voice to the questions our hearts are asking, but that we have not been able to hear.

Professor Michael Rosenak was once teaching about Mordecai Kaplan, and spent over two hours advocating for Kaplan's philosophy. At the end of his presentation, he was asked how his own philosophy differed from that of Kaplan. Mike said that Kaplan viewed religion as a *solution to a set of problems.* Kaplan's approach had been to assess what problem the religion had tried to solve, and then to look for more contemporary or effective ways of addressing these same problems. "Where I differ from Kaplan," concluded Rosenak, "is that I believe that sometimes life presents problems for which there are no solutions. I believe that *religion's main role is to enable us to live with problems for which there are no solutions.*"

Here Nussbaum suggests that great art can and should do the same.

> There may be views of the world and how one should live in it . . . that emphasize the world's surprising variety, its complexity and mysteriousness, its flawed and imperfect beauty—that cannot be fully and adequately stated in the language of conventional philosophical prose, a style remarkably flat and lacking in wonder—but only in a language and in forms themselves more complex, more allusive, more attentive to particulars. . . (Nussbaum 1992)

Concluding Toward Practice

If art is culturally significant meaning, skillfully encoded in an affecting and sensuous medium, then the educator must aim to work with art that is such. The educator will endeavor to ensure that the students appreciate the art's Jewish significance where the art's codes prevent them doing so. At the same time, the educator will work hard to allow the art to work its magic on the students, without undermining its intrinsic value through prosaic interpretation or poor conditions.

Andrew Taylor points out two aspects of the wonderful moment that is in the aesthetic experience:

> Consider any powerful, transformative moment you've had with an act or artifact of creative expression. That moment required at least *two* lifetimes to form its value—your lifetime to that moment and the artist's. There was a resonance between your experiences or emotions and the expressive voice. The moment required them both. The value was co-constructed. (Taylor, 2006)

As Jewish educators we would add a third "lifetime": that of the Jewish People. For us the ultimate transformative Jewish arts experience would involve the intersection of the piece of art, the life of the student, and the broader narrative of the Jewish People—its wisdom and experiences.

How to Keep the Wind Blowing?

Here we shall refer to work executed by Makōm Israel Engagement Network (Makom) that has extensively addressed the seam-line between arts and Jewish education in general, and Israeli contemporary arts in particular. What pedagogical strategies has Makōm employed that might allow this three-way encounter between self, art, and Judaism, to maintain its resonance? What techniques have been employed to give information without stifling, offer broader context without depersonalizing, and allow for individual interpretation without trivializing?

There is no doubt that Makōm has by no means exhausted the potential answers for such questions, but can perhaps refer to the Hassidic tale of the King lost in the forest:

> The King has wandered off the trail, and is horrified to find himself lost in the thick woods. Whenever he follows a path that would seem to lead out of the forest, it turns out to be a dead end or a full circle. After having returned to the same spot once again, and as the light begins to fade into nighttime, the King begins to despair. Suddenly he hears a whistling. He looks up to see a young man walking by, calm and self-assured.

> "I am saved!" cries the King, approaching the young man with a smile, "Surely you can help me find my way home. I am terribly lost!"
> The young man smiles at him and nods.
> The King begins to walk with him, feeling his despair begin to lift, when he notices that the young man is wearing a pair of shoes that are worn down to the skin. When questioned, the young man replies:
> "Ah yes, a pair of shoes can only take so much walking. I have been wandering lost in this forest for the past 3 years."
> The King is distraught.
> "But you said you could help me! And now it appears you are more lost than I!"
> The young man rushes to encourage the King:
> "Do not despair, sir! I can indeed help you! Though I do not yet know which path leads us out of the forest, I can tell you from experience which paths definitely do *not* lead out of the forest! And surely that must be worth something. . ."

It is with the realism and humility of the young man that we may learn from Makōm some directions within the forest.

Interpret Art with Art

It may well be that in order to allow for interpretation to be shared on the one hand, but not fixed down and limited on the other, we might need to strive for a non-prosaic form of sharing interpretations. Instead of building a formal verbal discussion following an art experience, the educator might be better advised to build in an additional artistic genre for the purpose of sharing interpretations. While creating a piece of art allows the participant to conjure a "holding form" (Witkin, 1974) for the whirlwind of emotions left after the art event, it nevertheless does not box them in an analytic and limited way. If, after hearing a song, the class paints their responses, or if after seeing a film, the students write a page in the diary of one of the characters, a form of digesting and processing and sharing takes place without suggesting that the interpretative process has yet ended.

Keep the Discussion Within the World of the Art

By the same token, if a discussion is to be had, make sure that the bulk of it is directed to the art and not its "subject." We have been party to many discussions that have followed a piece of Israeli art that touched on current politics. Whenever general conversation is encouraged, the floor is always commandeered by those with a political axe to grind. Yet whenever discussion is directed toward the creation itself, far more interesting and broadening issues arise. Thus when instead of asking "Do you think Israel's army commits war crimes?" the facilitator asks "Do you think you would have made the same choices as the soldier character?", two things happen. First, everyone is an expert, since they all watched the film or play, and they each have their own levels of empathy. Second, even the most hardened political hacks are forced to express something new, or in a new way: what Anna Deveare Smith calls "authentic speech" (Smith, 2001).

Ask Generative Questions

"Which character did you like?" tends to be an easy yet fruitless question. "Which character did you respect?" leads to far more contemplation. This latter question calls upon the participant to bring together two possibly separate worlds: The play on stage/screen, and their own value system. Makōm's educators' guide (Makom, Cinema Israel, 2007) to the Israeli film Joy (Shles, 2004), for example, worked at combining a scene in the film with personal values systems, and Jewish tradition:

> The real breakthrough in the film is when Simcha confronts her parents' friends. She accuses them of being unfair, of banishing her parents, and making no attempt to repair what was broken. In the Torah such an honest calling of someone to accounts is called *tochacha.* [Leviticus 19:17]
> Can you describe a time in your life when you, like Simcha, did *tochacha*? Or when someone came to do *tochacha* with you?
> Or have you ever felt the need to do *tochacha* but not managed to? What was it that stopped you? (Makom 2007)

Develop Non-intrusive Forms

If, on the one hand, a screening of a film without a discussion would be irresponsible, while, on the other hand, participants will resist any formally facilitated processing, then less intrusive ways of affecting conversation should be attempted. In work for the Eyes Wide Open film production, Makōm created a series of place mats (Makom, Eyes Wide Open, 2008). On these place mats were generative quotations from characters in the film, bits of information, and leading questions. These place mats were printed and placed on tables in the café of the cinema theatre. After the end of the screening, groups of people sat around, drinking their coffee, and relating to the place mat as they saw fit. In this sense we were able to influence the discourse without being seen to be leading it.

Use Jewish Terminology and Structures of Learning

In working to create the three-way encounter between the student's life, the life of the artist, and the life of the Jewish People, an attempt should be made to frame the personal work in a Jewish context. In working with song, for example, PaRDeS can be applied as a hermeneutic tool, while explaining its origins. The study guide Makōm created for the animated documentary *Waltz with Bashir* included a chevruta page that applied Talmudic issues to the subject of the film (Makom, Cinema Israel, 2009).

Conclusion

In his tribute to Yossel Birstein, Haim Beer quotes Yossel's recollection of his father's work as a shoemaker. As he describes the key aspect of finishing the sole of the shoe, one can almost imagine him talking about the stitching together of art and education:

> The skill of the stitcher comes into play when the thread breaks off. There's no way of tying it—a knot in the upper part of the shoe would be unsightly, and a knot under the sole hampers walking. And so—either the stitcher has to undo what he's already stitched, or else he has to mend the broken thread in such a way that the knot can't be felt. (Beer, 2004)

It is our job to bring together two different materials—art and education—in such a way as to create a strong, efficient vehicle of meaning. Yet, in so doing, we must take care to make sure that the "knot" that binds the two materials be "mended" in such a way that it cannot be felt.

This "stitching" work requires that we first of all appreciate the different nature of art from education in order to better appreciate the kind of "stitching" required. Through an analysis and application of Anderson's definition of art, we can begin to understand what we are working with, and develop appropriate strategies.

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Arts and Jewish Day School Education in North America

Ofra A. Backenroth

Introduction

Aesthetic appreciation and creation of works of art have been central to the Jewish experience, linked to the term *hiddur mitzvah* (embellishment of a commandment) and have resulted in an explosion of interest in the arts and Jewish expression in the visual arts and the performing arts. According to Michael Rosenak (1999),

> We are to learn to take the sights, sounds, and forms of the world that are given to us, to cultivate and distill, to reach an understanding of what is beautiful, for what we may be grateful, and to give back this concrete beauty through concrete commandments performed beautifully, with *hiddur* [with embellishments]. (p. 273)

This contemporary interest in the arts, visual arts, music, drama, and dance has made its mark on the Jewish education, even though the traditional view "that presented the written text as the supreme source of knowledge and truth" is deeply established as the ruling paradigm in Jewish education (Cohen, 1988, p. 3).

In this chapter, I will explore how, when, and which of the arts are being taught to middle-school-aged students in North American Jewish day schools. I will begin with investigation of attitudes toward the arts in general education and in Jewish education, continue with an analysis of the various models of teaching the arts in Jewish day schools, and conclude with an examination of the Jewish subjects that are being taught through the arts. The second half of this chapter is focused on a comparison of arts-infused schools and arts-based schools. In contrast to the arts-based school, where the arts permeate all aspects of school life, in the arts-infused schools, the arts are infrequent and integrated or taught according to special interest groups or teachers within the school.

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Context

To date, the arts have received only a mild reception in the contemporary Jewish educational world. One of the reasons for this is that the arts historically do not have a prominent place in the curriculum of general day schools (Hurwitz & Day, 1995). Jewish day schools, overburdened by the requirements of the dual curriculum and in particular the requirements of the Judaic curriculum tend to treat the arts as add-on and frills. The school day at the Jewish day school covers all the secular subjects as well as a wide range of Jewish subjects, including Hebrew and Israeli literature, The Bible, Talmud, Jewish philosophy, Rabbinic literature, and Israeli and Jewish history (Fox & Novak, 1997). Since the curricular requirements are so extensive, the arts, mainly instrumental music, dance, and other forms of performing arts are often neglected and are considered to be extra-curricular activities. Schools generally offer visual arts classes and students might participate in choir and audit for the school play by the end of the year; however, there is a lack of exposure to dance, instrumental music, multimedia, etc. Lack of the arts and experiential teaching is an impediment to what Twersky (1990) defines in *A Time to Act* as the goal of Jewish education.

> Our goal should be to make it possible for every Jewish person, child or adult, to be exposed to the mystery and romance of Jewish history, and to the enthralling insights and special sensitivities of Jewish thought, to the sanctity and symbolism of Jewish existence, and to the power and profundity of Jewish faith. (p. 19)

The arts can play a major role in developing awareness, enhancing Judaism with spirituality, and bringing additional perspectives into Jewish education.

In addition to the time requirements that the dual curriculum presents, day school education is an expensive undertaking for the Jewish community. The high costs are the result, among other reasons, of the requirement to hire two separate teaching staffs for each class; one for Judaic studies and another for general studies (Wertheimer, 2001). Enrichment programs in the arts create an added burden in costs and space requirements for art studios, dance space, and music rooms. Considering the chronic lack of time in the Jewish day school, scheduling planning sessions and faculty meetings becomes a deterrent. As a result, taking into account the expenses "[w]hen it comes to budgets, art is always the first piece that goes" (Wiener, 2002). However, in spite of all these difficulties, there is a deliberate ongoing recognition of the merits of teaching through the arts by some schools. The establishment of various arts organizations such as the Lincoln Center Institute, an arts and education organization founded in 1984 based on Dewey's and Greene's aesthetic approach, and Chicago Arts Partnership which was founded in 1992 as a organization working on school improvement through the arts, lead to a renaissance in arts in education in the public schools system (Burnaford, Aprill, & Weiss, 2001). Jewish schools refused to stay behind, and as Wiener (2002) states, "Jewish education is becoming increasingly inclusive of the arts. [T]he trend is not limited to the visual arts, but also includes newfound interest in using music, filmmaking, dance, and even creative writing as a way to teach Judaism" (p. 63).

For example, a recent edition of *HaYedion*, the RAVSAK'[1] quarterly, is dedicated to the arts and Jewish education. Davis (2008), the editor maintains that the schools experience a "renaissance of creative Jewish exploration of visual and performing arts, as well as new media, as means of increasing students' understanding of the roots of our faith and the many ways in which our faith can be expressed" (2008, p. 2).

Indeed, policy-makers and educators realize that to a large extent progress in schools depend not only on the improvement of the leadership and teaching staff but also on the development of new curricula, textbooks, online learning, the preparation of materials, and the willingness to draw on new methods of teaching (Wertheimer, 2001). Educators have come to believe that teaching through the arts is an effective way of teaching Judaic subjects that texts are only the beginning of Jewish education, and that investing in the arts as a teaching method is a worthwhile enterprise (Backenroth, 2008).

Justifying the Place of the Arts in Education

American educators have long considered the fine and industrial arts an essential part of a well-balanced curriculum. Already in the 1880s, the arts were included in the curriculum of the Park School, the Practice School, and later on at Dewey's Laboratory School (Cremin, 1961). Cremin explains, "Music, drama, hygiene, and physical education: all were seen as vehicles for child expression; all began with what had meaning to the children themselves" (Cremin, 1961, p. 133). Still, it was during the 1920s and 1930s, "as the intellectual avant-garde became fascinated with the arts" (p. 181) that using the arts in education became widespread. Individual teachers, looking to apply innovative pedagogical theories based on the idea of child-centered education (Dewey, 1902/1990, 1915/1990) founded new and innovative schools (Cremin, 1961). Dewey (1915/1990) drew attention to the significance of the arts as an integral part of the way children express themselves. Objecting to education that "appeals for the most part simply to the intellectual aspect of our natures" (p. 26) Dewey believed that children's natural tendency is to learn through activities. Children like to draw, to dance, and to sing, and therefore education should appeal to students' "impulses and tendencies to make, to do, to create, to produce, whether in the form of utility or of art" (Dewey, 1915/1990, p. 26). Since the arts are integral to how children construct their knowledge about the world, Dewey argued for the inclusion of the arts in the curriculum. Cremin (1961) describes the curriculum in Dewey's Laboratory School as including "languages, mathematics, the fine and industrial arts, science, music, history and geography . . . in well-planned fashion" (Cremin, 1961, p. 139).

Other educators and researchers advocate for the inclusion of the arts in education. Greene (1997, 2000), the founder of Lincoln Center Institute which promotes

[1] The Jewish Community Day School Network.

arts education in public school suggests that immersing oneself in a work of art demands the use of imagination not only as a passageway to empathy and personal meaning-making, but also as the key to teaching the various disciplines and to pluralistic education. Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles (1999) found that "children exposed to strong and varied arts experiences over periods of time, both in and out of school, are more confident and willing to explore and take risks, exert ownership over and pride in their work, and show compassion and empathy towards peers, families, and communities" (Burton et al., 1999, p. 30).

Eisner (1998) argues that the arts are an important part of the curriculum not only because of their ancillary outcomes, but also because of the arts-based outcomes. These outcomes are comprehension of texts, understanding the relationship between form and content in the arts and in texts, contextualizing arts in history, refining aesthetic awareness, and expressing feelings through the arts. Similarly, Smith (1994) maintains that the arts are important in and of themselves. He advocates for the learning of the arts as a source of culture and knowledge in education, and encourages educators to use the arts not only as an expressive tool, but also in a humanities-based curriculum that can inform students about their heritage.

Jensen (2001) underscores cognition and personal development as a result of arts education. Surveying current brain research, Jensen argues that the arts enhance the process of learning. In addition to their effect on the sensory, cognitive, and motor capacities, the arts promote self-discipline and motivation, and improve emotional expression. He further contends that music helps with recall and the ability to retrieve information. Creating artistic representations of texts promotes long-lasting learning, improves retention, and eliminates "fragile knowledge" (Perkins, 1993). Additionally, researchers claim that students' general attitudes toward learning and school improve as a result of a challenging but enjoyable activity, and that learning art skills forces mental 'stretching' useful to other areas of learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). The ideas of these thinkers and educators underscore the importance of including the arts in the school curriculum, not only as separate disciplines, but as a vehicle to teach the entire curriculum of the school.

Research and Arts Education

Integrating the arts in education is grounded in research about human abilities, cognition, and creativity. In 1967, Project Zero was founded by the philosopher Nelson Goodman who believed that arts learning should be studied as a serious cognitive activity. The Project's mission was to understand and enhance learning, thinking, and creativity in the arts, as well as humanistic and scientific disciplines, at the individual and institutional levels. The launching of the project culminated with the publishing of *Frames of Mind* by Gardner (1983) and brought the theory of multiple intelligences to public awareness. Multiple intelligences theory (Gardner, 1983) suggests that there are nine intelligences: linguistic, logical–mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist, and the existential intelligence. This theory offers a pluralistic view of competence

and suggests that the linguistic and the logical–mathematical abilities cannot be regarded as the only indicators of human intelligence (Gardner, 1983; Perkins, 1991). Consequently, it urges teachers to legitimate the use of alternative methods of teaching and for using art, music, and movement in class (Armstrong, 1994). It encourages teachers to "expand their current teaching repertoire to include a broader range of methods, material, and techniques for teaching an ever wider and more diverse range of learners" (Armstrong, 1994, p. 39).

As the interest in the arts grew, and research in cognitive development and brain research found new evidence to support the value of teaching the arts (Efland, 2002), new experimental programs were established, motivated to use the theory as the foundation for new curricular materials for education. In 1985, Project Zero collaborated with the Educational Testing Service in Pittsburgh to create Art Propel. The project was built on the conviction that arts teach content and that they "exercise not just the hand and heart, but the mind as well" (Wolf, 1987, p. 26). The project's goal was to measure the impact of the arts on assessment in schools. A subsequent program, Project Spectrum, was based on the assumption that every child has the potential to develop strength in one or several content areas and that it is the responsibility of the educational system to discover and nurture these inclinations. Project Spectrum emphasizes identifying children's areas of strength and using this information as the basis for an individualized educational program. Spectrum researchers (Wolf & Piston, 1995) design assessment activities in seven different domains of knowledge: language, math, music, art, social understanding, science, and movement. Blurring the lines between learning and assessment, grounding assessment in engaging real-life situations, applying assessment through different intelligences, and focusing on children's strengths rather than on their weaknesses allow teachers to use hands-on activities in the domains of visual arts, music, dance, and drama, as well as games, machinery, and physical activity.

Jewish Thinkers on the Arts

Many Jewish thinkers are aware of the power of the arts and recognize the importance of the arts in Jewish life, community life, and in worship. For instance, Kaplan (1934/1997) explicitly addresses the issue of the arts, claiming creativity as one of the pillars of civilization. "A civilization cannot endure on a high plane without the preservation and cultivation of its arts. Art creations become part of the social heritage which is the driving force of the civilization" (p. 203). Kaplan argues that artistic creation is the unifying force of a community and therefore "Jews as a group must add to the cultural and spiritual values of the world. They must produce ideas, arts, literature, music" (1937/1997, p. 367). In addition, Kaplan maintains that the arts have the ability to facilitate meaning-making since they demand intensive engagement and personal creation. As the Dean of the Teachers' Institute in the first part of the twentieth century, Kaplan established the arts as part of the education of future teachers (JTS Register, 1918/1919).

A contemporary thinker and educator, Scheindlin (2003), in his research about spirituality, argues that the arts and the emotions bring to consciousness the spiritual aspects of life and urges schools to nurture the emotional lives of students. He encourages Jewish educators to create lessons that "serve as scaffolds to spiritual sensitivity" (p. 190). Through art, music, and creative writing students can represent their emotional lives. Teaching prayers demands as much time and attention as any other discipline. The secret of prayer lies in the sense of awe and wonder, and feelings of religiosity should be expressed in a tangible form of words, gestures, music, art, or dance.

Even the less liberal world that customarily ignored the arts as *bitul Torah* (waste of time that should have been dedicated to the study of Torah), grasps the power of the fine arts. Rabbi Haim Brovender (2003), the head of *Yeshivat HaMivtar*, declared that since the arts play such an important role in young people's lives and are so fundamental to their daily experiences, teachers should use the arts in their teaching. Suggesting that people become spiritual by observing art, Brovender believes that through the arts one can experience *ahavat Hashem* (love of God).

Fox, Scheffler, and Marom (2003) in their study of vision of Jewish education clarify that affect and not only cognition has a legitimate role in Jewish education, and they call for a comprehensive change in the design of the school curriculum. The authors maintain that Jewish education stresses the centrality of texts, and it tends to ignore the arts and use them only sporadically. The authors write that the current curriculum at the Jewish day schools is "[a] mere recapitulation of conventional lessons and past practices, lacking both systematic connections with the depth of Jewish lore and the energy to make such lore come alive convincingly in the hearts of contemporary youth" (Fox et al., 2003, p. 8). They suggest, "Curricula are increasingly understood to require not only recourse to the texts but also to materials drawn from the arts" (p. 7). Exploring the lack of spirituality in education, they state, "For purposes of education, spirituality cannot remain an abstraction" (p. 16). Greenberg and Brinker (in Fox et al., 2003) argue that the character of Jewish education should be religious and spiritual, and as such education should include not only knowledge and values, but also the arts: literature, music, and painting. They state that the arts are not a luxury, but a fundamental requirement.

The Arts in Jewish Day Schools

Research on the place of the arts in Jewish education is sparse; however, lately researchers are looking at school practices and how schools use the arts in the teaching of Judaic studies. Epstein (2003) suggests that Jewish educators often too narrowly define the parameters of what counts as a text within the classroom maintaining that visual images such as a painting or a student-generated tableau can be read as textual commentary upon the Bible. Epstein underscores that teachers who use drama-related activities help students to more fully express themselves in conversations about the text.

Similarly, Miller (1999a/2001) and Milgrom (1992) suggest that teaching art skills in conjunction with text skills enriches the way students interpret the text and helps them make a personal connection with biblical texts. Both researchers demonstrate that art making is a legitimate strategy for traditional Jewish learning. The students are encouraged to work from an intellectual cognitive framework through successive steps in order to develop an understanding of the text through creative activities. To keep students accountable for true understanding of the texts, they are asked to return to the text following the creative activity and re-visit and re-test their interpretations.

Hascal (2001) demonstrates how dance, as a learning-by-doing approach, provides an alternative way to help students recall and sequence events in the Bible. She further suggests that interpreting the events through dance allows the students to visualize the events and therefore gain better understanding. During the discussions that follow, the students demonstrate abstract thinking, renewed interests in the texts, and the ability to ask new questions. The most important finding of the study is the students' ability to engage in hermeneutic methods of text study such as word analysis, juxtaposition, and filling the gaps in the text.

Backenroth (2003b, 2004, 2005a, 2005b) explores day schools that teach the arts as extra-curricular, discrete disciplines, and partially or fully integrate the arts in Judaic studies. She finds that in addition to the arts' contribution to the learning process, the arts fulfill the needs of teachers by giving them a way to express themselves creatively and teach texts in an innovative way. In her study, Backenroth identifies a few models of teaching the arts in Jewish day schools and identifies the domains that are most commonly taught through the arts.

Models of Teaching the Arts in Jewish Day Schools

Most Jewish Day Schools offer a course in visual arts—mostly painting and drawing, and music (mainly choir classes)—to their students. Since Jewish day schools in the United States are members of the independent school system, however, they are not bound by state requirements and standards. Administrations in each school are free to determine the scope, sequence, frequency, and methods of arts education and consequently the distribution of arts varies from school to school and from state to state. It is important to note that the National Standards for Arts Education were developed only in 1994.[2] The standards and benchmarks for arts education describe what every student should know and be able to do at various grade levels in each artistic discipline. However, only half of the states in North America mandate that local districts implement them and in the other states, the standards are voluntary and implementation of teaching methods varies from state to state and district to district. There are no standards and no requirements in regards to teaching of the arts in Jewish day schools.

[2] www.Americans for the arts.

Backenroth (2003b, 2004, 2005a) in her study of arts education in day schools in North America identifies a continuum of approaches to teaching the arts in Jewish Day Schools that moves from well-integrated arts-based schools on one edge of the spectrum to teaching the arts as discrete disciplines with very little integration and relationship to the Jewish studies curriculum. The various models of teaching the arts are distinguished by the relationship between the curricular subjects (Beane, 1997; Drake, 1993; Fogarty, 1997; Jacobs, 1989) and the level of cooperation between the different teachers. In some schools, teachers integrate the arts individually in their own classrooms while the arts teachers do their own teaching with no relation to school curriculum (Backenroth, 2004). At arts-based schools, all the teachers integrate the arts into the curriculum in a consistent, coordinated, theme-based method under the supervision of the administration and a specialist for arts-integration (2005b).

According to this continuum, the arts can be taught according to several models:

1. As a distinct discipline—The arts are taught during the school day or after the conclusion of the school day with no connection to the rest of the Judaic studies curriculum.
2. Parallel integration model—The teachers, including the arts teachers, sequence their lessons to correspond to lessons in the same area in other disciplines. Teachers teach each of the disciplines independently, but in consultation with each other or through a curriculum coordinator. The order of the lessons changes but not the content.
3. Integration by an individual teacher—A single teacher who teaches more than one discipline during the same session and creates active connections among the arts and other disciplines.
4. Multi-disciplinary method—The arts teachers and Judaic subject teachers teach together a theme or an issue.
5. Theme-based integration—The entire curriculum revolves around a theme or an issue and thereby breaks down the boundaries of the disciplines. In theme-based integration, the arts are taught as part of the entire curriculum in an integrated method, teaching the same issues or topics as the rest of the curriculum. In this integrated curricular model, the arts not only share a place with the other disciplines, but they also support each other, and they take on the same importance as the other disciplines.

Based on this continuum of integration of the arts, Backenroth (2005a, 2005b) identified two models of teaching the arts in the Jewish day schools:

A. Arts-based schools: The arts are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum in a theme-based integration model and are used across all the disciplines in an integrated curriculum model.
B. Arts-infused schools: The arts are partially infused into the Judaic studies curriculum according to individual teachers' inclinations using integration models from the lower end of the continuum of discipline integration.

The schools share the rationale for using the arts in the curriculum and the belief in the importance of the arts to education. However, there is a philosophical difference in the way the arts are integrated into the curriculum at the arts-based school and the arts-infused school, which affects the way schools function and operate.

The arts-based schools (Backenroth, 2005a, 2005b) are committed to the integration of the arts in all areas of the curriculum by the entire faculty. The arts are represented across the curriculum and their status is equal to the rest of the subjects in the school's curriculum. There is a tight connection between the skills that are taught during the arts classes and the activities that the students perform during their various lessons. Since the curriculum is based on themes, teachers must work together, team-teach, and team-plan their courses. In many occasions, the teachers need to develop their own curriculum and teaching materials. This approach to teaching consciously applies methodology and language from more than one discipline to examine a central theme, issue, or problem. In this model, no subject is taught in isolation (Drake, 1993; Gaudelius & Speirs, 2002; Jacobs, 1989) and it requires intensive planning and cooperation by all the teachers, as well as complete support from the administration, the board, and the parent community.

At the arts-infused schools, Backenroth identifies two models:

1. Self-designed arts curriculum:
   A parallel design of integration in which the teachers re-sequence their lesson plans to correspond to lessons in the same areas in other disciplines. However, the disciplines keep their integrity and often arts specialists work in isolation, rarely interacting with the rest of the faculty. The arts specialists cooperate with the rest of the Judaic curriculum teachers only if there is a school performance that needs musical or choral accompaniment such as a *siddur* (prayer book) ceremony or the *Sukkah* (a temporary dwelling occupied during the festival of *Sukkoth*) needs decoration.
2. Professionally designed arts-integrated curriculum:
   Arts-infused schools that hire professional arts organizations or consultants to introduce the arts into the schools. Hiring companies such as the Lincoln Center Institute, Young Audience Arts, the nation's leading source of arts-in-education services, or inviting individual artists to present a show or work with the teacher on curriculum development can be done on a one-time basis or in a long-term arrangement with an arts consultant who works with the teachers during the school year on creating an arts program. In some cases, the programs brought in from the outside cover the same subjects or themes that are covered in the classroom. In other cases, the arts programs are detached from the school curriculum and function in isolation.

What Is Being Taught Through the Arts in the Jewish Day Schools?

As I stated in the previous sections, the arts are powerful. Research on learning and the arts, and the findings of research on the arts and Jewish education suggest that

the arts shape not only the content that is being taught, but also how it is being taught. The arts change the character of the school and its culture, and make it unique (Backenroth, 2005b).

The two models of the schools, the arts-based and the arts-infused schools integrate experiential methods of teaching that include the arts and multisensory teaching approaches. They concentrate on educational experiences and not only on rapid output and coverage of material and espouse child-center philosophy. However, in the arts-based schools, there is an overall commitment by the school community to the arts on all its aspects: arts appreciation, arts skills, teaching through the arts, and teaching with the arts as the locus of the curriculum. Additionally, the teachers at the arts-based school see themselves not only as responsible for imparting knowledge, but also for nurturing abilities and inclinations and developing talents in the arts.

Whereas arts-infused schools treat the arts as add-ons, arts-based schools believe that the arts are imperative and non-negotiable means of education and that integrating the arts in all aspects of the school curriculum is the only way to teach. The arts are considered to be the basic foundation of the teaching methodology and they are taught in conjunction with the rest of the curriculum throughout the school day. The arts are taught and practiced for various reasons including teaching critical thinking, skills, language acquisition, reading skills, problem solving, practicing cognitive skills, making connections with the texts, helping with emotional issues, nurturing spirituality, solidifying knowledge, intensifying memory, and identifying students' strengths. The arts are always integrated with content and are constantly used as a teaching tool in the classrooms, corridors, and public spaces; and they are always part of the many celebrations of a Jewish day school.

Teaching Arts Skills

At arts-based schools, the arts are present in every aspect of the school's life. These schools consider the arts important and believe in the interconnectedness of childhood and the arts. Ruth Belkin, the head teacher of an arts-based school underscores the significance of the arts in the eyes of parents who are searching for schools for their children. She explains, "That was the problem with the Jewish day school that they never used the arts. So people, who would send their children to a Jewish day school, were turned off by the lack of creativity and [lack of] the arts. The school [arts-based] attracts a lot of people who normally would not send their children to a [Jewish] day school" (Backenroth, 2005a, p. 78).

Teaching through the arts happens in all grades and throughout all the disciplines. Visual art, music, and drama have the same importance as other disciplines, and they are integrated into the curriculum as the teachers and the coordinators plan the curriculum. The teachers at arts-based schools understand that to express knowledge and feelings through the arts, there is a need for arts skills (Gardner, 1982). Furthermore, they realize that they cannot impose a love of the arts on students. Knowing that students love the familiar and that knowledge builds on

previous knowledge, they design a comprehensive and well-designed arts program that through small steps and experiential activities introduces the student to the arts. Consistent teaching with and through the arts (Goldberg & Phillips, 1995), from the time the students enter the school until graduation, presents the teachers with ample opportunities to teach skills, to provide many creative experiences, and to teach arts appreciation.

The arts-infused schools vary in their commitment to the arts and teaching arts skills is not always at the top of their interest and ability. An interview with one of the teachers in an arts-infused school points to the lack of skills transfer, and to lack of coordination and communication among the various teachers in a school.

> I used to take people on tours of the lower school. Once I took them to a floor where one wall was decorated with artwork done in the classroom and coincidentally, the opposite wall was decorated with art done at the art studio. When you have a good art teacher, I would show people, the same child will produce art in the art room on a completely different level than during Bible class. Use of color, use of form, understanding perspective, they are all different. (Backenroth, 2005a, p. 194)

At the arts-based schools, no dichotomy exists between art in the art or music studio and art in the classroom. The arts teachers and the content teachers plan and implement the curriculum together. Students know that they are accountable for all aspects of learning in each class and that they are expected to apply what they learn in arts classes to the projects done in other classes. This method of teaching encourages responsible learners who can apply learning in one class to another and produces enthusiastic artists and knowledgeable consumers of arts.

Hebrew and the Arts

The teaching of Hebrew is one of the most important issues in the curriculum of Jewish day schools, yet it is one of the most challenging. The shortage of good teachers, appropriate materials for teaching Hebrew as a second language, and confusion about the aims of teaching Hebrew make it difficult to achieve literacy in a language that is the cornerstone of all Jewish texts. Implementing theories of teaching a second language through content (Swain, 1988; Met, 1991) and through the arts (Asher, 1981; Curtain & Pesola, 1994) is efficient, and it maximizes what Jewish day schools can do with the limited time they allocate to language teaching. Jewish day schools pride themselves on teaching Hebrew and teaching the Jewish subjects in Hebrew. However, the time devoted to language lessons is limited. Using Hebrew during arts classes, recess, and lunchtime is an authentic and organic way of teaching the language. As Curtain and Pesola (1994) explain, "Children do not acquire a language primarily by being told about it, but rather through meaningful, communicative experiences with the language" (p. 178). The physical activity helps create patterns that improve memory, aid retention, and facilitate fluency in language acquisition (Asher, 1981). The use of a variety of visuals, music, drama,

and dances representing Israel and its culture can help to relate interests of the children to the wider world in which Hebrew plays a major role and instills a deep sense of understanding by involving children emotionally with the content.

A vivid example of teaching Hebrew in an art studio (Backenroth 2005a, 2005b) underscores the complexities of an integrated unit. Preparing for Hanukkah, the students visit the local museum to look at old oil vessels in the Greek and Roman wing, some of which were excavated in Israel. Later on, in the integrated art/Hebrew class, they are learning vocabulary pertaining to sculpture in Hebrew and at the same time learning basic concepts of sculpture. While kneading the clay, they run through a verb conjugation in present tense: "*ani lashah homer*," "*attah lash homer*," "*anachnu lashim homer*," "*attem lashim homer*," "*atten lashot homer*" (I knead clay, you knead clay, we knead clay, you (masculine) knead clay, you (feminine) knead clay). The jars they produce will be exhibited at the holiday exhibition in which the students will explain how they created the jars. In a history class, students are also preparing for the holiday by creating a live presentation of previously unsung heroines and their contribution to the Zionist dream. "Eventually the students will create a *Hanukkah* lamp of eight heroic Israeli women. Instead of candle lighting, each of the candles represents one heroine" (Backenroth, 2005a, p. 225).

This complex and multi-dimensional structure of learning Hebrew language and the events of the Jewish calendar by using arts, ancient history, and Israel current history helps students make connections between various segments of the curriculum and elicit emotional reaction by having them research, design, create, and finally present their work to the larger school community.

Zionism and the Arts

Creating a knowledgeable and practicing Jew is an overwhelming challenge for the schools. Schools recognize the high expectations of the community, and they realize that they are considered to be the last source of connection to the Jewish community and the last resort for acculturation of Jews (Heilman, 1992). Equally important to most Jewish schools is the nurturing of ties with Israel and the exposure of students to Israeli culture, literature, and the arts.

Ingall (2003) in her portrait of Tziporah Johsberger highlights the power of music and teaching the *halil* (recorder) in creating "musical association to Israeli folkways, natural surroundings, and the towns and the cities, the Shabbat and holidays, and thus bringing children both in Israel in the Diaspora into more intimate contact with these aspects of culture in Israel" (p. 4). Passionate about instilling deep feeling toward Israel, teachers at the Jewish day schools use art forms like poetry, drama, and painting realizing that the arts are a useful tool in deepening experiences. By using Israeli arts such as movies, photographs, visuals, music, and dances teachers want to connect Jewish students with the study of Israel, its land, people, and culture. The arts nurture a sense of belonging, of community, and provide a vehicle for individuals, communities, and cultures to explore their own world and journey to new ones, thus enriching their understanding of the varied peoples and cultures that exist.

Prayer, Spirituality, and the Arts

Spirituality and feelings of closeness to God is the essence of religious education, and at the same time it is one of the most difficult challenges faced by educators in Jewish day schools. Scheindlin (2003), in his research about spirituality, argues that the arts and the emotions bring to consciousness the spiritual aspects of life and urges schools to nurture the emotional lives of students. He encourages Jewish educators to create lessons that "serve as scaffolds to spiritual sensitivity" (p. 190). Through arts, music, and creative writing students can represent their emotional lives.

To instill the sense of spirituality, arts-based schools use the arts to enhance and sanctify the time of prayer. The teachers help their students to explore and understand complex concepts such as creation or the existence of God by moving the students from concrete experiences to reflection and finally creation in the arts.

A moving example of using the arts in prayer sessions is found in the arts-based schools, which nurture spirituality as an outgrowth of their commitment to the arts. Loyal to their mission to teach through the arts, the school teaches the prayers through the arts. Classroom teachers introduce each phrase of the prayers differently, integrating visual arts, songs, and movements. Prayers denote not only words but also "motions" which are used to accompany the words of the prayers, layering words and movements. "Every morning we do a little. It is better that they pray with *kavanah* (feeling) than just do it. We read it slowly, explain it, and we make the movements. The movements add to the *kavanah*" (Backenroth, 2005a, p. 204).

Learning the *parasha*, the weekly portion of the Pentateuch, includes drama, creating visuals, and reflections. Maintaining that young children are not necessarily participating in spiritual life, educators believe that activities that enhance spirituality are a prerequisite for later spiritual activity. By using motions to teach the texts of prayers, the school helps students to achieve emotional memory and to establish the seeds of a spiritual life.

Arts Midrash[3]

The *raison d'être* of teaching Judaic subjects through the arts is the belief that the arts are a valid language of expression and that good teaching involves internalization of the learned material and reproduction of the material in a variety of forms. By using the arts to interpret and re-create biblical texts, the teachers fight against the exclusive use of the written word. They offer students a new way to be re-enchanted by the stories of the Bible and consequently to be able to re-create and re-enact the events of the Bible. Using the visual arts as a language provides teachers with a strategy to relate and to teach every student, even those who are less articulate, and

[3] *Midrash* is based on a Hebrew word that means to explore, to interpret, and to find new meaning.

find verbal expression challenging. Teachers create a safe learning environment for students of different backgrounds when they recognize the diversity of the student population in terms of biblical knowledge, analytical ability, and theological convictions. This approach to teaching encourages students to take risks by expressing their own interpretations, and nurtures their confidence by displaying art in front of the school community.

The most prevalent approach, though not the only one being used, is Milgrom's (1992) method of exploring interpretations of biblical texts by looking at visual images and creating torn-paper collages. The method enriches students' understanding of the biblical text and gives them opportunities to concentrate on one verse or on one event in the text. Re-reading the text following the arts activities ensures that the text is the locus of activity and students explore the additional meaning they gleaned from using the arts. A similar method of interpreting Jewish text through dance is practiced by dancers such as Tucker and Freeman (1990). The objective of using movement and dance in teaching texts is not to produce artists but rather to help with content learning. Finding simple methods of using motions, movements, and simple art techniques can help teachers to offer an entry point into the discipline. Teachers' beliefs that the Bible will be understood only by active participation in the learning process echoes Dewey (1934/1977) who claims that the arts need to be experienced by the viewer. Similarly, texts need to be reproduced by the reader.

Teaching biblical texts through the arts emphasizes the importance of students making their own meaning while searching for their own discoveries (Miller 1999b, 2000). The teachers in this case are not the experts who recite the content of the lesson, but rather mediators who facilitate the act of discovery of relevant issues. To reach each student, the teachers choose flexible teaching styles that let the students experiment with the arts, teach themselves, and express their knowledge in a variety of ways. Using the arts as a teaching tool enriches the teachers' repertoire and demonstrates that teachers can have more than one orientation toward teaching and the curriculum. Teachers who stress the cognitive orientation believe that the curriculum is primarily concerned with helping students to solve problems, to develop thinking skills, and with teaching them how to learn. Teachers who emphasize the personal relevance orientation enable the students to find personal meaning in what they study and in that case the curriculum should begin with the students' needs and interests. Given the ability to interpret the biblical text and create their own *midrashim* in their own unique way, the students are actively involved in fulfilling the most essential *mitzvah* (commandment) of Judaism, learning Torah. Thus, the students become a link in the long chain of scholars and commentators engaged in the interpretation and the teaching of the Torah (Holtz, 1984).

Implications of Integrating the Arts in the Jewish Studies Curriculum

Integrating the arts in the Jewish studies curriculum and teaching through the arts create a different environment for studies. Whereas most schools treat the arts as

add-ons, arts-based schools[4] are created based on a distinctive vision that the arts should be present throughout the curriculum and have merits on their own and as tools to teach other subjects (Backenroth, 2004, 2005a). The arts are considered to be the basic foundation of the teaching methodology and they are taught in conjunction with the rest of the curriculum throughout the school day. They are taught and practiced for various reasons including teaching critical thinking skills, language acquisition, reading skills, problem solving, practicing cognitive skills, arts skills, making connections with the texts, helping with emotional issues, nurturing spirituality, solidifying knowledge, intensifying memory, and identifying students' strengths. The arts are always integrated with content and are constantly used as a teaching tool in the classrooms, corridors, and public spaces.

To create an arts-based school requires a dramatic shift in the school's philosophy about the arts, about integration, and its place in curriculum design. Integration of the arts in the Judaic curriculum is embedded within a larger commitment to the integration of content areas as a fundamental practice. The underlying premise in an arts-based school is the belief that integration of subjects, including the arts, is crucial to teaching Judaic studies. In addition to being an arts-based school, the school offers other attractive educational features such as small classes, mentoring, minimal frontal teaching, experiential teaching, and many hands-on activities. The arts contribute to the excitement and the creativity that gives the schools their special character. The arts are not a luxury; they are a fundamental requirement.

If Jewish day schools are to transform students' lives, to enhance their spirituality, and to make the study of Jewish subjects more relevant and effective, they need to integrate the arts into the Judaic studies curriculum. Transforming students' lives is the most important task facing Jewish day schools, and the arts can make this possible in a way that can make the Jewish studies curriculum effective and exciting. The arts, which frequently give the impression that they are merely trendy add-ons to education, "might yet prove to be the Psalmist's 'cornerstone'" (Chipkin, 1952, p. 2).

Suggestions for Future Research

Research on Jewish education and the arts provides educators with studies of how the arts shape the curriculum and the teaching of the arts in Jewish schools and how they are being taught and for what reasons. However, there are still many unanswered questions such as what is the effect of arts education on students' achievements. It would be interesting to measure the achievement in Hebrew taught through the arts. Do students achieve more fluency in Hebrew as a result of studying the language through the arts? Does teaching texts through the arts help students to master language skills, acquire richer vocabulary, and provide for richer understanding of texts?

[4]Since my research in 2004, two Jewish arts-based schools, "community" and "Orthodox," were founded in North America.

It would be interesting to study whether in striving for depth in knowledge, teaching through the arts shortchanges the students in terms of scope of content. Do students learn fewer chapters in the Bible? Do they learn less of prayer book but reach greater heights of spirituality?

While it is true that arts-based schools do not claim to be art schools, it might be that the students who are enrolled in the school have special inclinations toward the arts. It would be valuable to investigate whether students in arts-based schools have special pre-existing artistic talents or they come from artistic families. What happens to graduates of the schools? Do they continue to pursue interest in the arts? Finally, it would be fascinating to hear the teachers' points of view about what it means to teach in a school that often requires a variety of skills, what are their needs in terms of support and training, and what attracts them to work in a school that believes in integration of the arts.

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Bible: Teaching the Bible in Our Times

Barry W. Holtz

Introduction: Teaching the Bible in the Jewish Past

Teaching the Bible surely goes back to the origins of the Jewish people. Yet we do not have a great deal of knowledge about education in biblical times; indeed, the author of the major scholarly work on the subject asks quite baldly, "What do we really know about education in ancient Israel?" And answers, "not very much. The preceding observations are largely conjecture; whether or not they accord with reality can be debated, and undoubtedly will be" (Crenshaw, 1998, pp. 4–5). Even the existence of schools in the biblical world is unproven. We do know that there were schools in *other* cultures of the ancient world and that lends credence to the likelihood of there being schools in Eretz Yisrael, but as Crenshaw states, "Evidence for schools in these areas [Egypt, Mesopotamia] is incontrovertible. The same cannot be said of ancient Israel and much controversy centers on the very existence or non-existence of schools before the second century B.C.E. . ." (Crenshaw, 1998, p. 86). Inscriptions from ancient Eretz Yisrael point clearly in the direction of the existence of schools "but they do not clarify the nature of these places of learning" (Crenshaw, 1998, p. 112). And, of course, we certainly do not know much about the *pedagogy* of ancient times—who were the students? Who were the teachers? What was the subject matter? All these are hidden in the mists of the past.

Yet, it seems unimaginable that the Bible itself was not part of an ancient Israelite curriculum. The public *reading* of the Torah—mentioned in the Bible itself (e.g., II Chronicles 17: 7, 9; Nehemiah 8:1–10)—has traditionally been understood to be the origin of the practice of *teaching* the Torah, though the texts themselves are not entirely specific about this implication (Fishbane, 2002, p. xx; Sacks, 2009, p. 161). Certainly, however, by the time of the Mishnah (circa 200 CE), the practice of Torah study seems to have been well established. The oft-quoted utterance in Mishnah Avot (Avot 5:21) that Torah study begins at age 5 (with rabbinic literature being introduced in stages as a child gets older) indicates the value of Torah learning. The statement itself, however, is historically problematic. As Marcus shows, the passage

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is certainly a later addition to the Mishnah, probably introduced in the early Middle Ages (Marcus, 1996, pp. 43–44; see also Kraemer, 1989, p. 78), but the notion that Torah study begins at an early age is attested in the Babylonian Talmud (Bava Batra 21a). And, as Marcus shows, by the twelfth century, Talmudic interpreters have come to understand the text to mean that fathers are obligated to teach their sons and to find teachers for them as they get older (Marcus, 1996, p. 44).

The passage from Avot, albeit a later addendum, came to have a great influence on the notion of "curriculum" for Jewish education. It indicates an early exposure to learning Torah, but at the same time the statement asserts an important distinction that will come to dominate the course of study in Jewish education for centuries—ultimately the highest value of Jewish study is exploring the great works of *Rabbinic* culture, the Mishnah and even more importantly the Babylonian Talmud. The study of the Bible itself seems to occupy a lower rung on the scale. Moreover, the entire book that we call *Tanakh* or The Bible was not *as a whole* the object of study. When Jews studied the Bible, they focused on the Pentateuch (*Humash*) because of the lexical readings from the Torah that Jews encountered on the Sabbath, the Festivals, and twice weekly on Monday and Thursday mornings.

One way of thinking about the curriculum of ancient times is to look at a large body of literature that in one way may be understood to be the "lecture notes" or lesson plans of the rabbinic schoolhouse (Bregman, 1982). That is, the vast midrashic literature of Torah interpretation that has come down through the ages. If one thinks of Midrash as the mainstream or dominant interpretation of Torah promulgated by rabbinic teachers, it is not unreasonable to argue that the "curriculum" of the Beit Midrash can be mapped onto the books of midrashic writings (*teachings*, as it were) that we have inherited today. By that account, once again, the great preponderance of Midrash deals with the Pentateuchal readings, and although we do have Midrash on books such as Proverbs or Song of Songs, the number of actual textual pages devoted to Midrash on the *Humash* far outstrips that which we find on other books. A not unreasonable conclusion to draw, therefore, is that in rabbinic times the main focus of Bible *teaching* was on the weekly Torah reading and some of the other books of the Bible that were read liturgically (such as Esther, Song of Songs).

But what did this teaching look like? There is a great deal of discussion in the Talmud itself about the nature of the teaching and learning process. Through declarations of pedagogic practices (rarely) and through *aggadot* (legendary tales) about the world of the Beit Midrash itself (frequently), we today do get some insight into the world of the rabbinic study hall. It is hard to be definitive, of course, about the specific pedagogies employed by the teachers of those times and it is even more problematic to judge the practices of the past in the light of current-day values and ideas. It does seem that rabbinic culture, like most traditional cultures of the past, viewed teaching in the mode of what Philip Jackson has termed "the mimetic tradition" (Jackson, 1986). Namely, "transmission of factual and procedural knowledge from one person to another" (p. 117) in which the goal is to reproduce in the student the same knowledge already possessed by the teacher, and hence the term *mimesis*.

But it is certainly also true that rabbinic culture set the tone for a history of Jewish pedagogy that went beyond "soaking up" the wisdom of the wise teacher.

There is, in addition to mimesis, the culture of questioning and analysis that has over time come to characterize the classic Jewish pedagogy (Halbertal & Halbertal, 1998). The culture of the rabbinic schoolhouse is not the culture of memorizing catechisms. It is a world of debate and discussion; challenge and response. We can see this in the plaintive call of Rabbi Yochanan after the death of his opponent and challenger, Reish Lakish (Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish):

> Rabbi Yochanan was very pained by his passing. The Rabbis said: "Who will go and help calm Rabbi Yochanan? Let Rabbi Elazar ben Pedat go, for he is sharp in learning." He went and sat in front of Rabbi Yochanan. Every time Rabbi Yochanan said something, Rabbi Elazar cited a supporting Tannaitic source.
> Rabbi Yochanan said: "Are you like the son of Lakish? When I said something, the son of Lakish would ask me twenty-four questions, and I would respond with twenty-four answers. As a result, learning increased. And you tell me a Tannaitic support. Do I not know that I say good ideas?"
> He walked, and tore his garment, and wept.
> He said: "Where are you, son of Lakish? Where are you, son of Lakish?" He was crying out until he lost his mind.... [Bava Metzia 84a]

Even though this is a tragic tale, this text asserts the positive value in having a culture of questioning and debate (Holzer, 2009). What is clearly indicated is a pedagogic style that strongly resembles the modern perspective that is often called "inquiry" (Bruner, 1979; Schwab, 1978; Shulman & Keislar, 1966; Weinbaum et al., 2004). In "inquiry" the teacher is not the only source of wisdom but students challenge the teacher, examine the evidence (in science it is often experimental data or theory; in the humanities it tends to be documentary or textual evidence), and come to their own conclusions. As we shall see, "inquiry" came to have an important influence on Bible teaching in the twentieth century and into our own times. We can trace its roots back to the values of the rabbinic study hall itself.

Teaching and Learning the Bible Through the Rabbinic Lens

As teachers and learners of the Bible today, we are heirs to a long history in which the dominant approach to understanding the Bible was that given by *rabbinic interpretation*.

The classical interpreters of the Bible operated under certain specific assumptions, most importantly, in James Kugel's words, "the doctrine of 'omnisignificance,' whereby nothing in Scripture is said in vain or for rhetorical flourish: every detail is important, everything is intended to impart some teaching" (Kugel, 1997, p. 21).

Learning the Bible in the schoolhouse from the Middle Ages onward, we may surmise, was a matter of learning the standard rabbinic interpretation of these texts, particularly as preserved in the commentary of Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki ("Rashi"), the great French commentator of the late eleventh century. It was Rashi, in large part due to the authority of his commentary on the *Talmud*, who essentially set the way that "we" understand the Torah from his time onward. There were, of course, other commentators and no doubt the more learned among the Jews debated the

interpretations of these other figures both in relation to Rashi and independent of him. The famed Mikraot Gedolot ("the great readings" or Rabbinic Bible) edition of the Tanakh lays out the variety of commentators on the page, as if in debate with one another. But for most Jews, the curriculum of "*Humash* with Rashi" was the standard way to understand Torah. And therefore, most certainly, also the standard way to *teach* Torah.

But raising the name of Rashi and the other medieval commentators leads us in another direction as well in which we see that a historical development in the past will lead to important implications about teaching later down the road. As I have stated above, the dominant approach to teaching (i.e., reading) the Bible has been through rabbinic interpretation, the "midrashic" (or *derash*) mode. But in the early Middle Ages, particularly outside the world of Ashkenazi Judaism, a new approach to reading the Bible began to take hold:

> After the rise of Islam in the seventh century, another mode of interpreting Scripture emerged and for several centuries overshadowed *derash* in biblical exegesis. This approach, that of *peshat* [plain meaning], sought to understand the biblical text within the parameters of its historical, literary, and linguistic context. Historical context requires that interpretation must read the text in terms of the world of ancient Israel and the biblical story as a whole. (Greenstein, 1984, p. 217)

As Greenstein and others have noted, *peshat* came into the Jewish world through the encounter of Jewish thought with the intellectual culture of Islam and the approach of Muslim readers to sacred texts. "No longer did the rabbis need to press the midrashic interpretation of the Bible into service as a primary means of learning God's will" (Greenstein, 1984, p. 220). *Peshat*, in its medieval mode, has been seen by scholars to set the stage many centuries later for the growth of modern academic approaches to the study of the Bible. Those approaches, while differing dramatically in their faith assumptions about the nature of the Bible and biblical authorship, nonetheless are focused on using what Greenstein, above, has called the "historical, literary, and linguistic context" to help us understand the text. In the mid-twentieth century, *peshat* in its modern academic guise enters the arena of teaching methods, as we shall see in the next section of this chapter.

Teaching the Bible in the Twentieth Century: Israel

It is not my task here to trace the entire history of biblical *interpretation*, extrapolating from it the history of Jewish *teaching* of the Bible. That is a task that is far too large and fraught with complex historical issues, unrelated to our concerns. These introductory comments are meant to set the stage for a discussion on Bible teaching in the North American context in our times. But before we do so, it is important to spend a brief time talking about the teaching of the Bible in the other major Jewish center of the contemporary period, the Land of Israel.

The issue of the Tanakh in Israeli culture is a complex one that has occasioned a good deal of research from historians, most notably the contemporary scholar Anita Shapira who has written important essays on the topic (most of these have

not been translated into English, unfortunately). In one article, "The Tanakh and Israeli Identity," Shapira points out the importance of Bible study in the *secular* consciousness of the early Zionists:

> In Jewish Tradition the Tanakh was considered of lesser importance in comparison to the Talmud—the "oral Torah." The Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah) raised the status of the Tanakh as part of its return to the ancient sources. Renewal of the Hebrew language, Hebrew grammar, learning Tanakh—all these were elements that were chosen from the Tradition for service in the realization of the new national movement [Zionism], a process of secularizing the Tradition. (Shapira, 1997, pp. 166–167)

Unlike other elements of the Jewish traditional past, Shapira goes on to say, the Tanakh was adopted by the secular Zionist movement as it broke down the traditions of the Jewish past into elements among which the secularists would pick and choose. The first Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa gave pride of place to the study of Tanakh, while Talmud "was brought down to 1 hour of study per week" (p. 167).

The major scholarly study of the history of Bible teaching in Israel is that of J. Schoneveld (1976); Schoneveld's work is well summarized and explored in Joel Duman's doctoral dissertation (2005). In the scholarship of Shapira, Schoneveld, Duman, and others, we can see the complex relationship of Bible education to the project of Zionism.

On the one hand, the *religious* Zionists viewed the Bible as a proper object of study in the way it had been studied for millennia, through the lens of rabbinic commentary. And yet at the same time, studying Tanakh in the landscape of Eretz Yisrael—the physical location for most of the Hebrew Bible—added an extra dimension of power to the educational experience. The world of *derash*, one might say, comes face to face with the living reality of *peshat*; so it is no longer sufficient to view the text through the midrashic lens when one can actually walk where the storied characters of biblical times were said to have lived. Religious readers and teachers became more "fundamentalist" or literalist when they could point to a valley and say with pride "here is where David fought Goliath." In a certain sense, an internal tension was inevitable in the religious teacher's mind: are we focusing on the great values and teachings that our rabbis found in these tales or are we worrying about the exact location and terrain in which this or that story took place?

For the vast majority of Israeli society, in the *secular* state school system, the problem was somewhat different. As Duman puts it,

> Rather than being seen as the basis of religious authority and behavior, the Bible became the corner stone of Jewish history and culture, a treasure trove to be valued for its artistic, moral and historical wealth. In this manner modern secular Jewry was able to maintain traditional attachment to the ancient canon, without being committed to the observance of traditional rites, laws and customs. (Duman, 2005, p. 13)

But what about the centuries of traditional commentaries? What role did they now play? For Ahad Ha'am, for example, the Bible teaching that he saw around him in Palestine in the early years of the twentieth century did not emphasize what he called "spiritual education." It was too "archeological"—that is, focused on the specific connection of the biblical text to the physical land of Israel. For Ahad Ha'am, "the

Bible must be studied as part of the chain of Jewish history and culture, linked to the student of today by generations of Jewish thought, interpretation and creativity" (Duman, 2005, p. 15). Over the course of the decades following this debate, many theories about Bible teaching in Israel emerged, rooted in different disciplines—for example, psychology—and competing values (these are all summarized by Duman, pp. 17–33); but in the mid-1980s, a number of studies—culminating in the so-called Shenhar report of 1994—began to document the falling status of Judaic studies among Israeli students. The Bible, which for the Zionist leaders of the twentieth century (Ben Gurion most famously was an ardent student of Tanakh, though a secular man[1]) was so important, no longer became an object of study and veneration for the new generation of Israeli youth, focused so much on technology and economic status. Since the mid-1990s, the Israel Ministry of education has been trying to address these issues, but solutions are not so simple. Some of the root causes of the decline are connected to the nature of Israeli society today and therefore are resistant to easy change.

Teaching the Bible in the Twentieth Century: North America

Educators, literary figures, and philosophers in Israel were faced with the challenge of creating a total Hebrew culture in the actual geographical locale of the biblical world. The revived land required a revived language and set of cultural references. But in North America, the issues were considerably different. Here, the question was the preservation of Jewish life, religion, and culture amidst the allurements of this very welcoming Diaspora. What should be the role of Hebrew in the American landscape? What would be the relationship between this Diaspora and Eretz Yisrael? How should the Bible be viewed in this context—as a religious and authoritative work? As a cultural heritage? As a tool for learning Hebrew language? It is also important to remember that the American context, at least in the first half of the twentieth century, was dominated by a particular educating *institution*, the Talmud Torah, or Hebrew School (Graff, 2008; Rauch, 2004, pp. 41; 57–61). The fact that Jewish education would take place in a part-time institution (unlike, e.g., the Jaffa Gymnasium), conducted in a language that was not a Jewish language like Hebrew or Yiddish[2] was certain to have a huge impact on the way that subjects such as the Bible would be taught.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the typical approaches to Bible instruction were at two ends of the spectrum. On the one hand, there was the Bible stories approach in

[1] See Shapira (1997).

[2] The *lingua franca* of the Eastern European Yeshivah was Yiddish of course. In general (except within parts of the Haredi world) that changed in America and English became the new "mother tongue." That change is not to be underestimated. Although most Jews in Eastern Europe did not *speak* Hebrew, the fact that Yiddish and Hebrew share the same alphabet and that Yiddish has so many Hebrew words and references embedded within it must have had an enormous impact on the experience of young students learning in the European school house.

which simplified versions of narratives from the Bible (mostly *Humash*) were read or told. This approach was found in large measure in the one-day-a-week Sunday schools. On the other hand, in many of the Hebrew schools there was the *ivrit b'ivrit*[3] approach (Hebrew in Hebrew—i.e., biblical texts of a somewhat simplified sort which were then supposed to be "translated" by students into modern Hebrew, while the teacher's instruction was done, or supposed to have been done, in spoken Hebrew). The problem, as Zielenziger (1989) states it well, was the following:

> The emphasis was not on the learning of the values in the Bible but on *Bekiut*, or memorization, the ability to recognize phrases and facts and knowing exactly where in the Bible they occur. This ability to quote and correlate is enriching when the student also understands the ideas and values behind the phrases learned. When, however, *Bekiut* is the final aim of the study of Bible, it becomes a meaningless skill, somewhat reminiscent of the skill of knowing the names of the capitals of the fifty states of the United States without knowing anything about these capitals... (p. 48)

What would it mean to teach the Bible so that students might learn, as Zielenziger puts it "the ideas and values behind the phrases learned"? The great revolution in Bible teaching and Bible curriculum in American Jewish education was spearheaded by the Jewish Theological Seminary's Melton Research Center beginning in the mid-1960s. The Melton Center, conceived by the Jewish educator Seymour Fox and funded by the lay leader Samuel M. Melton, was founded in 1959 as a place of curriculum research, educational theory development, and teacher education. Fox and the Melton advisory board decided early on that it was important to develop new ways of teaching the Bible. This decision flowed out of a number of motivating factors. First, there was the situation in the Hebrew schools, as described in the passage above by Zielenziger. The Bible had become either a tool toward learning Hebrew—in essence, a kind of Hebrew textbook—or the occasion for the dull *Bekiut* exercises that are mentioned above. The Bible in the view of the architects of Melton needed to become a source of values, and in the language of the time, "character education."

But the Melton project was motivated by other factors as well. The age of Sputnik was a time of great reverence and excitement about science and technology. The Bible was seen as an outdated, anti-intellectual work, a book that represented superstition and bad, outmoded science (such as in its depiction of the creation of the world). The Melton design team wanted to counter this attitude and make the case for the Bible in the modern world. Years later, when I asked Fox why Melton had begun with Genesis when in fact they could have focused on any area of Jewish education, such as prayer or the Jewish holidays, he replied bluntly, "because we wanted to show that the Bible wasn't junk."

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[3] *Ivrit b'ivrit* is a methodology in American Jewish education dating back to the early years of the twentieth century. It was actively promoted by the most extraordinary figure in American Jewish educational history, Samson Benderly and his followers. *Ivrit b'ivrit* was a controversial idea and remained so. It might even be argued that the battle over *ivrit b'ivrit* is *still* being played out in contemporary Jewish education, but the playing field has moved from the supplementary school to the day school. For more on this background, see Graff (2008) and Krasner (2005).

At the same time, interesting developments in the world of general education seemed relevant to new thinking about Jewish education. Bruner's (1960) idea that "the curriculum of a subject should be determined by the most fundamental understanding that can be achieved of the underlying principles that give structure to that subject" (p. 31) had a profound influence on all fields of education. Fox's graduate school adviser at the University of Chicago, Joseph Schwab, though a critic of Bruner, was heavily involved in the new work being done on the "structure of the disciplines." Bruner's memorable phrase that the "schoolboy learning physics *is* a physicist" (p. 14; emphasis his) in essence was translated by the Melton curriculum writers as the "schoolboy learning the Bible *is* the academic Bible scholar!" To show that the Bible wasn't "junk," the Melton Center's curriculum work wanted to highlight the work of Bible *scholars*, not traditional rabbis, but academics in university-type settings whose work was methodologically rigorous and intellectually respectable (Zielenziger, 1989, pp. 70–71).

Thus the Melton Bible project began with two competing ideas: that the Bible should be viewed as a source of values and ideas that aimed toward character education and that the Bible should be viewed through the lens of academic scholarship, "translated," as it were, for children. A leading Bible scholar of the period, Nahum Sarna, was enlisted to write what may very well be the first popular book aimed at presenting the ideas of modern Bible scholarship to a non-professional audience, *Understanding Genesis* (1966). And under the leadership of the Melton Center's first director, Louis Newman, writers were engaged to turn this work into lesson plans. Finally, teachers were recruited for training in the "new method." If the sciences were to have New Math and New Biology, at its heart Melton was the creator of the New Bible.

In retrospect, one can see that the twin goals of teaching the Bible for character education and teaching the Bible in the style of modern biblical scholarship were not fully compatible. After all, university scholars of the Bible—particularly at that period—were very oriented toward seeing the Bible in the context of its ancient setting. They were focused on an historical, contextual approach toward understanding the Bible. Matters of character education and values, though not necessarily at *odds* with the scientific approach, had little in common with it. The approach represented by *Understanding Genesis* was clearly on the side of the university Bible scholars.

Resolving the tension between academic scholarship and values education may well have led to the early introduction of more literary approaches to the biblical lessons being taught in the Melton curriculum. This literary approach was more attuned to a character education pedagogy. Looking at Sarna's *Understanding Genesis* and comparing it to the original Melton teacher's guide by Leonard Gardner (1966), we can see the way that Gardner added a more literary perspective and cut back on the number of ancient Near Eastern comparisons that had appeared in *Understanding Genesis*.

Still one thing that did *not* appear in the Melton work was *rabbinic commentary*. The radical nature of the Melton approach was not only in its adaptation of academic scholarship of the Bible to the world of Jewish education. It also represented a thoroughgoing rejection of the dominant mode of Jewish Bible reading

(and hence teaching) throughout the generations—the Bible as seen through eyes of the rabbinic tradition. Melton was the reinvention of the Spanish *peshat* tradition in the new guise of the academic focus on context.

But something else was going on as well and it too had major implications for the future development of Bible pedagogy. Melton strongly rejected the *Bikiut* pedagogy in favor of a very different, one might say, Deweyean approach to classroom teaching and lesson planning. The Melton approach was to be based on an "inquiry" model with teachers leading discussions rather than either giving lectures or examining students on memorized facts. The idea that the Bible could become a focus of investigation and "discovery learning" was revolutionary in its time. And it is, I think, fair to argue that this model of teaching came to have a profound impact on Jewish education in many different venues.

The Melton Bible materials, both in their earliest generations and in the later work done by Zielenziger (1979, 1984) demonstrated the important potential connection between the work of academic scholarship and the practice of education (Holtz, 2006). Hence, the Melton Bible materials more and more came to have a *literary* emphasis (and less of an Ancient Near Eastern focus) not only because of the focus on character education but also as the field of biblical studies itself came to recognize literary analysis as a legitimate academic mode of scholarship (Alter, 1983; Rosenberg, 1984). The influence of scholarship on education could be seen quite clearly in the mid-1980s when Joel Grishaver published his Bible curriculum *Being Torah* (1986), which consciously modeled itself after Robert Alter's work in literary studies of the Bible. Grishaver aimed at giving children the skills and experience related to reading the Bible in a literary way.

Alex Sinclair's doctoral dissertation (2001) further explored the relationship of scholarship for Bible instruction by looking at three Biblical scholars (J. Cheryl Exum, Jeffrey Tigay, and Yair Zakovitch) and exploring the theoretical implications of their work for Bible teaching. Prior to Sinclair, Gail Dorph's doctoral dissertation (1993; see also Dorph, 2002) was another work heavily under the influence of the Schwab tradition. Dorph explored the Schwabian conception of subject matter (syntactic and substantive structures) and did an empirical study of MA students in two different pre-service training programs in Jewish education. She examined the ways in which young teachers' knowledge of the Bible influenced their reactions to certain pedagogic dilemmas, findings that had important implications for the way we prepare teachers for the field. In addition, she added the important element of teachers' *beliefs*—particularly core foundational beliefs—to the picture of how we might improve the practice of teachers. The role of beliefs is underestimated in the Schwab model and Dorph's work put that question on the agenda.

While literary approaches to the teaching of the Bible came to have a larger role in the world of non-Orthodox education, Orthodox educators continued to base their approach on the foundation of classical commentaries (*parshanut*), most importantly Rashi. Within Orthodox education, however, an interesting bifurcation could be discerned in the approach to *parshanut* that various educators employed. On the one hand, Rashi's commentary was viewed as *the* authoritative understanding of the biblical text. To learn *Humash*, one had to learn "*Humash* with Rashi"—the two

went hand in hand. For any "problem" posed by the biblical text, Rashi had the "correct" answer. At the same time, another force in Orthodox Bible education was being felt, the enormous power of possibly the most influential Bible educator in the world during the latter part of the twentieth century (and beyond)—Nechama Leibowitz (1905–1997) who taught hundreds (perhaps thousands?) of both Israeli and Diaspora teachers from her post at the Hebrew University. Leibowitz had developed her own particular methodology for the use of classical commentators. Rather than viewing one commentary (Rashi) as providing *the* authoritative reading of any biblical passage, Leibowitz saw the *range* of commentators arrayed over and against one another as the appropriate approach in reading the biblical text. What she aimed at was analyzing the particular commentary's approach and seeing it in relationship to others that she brought to bear on the biblical text. Her pedagogy—influencing all those students whom she taught—was the arrangement of these commentators around key issues in the particular text. She raised certain textual or philosophical questions implicit in the biblical passage and then brought the commentators out to battle over the meaning of the text (see, e.g., Leibowitz, 1963, 1974).

Leibowitz was in many ways an unusual figure in the university. She was not interested in studying the commentators in their historical or geographic context in the mode of academic researchers. She was not interested in the influences upon them from both within and outside Jewish culture. She was trying to discern their readings of the text.[4] And although Leibowitz herself was an Orthodox educator, she aimed at opening up the range of interpretation beyond the Rashi-only approach. And in doing so, Leibowitz suggested that multiplicity of interpretations was the hallmark of a Jewish way of teaching, a view that was not universally accepted among Orthodox educators, though it came to influence a significant number.

Teaching the Bible: Theoretical Considerations

In the mid-1980s, one of Schwab's most distinguished students, Lee S. Shulman, began to publish the results of important research in the field of general education that he and his graduate students were conducting in the area of the relationship between the content knowledge of teachers and the way those teachers conceptualized their teaching. Shulman's influence on Jewish education could be seen in the previously mentioned doctoral dissertations by Dorph (1993) and Sinclair (2001). My own work in this area (Holtz, 2003) was influenced by Shulman and particularly by Shulman's student (later, one of his successors at Stanford) Pamela Grossman (Grossman, 1990, 1991; Grossman, Wilson, & Shulman, 1989). Grossman was working on the way that beginning high school English teachers thought about their subject matter knowledge for teaching purposes. Grossman herself described her project as an exploration of "the nature of pedagogical content

[4]The major study of Leibowitz's methodology is Frankel (2007); see also Deitcher (2000), Frankel (1999) and Peerless (2005).

knowledge in English among beginning teachers and the role of subject-specific teacher education coursework in contributing to graduates' knowledge and beliefs about teaching English" (Grossman, 1990, p. x). It was obvious to me at the time that I began reading Grossman's work that her ideas about teaching English "texts" could be applied to Jewish "texts," in particular the Bible, with considerable potential.

Grossman began to describe the teacher's "orientations" to the subject matter that they were teaching. The word "orientation" here is used in a technical sense, a term meant to include aspects of both the knowledge and belief sides of a teacher's relationship to the subject matter. An orientation represents the "English teachers' interpretive stance. . . toward literature [and] becomes important in understanding their goals for instruction, curricular choices, instructional assignments, and classroom questions. . ..More than a casual attitude toward the subject matter, an orientation toward literature represents a basic organizing framework for knowledge about literature" (Grossman, 1991, pp. 247–248). Orientation is a rich and valuable concept in education. It touches not only upon the *practice* of teaching but upon the *philosophy* behind that practice: "An orientation is a description not of a teacher's 'method' in some technical meaning of the word, but in a deeper sense, of a teacher's most powerful conceptions and beliefs about the field he or she is teaching. It is the living expression of the philosophical questions. . .: What is my view of the aims of education, and how as a teacher do I attain those aims" (Holtz, 2003, pp. 48–49)?

Grossman described three main orientations to a literary text: a text-based approach, a context-based approach, and a reader-response-based approach. Orientations in Grossman's presentation (as I tried to show in *Textual Knowledge*) are rooted in the world of academic scholarship. It is the translation for education of what scholars in the academy do. This is clearly the Schwabian tradition, but "Schwab's description of substantive structures does not take into account the possibility that there may be modes of discourse that do not fit the basic rules of university life. Perhaps, in the context of general education these difficulties would be less likely to appear. But in the realm of Jewish religious education we find ourselves face to face with the reality of multiple approaches to the discipline, some of which are governed by the comfortable rules of university discourse, and others of which are quite different. So different, in fact, that even the word 'discipline' is outside of realm of discourse" (Holtz, 2002, p. 17).

Thus, in conceptualizing the Bible as a subject area, I tried to delineate a more expansive list of orientations that seemed relevant to teachers of this particular text. This is what I called "The Map for Teaching Bible" (Holtz, 2003, pp. 92–95). These orientations are wide-ranging and include classical academic approaches such as what I called "The Contextual Orientation" which tries to teach students an understanding of the Bible based upon the meaning of the biblical texts *within their own times* and "The Literary Criticism Orientation" that reads biblical texts in the spirit of modern literary theory. But the "map" also includes orientations that would not be found in the university world, "The Moralistic–Didactic Orientation" that "aims at discerning the 'message' (or messages) that specific biblical texts offer for our

own lives" (p. 93) or "The Personalization Orientation" that tries to find the psychological, spiritual, or political meaning of the Bible, aiming "to see the relationship between text and the life of today" (p. 94).

I have argued (Holtz, 2003, pp. 103–106) that while a knowledge of orientations related to teaching the Bible will give teachers a variety of resources to help address both the differences one finds from one biblical text to the next, such understanding by teachers also helps accommodate the fact that in any given classroom one might find many different kinds of students. One orientation may appeal to certain students more than another, and as teachers of texts we need to be aware of the ways that our teaching reaches a variety of students. A consciousness of the concept of orientations has led some researchers to explore in empirical research the way that orientations might actually be playing out in Jewish classrooms. Most recently, for example, the *Journal of Jewish Education* published a series of articles in which a variety of scholars explored the "contextual" orientation as it was found in different educational settings (Cousens, Morrison, & Fendrick, 2008; Holtz, 2008; Levisohn, 2008; Tanchel, 2008).

Institutional Issues and the Future of Bible Teaching

In the early years of the twenty-first century, it is interesting to see how some of the core issues of Bible teaching in America from the last century continue to persist. The question of "who will do the teaching" that, in various ways, has been a constant in American Jewish education continues to trouble the world of Bible teaching. In the early part of the twentieth century, the battle between the proponents of Benderly's *ivrit b'ivrit* approach and the traditional teachers from Europe was one setting for this same enactment of the "who will teach" question. At the time that the Melton curriculum first appeared in the mid-1960s, the issue revolved around the tension between Israeli teachers who viewed the Bible as a kind of textbook for Hebrew and the curriculum team that wanted the Bible to be taught as a repository of values and scholarly information (Zielenziger, 1989). Later, the question of who was the Bible teacher became connected to the weaker and weaker background in education and Jewish studies of the newer teaching core (Gamoran, Goldring, & Robinson, 1999). It is probable that this is an issue that will not soon disappear. Efforts to improve the preparation of educators at the so-called "training institutions" (schools of higher learning) in North America coupled with ambitious programs for professional development for teachers are likely to be as crucial as they ever were (Dorph & Holtz, 2000; Dorph, 2010).

The nature of the educating institutions themselves also has a profound impact on Bible teaching in the American context. The fundamental institution for the Jewish education of children—the supplementary school (or Hebrew school; now often called the "congregational school")—has, since the latter years of the twentieth century, cut back on the number of hours of instruction and days of the week that it meets. That change had profound implications for Bible study. If schools now

only meet 2–4 hours a week, how much of the Bible can actually be taught, especially with all the other items on the school's agenda—especially preparation for bar and bat mitzvah? At the same time, the growth of day schools with (at least in *potential*) more hours for Jewish content instruction offers new opportunities for Bible teaching.

New curriculum materials such as the Melton Research Center's MaToK project, aimed specifically at the day-school setting, offer the possibility of combining a variety of orientations toward the Bible in a single, well-designed curriculum (Miller, 2005; Scheindlin, 2007). The Internet as a resource for both curriculum delivery and teacher education is only beginning to be tapped. And new pedagogic approaches, using techniques that open up the potential of the Bible for personal growth and exploration surely will continue to evolve. Perhaps the most striking in recent years has been the application of approaches from the world of drama and psychodrama to Bible teaching. Recently, the organization Storahtelling has been associated with this approach asserting that "[u]sing an innovative fusion of scholarship, storytelling, performing arts and new media, our programs reclaim the narratives and traditions that define Jewish life yet have failed to adapt to modern times" (http://www.storahtelling.org). Though Storahtelling as an organization has become very popular, its work draws upon earlier experiments in this area, particularly drama as studied by Shira Epstein (2004), Midrash drama as explored by Seymour Epstein (1976), Bibliodrama (http://www.bibliodrama.com) as practiced by Peter Pitzele (1995, 1997), and the work of Samuel Laeuchli and Evelyn Rothchild Laeuchli (1989) in using the exploration of myths in the context of psychodrama.

There is little doubt that the Bible will continue to be the core curriculum content in many settings of Jewish education. The challenges as we face the next century will, in a perhaps unsurprising way, mirror those that Jewish education in America has always faced: in what way is the American setting conducive to the exploration of an ancient literature? In which contexts will Bible education best flourish? And who will be the teachers who carry on the tradition of teaching and learning of this most central text? As for the Bible itself, there is little to worry about. As the Bible scholar Michael Fishbane has written, "…the Bible may become sacred to us insofar as its images and language shape our discourse, stimulate our moral and spiritual growth, and simply bind us to past generations which also took this text seriously" (Fishbane, 1989, p. 132). Future generations, with the benefit of wise and thoughtful teachers, will continue to hear within it the echoes of a people's distant past. And they will find within its language, narrative, and poetry the ways to build a life and map a future.

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Environment: Jewish Education as if the Planet Mattered

Eilon Schwartz

Introduction

Let us be blunt – education as presently practiced has almost categorically ignored the environmental crisis and its educational implications.

Think about just one corner of the environmental crisis: climate change. Experts have painstakingly documented over the past two decades the effects of carbon dioxide emissions on the climate, achieving a rather remarkable consensus uniting widely differing perspectives in the scientific community. They have concluded that the climate is changing and that we are the cause; that its catastrophic consequences are already responsible for significant economic damage, for social and political unrest as a result of large and growing numbers of "environmental refugees", and for rising death tolls from environmentally linked disasters (see, for example, Low, 2009 and Elsayed, 2009). And this is only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. Whereas worst-case scenarios once hovered around a change of four degrees centigrade worldwide, the newest models are showing that such predictions might be gross underestimates, and that the worst-case scenarios are now the likely scenarios by the end of the century (Sokolov et al., 2009). Most scientists accept that changes above two degrees will have unprecedented effects on life on the planet, and changes of four degrees and higher threatens life as we know it.

Climate change is our most clear and present danger, but the environmental crisis cannot be limited to climate change. Virtually, all of our ecological services – seas, forests, freshwater, productive soil – are rapidly deteriorating. These are not isolated events. They are all the result of a set of cultural, economic, social and political assumptions on which Western society has been built but that are self-evidently no longer tenable. Modernity has brought us many blessings, but the ecological destruction which surrounds us is our most measurable means of asserting that society's current path is unsustainable. Already in 1992, over half of the world's then living Nobel laureates in the sciences signed on to a "Warning to Humanity",

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calling for a radical shift in public policies and personal practices in order to change course and avoid calamity, but the trends have continued to spiral downward (World Scientists' Warning to Humanity 1992).

Given the massive scope of the crisis, it is indeed shocking that our educational systems have until recently barely noticed what was at stake. Even now, one can find only a few ecological science curricula, an occasional Earth Day activity, perhaps a school-wide community project. There is a growing list of success stories, but they continue to be the rare exceptions to the rule, and even in those path-breaking settings the educational challenge has barely been confronted. Let us be clear: It is not simply the absence of any particular curricular component that has created our current state of ecological illiteracy. It is much more perniciously the presence of a certain kind of education which has consciously and subconsciously supported the very trends and ideas which endanger us. David Orr has remarked that far from being part of the solution, education has largely been part of the problem. Orr argues that the environmental crisis is, in fact, a product of the most educated generation in human history (Orr, 1994). The post-Second World War economic and technological revolution, supported by the best and brightest of our students, has led to massive economic growth and unprecedented prosperity. However, the kind of prosperity that has been pursued, and the ways in which it has been achieved, has led to massive disruption and destruction of the ecological infrastructure on which life depends, along with vast and growing inequalities between the rich and the poor. The education that has contributed to getting us into this mess is incapable of being the education that gets us out of it. The environmental crisis is a challenge to education as we know it. Business-as-usual is no longer an option. Environmental education, therefore, is not an addition to a largely successful educational system, but an alternative way of thinking about education, and a call to rethink what we teach, how we teach it and for what ends.

What Does the Environment Got to Do with Jewish Education?

If Jewish education is about adding additional "Jewish" subject matter to our curricular – Bible, Jewish History, Hebrew language, etc. – then clearly the environmental crisis has very little to do with Jewish education. In this view Jewish education is a particularistic component tacked onto the universal curricula that should be in all schools. Ecology is a global issue, not a particularly Jewish one. However, if Jewish education is not parochial subject matter, but rather part of a much larger set of questions about culture, spirit and values, and if, as I have argued, environmental education is likewise more accurately described as a set of questions about culture and values (and as we shall see, about religion and religiosity, as well), then the relevance of Jewish education to the environmental crisis becomes more understandable.

From such a perspective, it is telling that the first attempts to understand the environmental crisis as a crisis of cultural values saw Judaism, and by association Jewish education, as not only relevant to the environmental crisis, but in fact its primary

cause. Lynn White's classic essay from the 1960s on the roots of the environmental crisis raised a stir because of his attacks on the monotheistic Judeo-Christian ethos, which he claimed removed holiness from the world by making God transcendent of nature, rather than immanent within it. The result, according to White, was a desanctification of nature, and therefore a license to exploit it for human benefit (White Jr. 1967). In short, a slippery slope led from revelation at Sinai to ecological devastation. From White's perspective, Jewish education can be seen as fueling the crisis. While perhaps teaching ecology in the science classes of the general studies curriculum – learning about the role of the rainforests in protecting biodiversity and their role as a massive carbon sink that absorbs greenhouse gases – White might argue that the hidden curriculum of Jewish studies has nevertheless been nurturing the cultural assumptions which foster and justify ecological destruction.

Over the years the question of Judaism's environmental credentials has been discussed and debated, catalysing a rich and growing literature on the interface between Judaism and the environment. However, while criticism of White exposed his condemnation of the monotheistic traditions as unfounded, White's central point was left unnoticed. White's principle claim was that, fundamentally, the environmental crisis is not a techno-scientific crisis, but rather a crisis of culture and values, and that a proper diagnosis of the environmental crisis demands not only knowing the science, but primarily examining the culture. To understand the crisis, one has to understand the cultural assumptions that make the crisis possible. At its heart, the environmental crisis is a crisis of how we see and relate to the world around us. It is a crisis of culture, society and politics. Jewish education, framed as a cultural endeavour, should therefore be extremely relevant to the questions of the environmental crisis and the ways we are part of the problem, and the ways we can nevertheless become part of the solution.

Hegemony and the Jews

Jewish education, as primarily a cultural project, needs to understand what culture it is in fact passing on, and what are its values. Several years ago I had the pleasure of spending a Sabbatical year in the United States, away from my home in Tel Aviv, and sending my older children, then 12 and 11 years old, to a Jewish day school. The school was in many ways a lovely place – they welcomed us kindly and enthusiastically. The curriculum put strong emphasis on the secular studies of math, science, social studies and language arts, along with Jewish subjects of Bible and Hebrew language. Every day began with morning prayer. I have reason to believe that the school was an example of some of the best Jewish education in North America.

And for all that, I was profoundly aware of the often instrumental, success-driven, individualist nature of the Jewish day school. It struck me that the school was trying to offer a more nurturing version of what is nevertheless essentially a private, prep school education – where academic excellence was the primary value, Ivy League universities were offered as the reward for discipline and hard work (I was fascinated by how elite colleges were at times used as a motivator for kids), and wealthy

professionals, making up many of the lay leadership of the school, were symbols of success. The values part of the curricula appeared in the shadows of the school programme – teaching "Jewish values" in Bible class, having a "mitzvah day", trying to have inclusive sports teams where team cooperation rather than individual competition was the norm (although the YMCA was far more successful at that than the Jewish day school).

Most often, Jewish education, like all education, ends up supporting and strengthening the status quo. Schools are agents of socialisation into the values of the larger society, and Jewish education has served as an agent of acculturation to the accepted societal norms. Jewish education, like all education, usually mirrors and recapitulates the values which rule the cultural landscape. Educational interventions that are perceived as pursuing alternative aims, more often than not, are peripheral to the central educational message, barely noticeable at best, and at worst strengthening the very values that they believe to be challenging. I am quite familiar with this phenomenon in environmental education, whose practitioners often believe themselves to be engaged in a subversive activity which is challenging the status quo, and instead are all too often creating only an illusion of critical thinking, with everyone feeling satisfied that schooling is engaged in social change. The core questions about the assumptions on which ecological disaster is based, those questions that would challenge accepted norms and values are seldom addressed.

None of this is surprising. As Antonio Gramsci, the Italian theoretician, argued in his persuasive, although overly pessimistic theory of hegemonic discourse, individuals, often unwittingly, continue to support the values of the ruling class, even when they ostensibly express their opposition to them (Hoare & Nowell-Smith, 1971). The political power of hegemony is in its ability to turn historical, situated notions of society, economics and culture, into ahistorical, transcendent truths. This is the way it has been, is, and forever will be. Without a history, the hegemonic values become a universal that remains unchallenged, since they are, in effect, the only way that is possible. They become "common sense" – much like, for example, "the invisible hand", which we are led to believe tells us a transcendental truth as to the way markets function, rather than a particular economic philosophy with a history, supporting a particular ideology which can be challenged and changed.

Gramsci holds that the only way to challenge the hegemony is to create an alternative culture which nurtures an opposition to the ruling values of the hegemony, and allows one to see them not as "common sense", but in effect as "non-sense". Such a task, however, is not easily achieved. More often than not, our attempts to challenge the hegemonic status quo unsuspectingly accept the "common sense" as the unseen backdrop, leaving attempts at social change to deal with peripheral issues, at best. From the perspective of the environmental world, without challenging the central narrative of economic growth and consumer society which sits at the heart of the environmental crisis, we are largely the decorations' committee on the Titanic, ignoring the core issues which must be addressed, but are rarely noticed, and if noticed, cannot be confronted.

And yet, Gramsci would hold, the task is not insurmountable. There is the possibility of creating, painstakingly, a "second language", which articulates an

alternative to the common sense which stifles criticism, and which allows a different story to be told. A second language is a successful metaphor for describing what Gramsci is demanding, for language is not simply a random selection of words. Language needs a cultural background in order to flourish – a community which converses. Historicising the common sense and articulating alternative value assumptions cannot materialise from a collection of disembodied social critiques. It must emerge from a thick cultural milieu, which will give it the intellectual depth and social strength to hold one's ground on an uneven playing field between dominant cultural values and those that try to challenge them. If we frame it this way, Jewish education has at least the theoretical potential to teach us a true second language, rather than a "kosher-style" variety of the first language which more often than not passes for Jewish education today. A second language of cultural alternative can only be built if one is indeed committed to challenging, rather than recapitulating, the dominant assumptions. And to be clear, Jews are no more guilty of the march towards acceptance of the hegemony than any other peoples in the contemporary world. Gramsci's theoretical insights notwithstanding, he could not have imagined the unprecedented power and scale of the globalised neoliberal vision for human society, and its threat to cultural diversity everywhere on the globe. And yet, Jewish education at its best might be part of the solution, and not just another part of the problem. It might, in fact, be one of the best chances we have to challenge the assumptions that allow our ecologically destructive culture to flourish.

Jewish Education as a Second Language

In his book *Caring for Creation*, Max Oeschlaeger confesses that he has come around (Oeschlaeger, 1994). Western religion, contrary to what White had him believe, is in fact part of the solution, not the problem. If the problem is cultural, then only an alternative, living cultural narrative which espouses different values from those of the mainstream culture can possibly challenge the accepted common sense. Oeschlaeger argues that religious cultures, Judaism among them, offer such an alternative – both a cultural language which works according to different assumptions than the dominant one, and concurrently, a community in which the language is alive and, at least in some sense, authoritative. What the tradition "says" matters to its members. In a famous confrontation between environmentalists and business interests who were advocating the clear-cutting of an old-growth forest, the so-called "redwood rabbis" organised and convinced the Jewish owner of the logging company to do *teshuva*, to change his path. They succeeded where others failed in persuading the businessman to spare the old growth from clearing. The combination of language and community persuaded the man and his corporation to act differently (Forum on Religion and Ecology, 2004).

Oeschlaeger's argument is an extension of the work of Bellah and other sociologists, documented in their book *Habits of the Heart* (Bellah et al., 1985). They too wrote of the instrumental, materialist hegemonic discourse of American society. True to Gramsci's analysis, they historicise the discourse, showing its historical

roots, and simultaneously identify alternative American cultural values and their histories. According to their findings, one can identify at least four historical narratives that each find expression and define contemporary American culture. Although they claim that the utilitarian one, rooted in Benjamin Franklin's ideas about individual success, has become dominant, religious Biblical narratives and civic secular ones – both of which nurture an alternative set of community values – are still present, but need to be reasserted. Already in the 1960s, Rabbi J.B. Soloveitchik made a similar argument in his "Lonely Man of Faith", claiming that the instrumental values of Adam I have eclipsed the communitarian–religious values of Adam II in modern society, and need to be reasserted within the Jewish community (Soloveitchik, 1965). Bellah's argument, which Oeshlaeger adopts, is that cultural change is a hermeneutic task – identifying suppressed cultural narratives which can be reclaimed, exposing the historic nature of the dominant cultural norms which were assumed to be transcendent and immutable, but are in fact one option among others. Likewise, the historian Simon Schama wrote his opus on the history of nature in the Western tradition in order to uncover alternative traditions, still alive but waiting to be reclaimed, which can serve as an alternative trajectory for Western culture's interface with the environment (Schama, 1995). Reclaiming the past that has never really left us is a central tool for social and cultural change.

From this perspective, Jewish education is more than a process of acculturation to the Jewish tradition. It is part of a multicultural education aimed at exploding the dominance of one particular cultural voice, one which has been particularly damaging to our relationship with the environment, and it allows our students and our culture to learn and participate in other ways of acting in the world. As Bellah argues, it is a second language, and like the difficulty of teaching Hebrew as a second language, it demands immersion and commitment for it to flourish. Otherwise, our attempt to build an alternative cultural voice is trivialised to sentimentalism and nostalgia.

Challenging the Jewish Status Quo

Jewish environmental education, however, does not only challenge the assumptions of the dominant culture and its educational messages. It is also similarly in tension with conventional Jewish education, as it presently is practiced. This is for two reasons, both already mentioned, but worth highlighting. The first is that the Jewish community has largely adopted exactly those values and lifestyles which so many social critics today see as the heart of the problem. As related above, at any given Jewish school one is more likely to find the dominant cultural values than any alternative Jewish voice. The second is that the Jewish community, even when resisting the larger culture's values, often finds that traditional Jewish voices as currently understood have little to offer, or worse, what they have to offer is problematic. Wyschograd was probably the boldest in this regard, given his Orthodox affiliation, arguing that while Judaism had good reasons to resist a natural morality which he saw as sitting at the heart of an ecological worldview, in doing so it had

consequently desensitised the Jewish tradition to the glory of the Creation, and that we indeed have what to learn from other, more environmentally aware and sensitive pagan traditions (Wyschograd, 1992).

The idea that "Judaism" teaches us any one lesson, is, however, a mistaken one. There are numerous voices that speak in the name of the tradition, some more dominant than others, but all present (Schwartz, 2002). And these voices are not a self-referential creation emanating from within, but rather have been shaped and moulded by a rich interaction with surrounding cultures. One of the problems with Gramsci's notion of culture is that he suggests that they exist as independent entities. Judaism, like most cultures, has in fact been in constant contact with other cultures, changing as a result. Describing the task as bringing a "Jewish" voice to bear on "contemporary" culture ignores the porous borders which make such essentialist distinctions problematic. Jeremy Benstein, in his beautiful book *The Way Into Judaism and the Environment*, correctly describes the hermeneutical approach needed – accepting that the tradition is a living one, and that our own perspectives and ideas have been shaped by a multitude of influences that in turn influence the ways that we read the tradition, in the same way that those who came before us brought their various cultural traditions to bear on their reading and understanding of "Judaism" (Benstein, 2006).

Similar to the role that Jewish education can play in challenging contemporary culture, perhaps it is most accurate to describe a parallel project that environmental education can play within the Jewish community. Once again building on Bellah, one can argue that Jewish culture is made up a myriad of voices which have developed over the centuries, both internally and in dialogue with voices from other cultures. The task is not only to challenge the dominant culture by allowing alternative cultural voices to assert themselves, but also to challenge contemporary Jewish culture, by allowing alternative Jewish voices to be reclaimed and, at times, reinterpreted.

A Different Voice

Jewish environmental education has many starting points. In Israel, it is historically most associated with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI). Overseas its history is less well-known, but the first major environmental education initiative familiar to me was that of Shomrei Adama of the late 1980s, founded by Ellen Bernstein, and their wonderful book, *Let the Earth Teach You Torah*, although there were certainly precursors (Bernstein & Fink, 1992). I have my youth movement reader, written by Steve Copeland already in the late 1970s, that contains an activity criticising human hubris as a root cause for the environmental crisis (Copeland, 1978). I am confident, given the growth of environmentalism in the 1970s and 1980s, that similar initiatives sprouted in other countries, as well. Outdoor environmental education activities, at summer camps and as independent initiatives, also were born. The Coalition for the Environment in Jewish Life (COEJL), founded in 1993, gave an organisational home to some of these budding initiatives.

The histories of environmental education in Israel and abroad have different antecedents, different storylines and different motivations. In the Diaspora, similar to the Jewish environmental movement with which Jewish environmental education is affiliated, there has been exponential growth over the last decade since its modest beginnings. Still far from being mainstreamed in the Jewish community, Jewish environmentalism is nevertheless no longer marginalised. Organisations like Hazon, which has eclectically combined biking ("The People of the Bike"), community building and food advocacy, and the Teva Learning Center, which has been training Jewish environmental educators now for a decade, are leading a surge of local and national environmental organisations (see annotated bibliography of websites at end of the chapter). While concentrated primarily on the liberal side of the Jewish community continuum, there are initiatives affiliated with all parts of the Jewish community. These initiatives are making inroads beyond North America as well, as fledgling projects in England and Australia, for example, take root. In Israel, the Heschel Center, inspired by the thought and social activism of Abraham Joshua Heschel, brought an educational approach of social criticism and activism to Israeli environmental education, and its curriculum "Between Human Beings and the World" (Benstein, Samuels, & Schwartz, 1996) along with the environmental education reader "A Place to Ponder" (Benstein, 1998) connected universal environmental messages with the local environmental education that the SPNI had developed for decades. Environmental organisations sprouted throughout the country in the 1990s, growing from a small handful to over 100. The recently established "Hebrew Nature" (Teva Ivri) is an umbrella organisation bringing together the many initiatives throughout Israel now combining Jewish and environmental education, thus creating for the first time in Israel a Jewish environmentalism similar to that which exists abroad, focused on Jewish-environmental identity, and not solely Zionist or Israeli civic identities.

From this growing network of organisations and programmes, an educational philosophy and pedagogy are beginning to emerge. A set of categories and concepts have been mapped out, in which environmentalism and Jewish concerns intersect, creating a unique language which challenges contemporary Jewish and Western cultures at once. If I am right that Jewish environmental education is not simply another discipline, then similarly, its research questions are not simply questions about subject matter. The parallel category to "environmental education" is not "chemistry", or "biology" or "algebra" or even "social studies" and "literature"; it is part of the family of alternative educational models which are rethinking the basic questions of education. As in any grassroots educational movement, there is not yet an intellectual rigorousness to its theory and practice, but its themes are to be the starting point of any reflective academic research in the coming years. What follows is an attempt to categorise those themes, suggesting some of the theoretical questions and educational practices which any (Jewish) environmental educational research agenda should pursue.

Nurturing Wonder

How do we educate towards wonder? Heschel has argued that the central malaise of modern life is the loss of a sense of wonder in the world. “Mankind”, as he writes, “will not perish for want of information; but only for want of appreciation” (Heschel, 1956). Rachel Carson, in her moving children’s book *A Sense of Wonder* makes a similar point: “A child’s world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood” (Carson, 1998). Environmental education has correctly made much of creating educational activities that nurture a sense of wonder in the natural world, and Jewish environmental education has linked the practice of berakhot [blessings] to acknowledging the small and great wonders that we witness every day. But if the culture around us, and the educational culture within, are all projecting the antithesis of wonder, what difference does one short educational activity make?

Can wonder be taught? What are its practices? What does a school look like that takes wonder seriously? What does a culture look like that takes wonder seriously? Is it even possible to create an alternative culture, when the rest of society marches to such a different drummer? I have seen classes that go out daily to paint the movement of the clouds; spent nights away from the urban lights that blind the heavens from the earth, to watch the spectacle of stars that moved the ancients and is now all but extinct in our daily experience. And I have seen our educators and our children struggle to see these daily wonders, to change the pace of their lives to be able to hear Nahman of Bratzlav’s song of the grasses. We need a better understanding of what wonder is, and whether and how it can be taught in our fast-paced, achievement-oriented world.

Science and Religiosity: Interdisciplinary Education

Ever since Darwin, science and religion have been portrayed as separate realms, at best, clashing worldviews, at worst. The dominant model of Jewish day school education is to divide the day between the secular subjects of general knowledge and the Jewish subjects of values and culture. Jewish environmental education invites us to rethink that divide and its price.

One of the few pedagogic questions about wonder which have been asked, although as yet not researched, is whether scientific understanding enhances our wonder in the world, or retards it. That depends very much upon how science is taught. A reductionist, materialist scientific narrative, as for example that of Richard Dawkins (Dawkins, 1989) and his advocates, is on a collision course with the reverence which sits at the core of a naturalist such as Rachel Carson’s worldview (Carson, 1998). Science education is not neutral and cannot be treated as such. It, like any other part of our education, will reflect values and ideas, and it is best that

they be attended. We need to explore in a far more sophisticated way the interplay between facts and values, with far more thought given to the ways our values influence how we see the facts, and how information can challenge beliefs that are no longer tenable (Schwartz, 2009). Environmentalists have been leading the way in reconnecting our science with social responsibility, and Jewish environmental education has much to offer in building a dialogue between science and religion. This is not to say that science should be reduced to values education. Notwithstanding the post-modern desire to read ideology into any claim of objectivity, facts and values are different, but are not nearly as separate as the modernists have claimed. Research needs to describe in much more detail the subtle interactions between the two, and how to build educational initiatives which are aware of the ways they can and should interact.

Interdependence

Environmentalists are fond of talking of the web of life, of the ways that all of life is interconnected. And yet, in spite of the core idea that Adam emerges from *Adama*, that human beings are made from the very stuff of the earth, so much of our culture advocates the inherent separateness of human beings from the rest of the natural world, and often enough, the independence of human beings one from another, as well. In one of my favourite quotes of John Dewey, he writes:

> From a social standpoint, dependence denotes a power rather than a weakness; it involves interdependence. There is always a danger that increased personal independence will decrease the social capacity of an individual. In making him more self-reliant, it may make him more self-sufficient; it may lead to aloofness and indifference. It often makes an individual so insensitive in his relations to others as to develop an illusion of being really able to stand and act alone – an unnamed form of insanity which is responsible for a large part of the remediable suffering of the world. (Dewey, 1944, p. 44)

"No man is an island" John Donne wrote, but in the 1600s no one yet knew just how scientifically complex the web is which connects all of life. Although Dewey refers in the above quote to human interdependence, he was well aware of how our interdependence expanded beyond the species barrier (Dewey, 1944). And ecologists have painstakingly documented over the last decades the myriad ways that life is connected, and how that web is fraying at a frightening rate. (See, for example, United Nations Development Programme et al., 2001.)

The Jewish community certainly advocates interconnectedness of the Jewish community – *kol yisrael aravim zeh l'zeh*, all Jews are responsible for one another, but a central question of our times is how do we expand our sense of community beyond the ones closest to us, and how do we recognise and acknowledge the web of attachments which connect us. In a globalised world, where our clothing is made by children in Southeast Asia working under inhuman conditions, taking responsibility for our actions is a complex matter. We buy inexpensive clothing because we are ignorant of, or capable of ignoring, the ways that our actions are intertwined with the well-being of others. Our interconnectedness is not limited to those in other places,

either. We are connected in time, as well as in space, and our connections reach back and forward in history. Climate change is our legacy to future generations. Are there examples of education that fosters a sense of our interconnectedness, of uncovering the ways that we are responsible for one another, and of fostering an ethic of care that expands outward into the world?

These connections, we are relearning are not limited to other humans around the world, but to our connections beyond the species barrier. And they are not limited to our material connections to the natural world, on our dependence on its bounty for the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe. Our souls as well as our bodies are dependent on our connections to the world, assuming that it is even possible to consider the human soul and body as separate entities. We are all part of the same creation, share the same evolutionary story, and are intertwined with one another. E.O. Wilson claims that human beings have an innate biophilia – an instinctive bond to the natural world (Wilson, 1986). If that is so, what happens to a generation deprived of the delight of wandering in the woods, and of hearing the sounds of animal life in their native habitats (see, for example, Louv, 2005)? As Midgley says of the existentialists, when life shrinks to a few urban rooms – with no plants, animals or children – no wonder it becomes absurd (Midgley, 1995). Interdependence is dependent on our experience of interdependence. Our education needs to pay attention to what it is teaching and what it is not; what experiences it privileges and what it neglects.

A Sense of Place

I remember the first time I understood the connection between being Jewish and a sense of place. A close friend who had grown up in South Africa was telling me about his youth movement summer camp experiences, and he mentioned how, as opposed to us in the northern hemisphere who turned Tisha B'Av into a central part of the camp's Jewish calendar, they celebrated Hannukah! Hanukkah, not only the festival of freedom, but also the festival of lights, the Jews' winter solstice holiday, was celebrated in the middle of summer. The Jewish calendar memorialises a time when our culture and nature were one.

Environmental educators have recognised that our collective contemporary wanderings – the disconnect of modern culture from land and nature – have damaged our understanding of the natural world, and our sense of connection and responsibility for it. Re-indigenising, however, is an extremely difficult task in our global world. In many ways, the Zionist experiment is exactly that – a noble attempt to reconnect a culture with its natural landscape. Much of Israeli environment education was in fact invested in hiking the land and learning its natural history, although often such education was more centrally about national identity and about political ownership (see, for example, Benvinisti, 1988). There is much to be written on the intersect between national and ecological agendas in Zionism – how questions of local, national and global identities are entwined in the nurture of an ecological identity.

In the Diaspora, a different issue emerges. An agricultural culture found itself outside of its native land. We chose to sacrifice our connection to nature for our connection to the Land of Israel, and by extension to all other Jewish communities. All Jews pray for rain according to the seasons of the Land of Israel, no matter where they live; we bless the agricultural harvest with fruits foreign to the soils of the Diaspora. But Jewish environmental educators will tell you that there is a price to be paid for ignoring the landscape of your home. It means that our Jewishness does not foster a sense of place, and that our rituals, focused on a distant landscape rather than our lived experience in this place, can alienate us from the visceral natural world which surrounds us. What was long ago taken for granted in Jewish life, that our calendar nurtured our relationship with the natural world, and that our religious lives were intimately connected with our natural ones, has been for most of the last 2,000 years far from obvious. One of the great challenges of Jewish environmental education is building a ritual which returns the nature outside of our doors to Jewish culture, while paying attention to the historical reasons why Jews chose to compromise their connection to nature in the name of their connection to the land and people of Israel.

Changing Habits

There is an intentionality about Jewish environmental education – exposing the environmentally damaging beliefs and practices in our lives and nurturing new ways of acting. Eating is perhaps the most dramatic of such acts. The fast-food culture which is so connected to the pace of our lives, the replacement of agriculture with the factory farming of agri-business, and the breakdown of traditional communal practices, is being challenged by educators who pay attention to the hidden curriculum of soda machines and junk food. Jewish practices, like those of any traditional culture, offer different models: whether it is recipes that have been handed down for several generations, the seamless mix of family, tradition and food at any festive meal, blessings over bread and after the meal that bring attention to that which is taken for granted, the many cycles of fast and feast which can fill the Jewish year, all these offer resources from which to resist the mindless and destructive food habits that have become commonplace. Practices that create school and community gardens, as well as community supported agriculture, are attempts to reconnect our lives with the land and its bounty.

Eating is but one of a host of practices that are unreflectively present in our educational culture. Transportation is another – how we move from one place to another is not simply a question of convenience – whether we use public transportation or private cars has moral and social implications. Building a communal culture, which emphasises walking and biking, could transform our communal lives. Similarly, our homes are not simply our castles. Once we accept our interdependence, we recognise that our choice of home and communities is a social, communal and political choice. Jews have traditionally sought out other Jews with whom to live in community. The religious ideas of an eruv [an artificial halachic boundary] and of the

need for a minyan [a prayer quorum] in walking distance of one another are a very different kind of community than that of a suburban car-based culture. And the very architecture of our homes embodies social, cultural and political choices. I know an architect who, in planning homes, exposes the electrical wires for all to see. The hidden curriculum is laid bare. Where does our energy come from? How much do we use, and at what price? Where does our water come from? Go to? What materials? The first step in changing habits is exposing what is unsustainable about our present ones, and then creating alternatives. We pay great attention to curricular questions; our education needs to pay far more attention to the hidden curricula of our practices where so much of our education takes place.

Celebrating Physicality

Environmentalists are often called the "gloom and doom" folks. One of the critical questions in contemporary environmental education is whether "gloom and doom" is a motivator, or, more probably, leads to despair and hopelessness. If all environmentalists have to tell us is that the world as we know it is doomed, without any vision of why a different, sustainable world, is not only sustainable in its physical sense, but is also a life worth living – a life that is richer, fuller, compelling, satisfying – in short, sustaining, then the environmental vision will only criticise what is, not celebrate what can be.

Jewish environmental education can focus environmentalism on the spiritual components of the environmental agenda which are too often overlooked, or vaguely articulated. The environmentalists' central thesis, that we are interconnected, means, as Dewey hinted, that living a life of disconnection is in a deep sense, which should be more fully articulated, dehumanising (Dewey & Tufts, 1976). An environmental agenda does not simply protect the ecosphere, it returns values of simplicity, community, and of course, nature, to the centre of human life. Riding a bicycle is not only about reducing our carbon footprint; it is about feeling the wind at our face, reconnecting with our bodies and being alive. When we walk in our towns and cities we get to know our neighbours and our neighbourhood shopkeepers; we create a pace of life that is a more human pace. And when we notice the sight and scent of the flowers we connect ourselves to the larger context of life, which puts our own lives within a setting that gives them meaning. Religious traditions are uniquely positioned to build a language and a pedagogy that can give expression to such intuitions.

Text and Context

And yet, many have argued that Judaism is, in fact, in tension with environmental ideas and concepts, physicality among them. There are those who condemn Judaism's anti-environmental intuitions, and those that praise them, but they both share the supposition that "Judaism" does not sit easily with ecological ideas. For all

those who see Judaism as being at odds with environmentalism, the attempts to show the ecological teachings of Jewish culture can be viewed as an apologetic exercise which distorts Jewish culture and its cardinal messages. Against this, a generation has been reclaiming the environmental sentiments of our tradition. From Genesis II and the story of Noah, Talmudic concepts of Bal Tashchit ("not to destroy") and Tzar Baalei Chaim (prevention of animal cruelty), Rabbinic midrash and commentaries, modern Jewish philosophers such as Rav Nachman, Rav Kook, A. D. Gordon and of course Abraham Joshua Heschel, a vibrant alternative textual tradition has been articulated.

Clarifying these issues, of course, is the work of Jewish philosophy, history and sociology. The answers depend on how we read our texts and how our texts intersect with the life around them. Jewish environmentalism is one of the many places of dialogue between traditional text and contemporary society. Feminism is another. But environmentalism is also a place where we recognise our Jewishness as being more than the study of texts. By definition, the text as the canon of Jewish tradition minimises the centrality of the body and the world (see, for example, Biale, 1997; Boyarin, 1995 and Eilberg-Schwartz, 1992). Revelation trumps creation. Jewish environmental education invites our communities to be less text-centred and more life-centred; to find ways of creating a more fruitful dialogue between the people of the book and a people living life.

Responsible Communities

At its core, environmental education is about nurturing responsible citizens engaged in their communities and in their world. Engagement is not simply about acculturation – mimicking the practices of previous generations. It is about identifying as part of the community, and caring enough about its health and well-being to change it for the better. Too much of our Jewish educational practice is focused on belonging, and not enough on engaging.

Engagement demands both belonging and criticism. We need to be part of the community, but we also need to change it. Being part of the community is a necessary condition for any engagement – criticism without a deep sense of belonging often strips criticism of sympathy, an important component in any effective criticism. But belonging without criticism does a profound disservice to the rich, dynamic tradition of which we are part. Jewish environmental education can provide these tools of belonging and criticism, but to be serious, it must be wary of the hegemonic power of dominant cultural values, which always threaten to trivialise or marginalise any attempts to allow a meaningful social critique to flourish. Social criticism cannot simply be empty words. Teaching our children to be citizens – to be active participants in their world, to want to change it and to explore what needs to be changed and how – is the heart and soul of environmental education. Jewish environmental education is uniquely positioned to translate social criticism into social practices for the Jewish community, to allow us to engage sympathetically with our manifold communities, and out of commitment and respect for what was and is, to build a more just, kinder and more sustainable future.

Last Thoughts

There is no academic field of Jewish environmental education today, mirroring the peripheral status of environmentalism within the Jewish educational establishment, and within society in general. For those of us who are conscious of the ecological disaster that has already begun to unfold, and of the chilling consequences that have already been set in motion, we search to find a voice that can shift public consciousness and create political will. Overwhelmed by what is at stake, we struggle to remain hopeful. Optimism is no longer an option.

But young people are way ahead of the curve. I get probably a dozen requests annually, asking where one can go study Jewish environmental education, where one can go to learn – get a masters degree or even a doctorate. This passion is contagious. It contains a large measure of gloom and doom and a pressing sense of the need to create change, but it also is infused with a profound joy in the wonders of the world and a desire to celebrate what we still have and might yet reclaim. Like so many shifts in educational theory and practice, change will not come from the top-down, but from the bottom-up. It will come from a growing field of educational innovators whose central challenge will be to take their intuition as to what needs to change, and transform it into a reflective educational practice that is capable of recreating how we see Jewish education and the Jewish world. Whether the Jewish community will be responsive to their call, whether it will open up its institutions and its budgets to educational innovation that can change the very meaning of Jewish education is an open question – I remain doubtful as to the likelihood of success. But, truth be told, failure really is not an option. The Jewish future – Jewish continuity – depends on our collective ability to re-imagine our educational and communal institutions, and to build a Jewish community where continuity does not begin and end at the Jewish doorstep, as if our Jewish existences live apart from the world of which we are part. It depends on building a Jewish future for which life on the only planet on which we have been created to live actually matters.

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Orthodox North American organisation Canfei Nesharim – www.canfeinesharim.org/

The Children and Nature Network – founded as a response to childhood nature deprivation, as documented in the best-selling book *Last Child in the Woods* – www.childrenandnature.org

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL) Jewish environmental education programme bank

http://www.coejl.org/~coejlor/programbank/viewprog.php

COEJL of Southern California – www.coejlsc.org

Ecological Footprint – Interactive ecological footprint calculator – www.epa.vic.gov.au/ecologicalfootprint/globalfootprint/index.asp

Eden environmental summer camp just north of NYC – www.edenvillagecamp.org

Edible school gardens movement – using school grounds as a food and ecology pedagogic tool: http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/garden http://www.edibleschoolgardens.com.au/; http://www.ediblegardens.org.uk/

The Greening of Jewish Institutions Fellowship – www.isabellafreedman.org/environment/greening

Green Maps – Charting the environmental resources of communities and neighbourhoods – www.greenmap.org

Green Schools Network – largest network of green schools in Israel – www.greennet.org.il/content2.php?cat=73

The Green Teacher – Quarterly magazine on environmental education – www.greenteacher.com

Hazon – pioneers in Jewish outdoor education and leading the Jewish food movement – www.hazon.org

The Heschel Center for Environmental Learning and Leadership – leadership training in sustainability – www.heschel.org.il

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The Jewish Farm School in Philadelphia – www.jewishfarmschool.org

The Jewish Nature Center of Canada – www.torathateva.org

The Kayam Farm outside of Baltimore – www.pearlstonecenter.org/kayam.html

In England, the Noah Project – www.noahproject.org.uk/

The North American Association for Environmental Education – www.naaee.org

Orion Magazine – Placing environmentalism in its cultural, political and educational context – www.oriononline.org

Seviva Yisrael – linking schools in Israel and the Diaspora with joint environmental projects – http://www.svivaisrael.org/programs_en.asp?id=10

The Shalom Center, located in Philadelphia – www.shalomctr.org

The Shalom Institute –West Coast Jewish Environmental Education Center – www.shalominstitute.com

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The Society for Protection of Nature in Israel – one of the pioneers of outdoor education in the world – www.teva.org.il
Teva Ivri – uniting Jewish and environmental identity in Israel – www.tevaivri.org.il
Teva Learning Center – leading Jewish environmental education centre – www.tevalearningcenter.org

Havruta: What Do We Know and What Can We Hope to Learn from Studying in Havruta?

Elie Holzer and Orit Kent

Picture a large room filled with pairs of learners sitting face-to-face, studying a text. Each pair sits at a separate desk, on which a variety of texts, including the Bible, Talmud, medieval literature, and modern Jewish and Israeli literature are placed. Partners read an assigned text together, explain it to each other, and argue about what the text says and means. The room fills with the multiple voices of conversation. All the learners are engaged in the same learning activity—they are conducting conversations with texts and conversations with their learning partner. They are practicing a mode of learning known as Havruta learning, which takes place in a specially designed learning environment, the Beit Midrash, literally the "House of study" or "House of interpretation."

Havruta learning or paired study is a traditional mode of Jewish text study. The term itself captures two simultaneous learning activities in which the Havruta partners engage: the study of a text and learning with a partner. Confined in the past to traditional yeshivot and limited to the study of Talmud, Havruta learning has recently made its way into a variety of professional and lay learning contexts that reflect new social realities in the world of Jewish learning. However, despite its long history and its recent growing popularity, Havruta learning has received little scholarly attention.[1]

We begin this chapter by mapping the current state of Havruta learning in relation to variables such as its structural, situational, and organizational elements. We then present a review of research on Havruta learning, and conclude with a suggested research agenda.

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[1] According to Stampfer (1995), until the beginning of the twentieth century, Havruta learning was only one among other modes of study, like, for example, studying on one's own which in some contexts was perceived as the more advanced format of learning. In the traditional Lithuanian yeshivot, Havruta learning became a predominant mode of study as a response to the increased number yeshiva students with weak background in Talmudic studies, who needed to be assisted by more experienced learners.

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Havruta Learning in the Field

Where is Havruta learning being practiced and in what ways? To date, except for one evaluation study of secular Israeli Batei Midrash (plural form of Beit Midrash) commissioned by the Avi Chai Foundation (Yair, Sagiv, Shimborsky, Akrai, & Lichtman, 2006), there is no research documenting how Havruta learning is being used. In the absence of additional empirical data on this question, we draw on our knowledge of Havruta learning in Israel and the United States in contemporary Jewish-educational settings. First, we present a variety of institutions in which Havruta learning is being used. We then discuss five variables of Havruta learning, each of which has an impact on the way Havruta learning is evolving.

Where Is Havruta Learning Practiced?

Havruta learning has been employed in the past decades in different Jewish learning contexts. It is interesting to note that it prevails across denominations and in non-denominational institutions, involving men and women of all ages. It is found in Jewish day-school classrooms, institutions of Jewish adult learning, and in programs for the training of professionals such as rabbis and teachers. In some of these programs, Havruta learning takes place at the initiative of an individual teacher. In other instances, it is perceived as an official and central element of the program. Havruta learning continues of course to be a predominant mode of study in orthodox/haredi yeshivot, often beginning in middle school.

In addition, with the increasing use of distance learning, some programs have introduced what can be labeled as "remote Havruta learning," which is based on phone or online communications. In remote Havruta learning, Havruta partners do not meet in person but connect via technology to study texts together. Examples of this relatively new type of Havruta learning modality can be found at Oraita, a continuing education program for rabbis, and at the Institute for Jewish Spirituality.[2]

The Structural Organization of Havruta Learning

While different institutions and people may use the same term—Havruta—to refer to paired study, the precise form of Havruta learning may differ across contexts. At the most basic level, some people use the term Havruta to refer to a learning arrangement involving two people and a text. Others use the word more generally to refer to small-group study of texts. These differences in how Havruta learning is set up may affect the type and quality of the dynamics that evolve between the learners, and between the learners and the text.

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[2] http://www.hebrewcollege.edu/rabbinical-school/rabbi-continuing-education and http://www.ijs-online.org/practices_textstudy.php

Additional elements that shape the Havruta learning experience include the amount of time allocated for Havruta study, the genres of texts that are studied, the Havruta "task," the role of Havruta in the classroom lesson, and the learning environment in which it takes place.

Allocated time: The amount of time allocated to Havruta learning includes a wide range of possibilities. For example, a high school teacher may allocate 15 minutes of his class to Havruta study during which students are told to partner with someone else, study a specific text, and find specific information in the text. This is a very different arrangement than in a Beit Midrash where the same two students study together in Havruta on a regular daily or weekly basis for several hours at a time. In the latter situation, the Havruta has time to develop a learning relationship, which may contribute to the Havruta experience.

Text genre: Traditionally, Havruta learning has been used for the study of rabbinic literature, in particular the Talmud and its commentators. Nowadays, depending on the context, Havruta learning is used for a variety of genres of texts, including biblical texts and medieval commentators, texts of Jewish thinkers, Midrash Aggadah, modern Jewish and Israeli writing, including poetry. This change is interesting not only from a cultural point of view but also from an educational perspective. We may assume that the inherent complexity of the Talmudic text has been a major impetus for learners to seek the help of a Havruta partner. Using Havruta learning for the study of less-complex genres of texts suggests that alternative purposes and needs might lie behind what people expect from Havruta learning today and impact the dynamic of Havruta learning in different ways. For example, when studying a less-complex text in Havruta, students may need to spend less effort or time deciphering the literal meaning of the text and its argument and can devote more time to discussing the broader meaning of the text. An alternative purpose could be the desire to create personal meaning with and from the text with the help of one's Havruta partner.

Open vs. directed Havruta learning tasks: In many traditional settings such as yeshivot, Havruta learning often entails an open-ended inquiry of two learners into one or a series of assigned texts. The learners generally have no more specific task than to study these texts together. There are however contexts in which Havruta learning is directed by explicit guidelines or tasks of various degree of specificity. For example, learners may be invited to focus on particular themes or ideas in the text, or may be given a specific learning task such as comparing different texts or articulating their views about the texts. The guidelines often appear in the form of written worksheets, in some instances inviting the Havruta learners to record their findings in writing.

Role of Havruta in the classroom: Another important factor which may affect the nature of Havruta learning is the purpose(s) it serves in the greater educational context. For example, Havruta learning can serve as the summary of a lesson. In this case, the purpose of the Havruta learning is for students to practice and review together what has been taught in the formal class. Another purpose could be to prepare for an upcoming class by becoming familiar and engaging with the materials

that the teacher will be addressing. Havruta learning can also serve as stand-alone activity that has no link to other formal learning activities.

The Havruta learning environment: The learning space in which Havruta learning takes place is another element that affects Havruta learning. In some cases, no specific space is designed for Havruta learning. For example, students simply turn to their nearest classmate without changing the arrangement of the chairs or tables in the formal classroom. This is particularly the case for very brief Havruta study experiences characterized by a very specific learning task such as finding information in the text.

Some institutions allocate a specific space for Havruta learning, which is usually refered to as a Beit Midrash, literally meaning a study house. The Beit Midrash is often designed so that Havruta learners may face each other or sit next to each other in a way that facilitates one-on-one communication despite the presence of many others who share the same space for study. Convenient access to books (and relevant electronic databases) can impact Havruta learning. These additional resources can help encourage learners to be responsible for independently exploring the connections between the text they study and a variety of other texts.

Review of Research

There is limited historical research on Havruta learning. Halbertal and Hartman-Halbertal (1998) briefly discuss Havruta learning in an article on the yeshiva. Havruta learning in its historical perspective, especially in the tradition of the Volozhin yeshiva is discussed in the work of Stampfer (1995) and in Tishby's Hebrew encyclopedia entry (1979), although there is still a great deal that we do not know about when, where, and why Havruta was practiced in different Jewish communities and in different historical periods.

A second line of research is characterized by the attempt to understand and analyze Havruta learning through the prism of theories from the social sciences or the humanities. Segal (2003) briefly reviews the history of Havruta learning and concludes that the practice is not as ancient as we think and that its use in modern contexts should be based around an educational rationale. She then outlines three domains in which Havruta offers potential learning benefits—the affective, the cognitive, and the social—and provides details about each one. Finally, drawing on contemporary educational literature, she compares Havruta to cooperative learning, noting areas of similarity and difference. Feiman-Nemser (2006) offers a rationale for engaging in Havruta learning as part of the professional education of teachers by drawing on a theory of learning to teach, and connecting this theory to the opportunities Havruta study offers prospective teachers to learn about and practice dispositions and skills that are important in teaching. Holzer (2006) draws on philosophical hermeneutics to conceptualize a view of good Havruta learning, conceptualized as engaging in a conversation with text and people, and characterized by the cultivation of specific dispositions such as openness toward another perspective, readiness to revisit one's own preconceptions, attentive listening, and

the cultivation of an awareness of one's own limited perspective. Kent (2008) draws on a diverse body of contemporary educational research and video analysis of nine pairs of Havruta learners studying over time to develop a theory of Havruta learning, highlighting six core practices—listening, articulating, wondering, focusing, supporting, and challenging—and their interplay. Kent then explores the use of these practices through four cases in order to illustrate and probe some of the ways in which Havruta has the potential to engage students in generative, textually grounded interpretive discussions of classical Jewish texts, as well as missed opportunities.

There is a range of empirical research that has been conducted on Havruta learning. Tedmon (1991) uses a variety of educational theories to analyze a Havruta between two orthodox teenage boys in a yeshiva high school. Drawing on interviews and two Havruta recordings, she analyzes this Havruta interaction through a socio-cognitive perspective on reading, a sociolinguistic perspective on discourse, a literary perspective of reading, and a cultural perspective of reading. Her dissertation points to the usefulness of analyzing this phenomenon through multiple disciplinary lenses in order to better understand what occurs. Her work also points to the ways in which students can complement each other's learning when they study in Havruta and to the ways in which Havruta learning in the yeshiva high school reflect and reinforce broader orthodox values and beliefs. In her research, Brawer (2002) assesses the advantages of Havruta learning among yeshiva day-school students from the perspective of peer collaboration and critical thinking, and its beneficial impact on the learners. Informed by research on reading and interpreting literary texts and socio-cultural theories of knowledge, Kent (2006) conducts discourse analysis of video footage of adult Havruta learners, focusing on the interactions between Havruta learners and between each Havruta learner and the text. Her article documents and analyzes the social and intellectual moves of Havruta learners in one Havruta discussion. She begins to conceptualize how interpretive conversations in this Havruta unfold and identifies that it includes phases, moves, and norms. In addition, she identifies two different modes of the Havruta partners' engagement with one another, "co-building" and "interpreting through opposition."

In their research, Brown and Malkus (2007) explore how Havruta is organized and experienced in the Rabbinical School of the Jewish Theological Seminary. They interviewed and conducted focus groups with students, the Talmud faculty, the administration, and the Beit Midrash staff. Among other things, they report that students had little guidance about how to pick a Havruta or what to do once they were in a Havruta and that faculty were ambivalent about how much they should intervene. At the same time, many students reported that Havruta helped them form positive bonds with another student, connect to the text, and explore issues of religious meaning. They conclude that Havruta left to itself has enormous benefits and that this "natural" form of Havruta could benefit from research and practice in cooperative learning that points to such issues as the importance of positive interdependence and individual accountability. Raider-Roth and Holzer (2009) study the impact of carefully designed Havruta learning on the quality and the intensity of the relationships that learners establish with the text, with their Havruta partner, and with their own personal beliefs and values.

Two works of research have focused specifically on argumentative discourse patterns in Havruta learning. Schwarz (in press) studies the argumentative rhetoric of highly experienced Havruta partners in a traditional yeshiva. Blum, Kolka, Blondheim, and Hacohen (2008) attend to the characteristics of argumentative discourse that are common to traditional learners of Talmud and to Israeli politicians. Their study is based on a comparative discourse analysis of one Havruta pair with politicians' confrontational rhetoric during a popular Israeli TV show. This research shows a high degree of identity between discourse characteristics in both contexts and suggests a causal connection between the argumentative and non-consensual tradition of Havruta Talmud study and what is often identified as the strong argumentative and non-consensual character of contemporary Israeli culture and political discourse.

Finally, two research articles have applied a hermeneutic methodology to probe rabbinic texts related to peer learning to discuss various aspects of Havruta learning: Ratzersdorfer Rosen (2003) discusses short statements in the Talmud that characterize various learning purposes and modes of interaction between Havruta learners. Holzer (2009) offers an interpretation of a Talmudic legend which emphasizes an ethical dimension of Havruta learning, this being the responsibility that one has for the learning of his Havruta partner.

Currently, we are writing a book which draws on our work designing and teaching in DeLeT's Beit Midrash for Teachers. The book reflects two of our core convictions: that any model of Havruta learning that educators promote should be situated within broader theories of epistemology and learning and that Havruta learning should be treated by educators as composed of practices which can and should be conceptualized and curricularized and into which participants should be inducted. The book offers conceptual and practical tools for Havruta text study design and teaching, as well as a discussion of principles and examples of a Beit Midrash design. Kent is also writing a book which presents a contemporary theory of Havruta learning as composed of six practices and illustrates these practices in concrete cases of people learning in Havruta. This book describes the adaptation and use of her theory in three distinct educational settings: a teacher education program, a third-grade classroom, and a Jewish afternoon school.

An Agenda for Future Research

Mapping

Because of a lack of systematic documentation of Havruta learning, we advocate a mapping agenda to document the uses of Havruta in contemporary times. This documentation process would address a series of questions: Where is Havruta being practiced, with whom, and to study what subject matter(s)? How is it being practiced? What purposes does it serve according to both teachers and students? When and why was it first introduced in various contexts? What are explicit and implicit views about what good Havruta learning entails in these contexts?

In general, we believe that research on Havruta learning should aim to address issues beyond the documentation and the analysis of this phenomenon in contemporary settings of Jewish learning. As with any rich and complex learning practice, educators might benefit from descriptive as well as programmatic research that would turn Havruta learning into a focus of scholarship. For example, educators who promote Havruta learning may gain a more refined understanding of models of what Havruta learning might look like and what purposes it might serve in different contexts and for different learners. The following lines of research illustrate our point.

Studies of the Teaching and Learning of Havruta

Another line of research would focus on Havruta teaching and learning in different contexts. This could include direct classroom studies and experimental studies, such as comparison studies between expert and novice Havruta learners. Comparison studies between novices and experts have been conducted in the area of teaching literature with useful results.[3]

This line of research would explore what Havruta learning requires of teachers as well as a range of learners, how its use can best be supported, and the purposes best served by Havruta learning. Some of the specific questions this line of research could address are as follows: What does Havruta learning require of learners? And, how do educators conceptualize a successful Havruta conversation? Kent's work (2006, 2008), for example, demonstrates a range of practices in which Havruta learners in the DeLeT Beit Midrash engage, some with more success than others. What is the range of skills and dispositions required by these practices? Does Havruta in different contexts entail the same six practices or a different constellation of practices?

Other examples of questions worthy of empirical study are as follows: Are educators in different contexts providing learners with the necessary skills and scaffolding to successfully engage in Havruta and, if so, what characterizes their pedagogies? What are the ways, if any, by which Havruta learning is evaluated and assessed? What are some of the actual effects of Havruta learning on the learners and their learning? How do educators and learners experience the advantages and disadvantages of using Havruta learning and what might this tell us about appropriate and inappropriate applications? And, how, if at all, does the work students do in Havruta contribute to the larger classroom conversation about particular texts?

This type of close study of Havruta learning would benefit from both cultural and gender analysis. Beliefs, assumptions, or preconceptions about Jewish texts in general, and biblical and Talmudic texts in particular are culturally constructed. Such beliefs and assumptions may operate as significant variables in the Havruta learning

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[3] For example, Earthman (1992), "Creating the Virtual Work: Readers' Processes in Understanding Literary Texts."

dynamic and have an impact, for example, on what is assumed to be representative of a "good" interpretation in different cultural settings.

The participation of both men and women in many contemporary Havruta learning settings also invites interesting research questions. Feminist epistemological and psychological theories present different and new ideas about the connections between knowledge, learning, and relationships which might be the source for generative research questions. For example, according to Gilligan (1982), Coates (1996, 1997), and Sheldon (1992, 1997), women tend to silence their personal views and prefer a consensus when engaging with people with different views. It would be useful to consider the gendered nature of Havruta discourse and whether there are specific norms of discourse, argumentation, negotiation, and support which emerge in these new Batei Midrash.

Conceptual Research

In addition to empirical research, we believe that teachers and students of Havruta learning could benefit from the articulation of various views on what *good* Havruta learning entails. This would have an impact on developing both the textual skills and the interpersonal skills of Havruta learners. Furthermore, images of *good* Havruta learning may be infused by various epistemological or psychological theories, which offer important views of good learning and understanding. For example, Holzer (2006) adopts the concept of conversation developed in philosophical hermeneutics in order to articulate qualities of the relationship both between Havruta learners and between the Havruta learner and the text. One outcome of this analysis is the identification of a set of dispositions such as listening, wholeheartedness, and revising one's prejudices. In this approach, Havruta learning is conceptualized not only as a way of doing, but also as a way of being, from which it is possible to identity a set of essential skills for Havruta learning. Alternative epistemological and psychological theories may help us clarify additional, possibly alternative, elements and skills of what it is that educators are trying to educate for when they promote Havruta learning among their learners.

Sociological Studies of Batei Midrash and Havruta Learning

Sociological work is needed to understand the spread of Havruta learning and its use in non-traditional Batei Midrash. The research should try to understand this phenomenon in relation to other Jewish and societal trends such as people's search for greater community and the renaissance in adult learning, at least in the United States. In addition, the interpersonal nature of Havruta, particularly when used in the context of a collective learning environment such as a Beit Midrash, raises questions about the intersection between learning and identity development. For example, what role might learning in Havruta with peers play in one's own Jewish identity development? Another question pertains to the potential shifts in people's notions

of the role of the expert in Jewish learning. Indeed, Havruta learning may indicate as well as cultivate a view in which the individual lay person, rather than the rabbi or the scholar, is entitled to assume and voice ownership of traditional Jewish texts and their meaning.

Finally, given the rise of non-traditional Batei Midrash in Israel and the United States, it would be useful to consider the differences between these new types of study houses and more traditional study houses. For example, Newberg's article on non-traditional Israeli Batai Midrash (Newberg, 2005) and their role in providing a framework for the exploration of Israeli/Jewish identities points to the need for additional research in this area. As noted above, another characteristic of these new Batei Midrash which calls for research is that they include both men and women learners and a variety of Jewish texts, including but not solely focusing on Talmud. One could well imagine that these and other differences could contribute to very different kinds of learning environments, with implications for how teachers teach and how students learn.

Conclusion

Havruta learning, often perceived as a traditional mode of "Jewish learning," has slowly become the object of scholarly interest. One reason for this "late awakening" may be related to the relative lack of scholarship on teaching and learning in Jewish education in general. We believe that research on Havruta learning has important implications beyond simply learning more about this particular phenomenon. As researchers who have made Havruta learning the focus of their work, we are often asked the question if Havruta learning is a peculiarly Jewish form of study. We believe that the meaning of the question itself is not always as straightforward as it may appear. Is the question to be understood to refer to the formal setup of two people engaged in the study of a text? In this case, various forms of collaborative learning in progressive education show that Havruta learning is not peculiar to Jewish learning (Cohen, 1994; Sharan, 1994; Slavin, 1995). Does the question refer to specific features of the Havruta learning dynamic? As implied in our chapter, a formal Havruta learning setting does not necessarily mean specific and pre-defined features of interaction between learners and between learners and text. Rather than answer the question about the peculiarly Jewish aspect of Havruta learning, we prefer to say that in its very essence, Havruta learning creates an intense microcosm of two central activities of Jewish education: the study of Jewish texts and dialogue with contemporary fellow Jews. We believe that scholarship oriented toward both of these learning activities can contribute toward the overall scholarship of Jewish education and the improvement of classroom practice. While Havruta learning admittedly reflects one learning situation among many, we believe that significant progress in documenting, conceptualizing, designing, and teaching the Havruta learning mode will contribute to our attempts to help students learn how to study Jewish texts and to learn together.

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Hebrew Language in Israel and the Diaspora

Nava Nevo

Translated by **Daniel Verbov**

This chapter examines the state of Hebrew today, both in Israel and in Diaspora communities, and discusses challenges facing those who are involved with the language. As a first language in Israel, Hebrew is undergoing changes due to globalization processes which cause some to express concern for its fate. As a second language, Hebrew is taught to immigrants and to minority groups with the intent of facilitating their integration into the life of the country; unfortunately, recognition of teaching Hebrew to immigrant students as a particular profession is still needed. In Diaspora communities the status of Hebrew today has changed for demographic, contextual, and pedagogical reasons. Diaspora Hebrew education confronts dilemmas regarding the definition of goals, the language of instruction of Jewish subjects, teaching materials, and human resources for teaching. Given the challenges discussed in this chapter, an in-depth examination of the agenda for Hebrew language education, both in Israel and abroad, is needed to develop and preserve our people's unifying language.

Introduction

Milestones in the History of the Hebrew Language

The name "Ever"[1] and the word "Hebrew" in its masculine and feminine forms appear in the Bible, but there is no reference to the Hebrew language per se. A language called "Judean," as opposed to Aramaic, is mentioned.[2] It is feasible that the implication is what is known as "Hebrew," but we cannot be certain. The name "Hebrew" appears for the first time as the name of a language in an external book,

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[1] "Ever" has the same root letters as "Ivrit."

[2] "And they cried loudly in Judean to the people of Jerusalem on the wall . . .," Chronicles 2, 32:18; "And Ravshakeh stood and called out loudly in Judean," Isaiah, 36:13; "half speak in the language of Ashdod and do not know how to speak Judean," Nehemiah, 13:24.

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Sefer HaYovlim—"The Book of Jubilees," when God speaks to Abraham: ". . . and I opened his mouth, and his ears and his lips, and I began to speak with him in Hebrew in the tongue of the creation" (Chapter 12:31).[3]

Hebrew never died out in its written form, neither for public purposes (such as religious and non-religious literature, philosophical treatises, science) nor for private needs (including personal letters and business correspondence). According to Haramati (2000) there were oases of Hebrew speech throughout history, but it was opportune and temporary. Hebrew was spoken by people in Jerusalem and Safed; Torah scholars taught and lectured in Hebrew; Yemenite Jews taught in Hebrew; between the ninth and sixteenth centuries, medical studies in Europe were conducted—inter alia—in Hebrew too; spoken Hebrew was heard among Italian Jews until the end of the sixteenth century, and teaching in Hebrew was also somewhat present during the Enlightenment at the start of the nineteenth century.

The Jewish National Revival Movement sparked the start of the process of making Hebrew the spoken tongue of Jewish settlement in Israel. Thus, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda called for the adoption of Hebrew as the language of instruction: "We should make it (Hebrew) the language of education . . . the revival of the language will be a sign that the revival of the nation will also occur without delay" (cited from "Ha-Magid" 1888 in Perlmutter, 2002). In other words, he proposed transforming Hebrew speech into something constant and permanent. A new–old Hebrew was created, written, and spoken, which adapted biblical language, the language of the Sages, medieval speech, and the language of philosophers and writers together with modern innovations (Brosh-Weitz, 2007, p. 68).

Since 1948, Hebrew has been the official language of the State of Israel, together with Arabic. While Hebrew is the dominant language in every sphere in the public domain, Arabic chiefly serves the Arabic-speaking areas.

Representations of the Hebrew Language

In Israel, Hebrew functions in all walks of life just like any other first language in a country: in the education system, academia, the media, in daily life, the world of culture, the Internet, etc. Although Hebrew is expanding and renewing itself, it is noteworthy that the hegemony of Hebrew in Israel and the "melting pot" policy that characterized the first years of the State (the aim of which was to create a homogeneous community of Hebrew speakers) are becoming blurred due to the absorption of immigrants from various countries, with different ethnic backgrounds, and the impact of the era of globalization.

Today, Hebrew is a living, evolving language that can be divided into subcategories: literary Hebrew with high linguistic norms, standard written Hebrew, standard spoken Hebrew, non-standard Hebrew, and the Hebrew spoken by certain

[3]The mention of the Hebrew language for the first time in *Sefer HaYovlim* was noted by Professor Rachel Elior at a conference on Hebrew and its Culture, at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem, December 31, 2008.

groups in Israeli society, such as soldiers who have developed a military lingo and slang often seeping into "civilian" Hebrew; the language of ultra-Orthodox Jews whose Hebrew contains various Yiddish expressions, interspersed with abbreviations and idioms from the yeshiva world; and the Hebrew spoken by Kibbutz members, which includes unique expressions for daily kibbutz life. Other groups include taxi drivers, sports commentators, tour guides, prisoners, Israeli backpackers, and teenage girls. The language used in post-modern literature is also often a separate category, setting new language norms by combining high Hebrew with foreign words, flouting conventions, sidestepping the rules, using slang, making no commitment to "clean" language, and even making intentional language errors to position protagonists in a particular socio-linguistic and socio-cultural milieu.

Hebrew, apart from its representation as a first language, is also a second language for immigrants and minority groups in Israel. A language defined as "second" is the dominant language in the environment of the non-native speaker, to which he is also exposed in informal frameworks. Immigrants are driven to achieve a command of Hebrew (at various levels) as a second language because of their integrative and/or instrumental motivation. Non-Jewish minority groups are motivated by instrumental needs such as education or employment.

Another representation of Hebrew is as a foreign language. In contrast to a second language, which has contextual support in the student's surroundings, it is studied in a formal framework and is not used in a natural context on an ongoing basis. For example, Hebrew is studied in universities the world over in the framework of Language Studies Departments, in Jewish day schools, and in some cases in public schools, such as "Ben Gamla" in Florida, which includes Hebrew lessons in its curriculum.

In contrast to the clear definitions of the status of Hebrew for native speakers and immigrants, minority groups, or universities outside of Israel, defining its status for Jews in the Diaspora is less obvious. It seems that one cannot link it dichotomously to any one of the above categories. It is not a first language, but is also not a fully second or foreign language. Hebrew in the Diaspora does possess characteristics of a foreign language, for it is not in use in the speaker's macro-world, but at the same time it also has second language attributes related to the speaker's micro-Jewish world and is associated with Jewish belonging, identity, cultural uniqueness, and heritage (Shohamy, 1989). As such, it has been perceived throughout history as a unifying national, social, and cultural value.

The aim of this chapter is to examine the state and status of Hebrew today, both in the Israeli context and in the context of Diaspora communities, and to discuss issues, questions, difficulties, and challenges facing scholars, Hebrew teachers, students, community leaders, and lovers of the Hebrew language.

Hebrew in Israel

The discussion will be conducted on two levels: Hebrew as a first language for native speakers and as a second language for immigrants and the Arab sector.

Changes in Hebrew as a First Language

Like other societies, globalization processes permeate Israeli society. These processes also impact the language and cause it to change. Despite the fact that a body of work has developed in Israel in Hebrew, there are those today who are concerned about the fate of the language and fear a negative attitude change toward it. Schwarzwald notes that Israeli Hebrew speakers display a lack of respect for their language, contempt for careful speech, a detachment from the sources, and self-deprecation when faced with the English (chiefly the American) language and culture, the import of which is not only on a linguistic level, but also on a socio-cultural level. She adds that in contemporary Hebrew, one can see "trends of unification, leveling of systems and finding the lowest and most comfortable common denominator for all speakers" (Schwarzwald Rodrigue, 2007, p. 60). There are others who agree with these claims, for example, Aharon Amir, author and winner of the Israel Prize for Translation: "Things are going beyond purity of language and a zealousness to preserve it. The massive Anglicization of the language contains a certain disrespect which also testifies to . . . a feeling of a lack of belonging"(Ma'ariv, 2008).

According to Schwarzwald (2005, 2007), changes in the language originate in a number of causes, including secularization processes and the influence of foreign cultures. I would add social polarization and the "ingathering of the exiles." Social secularization processes have led to a situation in which knowledge of the language of Hebrew sources has declined, and with it a depletion of a rich Hebrew vocabulary. The influence of foreign cultures on Hebrew—particularly the American one—is visible in academia, music, and in ordinary daily life, as speakers tend to slide into English words and expressions. The hi-tech industry has contributed a plethora of English terms, as have the worlds of advertising, entertainment, sport, finance, and commerce. Use of the Internet and exposure to mass communication, cinema, and music have generated a massive English presence in Israeli Hebrew.

There is no doubt that English has a privileged status in Israel and is no longer considered a foreign language. The particular impact of English on Israel can be attributed to the following: Israel's linkage to world globalization processes; its connection to American society and to World Jewry; it being a small country with a language that is rarely understood outside its borders; being a country that seeks resources from the world and whose economic development is linked to international markets and has advanced status in elite technology. As Ben-Rafael puts it, "we are an extreme case of globalization" (Ben-Rafael, 2003, p. 54).

The influence of English is also apparent on other international languages. For example, English has intruded into Spanish and French, but the comparative difference to Hebrew is the level of intrusion and the strength of Hebrew relative to the power of the other languages. French and Spanish are ancient languages whose exclusivity has been zealously preserved for years. In contrast, Hebrew, in its function as a language of communication, is a relatively young language. This arouses concern that the great impact of English is liable to undermine it. Hebrew is not fighting the English influence, but absorbing it within its ranks.

The mass immigration from the Former Soviet Union in the 1990s resulted in Russian also being heard and seen in abundance: in the street, the media, in theater, and on billboards and ads. In the past, new immigrants tried to leave their native languages within the confines of their own narrow surroundings and speak Hebrew in the public sphere. Children would even be embarrassed in front of their native Israeli friends when their parents spoke in a foreign language.[4]

In contrast, today, the spoken foreign languages of various communities are heard in public and are changing the face of the Hebrew language. The trend of borrowed words and expressions slipping directly into Hebrew or translated from other languages is increasing, especially in the spoken language. For example, you made my day (*asita li et ha-yom*), it doesn't make sense (*ze lo ose sechel*)—from English; *achla, sababa*—from Arabic; *kuter*, *tachles*—from Yiddish; *amigos* from Spanish, and more. This trend is particularly prominent in the gastronomical realm: ice café, noodles, junk food, burekas, chaminados, shtrudel, shnitsel. Similarly, in foreign verbs introduced into the square root structure in Hebrew (e.g., *ledaskes*—to discuss, *lefaxes*—to fax, *leflartet*—to flirt). Furthermore, Hebrew syntactical structure and sentence word order have also undergone transformation, part of which is the fruit of independent creation in Hebrew and part of which is influenced by foreign languages. For example, the order—subject, predicate, complements (widespread in Hebrew)—has been influenced by European languages (such as SVO—subject, verb, object in English), while the dominant word order in a sentence in the classic sources is predicate, subject, and complements (Schwarzwald, 2007).

Like others mentioned above, Rosenthal (2007)—a linguist, author, and journalist—expresses concern for the future of Hebrew as heard in Israel, claiming that the language is becoming increasingly shallow, especially in speech. Rosenthal indicates a number of foci for concern: a distancing from becoming familiar with Judaic sources; a plethora of foreign words in both written and spoken texts threatening the independence of Hebrew; multiple linguistic errors also trickling down into written texts; eliminating words and verbs within the language. I would add the disappearance of the distinction between consonants (*tet* = *tav*, *kuf* = *kaf*, *aleph* = *ayin*, and sometimes *heh*) and the mode of expression in the digital world (text messages, chats, and even e-mail), which youngsters view as legitimate and use quite indiscriminately. Thus, a shriveled language is created, relying heavily on English, accompanied by spelling mistakes, stringing words together (*yom huledet* = *yomuledet*—birthday, *shishi shabbat* = *shishabat*—Friday to Saturday), cutting words and expressions (*ma nishma* = *ma nish*—how are you?), and using "umbrella" verbs instead of specific ones ("brought" instead of "gave," "put on" in the sense of "wore"). Rosenthal notes a gap between what he terms "Israeli Hebrew," spoken by Israelis, and "self-contained Hebrew," in all its historical layers, rules of grammar and syntax, and dictionary entries.

[4]See, for example, Shamosh, A. (1979). Vignettes from elementary school, in the story anthology, "Calamus and Cinnamon" (p. 79). Ramat-Gan, Massada Press Ltd. (Heb.).

It should be noted that the trend of linguistic and literacy recession is a transnational phenomenon. Just as there is a recession in literacy skills among Israeli children, one can point to English-speaking children who do not have the necessary skills to read English and American literary classics (Waxman, 1999). What is known as “linguistic deterioration” is characteristic of many languages. Indeed, I would pose the question: Should we relate to the changes occurring in the speakers’ languages as regression and deterioration or perhaps as the normal development of a living language?

Hebrew as a First Language—Learning and Teaching

A distinction should be made between acquiring Hebrew as a first language and studying and teaching it. Acquisition occurs naturally from the very fact that the acquirer is part of an environment that functions in Hebrew. Study and teaching occur within the formal framework of the education system. Various arguments have been made in this context, some in a document about the state of Hebrew presented to the Israeli Knesset’s Education Committee (Vorgan, 2008). The teaching of Hebrew in high schools is dictated by the demands of the matriculation exam; in essence, the matriculation exam has become the curriculum. Hebrew study and teaching curricula in the education system focus on rules and laws and overemphasize grammatical pedantry at the expense of the richness of the language itself and the analysis of daily spoken discourse. This generates a feeling of revulsion for the subject among students. The result is an insufficient language level, a shallow vocabulary, use of empty words (such as “like”), and primarily no distinction between high and low registers or between written and spoken language. School students often write as they speak, even when faced with a formal academic assignment, and some continue to do so when they progress to institutions of higher education as well. The Hebrew among Israeli school students, argues Schweid (2004), is not only inadequate for reading the Bible or the prayer book, but also for reading modern national classic literature or quality Israeli contemporary literature. Spolsky and Shohamy (1999) further detail problems associated with Hebrew teaching and point out that there is no emphasis on the spoken language in grade schools; many teachers do not use efficient reading instruction methods; and in-service training only reaches a small percentage of the teachers. These two researchers conclude that the education system must rise to the challenge of conducting a comprehensive and in-depth examination of the state of teaching Hebrew as a first language and evaluate its aims.

I would emphasize that garbled and defective language is not only a linguistic problem, but also a perceptual one. Language serves to organize thought and to conceptualize and perceive reality. Language deficiency can have negative ramifications on the thinking or philosophical level. It is imperative that educational frameworks present students with texts representing a range of language registers and point out the distinctions between them. This would raise students’ awareness of using an appropriate register in keeping with context and circumstances and ensure that the spoken register does not remain all-exclusive in their consciousness.

A curriculum, "Hebrew Language Education," was developed in 2003 that includes language, literature, and culture, with the aim of addressing the need for developing and nurturing communicative and literacy competence in Hebrew as a first language. The theoretical infrastructure and didactic principles at the root of the program include linguistic knowledge as well as discourse skills. The aim of the curriculum is to cultivate a "literate person," capable of using, understanding, and discussing written and spoken texts (Blum-Kulka, 2007).

Is Hebrew Really in Danger?

In light of the worrying picture described above, the following question arises: Do the influences of globalization, together with the decline in Zionist ideology, have the power to endanger the sustainability of Hebrew? There is no doubting the changes in Israeli Hebrew, but we should also remember that it is hard to avoid the influences of the "global village." Since Hebrew speakers are part of that "village," their language is undergoing natural processes of change.

In contrast to concern for the fate of Hebrew, there are also other opinions, such as that of poet Ronni Somek, advocating Hebrew's natural development: "Hebrew is like a baby whom everybody once protected and nurtured. This baby has now grown up, become independent and he is kicking ... [Hebrew] does not feel any need to fight for its status because its status is assured." There are those who further argue that closing government schools for studying Hebrew (*ulpans*) might even make teaching the language more efficient, because "one can see this as a sign of maturity and self-confidence of a society whose language no longer needs ideological nurturing and is alive and kicking, increasingly acclimatizing to innovations and inventions, some of which are weeds, and some of which are pretty flowers" (Segev, 2007).

I also do not share the fear that foreign languages will subvert Hebrew, or pose a real threat and take control of it (although linguistic cultural "ghettoes" are liable to form): Hebrew is not only an official language of the State of Israel, but a language that is the essence of Israeli identity, bearing a cultural cargo. It is a modern language, in which plays are created, books are written, discussions take place, interviews are conducted, articles are published, and dictionaries are compiled, unafraid to include slang and popular speech as well. In my opinion, these characteristics will preserve balance and cultural identity. Nonetheless, in places where it is possible and logical to do so, it is important to offer alternative forms of expression in Hebrew that will seep into the public discourse. Finding such alternatives in Hebrew is the role of the Academy of the Hebrew Language.

Challenges in Teaching Hebrew as a Second Language to Immigrant Students

Due to the limited scope of this chapter, the following discussion will focus on teaching Hebrew to immigrant students, although teaching Hebrew to other

foreign-language-speaking populations, such as immigrant adults or immigrant soldiers, is worthy of attention as well.

The education system is faced with a double challenge in teaching Hebrew as a second language, both regarding students and teachers. In terms of the students, the challenge is to imbue them with the language on four levels: linguistic competence that will enable them to understand and use proper language syntactically and lexically for their various daily needs; communicative competence that will allow them to function appropriately in specific social circumstances; academic competence that includes understanding concepts unique to various study disciplines; and literate competency that will represent Hebrew writing and reading ability.

In contrast to these wide-ranging needs, the basic allocation of the Ministry of Education for an immigrant student in an upper school, for example, is 1 hour a week for learning Hebrew and additional assistance in subjects that are language-dependent. Ethiopian immigrant students are allocated 1.75 weekly hours.[5] Immigrant students have a number of possible study frameworks upon their arrival in Israel. Whichever way, studies examining second language learning among immigrant students in other countries do not support the assumption that so few hours of assistance are sufficient to effectively include the immigrant in a class of native speakers.

Regarding teachers, teaching Hebrew as a second language to immigrant students—in contrast to other teaching professions—is not recognized by the Ministry of Education as a specialization subject area, possibly because waves of immigration are not always foreseeable and the number of immigrant students joining schools changes from time to time. In this situation, the issue of instilling a language is dependent on the needs of a given period, and thus Hebrew teaching is as a transitory profession (Spolsky, Shohamy, & Nevo, 1995). In many cases, teachers teaching Hebrew to immigrant students come from a different field of specialization. At times teachers do receive some training in the principles of teaching Hebrew as a second language, but this is not enough to create expertise in this area, which is different from teaching a first language. Recognition of the field as a particular teaching profession is needed. This will then lead to appropriate formal training and high professional standards, based on a comprehensive and in-depth program. Support for these ideas comes from a study conducted among grades 5, 9, and 11, which compared the level of achievement in the academic language of immigrant students from the Former Soviet Union and Ethiopia, as opposed to native Israelis, in the different subject areas studied at school. The study found that immigrants only equal the academic achievements of native Hebrew speakers after 5–11 years in Israel, depending on age and home country. The researchers' conclusion is that the curriculum must provide support in acquiring language skills and that for this purpose, experts are needed to teach Hebrew as a second language (Levin, Shohamy, & Inbar, 2007).

[5]It should be noted that allocation of teaching hours by the Ministry of Education is influenced not only by the student's native country, but also by the number of immigrant students in the school, the time of arrival in Israel and by the preparatory needs of the matriculation exams: http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/lprc/home/HOLSHORT.htm.

The community in Israel is multi-cultural and consists of immigrants speaking a variety of foreign languages alongside speakers of the majority language, Hebrew. In the modern era, it would be fitting to allow space for multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism. A solid and stable status for Hebrew and competence in other languages may facilitate social, communicative, and economic mobility for immigrants. In such a society, it is worth developing a language education model that includes a curriculum ensuring the following: (1) complete command of the majority language skills, both for its native speakers and foreign-language speakers; (2) Hebrew speakers' command of other languages at threshold level. This model will benefit both native Hebrew speakers and foreign-language speakers: Hebrew speakers will nurture and enrich their language alongside the understanding that knowing other languages is of added value in modern society and in the world of the twenty-first century. Speakers of other languages will benefit from the recognition of their right to preserve their language and not to forfeit their ethnic identity together with receiving intensive and extensive support in acquiring Hebrew. This will allow them to integrate into the education system and into Hebrew-speaking society. It would be correct to build Hebrew acquisition on the linguistic and cultural platform that foreign-language students bring with them rather than to destroy what already exists. Their native linguistic and cultural experiences will reinforce the students' confidence and serve as a base for future study (Nevo & Olshtain, 2007).

This linguistic policy, one that recognizes the value of multiple languages and cultural pluralism, is the opposite of what the Zionist enterprise proposed in its time. Immigrants had to forego their language, culture, and identity in favor of Hebrew, and Israeli society relinquished the linguistic and cultural capital that the immigrants brought with them. The principles of the new language policy are at the root of the current curriculum for teaching Hebrew to immigrant children. It acknowledges the importance of preserving first language and cultural continuity, while establishing teaching Hebrew as the overall objective and exposing students to different universes of discourse (Blum-Kulka, 2007).

Hebrew in the Arab Sector

The Arab sector in Israel also acknowledges the need to study Hebrew as an additive second language, because this is the language of official institutions, the media, institutions of higher education, and the street. Acquiring a command of Hebrew allows Arab citizens open communicative access to the Jewish majority group and integration into the life of the country through society, education, and the economy. It also creates a bridging dialogue between the Arab and Jewish cultures. Israeli Arabs, Druze and Circassians cite Hebrew as being most important to them. The recognition of the need to know Hebrew and to be able to use it appropriately in given circumstances led, in 2007, to the development of a new curriculum for teaching Hebrew in Arab schools, from grade 3 through grade 12. This program highlights the communicative aspect of the language. The program stresses linguistic knowledge alongside comprehension and expression of both the written and

spoken language, while basing study on texts from the students' world and from various other worlds of discourse that address the needs of Arab adults. These include formal and informal inter-personal communication—interfacing with the immediate environment as well as with official institutions; printed and digital mass communications; theoretical discourse presenting the student with scientific texts from different disciplines studied both in school and outside; and Hebrew literature, enabling the Arab student to encounter the cultural content of the majority society, including a rich vocabulary unfamiliar from daily life (Wated, 2007).

Hebrew in Diaspora Jewish Education

Changes in the Status of the Language

In contrast to other peoples who are masters of their national languages, Hebrew is not the "common possession" of all Jewish people, and it mainly—if not exclusively—lives and breathes in Israel. In the past, Hebrew was perceived as "linguistic capital" with the potential to serve as the common denominator for the Jewish people, connecting various sectors in different communities, and linking them to those living in Israel, to their past, their culture, and heritage; it served as a key to the doors of the Jewish bookcase. The Jewish people's spiritual leadership encouraged study of Hebrew, as well as prayer and Torah study in this language. Today, there is in general a decline in the status of Hebrew in Diaspora communities and in the motivation to study it, which also affects students' perception of Israel's status. While life in Israel demands knowledge of Hebrew as a mutual language that enables the integration and functioning of different parts of the society, Diaspora Jewry needs to adopt local majority languages in order to blend into the surroundings from a social, cultural, economic, and academic perspective. Although there are oases of Hebrew in certain schools, it has not become the Jewish lingua franca and English is rapidly taking its place as the Jewish people's language of communication. Even Hebrew-speaking Israeli representatives tend to use English in their public appearances at international Jewish conventions (Schweid, 2004; Schenker, 1991; Shohamy, 1999). In order not to remain an isolated "nature reserve" unique to Israel or the language of prayer and sacred studies alone, the preservation of Hebrew is one of the most significant challenges facing Jewish education in the Diaspora.

Changes in the status of Hebrew manifest themselves on a number of levels. The role of Hebrew in building Jewish identity is gradually changing; classical Jewish sources are increasingly being translated into foreign languages; there has been a decline in community leaders' positive attitude toward the language (Deitcher, 2007); and most institutions and movements in the Diaspora no longer view the promotion of Hebrew as a major objective (Ganiel, 2007). Thus, for example, in the United States, various Jewish schools feel less committed to the language; Jewish subjects are studied in English; some teachers are lowering expectations for acquiring command of the language and make do with phonetic reading to enable

participation in prayers (a goal that could be achieved in a very short time); some children stop learning the language once they finish grade school, and others—once they have the choice—prefer to focus on those subjects that will be of future practical benefit. The use of Hebrew has also become limited in summer camps, many of which traditionally functioned in Hebrew.

Jewish communities do not necessarily perceive Hebrew to be a crucial factor for the existence of Jewish life. There are those who see it as a foreign language in need of revival (Schiff, 1999), whereas others ask: Why Hebrew? After all, it is a minority language, spoken only in Israel, and in the Diaspora there is little to no use for it outside the synagogue. Thus, a new model of the “educated Jew” is created, lacking knowledge of Hebrew. This model, as expressed in the curricula of Jewish schools, does not include training for engagement with Jewish sources using the Hebrew language (Bekerman, 1999; Deitcher, 2008; Steinberg, 1997; Zisenwein, 1997). Mintz (2002), in describing the status of Hebrew within American Jewry, argues that the definition of an educated Jew applies, inter alia, to someone who has access to Jewish sources in the original, since translation—which incorporates the translator’s interpretation—cannot be a substitute. Mintz claims that renunciation of the original language and dependence on translated sources not only means that cultural, religious, and national “baggage” is not transmitted as it should be, but that even the future development of Judaism is endangered. Hebrew, he suggests, should be preserved as the key to continuity in all aspects of Jewish and communal life. In a similar vein, Berdichevsky (1998) quotes Mordechai Kaplan who, more than 60 years ago, warned that once Hebrew becomes a foreign language for Jews, they will cease to live Judaism as a culture and no longer experience a sense of intimacy with Jewish life.

There are a number of reasons for the dramatic decline in the status of Hebrew, in the Diaspora in general and in America in particular: According to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, the main causes are the demographic drop in the Jewish people, a weakening of Israel–Diaspora relations, and a leadership crisis in coping with these trends. Furthermore, the Zionist ideology, with Hebrew as one of its dominant symbols, has also become weaker. These factors are bolstered by contextual and pedagogical forces, as indicated by Shohamy (1999).

On the contextual level there are two factors: First, Hebrew was never a heritage language spoken in Jewish homes (unlike Yiddish and Ladino), and, hence, Jewish children today do not identify it with their parents and grandparents. It is detached from their daily reality and does not possess any concrete associations. Second, with most Jews living today in tolerant and welcoming societies, that assist in accelerating assimilation into the dominant society, feelings of Jewish identity have been undermined as has the need to know Hebrew. Bouganim (2007) reports that even among those who are very committed to their Judaism, there are now different symbolic forms of identification that spare the need to learn and speak Hebrew, such as giving children Hebrew names in addition to their regular names, or inserting Hebrew words and (Jewish) concepts in Hebrew in conversation. A holistic approach that advocates knowledge of Hebrew in order to be a Jew is no longer necessary.

On a pedagogic-didactic level, reasons for the poor state of Hebrew in the Diaspora start with the absence of focused, realistic, and measurable goals and objectives in teaching the language. Goals must be defined in accordance with the context in which they are applied and vary from one study framework to another. In one context, teaching Hebrew might be for ritual purposes or for reading classical texts; in another, Hebrew instruction may be for communication purposes in advance of a possible visit to Israel or Aliyah (immigration to Israel); at other times, Hebrew is indeed studied as a ritual language, but with the expectation that the students can use it as a communicative language. Sometimes the aim is to teach Hebrew as a communicative language but without providing the necessary conditions to consolidate it as such. Defining goals and objectives also dictates what study material, contents, emphases, and teaching methods will be, and how the time will be allocated. Lack of clarity in defining the aims of instruction leads not only to a lack of clarity in the style of teaching, but also to confusion about what is expected from graduates of the Jewish educational system. It remains unclear, for example, whether graduates should relate to Hebrew as a national language of the Jewish people or as the language of the Israelis.

Uncertainty is evident also in curriculum choices. In many cases, schools use materials that are not relevant to the student's world; they are often much less attractive than the materials used to teach other languages or the general subjects (lacking color, pictures, illustrations). This ultimately conveys the message that Hebrew studies are less important.

The decline in the status of Hebrew has been exacerbated by a number of factors. First, a trend toward translating classical Jewish texts into local languages, thereby denying students the opportunity to strengthen and enrich their Hebrew. Second, insufficient ongoing evaluation of the curriculum's impact on the students' achievements has a similar effect. Another contributing factor has been rapid teacher turnover and the lack of human resources, that is, people with a good command of Hebrew who are also trained to teach the language professionally. In this context, Deitcher (2008) notes a rise in the number of ultra-Orthodox teachers teaching Jewish subjects in Orthodox schools. These teachers are not experts in Hebrew and do not identify with the Zionist ideal of schools. There is also an increase in the number of young, inexperienced teachers lacking an appropriate knowledge of the language. Furthermore, changes that have occurred over the last decade in educational emissary programs in the Diaspora have influenced the current state of Hebrew: The number of *shlichim* (emissaries) with professional training in Hebrew has declined and their place has been taken by young, untrained *shlichim* who only serve for a short period of time, with limited resulting impact.

One can certainly question whether teaching Hebrew in Diaspora schools and universities must depend on imported teachers. For example, the Argentinean model indicates that Jewish school graduates, who continue their academic studies, can be trained to teach Hebrew locally. The fact that most of the Hebrew teachers in America are Israelis, who acquired the main part of their formal education in Israel, stems, however, from the fact that the American community has not succeeded in generating teachers capable of teaching the language in general and at the university

level in particular (Brosh, 1996). In light of the above, it seems that one of the main challenges facing Hebrew education today is how to raise its status and the motivation to study it in the Jewish world.

The Place of Communicative Hebrew

Hebrew's Achilles heel in the Diaspora is the spoken language. Command of spoken Hebrew carries the message that Hebrew is a living, dynamic language. However, research indicates that acquiring even minimal command in schools, even in day schools, is doomed to failure. Different schools relate to Hebrew first and foremost as a symbol of Jewish identity and, in certain cases, as a language of culture; there is almost little to no commitment to teach Hebrew as a spoken language (Bouganim, 2007; Shohamy, 1999). Hence, comments like the following, from parents and students alike are often heard:

– "After 12 years of learning Hebrew, my child is not able to speak the language."
– "What is needed are more spoken Hebrew sessions."
– "I would rather like to concentrate more on practical speech, the Modern Hebrew that I could speak to someone on the street in Tel-Aviv."[6]

Mastery of daily Hebrew for communicative purposes has become almost impossible due to the limited time devoted to teaching and the non-positive attitudes toward it. This reality has been felt recently even in Argentina, where institutions were established to train Hebrew teachers, where Jewish Studies in schools once took place in Hebrew; and where graduates of the Jewish educational system were known for their Hebrew knowledge and motivation to study it. Today, parents believe their children will not use Hebrew anyway, while the science subjects and the English language are perceived as having greater instrumental value. They demand more mathematics, physics, and especially English as a prestigious language that will open the gates to universities and colleges worldwide. This results in a significant reduction in the number of hours devoted to teaching Hebrew. The situation in Mexico is similar.

Following research on the teaching of modern Hebrew in Jewish communities around the world, Rodman (2003, p. 9) found that Russian parents have a similarly negative perception of Hebrew. In the words of one of the participants, "Parents are negative about Hebrew when they feel it is not successful. Some parents . . . in Russia think Hebrew is a poor investment of precious time, taking up a large part of the local-option segment of the government-mandated curriculum." Added to this

[6]These representative quotes are taken from responses to questionnaires for students and parents, developed as part of an assessment project of Hebrew achievements, conducted by the Melton Centre for Jewish Education of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The project was administered in 18 Diaspora Jewish day schools for close to a decade, until 2000.

is the fact that most Jews of the Former Soviet Union have immigrated to Israel or other places and few remain to carry the Hebrew banner.

In light of these circumstances, the question arises: Should Diaspora educational frameworks, particularly supplementary schools, consider completely foregoing the objective of teaching Hebrew as a spoken language in favor of teaching classical texts? Should they invest in teaching biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic language? How this question is answered has significant ramifications since a declared preference for either type of Hebrew means a renunciation of the other. Each of these two types of Hebrew demands different teaching approaches and methods and in turn has implications for resource allocation that not many institutions are prepared to consider.

Dilemmas in Teaching Hebrew in the Diaspora

The Language of Teaching Jewish Subjects

A major dilemma that continues to face teachers and educators in Diaspora Jewish schools relates to the language of teaching Jewish subjects: To teach in the vernacular or in Hebrew? Those who use the vernacular believe that students cannot conduct a serious, comprehensive discussion of the subject matter in a language that is not their native tongue. Others believe that Jewish subjects should be taught in Hebrew due to the added value of a text read in the original language, the loss of cultural impact when translated, as well as the linguistic profit the student derives from the added exposure to Hebrew. However, in-depth elucidation and discussion of the textual content in accurate Hebrew cannot be achieved simultaneously. Involvement in the language will come at the expense of the content and vice versa (Greenberg, 1990). Educational systems need to determine which of these two objectives they seek to advance, while being aware of the implications of this decision. In light of this dilemma some recommend the middle path—reading the text in Hebrew and discussing it in the vernacular.

The Nature of Curricula and Learning Materials

Curricula and learning materials present another serious challenge. Rodman (2003, pp. 13–14), in his survey on the place of modern Hebrew in Jewish education worldwide, found that there is a dearth of curricula with a consolidated approach that have been piloted in the field. Instead, there is “A hodgepodge selection of materials without articulated goals and methods and without careful linguistic gradation” together with students’ “frustration at the lack of measurable progress from unit to unit and from year to year.”

In recent years, we have witnessed the development of a number of curricula—now widespread—for different age groups: “Chalav Udvash” (Milk and Honey)—Hebrew for ages 3–6; “Nitzanim” (Buds), a program for 5 to 8 year-olds; “TaL

Am" (Teaching Hebrew as a Communicative-Heritage Language) and "Chaverim Be'Ivrit" (Friends in Hebrew), both for elementary school; "Neta" (Youth in Favor of Hebrew) for middle and high schools. Not all of these programs are entirely similar in their approach, but all of them aspire to develop Hebrew as a language of communication, on the one hand, and to cultivate Jewish identity and culture, on the other hand. In this curricula-oriented context, the essential question is whether current innovative curricula will be the key to creating successful change and will lead students in Diaspora Jewish schools to achieve a good command of Hebrew. I will examine a few successful cases and try to identify the responsible factors.

All graduates of the Belgian "Tachkemoni" and "Maimoni" schools speak Hebrew. Is this because of the curricula? In a meeting of the Knesset's Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Committee on February 24, 2007, Ze'ev Bielski, then Chair of the Jewish Agency, explained that the success in these schools is due to their committed local leadership. Thus, instead of adding hours to other subjects, they increase the number of Hebrew teaching hours, import teachers from Israel, and ensure that every student speaks Hebrew. The importance of leadership commitment is supported by Morhag (1999/2000), who asserts that not even one of the national organizations involved in Jewish education in America places Hebrew at the top of its list of priorities. He suggests establishing a national organization of American-Hebrew teachers that will contribute to professionalization in the field, define professional objectives, and position these objectives high on the national agenda.

It may be assumed that success in Hebrew study is dependent not only on committed leadership but also on supportive parents and family, who believe that studying the language is the right way to preserve the child's link to Judaism and to Israel. In Rodman's survey it was found that the more the members of any given Jewish community perceive themselves to be an ethnic or national minority group—and particularly a minority connected to Israel—the more importance they attribute to the Hebrew language. In his opinion, this can explain the high level of Hebrew language achievement in Antwerp, Belgium.

Another project with ripples of success is "Hebrew in America," an initiative of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture in partnership with the North New Jersey Federation. About 4,000 students in Bergen County have participated in the project since its inception four years ago with early childhood and its current expansion to first and second grades. Here too, the vision and determination of leaders and decision-makers have been critical in increasing awareness of the fact that Hebrew is the agent through which the student can be exposed to Jewish culture.

Despite the respectable position of curricula and their possible impact on achievements and motivation, augmenting the status of Hebrew depends, then, first and foremost upon the will and support of influential bodies such as policy- and decision-makers, community leaders, and parents. As Deitcher (2007, p. 201) argues, Hebrew teaching programs will not generate meaningful change in the Jewish world until Jewish communities make Hebrew acquisition one of their highest priorities.

Human Resources in Hebrew Teaching

Good curricula and learning materials are part of an appropriate design for studying a language. However, it is undoubtedly critical to create a pool of teachers who know both the language and about the language, and who have experience in implementing a range of methods to suit different learning styles. As teacher trainers are accustomed to say, "a good teacher is able to teach even from a telephone directory."

A long-standing debate surrounds the question of whether to prefer native Hebrew-speaking Israelis or local teachers. There are reservations concerning the suitability of Israelis to teach the language. On the one hand, they are indeed native Hebrew speakers with Israeli pronunciation, who bring a living, authentic language spiced with the scent of Israel. On the other hand, they do not always have the training, skills, or qualifications to teach languages in general and Hebrew as a second language in particular. At times they tend to use teaching methods from the Israeli education system, with which they are familiar, but which are not necessarily appropriate for the local student population. Furthermore, Israeli teachers may find it difficult to motivate the students due to an insufficient understanding of the local mentality and culture. According to Ofek (1996), American teachers and principals testify that much time is needed before an Israeli teacher becomes well acquainted with the culture and values of students and their parents, and this often creates tension. She also notes that many Israeli teachers do not come from traditional backgrounds and thus do not feel obliged to conform to the traditional Jewish norms that many schools encourage their students to observe and respect. Local teachers, by virtue of being part of the society in which they function as teachers, are equipped with a good understanding of the local culture and its mores and of the population's needs and world-view. On the other hand, they may not be sufficiently proficient in Hebrew in terms of fluency and functional vocabulary and may lack socio-linguistic competence (Schachter & Ofek, 2008). Supplying resources to expand the local teachers' command of Hebrew for communication and for specific disciplinary purposes could serve well. Having a local Hebrew teacher with good mastery of the language would also have the added advantage of proving to the students that success is possible, something which could generate motivation and confidence in their own ability.

In the Diaspora, there are very few frameworks for training Hebrew teachers. A notable exception is Brandeis University where there is a second-degree program for teaching Hebrew. There are also a few programs in Israel. It is important to consider the character of the training in each framework, as well as its compatibility with the aims and contexts in which Hebrew will be taught as a second language.

What Next?

Given the challenges, issues, and dilemmas discussed above, it is worth asking: What is an appropriate agenda for the development of Hebrew language education in Israel and abroad? What needs improvement? What should be the foci of future research?

Hebrew as a First Language in Israel

In Israel, it is largely the responsibility of the education system to improve the status of Hebrew as a first language (although it is also incumbent on the media to be more pedantic with their language). The main problem in the education system lies in the allocation of teaching hours and the way these are used. Effectively, language learning ends in grade 10; in the last 2 years of upper school, language instruction is not part of the curriculum. Teaching takes place frontally, because of insufficient teaching hours (Vorgan, 2008). In order for a language to develop, especially in the areas of comprehension and expression, frontal teaching, directed to all, is not sufficient. Students need more individualized instruction in writing models based on different genres and for different aims and recipients; in using different reading comprehension strategies to interpret a text; and in practicing good rhetoric. Similarly, the number of teaching hours should be increased and standards raised. It is unacceptable that students are only required to study two units for matriculation in their first language, while at least three are required for foreign languages.[7] This is not only a practical matter, but a question of prestige for Hebrew as an academic subject.

Hebrew as a Second Language in Israel

Regarding teaching Hebrew as a second language, it is worth considering the fact that students come from different backgrounds and have different learning styles. It is important to identify the learning profiles of various groups and to adapt teaching styles accordingly. The smaller the gap between teaching and learning styles, the greater is the chance of success. For example, immigrant students from the Former Soviet Union are accustomed to logical, analytic study and will therefore be better suited to using language rules as a starting point, relating to details and stressing accuracy. In contrast, Ethiopian immigrants who come from an oral culture are accustomed to memorization, repetition, and concretization. Given this, teacher training frameworks should expose trainees to a broad gamut of teaching methodologies.

Teaching Hebrew in the Diaspora

In theoretical terms, there is no shortage of questions to ask, beginning with—Why Hebrew? What are the aims of teaching Hebrew in any given study context and what is the envisioned Hebrew profile of a graduate of that context? Is there a connection between the attitudes of students, teachers, and parents toward the study of Hebrew and the students' achievements? Are these attitudes linked to the size of the community and to its contacts with Israel? Whether and to what extent does

[7] As mentioned by the Coordinating Supervisor for Hebrew Teaching at a conference at the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem on December 31, 2008.

teaching Hebrew have to be part of university Jewish Studies and Jewish identity programs? What is the place of the study of modern Hebrew as compared to Jewish textual study? What, if any, are the implications of having studied Hebrew in childhood and adolescence for the adult Jewish person? Is there a connection between students' attitude to their first language and their achievements in Hebrew? Is it possible to point to a link between students' attitude to Israel and their achievements in Hebrew? What image of Israel does the school's curriculum present? Does teaching the Jewish subjects in Hebrew add or subtract value for these subjects?

In practical terms, teachers sometimes feel professionally isolated, both in their school and in the larger framework of their communities. Professional organizations, frameworks, or supportive networks are needed for those involved in the Hebrew language, providing opportunities for consultation and connection, and for the dissemination of information on what is being done in the field in other places, raising questions, looking for solutions, sharing ideas, successes and failures, and analyzing the reasons for such results. Educational frameworks can serve as "magnets" that expose teaching staff from different places to the experience of different Hebrew realities, so that they may invigorate their own Hebrew frameworks. Upgrading the quality of teaching is essential to the field of Hebrew teaching. Somehow a way must be found to enable schools to be more discriminating in the personnel they appoint. At the same time there is a critical need for pre-service training seminars for new teachers and in-service training courses for the professionalization of existing ones. Teachers must acquire a theoretical and practical knowledge base that will allow them to make informed decisions when selecting learning materials and teaching methods that conform with their schools' aims.

Curriculum development can be based on one of two models: top-down or bottom-up. The first model conceives of a curriculum authority external to the educational system. According to this model, the experts are those who define the aims of the program, determine its characteristics, and develop the materials. The teachers' role is to run the program in line with the program developers' guidelines and expectations. In this constellation, the program developers do not teach in the field and the teachers are unaware of the various considerations of the development team; in fact they may feel that they do not have a say in an issue directly relevant to them. In the second model, the teachers are invited to play an active role in building the curriculum. They are perceived as partners in at least part of the process of shaping the program; they are professionals who know the school reality, are responsible for teaching, and are aware of the students' needs and study conditions. They serve as a starting point for defining problems and objectives in advance of planning considerations, according to Ben-Peretz (1995). The developers of Hebrew teaching curricula will presumably adopt the appropriate paradigm for their own approaches, but I believe that programs built together with teaching staff in the field and tested in "laboratory-like" schools will not only be more efficient, their development may also serve as a learning experience for Hebrew teachers, raising both their status and the status of the language. After developing curricula, it would be appropriate to develop tools to evaluate the students' achievements and their opinions of the curriculum. Assessing students' achievements after using a given program,

and updating the curriculum in line with evaluation findings, should be an ongoing process rather than a one-time effort.

Further Research

The themes discussed in this chapter raise a number of questions for further research: First, with regard to Hebrew as a second language in Israel, how do students who studied in formal frameworks integrate into the life of the majority society compared with those who learned "from life?" Is there a connection between the level of immigrants' first language development and their achievements in Hebrew study? What might be the influence of a truly bilingual education model, as opposed to a melting pot model, on immigrants' linguistic, social, economic, and academic success? Second, in relation to the linguistic impact of globalization, the influence of other languages, and particularly English, on Hebrew is well known and has been discussed in this chapter; however, it would be interesting to examine relationships that flow in the opposite direction too: Can we point to the influence of Hebrew on English as an international language, on Arabic as the regional language, or on other minority languages present in Israeli society?

Other topics generating questions for future research relate to Hebrew in the Diaspora: Is there a connection between learning Hebrew and the intensity of Jewish identity and belonging? Is it possible to preserve identity without a unifying language? Similarly, it is worth examining attitudes of students and parents toward the study of Hebrew in general and of specific language skills in particular; the use of Hebrew as the language of prayer and the language of teaching Jewish subjects compared with praying and teaching in the vernacular; the achievements in various aspects of Hebrew of those who learn from native Hebrew-speaking teachers as opposed to those taught by local teachers; the efficiency of Hebrew teaching programs in the Diaspora in relation to the vision of the schools using them and the needs of the students; and what can be done to promote the teaching of Hebrew in supplementary schools, where conditions are different from those in Jewish day schools. The data collected in such studies would shape a more realistic set of expectations in the field and in turn would lead to the development of more appropriate content and methods for each cluster of Hebrew teaching frameworks.

In Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analyzed a variety of issues related to the Hebrew language in both Israel and the Diaspora. Although there are great differences between the goals of Hebrew acquisition in these two contexts, Hebrew nevertheless can provide a cultural bridge between widely different Jewish communities. Just as, in order to be French, one must know French, it is appropriate for Jews to acquire Hebrew as part of their cultural linguistic "baggage." This is true for Jewish school students, members of Jewish communities, community leaders, and even Hebrew speakers who

live in Israel whose attitude to their language plays a role in determining its status in the world. Furthermore, in an era of globalization, technology may link those in Israel with Diaspora communities and reduce the gap between Israeli Hebrew and the Hebrew studied in Jewish communities elsewhere. This could create a situation in which Jews in Israel and the Diaspora have equal access to the sources and literature in the language of their people's culture. Let me conclude with the clarion call of Talma Elyagon-Rose (1989, p. 35) in her book *Hebrew: A Language Like That*: "The miracle happened, and there in the mountains, inside the cave, the princess Hebrew opened her eyes, moved her arms and legs, polished up her words and rules, removed the cobwebs from her clothes and went back to being a simple, clear language, our mother-tongue—for we do not have any other—our spoken Hebrew language."

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History: Issues in the Teaching and Learning of Jewish History

Benjamin M. Jacobs and Yona Shem-Tov

For modern Jews, a conception of their past is no mere academic matter. It is vital to their self-definition. Contemporary forms of Jewish identity are all rooted in some view of Jewish history which sustains them and serves as their legitimation.

(Meyer, 1987, p. xi)

Introduction

Recalling, reviewing, reconsidering, and/or remembering the Jewish past plays a central role in most contemporary preK-12 Jewish schools the world over.[1] In North American Jewish day high schools—the main focus of this chapter—teaching and learning Jewish history normally occurs through formal classroom instruction in Jewish history, Judaics, and/or general history courses, as well as through informal educational experiences including holiday celebrations, commemorations, and historical field trips. When taught chronologically, the course of study typically covers some or all of the following topics: the Hebrew Bible's historical narratives; the ancient Israelite settlements in Palestine; the dispersion of Jews into the diaspora; Jewish life in medieval Europe, North Africa, and the Near East; modernity, enlightenment, and emancipation in western and eastern Europe; Jewish life in North America; the Holocaust; Zionism and the State of Israel; and the contemporary Jewish community. Methods for teaching Jewish history are mostly the same as in any history course, namely primary source analysis, discussion, debate, lecture, roleplay, simulation, and inquiry. Jewish history programs generally emphasize not only Jewish historical facts and figures, but also Jewish thought, civilization, current

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events, contemporary problems, social service, customs and ceremonies, heroes and holidays, and more.

The objectives for history education identified by researchers in the general education literature include accumulation of factual knowledge and development of intellectual skills; knowledge of the discipline and its methods; illumination of the present in light of the past; and promotion of social awareness and self-knowledge (see, e.g., Barton & Levstik, 2004; Gagnon, 1989; Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000). These same objectives also animate Jewish history education in Jewish schools. As a rule, however, Jewish history education is not merely an academic matter; rather, it aims to bolster Jewish identification and commitment among the rising generation. Specifically, the aims of Jewish history education are to develop within Jewish youth an appreciation of the Jewish past and a commitment to Jewish continuity; trust in Jewish culture, values, customs, and community; an understanding of historical and contemporary Jewish issues and problems; and the ability and will to participate actively in Jewish life (see, e.g., Ackerman, 1984; Chazan & Jacobs, 2005; Eisenberg & Segal, 1963; Goldflam, 1989; Golub, 1944; Honor, 1931). Above all, as these objectives intimate, the rationale for Jewish history education—and, perhaps, Jewish education in general—stems from the community's desire to develop in its children a full appreciation of Jewish life, so that the students will cherish the cultural environment and be loyal to it. The main question confronting Jewish educators is how to accomplish this identity-building project appropriately.

Understanding how history is taught and learned effectively entails extensive investigation. The broad field of history education research presently includes analyses of objectives for teaching history; interpretations of curriculum plans and textbooks; descriptions of instructional techniques; studies of how historical thinking is cultivated among teachers and students; assessments of the knowledge-base of history students; critiques of the preparation and competence of history teachers; and much more (Wilson, 2001). The real or perceived role of history education in inculcating notions of national pride; developing among students historical empathy, a sense of cause and effect, and critical thinking; preparing youth for the responsibilities of citizenship; and perpetuating or challenging race, class, gender, and other forms of hegemony are by now well-documented in the scholarly literature as well (Barton, 2008). Increasing attention has been paid to the ways in which teachers' and students' positionality is reflected in their interpretations of historical sources and reconstructions of historical accounts, and the politically laden potential of history education has led scholars to focus much interest on the ways in which debates about history education are emblematic of society's so-called "culture wars" (Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1997; Stearns et al., 2000).

Unfortunately, there is scarce research on how Jewish history education is planned, implemented, and received in Jewish schools in North America or any other diaspora community. Only a handful of scholarly articles, monographs, dissertations, and curriculum guides have been dedicated to issues involving teaching and learning the subject. By contrast, a robust line of inquiry on history education is emerging in Israel and includes analyses of history textbooks, curricula,

school-wide commemorations (including those in schools where Jews, Arabs, and Christian students learn together), and student understandings of official historical narratives (see, e.g., Bekerman, 2004; Podeh, 2002; Porat, 2004, 2006). To be sure, this work is particular to the Israeli political, cultural, and religious scene, and, as such, provides valuable insights into the ways research on the teaching and learning of history—and for our purposes, Jewish history—is shaped by context. Jewish history is a state-mandated subject in Israel and includes curriculum standards from a centralized authority; thus, potential research opportunities abound. This is not the case in North America, where Jewish history programs are as disparate as the schools that offer them. For this reason, in part, Jewish history education in North America has eluded any comprehensive research and analysis. It is also the case that scholars of Jewish history, Jewish education, and general education simply have not been interested in the Jewish history education enterprise (Jacobs, 2005b). As a result, we have little concrete, empirical, aggregated data on what actually constitutes the Jewish history curriculum in North American Jewish schools. Indeed, the last formal study of any scale on the aims and practices of Jewish history teachers in North American Jewish day schools was conducted in the late 1980s (Goldflam, 1989).

This chapter seeks to fill a gap in the literature on history education writ-large, and Jewish education specifically, by exploring contemporary perspectives, practices, and prospects for teaching and learning Jewish history in North American Jewish day schools, with a focus on high schools. Our overview of the state of Jewish history education includes a consideration of the origins of Jewish history as a school subject; the purposes and methods of teaching Jewish history today; and prospects for new areas of research in the field. Our scope is necessarily limited to the state of Jewish history education in only one sector of the Jewish education world—namely, the North American Jewish community—and even within this diverse educational network, it is mostly confined to denominational and community sponsored day high schools, the setting in which the most intensive instruction in Jewish history commonly occurs. This chapter is intended as an entry point for new researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in Jewish education who are looking for guidance regarding the essential contours of Jewish history education in North America.

Historical Foundations of Jewish History Education

Any serious discussion of the Jewish history education enterprise must first acknowledge that the teaching of Jewish history, unlike other dimensions of Jewish education (with the exception of teaching modern Hebrew language), is a relatively modern innovation. Its emergence as a school subject is intrinsically linked to the evolution of new ways of conceiving of and reconstructing the Jewish past that began only in the mid-nineteenth century.

"It is the very nature of what and how I study, how I teach and what I write, that represents a radically new venture," writes Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi in *Zakhor:*

*Jewish History and Jewish Memor*y (1982), widely regarded as one of the most important Jewish historiographical works of modern times: "I live within the ironic awareness that the very mode in which I delve into the Jewish past represents a decisive break with that past" (p. 81). The departure Yerushalmi is describing is a break from Jewish history as it was understood in the pre-modern world, where the rabbinical hierarchy governed the way the Jews' past was to be remembered by deliberately culling and appropriating history in the service of Jewish survival and the survival of Judaism. In the pre-modern world, history, even biblical history, was of use to the rabbis only insofar as it could provide concrete support for their own religious and moral considerations. Generally, the rabbis highlighted collective, symbolic religious memories—or myths—without concern for historical details. It was not the subject matter of Jewish history but rather the sentimentalism of Jewish memory that needed to be pondered and preserved. This could be accomplished through commemorative observances such as rituals, festivals, and fasts, rather than through historical investigation or instruction. Formal Jewish education in the pre-modern world consisted almost exclusively of studying the Torah and the Talmud, where the people's theology, wisdom, tradition, norms, and folkways were delineated. Because the subject matter was, according to tradition, derived ultimately from divine sources, Jewish education was seen as a continual process of revelation. Text study was considered the only viable means of preparing for Jewish living and ensuring Jewish continuity.

> Within this scheme, the study of Jewish history as history – that is, the human reconstruction of the Jewish past – was peripheral at best. Instead, Jewish history as gleaned from biblical and rabbinic literature was taught uncritically, buttressed by its obvious truth. The didactic "lessons" of the Jewish past were securely anchored and relatively easy to comprehend (Yerushalmi, 1982).

By contrast, in the modern age, a new historical consciousness emerged largely as a result of Jewish enlightenment and emancipation. Enlightenment thinkers in the Christian majority had come to challenge the traditional religious foundations of their faith, projecting both the Hebrew Bible narratives and the New Testament narratives as the product of human effort rather than divine revelation. For some in the Christian majority and in the Jewish minority, such doubts signaled the end of any belief in Christian or Jewish "Truth." For others, the foundation of faith passed from divine sources (e.g., scripture) and forces (e.g., providence) to the historical creativity of the human community (e.g., culture, politics, etc.). While this shift began in the Christian majority, the new societal openness ensured its rapid passage into Jewish circles as well. "Modern Jewish historiography," explains Yerushalmi (1982), "began precipitously out of that assimilation from without and collapse from within which characterized the sudden emergence of Jews out of the ghetto. It originated, not as scholarly curiosity, but as ideology, one of a gamut of responses to the crisis of Jewish emancipation and the struggle to maintain it" (p. 85). The more traditional Jewish society changed, the more Jews searched for new social, political, and ideological commitments, such as more liberal and humanistic forms of

Judaism. Soon enough, modern scholars rather than traditional rabbis would become the new guardians of Jewish history.

For the nineteenth century founders of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (the scientific study of Judaism), Jewish history had an entirely new purpose: to bring the Jewish world into harmony with the spirit of the times. For most modern Jewish historians, this meant that Jewish history was to be consciously and necessarily divorced from religious dogmatic considerations. A distinction had to be made between the normative study of Judaism and the critical, academic study of Jewish religion, philosophy, and history. Only when Jewish history was secularized and subjected to the generally accepted tools of historical research could it be considered on an even plane with any other type of history in terms of form and function (Rostenstreich, 1995). It was the historians' task to document the past in detail and to explain historical events and processes as objectively as possible, so that the gaps of historical memory could be filled. In the process, the historians would challenge even those memories that survived intact, debunking old myths, or offering competing views of the Jewish past. In this context, it is not surprising that Jewish memory, with its close ties to religious myth, shared faith, and symbolic meaning, would decay, while Jewish history, with its commitment to humanism, universalism, and rationalism, would gain credibility. Not only was Jewish history now divorced from collective memory, it was often thoroughly at odds with it (Yerushalmi, 1982). For many modern Jews (especially secular intellectuals), the study of Jewish history would supplant observance of Judaism as the primary means of Jewish self-identification.

While the commitment of the new Jewish historians to historical accuracy was sincere, an inevitable tension grew between the objective explication of data and the writing of compelling histories into which these data and explications could be embedded. New, more secular reconstructions of the Jewish past were created to supplant the traditional, theocentric Jewish master narratives. These new narratives were partly intended for non-Jewish readers—an utterly new audience for Jewish historians—and set out to overturn long-nurtured negative stereotypes of Jews and Judaism that had been perpetuated by demeaning Christian authors. At the same time, since the Jewish sense of self-worth also had been adversely affected by negative majority perceptions, these new histories were aimed at Jewish audiences as well, in an effort to convince Jews of the nobility of their heritage. Indeed, the new narratives of Jewish history—works by Abraham Geiger, Heinrich Graetz, Simon Dubnow, and others—often portrayed Jewish experience in a romantic, idealistic, positivistic, and/or nationalistic way that would engender pride in Jewish civilization. It was of course by no means accidental that many of the new Jewish historians were in the forefront of nineteenth century efforts to reform Jewish practices and develop Jewish nationalism, efforts they reinforced through their historical research. Their work often included penetrating criticism of traditional Jewish views alongside arguments for ever-evolving Jewish beliefs, which they claimed were firmly grounded in the ever-evolving historical Jewish experience. The result was a set of rich, informative, and compelling historical narratives that highlighted prior Jewish adaptability and responsiveness to changing external and internal circumstances,

as well as divergences and changes in Jewish thought and practice over the ages (Meyer, 1987).

The impact of this shift in Jewish historiography on the teaching and learning of Jewish history in academic and Jewish educational settings was profound. Given that university teaching posts for Jewish studies scholars were virtually nonexistent prior to the mid-twentieth century, many of the *Wissenschaft* and Zionist historians of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century earned a living as teachers in Jewish seminaries, historical societies, and primary schools across Europe, America, and the *Yishuv* (the pre-State Jewish community living in Palestine). Their efforts at reconstructing the Jewish past with an emphasis on the wonders of the Jewish heritage were clearly influenced by their teaching experiences and in turn impinged on the educational environment in which they worked. Indeed, their mostly positive Jewish historical message lent itself comfortably to the educational needs of a Jewish community in search of a spiritual, cultural, and political center within the free and open society at-large. An entire generation of Jewish intellectuals and scholars would be initiated into the study of Jewish history by way of national history (Podeh, 2002). They in turn played active roles in the budding communal (America) and national (Israel) Jewish educational enterprises.

As a result, when the teaching and learning of Jewish history became a formal component of the Jewish school curriculum, sometime around the turn of the twentieth century (Ackerman, 1984), its purposes were, on the one hand, to subject Jewish history to the generally accepted scientific tools of historical inquiry (the *Wissenschaft* legacy), and, on the other hand, to employ Jewish history as a means of Jewish cohesion (the Zionist legacy). Pre-modern instruction in Jewish history primarily entailed children memorizing and reciting Bible stories while teachers impressed upon students the moral of every tale (Gold, 2004). Emphasis was placed on biblical heroes and villains, wars and conquests, miraculous events and tragic circumstances, and the rise of the Jewish nation and religion. The overarching theme was God's role in shepherding God's "chosen people" through history. But with the rise of Jewish history as a secular, scientific discipline, it no longer seemed reasonable for Jewish history instruction to rely on the Bible as its sole textbook, or to promote a narrowly providential view of history, or to moralize excessively about the dictates of tradition. Instead, many Jewish educators strove to teach the expanding corpus and emergent methods of Jewish historical scholarship, adapted for pedagogical purposes (Jacobs, 2005a; Krasner, 2004). As noted, this did not necessarily mean abandoning history as a vehicle for Jewish identification. Rather, the challenge for Jewish history educators was to seek a proper balance between teaching academic Jewish history and cultivating collective Jewish memory (Honor, 1953; Pomson, 1994).

Gerson Cohen (1977) describes this challenge in one of the few essays written by an academic Jewish historian on the subject of Jewish history education.

> In the study and teaching of Jewish history . . . scholars of our time have harped on the need for a critical approach, so that . . . the orientation of Jewish education should not be totally out of line with the universe of discourse in which Jews are educated for life as a whole. Great stress has been laid on the need to alert the student to an understanding of

> Jewish history not reflected in dogmatic texts, and, accordingly, to the need of bringing him to see uncensored data and to appraising Jewish political, economic, social, intellectual, and religious development in the light of the general milieu in which the Jews lived . . ..
>
> Since [however] our concern with Jewish education and a Jewish curriculum implies the desirability in our eyes of a corporate Jewish identity in the United States, of a relationship of American Jews with other Jewries, past as well as present . . . the history of the Jews must be related to American Jewish life and experience; that is, this history must suggest some continuing thread, some constant Jewish quest for corporate expression. (pp. 35, 37)

For Cohen, there is a profound distinction between academic and classroom Jewish history. The former concerns itself, foremost, with normalizing the Jewish historical experience by subjecting it to the same spirit and standards of all other fields of historical inquiry. The latter concerns itself foremost with maintaining a sense of Jewish historical exceptionality by claiming that the Jewish community is a part of a perpetual "Jewish quest for corporate expression." In an attempt at synthesis, Cohen (1977) claims, "if Jewish education is to produce any significant yield in this country [i.e., the United States]," it "will require the rewriting of Jewish history to bring its relevance home to the Jewish student and to achieve for the American Jew what we feel the study of history in our society seeks to achieve generally" (pp. 38–39). If Jewish educators expose students to the ways that Jews and Judaism have adapted to their time and place through history, the students will come to understand how they came to be as Jews in their own time and place; ultimately, this will lead to a positive, deeper Jewish identification. Cohen suggests that students ought to analyze sources critically, using the tools of the historian, and then evaluate the evidence for themselves.

This approach to Jewish history education holds in tension the objectives of critical inquiry and positive Jewish identification—a longstanding tension in the field of Jewish studies. The historian Lucy Dawidowicz (1994) argues for the "uniqueness" of Jewish history and rejects the stark distinctions historians like Yerushalmi (1982) draw between history and memory, arguing instead that a historian's subjectivity could potentially enrich historical writing. "Some people think that the professional historian's commitments – to his people, his country, his, religion, his language – undermine his professional objectivity. Not so," writes Dawidowicz (1994), "as long as historians respect the integrity of their sources and adhere strictly to the principles of sound scholarship. Personal commitments do not distort, but instead they enrich historical writing" (p. 19). For Dawidowicz (1994), the study of Jewish history is about Jewish survival: "For if interest in the Jewish past is not sustained by concern for the future, then Jewish history loses its animating power, its very life" (p. 17). *Ahavat yirsrael*, "that distinctive Jewish concept of love of one's people," is essential in transmitting a significant and meaningful account of Jewish history, she argues (Dawidowicz, 1994, p. 16). This concept of *ahavat yisrael* "entails not only a sense of identity with the Jewish past and an involvement in its present, but also a commitment to a Jewish future" (Dawidowicz, 1994, p. 16).

While Dawidowicz's approach, with its blurred distinctions between historical integrity and Jewish identification, would not go without serious critique in the mostly dispassionate university setting, it offers a potentially useful paradigm

for Jewish history education in North American Jewish schools: one that complicates Yerushalmi's dichotomous approach between history and memory and instead allows for teaching critical historical inquiry *and* positive Jewish identification at once. As we shall see in the remainder of this chapter, it is but one of several different approaches to the teaching and learning of Jewish history found in Jewish education classrooms today.

Orientations to Jewish History Education

In this section, we outline a variety of orientations toward Jewish history education that over time have gained legitimacy in North American Jewish schools. The orientations, which build on Keith Barton and Linda Levstik's (2004) categorization of stances toward the teaching of history generally, include (a) identification, (b) group citizenship, (c) moral response, (d) integration and adjustment, and (e) Jewish history as an intellectual and disciplinary pursuit. These orientations encompass an array of educational objectives, subject matter, instructional methods, and organizational modes, oftentimes simultaneously, depending on how much weight certain educational ideas, activities, and approaches carry relative to others in a given educational setting. Indeed, the values inhering in the aims, content, methods, and/or intended outcomes of a particular Jewish history curriculum may not always be consistent. Ideological ambitions may be tempered by practical constraints, such as the structural limitations of schooling (e.g., time and space, administrative policies, access to materials and resources, teacher preparation and competence, teacher and student buy-in, school culture), while practical ambitions may be tempered by ideological constraints, such as the inconsistent purposes ascribed to Jewish education at-large (e.g., mastery of basic Judaic skills, intellectual development, enculturation, interpersonal relations, moral and ethical character, communal continuity). A balance therefore must be negotiated between the desirable and the possible in designing and implementing the Jewish history curriculum. Our hope is that a better sense of the multiple objectives that may be realized through the teaching and learning of Jewish history can help improve the curricular decision-making processes that might bring about the realization of these objectives in Jewish schools.

An important methodological caveat is in order. The following orientations *typify* what transpires in Jewish history classrooms in most North American denominational and community Jewish day and supplementary schools today. We say "typify" because, as noted previously, we have virtually no empirical data on what actually transpires in these Jewish history programs. Nonetheless, the past experience of this chapter's authors as Jewish history teachers in North American Jewish day high schools as well as professional development workshops we have facilitated over the last few years with a growing network of Jewish history educators representing diverse schools and communities throughout North America (The Network for the Teaching of Jewish History) have made us well-acquainted with the types of

Jewish history curricula that are currently in place.[2] In addition, there is a small but rich body of literature that addresses in considerable detail some important conceptual questions related to Jewish history education—Why study Jewish history in Jewish schools? What are the aims of Jewish history education, and how can these aims be met? What impact does Jewish religious and historical consciousness have on Jewish history education? In what ways are children expected to think, feel, and behave after having gained a Jewish historical education? (see, e.g., Ackerman, 1984; Chazan & Jacobs, 2005; Eisenberg & Segal, 1956, 1963; Gereboff, 1997; Jacobs, 2005a; Krasner, 2002; Levisohn, 2004)—much of which we attempt to synthesize in our discussion of orientations. All the same, we are adamant that evidence-based research in the field of Jewish history education is significantly lacking at this point and would enhance further conceptual work substantially.

Jewish History and Memory as Keys to Jewish Identification

Traditionally, the aims of Jewish history education have been to give students the ability to interpret contemporary Jewish life in light of Jewish history; to develop within students an emotional appreciation of Jewish values, ideals, hopes, and struggles through history; and to inspire within students identification with Judaism and the Jewish people. Affective, behavioral, and attitudinal goals take precedence over cognitive goals in this type of pedagogical scheme (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Indeed, within this program of Jewish socialization, *knowing* Jewish history is often not as important an outcome as *feeling* Jewish, *sensing* Jewishness, or *identifying* with Jewish peoplehood (Ackerman, 1984; Gereboff, 1995; Jacobs, 2002; Krasner, 2003).

The identification stance toward Jewish history education commonly sees the ends as outweighing the means. As a result, in many cases, rather than presenting critical, scholarly versions of Jewish history, the curricula instead emphasize mythical historical constructs and collective memories, based on the assumption that celebratory narratives have the power to instill pride in Jewish students. [By "collective memory," we mean those remnants of past experience—such as formative events, traditions, customs, texts, and values—that are remembered, repeated, and reinforced by a contemporary group for the sake of bolstering its collective identity (Gedi & Elam, 1996).] Jewish heroes and holidays play a central role in

[2]The professional development workshop, "Re/Presenting the Jewish Past," is a joint project between RAVSAK: The Jewish Community Day School Network and The Network for the Teaching of Jewish History at New York University, and is funded by the Avi Chai Foundation. To date, we have worked with more than 50 teachers from over 20 day and supplementary schools across the United States and Canada. The workshops are focused entirely on issues regarding teaching and learning Jewish history. The teachers spend 5 days in intensive workshop meetings—guided by scholars of Jewish history and education—revising their schools' Jewish history curricula, working to incorporate primary and secondary historical sources into the teaching of the Jewish past, and devising new modes of organization, instruction, and assessment.

this curriculum, as do stories of Jewish triumph and cohesiveness. Jews are depicted as resilient in the face of adversity, owing in part to their faith and in part to their exceptionality as the "chosen" ones. Nationalistic elements predominate as well, with the rebirth of Israel portrayed as the epitome of the Jewish spirit. At the same time, North America is seen as the "*goldene medine*" (golden land) where Jews not only have succeeded, but have in fact thrived and in some cases dominated. Heady triumphalism is the stuff of Jewish pride and identification, according to this perspective. (See, e.g., Solomon Grayzel's popular, triumphalist *A History of the Jews* (1968), which has long been a standard textbook in North American Jewish history classrooms.) Such identification brings with it an optimistic assessment of the Jewish present and prospects for the Jewish future (Ackerman, 1984; Gereboff, 1997; Levisohn, 2004; Pomson, 1994).

Critics of the identification approach to history education—which, it should be noted, is equally prevalent in the teaching of American history, society, and culture in public schools—draw an important distinction between teaching *history* and teaching *heritage*. David Lowenthal (1998) writes: "History is the past that actually happened, heritage a partisan perversion, the past manipulated for some present aim. Substituting an image of the past for its reality . . . heritage effaces history's intricate coherence with piecemeal and mendacious celebration" (p. 102). To be sure, there is a genuine distinction to be drawn between what might be termed dispassionate, scientific, critical history, and tendentious, affected, self-serving heritage. But for Lowenthal and many other like-minded scholars, the distinction between history as truth and heritage as faith, or history as impartial and heritage as chauvinistic, is specious. William McNeill (1986) coined the term "mythistory" to suggest that "the same words that constitute truth for some are, and always will be, myth for others, who inherit or embrace different assumptions and organizing concepts about the world" (p. 19). In other words, in the end, history is what the individual and/or community makes of it and takes from it, despite what the historians or mythmakers might say. Thus, both history and heritage have their place in the recounting, recollection, commemoration, memorialization, and teaching of the past.

With reference to the teaching of Jewish history specifically, Levisohn (2004) suggests that teachers "need not be ethnic cheerleaders, and [they] need not abandon [their] critical perspectives" (p. 14). Rather, Levinsohn argues that teaching students Jewish history warts and all, but with an eye toward asking "what is best" in the community (i.e., what aspects of history are most worthy of being remembered), can allow students to be empowered to create their own thoughtful narratives of the Jewish past. Thus, they will achieve personal ownership of their past—perhaps the most lasting form of identification.

Jewish History as the Basis for Jewish Citizenship

Jewish history has been assured a central place in the contemporary Jewish school curriculum partly because of its parallel role as a core subject of the general school

curriculum (Jacobs, 2004). Why then does history occupy the place that it does in public schools? There are, of course, a number of possible responses to this question, but the primary answer lies with the notion of promoting citizenship. American schools have adopted the position that studying the past will ultimately promote good citizenship in the present (Gagnon, 1989; Nash et al., 1997; Thornton, 1994).

In a similar vein, some Jewish schools hope that teaching the Jewish past will help inspire and orient young Jews toward active participation in the contemporary Jewish community. Indeed, learning the Jewish past—it is hoped and anticipated—will encourage the rising generation to be concerned with and see themselves as part of the Jewish present and future (à la Dawidowicz's "*ahavat yisrael*" approach to historical study). In this scheme, emphasis often is placed on interrogating the evolution of present-day Jewish issues and problems. For example, Beth T'filoh Dahan Community School in Baltimore recently refashioned its ninth-grade Jewish history curriculum as a "Jewish social studies" course, intended as a complement to public school civics courses. The Jewish social studies course addresses major contemporary Jewish issues as defined by the Jewish history department, including the demographics of contemporary Jewish society, interdenominational differences, and the role of Israel in American Jewish life. The Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto has a similar course for ninth graders which is also intended to initiate students into an understanding of contemporary Jewish life while providing foundations for inquiry into the Jewish past.

Jonathan Golden, chair of the history department at the Gann Academy–New Jewish High School outside Boston, articulates the goals of history education at his school thusly: "I describe it as a John Dewey-inspired experiment in democratic education. So what that means is, I think, that the most important thing for me to teach students is [how] to prepare them to participate in American democracy" (personal communication, July 11, 2007). What is more, "I would expand that definition beyond American democracy to be civically minded within the Jewish community, [asking], What are some contemporary Jewish issues and problems?, and looking at the past and history and choices that Jews had in the past, and asking, How does that shape current Jewish choices and American choices that our students make?" (personal communication, July 11, 2007). At Gann Academy, the teaching of Jewish history is meant to provide historical context for contemporary Jewish problems with the hope that doing so will empower students to make informed choices about Jewish life. One method they use is what Golden terms the "debate *midrash*."

> You literally sit if you're "pro" the question, you sit on one side, if you're "con" you sit on another side; if you're unsure, you sit in the middle and you can't speak, you have to be in one of those places. But during the course of the debate you can move, and people can move from "pro" to "con" if they want to, if their mind changes, and we do this in all sorts of subjects and scenarios.
>
> And the question there we ask is: "Should there be active efforts to revive Jewish life in Europe today?" So this is an example of a modern Jewish choice in terms of resources, priorities and so we have them debate that before they go, while they're there and after, when

> they come back, being reflective upon it . . .. So this is an example of history, the experience learning about it, but also the modern choices of the community. (personal communication, July 11, 2007)

This method illustrates one way in which Jewish history education can be utilized to encourage students to deliberate how Jews ought to respond individually and/or collectively to the challenges confronting the community.

This kind of history teaching and learning is potentially less authoritarian than what might be found in the identification orientation, in that it allows opportunities for questioning and disagreement (although the range of these disagreements is admittedly quite limited, depending on the mores of the school setting). There is no divinely revealed or humanly unfolded essence of Judaism, the Jewish community, or the Jewish past and future to contend with. Rather, contingencies and differences are recognized and honored in the hope that students capable of tackling today's problems will be well prepared to confront new challenges going forward. The general idea is that studying the Jewish past and contemplating its complexities will enable Jewish children to become intelligent, engaged, active, and effective citizens of the Jewish community in the future (Chazan & Jacobs, 2005; Levisohn, 2004).

Jewish History as Motivation for Moral Response

The study of Jewish history has the capacity to stir up a host of emotions, ranging from the pain of abject loss (the Holocaust) to the thrill of existential victory (Six-Day War). Taught this way, Jewish history also inspires intense moral responses, such as admiration for things good, right, and just, and condemnation for the bad and unjust. It is expected that students will emerge from their studies believing that Hitler was reprehensible and the Holocaust was tragic, while Herzl was a visionary and the establishment of the State of Israel was a triumph. The Holocaust has commonly been taught with a specific moral imperative in mind, such as Emil Fackenheim's famous "614th Commandment," through which it is hoped that students will not give Hitler a posthumous victory by abandoning Judaism, and, likewise, they will regard discrimination of any sort as abhorrent and social justice as a desideratum (Sheramy, 2000). The history of the State of Israel has typically been taught with a heavy dose of faultless Zionist mythology and Israel advocacy, intended to inspire North American Jewish youth to go to Israel and get their hands dirty just like the young *chalutzim* (pioneers) did before them (Ackerman, 1986). It is hoped that Jewish students will grow to be *mensches* in the course of their Jewish education, in part by developing "proper" and "desirable" moral responses to the events of Jewish history. A Jewish history program that raises and leaves unresolved too many moral ambiguities would be anathema to the Jewish education enterprise (Chazan, 1978).

However, teaching Israel's history has become, for many schools, one of the most challenging aspects of Jewish history education, given the rising prominence of the

work of critical “new”/“post-Zionist” Israeli historians and the seemingly intractable nature of conflict in the region (see chapter on teaching Israel, this volume.) Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (2002) points out the irony of mythologizing Israel in North American Jewish classrooms, as it necessitates employing “idealizations that are being contested in what has been called a post-Zionist Israel to anchor the identity of American Jewish youth” (p. 281). Teaching politically loaded subject matter has long been one of the great challenges for social studies educators in general. Compounding the complication for North American teachers of Israel’s history is the simple reality that Israel is different and distant from their students’ lived experiences. Thus, while some diaspora versions of Israel education, such as teen tours to Israel, seek to drop the anchor of “Jewish identity in contemporary Israel, the Israel to which it anchors the youngsters is [today] elsewhere – historically and existentially,” argues Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (2002, p. 281). Indeed, the moral imperative messages traditionally tied to Israel education may be missing their mark these days.

The moral response orientation toward history instruction is generally unacknowledged, in part because it appears to be more suggestive of a program of indoctrination than an effort to cultivate critical thinking. It also seems to run against the idea of history as a scientific area of inquiry that is subject to open interpretation (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Moral compasses and social conventions (not to mention laws in some nations) dictate that Hitler was the embodiment of evil—there is no other possible or at least acceptable interpretation of his actions, in the final analysis. But moral decisions related to other subject matter, such as the actions of controversial Jewish historical characters, may not be as clear-cut. A further complication is the developmental consideration regarding when students are ready to tackle moral ambiguity in the first place. In her study of teaching the documentary hypothesis to high school students in a TaNaKH (Hebrew Bible) class, Susan Tanchel (2008) argues, “late adolescence (ages 16–20) . . . is precisely the appropriate time for learning the documentary hypothesis and source criticism” (p. 48). Developmentally, at this stage, students are in a position to reexamine their beliefs and explore provocative ideas, holding in tension contradictory versions of “Truth.” In her view, “it is invaluable for this faith questioning to happen when the students are still in a supportive Jewish environment” (ibid., p. 48). Given that the vast majority of students in North American Jewish high schools will attend universities where critical theories of the Jewish experience are accepted and espoused, it is “not only unrealistic, but also potentially counterproductive” to shield students from such provocative material while in late adolescence, claims Tanchel (2008, p. 49).

For these reasons, Jewish schools would benefit from contemplating what aspects of Jewish history are to be considered foregone conclusions within the life of the school and which are more nuanced and contentious. A critical examination of difficult history may not necessarily come at the expense of certain ideological, ethnic, national, religious, or moral commitments, but it does not come without its challenges to those inclinations, either (Levisohn, 2003). In the end, the question regards how passionate or dispassionate Jewish history instruction ought to be and what moral outcomes are expected from it.

Jewish History as a Paradigm of Integration and Adjustment

In many Jewish day schools, Jewish history is not taught as a separate core subject of the curriculum; rather, Jewish history content is integrated into general history courses. A number of considerations motivate this curricular decision (Levisohn, 2008). First, teaching one history course is simply more efficient than teaching two courses—and by efficient we mean not only more expeditious vis-à-vis the scope and sequence of the curriculum, but also more economical vis-à-vis personnel, materials, resources, space, and scheduling. Second, presenting Jewish history alongside and within general history reinforces the notion that Jewish history cannot be understood in a vacuum, that is, without its inextricable link to general history. Jewish history is dependent on external developments. In many times and places, general history is dependent on developments in the Jewish world as well. The integrated history curriculum demonstrates literally and symbolically that Jews are "normal" actors in history, rather than exceptional. Last, interweaving Jewish and general history validates the notion that Jewish life is compatible with North American life, and the ideas and experiences of the Jewish people are a part of, not apart from, the broader North American society. As Jonathan Sarna (1998) puts it, Jewish schools "are the primary setting, along with the home, where American Jews confront the most fundamental question of American Jewish life: how to live in two worlds at once, how to be both American and Jewish, part of the larger American society and apart from it" (p. 9). In this sense, the integrated Jewish general-history course serves as a paradigm of adjustment—the full adjustment of Jews to their surrounding society, and more generally to the modern, secular world.

Another version of curriculum integration entails the fusion of Jewish history with other branches of Judaic studies, creating a total program of Jewish social education in the school (this is the type of Jewish history education once commonly found in part-time supplementary schools). Conceptually speaking, almost everything that happens in the Jewish school curriculum—be it studying Biblical and Rabbinic texts, speaking Hebrew, singing songs and dancing to Jewish music, praying, celebrating holidays, etc.—can be considered an aspect of Jewish social education, for it is related to the development of Jewish identity and the cultivation of Jewish citizenship. The broad-based Jewish studies course helps model for students the intricate connections of various facets of Jewish thought, culture, and life (Jacobs, 2005a).

At the same time, ironically, the integrated Judaic studies approach has the capacity to marginalize the value of teaching and learning Jewish history as well. In many ultra-orthodox schools, Jewish history—in the critical, modern sense discussed earlier in this chapter—is essentially not taught at all. In omitting Jewish history from their curricula, these schools are, first of all, remaining true to their heritage. As noted above, pre-modern Jewish schools had no place for Jewish history in their teaching. The essence of Judaism was—in this traditional view—transmitted clearly by God to the Jewish people in the written Torah that God had graciously bequeathed, and clarified further through the oral Torah that had the imprimatur of the rabbis. The written and oral Torahs provided all the historical knowledge a Jew

might need, in two senses. First, the narratives described the crucial phases of the Jewish past, the phases in which Judaism emerged and Jews were properly located in their promised homeland. Equally important, these narratives identified clearly the crucial dynamic of Jewish history that needed to be pondered: namely the system of divine reward and punishment that was intended to govern Jewish fate over the ages (Bernstein, 1986; Bloomberg, 1992). This understanding of Jewish history continues to hold sway among certain segments of Jewry who feel that history primarily unfolds according to a divine plan that is unknowable. The study of Jewish history as a social science is seen as secular in nature; it is therefore regarded, at best, as a theft of time that could better be used studying sacred texts, and, at worst, as a threat to sacred education altogether. Hence, in these settings, there is little support for teaching and learning Jewish history—as we presently conceive of it—extensively or rigorously.

Jewish History as an Intellectual and Disciplinary Pursuit

History educators and curriculum reformers on the general North American schooling scene frequently have asserted that teaching history should introduce students to problems in reconstructing the past and, by extension, to the uncertainties in assessing information available on the present and future as well (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Some have referred to this model as the "student-as-historian" approach to history education (Kobrin, 1996). Here the key is a direct student encounter with the data of the past: the artifacts and texts that historians utilize in their reconstructions of history. Students are encouraged to confront these data directly, to draw their conclusions, and to assess the reliability of their conclusions. This can be a potentially exciting intellectual exercise. Development of these critical skills is deemed useful for students as they engage the challenge of encountering complex data and assessing the meaning of these data, whether they involve issues of the economy, American political life, and/or foreign affairs. In a sense, this type of history teaching might well be viewed as an extension of the notion of training for citizenship. Here, however, the citizenship training does not involve the content of the past, but rather the methodology of studying past events systematically and critically, which then becomes available for engaging and assessing present-day issues as well.

A few Jewish schools have begun to gravitate in this direction (Graff, 2000). There is now a considerable corpus of data available—much of it on the Internet—for confronting students with the raw materials of the Jewish past (among them, texts, artifacts, maps, art, architecture, photographs, audio recordings, and video footage), encouraging them to the stimulating task of assessing and drawing conclusions from these materials and using these honed skills to tackle historical and contemporary issues. Pre-conceived results are usually eschewed in such teaching, with students exercising considerable independence in reaching meaningful personal conclusions from their study of the Jewish past. The teacher plays essentially the role of coach in overseeing independent student effort. Students, in constructing

their own histories of the Jewish experience, become critical thinkers about Jewish history. This pedagogical approach necessitates a teacher who is highly familiar with the content of Jewish history and the methods of doing historical research (anecdotally, our work with Jewish history educators suggests that many are expert in one or the other but not always both). It also often entails a significant time commitment, both in planning for and engaging in instructional activities. When carefully developed and guided by a skillful teacher, this kind of teaching and learning can have great success in engaging students in the process of historical inquiry (VanSledright, 2002; Wineburg, 2001). Students may thereby devise creative solutions to the religious, social, political, and cultural challenges that Jews have faced in any given time and place, including the world today.

Prospects for Future Research in Jewish History Education

In this chapter, we traced the origins of Jewish history as a school subject and laid out a variety of orientations toward Jewish history education that may be found in North American Jewish schools today. In this final section, we consider prospective new directions for research in the teaching and learning of Jewish history. It is our hope that researchers, practitioners, and policymakers alike will find this a useful departure point for work in a rich, yet largely untapped, field.

As previously noted, current research on how Jewish history education is planned, implemented, and received in North American Jewish schools is limited, at best. The modest numbers of scholarly works that have focused on the study of Jewish history in schools have enriched the field in important ways—mostly in terms of explicating the history and purposes of Jewish history education (hence the focus of this chapter)—yet, we know remarkably little about the what actually goes on in Jewish history classrooms and programs these days. What constitutes the Jewish history curriculum and how is it organized? What time periods, events, and themes are most emphasized, and why? What instructional methods, learning activities, and materials are utilized, and to what effect? Who teaches Jewish history in Jewish schools, and what kinds of formal preparation have Jewish history teachers had, if any? What is the place of Jewish history education in the overall Jewish school curriculum, vis-à-vis other Judaic studies and general studies subjects as well as curricular activities outside the classroom? Finally, and perhaps most important, how do students make sense of the Jewish past they encounter in schools? These and other subjects have eluded scholarly pursuit up till now but are certainly worthy of investigation.

Of particular interest to us are questions that address the problematics of teaching Jewish history. What are the sacred cows of Jewish history education? For example, what is the status of the identity-building project? How are Jewish history educators and students wrestling with the tension between promoting critical thinking while upholding positive Jewish identification? Much has been written

about the possibilities in this regard (see, e.g., Chazan & Jacobs, 2005; Gereboff, 1997; Levisohn, 2004). But how does this tension actually play out in Jewish history classrooms? What about the numbers of non-Jewish teachers who teach Jewish history, particularly in settings where Jewish history is integrated into the general history curriculum? Can a teacher who lacks a personal connection to Jewish history and culture be as effective as an "insider" to the community? How are non-Jews (Christians, Moslems, others) treated in the Jewish history curriculum? What about groups that historically have been marginalized in general history, such as women, people of color, gays and lesbians, and poor people, not to mention those marginalized in certain Jewish history circles, such as Sephardic, Oriental, and Persian Jews? What issues are educators and students grappling with personally, and how do they manifest in the Jewish history classroom? This list of potential avenues for research is only a start. Clearly, there is much work to be done.

Fortunately, the prospects for growth in the field of Jewish history education research are encouraging. Academic interest in the teaching of Jewish history in North America has burgeoned since the start of the twenty-first century (see works by Gold, Jacobs, Krasner, Levisohn, and Sheramy cited in this chapter) and continues to expand in Israel (see works by Bekerman, Podeh, Porat, and others). The progress is due in part to (a) the proliferation of research-based graduate programs in Jewish education in the United States and Canada; (b) new initiatives focused on bridging research and practice in various spheres of the Jewish education world (e.g., collaborations between historians and veteran educators have emerged, such as *Understanding Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (2003), a secondary school-level adaptation of Lawrence H. Schiffman's scholarly work on late antiquity, edited by Jon Bloomberg [Maimonides Jewish Day School] and Samuel Kapustin [Tannenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto]); (c) a surge of scholarly interest in history and social studies education in K-12 schools writ-large; and (d) continuing concern in the Jewish community about the role of Jewish schools in fostering Jewish identification and maintaining communal continuity, both of which have been attributed in part to Jewish history education. We hope that as the scope of research in history education and Jewish education grows, so too will interest in Jewish history education widen and deepen.

We are especially excited by the growing range of methodologies being utilized to investigate history education and their potential application to Jewish education. The works of Sam Wineburg, Keith Barton, Linda Levstik, Bruce VanSledright, and others in the field of general history education have deepened our understanding of how students think about and understand historical texts. Wineburg's method of probing students' historical thinking through read-aloud exercises and other techniques has generated comparable research in Israel (Porat, 2004). Ethnographic, classroom-based (or other context-based) studies that profile in detail the ways Jewish history is organized, presented, and mediated by both students and teachers can enrich our understanding of history education and Jewish education more broadly. While historical and philosophical works on Jewish history education are essential foundations for further investigation, empirical and qualitative research

in this field can take us beyond “official knowledge” and enable us to peer into how students and teachers are actively constructing meaning from Jewish history in schools.

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Holocaust Education

Simone Schweber

Introduction

Although there are literally tomes of writing concerning teaching and learning about the Holocaust, it is only since the 1990s that rigorous research in these domains emerged. Prior to that period, there were heated arguments about the nature and aims of Holocaust education, who ought to receive it, under what conditions, in what contexts, and with what intended results. While often well-argued and highly readable, most of that literature was philosophical in nature; it was based on ideas and commitments rather than research or investigation. And while much of that body presented powerful insights and masterful argumentation, very little examined the lived world of Holocaust education. In other words, most of this writing dealt instead in the realm of ideas about Holocaust education rather than experiences with it. Or, when that literature did delve into Holocaust education as practiced in specific contexts, the data were typically anecdotally seized rather than systematically generated.

Arguably, the field is so recent that it is in some way itself to blame for the lack of experiential evidence on which to base current practices. As Thomas D. Fallace (2008) explains, the treatment of the Holocaust as a curricular topic in US public schools dates back only to the 1970s. Though it was taught about in Jewish congregational schools prior to that period (Sheramy, 2003), research on Holocaust education commenced only some 20 years later. Holocaust education in Israel has taken many different ideological forms from the 1950s onward, corresponding precisely to which political parties are in power. In Germany, the history of Holocaust education is likewise multilayered, as it took decidedly divergent routes in each of the former States of East and West Germany and as Germans remain committed to understanding the Holocaust's various legacies. What it means to teach about the Holocaust in Germany is thus very different from what it means to teach about the Holocaust in Israel or in the United States "after Auschwitz," as teaching is

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inevitably connected to national ideas about the state, citizenship, morality, and history. As such, research on Holocaust education, indeed wherever it is carried out, has a wide range of contexts to consider. Conceived of as a scholarly enterprise and a sub-field of Holocaust studies more broadly, Holocaust educational research has been slow in developing. In reviewing the education literature published in the last decades, it becomes clear that the literature on Holocaust education has grown slowly, if steadily, unlike related domains such as Holocaust memory studies or Holocaust historical works that have expanded exponentially over the same period. Though the field is small, there are broad philosophical divides that characterize it. A review of some of these divides follows. It is limited to publications in English, which regrettably excludes the works produced in other languages and gives this chapter a decidedly Anglo-centric bias.

Philosophical Divides

Much early education work delimited the pedagogical implications of the historiographical debate between the universality and the uniqueness of the Holocaust. Put simply, educators and educational researchers early on tended to align themselves either with the position advocating for the Holocaust's uniqueness or with the position claiming its universality. Thus, writing in 1979, Henry Friedlander already advocated for the Holocaust's universality, hoping that the study of the Holocaust might serve as a basis for civic participation. Not long thereafter, in 1982, Chaim Schatzker lamented that much universalistic Holocaust education seemed to him to deny the Holocaust's singular status. Schatzker explained that with such educational efforts, "there is the danger that [the Holocaust] will be dwarfed, diminished and will lose its. . . significance. . . instead of making students sensitive to [its] abnormalities" (Schatzker, 1982: p. 80). As this brief juxtaposition implies, the unique/universal divide tends to play out among educational researchers in discussions involving curriculum, student learning, and teacher preparation. Like Schatzker, those who lean toward the "unique" pole of the continuum tend to caution teachers about the limits involved in teaching about the Holocaust, given the unintelligibility of the event itself. They thus tend to advocate for the use of particular pedagogical formats over others, and they sometimes argue against drawing comparisons between the Holocaust and other genocidal events. In a famous essay that reiterates this position from a data-rich standpoint, the historian Lucy Dawidowicz railed against "How *they* teach the Holocaust." Most American curricula that she examined at the time of her writing (1992), she claimed misrepresented the Holocaust, glossing over its sources, evading its horror, and universalizing its main victims.

Samuel Totten, a prolific writer in this first generation of Holocaust education scholars, shared Dawidowicz's commitment to historical specificity and helped shape the field from that standpoint (Totten, 2002). Following Elie Wiesel's particularist approach to Holocaust representation, Totten has avidly delimited the pedagogical choices he deems appropriate. Teaching about the Holocaust, he has argued, demands specialized knowledge and careful handling—beyond that which

might be involved in teaching about other events. Thus, Totten has argued that children in the early grades should not be exposed to the Holocaust, that teachers should never engage Holocaust simulations and that the curriculum materials used to teach about the Holocaust should be realistic. Along with William Parsons, Samuel Totten wrote the US Holocaust Memorial Museum's (heretofore USHMM) *Guidelines for Teaching about the Holocaust*, which were published in 1993 to correspond to the opening of the museum. These guidelines showcase Totten and Parsons' ideological commitment to the Holocaust's "uniqueness," albeit in a somewhat understated manner, as the officially sanctioned position of the US Holocaust authority, a position that museum administrators have begun to revisit as the institution continues to develop.

Other educators within what might be considered this "unique" school of thought proposed strategies for patrolling the boundaries of representation. Karen Shawn, for example, suggested that teachers ought to be specially "certified" to teach about the Holocaust before being enabled to do so (Shawn, 1995). Like Totten, Shawn objected to the oversimplification of the Holocaust in many curricula and classrooms, the watering down of its content such that it becomes trivialized. Shawn worked for many years as an education specialist at Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust Memorial, whose educational philosophies coalesce at a similar point along the unique/universal continuum, though in an Israeli context, the stance serves different socio-political purposes than it does elsewhere. For critics like Ruth Firer, the ideological position of uniqueness supports Israeli prejudices and racism, shrouded beneath Israelis' national "siege mentality" (1998), all of which appear in her review of Israeli textbooks. For supporters, however, the Holocaust's "uniqueness" is authentically justified such that its implications for that country's national security interests are legitimate. Dan Porat's (2004) careful research on debates over the Holocaust among officials in the Israeli Ministry of Education and the resulting textbook treatments of the topic from the early 1950s to the late 1990s demonstrates the complexities of educational uniqueness, including Israel's relationships to Zionism, state-building, post-Zionism, and militarism.

German debates over the Holocaust's uniqueness translate into educational orientations as well, though they have utterly different implications in that national context. As the German educational philosopher Micha Brumlik maintains, the project of "education after Auschwitz" is necessarily vexed, and a denial of its uniqueness implies a denial of responsibility, which is morally repugnant. As Friedrich Schweitzer writes, following Brumlik's logic, "there are at least two different ways of not doing justice to the Shoah in education," the first being a simple "forgetting" of it in the curriculum, the second being "treating the Shoah as if it were like any other topic in the curriculum" (2000: p. 371), a structural relativising that might position study of the Holocaust "after biology and right before the test in math" (Schweitzer, 2000: p. 371). On even a cursory comparison of Holocaust education debates in the US, Germany, and Israel, what surfaces is the importance of national contexts in framing curricular issues.

In the US context, a second generation of educational researchers tends to disparage the unique/universal divide itself as falsely dichotomous, paradoxically aligning

with the latter pole. These researchers argue against Holocaust uniqueness out of commitments to democratic, socially just, anti-racist, and humanistic education. The purpose of teaching about the Holocaust is precisely to learn from it, no matter how difficult, not to hold it in abeyance as impossibly non-educative, no matter how appealing such a theoretical position may be. Thus, Geoffrey Short, whose empirical and theoretical work spans multiple decades in England, demonstrates repeatedly that the Holocaust may provide useful lessons, not only for students as individuals, but "for the educational system as a whole" (Short, 2003: p. 285). As he writes in the introduction to a study he co-authored with Bruce Carrington, "If taught properly, [the Holocaust] can make an invaluable contribution to the general development of the skills, attitudes and dispositions usually associated with 'maximalist' notions of citizenship in a participatory democracy" (Carrington & Short, 1997: p. 271). Like Short, researchers in this contingent question the morality of a rigid boundary cordoning the Holocaust off from other atrocities. The sacralization such categorization enacts prevents its being learned from morally and learned about in historical detail. Rather than treating the Holocaust with reverence, its artificial seclusion renders it trivialized.

Within this group of researchers are those who turned to empirical studies as a mode of questioning some normative assumptions about Holocaust education in the USA. Beth Aviv Greenbaum's discussion of six works she assigns in her semester-long, public high-school Holocaust elective is a good example of this genre. Her book *Bearing Witness* (2001) considers her literature choices and her students' readings of them, thereby usefully straddling the line between guidebook for educators and research on Holocaust education. I (Schweber, 2004) studied what teachers who were highly regarded within their communities taught *as* the Holocaust and what students in their classrooms learned from the experience. Melinda Fine (1995) had written a polished case study of a class engaged with the still-exceedingly popular curriculum, *Facing History and Ourselves,* and I wanted to see how very experienced teachers adapted this curriculum and others. I purposefully observed a teacher who designed and ran an elaborate, semester-long Holocaust simulation, a masterful storyteller, and a third teacher who was a powerful dramaturge. The pedagogical practices and student impacts upended notions that were commonsensical on the "unique" end of the ideological spectrum. It turned out, for example, that simulations can teach students important lessons, despite the reality that they are problematic formats that can go awry in practice. In this study, the teachers' home-grown, classroom-based practices butted up against the prescriptive institutional directives aimed at constraining their choices. It is worth noting that Dawidowicz's assessment of official Holocaust curricula applied to the enacted curricula in these school rooms, too; anti-Semitism tended to be ignored as an explanatory framework for atrocity and Jewishness as a category tended to be oversimplified.

What might be considered a third generation of US researchers has emerged. Karen Riley's (Totten & Riley, 2005) work exemplifies the continuity of the "unique" position—as when she finds a pronounced absence in US state standards documents of language that treats the Holocaust as a historically specific event.

By contrast, Karen Spector's and Mary Juzwik's careful studies of classroom discourse illustrate the widening of "universalist" research. Spector's study followed students whose fundamentalist Christian eschatology funneled their interpretations of the Holocaust into particular pathways. Some of the middle-school students she observed, for example, thought that the Holocaust was preordained by God, not unlike the sacrifice of Jesus for the salvation of humanity. Other students, after reading Elie Wiesel's memoir, considered his faith to have grown during his incarceration in the concentration camps. Like Spector's work, Juzwik's research focuses on classroom narratives, but Juzwik employs an almost microscopic lens to examine discourse (2009). Juzwik examines the grammar of Holocaust teaching, finding, for example, that even at the syntactic level of middle-school students' talk, Jews within Holocaust narratives end up being literally "objectified." Within the structure of the sentences explaining their treatment, Jews are discussed as the receivers rather than the generators of action; their position grammatically reflects their persecution historically.

While the aforementioned researchers' work may be positioned in different spaces along the unique/universalist continuum, all of the examples above might be grouped together in regard to conceptual orientations toward research. The studies above may be classified generally as either post-positivistic or constructionist works; that is, in all of these studies, "reality" is assumed to exist outside of individual experience or discursive performance. History exists regardless of its narration as such. Post-modernists have also considered Holocaust education, however, and have incorporated the concepts of trauma, the theorization of pedagogy, and the role of testimony in the body of Holocaust education literature. Proponents of this school of thought have tended to rely heavily on literary theories of the Holocaust as when, for example, Michael Bernard-Donals and Richard R. Glejzer (2001) discuss what testimony "teaches," or when Marla Morris (2001) considers the generation of a "dystopic curriculum" in the wake of the Holocaust—that is, a curriculum that reveals the practices of "othering" in order to pursue a non-utopian world. Given their indebtedness to literary concepts and methodologies, post-modern researchers tend to give preference to the generation of high theory over the gathering of empirical data. There are, nonetheless, researchers whose work bridges both worlds.

Shoshana Felman's groundbreaking work, "Education and crisis, or the vicissitudes of teaching" may well be considered a scholarly first-generation work within this post-modern school of thought (Caruth, 1995). Interpreting her own post-secondary teaching through a psychoanalytic lens, Felman positions the hardship of learning about the Holocaust as an opportunity to revisit and re-envision the act of teaching as a whole. Her students, she writes, experienced a terrible crisis in learning about this topic, an experience that left them with an absence of speech and an overabundance of talk; that is, her students could talk, but in the midst of learning about the Holocaust, they could not generate meaning. She concludes with the speculation that all teaching ought to be risky, writing, "if teaching does not hit upon some sort of crisis, if it does not encounter either the vulnerability or the explosiveness of an (explicit or implicit) critical and unpredictable dimension, it has perhaps not truly taught" (p. 55).

Deborah Britzman is another active participant in the development of psychoanalytic approaches to Holocaust education. Britzman (1998) proposes a theory of "difficult knowledge"—that kind of knowledge which challenges people's notions of themselves and humanity, inducing a type of Freudian melancholia. Expanding on these ideas, Elisabeth Ellsworth examines the ways in which the Holocaust necessarily exceeds the conventional boundaries of language. Education about the Holocaust, Ellsworth explains, cannot be contained in dialogue, communication, or representation. Instead, education must be about "the necessity, the right, the responsibility of participating in the ongoing, never-completed historical, social, and political labor of memory construction" (2005, pp. 177–78). In later work, Ellsworth examines how the Permanent Exhibit of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum positions viewers pedagogically. She asks what it is that viewers are positioned to know, feel, and be able to do. Fracturing staid notions of identity and psychoanalytic notions of agency, Ellsworth attends to how the "pedagogical address" of the Museum (re)produces power relations (2005).

The two ideological divides I have used to characterize research on Holocaust education—both the unique/universal debates that grew out of early historiographical disputes and the epistemological domains that punctuate all academic inquiry—are of course not the only bases for categorizing work in this field. There are many other important divides ideologically and historically. In this regard, for example, the Eichmann trials initiated a particular era of education reform in dealing with the Holocaust in Israel, just as the anti-Semitic wave of 1959–1960 ushered in a new era of education reform in Germany. The list of ways to section the field is dauntingly long given its short history, and none of the options is blatantly the best. The remainder of this essay summarizes what is known about where the Holocaust is taught, in what kinds of venues, how, by whom, and with what effects. In each section, significant issues are raised, but what we do not yet know is also highlighted in the hopes of inspiring further study in exactly those domains.

Educational Venues

Educational venues can be classified along a number of axes, among them: grade-level (elementary to university), regional setting (where in the world people are learning about the Holocaust), and venue type (whether the institution provides formal or informal educational opportunities, whether it is a private Jewish setting, for example, or a public one). In light of their interpenetration as categories, grade-level has been prioritized in the hope that it provides some measure of analytic clarity.

In terms of schooling level, in the USA, it appears that the Holocaust has drifted from upper to lower grades over time. That is, whereas the Holocaust was initially only taught about in the high-school curriculum, it has been absorbed into the middle school, and in recent years, has entered the elementary school, a trend I have labeled "curricular creep" (Schweber, 2008b: p. 2075). Because the USA has neither a standardized curriculum nor even intra-state content consistency, the scope and rapidity of "curricular creep" is impossible to assess nationally. In Scotland,

Henry Maitles and Paula Cowan interviewed five teachers who taught the Holocaust to 9-year-olds, and all five, perhaps not surprisingly, considered their units a success (1999). Geoffrey Short and Carole Reed interviewed young children in England, ascertaining that "8- and 9-year-olds have almost no conception of a Jew" (2004: 126), which prompts them to argue for "substantial preparatory work" (2004: p. 127) before teaching the Holocaust as part of the formal curriculum to youngsters. In a study I conducted of a third-grade classroom in which children learned about the Holocaust in-depth through picture books, the parents of the children all thought the unit was a success, and many of the children valued their learning. Only a few students and I felt that they were too young for the subject, given the nightmares some students experienced and the general lack of comprehension other students reported (Schweber, 2008b). That single, small-scale study, while theoretically generalizable, proposes too limited an answer to the question of when children are old enough to learn about the Holocaust. Moreover, because the study-setting was a nonsectarian public rather than a private Jewish school, the transferability of its results to Jewish school settings is questionable. Only one student in that classroom was Jewish, and she experienced a depression directly related to her strong identification with Holocaust victims; such a reaction implies that schools with large numbers of Jewish students need to be especially vigilant about not teaching children directly about the Holocaust until at least the 4th grade. Cowan and Maitles' survey research in Scotland assesses students' reactions to learning about the Holocaust in "upper primary school," where students are aged 10–12, and it strongly indicates that their learning carried positive short-term effects on their civic engagement (2007). Taken together, these studies seem to suggest that students ought to begin learning about the Holocaust formally in school only when they reach double-digit ages.

Children in Israel typically learn about the Holocaust much earlier since the country officially commemorates the Shoah as a nation and because the Holocaust so saturates public discourse. German children, too, often encounter the Holocaust long before they learn about it officially as part of the school curriculum. Does this heightened awareness mean that Israeli and German children *should* learn about the Holocaust at earlier ages? Both more and more nuanced research ought to be conducted in answer to the questions involved in what children actually learn from study of the Holocaust, at various young ages, given the complex facets of their identities (e.g., social class, religious identities, gender identification, ethnic heritages, psychological development, national and local affiliations). This dearth of research is especially problematic for Jewish school principals and teachers, where Yom Hashoah commemorations or the Tenth of Tevet[1] rituals frequently expose children to the Holocaust at young ages. What such commemorations look like and how young children interpret them is an area ripe for investigation.

The Holocaust is frequently taught about in middle schools, wherein adolescents are roughly 12–15 years old. However, what this schooling level endows students

[1]Because Yom HaShoah falls within the month of Nisan, a month when mourning is prohibited, many orthodox Jews say kaddish for the murdered of the Holocaust on the Tenth of Tevet.

with specifically is also not well documented. How students understand the material they learn, and how such learning affects their moral, intellectual, and spiritual lives are only beginning to be examined. Veronica Boix Mansilla explored how Canadian adolescents understood the Holocaust cognitively, focusing in particular on how the students were able to perform their acquired knowledge (1998). Research on how the Holocaust was taught and learned about in two religious 8th-grade classrooms, one at an evangelical, Charismatic, fundamentalist Christian school, and the other at an ultra-orthodox Jewish, Chabad/Lubavitch girls' *yeshivah*, strikingly revealed teaching strategies meant to enhance students' identification with very narrowly defined groups of victims: fundamentalist Christians in the first case (Schweber & Irwin, 2003) and ultra-orthodox Jews in the second (Schweber, 2008a). The Lubavitch case in particular illustrates how the Shoah can be taught about from the perspective that it is historically incomparable and fundamentally incomprehensible, "unique" not only in history but of particular importance in Jewish history. In both of these studies, the students' religious identities shaped their learning of the material, which had already been narrowed by the ideological biases of the institutional settings. No studies as yet compare Holocaust learning between schooling levels, that is, between upper-elementary, early middle-school, or late high-school students. Moreover, none compare the Holocaust learning that occurs at different religious settings, between, say Lubavitch and Satmar yeshivahs or between liberal Jewish congregational schools and the more conservative ones. Given individuals' differential growth and development trajectories, such study might be especially illuminating and helpful in scaffolding a developmentally appropriate, systemic Holocaust education curriculum.

Because the Holocaust has been positioned within the high-school curriculum historically, most studies of Holocaust education have situated research at the secondary level. In one of the few comprehensive US-based surveys, Jeffrey Ellison established that in Illinois high schools, teachers spent 8 days of instruction on the Holocaust on average, usually "... during students' junior year" of high school. Ellison also found that most teachers tended "to subsume the topic of the Holocaust within the topic of tolerance and stereotyping" rather than within the specific history of anti-Semitism. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum sponsored a survey in 2003–2004, which found that "the vast majority of teachers (72%) reported that the Holocaust was addressed in one of more of their [English and social studies] courses" (Donnelly, 2006: p. 51). Students in England and Wales are taught about the Holocaust in history classes of Year 9, when students are roughly ages 14–15. Britain's national curriculum includes the Holocaust, but its positioning within the standardized content implies that it has lower status than other subject areas (Brown & Davies, 1998). The Council for Cultural Cooperation (CDCC), the Council of Europe's educational arm, perhaps in the hopes of spurring greater coverage, published a range of small guides on Holocaust education available to all 40 of its member nations.

While it has been a mainstay curricular presence in Germany and Israel, in many places where the Holocaust took place, education about it is just beginning to be

broached. As Ruchniewicz (2000) has shown, Poland only initiated Holocaust education in 1996, and in "the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Hungary, and Slovakia, Holocaust education remains in its infancy" (Crawford & Foster, 2007b: p. 22). In 2006, the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal initiated Holocaust education (Schneider, 2006). Such reports indicate an increase in Holocaust education in certain regions of the world. Nonetheless, reports have indicated that in specific locales, the Holocaust is being excised from the curriculum. In certain Parisian suburbs that house large populations of North African immigrants, teachers gave up trying to teach about the Holocaust because it was presumed by students that such teaching symbolically supported the existence of Israel as a state. During an interview about his report on anti-Semitic events and attitudes in French schools, Georges Bensoussan shared that he "[knew] of cases in which the teacher mentioned Auschwitz and Treblinka, and students clapped," which presumably prompted teachers to refrain from teaching hostile learners (2004). In 2007, a rumor that the Holocaust was being removed from the United Kingdom's national curriculum prompted multiple organizations to clarify its falsity. Interestingly, the power of Internet communication in the twenty-first century ended up pressuring the University of Kentucky to host Holocaust teacher training programs (since the "UK" was widely perceived among US e-mail recipients to refer to that institution rather than the United Kingdom).

In those countries with national curricula, the venues for Holocaust education are documented in policy. Whether increasingly or decreasingly covered, in these locales, the need for research on the experiential dimensions of such curricula looms large. One might well ask how subject area context affects instruction and learning; how might it be different to learn about the Holocaust through mandatory religious studies classes, through citizenship classes, or in English classes, the three main venues in England? Tom Misco has studied how the Holocaust is being treated in Romanian classes and what institutional supports exist to further that education (Misco, 2008), and he has found that continued anti-Semitism has impeded progress. A qualitative study of Eastern Ukrainian high-school students' writings illuminates their multiple and competing discourses with regard to anti-Semitism, Jews, Nazis, and responsibility (Ivanova, 2004). The two studies beg for more and broader comparative research across national borders, as when Shamai et al. compare Israeli and German teenagers' conceptions of National Socialism and the Shoah. Interestingly, that study determined that the greater the level of students' Holocaust knowledge, regardless of whether they were German or Israeli, the more they hoped to interact with students from the other country (Shamai, Yardeni, & Klages, 2004). A few, very carefully designed, large-scale, international studies could be exceedingly fruitful in mapping Holocaust education worldwide. Such studies, thoughtfully done, could help to answer the questions that revolve around how different it is to learn about the Holocaust within a context where genocide lingers in lived memory vs. where it exists only as learned history. Moreover, such a study could help answer the important questions involved in how Jewish students in different national contexts are taught about the Holocaust and with what results.

At the college and university levels, the Holocaust is a common offering, and yet very little research has been undertaken to assess the results of such courses. In his survey of Holocaust courses offered at US institutions, Stephen Haynes (1998) found tremendous diversity among professors as to curricular materials, historical scope, and pedagogic activities. Moreover, those who chose to teach about the Holocaust tended to be untrained in the subject area and thus "neither their perspective on the subject matter nor their pedagogical style [was] necessarily informed by any coherent philosophy of Holocaust education" (1998: p. 282). In attempt perhaps to develop such philosophies, however, many college-level instructors write about their experiences teaching and their perceptions of its impact. As an example, Wink discusses how she teaches about the Holocaust in the hopes that her students reject apathy and examine the "tension between obedience and critical thinking" (2006: p. 84) in her English class at the US Coast Guard Academy. Marion Faber (1996) writes informatively about teaching a Holocaust course that highlights the role of German culture, and Judith Tydor Baumel (2002) considers the potential intersections of Holocaust and gender studies. Other authors discuss other kinds of subject areas through which to teach the Holocaust, as well as different kinds of institutional settings and what their students learned within them, including community colleges, the US Air Force Academy (Westermann, 1996), and both Catholic (Braiterman, 1999; Farnham, 1983) and state-affiliated (Berlak, 1999; Friedrichs, 1996; Halperin, 1986) universities. In an especially compelling essay, Tinberg (2005) grapples with the dilemmas of designing a Holocaust course as the child of Holocaust survivors, sharing his sense of entitlement to "regard the Shoah as a family matter" (73). For numerous other essays on the perspectives of college and university teachers, see Marion Hirsch and Irene Kacandes' (2007) engaging edited volume. Self-studies of post-secondary teaching are, on the one hand, a valuable resource revealing of the beliefs and practices of academics. On the other hand, the number of such studies alone highlights the need for other kinds of research on this important schooling level as well.

In addition to grade level, another important categorical distinction is type of venue, whether the educational institution offers formal education—in the form of classroom instruction, for example—or informal education—in the form of trauma tourism, museum excursions, or online learning. A number of studies have considered Israeli youth pilgrimages to Poland, examining how the sponsoring institutions' ideological orientations shape the trips' programmatic dimensions and in turn, affect travelers' experiences, for better and worse (Feldman, 1997; Kugelmass, 1993, Hazan 2001). When Lazar, Chaitin, Gross, and Bar-On (2004) studied Israeli students' pre- and post-trip reactions to their state-sponsored trip, they found that adolescents' conceptions were unstable. The Poland trips tended to emphasize Zionist goals rather than humanistic ones, a trend that some have argued supports Israeli militarism, which critics refer to as the " 'new Israeli religion,' based on the notion that since the Jews were weak during the Holocaust, there is a need to ensure that Israel remains strong" (Lazar et al., p. 190). When Shlomo Romi and Michal Lev (2007) studied students who had participated in a pilgrimage tour 5 years earlier, they determined some of the long-term consequences for students'

Jewish identities, specifically the participants' greater conviction of the importance of supporting Israeli military might. It is worth noting, though, that "peak experiences" like these trips are available for a wide range of educators and students, and that ideologically, some trips can cement general humanitarian values, too, which Elizabeth Spalding and her research collaborators found to be the impact of one such trip for multi-ethnic pre-service education professionals (2007). This is to say that informal educational experiences, even if they cover similar geographical territory (Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps, for example), may convey radically different messages about the Holocaust.

Holocaust-based trips specifically geared toward American Jewish youth constitute a burgeoning market, which has been little studied. How, for example, do Birthright tours cover "Holocaust content" as opposed to denominationally specific Jewish tours that cover similar content? And, how do students' receptions of that content differ? Just as classrooms in Jewish institutional settings will necessarily differ from classrooms in diverse public school settings, so tours directed at Jewish participants will necessarily focus on what is deemed important for Jews. Such efforts necessarily reveal the contours of collective memory as it is being forged, an exceedingly fruitful domain for inquiry into how Jewishness itself is represented, constituted, and continued.

Another area that remains understudied is museum excursions. Few researchers have examined the educative and non-educative dimensions of exhibits, even if much literature is devoted to analyzing displays. Fewer studies consider the actual reception of museum exhibits among visitors. Though not technically a research project, the trenchant article by Philip Gourevitch, entitled "Behold now behemoth—the Holocaust Memorial Museum: One More American Theme Park" (1993) remains one of the most gripping examinations of how museums are necessarily interpreted through audiences' pre-existing conceptions. In the religious eschatology of certain believing Christians, Jews were fated to be murdered during the Holocaust as divine punishment for their rejection of Jesus as the messiah. In riveting prose, Gourevitch points to the inevitability of any museum exhibit—and by implication, most educational materials—inadvertently reinforcing such religious notions by not engaging them directly. Researchers have yet to devote attention to the question of how students' experiences with authentic sites of tragedy compare with their visits to museums designed to evoke such tragedies.

Commemorative activities, sometimes referred to as "Holocaust days" or weeks, are another informal education venue rarely studied in terms of reception. What is it organizers hope to accomplish educationally? What do participants and observers learn from the commemorative events? What do college-based, student-organized commemorative activities look like, what do they teach, and how are they received? In Britain, Holocaust Memorial Days have been annually marked in schools since January 27, 2001. Neil Burtonwood (2002) usefully describes the research literature to support the relatively new ritual, and Cowan and Maitles (2002) carefully dissect the kinds of supports and efforts that converged to make its first instantiation in a Scottish locale highly effective among a wide circle of stakeholders. To date, very little research has looked into how summer camps for Jewish youth

commemorate the Holocaust and with what effects. Researchers could well ask how Jewish youth camps in different parts of the country, with different religious interpretations of the Holocaust, and with different denominational affiliations commemorate the Holocaust. How do insiders and outsiders understand the importance of such commemorations and how do they experience such programs? A carefully designed, international comparative research study on the educational dimensions of Holocaust commemorations could be enormously informative, especially in light of the widening discourse of global education. For many involved in Holocaust education, however, the most pressing questions do not concern its venues only, but its curriculum and pedagogy as well. What students learn from study of the Holocaust is not only a product of where they encounter it, but how.

Curriculum

This section focuses first on traditional materials that guide teachers' classroom choices: textbooks, educational literature, and packaged curricula. It then briefly considers alternative educational media forms like films, websites, and emerging technologies. For the sake of brevity, the discussion of curricula includes pedagogy, though the two are conceptually separable. The little that is known about student learning is also incorporated.

According to most educational literature, the majority of history teachers still rely on textbooks as their primary source of information despite the fact that textbooks are never neutral documents. Though written in a narrative voice to imply that they are balanced, textbooks are always value-laden. A sensitively rendered and methodologically impeccable comparison of textbook treatments appeared in 2007 in the form of Keith Crawford and Stuart Foster's study, *War, Nation, Memory: International Perspectives on World War II in School History Textbooks*. Having compared German and British textbook selections on the Holocaust, Crawford and Foster analyzed major themes represented in each. "It is not surprising," they write, "that in both England and Germany the content base for teaching the Holocaust is broadly similar as are the generic educational objectives couched in the all too often cliché-ridden language of democracy, freedom, and human rights" (26). Their analytic constructs encompass many of the dilemmas that all Holocaust educators face, for example: whether Hitler's agency should be overstated or understated, whether personal accounts that students read should include perpetrators' testimonies or only victims', how resistance and rescue are included, and whether the Holocaust is compared, explicitly or implicitly, to other genocides or historical events. In regards to this last point, Crawford and Foster find that the legacies of different post-war commitments appear in textbook treatments of the Holocaust, such that German textbooks explicitly make contemporary connections to the event whereas British textbooks tend not to. Their examinations of the massacre of Nanjing within Chinese textbooks, "responsibility and victimhood" in Japanese textbooks, and resistance and collaboration in French textbooks are not only important on their own terms but also for what they suggest about the imprints of nationhood on Holocaust

education writ large. The study of textbook treatments is unquestionably important, and much more needs to be done, but more research on the reception of such treatments is also necessary given that we know that the complexities of students' identities influence their textual interpretations.

The Diary of Anne Frank and Elie Wiesel's *Night* are popularly believed to be the most widely read and consistently assigned texts for teaching about the Holocaust through literature. Given the worldwide popularity of these books, Sam Wineburg has cleverly labeled a Holocaust education phenomenon, "Victim as Curriculum," by which he means that the major works used to teach about this atrocity have been and remain memoirs that focus on survivors' perspectives exclusively. In this formulation, the survivor is the teacher, and the readers, the students. In high school classrooms, the most frequently shown educational film about the Holocaust, certainly since the Shoah Foundation distributed copies to all American high schools free of charge, is *Schindler's List*. By focusing mainly on the oversized character of Oskar Schindler, the film encourages identification with him as a rescuer. This conjunction of materials is not misplaced, but it may well be worth questioning. Some have referred to this tri-partite constellation of larger-than-life iconic figures as a trinity (of sorts): with Schindler cast as the father-figure, Elie Wiesel in the position of the son, and Anne Frank as the ghostly victim. The array importantly leaves out sympathetic representations of perpetrators, bystanders, or collaborators, which when coupled with the typical neglect of anti-Semitism and the glossing over of Jewish complexity, turns out to be a consistent theme in teaching and learning about the Holocaust outside of Germany.

As "curricular creep" has moved the Holocaust into lower and lower grade levels, a host of new materials for young audiences has emerged in the form of a "literature of atrocity" (Baer, 2000). Lydia Kokkola (2003) and Adrienne Kertzer (2002) have reviewed many of the literature choices in this body, considering what it is that these texts teach. Among the incisive questions both ask are why victims in Holocaust fiction for young people are so often girls. As Kertzer explains, "if we persist in thinking that children need hope and happy endings... then we will need to consider narrative strategies... that give child[ren] a double narrative, one that simultaneously respects our need for hope and happy endings even as it teaches a different lesson about history" (2002, pp. 74–75). While insightful readings of literature and films designed for young audiences are beginning to find authors (Baron, 2003), more educational research is needed to investigate students' understandings and teachers' uses of these materials. Which texts are typically used in Jewish settings versus non-Jewish settings and why? Which materials tend to generate which kinds of reactions among children of different denominations? Jeremy Stoddard's (2007) analysis of teachers' uses of Hollywood films as tools for teaching history is here the exception, as it demonstrates teachers' beliefs in films as projected truth-tellings. The expansion of Holocaust-themed graphic novels alone begs for comparative research across genres and geographic contexts, asking for example, whether students' repeated study of the Holocaust alone can lead to "Holocaust fatigue" (Short & Reed, 2004: p. 67) or whether it is the repeated viewing of filmic materials that produces this phenomenon.

Official curricular packages comprise a third major source of teacher knowledge and know-how, and many have been thoroughly critiqued and evaluated. In the USA, *Facing History and Ourselves* (FHAO) will provide schools with an entire comprehensive Holocaust curriculum that includes audio-visual materials, testimonies, specialized textbooks, and workbooks. FHAO has been critiqued variously for its universalistic orientation and its drawing of inapplicable comparisons (Lipstadt, 1995), but teachers report satisfaction in using their materials, being well supported by FHAO staff, and being impressed by their students' learning. FHAO, however, is a costly program, which makes it inaccessible to poorly funded schools. The Shoah Foundation's sales of more than 14,000 interactive CD-ROMs designed to teach about the Holocaust are in the process of being evaluated. Most US states that mandate Holocaust education provide state-based Holocaust curricula as well, which vary in quality. The US Holocaust Museum and many smaller, city-based Holocaust centers also provide curricular materials and educational services. Thus, the Houston Holocaust Museum designed "teaching trunks" that contain Spanish-language materials to be shipped to Latin American countries where such resources on the Holocaust are scarce. How such materials are used, how they contribute to (or detract from) student learning, and what they include and exclude all deserve to be researched, and not only in the USA. Moreover, curricula specifically designed for Jewish school settings deserve devoted scrutiny in terms of what they include and exclude, and what coverage patterns symbolically convey about Jews, non-Jews, and their relationships in history and the present.

Dan Magilow (2007) has labeled "a new trend in Holocaust education. . . memorial collecting, whereby groups, often student groups, accumulate six million of a particular object (such as paper clips, buttons, or shoes) to symbolize the murdered" (23). Magilow has postulated that these projects, though well-intentioned teachers design them with the aim of fostering empathy, can become symbolically problematic, fetishistically pursued accounting exercises, empty of educative import. As Magilow argues, however, even when they are overly commercialized and somewhat obsessive, the efforts themselves may be worth celebrating as kitsch.

The richness of online environments has enabled new forms of educational materials on the Holocaust to proliferate, which, as with most new technologies, have as yet to be fully investigated by social scientists. Researchers and graduate students at the University of South Florida designed a web-based instructional site for in-service and pre-service teachers (Calandra, Fitzpatrick, & Barron, 2002: p. 78). Utilizing an experimental methodology, these researchers found the site to wield only a small impact on teachers' ideas and practice, after which they concluded that sustained engagement with new technology would be required to change teachers' habits in any significant way (Kern, 2001; Lincoln, 2003). Other technologies that may be used to study the Holocaust, such as interactive geographic maps, streamed testimony excerpts, online discussion, social-networking and social action sites (Manfra & Stoddard, 2008), online groups, and GPS-based interactive technologies have all emerged in the last few years. Such new forms require the development of

new research methods to study them. At the time of this writing, the vast majority of Holocaust-based video games feature anti-Semitic plotlines and contrivances, but when interactive video environments are designed to educate toward worthwhile goals, these will merit research as well.

Reflections

As a new field, Holocaust education research is still in its infancy, and much more work remains, preferably research that includes the reception of Holocaust teaching among students rather than solely its production by teachers or curriculum writers. Preferably, too, the new generation of researchers will pursue comparative research agendas that broaden the national contexts and ideological locales of Holocaust education. Much more work needs to be done on what Holocaust education looks like in Jewish school settings in particular. In terms of teacher training and practices, curricular materials and usage, and student learning and impact, it seems as though there are consistent themes across venues. The history of anti-Semitism tends to be avoided, the range of pre- and post-Shoah Jewish life tends to be underplayed, and Germans, Nazis, collaborators, and other perpetrators and bystanders tend to be vilified rather than treated with nuance, empathy, or understanding. Most Holocaust education efforts have also focused on victims' experiences rather than aiming to understand perpetrators' choices to the detriment of students' great potential for learning. Of course, these biases function within particular regional frames; Holocaust education efforts taking place in Rwanda vs. those which occur in the former Yugoslavia, for example, are necessarily very different projects, bound up with very different political aims, cultural goals, and beliefs about learning. Given that the new millennium did not see the end of genocidal violence, it seems worth asking what Holocaust education should and can do, and then to build research on its effects. What might Holocaust education do if conceptualized not within the frame of building nations but as a project of global citizenship and human understanding? What might students of the Holocaust learn if the goal is not to understand themselves but others? What might Holocaust education accomplish if, in Jewish contexts, it was not about creating Jewish identity in any narrow sense but rather Jewish coexistence in its most radically expansive form? More research holds out the hope of finding a shorter path to a more humane world.

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Israel Education: Purposes and Practices

Alick Isaacs

The Need for Theory

Like the State of Israel itself "Israel Education" seems to have evolved as an area of practice that desperately needs a clearer sense of direction and purpose. Again, like Israel itself, the teaching of Israel seems to generate more questions than it does answers. The result is that many educators are deeply committed to the idea that Israel must feature in their curricula while they are often hard put to explain why and to what ends.

It perhaps seems clear to an older generation of educators that Israel programming is just one of the ways Jewish education is done. (This is particularly true in informal Jewish education where young *madrichim shlichim* from Israel have played a central role in making ad hoc curricular decisions for decades.) But, as much of the recent sociological research shows, the firm and central place of Israel in the future of Jewish education should not be taken for granted.[1] Many feel alienated and distant from Israel – if not even put off by it – and choose to avoid teaching about it in both formal and informal Jewish educational settings. It is in these circumstances that the lack of a rich theoretical conversation about the purposes of Israel education is starting to show.

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[1]This has been widely demonstrated in studies with a particular focus on the United States. See for example (Cohen, 2008; Cohen & Kelman, 2007a), also (Chazan & Cohen, 2000, pp. 76–82). From these studies the picture emerges that less than 25% of North American Jews younger than 35 define themselves as Zionists. More than 60% of North American Jewry has never visited Israel and furthermore, a very large portion of them no longer considers Israel to be a major component in their Jewish identity. Having said this it is important to mention that there is some debate about the social reality. See for example (Saxe, Phillips, Sasson, Hecht, Shain, Wright, and Kadushin, 2009) who argue that the Birthright trips to Israel have a profound effect of deepening attachment to Israel among its alumni. Given that this study is confined to Birthright alumni, it is hard to determine how significant the widespread ripple effect of these findings might be.

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The absence of theoretical clarity in Israel education is perhaps most acutely felt where a teacher or principal must overcome either estrangement from or opposition to Israel in a Jewish educational setting. But indifference and ideological opposition to Israel are by no means the only obstacles that theoretical clarity might help overcome. Even in institutions where commitment to the importance of Israel is high, a clear sense of exact purpose is still required to justify the allocation of time to Israel at the expense of the other disciplines. Finally, even in an institution where Israel's place in the curricular pecking order is firm, a clear vision of the educational goals for the teaching of Israel is still essential for making informed choices about *which* aspects of Israel to teach, how to teach them, and how to measure educational success.

The subject matter of Israel education is both extremely varied and extraordinarily hard to define. A cursory list of academic disciplines that might come under the rubric of Israel Education could easily include History, Political Science, Geography, Bible, Talmud, Jewish Thought, Jewish Law, Economics, Sociology, Law, Folklore, Food, Group Dynamics (e.g., *mifgash*), Music, Dancing, Song, Environmental Studies, Archeology, and many more. In addition to this remarkable spread of subject matter choices, the complexity of the questions in the field is quite an imposition on the teacher's capacity to make informed curricular choices.

Practitioners in the field of Israel education ultimately need theoretical debate because the practice of Israel education brings them face to face with some of the most confusing and confounding questions in contemporary Jewish life: What is the meaning of Israel today? How has this meaning changed in recent times and how does this change affect Jewish life, culture, and education today? Is Zionism still ideologically viable? Can it be compelling in Diaspora Jewish education? How is Israel education affected by such issues as the rights and wrongs of the Arab–Israel conflict, the Jewishness of the Jewish State, the secular/religious tensions in Israel, and the socioeconomic justice of Israeli society? The list goes on. All of these questions require immensely rich theoretical treatment.

There is a noticeable gap between the frequency with which Israel appears in the practice of Jewish education around the world and the theoretical sophistication with which the questions raised by this field are discussed in the academy. Israel educators need theory because so many of the issues that we know as part and parcel of the seemingly intractable complexity of the social, religious, and political debates in Israel today are also the unavoidable questions of Israel education. Bridging this gap by addressing the real questions of Israel's meaningful purpose today is the primary theoretical challenge that the field of Israel education must face.

Asking the Right Questions

As we move in to take a closer look at how Israel education is discussed theoretically today, it seems quite clear (though regrettably so) that the field is dominated by an overwhelming tendency to define the problems of Israel education in primarily pedagogical terms. Teachers have tended to assume that the difficulties they encounter

engaging their students with Israel-related subject matter can be countered by the use of more exciting and stimulating teaching aids. Despite all the games, videos, and creative use of interactive websites, the confusion has not subsided and the crisis of teaching about Israel has not been alleviated. It is my view that persistent and repeated attention to the "wrong" questions (i.e., the exclusively pedagogical ones) has led the field astray. One of the purposes of a renewed theoretical debate about Israel education must be to redirect the attention of educators back to the "right" questions. These *are* the philosophical, historical, sociological, political, religious, and ideological issues that Israel's complex reality raises and *are not* those that emerge from the difficulties teachers encounter making Israel appealing or meaningful for kids in the classroom. When I say this I am basically agreeing with Barry Chazan who argues that,

> . . . the core of the problem is not about instructional materials, pedagogy or didactics. . . You cannot "do" Jewish education very well without clear content and stances. Education generally – and certainly Jewish education – demands normative content, values, and "meaning making." In no way have these requirements been met with regard to teaching Israel. Until this is changed, we are doomed to decades more of one-day pedagogic seminars on "how to teach about the kibbutz "or the like. (Chazan, Schechter's Lament, 2004)

According to Chazan, the emphasis on instructional materials has led the field to ask the wrong questions about its own problems. The answers to these questions have produced a bundle of misguided assumptions that are the root cause of (what Chazan sees as) an entirely inadequate range of educational responses. Examples of *wrong* questions that took hold of the field include the following: "How do we get our students to love/support/care about Israel?" or "How can we equip our students with the answers they will need when forced to defend Israel on campus?" or "How can we use Israel effectively as a weapon in the fight against assimilation?" None of these is up to the task of what Chazan calls "meaning-making." None of these questions takes our students any further along the road toward making sense of Israel herself.

A brief contrast of Israel education with its predecessor – Zionist education – might help illustrate how a clearer broad conception of the field helps articulate the questions that can crystallize an educational sense of purpose. A glance back at Israel education's history will reveal an age of relative clarity (though not one of conformity and agreement) that coincided more or less with the plain equation of Israel's meaning with Zionist ideology. As long as Israel's ideological significance was self-evidently cast in Zionist terms the traditional Zionist alternatives that presented themselves to Israel educators were obvious. More importantly, they were also engaging for educators and students alike. Israel was taught within a context of larger meanings that were clear to everyone in the field. Different attitudes to Israel's purpose and meaning could be neatly divided into group identities and even youth movement affiliations. Each approach had its own literature, songs, folklore, and ideological heritage – each of which represented a different "mythical" or "romantic" vision of the Zionist State. From these clear ideological visions, clear educational practices, traditions, and pedagogical approaches ensued.

But, what kind of meaning-making will help give clarity to Israel education today? How can we talk about "meaning" when both educators and students are confronted with so much less than a normative understanding of Israel everywhere they turn? In an era of dramatic disenchantment with ideology in the West, what system of meaning-making is broad enough and deep enough to replace Zionism? In an age when Israel education is deeply affected by the accessibility of information – where the *so-called* real Israel is in everybody's reach (via the Internet, electronic media, and 'Israel Experience' educational travel to Israel) – how can a meaningful, ideal or mythical vision of Israel ever take hold?

My purpose in raising these questions is twofold:

a. to suggest that Israel education is difficult because the subject matter in the field has moved beyond its era of simplistic idealism and into an age of complex realism
b. to state my opinion that ideology – which we must remember can be both complex and realistic – is still essential to the successful practice of Israel education.

Let's briefly consider each of these:

a. Israel education is such a particularly difficult practice to theorize precisely because the primary issues that need to be addressed today are the same as the fundamental "ideological" questions that the Jewish world as a whole needs to explore in terms of its relationship with Israel. Israel poses very real challenges to educators as thinking people and not just pedagogical questions they must deal with in their teaching. Israel generates the most complex, important, and radical shifts in Jewish thought that the Jewish people face today at a time when teaching about it is sometimes very awkward.
b. In the absence of a broad ideological system that explains the necessity of Israel – its moral and ethical standing, its purpose in the world, its consistency with the Jewish tradition, and its promise for the Jewish future – how can the story of a small conflicted island of Jewish life in the Middle East that faces existential challenges from within and from without ever be made compelling? This pedagogical question that is so often asked in the field is really an ideological one. In order to answer it, we must imagine that our concern is not simply with teaching about Israel but with the challenge of replacing or rejuvenating Zionism. The ultimate obstacle to success in Israel education is predicated upon what I see as the indispensability of ideology to the telling of Israel's story. The State of Israel owes its existence to an ideology. Ideology is so central to its genealogy that anything less than an ideological message from "Israel education" strikes me as inadequate to the task of giving Israel a clear meaning and purpose in the Jewish lives of the next generation.

Working with these assumptions, I propose that *the right question* that demands rich theoretical attention and practical implementation in Israel education is this: *What*

ideas about Israel today are compelling enough to excite ideological commitment to it in a time when the complexities of its realities are so well-known?

Theory Catching Up with Practice

This question has not been answered well by anyone writing theoretically about Israel Education. I shall return to it later in this discussion. But first I think it is important to point out that practitioners in the field are already responsible for significant shifts in the field that need to be noticed and conceptualized. This is what I mean by "theory catching up with practice."

With all the unresolved issues that plague Jewish life in Israel and Israel–Diaspora relations, it is hardly a surprise that educators have just pushed ahead developing curricula and building upon the well-tested practices of Israel education – such as the Israel trip, army day, Zionist history course, Yom Hazikaron/Ha'atzmaut ceremonies, falafel night, Israeli movie night, Israeli dancing, "Israel" and "Me" identity seminar – to try and make them better, more interesting, more relevant, and more fun. They have pushed on, adapting the old to suit the new without waiting for more contemporary theoretical frameworks to emerge. And who can blame them? They have programs to run and classes to teach each morning at school or camp, while the theoretical conversation about Israel education in the wider context of Israel's meaning today has hardly started and – even when it does get underway – will surely take a long time to yield educationally useful results.

It seems especially appropriate in a field where so much is already being done to think of the theoretical debate as one that must catch up with the work of practitioners. In this spirit, I believe it is worthwhile – before briefly suggesting a new ideological framework of my own – to give careful consideration to the possible ideological and theoretical directions implied by current practices in Israel education.

I would like to present a brief taxonomy that describes and critiques some of the dominant paradigms of Israel Education in theoretical and even ideological terms. I submit that this exercise will offer insights into the implicit intuitions of many educators about the new purposes of Israel Education and that these will help mark the starting point of the ideological discussions that I believe must ensue. As taxonomies go, the point of this one is a little unusual in that it seeks to work "backwards" gleaning "purposes" from "practices" and not the other way round.[2] The categories below have been assembled because the pedagogical choices

[2] The taxonomy depicting common pedagogical strategies used in the field of Israel Education that I shall present in this section is hypothetical. The list is illustrative, not exhaustive. While it does reflect actual curricula and observed practices, it is not the product of a systematic survey done in the field. As a result, I shall make no attempt to describe educational practices and pedagogies in detail.

made in each one reflect distinct visions of Israel's ideological meaning. After discussing each category separately, I shall attempt to draw general conclusions about them all.

I propose dividing up the "purposes and practices" of Israel Education into six models:

1. The Classical Zionist model
2. The Israel Engagement Model
3. The Jewish Peoplehood Model
4. The Romantic/Realist Model
5. The Classical Jewish Text Model
6. The Comparative Model

1. The Classical Zionist Model – In this model, the State of Israel is understood as the culmination of Jewish History and the solution to the Jewish problem. The advantage of this approach is its clarity of purpose that we have already discussed above. This model builds upon an educational tradition that has been well established during more than 100 years of Zionist educational activity. The totality and centrality that it extends toward the meaning of Israel in every aspect of Jewish life, past, present, and future is perhaps unparalleled in its scope by any other theoretical or ideological position articulated in modern Jewish life. However, within the context of this discussion it is important to distinguish a naïve approach to Israel education – that embraces classical Zionism as its organizing principle – and one that seeks to *reassert* the validity of Zionism within a context in which it has come under attack.

Significant questions have been raised about the validity of the classical Zionist vision. In particular the ethical plausibility of Zionism's totality has been challenged. Oppositional voices have called into question the ethics of Zionism's exclusive approach to the "Jewish" right of settlement in the Holy land.[3] Similar, but more subtle claims have been made for the colonialist nature of the Zionist aspiration, as well as its Ashkenazi ethnocentricism. Finally, though by no means least significantly, pro-Diaspora (and perhaps also assimilationist) voices have criticized Zionism's totality on the grounds that it is blind to and intolerant of the different forms of Jewish life evolving outside of Israel.[4] The "Classical Zionist" model seeks to combat these critiques with renewed efforts to diagnose them as the cultural

[3]The discussion of the ethics of Zionism's totality was particularly precipitated by Edward Said's *Orientalism* that provoked a striking Israeli response. See for example Kalmar and Penslar (2005). This ideological position was championed by the so-called New Historians whose reanalysis of the events of 1948 underlined the inability of the founders of the state to identify the claims of the Palestinian people to both national identity and self-determination in the land of Israel as morally viable. See for example, Morris (1995, 1999, 2004) and Pappe (1992)

[4]Some of the most prolific critiques of this "blindness" are carefully analyzed by Laurence Silberstein (1999). For a detailed critique of the Zionist negation of the exiles and its implications for the questions of Israel's internal culture see (Raz-Krakotzkin, 2005)

"problem" that Israel education must help overcome.[5] In other words, the classical Zionist model comes to combat a weakening of Zionist conviction by reasserting its own validity as the answer to the critiques that it itself must face. In this sense the uninhibited reproduction of classical Zionist educational practices promotes a "tight"[6] social identity designed to withstand adversity and generate a "masculine" ethos of cultural (but also military) heroism.[7]

2. The Israel Engagement Model – The shift from the Classical Zionist to the Israel Engagement model is perhaps the most obvious and visible development in the field of Israel education as practised in the past two or three decades. In many ways, this model reconstitutes the claims of classical Zionism in terms that are understood by its proponents as more complex, nuanced, and indeed realistic. According to this model, the Zionist movement must retract its claims against the viability of the Diaspora and acknowledge the vitality of the new forms of Jewish life that are generated outside the State of Israel. Similarly, the Israel Engagement model seeks to retract the over-ambitious claims of the Zionist movement to solve the problems of assimilation and anti-Semitism. However, within the more realistic context that these two retractions create, the Israel Engagement model seeks to reclaim ground lost on precisely these two issues by reasserting the centrality of the educational encounter with Israel to the formulation of Diaspora Jewish identity and to the struggle against both spiritual and physical adversity in contemporary Jewish life (Gringras, 2006). In this model, "Israel" is a quintessential resource for Jewish education. It is in Israel that communal Jewish life and contemporary Jewish culture are most publicly on display. In Israel Judaism is most significantly pushed, tested and challenged, and most compellingly connected to claims of authenticity about the Jewish past (Margolis, 2005).

The Israel Engagement model is often criticized for its "instrumentalization" of Israel.[8] Israel as it appears in contemporary Jewish life as well as in history, literature, etc., is turned into an educational playground for Jewish exploration. While this approach is perhaps not the most conducive one to gaining a rich, mature, and sophisticated grasp of all that Israel's contemporary and historical reality might

[5]One of the more outspoken proponents of this approach is Gil Troy. See for example Zionist Dreams (2002)

[6]My use of "tight" in this context echoes Erving Goffman's (1971) xiii.

[7]An example of this is Tuvia Book's curriculum, *For the Sake of Zion* (2004). The curriculum emphasizes Zionist Jewish heroism with a particularly striking emphasis on male and military role models.

[8]Lisa Grant voiced this criticism in an unpublished paper submitted to the Think Tank on Israel Education that I organized at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education in the Hebrew University in January 2008. Grant writes, "I hardly mean to suggest that using Israel as a means of building and reinforcing Jewish identity is a bad thing. Neither do I mean to belittle or diminish the impact that Israel experiences have had on participants. Nonetheless, from an educational perspective, this instrumental focus on Jewish identity seems incomplete, not to mention the fact that in congregational schools, day schools, and Jewish summer camps Israel education seems to have had little or no impact on how American Jews' attitudes towards Israel are shaped."

stand for, the overwhelming critique of this approach is not directed at its reductionism. From an educational point of view it seems to tackle some of the most direct problems in Diaspora Jewish life in a convoluted way. It seems far-fetched to imagine that identification with a distant and foreign complex reality is the key to Jewish continuity within the context of local Jewish life. As a result, proponents of this model are perennially challenged by the question, “Why Israel?” If the objective is to engage students with their own Jewish identities through powerful meaning-making experiences, why must these engage with the distance and ambivalence attached to Israel? Surely, more accessible alternatives could be found. It is perhaps for this reason that the Israel Engagement model might be perceived as disingenuous and manipulative in that its accommodating retractions are perhaps nothing more than tactical compromises that ultimately conceal ulterior – classically Zionist – educational objectives.

3. The Jewish Peoplehood Model – This approach to Israel education seeks to stitch the uniqueness and centrality of collective Jewish life in Israel into a broader fabric of globalized Jewish nationalism.[9] Ideologically, it might be compared to models of pre-Zionist nationalism proposed by thinkers such as Pinsker, Dubnov, and Kaplan. However, within the contemporary context, after the fact of the Jewish State’s establishment, the peoplehood model must accommodate what is unique and special about the Jewish State without overemphasizing its privileged status. (Ariel, 2007; Brown & Galperin, 2009)

The peoplehood model of Israel education suggests that the State of Israel should be conceptualized as one of many possible frameworks of collective Jewish identity. In this sense Israel’s status as a unique center of Jewish life is understood against the backdrop of all other collective forms of Jewish existence that are found elsewhere in the world. This construction is responsible for the tendency to give special attention to the North American and Israeli Jewish communities which sometimes comes at the expense of the other Jewish centers around the world. Most importantly, from the classical Zionist point of view, the peoplehood model tends to downplay the unique importance of Jewish sovereignty in the Holy Land.[10] Israel is generally recognized by most advocates of this model as a uniquely full and rich expression of the collectivist and nationalist impulses of the Jewish people. Like the Israel Engagement model, proponents of peoplehood hope to redress the undemocratic imbalances of classical Zionism’s attitudes to the communities of the Diaspora and articulate a non-ideological vision for embracing the present realities of Jewish demography (as far as the international spread of Jewish life is concerned). The offshoot of this approach is that its proponents must depend very heavily upon the leadership and guidance of sociologists whose surveys and studies monitor the heartbeat of the Jewish people. Since the emphasis of this approach is upon the Jewish people, the realities of how Jews actually live their lives lead

[9] A curricular example of this is a curriculum sponsored by the Jewish Agency (Israel, 2003).

[10] Dan Ehrenkrantz, “The Primacy of Peoplehood” *Contact* (Spring 2008). See also Brown and Galperin’s discussion of Mordechai Kaplan’s role in generating this model in ibid. 13–16

the way while values, ideals, and possibilities for the future are inappropriately marginalized.

It is hard to ignore the red squiggly line that Microsoft Word puts under the word "peoplehood" every time you type it. The option of removing the offensive squiggle by adding "peoplehood" to the dictionary is always there, but I confess that this is a temptation I have thus far chosen to resist. My point is that despite "peoplehood" being a term that has attracted a great deal of philosophical and legal attention (both inside and beyond Jewish circles), in my view proponents of peoplehood have not yet made a compelling case for its "authenticity" in Jewish culture. The idea that the Jewish people must take their lead from what Jewish people happen to think today (and not from Jewish values, texts, traditions, and ideas) is not one that I can easily recommend in this age of confusion, Jewish ignorance, and disillusion. Difficulties of translation into Hebrew (*ami'ut* being the best option available) only reinforce the irony of the general point.

4. The Romantic/Realist Model – The tension between mythology and realism is inherent to the history of Israel education (as it is indeed to the history of Israel herself). In its essence the history of the State of Israel is the story of an ancient mythological-utopian vision for the future taking the form of a concrete political reality in the present. Ultimately, much of the early opposition to the idea of building the Jewish State came from those who understood Zionism's realism as a pollution of Israel's ancient messianic heritage.

The practitioners of the Romantic/Realist model of Israel education understand that both mythology and realism are essential to the understanding of Israel's meaning and purpose. They seek to explore the tensions between the realm of the ideal and the world in which this realm is necessarily implemented imperfectly.[11] The educational strategy employed by the practitioners of this model seeks to forge a simultaneously ironic and sentimental relationship with Israel in which ideological convictions can be perpetuated without naïveté. An awareness of Israel's accomplishments that is accompanied by deep recognition of its flaws is essential to a healthy and balanced relationship with the idea of Israel in an age in which that ideal is no longer pure and unadulterated by political realism. This ironic awareness is seen as the key to maintaining a sense of ideological commitment to Israel that is robust enough to withstand the confusing experiences that many encounter as they come to know the real Israel better.

By the same token, in this approach Israel's flaws are to be treated with the same irony when these are presented in the context of a grand effort to do better and to improve the quality of Jewish collective existence in our time. (For example, Sarna, 1996, pp. 41–59.) The desired product of this educational approach is often referred to as a consciousness of "critical engagement" with Israel. Israel is presented as "a work in progress" desperately in need of both loyalty and sincere vehement criticism.

[11] The implementation of this model in American community day schools has been studied by Ezra Kopelowitz (2005)

5. The Jewish Text Model – This is an approach that is most commonly practised (though not exclusively so) in religious educational settings. Israel is (perhaps naively) understood as integral to the Jewish studies curriculum in ways that echo the treatment of Mitzvot, Breishit, or the laws of Shabbat. In this model Israel deserves attention in the Jewish studies curriculum simply because it is one of the classical foundations of Jewish belief and thought. The Land of Israel is one of the pillars of the Biblical covenant between God and the Jewish people. The land was promised to the Jewish people and it is therefore their religious and historical right to reclaim it today. The settlement of the Jewish people in the land is the primary point of overlap between the proponents of this approach and the Zionist idea. The state and the realities of statehood take a second place to the fulfillment of Judaism's historical role in the holy land. As such, the curricular content presented by the proponents of this approach pays little attention to the "on the ground" realities of the modern State of Israel. Instead, the subject matter that is emphasized is connected with the concept of Israel as it appears in Biblical and Classical Rabbinic texts. Israel is dealt with as the land of covenant and prophecy, the home of Jewish life in the times of the First and Second Temples, the site of the composition of the Mishna, the early Midrashic literature, and the Jerusalem Talmud. Such issues as the comparative importance of the centers of Torah learning in ancient Israel and Babylon might be explored with special reference to such themes as the exclusive right of scholars in Israel to determine the final form of the Jewish calendar. Israel is a land of pilgrimage and the home to such holy sites as the western wall and Mount Carmel.

In many cases this approach to Israel education is adapted to meet the challenge of facing Israel's recent secular political history. Israel is studied as a historical phenomenon in courses that deal with the precursors of Zionism such as Kallischer, early Zionist thinkers such as Ahad Ha'am and Herzl, the first Zionist congress, the Uganda debate, the waves of immigration (aliyot), the foundation of the state, the wars, the social map of Israeli society, and the Oslo peace process. While this kind of curriculum seems to be addressing contemporary Israel, it does so through a kind of historicism that absolves the teacher from engaging in the fundamental questions of Israel's meaning. In this sense, though the subject matter is modern history, it is similar to the mode of teaching about Israel that relies on more classical religious source material.

The primary challenge that this approach must face is how to contextualize the reading of classical and modern texts about Israel in contemporary Diaspora reality. This is an issue that is easily avoided, perhaps in the hope that no more than a deep religious or historical commitment to the land and to God's promise of Israel to the Jewish people is sufficient to the challenge of breeding a deep commitment to the modern Jewish State. Some variations of this approach stimulate discussion that invites comparisons between classical biblical rabbinic ideas about Israel and modern life. For example, the teaching of Joshua's conquest of the land might be taught in tandem along with the history of the aliyot and the War of Independence in 1948. Similarly, questions dealt with in rabbinic texts that touch upon the tension between the Jews of Babylon and the Jews of Israel might be considered in the context of contemporary Israel/Diaspora relations. But the question of how these

comparisons might be incorporated in a compelling contemporary belief system is avoided through the conversion of "Israel" into a (recent or ancient) piece of historical subject matter.

6. The Comparative Model – This approach seeks to treat the State of Israel and the contemporary realities of Jewish political sovereignty as a resource for exploring "essential questions" in Jewish life. As in the "Jewish Text Model of Israel Education," this approach is characterized by its treatment of contemporary Israel as "subject matter." However, in the comparative model, subject matter associated with Israel is integrated into a broader discussion that is not exclusively focused upon "Israel" itself. For example an "essential question" in ethics about the correct distribution of charity may be examined through the study of certain biblical or rabbinic passages along with an analysis of a particular event or phenomenon in contemporary Israel. As such, the living breathing Judaism that is the public culture of the Jewish State is placed beside the classic texts of the Jewish tradition and is made open to analysis and discussion. However, in this approach, contemporary Israel emerges as one of the piecemeal resources that Jews look at when they want to think about issues in the world. Israel becomes a reference point for formulating contemporary Jewish thought in the Diaspora in the same way as the Talmud. This approach utilizes the richness of Jewish life in a sovereign state to allow Israel to emerge as an integral part of the exploration of contemporary Jewish identity.

By way of extension this approach may be used to introduce Israel related subject matter into discussions that address ethical or political dilemmas elsewhere. For example, a significant local question raised in an American, English, Argentinean, or Australian classroom might concern the environment, racism, road rage, conflict, or government. The question might be explored drawing upon local examples alone. It might also be explored in the context of Jewish studies through the analysis of pertinent Jewish texts. Similarly, contemporary examples of how the same environmental, political, social, or military issues are dealt with in Israel allow for a comparative exploration that establishes connections between the local context of the students' lives and the wider experience of Jewish culture in our time. In this approach, the State of Israel is the primary arena in the Jewish world today that raises pressing questions that motivate and contextualize the contemporary challenge of (re) interpreting the Jewish tradition. As such it is both the source of essential questions and a resource of their explication.

The primary challenge that this approach faces is the degree of abstraction that is necessary for its implementation. The questions raised are often hard to clarify while the pertinence of Israel to engaging with them is as challenging an issue here as it is in all of the non-ideological approaches to Israel education.

As I said earlier, this taxonomy is not the result of a broad survey. Rather, it is an attempt at conceptualization that both theoreticians and practitioners in the field might find helpful. It allows for the clear categorization of the dominant articulations of purpose that can be found in the field of Israel education. Though, it is often the case that a single curriculum might adopt two or more of these models and combine them.

If this taxonomy is in any way reflective of the most common practices in the field (and I believe it is) then it allows us to draw one clear and striking conclusion. The overwhelming characteristic that each of the models described here seems to share is that educators have implicitly recognized and adapted themselves to a reality in which they must teach about Israel in a post-ideological atmosphere. The six models outlined here can be understood as six answers to the question of why Israel still deserves educational attention. This question is tackled in one of two ways: The first of these – exemplified by the Classical Zionist model/the Israel Engagement Model/the Jewish Peoplehood Model/the Romantic-Realist Model – attempts to justify the importance of Israel by reconstituting components of classical Zionist ideology in the context of post-ideological Israel education. As such, these approaches argue respectively that "in spite of everything" (a) Zionism is still relevant, (b) Zionism today need not be offensive to Diaspora Jewish life, (c) Zionism should be seen as merely a special but not unique form of collective Jewish life, and (d) Zionism is a historical movement in need of post-ideologically ironic (but not cynical) review.

The second overall approach to the dissonance between Israel education's ideological charge and the current climate – exemplified by the Classical Jewish Text Model and the Comparative Model – seeks to justify Israel education in predominantly professional terms that bypass the challenge of reconstituting Zionism altogether. Thus it is appropriate to engage with Israel in Jewish education because the complexity and the richness of this area of Jewish subject matter allows for the acquisition of such skills as textual analysis, historical analysis, complex thought, ethical engagement, and complex abstract thinking. All of these are merits that might be evaluated in purely professional educational or developmental terms. It is these considerations that account for the curricular decisions in the field as in other fields such as general history, physics, or social science. In these two models the decision to dedicate time to the teaching of Israel is defensible without ideology.

The Gap Between Theory and Practice

Again, while we must remember that this discussion is analytical and theoretical (i.e., not empirical), this taxonomy seems to suggest a way of thinking about one of the more puzzling "empirical" questions in the field of Israel education. While it seems clear that there is a significant decline of interest in Israel (not to mention commitment to Israel) most particularly in the American Jewish communities (though not only), this decline is coming at a time when the field of Israel education is enjoying an unprecedented period of growth. The resources of time and money that are being dedicated to this field are consistently on the rise at a time when the problem that these resources are trying to tackle is not being alleviated.

I would like to suggest that the widespread evasion of Israel's ideological meaning for the future is not healthy and that passionate commitment to Israel will only be possible when the reasons for it are more apparent to educators and students alike. As such, the field of Israel education has a great deal of work to do in gaining

this clarity. A rich and informative process of discussion and debate conducted at the Melton Centre for Jewish education in the Hebrew University during the course of 2007–2009 has facilitated what I believe is a useful articulation of how this work should be conducted. The academic study of Israel education needs to bridge the gap between theory and practice in three distinctive areas of research:

1. Israel Education Studies
2. Philosophy of Israel Education
3. Israel Education Design

1. Israel Education Studies addresses practices in Israel Education in a wide variety of educational settings (formal and informal for example, teaching of Israel in schools, university-level Israel Studies courses, informal activities in schools, camps, community events, adult education, synagogues, etc.,) as well as attitudes to Israel and its contemporary meaning fostered by educators, teachers, lay leaders, youth, graduates, and participants in Israel trips (such as Birthright, March of the Living, Youth Movement, and Israel Experience programs), among Jews of different denominations, in the media, etc. This is work that must rely heavily upon the academic disciplines of the social sciences such as sociology, anthropology, and ethnography and must engage in both qualitative and quantitative research in as many educational settings around the world as possible.
2. Philosophy of Israel Education addresses conceptualizations of Israel's meaning as expressed in classical and modern texts. The research in this field must attempt to conceptualize the different approaches to Israel's meaning as these appear in a variety of contemporary scholarly debates about the Jewish past while considering their implications for the present and the future. Understandings of Israel's meaning are also implicit in contemporary Israeli and international politics, media, contemporary literature, art, music, theatre, etc. In each of these fields, questions of political sovereignty, the establishment of Jewish public space, territorial conflict, religious and national conflict, human rights, minority rights, environmental responsibility, Israel and Diaspora relations, Jewish–Gentile relations, Hebrew language, contemporary (secular and religious) Zionism, Nationalism, Messianism, Jewish law, and Jewish philosophy are dealt with in thoughtful depth that could provide the practice of Israel education with a host of fresh ideas. A systematic conceptual analysis of the educational/ideological implications of this cultural/political/social activity is therefore essential to Israel Education's quest for future direction.
3. Israel Education Design addresses, proposes, or describes curricular models and taxonomies for implementing theories and philosophies of Israel Education in practical educational settings. It also evaluates the boundaries of the field vis-a-vis Bible education, Jewish history, Israel Advocacy etc., and proposes theoretical meanings and purposes for the practices of Israel education.

These categorizations help organize the potential contributions of academia to Israel education in ways that mirror the academic disciplines and expand our sense of

which forms of study – which questions – are indeed applicable to the challenge of enriching the discussion about the teaching of Israel in the world today.

Renewing Ideological Commitment to Israel – Where Zionism and Peace Meet

Finally, I would like to return to the issue of tackling the "right" questions when attempting to give clarity to the field of Israel education. My proposal is that the "right" question is, what ideas about Israel today are compelling enough to excite ideological commitment to it in a time when the complexities of its realities are so well known? I believe that this is a question that should stimulate a great deal of discussion. This question invites many different answers each of which might subdivide into multiple points of view. My intention in beginning to discuss it here is therefore not to close down or negate alternative answers to my own, but to open up a debate by providing *an* answer that I find personally compelling and meaningful.

If an ideological discussion is still possible in the twenty-first century's post-ideological environment, it seems clear that the reasons for the rejection of ideological thinking as a mode of discourse must first be acknowledged and not ignored. The primary criticism leveled against ideology concerns the ethically questionable nature of a point of view that is either blinkered or unswerving in its commitments. By insisting that an ideological perspective must have something to say about the past, the present, and the future, it must encounter the challenges of articulating a method of interpretation, a critique, and a vision. It is this multidimensional approach to ideology that enforces a regime of hermeneutic accountability on any given perspective. It must have the capacity to support a varied and compelling interpretive analysis if it is going to compete, not only with other causes, but with other ways of understanding the world.

This chapter is not the place to expand upon this in too much detail, but I will say – perhaps cryptically – that I believe that the return to ideology is made possible by the post-modern critique of positivism (and its pseudo-scientific notion of a single truth) and by the possibilities that this critique creates for subjectivist understandings of phenomena to compete on an even field. In many ways, the successes of Zionism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries might be evaluated in terms of the Zionist movements capacity to articulate a clear methodology for interpreting the Jewish past, for critiquing vigorously the Jewish present, and for envisioning a better Jewish future. The same may be said for other ideological movements such as socialism and feminism. Zionism's fundamental flaw – which I suggest is connected to positivist ideas – is that its notion of the truth was necessarily exclusive of other understandings. Thus the idea of negating the Diaspora was of such decisive importance. That said, it is possible today to retract the absolute truth claims that ideologies necessitated in the context of positivist discourse without discrediting the validity of a given point of view. As a rule of thumb, I would suggest that these ideologies go wrong – or are indeed abused – when they function without self-criticism as a means of justifying an absolute truth claim especially if that focuses

most particularly on the present and the recent past. However, when an ideology or a cause invites a broad interpretive vision that spans past, present, and future and indeed contains within it spheres of internal debate, ideology strikes me as a source of meaning, motivation, and purpose that should be celebrated and not feared.

In the context of contemporary Israel, I would like to propose here – very briefly – that the idea of making peace in the Middle East is one that can be developed into a rich ideological perspective in which the value of peace in Israel or Judaism as it appears in biblical rabbinic, kabalistic, and philosophical texts might be considered richly in ways that interpret the past, critique the present, and envision the future. The value of "peace" can be taken as the foundation of an interpretive prism that yields understandings of the entire Jewish religious heritage, as well as Zionist thought while at the same time proposing a vision for the future of Israel. The ideology of peace that I have in mind would understand Judaism and Zionism as oriented toward the accomplishment of peace in Israel, for Israel, and perhaps for the world.[12] The notion that the purpose of the Jewish State is "the up-building of peace" in the whole world was central to Buber's understanding of the Zionist movement's ideological purpose.[13] Like many other Zionist thinkers, Buber believed that normalcy was not a worthy objective for Jewish Statehood. He hoped that Zionism would allow for the implementation of Jewish ideas in politics. For Buber as indeed for Rav Kook and others, the Zionist vision was not one that could be accomplished through the establishment of the state alone. Indeed, a certain sense of ulterior purpose that echoes the messianic dimension of Zionist thought as it is seen in the writings of Ahad Ha'am Moshe Hess, Rav Kook, Gershom Scholem, Ernst Simon, and even Ben Gurion is easily connected with the prophetic visions of the Bible that epitomize the "politics of messianism" in ultimately peaceful terms.

Within the context of a richer discussion of Zionism's ultimate purpose as peace, the question of how to critique both the internal and external dimensions of the State of Israel's recent history becomes much clearer. The question is not simply one of right and wrong – land and compromise. The yardstick of "peace" as a Jewish concept is rich enough to contain a varied and nuanced debate about both the internal and external conflicts that Israel is connected to within the Jewish world and beyond it. The internal conflict over the Oslo agreements is a case in point. It exemplifies how a narrow understanding of peace became the subject of a violent existential debate. What I propose is a deep investigation into the richness of peace as a Jewish concept that might fuel a values debate similar to the one that took place 100 years ago over competing understandings about the meaning of Jewish Statehood.

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[12]This idea echoes Immanuel Kant's conception of the modern state as a peacemaker. For a fascinating critique of the assumption, made most explicit in the writings of Thomas Hobbes, that secular nationalism can bring war to an end see William T. Cavenaugh (2009), pp. 314–337

[13]Martin Buber, wrote in his (1976) article, "The Spirit of Israel and the World of Today" 186, "Our purpose is the upbuilding of peace.... for only an entire nation, which comprehends peoples of all kinds, can demonstrate a life of unity and peace, of righteousness and justice to the human race..."

It is important to be clear here that the ideological debate I am proposing is not one that correlates simply with the contemporary political debate in Israeli politics over the conflict with the Palestinians. It is an ideological debate about how the State of Israel best fulfills the biblical, rabbinic, and indeed Zionist understanding of peace as a core Jewish concept. One might hope that such a debate would create a positive ideological energy for resolving conflict. But, this is not its exclusive purpose. Rather, it is connected to the ideological vision that the State of Israel might fulfill something very fundamental to Jewish values. "What does peace mean in classical Jewish texts?" is a core contemporary ideological question that might echo the nineteenth century question "Are the Jewish people a nation?" But, in the same way as one can easily distinguish between the answers given to that question and the political strategies that led to the foundation of the state, one may also distinguish between the ideological debate about the implementation of peace as a collective Jewish value and the political debate about settlements, security, refugees, and Jerusalem in a final status agreement. Answers to the ideological question of peace's meaning must tackle both the classical usages of the word and the phenomena associated with it (such as the biblical lying together of wolves and lambs) before engaging the visionary question, "how can the Jewish State give public meaning to this value?"

This discussion is only a sketch of something much more elaborate that I have begun proposing in a separate context. However, I think that this sketch is sufficient to the task of illustrating here how a contemporary idea about Israel might be developed into a full-blown ideological perspective that is both rich and varied as well as capable of generating criteria for clear curricular decision making and educational practice.

Concluding Remarks

In my view, the genuine confusion in the field of Israel education is only compounded by the widespread instrumentalization of Israel in Jewish education as part of the overwhelming effort to keep the next generation of Jews Jewish. "How can we use Israel to connect the next generations of Jews to their heritage?" is the wrong question to put to Israel in this time of confusion. The reverse effects of this strategy – the ones we tend to blame on CNN – are surely obvious. We invite the young generation to identify with a concrete reality that they have every opportunity to evaluate negatively for themselves and expect them to embrace it as if it were an unequivocally optimistic dream come true.

It is ironic, but the foundational idealism that made the establishment of the State of Israel possible is responsible for a general confusion between ideology and blind loyalism. Today's Zionists (and I count myself among them) are forced to stand alone against a hostile world convinced that nothing has really changed since the dark days of crusades and blood libels because it is a law of nature that "Esau will always hate Jacob." The alternative to this is seen as flaky and perhaps even a threat to the firm conservation of the Jewish future. This is ideology gone wrong. Ideology is abused when an establishment uses it to justify – rather than to change – its ways.

Ideology is only plausible when it broadens our view of the future not when it narrows our understanding of the recent past.

The challenge of Israel education as I see it is therefore the challenge of unraveling the confusion between ideology and reality in order to begin the search for a new ideological purpose that Israel's future can realistically "stand" for. I propose we start by thinking ideologically and educationally about peace. By this I mean peace as a dream that we seek to fill with Jewish content and reinvigorate with Zionist Jewish meaning. Today's "Jewish question" is, what does peace mean in Judaism? What did peace mean in the unfulfilled dreams of the great prophets, rabbis, and Zionist thinkers of the past? What should it mean across the Jewish world today? How can we – as educators – ensure that our heritage yields as rich an answer to these questions today as it once did to such classical Zionist questions as "What is Jewish sovereignty? How does Jewish history look if we tell it as the story of a nation?"

The educational coherence of teaching about Israel's present reality in a curriculum for Jewish education will come from a clearer sense of purpose about our ideological dreams for Israel's future. We need not fear criticizing Israeli society's part in its internal and external conflicts any more than classical Zionist education feared its critical evaluations of Diaspora Jewish life. But these critiques must leverage a hopeful imagining of a future in which our tradition's commitment to peace – like its dreams of self-determination 100 years ago – are finally given their day in history.

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Israel Travel Education

Scott Copeland

Introduction

Israel travel has deep cultural roots as a central element of the practised memory of the Jewish people. The repeated yearly cycle of Torah reading, from the story of Abraham to the Exodus from Egypt, is a story of virtual travel: of wandering and transformation and homecoming. Already in the dawn of Jewish beginnings, where myth, memory, and history have no clear borders, the family tribe emerges bearing the name 'Israel' long before it took on the name 'Jew'. The story of Israel – the people – is a story whose *locus* – the place – provides a compass point for Israel's *mythos* – the community's foundational stories. The constantly shifting interplay between *locus*, *mythos*, and *ethos* (a community's vision of its most cherished values core) is shaped and reshaped as a community contends with tensions of time and place, with the responsibilities of ideas consummated in meeting with the real world. For many centuries, the realities of politics, the shortcomings of transportation technologies and the trepidations of Jewish ideological-religious tradition largely consigned Israel to an other-worldly status, rather than a living geographic territory (Ravitzky, 2006).

After 60 years of Israeli independence, in a world where physical distances seem to shrink as transportation and communication technologies constantly improve has Israel travel become a fundamental educational practice in Jewish life?

Israeli tourism, although a small slice of the international pie, has grown tremendously since the 1950s (World Tourism Organization, 2008). In the period 1950–1954, the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics recorded 169,940 tourist arrivals. For 2006, tourist arrivals to Israel numbered 1,825,200 (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2008). In 2005, approximately 43% of Israel's tourists were Jews (as compared to 20% of all incoming tourists to Israel in 2000) (Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006). Among American Jews specifically, slightly more than one-third have visited Israel, and in most of these cases, such visits are once in a lifetime events most commonly lasting for a week to 2 weeks. An additional

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20% reported having participated in two or more Israel visits (Kotler-Berkowitz et al., 2004).

In considering Israel travel as an emerging field of practice for Jewish education, and not solely as a branch of the business of tourism, it is my contention that education – the attempt to expose learners to meaningful experiences for imagining their lives in relation to others – needs educators whose practice is part of a reflective tradition and creative community. In the context of Jewish education as an attempt to expose learners to experiences for imagining their lives as part of a Jewish community, Israel travel has a central role to play in the bolstering of an expanded sense of self that marks the individual's recognition of his/her memberships and allegiances. Rather than promoting a dichotomy between the self and community, Jewish education needs to be able to cultivate the inter-relationship between self and community. Jewish education ought to be able to articulate and offer the ways that individual growth depends on intense contact with cultural-communal models, the ways through which particular lenses embody real-life interpretations of humanness, and the possibilities for choice as learners imagine, try on, and adopt their own paths towards becoming. Israel travel, like camp experiences, provides thick Jewish living environments. Unlike the Jewish virtual microcosm of camp life, however, with all of its transformative potentials, Israel travel, at its best, is about the celebration of, and confrontation with the challenges of a Jewish majority under conditions of sovereignty in the Land of Israel. As Michael Rosenak offers,

> The restoration of Eretz Yisrael to a prominent place in Jewish life actually makes the struggle and the search more complex and even frustrating, but, for those who persevere, more interesting and promising. (Rosenak, 1985)

Too much of Jewish education accepts the seldom-articulated assumption that at best Jewishness is a kind of hobby, a part-time affair, and that real life is lived in acquiescence to the majority culture. The Zionist experiment[1] is, at its best, an attempt to participate vigorously in a communal conversation about the meanings of Jewishness as one expression of the human, through confronting the responsibilities of life in a sovereign Jewish democracy. Israel travel education and Israel engagement ought to be an ongoing attempt to contend with the beautiful and the ugly, the successes and flaws, the triumphs and challenges of Israeli life for Jews wherever they live. In preferring the term 'Israel engagement' to 'Israel education', there is a de-emphasis on Israel as a formal subject matter, and an emphasis on the ways in which the encounter with Israel may become an elemental part of a learner's choices regarding his/her own Jewishness. My hope is that Israel travel education can contribute to the position of Israel as a prime instigator for a rich exploration towards notions of Jewish flourishing.[2]

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[1]Martin Buber spoke about the Kibbutz movement, and perhaps by extension, the Zionist movement, as 'an experiment that did not fail' (Buber, 1958).

[2]I thank Daniel Gordis for the phrase – 'notions of Jewish flourishing'. A person who cites a source in the name of its speaker brings redemption to the world (Ethics of the Fathers 6:6).

Building for Organization

Especially since the late 1990s, the organizational capacities for Israel travel, primarily for Jewish students and young adults (roughly ages 16–30)[3] have developed substantially. The establishment of Birthright Israel, *Masa*, and most recently *Lapid* all aim to provide umbrella organizations for increasing participation of Jewish students and young adults in Israel travel. Birthright Israel provides a 10-day Israel tour for young adults who have not previously participated in an educational tour of Israel. (Hazan & Saxe, 2008) Participation is free. *Masa* operates as the umbrella for long-term Israel programmes (between a semester to a year) and provides scholarship monies to participants and development funds to potential programme operators. In both the case of Birthright Israel and MASA, the funding is jointly provided by major philanthropists, by the State of Israel, and by Jewish public organizations like the United Jewish Communities, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and the Keren HaYesod. Lapid, an initiative to provide a similar organizational and economic umbrella for summer and semester programmes for high-school-age Israel travellers, has begun its efforts towards recognition in 2008–2009.

Have Birthright Israel, MASA, and Lapid succeeded in bolstering educational travel to Israel? One measure is numerical. As of December 2007, following 8 years of Birthright Israel activity, over 150,000 young Jews from 52 countries have participated in these intense, short Israel-travel experiences (Rosenbloom, 2007). The Birthright Israel web site (birthrightisrael.com) counts 230,000 program participants over their first decade of operations. In comparison, similar programmes sponsored by the now defunct ‘Youth and HeHalutz’ department of the Jewish Agency brought to Israel approximately half of that number in the decade between 1987 and 1997, previous to Birthright Israel’s establishment (Cohen & Cohen, 2000). There is no doubt that the financial enticement of a free trip is an important element in the marketing strategy and numerical success of the Birthright trips.

With regard to MASA, organizational statements set a target of 20,000 high-school graduates from Jewish communities around the world coming to Israel for semester- and year-long programmes annually.[4] During the period from 2006 to 2009, MASA brought to Israel 23,700 Jewish students and young adults.[5]

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[3]The websites of the two largest umbrella organizations dealing with Jewish student and young adult educational travel to Israel define the age parameters for participant eligibility as ages 18–26 for Birthright Israel, and ages 18–30 for MASA. See http://www.birthrightisrael.com/site/PageServer?pagename=trip_faq and http://www.Masaisrael.org/Masa/English/About+MASA/MASA+Definitions/respectively.

[4]See the use of 20,000 participants annually as an organizational benchmark on the MASA website – http://www.jewishagency.org/JewishAgency/English/Home/About/Masa – and in Hoffman (2005).

[5]Data regarding MASA participation was provided by the MASA offices (April 2009).

Year	Number of participants
2008–2009	8,303
2007–2008	8,230
2006–2007	7,167

Although the 20,000 annual mark remains an aspiration, MASA has impacted on young Jews deciding to choose Israel as a destination for long-term educational and volunteer experiences. With that said, the increase over the last couple of years is slight. Based on the financial circumstances in 2008–2009, it may be that, at least in the short term, numbers may decline. For all of the organizations looking to bring more Jewish travellers to Israel for more meaningful experiences, the demographic realities of a shrinking Diaspora, and a concurrent decline in numbers of Jewish youth in the age group eligible for Israel travel programmes through Birthright, MASA, and Lapid, suggests that the margin for significant numerical growth beyond current participation numbers may be limited by general trends in twenty-first century Jewish demography.[6]

The move towards the creation of Israel travel umbrella organizations like *Masa*, Birthright, and *Lapid* – towards more centralized organization and attention to more highly professionalized marketing/public relations strategies – are significant. However, the focus on bureaucratic solutions based on models from the business world largely disregards detailed concern for developing the foundational visions – in conception and practice – that are necessary for transforming Israel travel into a meaningful arena for Jewish learning and life. Part of the lack of emphasis on constructing Israel travel education as a sub-field within Jewish education is based on a widespread assumption that the encounter between Jewish travellers and Israel has a transformative power in and of itself, almost regardless of the quality and content of the specific experience. If the potential transformative power of the Israel experience is to be taken seriously, organizers, policy makers, and educators would do well to examine more closely how to strengthen the potential impact through deliberate practice in order to serve the visions of Jewishness and Israel that they seek to advance.

Challenges from the Literature

Attempts to define Israel travel as Jewish education and to set standards for excellence are not new. Within the organizational contexts of Birthright and MASA, standard documents attempt to provide a common denominator for the wide range of interests and organizations that enjoy their broader umbrellas. Because these broader organizational umbrellas provide cover for a broad spectrum of Jewish organizations – from ultra orthodox religious seminaries to secular Zionist youth movements,

[6]For a recent discussion of trends in Jewish demography, see Della Pergola, 2008.

from committed Reform Jews to frameworks for the so-called 'unaffiliated' – standards documents have little impact beyond perhaps so-called 'standards of delivery'. Their attempt to be all inclusive ends up producing the kinds of slogans about Jewish identity, continuity, and peoplehood that prove thin beyond initial examination. A lowest common denominator approach to standards for Israel travel encourages the inclusion of a wide spectrum of programme organizers and supporting agencies. With that said, without ongoing, facilitated professional forums where programme organizers, developers, and educators can share professional-educational best practices and challenges, standards documents run the risk of becoming fossilized rhetoric. Organizers and educators desperately need forums where they can articulate the vision hidden in their practice, be challenged by colleagues, and respond thoughtfully to the gauntlets thrown down in the dynamic and complex realities that Israel travel education operates.

An additional problem of the attempt to standardize Israel travel education stems from the volunteer nature of contemporary Jewish life. Unlike a state apparatus that for good and bad can enforce educational policy as it enforces economic, or health, or military policy, Jewish communal life is built on persuasion and consensus, not enforcement. In such a situation, if standards of excellence in Israel travel education are to be advanced in actual educational practice, the umbrella organizations need to construct educational teams and resource centres that because of their proven educational expertise can engage Israel travel operators in a meaningful conversation about the whys, hows, and whats of their practice. Israel travel education suffers from inflated attention to enrollment/participation and a distinct lack of attention to research and development for improving practice. The work needed to transform Israel travel from a tourism enterprise to an educational project is, to paraphrase Deuteronomy 30:11, 'not beyond you, nor is it far away...' In fact, as I relate below, already in the late 1980s and early 1990s, several researchers and reflective practitioners attempted to point to the kinds of innovative development needed to lay solid ground for Israel travel as a key practice of Jewish education.

Calls for Innovative Development

In 1988, Annette Hochstein prepared a report for the Jewish Education Committee of the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors – 'The Israel Experience Project' (Hochstein, 1988). Three key areas of development are pointed to by Hochstein and her team as vital for instigating the kinds of strategic upgrade to increase the number of participants and the quality of programs. Hochstein proposes the following:

1. Recruiting and training appropriate educational personnel to serve as planners, counsellors, and programme directors. Such personnel would introduce the changes necessary in curriculum, training, and recreation to ensure that the programmes meet the needs and expectations of today's participants.
2. Improving logistics. Current logistical arrangements often fail the educational goals of the programme instead of serving them. Logistics and administration

should, where necessary, be reorganized to become an integral part of the programme and be regarded as educational administration.

3. In order to increase participation (assuming that the crisis of the current year will not continue),[7] recruitment and marketing of programmes should make use of professional marketing techniques. Recruitment networks can and should be expanded. (Hochstein, 1988)

The report points to several pilot programmes carried out within the Jewish Agency, in cooperation with the Kibbutz Institute's for Jewish Experience seminars (connected with the Hebrew instruction seminars once widely popular on kibbutzim throughout Israel – *ulpanim*), and with the Alexander Muss High School in Israel.

Cohen and Wall (1994) in a report examining a wide range of Israel experience programmes in the early 1990s summarize their sense of the constituent ingredients that together form a meaningful standard of excellence for Israel travel education:

> [. . .] some trips are indeed qualitatively superior to others. In varying degrees, trips are characterized by: participants who are more thoroughly prepared and more cohesive; staff members who are more enthusiastic, capable, trained, and supervised; Judaic and educational philosophies that permeate every aspect of the trip; a well-designed curriculum; and extraordinary activities. (Cohen & Wall, 1994)

In a comparison that seems obvious, but is not typically considered because much of the field is dominated by a paradigm of Jewish youth and student travel to Israel as tourism, Cohen and Wall make reference to Lawrence-Lightfoot's 'Good High School' as a point of contrast.

> Good high schools provide safe and regulated environments. . . A strong sense of authority is reinforced by an explicit ideological vision, a clear articulation of the purposes and goals of education. Ideology, authority, and order combine to produce a coherent institution that supports human interaction and growth. These institutional frameworks and structures are critical for adolescents, whose uncertainty and vulnerability call for external boundary setting. In their abrupt shifts from childishness to maturity, they need settings that are rooted in tradition, that will give them clear signals of certainty and continuity. *[Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, The Good High School, p. 350.]* (Cohen & Wall, 1994)

Even among the best Israel programmes, and there are many, time and energy need to be devoted to articulating a vision of success, of 'the good' that is embodied in practice and can be evaluated through qualitative evaluation of Israel programmes' staff and participants.

Paul Liptz, writing at around the same time as both Hochstein and Cohen and Wall, echoes concerns regarding programme quality and the educational goals for Israel travel education:

> The Israeli experience must surely be more than just a tour. It has to include both cognitive and affective elements. It should encourage the highest level of participatory leaming and also be flexible in design. The term "leaming *Kehillah*" (learning community) should be

[7] Hochstein refers to the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza that became known as the *Intifada*. There is no doubt that the security/political situation in Israel at any given time has an impact on tourism and Israel travel education.

> used to refer to a group on tour, indicating that the participants are not only gaining information about Israel but are also experiencing a meaningful dialogue with other participants. (Liptz, 1993)

The three examples above, all written between 1988 and 1994, point to a range of programmatic/educational moves needed to transform the Israel travel experience into a meaningful arena for Jewish education, into as Liptz suggests, ‘a learning Kehillah’. The creation over the last decade of umbrella frameworks like Birthright Israel, *Masa*, and *Lapid*, as discussed earlier on, provide partial answers to some of the challenges already raised in the late 1980s and early 1990s. From the writing of Hochstein’s ‘The Israel Experience Project’, 20 years have passed. What are the practices that might advance the Israel travel experience as a fundamental arena for Jewish education and Israel engagement?

Research for Improved Practice

A central tool in the research on Israel travel has been the questionnaires evaluating participant satisfaction with programme experiences. Although the opinions of programme participants regarding the value of programme components and their overall experience are important both in educational terms and as a marketing tool, such tools are insufficient in considering the extent to which a programme’s practice embodies its oft-times unspoken vision, and consequently the educational success of the program beyond ‘customer satisfaction’.

Research work of a different kind has been conducted over the last number of years along two main themes – impact and significance. In studies like ‘Building Jewish Identity: A Study of Young Judaea Alumni’ (Cohen & Ganapol, 1988) or in the more recent ‘Tourists, Travelers, and Citizens: Jewish Engagement of Young Adults in Four Centers of North American Jewish Life’ (Chertok, Sasson, & Saxe, 2009), sponsoring bodies measure the significance of the Israel experience based on the ways that programme participants articulate and exhibit increased Jewish involvement following participation in some Israel travel experience. In these studies, Israel travel as an educational practice is rooted in a vision that sees the travel experience as a method and means for increasing the Jewish involvement of young people in organized communal life.

With regard to significance, at least two pertinent questions are typically addressed in the research:

1. What are the interpreted meanings of Israel and Jewishness that are embodied in the educational programming included in Israel programmes?
2. And how do Israel experience travellers/learners begin to make sense of the meanings of their Israel experience in their ongoing identity building?

Claire Goldwater’s reading of the ways that Israel tour-guide-educators present and discuss the meanings of Israeli-Jewish historical sites (as signifiers for their understandings of broader ideological issues of Jewish meaning and life) provides an

important lens on the stated and unstated connections between practice and vision, and the centrality of place as a category of meaning in Israel travel education (Goldwater, 2002). Sasson and Kelner add another piece to the exploration of the ways that place, and notions of the remembered past, play themselves out in the explicit narratives and implicit self-understandings of Israeli tour-guide-educators at Masada (Sasson & Kelner, 2008). Kelner, in other work, focuses not on the educator, but on the learner, and on the ways that the learner contends with Israel, with the place of Jewishness in his/her life, and with the important experimental Jewish community that the Israel experience offers learners/travellers (Kelner, 1988).

Research for improved practice focusing on questions of negotiated significance – both of Israel educators and of learners/travellers – is both sorely needed and under-represented. Research by Goldwater, Sasson, and Kelner provide the kinds of portraits of real-life learning experiences that give voice to educators and learners, and to the questions of the complex ongoing dialogue between vision and practice. If educational work is a craft it will be most readily understood through activity, work, presentation, and action. Research for improved practice has the potential to act as a mirror in which educators can see the reflection of their practice. Based on that reflection of practice, educators can challenge themselves to reconsider and hone both the 'whys' and the 'whats' of their work. As such, a more concerted effort is needed to produce a series of Israel travel education portraits that could become a centrepiece for analysis and discussion about the signature pedagogies of Israel travel education and the visions that grow out of and nurture them.

Training for Israel Travel Education as a Profession

Israel travel education suffers from a lack of forums for professional training and development. In a basic way, the lack of such forums is a symptom suggesting that Israel travel education has not been able to establish itself as a recognized professional branch on the Jewish educational tree. For example, one of the most significant roles in the work done during Israel travel experiences is that of the tour guide. Like in a number of other countries, Israeli tour guides are trained and licensed by the state through the ministry of tourism. The Israeli tour guide course includes between 18 and 24 months of study, and 450–500 contact hours. Study includes both classroom time and extensive field visits to sites (between 50 and 70 field days) throughout Israel. The syllabus includes a wide variety of brief, survey courses – botany and zoology, archaeology and history, religion and religious communities, climatology and geology – from the prehistoric until contemporary times. Students vary widely in ages and backgrounds, but must all possess a high school diploma and not possess a criminal record. A portion of the course is devoted to methodology and includes such topics as typology of incoming tourism to Israel and Israeli tourism, tools and aids for guiding, experience in guiding, administration and organization of a tour, methodology of guiding by target public and subjects, workshops in leadership and activation of a group, manners and conduct, security and safety, and the tour guide and his connection with tourism sectors. As compared

with tour guide courses in other countries, the Israeli tour guide course is extensive and serious.

With that said, the tour guide is not trained as an educator. Beyond methodological issues of public speaking and basic presentation techniques, there is no attempt to introduce the tour guide-in-training to educational theory, to relevant topics in informal education, or to educational thinking regarding, for example, dilemmas of history and memory, and possibilities of competing narratives. Issues concerning contemporary Jewish identity and the relationships between Jewish communities outside of Israel and Israel are not included in the course, even for those who will work with groups of Jewish learners/travellers.

Even if Israeli tour guides were trained in a way that heightened their professional sense of self as educators, which planted them firmly in the tradition of education, and that, helped them gather and use a richer tool box for both their thought and work, it would be a mistake to perpetuate an Israeli monopoly over Israel travel education. There is no doubt that Israeli educators with the appropriate training, background, and sensitivities do bring to their teaching a tremendous amount of authenticity and commitment when working with Jewish groups from the Diaspora. Especially for Jewish youth and student travellers to Israel, the personal model offered by a successful guide/educator offers the traveller/learner a gateway to enhanced identification with Israeli life. With that said, the lack of trained educators from the Diaspora communities, who have made an existential or practical decision to remain in the Diaspora as community leaders and educators, and who at the same time embody an ongoing intimacy and engagement with Israel, limits the possibility that learners will be able to imagine paths for their own lives that entail both vigorous involvement in Jewish life in their home communities and at the same time, ongoing, intensive engagement with Israel. An over-reliance on Israeli guides/educators, and the failure to develop educational leadership in Diaspora communities – whether in Bible, or Hebrew language and literature, or in Israel engagement – weakens the ability of the communities to demonstrate, through modelling, the relevance of Jewishness and Judaism in the lives of potential Jewish learners. Training programmes for Jewish educational leadership need to develop paths for developing cadres of professional educators from the Diaspora communities and from Israel who can jointly take on the challenge of developing sophisticated, compelling approaches to Israel engagement. The cultivation of reflective practitioners for Israel engagement can encourage a situation where Israel is met repeatedly by the learner in a wide variety of Jewish settings, including a richer palette of long- and short-term Israel travel options. An expanded palette of Israel travel options for a wider variety of learners, available at various developmental junctures and rooted in the kinds of follow-through programming (before an Israel journey and after it) offers a framework for a kind of lifelong Israel engagement cycle.

Israel experience organizers who construct themselves as educational institutions have, in many cases, built training units for their own staff. The Alexander Muss High School, Young Judaea, NIFTY, and the Canada Israel Experience all take upon themselves to provide seminars to enrich the work of their educators. Much

of this training focuses on sharpening basic logistic and pedagogical skills, and on deepening the allegiances of the staff to the specific organization.

The distinct lack of institutions to provide educational training for tour-guide-educators, for programme directors, and for Israel experience logistical staff perpetuates a situation where participants in Israel travel education settings do not receive the quality of faculty expected at Jewish day schools, in general public and private education, and in the colleges and universities that the graduates of Israel experience programmes are exposed to throughout their lives. As long as staff development and training for Israel travel education fails to take seriously the development of a cadre of Israel travel professionals who can measure up to the level of the best educational professionals that students will encounter in their long learning careers, Israel travel education will not be able to achieve the kind of impact and success that are its potential.

Lee Shulman, in describing the kind of 'signature pedagogies' needed to induct novices into their professional lives, raises the following challenge for the training of educators:

> I would respectfully propose that a major challenge for the education of teachers and the professional development of veteran teachers for this next generation will be to recognize that what we desperately need is a suite of signature pedagogies that are routine, that teach people to think like, act like, and be like an educator. We need signature pedagogies that respectfully recognize the difference between pedagogical thinking associated with promoting deep understanding in mathematics, and doing it deeply in English literature, or in history. And that we build our programs of teacher education around these kinds of signature pedagogies. (Shulman, 2006)

What would be involved in taking up Shulman's challenge for Israel travel educators? What would be the 'suite of signature pedagogies. . . that teach people to think like, act like and be like' an Israel travel educator?

Towards Israel Travel Experiences as 'Attentive Travel'

Travel experiences by their very nature entail a level of deliberate disconnect with home, and with travellers' usual routines. Beyond the small inconveniences that are part of arriving in and adapting to a new place where people may speak a different language, use a different currency, or drive on the opposite side of the road, travel is by its nature a kind of escape, a 'getting away from it all'. Travel as 'escape from' frames the place visited as an episodic adventure, or temporary refuge. If the destination is episodic or temporary, the experience of the traveller while away from home has little chance to impact the life of the traveller after returning home. In the case of Israel travel in Jewish communal and educational settings, Israel ought not to be framed as a distant 'island' separated from the 'mainland' of Jewish communal life. Rather, Israel travel education needs to be seen as an experience rooted in and growing out of Jewish communal life and that community's educational agendas. Israel travel needs to be practised as part of the ongoing series of milestone events

in the life of the Jew towards vigorous engagement with the meanings of Jewish life, and cultivating expanded Jewish involvements.

Building Jewish communal capacity for an Israel experience cycle that would encourage Jews to visit Israel repeatedly at different points in their lives within appropriate educational programmes would involve building the conceptual and practical scaffolding to turn Israel travel education from tourism – from episodic and temporary – to a kind of contemporary pilgrimage[8], to 'attentive travel'. Huston Smith suggests

> The object of pilgrimage is not rest and relaxation – to get away from it all. To set out on a pilgrimage is to throw down a challenge to everyday life. (Cousineau, 2000)

Although central trends in both general Western and Jewish education are dominated by models borrowed from the business world, a more serious appreciation of traditional pilgrimage models has the potential to significantly enhance the ways in which we think about and implement Israel travel education. I want to highlight one aspect of the pilgrimage experience that is suggestive for our work in Jewish educational travel.

A traditional pilgrim does not arrive at a site of meaning without initiation and preparation, without having been introduced to the communal story that frames the significance of the journey, the centrality of the destination, and the role of the traveller as an actor in both bearing and forging anew the community's most cherished values. For example, the Babylonian Talmud describes a paradigmatic example of Jewish travel in describing a visit to Mount Scopus, looking from the east onto the ruins of the Temple Mount in the generations after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

> Rabbi Elazar teaches – one who sees the cities of Judah in their ruined state recites the verse, "Your holy cities have become a desert, Jerusalem a desolation." (Isa. 64:9) and tears his garment... One who sees Jerusalem in its ruined state, recites the verse, "Our holy temple, our pride, where our ancestors praised you... all that was dear to us is ruined." (Isa 64:10) As soon as one reaches Mt. Scopus they tear their garments; one tear for the Temple and one tear for Jerusalem... (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Moed Katan 26a.)

For a modern-day traveller to perform a visit to Mount Scopus in the way suggested by Rabbi Elazar, an entire educative process would have to have been put in place by the community before the journey. First and foremost, the traveller would need to be familiar with the above text. He/she would need to be familiar with why the cities of Judah and Jerusalem are in ruins; why the verses chosen to be read at Scopus are from Isaiah, Chapter They would need to be familiar with why the cities of Judah and Jerusalem are in ruins; why the verses chosen to be read at Scopus are from Isaiah, Chapter 64, and what is the meaning of tearing one's clothing as a Jewish ritual act, and what is the meaning of tearing one's clothing as a Jewish ritual act. They would need to have a sense of the historical contexts of the importance of the

[8]See Lisa Grant's dissertation on the opportunities and problems of the use of the pilgrimage metaphor in Israel travel education (Grant, 2000).

Temple and Jerusalem in Jewish civilization, and the significance of their destruction for the Jewish experience. On a cultural level, the power of Rabbi Elazar's suggestion emanates from what Paul Connerton (1989) might call the reinforcing linkage between the inscriptive (reading, writing, drawing) and incorporative practices (embodied activities). Significant communal memories (in the case above, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E.) are able to remain significant with the eroding passage of time because the event is captured both in text, and is re-enacted on some level through physical place, sacred text, and ritual activity.

It would be difficult for most Jewish travellers today to carry out Rabbi Elazar's suggestion in their own visits to Jerusalem and Mount Scopus. Shaul Kelner highlights our difficulty and the realities of the lives and attitudes of contemporary Jewish 'pilgrims' by quoting a Birthright Israel participant's reaction to his first visit to the Western Wall:

> With expectations raised for the visit to the Temple Mount, Judaism's holiest site, participants were easily underwhelmed. 'Are the mountains here all so small?' one disappointed participant asked semi rhetorically. To the guffaws of those who heard, another responded by poking fun at the holy site and at the goals of Birthright: 'I hope Mount Sinai isn't such a piece of shit, or it might really shake my Jewish identity!' (Kelner, 2004)

Obviously a galaxy's length separates the historical realities of the world that produced the text from the Talmud from the world that produced the Birthright Israel participant quoted above. However, the educator can not afford to be dismissive of the voice brought by Kelner. Educationally, the challenge is to take both the learner seriously and to ask what communities ought to do to transform the Israel experience from an exotic episode largely disconnected from the life of the learner/traveller to Jewish-attentive travel.

Planning for Israel educational travel needs to take into account the wider placement of Israel engagement in Jewish communal life. If Israel is not woven in and out of the Jewish story that is encountered at holidays, at life events, on the family bookshelf, at the family dinner table, in camping, etc., Israel will remain a foreign country with a vague connection to an even vaguer notion of Jewish flourishing.

Visions of the Purposes of Israel Travel, and of Israel Engagement for Flourishing Jewish Life

In order to plan effectively, before the funding, before building the right staff, there needs to be an idea – a vision that maps the purposes of the specific venture and that like a map is a basis for continued reference, analysis, and exploration. With regard to Israel travel education, the outstanding question whose answer is a prerequisite for 'how', is 'why'. Why is Israel travel education crucial not only to Israel engagement, but to a Jewish education whose main goal is to help Jews to employ the wide-ranging tapestries of the Jewish experience as a central inspiration for the ways that they choose to build their lives?

Travel has long been recognized as a mode of experiential learning that is laden with potential transformative power. One need not look far for foundational stories from many cultures about travellers discovering the world, the other, and hence themselves, along the road far from home. Abraham, Jesus, Muhammed, and the Buddha all take part in transformative journeys, in life-changing challenges that prepare them for their life's work. Michel De Montaigne (De Montaigne, 2009), heralding the age of exploration and the place of 'The Grand Tour' in European education, extols the importance of travel education. For Montaigne, leaving home and the opportunity to see new places and meet new people is a means to testing the limitations and foibles of our own home culture. Travel becomes a lesson in humility – 'that we may whet and sharpen our wits by rubbing them against those of others' (De Montaigne, 2009) – as it offers the traveller alternative models of the meanings of being human, and the possibility that the way we live is not the only way to live. Here, travel becomes a deliberate quest for enhanced meaning – a journey rather than a tourist jaunt (Cohen, 2001). In recent years, major universities like Princeton and Harvard, in the United States, are reprioritizing study abroad both in their admission policies and in their study programmes. In a world where technology seems to bring people closer together and where, at the same time, there is no wane in inter-communal, cultural, and religious conflict, travel is receiving new attention in promoting citizens who are 'culturally competent and globally aware' (Mohn, 2006).

For the purposes of Jewish education, cultural competence can be understood as a number of concentric circles, each one seeking to expand the experience of the learner beyond the familiar circles of 'I', 'family', and 'local community' to more expansive encounters with Jews in other localities, with Jews in other historical times, and with the State of Israel. Through the encouragement of an expanded sense of self – a sense of self linked to an 'imagined community' – the learner has the opportunity to imagine himself or herself as part of a larger 'we' linked to the larger Jewish people and human family. The travel experience, not built as a bus tour 'seeing there' but constructed as a diverse array of encounters that challenge the learner's own notions of the meanings of Jewishness and the human can become a 'being there'. Such a 'being there' has enormous potential in making Jewish education not only about texts on paper, but about real-life questions of who do I want to be and how is my own Jewish community a microcosm of the image of the world that I want to inhabit.

What is the vision of a decent Jewish communal life that is worth championing? Although contemporary Israel as a majority Jewish, sovereign, and democratic state is very different from the Jewish communities of the Diaspora, Israeli life holds out the educational opportunity to explore visions in action, and the ways that competing visions for the Jewish future play themselves out in polity and society. Israel, with all of its differences from the Jewish communities of the Diaspora offers a potentially challenging mirror for Jewish life in the twenty-first century. Issues like environmental consciousness and responsibility, social justice, internal Jewish diversity and pluralism, and Jewish-non-Jewish relations – with all of their successes and failures and future challenges – can be explored through the Israeli reality. Values,

confined to the realm of fine sermons and well-intentioned statements, cannot be taken seriously as promoting any vision for the Jewish future. Israel travel education holds out the possibility of exploring the dilemmas of a unique sovereign Jewish community as it debates in real life and real time its understandings of the Jewish past, present, and future through its necessity to act in the world.

Michael Rosenak reworks Oakeshott's (1962) terms 'language' and 'literature' as central categories for Jewish educational exploration.[9] Rosenak defines language and literature as two separate, yet interdependent concepts. Language is 'a basic world picture', 'a set of paradigms', 'a basic explanation of reality' (Rosenak, 2001). However, language is only activated through literature and becomes meaningful only through interpretation. He writes,

> Language becomes a social and spiritual reality only when literature is initially made in it, when it is first 'spoken'. A language comes alive when what it means is interpreted. . . when it 'speaks' to the circumstances of those addressed by it. (Rosenak, 2001)

In other words, language is transformed in to meaningful, relevant literature through the encounter with life. Based on its unique position as a Jewish community possessing national sovereignty, the State of Israel represents an arena where the debate between the various literatures over the meanings of Jewish language, over the significance and meanings of Jewish stories takes place at a greater level of intensity, and with a wider range of responsibility because it is rooted in a historically unique 'social and spiritual reality'. For Jewish students and teachers coming to Israel, exposure to the tough issues facing Israeli society, with all of their complexities and heterogeneity, is a challenge towards engagement with the possibilities of unfolding Jewish and non-Jewish literatures in debate. Discussions of social justice, of peace, and of community are forced to develop a thicker aspect as the concepts themselves are fired, forged, and reformed between the sparks of living people acting within a living community. Michael Walzer, in his *Exodus and Revolution* (1986), like Rosenak, suggests that argument and interpretation are facilitated and enriched by a thick cultural context, a rich cultural range that can offer a variety of interpretative possibilities. Interpretation and the debate between interpretations, in this sense, is an essential expression of cultural commitment.

> Cultural patterns shape perception and analysis too. They would not endure for long, of course, if they did not accommodate a range of perceptions and analyses, if it were not possible to carry on arguments inside the structures they provide. . . Within the framework of the Exodus story one can plausibly emphasize the mighty arm of God or the slow march of the people, the land of milk and honey or the holy nation, the purging of the counterrevolutionaries or the schooling of a new generation. One can describe Egyptian bondage in terms of corruption or tyranny or exploitation. One can defend the authority of the Levites or of the tribal elders or of the rulers of tens and fifties. I would only suggest that these alternatives are themselves paradigmatic; they are *our* alternatives. In other cultures, men and women read other books, tell different stories, confront different choices. (Walzer, 1986)

Israel travel education ought to become an initiation into the creative challenges surrounding the ways a sovereign Jewish community debates and acts on its worldly

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[9] See Michael Rosenak, 2001, p. 4.

responsibilities, and the ways that notions of Jewishness impact on that debate and action. The more time a traveller/learner spends in Israel encountering the nuance of day to day life in all of its glorious complexity, greater is the chance that initiation will move to identification and action.

Israel travel education offers an arena not limited by four classroom walls where learners/travellers have the opportunity to become engaged interpreters of the possibilities of Jewish life through an honest wrestling with who they are, and who they want to become. “For what must be interpreted in a text is a proposed world which I could inhabit and wherein I could project one of my own most possibilities” (Ricouer, 1981).

For Jews, visiting Israel, at once holy land and homeland, at once foreign and familiar, offers possibilities of not only of imagining literary or historic models, but of new possibilities as Jews confront the challenges and opportunities of responsibility.

Closing Thoughts

Israel travel education is a field still in the making. Enormous organizational strides have been taken since the late 1990s towards marketing, enrolment, and financing. And yet, to encourage more Jews to have a wider range of educational opportunities to encounter Israel for varying lengths of time, on a number of journeys throughout their lives, is not only an issue of organization and logistics. Cultivating Israel travel education as a unique branch of Jewish experiential learning, and as a dynamic, sophisticated meeting with the challenges of Israel, calls for moving beyond the organizational to constructive work of articulating vision for practice. In building on existing achievements, Israel travel education would do well to renew emphasis on providing definitions for qualitative excellence, and develop compelling educational expressions of Israel’s foundational place in Jewish life – with all the celebration and challenges entailed.

In traditional pilgrimage models, travellers/learners return from their journeys as messengers and emissaries. They bring from the sites they have seen, from the people they have met, and from the challenges of the journey a renewed meaning for the values and ideals cherished by their community (Shutz, 1945). It is through those renewed meanings carried home from the road that a community has the opportunity to consider its inspirations and aspirations. At its best, Israel travel education ought to be a kind of cultural mapping for a discussion about where we have been, and where we want to go.

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Jewish Peoplehood Education

David Mittelberg

Introduction

Recent studies sponsored by the American Jewish Committee (Ukeles, Miller, & Beck, 2006; Shimoni and Shaltiel, 2006) and Cohen et al. (2008), indicate that the next generation of American and Israeli youth are relatively ignorant of, uneducated about, and unaffected by each other, suggesting that the goal of global solidarity of the Jewish people is constantly challenged. Increasingly, the paradigm of Jewish peoplehood is being offered as a framework to address this problem. Before reviewing some of the educational models that currently exist and addressing the question of what a useful paradigm of Jewish peoplehood might look like, it is important to consider the larger question of the very need for peoplehood education. Is there even such a need and why? This chapter will argue that (1) in both Israel and the Diaspora, Jewish youth seem to feel little existential need to belong to a Jewish collective (local or global), (2) The Jewish people has an existential and urgent need to instill a sense of belonging in its next generation if it wishes to survive, (3) the paradigm of Jewish peoplehood and the practice of Jewish peoplehood education, can respond effectively to the task of instilling a need to belong that can be shared by both Israeli and Diaspora young Jews.

The need shared by Israeli and Diaspora Jewry as collectives, is their common incapacity to awaken in their youth a sense of strong belonging to their Jewish community. While in the Diaspora the tension between the non-Jewish universal and the Jewish particular is emphasized by, and reflected in part by increasing rates of out-marriage, in Israel the tension between being universal and being Jewish manifests itself quite differently, specifically between being Jewish and being democratic. Sometimes, it is also reflected between being Jewish and being Israeli, or between staying in Israel and leaving the nation. All of these are serious tensions and pose in fact a threat not only to the connections and commonalities between Israeli Jews and Jews in the Diaspora, but perhaps even to the Jewish continuity of each community.

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One of the universal but non-ideological factors that differentiates between being Jewish in Israel and being Jewish in the Diaspora, is that in the Diaspora *no one* can take being Jewish for granted. One has to make the effort to be Jewish. One must create Jewish space in the non-Jewish world within which we live. Thus, in the modern world where personal identity is a matter of a choice among multiple choices, the challenge is to promote the choice to be Jewish where the prevailing majority status quo is non-Jewish.

In Israel, the reverse side of the same problem is prevalent. In Israel, *everyone* takes being Jewish for granted. Since Jewishness is ubiquitous in the public domain, Israeli Jews are not compelled to affirm it. Indeed, it is precisely because being Jewish is taken for granted that it becomes the problem. Because Israeli Jews take their Jewishness for granted, Israeli Jewish adolescents have to go to European sites; for example, the death camp of Majdanek, in State-sponsored visits, in order to begin to understand Jewish tradition and pre-State history. Of course, there is an additional problem in that the Israeli educational system does not teach contemporary Jewish history to its pupils, certainly not about Jewish life in the Diaspora today, or the last 60 years for that matter.

Despite the wide-ranging plurality of its forms (albeit without an ideology of pluralism), Israeli Jewishness lacks its flexibility and portability. One cannot take Israeli Judaism when leaving Israel, unless one is a practicing religious Jew. So while Diaspora Judaism has the fundamental weakness of not being situated within a sovereign Jewish state, it has the powerful advantage of being portable and adaptable through multiple mutations and permutations of external society. These are very fundamental, existential differences between Israeli and Diaspora Judaism that I do not think can be transformed by *any* ideology. Moreover, they both represent critical flaws to a thriving Jewish existence. It is possible that Jewish peoplehood might offer a reasonable, responsible response to these existential challenges facing both Israeli and Diaspora Judaism.

Philosophical Underpinnings of the Discourse

Michael Rosenak (2008) suggests that the discourse of peoplehood provides a constructive answer. He claims that the search for commonalities offered by the paradigm of Jewish peoplehood is both useful and meaningful, for it offers "...Jewish self-identification without shared religiosity, or a cultivation of a national culture...... .. it does not even require a common language: and it does not insist that all Jews come on Aliya..." (ibid., 13). By neither mandating a common language nor insisting on normative immigration to Israel, and, moreover, by blurring the differences between Jews, rather than accentuating antagonistic differences, Jewish peoplehood fuels the continuing search for shared meaning within the current ambiguity and ambivalence that face Jews in both Israel and abroad.

Unlike Soloveitchik, for Rosenak the choice is not between 'mere' fate and essential destiny, but rather is a question of whether there can be found a new foundation for Jewish peoplehood that all Jews can share. Rosenak is searching for

"... a prescriptive Jewishness that... involves fostering a community identity that leaves questions of belief, behavior and commitment as open, yet important issues." (ibid., 16).

Citing the religious philosopher Eliezer Goldman and the philosopher Martin Buber, Rosenak offers the prescription that "...the concept Am Yisrael as including those who do not observe the (religious) norm" (ibid., 28). This inclusion of those who do not define themselves as "religious" is quite pertinent today; institutionalized Jewish religion, rather than serving as a unifying force for the larger proportion of Jews who are not Orthodox, increasingly appears to divide different groups of Jews worldwide. The inclusiveness of Jewish peoplehood could well provide a meaningful remedy.

Arnold Eisen has already decided it is so. In his words, "... peoplehood is probably the *only* concept that suits the present situation and meets present needs. "Nation" and "religion" are each in their own way too all-encompassing. They demand more than many Jews are willing to identify with in terms of belief or behavior, and thus render significant portions of the population outsiders to a group which they know belongs to them and which they want very much to claim as their own. On the other hand, ethnicity and heritage are too narrow. They miss out on much of what makes Jewish identity attractive and even compelling to many Jews—a part of the self for which they are profoundly grateful and that many are profoundly disappointed not to transmit to the next generation. Only *peoplehood* seems just right." (Eisen, 2008, p. 2) for it blurs the divisive differences between the contrasting modalities of Jewish existence today, namely nationality and faith, or nationhood versus ethnicity. Peoplehood, argues Eisen, stands between these dualisms and authentically reflects Jewish biblical and historical heritage in and of itself. Moreover, the utility and robustness of peoplehood derives from what Eisen chooses to call its sociological constituents, akin to the term *civilization* as coined by Mordecai Kaplan. In Kaplan's own words,

> Judaism as otherness is thus something far more comprehensive than Jewish religion. It includes that nexus of a history, literature, language, social organization, folk sanctions, standards of conduct, social and spiritual ideals, esthetic values, which in their totality form a civilization.... (Kaplan, 1967, p. 178)

Indeed, what is referred to here is the social structure on which peoplehood can rest.

Ami Bouganim has pointed out that in 1954, Kaplan adopted the term *peoplehood* instead of *civilization* articulating a transnational vision when referring to "a new type of nation—an international nation, with a national home to give them cultural and spiritual unity" (Kaplan cited in Bouganim, 2008, p. 84). Thus, while *civilization* was coined to avoid the contraction of Judaism to a religion, *peoplehood* was coined by Kaplan to avoid the contraction of Judaism to a State. But if so, what would be the basis of the new contract between all Jews?

For Eisen, the tool of conversation and dialogue is the agency of peoplehood building. This dialogue will require a framework within which to live and breathe. We will consider below, through the examination of certain educational ventures, whether this project can indeed be undertaken, and what conditions would be necessary to do so.

While Mordecai Kaplan offered us a groundbreaking formula to resist the reduction of contemporary Judaism to a religion or State alone, Simon Rawidowicz pioneered a language of dialogue that was ahead of its time and rejected by his peers. In his "Ever Dying People," Rawidowicz writes that as early as in 1948 he called in Hebrew for a partnership relation between Israel and the Diaspora.

> "Twenty years ago, I began to speak about a "partnership" between the Land of Israel and the Diaspora of Israel. Instead of Ahad Ha-Am's prevailing conception of a center and circumference, of a circle with one focus, I attempted to develop a conception of the people of Israel as a whole, as an ellipse with two foci, the Land of Israel and the Diaspora of Israel. Later, I tried to develop this system further under the symbolic title of "Israel is One": the Land of Israel and the Diaspora of Israel, two that are one." (Rawidowicz, 1986, p. 151)

Thus, Rawidowicz referred directly to the transnational component of Jewish collective life, presaging current Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) terminology by calling for a *partnership* between Israel and the Diaspora.

Rawidowicz's call was unheeded because it was framed or perceived in normative contested language; when understood as sociological imperative of partnership, however, as in Eisen's terms, it may be that what was rejected 60 years ago can now become a center piece of global Jewish life.

The Jewish Peoplehood Discourse

A wide-ranging discussion on Jewish peoplehood exists, as reported in part by Kopelowitz and Engelberg (2007). It seems, however, that for the most part, this is an internal discourse between Israelis, mostly of Anglo origin, with primarily, North American Diaspora Jews. This lack of symmetry belies the attractive inclusiveness of the term 'peoplehood' and undermines its capacity to serve as a shared paradigm for Jews both in Israel and the Diaspora.

Fishman (2007) succinctly defines "*peoplehood* as an ethnic group sharing a common descent, language, culture and homeland" (2007, p. 44). These four components may become subjective, compelling constructs of individual life, through the engagement of Jews with each other, through value-driven local and transnational, reciprocal, social networks, generating the individual and group resource of ethnic social capital. They too must be emphasized and nurtured in order to achieve a more mutual, shared discourse than currently exists.

Thus, Jewish peoplehood may be conceived as the dimension of Jewishness that 'thickens' the lines of engagement between Jews. Jewish peoplehood, furthermore, *crosses* the divides that exist between religious – secular and Israel – Diaspora. In this regard, Jewish peoplehood cannot be reduced to a particular constituent of either of these two antinomies, but rather contains them both—and maybe even others. We adopt Shulman's conviction (2009) that a multiple identity is a *virtue* for the modern person, and add that the Jewish peoplehood paradigm provides the quintessential framework within which may be situated the multiple identity of the global Jewish modern. In actuality, neither Israeli Jewry nor Diaspora Jewry can,

on its own, generate global Jewish peoplehood; both are dependent on each other to utilize the transnational platform for transcendent goals.

The goal for Jewish peoplehood education, therefore, is to build *interdependence*, *reciprocity,* and *mutuality* while accepting multiplicity of identity. In the emerging field of Jewish peoplehood education, there is a range of different educational programs (see Kopelowitz and Engelberg, 2007). This chapter will review only those programs that include core practices engaging both Israeli and Diaspora Jews with the goal of enhancing the Jewishness *of* each other, through the connectivity *with* each other (see below).

This discourse on Jewish peoplehood has been propelled by a number of recent initiatives and institutions. Kopelowitz and Ravivi (2008) report on a conference convened by the UJA-Federation of New York and JAFI in 2005, where the Jewish peoplehood discourse received an important, intellectual contemporary articulation.

In the following years, Oranim Academic College of Education, the Department of Jewish Peoplehood—Oren convened two conferences on Jewish peoplehood. In June 2006, with the support of the Department of Education at JAFI, a conference summarizing the work of a year-long think-tank on the subject of Jewish peoplehood education for *Israeli* Jews, was convened. Two years later in June 2008, Oranim hosted a second conference dealing with Global Jewish peoplehood education.

Philanthropic foundations have also exercised initiative in building institutions to address this issue. Efforts by the Nadav Fund led to the establishment of the International School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies at Beth Hatefutsoth (since November 2006). This school has pursued critical strategic initiatives with UJA-Federation of NY and JAFI, as well as with important practitioner educational institutions in Israel and the Diaspora (see below). In the second half of 2009, the School has shifted to developing programs for the renewed *Museum of the Jewish People*, and in response in November 2009, the Partnership of NADAV, UJA- Federation of NY and JAFI will launch the *Jewish Peoplehood Hub.* This new entity will function as a strategic catalyst and incubator in the Jewish world, aspiring to nurture Jewish Peoplehood globally (including the continuation of projects originally launched by the SJPS).

The field of *research* on Jewish peoplehood was advanced with the establishment of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute in 2002, (see www.jpppi.org.il). Cohen and Yaar (forthcoming) reported at the Herzliya Conference in April 2009 on their work developing a Jewish peoplehood index, based on a first-ever, bi-national survey conducted in Israel and in North America.

At the time of writing this chapter, the Israeli government had launched a global 'consultative process' designed by JPPPI, to generate policy recommendations for the Israeli government on how to strengthen Jewish identity and connection to Israel. The questions still to be addressed are whose identity needs to be strengthened and the purposes of the connections.

Just as the above process has unfolded *top-down,* so educational practitioners working on the transnational interface between Jewish communities in Israel and the Diaspora, have pioneered bottom-up initiatives in Jewish peoplehood

education. Here, too, support of private foundations, major Jewish Federations such as New York, Boston, and San Francisco as well as JAFI, have been critical in this process. Inductively and at first, perhaps somewhat intuitively, over the last decade, as Kopelowitz and Engelberg report, select institutions such as Oranim Academic College of Education, have developed a structure and content of Jewish peoplehood education. Oranim, in fact, has maintained uninterrupted, in-house evaluation of this process over the entire decade. When taken together, all of these processes present us with an opportunity to review both the intellectual discourse and the practice of Jewish peoplehood education and to seek the possible sources of synergy between them. Finally, an attempt will be made to develop an agenda of the many research questions that remain unasked and/or unanswered despite the intensive activity reported above.

The Jewish Peoplehood Discourse and Educational Practice

Kopelowitz and Engelberg (2007) review the renaissance of the discourse on Jewish peoplehood since Kaplan and the degree to which this intellectual discourse guides Jewish educators today. They point out how the very term is contested by Jewish scholars worldwide who are divided into two broad schools, with at least one Israeli institution in denial over the very term (*Amiut* = peoplehood in Hebrew), (See also Kopelowitz & Ravivi, 2008).

The two schools of thought, 'communitarian' on the one hand and 'liberal' on the other, bear some correlation to Rosenak's understanding of Soloveitchik's distinction between the "covenant of destiny" and "covenant of fate," respectively. (Rosenak, 2008, p. 15). The communitarian scholars emphasize normative prescriptions of peoplehood including: Covenant, Tikkun Olam/repairing the world, mutual responsibility, commandments/obligations; the liberal notion of peoplehood, recognizing the power of individual choice, is characterized as seeking a pluralistic content within a shared framework or common public. This latter notion is envisaged as a cross-cultural conversation transcending Jewish cultural and religious diversity while building the social capital required for the networks and institutional structure of Jewish community.

Kopelowitz and Engelberg offer three core principles common to both schools, which define Jewish peoplehood as:

1. A multi-dimensional experience
2. Rejection of a strong ideology
3. Connections between Jews, not Jewish identity
   To their three categories, I would offer a fourth:
4. Connections between communities and their local institutions

My fourth category refers of course, to the platform on which Jewish peoplehood must stand if it is not to be reduced to an idea or an image, namely the "glocal." I define glocal as "the global and the local simultaneously and contend that glocal relationships must exist between Jewish communities qua communities. The

transnational School-to-School Connections Program (see below) is one example of this dimension.

Further developing these ideas, Kopelowitz and Engelberg (2009) articulate three levels of [*an individual's*] (my emphasis) connection to the Jewish people. These are (1) the emotional (2) the intellectual and (3) holding a consciousness of belonging to the Jewish people (ibid., 14).

While these are critical elements required to evaluate change in a participant's sense of belonging to the Jewish people following Jewish peoplehood programming, this subjective domain of the *participant* does not exhaust the theoretical field of Jewish peoplehood, and hence, the addition of my fourth objective element above.

In both papers, Kopelowitz and Engelberg explain the post-2000 peoplehood renaissance as a consequence of an ideological vacuum that derives from the loss of a centrist ideology that is compelling for a majority of Jews worldwide. While this absence may explain the openness of Jewish leadership to an alternative framework, it does nothing to sustain Jewish peoplehood in the long term. What might add to this analysis by Kopelowitz and Engelberg? Scholarship in the areas of Jewish philosophy and sociology, for all its historical breadth and depth, begins its analysis understandably from within, moving outward from there. Strengths and weaknesses are sought and found within the Jewish sphere. Peoplehood has developed vitality not just because of what has changed within the Jews, but rather due to what has changed in the world at large.

Just as Zionism arose within the larger project of European and then global nation building, so too peoplehood will thrive in the global world of transnational peoples. It is not, as some post-modernists might claim, that the nation-state has declined, but rather that we are witnessing the demise of the culturally *homogenous* nation-state, everywhere. That type of nation-state is being replaced by multicultural societies; they will be followed by multicultural regimes. Hundreds of millions of human beings today live *outside* the country in which they themselves were born. The phenomenon of transnational peoples is growing and expanding. While the Jews may well have been the FIRST transnational people with homeland and diasporas, today they are only one among a growing number of peoples in this situation.

The time has come for mainstream global Jewish scholarship to take these changes seriously and to look beyond the often self-serving, dyadic, quasi mutually-exclusive relationships that have characterized the Israel – Diaspora discourse and existence. The historical possibilities and opportunities exist now for the Jewish people to continue to thrive and actually to develop a transnational civilization not very different from that imagined by Kaplan and Rawidowicz. Through the reconstruction of innovative multilateral global Jewish scholarship can be generated a new discourse on Jewish peoplehood that can recommend policy change for Jewish leadership.

The normative call for a glocal (both global *and* local) relationship of all Jews with each other, implied by the fourth domain I referred to above, has already been made by Deborah Dash Moore (2005), who critiques the current model of Jewish citizenship, particularly of Israeli and American Jews, as being essentially binary: Israel *versus* the Diaspora (ibid., 38).

Moore argues that transnationalism is a state encompassing both the identity and practices of individuals and groups that “assumes multiple social relationships – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political – that link together” (ibid.) different societies. Moore believes that a transnational Jewish citizenship characterized by “cultural exchange, mutual support, political engagement, religious dialogue, social interchange, economic cooperation, [and] educational fellowship” (ibid.) is the “best way to support and sustain Israel” (ibid.). The transnationalism Moore envisions involves several important elements: the active participation of both the Diaspora and Israeli Jews in Jewish societies, the expression of a variety of different (Jewish) perspectives in Jewish societies (ibid., 37), the encouragement of “multiplicity rather than uniformity” (ibid., 38), and finally, the encouragement of “cooperation rather than competition [in response to] changing circumstances” (ibid.).

Moore believes that increasing interaction and transcending binary roles—and thereby “moving to a new type of transnationalism that could reconfigure what is implied in the term ‘Jewish State’” (ibid., 37)—is the best strategy for sustaining Israel. A first step for Israel might be to “redefine its understanding of a ‘Jewish state [by] re-examining the Zionist belief in the negation of the Diaspora” (ibid., 38); while increasing interaction with Israel “would allow American Jews to identify with sectors of the Israeli population rather than with the state... help[ing] to move American Jews away from an idealized understanding of Israel” (ibid., 37). In addition, by sharing in a transnational Jewish citizenship, Israelis would forge “multiple ties of involvement that would broaden and deepen their understanding of Jewish peoplehood” (ibid., 38), invigorating the Israeli experience of Judaism. Through the above-described transnationalism, Jews would develop a form of “ethical peoplehood” that would “re-imagine the possibilities of religious community and responsibility” (ibid.).

Measures of Jewish Peoplehood

Can one offer any social scientific basis that such a transnational strategy would have any popular support? In order to explore the potential for this re-imagination of Jewish peoplehood among Diaspora Jews, I report below briefly part of my own analysis of the American NJPS2001 data, followed by a brief contrast with data from British and Australian Jewry.

(A) Collective Definition of American Jews
The 2001-2002 National Jewish Population Study explored several different definitions of what Jews in America consider themselves to be, i.e., a religious group, an ethnic group, a cultural group, a nationality, a part of a worldwide people. While variations exist across denominations and between respondents who have or have not visited Israel, 70–80% of Jews in America see themselves as a religious, cultural, and ethnic group (Mittelberg, 2007). The percentage of Jews in America who agree that Jews are a nationality drops significantly;

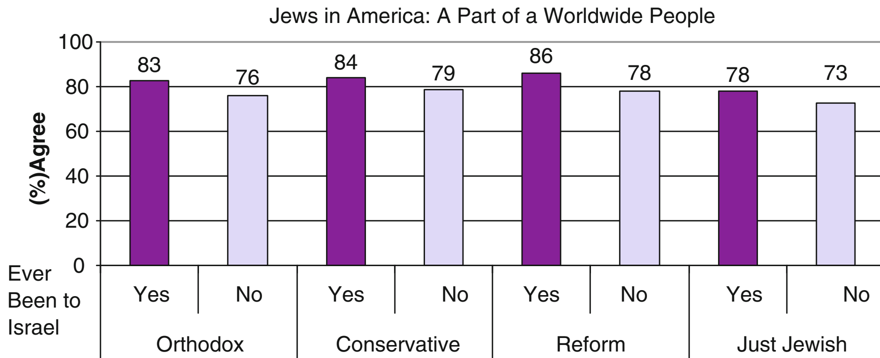

Fig. 1 Jews in America: A part of worldwide people (NJPS 2001 data)

Orthodox Jews are the only denomination with a majority (around 60%) agreeing with this statement. Despite the widespread rejection of the collective identity of nationality, we find across-the-board acceptance (again, 70–80%) of the collective identity of American Jews as being part of a worldwide Jewish People (see Fig. 1).

(B) How American Jews Define Themselves as Jews
The 2001–2002 NJPS also asked respondents whether they themselves have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish People (see Fig. 2). While these personal rates were far lower than the group definitions, generally, respondents under 30, in all denominations, who had visited Israel, expressed a stronger sense of belonging to the Jewish people than their age and denomination peers and often the adult denominational peers who had not visited Israel (see also Mittelberg, 2007).

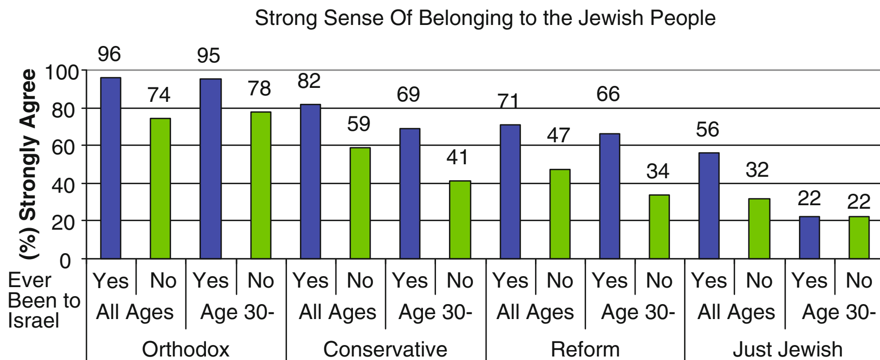

Fig. 2 Jews in America: A strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people

(C) British and Australian Jewry
It is important to note, however, that not all the Jewish diasporas follow the American mould. On the contrary, Sinclair and Milner report that

> "88% of young British Jews aged 16–30 years old agreed somewhat or strongly with the following statement: 'I have a strong sense of belonging to the Jewish people." (ibid., 2005:100)

Moreover 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 (Markus, 2009).

Toward an Index of Jewish Peoplehood

I have written elsewhere that what is methodologically called for today is deliberative, transnational Jewish social research (Mittelberg, 2007). This methodology is not neutral. It calls for an end to Jewish social research that is provincial by demand and habit and suggests a restatement of the Jewish question so that it can be referenced by a priori, worldwide Jewish inclusiveness and reciprocity. Cohen and Yaar's work conducting a bi-national survey with the goal of developing a Jewish peoplehood index (2009, forthcoming), presented at the Herzliya Conference (February 2009) adopts my position.

Even before the presentation of the full report of these two surveys, including 1,000 Israeli Jewish adults and 1,161 American Jewish adults, it is useful to note their measures of Jewish peoplehood which include: a sense of belonging to the Jewish people, a sense of pride in being Jewish, the importance of Israel and America as spiritual centers of the Jewish people, emotional attachment to Israel and American Jews. In addition, the index included measures of transnational social networks including personal family relations abroad, as well as willingness to support activities that would promote inter-community (Israel – America) relationships.

Cohen and Yaar's (2009, forthcoming) preliminary findings may be summarized in the following four key points:

1. Large majorities of both American and Israeli Jews affirm a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the Jewish people and to Israel.
2. Despite the researchers' own expectations, younger Americans shared these views no less than the older members of the population.

3. Both communities score far lower on indices of reciprocal knowledge or sharing relationships. In our terms, they lack transnational social capital.
4. Reciprocal visits are associated with higher scores on Jewish peoplehood measures; however, few Israelis or American Jews actually engage in activities that might foster these relationships. The researchers did not find any sort of ideological abyss, reciprocal negation, or age-related distancing. However, intimate knowledge and familiarity with the other, or any activity designed to create transnational relationships, is decidedly missing. What is lacking is an organizational infrastructure for global Jewish peoplehood.

Over a decade ago, I posited that a way to ensure the Jewish future was through purposeful and programmatic *Jewish People Building* built on engagement and interaction through reciprocal relationships.

> "Thus the Jewish communities in the Diaspora today could assume a *new* historic role of *partner* with Israel, to ensure the Jewish future of Israel in the Diaspora and the Diaspora in Israel – the Jewish future of the Jewish people. It would pursue this goal by engaging intentionally, purposefully, and programmatically in *Jewish People Building* through lateral Israel-Diaspora Jewish programming, of social engagement and interaction between different Jews from different communities who mean something personal to each other and who live out existential commonalities in partially shared communities, even if only for segments of their daily lives, or at important stages in their biographies." (Mittelberg, 1999, p. 135)

Since then, the research mentioned above has shed light on such possibilities and has fueled the hypothesis. Indeed, now we would claim that initiated, educational, reciprocal visits ought to enhance the sense of belonging to the Jewish people. We would argue that this would be true for all ideologies and ages, and, moreover, that it would work for Jews both from Israel and from the Diaspora. Through the lens of this hypothesis, we will now examine several practical interventions.

Top-Down Programming, Jewish Peoplehood Formal Education: Beth Hatefutsoth—International School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies

Beth Hatefutsoth, the Nahum Goldmann Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, is an institution dedicated to telling the story of the Jewish People and describing the special bond between the Jewish People and Israel. Education is central to the work of Beth Hatefutsoth, which in November 2006 (through the support of the Nadav Fund), established the International School for Jewish Peoplehood Studies (SJPS) (http://www.bh.org.il/about-us.aspx).

Often working in cooperation with other institutions, SJPS functioned as a "headquarters" producing learning and teaching guides, as well as educational curricula and activities for distribution. In addition, SJPS invited diverse audiences to events it hosted including enrichment programs, conferences, think-tanks, etc.; the following are descriptions of some of the main projects launched by the SJPS.

My Family Story

This curriculum encourages students to investigate their personal family histories, stimulating and reinforcing family ties. It is designed to strengthen students' identity, convey an appreciation and understanding of the connection between different individual histories, Jewish people's history and global events. Those who use this curriculum are eligible to enter for the "My Family Story" International Competition. SJPS has created an accompanying curricular unit to support teachers and students preparing projects for the competition.

The Educational Kit: Israel—the Vision and the Venture of the Jewish People. Developed in partnership with the Center for Educational Technology (CET), this curriculum includes an assortment of classroom resources: materials, sources, disk, facilitator's guide book, project cards, video, access to the interactive website (www.israventure.com), and ideas for engaging students in the account of international Jewish complex partnership and cooperation in establishing the State of Israel.

Peoplehood Papers

This collection of essays deals with philosophical aspects of Jewish peoplehood, covering subjects of thinking about and creating new understandings and action plans around Jewish peoplehood. Created in collaboration with KolDor and The United Jewish Communities, The Peoplehood Papers feature articles from a diverse group of Jewish leaders and thinkers.

Global Task Force of Jewish Peoplehood Education

With the support of UJA-Federation of New York, SJPS established The Global Task Force of Jewish Peoplehood Education. Over 30 leading practitioners in formal, informal, and adult Jewish education from around the world were invited by SJPS to construct a platform for conceptualizing, strategizing, and educating for Jewish peoplehood. The Task Force projects are presently being collated into a book on Jewish peoplehood education.

Top-Down Programming, Jewish Peoplehood Informal Education: The Taglit-Birthright Israel *Mifgash*

A quarter of a century of extensive research on the *Israel Experience* focused almost exclusively on the Jewish visitors from the Diaspora, showing unequivocally the significant and long-lasting impact that a visit to Israel can have on the Jewish identity and behavior of participants (Mittelberg, 1994, 1999, Chazan and Koriansky, 1997, Cohen, E.H. 2008; Saxe & Chazan, 2008). Increasingly, however, Israel Experience trips—and Taglit-Birthright Israel trips in particular—include a

mifgash—an "encounter" between the Diaspora Jewish visitors and Israeli peers. Recently, there has been some research dedicated specifically to this element of *mifgash*. On a typical Taglit trip, six to eight Israelis, usually soldiers, join the tour group for half or more of the 10-day experience. For a comprehensive account of the Taglit-Birthright experience, see Saxe and Chazan (2008), who highlight not only the dynamics of the *mifgash*, but also the meanings attached to the experience by Diaspora and Israeli participants. Sasson, Mittelberg, Saxe and Hecht (2008) conducted research on the *mifgash* itself. The study conducted in 2007 consisted of qualitative research on 20 tour groups and post-trip surveys of more than 400 Israeli participants, and approximately 6,300 North American participants. The data indicate not only that individuals who participate in Taglit-Birthright, experience significant post-trip impact on a personal level, but also that the cross-cultural, transnational encounter provided by the *mifgash* serves to promote in them a hybrid sense of belonging to the same Jewish people.

The *mifgash* is a structured encounter between individuals; it is at the same time, an encounter between Jewish worlds. The *mifgash* challenges the cultural identity of all its participants, enhancing their sense of collective belonging to the global Jewish people. Both groups recognize commonalities in Jewish background and practice, and this recognition serves as a basis of their sense of common belonging to the Jewish people. During the encounters, participants examine previously taken-for-granted assumptions regarding religion, nationality, and peoplehood. In so doing, they reject antagonistic dualisms of either/or religious or non-religious, Israeli Jew and Diaspora Jew. By creating a common framework of identification, participants come to better understand not only their counterparts—but themselves as well. Thus, the *mifgash* promotes not only Jewish identity, but also builds a sense of belonging to the Jewish people in participants.

Bottom-Up Jewish Peoplehood Informal Education Within Schools: Israel–Diaspora Jewish School-to-School Connections Program

The school-to-school programs discussed below are designed not only to impact the participants involved and to build a sense of Jewish peoplehood, as in the Taglit mifgash, but also to impact the infrastructure culture of the participating school *communities,* through the creation of meaningful and mutual people-to-people connections between the administrators, teachers, parents, and students of the partnered schools.

Methodology

The following is based on a secondary analysis of several interim evaluation reports for the School-to-School Connections Program, in two separate regional partnerships, that has been ongoing for a total of 7 years (2003–2009). In School Twinning

Table 1 School-to-school connections program survey database, 2008

Israeli educators—partnership A	*American educators—partnership A*
December 2007 ($N = 10$)	Two groups (2007, 2008), $N = 14$
Post-questionnaire only	Post-questionnaire only
Israeli students—partnership A	*American students—partnership A*
Two groups (2007, 2008), $N = 49$	Three groups (2008), $N = 76$
Pre- and post-questionnaires	Pre- and post-questionnaires
Israeli students—partnership B	*American students—partnership B*
Three groups (2004–2006), $N = 82$	Three groups (2004–2006), $N = 66$
Pre- and post-questionnaires	Pre- and post-questionnaires

Partnership A, evaluations were conducted among three delegations of teachers and school administrators (24 educators in total), and among five delegations of Israeli and American students (numbering 125 in total). In School Twinning Partnership B evaluations included student data only from six delegations, totaling 148 American and Israeli students (see Table 1).

The educator data is retrospective, administered to the participants who traveled either to the United States or to Israel, following their *mifgash.* All of the student data are longitudinal, collected from the same students at the following three stages: at the outset of the program or just prior to the first *mifgash* (Stage 1); following the trip and *mifgash* either in the United States or Israel, completed by those who traveled (Stage 2); and following each hosting experience, either in the United States or in Israel, completed by those who hosted (Stage 3).

The survey instrument consisted of a written questionnaire composed of "closed" questions with multiple-choice answers as well as a qualitative component of "open" questions to which participants responded in their own words.

The School-to-School Connections Program reported below is the flagship program of the Department for Jewish Peoplehood—Oren, at Oranim College. Pairing schools in Israel and around the world, these programs include building personal and professional relationships between the teachers of each school, developing a joint curriculum, visiting the respective communities, and experiencing "*mifgashim*" or facilitated encounters during these visits. Below are two concrete examples of such programming, where Partnership A, connects American day schools with Israeli state schools, Partnership B connects American day and afternoon schools with Israeli State schools.

School Twinning Partnership A

Together with the local Bureau of Jewish Education and the Jewish Federation, Oren has connected two schools (one school having two campuses) in one geographic area of the United States with four schools in Israel (referred to here as 'School Twinning Partnership A'). Oren's work focuses on (1) creating connections between the educators of the partnered schools through exchanges of educator delegations and articulating a shared vision, goals, and programs for joint study; (2) building a joint curriculum for student study; and (3) carrying out student delegations.

School Twinning Partnership B

Oren currently coordinates and supervises a major School-to-School Partnership, linking 19 schools in another region of the United States with their partner schools in one city in Israel (referred to here as 'School Twinning Partnership B'). Oren provides the educational curriculum and teacher training, bridging the two communities, with positive impact on thousands of students. This large-scale effort demonstrates the ability, capacity, and efficacy of people-to-people programs, using existing school frameworks, matching communities, and leadership, thus reaching dozens of schools.

With respect to school change, in both partnerships, the impact on administrators, educators, students, parents, families, and entire communities grows each year. In addition to the participant-level questionnaire data to be reported below, participating faculty have formally reported the following impacts on school life:

1. Video conferences on topics determined by the educators, with prepared lesson plans. Parents often attend these video conferences as observers.
2. Beit Midrash via video conference, involving preparation of sacred texts for study with questions for discussion.
3. Award-winning Eighth Grade Science curriculum developed and implemented by both the Israeli and American partner schools. While not a Jewish content program, it is powerful in its basis of connections and indirect impact on families and parents, especially after shared success and recognition of successful enterprise, resulting from reciprocal visits and hosting.
4. Exchange of joint curriculum on Jewish subjects for high-school students, noticeably strengthened Jewish component of the curriculum in an Israeli school.
5. Exchange of maps with the partner class, indicating birthplaces and homes of students in each class. Exchange of "identity cards" between partnered classes, indicating essential elements of students' personalities, identities, and lives.
6. Development of website accessible only to the members of the twinned classes and available for the purpose of sustaining formal and informal communications between the students. Establishment of other e-mail and Internet forums to facilitate communication between students.
7. Multilateral school partnerships with classes in various countries besides Israel and the United States. Such relationships exist with schools in Turkey, Germany, and England.

Basic Survey Findings

The following analysis will investigate the impact of Jewish peoplehood education, within four separate sub-groups: Israeli students, Israeli Educators, American students, and American Educators. However, the central finding across all of the schools is related to the *mifgash* (facilitated encounter) *between* these four different sub-groups.

Israeli Students

In order to ascertain whether the goal of building Jewish peoplehood was met, the questionnaires included a variety of questions about the strength of the bond that participants feel toward Jews across the world and toward Israel. Figure 3a–c report pre- and post-*mifgash* student responses from the same Israeli school, which report a meaningful change in Israeli students' sense of belonging to Israel and the Jewish people. Following their hosting experience, the Israeli students recorded significant, positive changes in their strengthened bond with Jews of the United States and all over the world, their view of Israel as the homeland as well as a national, cultural, and religious center for the Jewish people, all together indicate a heightened subjective sense of Jewish peoplehood.

The Israeli students exhibit another equally important response to the *mifgash*. The data show that they were unequivocally proud to be Israeli both before and after their travel. In the United States, they encountered a strikingly different model for being Jewish and for relating to Israel and the Jewish people. The data suggest that they realized that Jews living in other lands hold alternative views both of Israel as the Jewish homeland and of the place of Israel in the Jewish world. Their previous ideas were challenged and re-examined, and the Israelis arrived at new, nuanced understandings, resulting in decreases in their view of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and as a national, cultural, and religious center of the Jewish people. (These decreases from Stage 1 to Stage 2 are illustrated in Fig. 3c.) At the same time, the Israeli students did express a heightened connection to Jews of the United States and to Jews around the world. Thus, despite their realization that Jewish life and attitudes outside of Israel are quite different from what they are accustomed to, the Israeli students did not feel alienated from the "other." Rather, they felt closer and more connected to American Jews after meeting them and learning first-hand about their different and new ways. Students were also asked to respond to the statement, "Israel is a national, cultural, and religious center of the Jewish world." Figure 4 reveals that over several years, both Israeli and American students generally agreed more with this statement following the *mifgash*.

Many students internalized the idea of Jewish peoplehood, and some were able to extrapolate from the personal to the global, and vice versa, from the global to the personal.

> … before the trip I related to myself as a Jew without any questions. After the trip I understood that I am Jewish, and this is not self-evident. (Israeli student, November 2008)

Comments by two different groups of Israeli students following the *mifgashim,* also indicate that they grasped the importance of the Diaspora and the vitality of Jewish life outside of Israel.

- I have a greater awareness of being Jewish, and I understood things about Judaism in the Diaspora that it's not important where you're Jewish; it's important how much you feel Jewish. (Israeli student, November 2008).

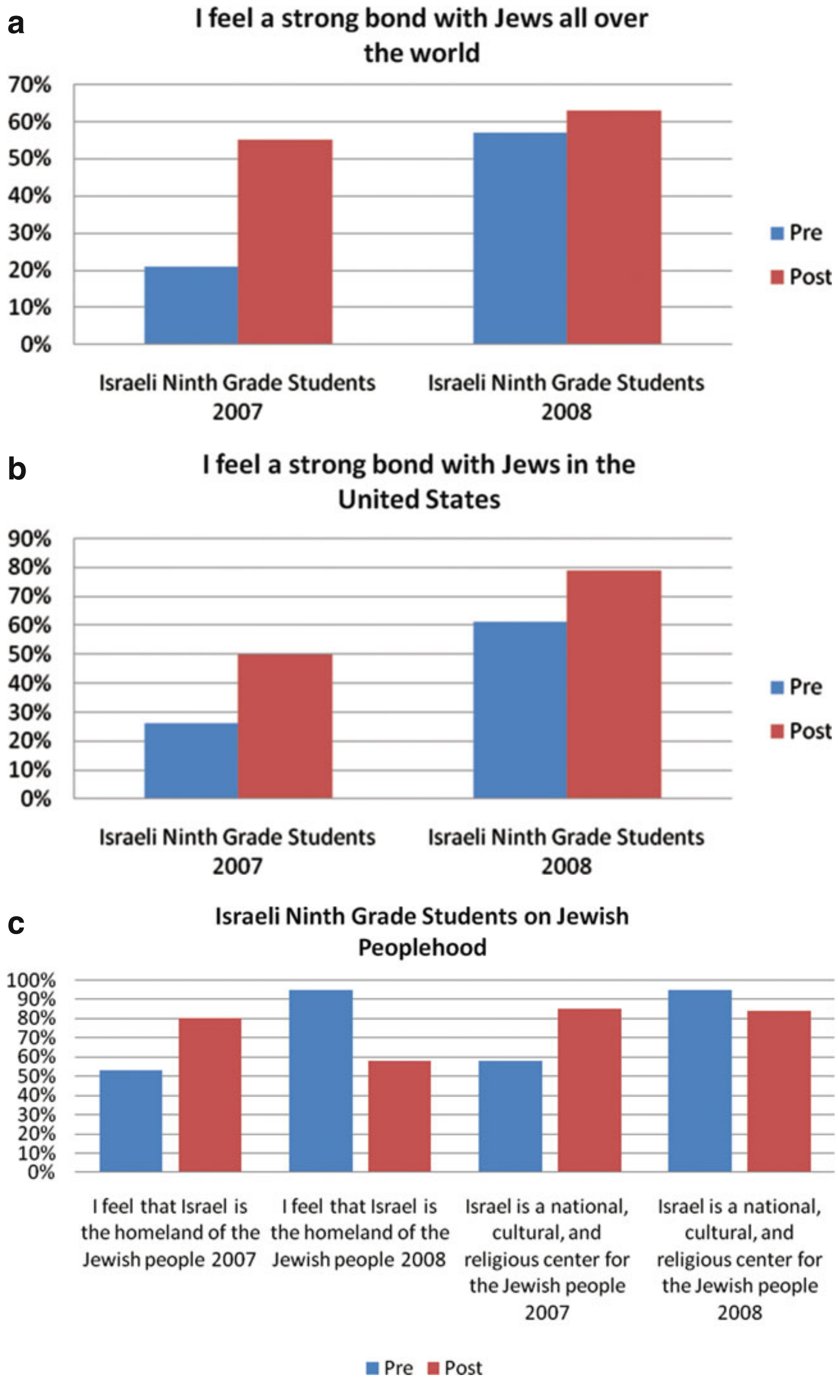

Fig. 3 Examples of impact of *Mifgashim* on Israeli Jewish students' sense of Jewish peoplehood (school twinning partnership A, ninth graders, percentage of responses for the two highest categories, "strongly agree" and "very strongly agree")

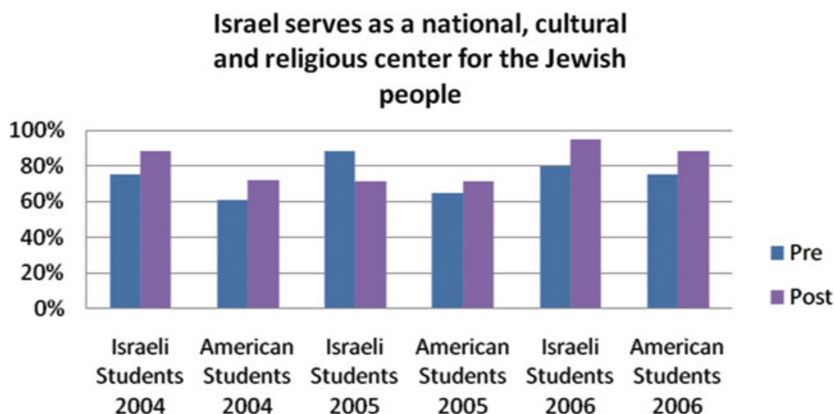

Fig. 4 Israeli and American student response rates to the statement, "Israeli serves as a national, cultural, and religious center for the Jewish people." (school twinning partnership B, tenth graders, percentage of responses for the two highest categories, "strongly agree" and "very strongly agree")

- What changed is that I will think again about maybe going to a synagogue, lighting Shabbat candles, etc. I saw the Judaism of the Americans, and I was surprised that I wasn't connected that way to Judaism. (Israeli student, November 2008).

Israeli Educators

When asked why they chose to participate in the School-to-School Connections Program, Israeli educators pointed to the importance which their *school* places on this program, as well as their own desire to contribute to the relationships.

- My participation in the group was for me a direct continuation of Jewish programming that exists at the school. [It also came] from an ability to contribute to strengthening the connection between teachers in Israel and in the Diaspora. (Israeli educator, June 2008)

Israeli educators, likewise, commented on changes in their sense of Jewish peoplehood following the *mifgash*, in response to questions about the impact of the *mifgash* on their lives.

- A huge influence! It opened a greater exposure in terms of being Jewish, in the State of Israel, being a principal, and what the role is regarding peoplehood, etc. (Israeli principal, December 2007)

Israeli educators were asked how the *mifgash* affected them personally. Again, the transnational, mutual, Jewish connections figured prominently in these educators' reflections.

- Personally, the experiences shaped within me a renewed and deep connection to the land. (Israeli educator, June 2008)

- Absolutely, I am already [experiencing] changes in [my own level] of acceptance and tolerance. (Israeli educator, June 2008)

Israeli educators foresaw that this experience would impact their entire school community through their relationship to Judaism and to each other:

- I will act to strengthen the connection between the [American] students and Israeli students with a focus on Judaism and Eretz Yisrael. (Israeli educator, June 2008)
- I believe that we are the pioneers and from here we can spread out to families, friends, the community, and more. (Israeli educator, June 2008)

American Students

The American students' comments also reflect a heightened sense of Jewish peoplehood and connection to Israelis and Israel, following their hosting experience. Remarks about the highlights of their hosting experience included positive reflections on meeting Jews from around the world; on learning about the Israelis' lives; about showing them their lives in the United States, and/or about similarities and differences with their own; on their mutual connection via Shabbat, being Jewish, or the Hebrew language; and on enjoying these "amazing" people and the process of becoming friends. Among students, a growing sense of Jewish peoplehood seems to begin with an appreciation of the different lives that each group leads and of the commonalities and connections between them.

- As a result of this program, I am more... attached to kids from the [Israeli] School. (American student, June 2008)
- As a result of this program, I am more... interested in visiting Israel and meeting Israeli kids. (American student, June 2008)

The American students also became more aware of their relationship with Israel and Israelis. When asked to complete this statement, "As a result of the Twinning Program you are more...," they responded that they are more "informed about the situation in Israel;" "more connected with kids/people in Israel;" "understanding toward Israel;" "aware of how life is in Israel;" and "interested in visiting Israel and meeting Israeli kids." Their sense of Jewish peoplehood was enhanced through their mutual relationship with their Israeli partners.

American Educators

American educators also experienced meaningful transformations as a result of their *mifgash* in Israel and their relationships with their Israeli counterparts. When asked if any of their attitudes or beliefs about Israel had been impacted by this visit to Israel, they responded as shown in Table 2. As can be seen from the data, following their Israel experience, 80% of the participants feel an increased sense of emotional attachment to Israel as well as an increased sense of attachment to Israeli

Table 2 Impact of the American Jewish educators' *Mifgash* in Israel on their relationship to Israel, June 2008

Statement	Less than before (%)	Same as before (%)	More than before (%)
Your sense of attachment to Israeli culture	0	20	80
How emotionally attached are you to Israel?	0	20	80
Your familiarity with Israel-related groups and organizations in your community	0	40	60
To what extent do you think that Israel serves as a national, cultural, and religious center for the Jewish people?	0	40	60
Your level of participation in Israel-related social activities	0	80	20
To what extent do you feel that your fate and future is bound up with the fate and future of the Jewish people?	0	100	0
To what extent do you see Israel as a source of pride and self-respect for Diaspora Jewry?	0	100	0

culture. Sixty percent are more familiar with Israel-related groups and organizations in their community; and the same percentage feel more strongly that Israel serves as a national, cultural, and religious center for the Jewish people, as did their students (see Fig. 3c).

American Educators relate how this will in turn affect their educational practice:

- Deeper connections to Israel through our friendships and classroom partnerships, and a chance to use the window and mirror of our relationship with the Israeli schools to peer into their lives and re-examine our own. (American educator, June 2007)

American educators were asked why they were interested in participating in this program. The highest rated responses were (a) strengthening ties between Israel and the Diaspora, (b) developing a joint project with a Jewish-Israeli colleague, and (c) being a part of a community of professionals. In their comments regarding their own motivation, they focus on the partnership and on the Jewish and Israeli connections.

- My colleagues and I are embarking on a remarkable partnership with an established Israeli school to deepen and expand our students' connections with and love for Israel. (American educator, June 2008)

Framing the motivation in this way gives structure to future work, both in terms of the content of future programming and also in terms of research.

- I have gained colleagues abroad but more than this, I have close friends, family with the [Israeli] teachers whom, I feel, can work with me on a common goal. (American educator, June 2008)

- I definitely feel more connected to [the Israeli partner school] and have a clearer understanding of the complex situation in Israel. Personally, I can now say that I have friends in Israel. (American educator, June 2008)

In reflecting on how this experience will affect them personally, the American educators commented as follows:

- I have a dee*per* sense of Israel, culture, people. . . as an educator in this time of my life. . . and will bring this back with me on a personal level. (American educator, June 2008)

Professionally, the impact of this experience on the American educators and potentially on their school appears to be profound:

- It will indeed help me in my work. It has given me the passion to continue my studies in both Hebrew language and "Jewish studies." (American educator, June 2007)
- This program. . . will strengthen the connection between youth in US and in Israel, hopefully laying the foundation for a lifetime of connection and community involvement. (American educator, June 2008)

Echoing the findings of Pomson and Grant (2004, p. 67), these educators report that their encounter in Israel allowed them to build powerful personal connections to Israel and with fellow teachers, though we add here, that the teachers involved are not only those from their home school but also their partnered *Israeli* teachers. This experience also served to impact their educational vision and practice, perhaps even to structure the way they now know Israel and its educational promise.

This research, methodologically pairing Israeli and American students as well as Israeli and American educators, all from the very same schools, demonstrates that there is tremendous opportunity in an educational encounter between Jews from different parts of the world. This central element of the program, the *mifgash* is a powerful tool for impacting participants' Jewish identity and sense of Jewish peoplehood. This finding holds regardless of the locale of the particular *mifgash,* whether in Israel or North America. Participants in the *mifgash* discover common beliefs and ideas regarding important aspects of Jewish history and life. In the process of beginning to understand "the other" comes the realization that both American and Israeli Jews essentially share a common Jewish cultural language. Particularly powerful are the opportunities to glimpse into others' lives through home hospitality and sustained contact. The outcome is an enhanced Jewish identity and sense of Jewish peoplehood, i.e., sense of belonging to the Jewish community.

Oren's baseline expectations were that the schools and their communities in North America would be the primary beneficiaries of the connection to Israel. That was, in fact, the case. Nonetheless, we have offered here concrete evidence of impacts on students, educators, schools, and parents in Israel as well, so that the impact on the Israeli side *is as significant* as it is on the North American participants. Connecting Israelis to their Jewish counterparts overseas (a global connection)

has led to a dramatic new understanding of their own local Jewish identity. It is eminently clear that the mutuality of the process is a unique and critical element of this model for building Jewish peoplehood.

The model is driven by the communities with support and facilitation by Oren as an outside educational provider by 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. Finally, the findings offered here both quantitative and qualitative, indicate the potential that a school twinning program with a well-structured *mifgash* may have, not only the individual participant (as seen in Taglit), but also on the schools (Israeli and American) and the wider communities within which they lodge.

Summing Up: Some Essential Components of Jewish Peoplehood Education

Recalling that the goal for Jewish peoplehood education is to build *interdependence*, *reciprocity,* and *mutuality* while accepting multiplicity of identity, what are the essential components of such an education?

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. Hebrew cannot be a sine qua non for Jewish literacy and peoplehood engagement.

Jewish peoplehood education flattens (Friedman, 2006) the educational institutions of the Jewish world (Mittelberg, 2007).

Thus, 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.

Future Research Questions

Some of the research questions that need to be answered in order to develop further the emerging field of Jewish peoplehood education would include the following:

- How can we articulate a clear vision of Jewish peoplehood education, shared by Israeli and Diaspora Jewish communities and their educators, which will drive the field forward?
- What are the educational processes, both top-down and bottom-up, that might transform a local, segmented, sectarian provincial Jewish identity of any intensity, into a glocal transcendent sense of belonging to a worldwide Jewish people?
- How does Jewish identity located within the paradigm of the Jewish State (without a synagogue) become connected to a Jewish identity located within the paradigm of the synagogue (without the Jewish State), and what binds the adherents of each with the other?
- What can we learn from the best practices of the *mifgash* and its pedagogy in developing the conversation and dialogue necessary to build a common Jewish cultural language for Jews worldwide?
- What is required to systematically and consistently translate the demonstrated impact of peoplehood programming on *individuals*, into sustained change in the *school culture* of Israeli and Diaspora schools, so that we may say that the schools are infused with Jewish peoplehood education?
- How are we to reconstruct institutions of Jewish education that will facilitate and sustain long-term transnational institutional relationships between Israel and Diaspora educational institutions, both high schools and Institutions of Higher education?
- What would then be required to translate the impact of the emerging transnational relationships on schools into impact on their wider host communities?
- How can we develop a methodology and practice of transnational Jewish research teams, building common core research instruments in multicultural environment based on the partnership model of EU research?

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Life Cycle Education: The Power of Tradition, Ritual, and Transition

Howard Deitcher

The power of rites of passage to shape, impact, and alter human life has been documented in a host of social, anthropological, psychological, and religious studies (Driver, 1998; Grimes, 2000; Marcus, 2004; Turner, 1967; Van Gennep, 1960; Marcus, 1996). The primary purpose of these rites is to ensure that individuals mark these transitions in meaningful ways that address spiritual, religious, psychological, and social needs. These rites can serve to either facilitate or obstruct critical passages in human life. As Driver claims, "they inscribe images into the memories of participants, and they etch values into the cornerstones of social institutions" (1998, p. 5).

In Jewish life responsibility for this education was traditionally subsumed within the family structure as young Jewish children were full participants in the various rites of passage (Marcus, 1996). With dramatic changes in Jewish family and communal structures arose the need to design educational programs that would prepare Jews of all ages to understand, appreciate, and acquire the necessary knowledge that would enable them to perform these rites. In attempting to address these critical educational challenges in a relevant and purposeful way, numerous educational programs have chosen to focus on life-cycle education as a means to integrate the realms of history, *halakhah* (law), sociology, and psychology, and thereby link the individual Jew's life passages with the rich array of rituals and ceremonies that have been practised throughout Jewish history.

The current study will include four main foci: (a) The factors that have secured the prominent role of life-cycle rituals in Jewish life; (b) The place of life-cycle education in Jewish education programs; (c) Research studies that have addressed educational issues related to the Jewish life cycle; (d) Suggestions for future studies that will expand and deepen our knowledge about the central role of life-cycle education in Jewish life.

Until the latter half of the twentieth century there was a limited number of books that addressed the Jewish life-cycle in a comprehensive way; since that time and over the past two decades in particular, there has been an unprecedented proliferation of

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popular and scholarly materials that have examined these life passages through a host of different religious, cultural, anthropological, and social lenses.[1] In direct contrast to the ever-growing number of popular volumes on Jewish life-cycle education, one is struck by the limited research-based projects on this topic. This phenomenon will be discussed more extensively at a later point.

The recent upsurge in interest has not only been noted in the proliferation of books and the significant increase of courses and programs, but is also reflected in the observance of life-cycle rituals by a growing number of moderately affiliated Jews around the world (Cohen & Eisen, 2000; Milburn & Seidman, 1999; Levi & Katz, 2000).

Four explanations for this growing phenomenon shed light on various social, religious, and psychological dimensions of these rituals. In their seminal work on the lives of contemporary American Jews, Cohen and Eisen (2000) highlight the critical role that ritual observance plays in the lives of these Jews. As these individuals mature, the importance of family takes on new meaning, and life-cycle events assume a renewed sense of purposefulness as they serve to bond the individuals to their past and forge new ties for the future. The rites of passage fill a critical vacuum that allow young Jewish families to add meaning to their newly acquired status, and concurrently, establish a link with their historical roots.

A second explanation is offered by Jeffrey Salkin (1991) who maintains that the recent proliferation of life-cycle rituals represents a paradigm shift in Jewish liturgical spirituality from celebration of festivals to commemorating life-cycle events. He argues that two recent developments in Jewish life have triggered a renewed interest in life-cycle rituals: first, from a theological perspective, there has been a loss of sacred meaning that interprets commandments like celebrating festivals as a divine obligation, and concurrently, from a sociological perspective, there has been a loss of the organic worshipping community that would have commonly celebrated these festivals in a communal setting. In celebrating the Brit Milah (male circumcision), baby namings, Bar/Bat Mitzvah, weddings and funerals, Jews experience a more compelling theological sense of *kedusha* (holiness) than in the traditional festival paradigm which is far less meaningful and appealing. The personal meaning of life-cycle passages buttresses their status and drives individuals to search for public arenas in which they can celebrate these events. A supporting argument for this claim is Salkin's belief that many American Jews consider Yom Kippur's *yizkor* (memorial) service to be the holiest component of not only the sacred season, but the entire Jewish year. Consequently, the holiest component of the festival cycle is, in fact, a life-cycle ritual that is marked by Jews around the world.

A third school of thought posits that this renewed interest in life-cycle rituals can best be understood from a social-historical perspective. Historically, ritual knowledge in general, and life-cycle ritual in particular, was acquired through observation and active participation within the confines of the family, synagogue, or various communal settings. Young Jewish children actively participated in these rituals on

[1] For an annotated bibliography see Marcus, 2004, pp. 20–29.

a regular basis and there was no need to devote precious study time to learn about these practices (Marcus, 2000; Kanarfogel, 1992).

In attempting to explain the dramatic changes in twentieth-century American Jewish life, Sarna (1998) employs the Deweyian distinction between *intentional* education that is provided in schools from *incidental* education, where education is absorbed from the world around. Incidental education clearly dominated early American Jewish life, where the explicit priority was to initiate children into the world of Jewish ritual and practice. Only at a later period did incidental education decline in importance and was replaced by a structured form of intentional education that continues to dominate Jewish life to the present time. "This represents a sea change in Jewish life. Where once Jews learned to negotiate the challenge of living Jewishly in America incidentally, informally, and largely by example, today many of these same lessons are provided intentionally through formal educators and curricula" (p. 11). This paradigmatic shift was explained by Isa Aron (1989) as a move from "enculturation" to "instruction." Borrowing the terms from the Christian theologian, John Westerhoff, Aron contends that *enculturation* constitutes the broadly conceived task of introducing children into a set of values and norms, and thereby initiating them into a particular culture and its commitments. *Instruction* is a more narrowly conceived task that assumes the child's pre-existing commitment to a culture and its norms; it is concerned with assisting children to acquire knowledge of the ideas and skills that society values. Instruction typically takes place within the walls of a classroom, while enculturation is less structured, experienced by direct exposure to the culture and its norms, and leans heavily on the affective. The emerging shifts in Jewish family structures and communal life has created a new set of circumstances which in turn has given over this responsibility to a host of formal educational frameworks (Dash-Moore, 1987).

A fourth thesis is discussed by Taylor (1992) and focuses on the central role of radical individualism in modern society. In modern society, the social environment of each individual is transformed, individual self-awareness is enhanced, and individual choice assumes a new sense of urgency. This newly defined sense of individualism challenges traditional understanding about religious belief and ritual behavior (Berger et al., 1973). Cohen and Eisen labeled this change as a move from an emphasis on "public Judaism" to "private Judaism," whereby contemporary Jews discover and construct Jewish meaning in the private sphere through prayer, study, and ritual and are much less engaged in organizational life, including philanthropy, support for Israel, or the fight against anti-Semitism. In sociological terms, the shift from the group experience to the individual Jew has heightened the popularity and prominence of life-cycle rituals across all denominations.

The Place of Life-Cycle Education in Jewish Education Programs

Over the past two decades the celebration of rites of passage has assumed a more prominent and influential role in the lives of Jewish families around the world. This dramatic change is reflected in the increasingly dominant role that life-cycle

education plays in school curricula, adult education programs, as well as a host of different family education programs (Moskowitz, 2003).[2] In non-Orthodox circles life-cycle education serves as one of the key building blocks in both congregational schools as well as day-school settings.

Israeli middle-school syllabi include extensive programs on personal and group celebrations of Bar and Bat Mitzvah as a means to bolster the Jewish identity of these youngsters (www.daat.ac.il). A similar trend emerges from the new CHAI curriculum that is currently being taught in American Reform congregational schools (see Avodah section in www.urj.org). In browsing some of the book publishers for American Jewish schools, one is struck by the disproportionate number of publications on life cycle (www.torahaura.com; www.behrman.powerwebbook.com). In Orthodox schools the role of life-cycle education is less dominant; at the same time one notes a significant emphasis on celebrating new and emerging rituals that have recently secured a place in Orthodox circles. In reviewing the curricular programs of Torah U'Mesorah, for example, it is intriguing to note that the bat mitzvah rite is the most prominent rite of passage, overshadowing the other rites in a pronounced and significant way (www.chinuch.org). This is a curious development, as it illustrates the use of life-cycle education as a means to addressing new social developments in the Orthodox world, a phenomenon that to date was most closely identified with the non-Orthodox.

Adult education programs also devote a significant amount of time to exploring the Jewish life cycle. In most cases these programs weave together the values and conceptual underpinnings of the various rites of passage with practical information about how to best commemorate these ceremonies in a meaningful and personal way (Florence Melton Adult Mini school curriculum; Israel, Steve, "The Jewish Life Cycle," www.jewishagency.org; www.judaism.about.com/od/lifeevents/Life_Events.htm). The opportunity to contemplate rituals that are rich in ideas, values, and psychological wisdom, and at the same time invite the adult learner to perform these ceremonies at transitional points in their lives has generated a flurry of new programs that have caught the imagination of many Jews and succeeded in changing the face of ritual observance.

Research Review

After determining the inherent need for life-cycle education and the wealth of educational opportunities that this topic holds for large numbers of Jews around the world, one is struck by the dearth of research that has been conducted to date.

In summarizing the current state of educational research on life-cycle education several points of interest emerge: (a) the vast majority of research has been conducted in non-Orthodox circles and focuses on issues of identity, psychological

[2] For Israeli education see http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/mishpach/index.htm

development, and issues of policy planning. (b) Few studies have examined curricular issues or challenges of professional development. This observation is even more pronounced when one compares this area of study to parallel studies of other content areas such as Bible education or Hebrew language instruction. (c) Finally, in reviewing the range of studies on the various rites of passage the over-representation of Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies is arresting.

In the 1980s a single doctoral dissertation examined the need for and potential impact of life-cycle education in Orthodox day schools (Deitcher, 1985). The study presented a theoretical argument for the need and critical role that a course on life cycle might fill in Orthodox high schools and then provided guidelines for the implementation of such a program. The suggested program was piloted in eight educational settings worldwide and the findings reflected different contextual nuances and influences. Educators from these communities were invited to respond to the following two questions: (a) Is there a perceived need to address the rites of passage in your educational program? (b) If so, does the cited project serve as a viable model for achieving this goal? Both questions elicited positive responses and demonstrated the need for ongoing research as well as the preparation of additional educational materials for use in various settings.

As noted above, rites of passage meet a host of psychological, social, and religious needs that deeply impact human development. In the following section I will review some of the most salient research projects that have explored these issues, highlight those areas that have not received adequate attention, and suggest new research projects that can further our understanding of the field and thereby impact educational practice.

The Power of Ritual

Durkheim's 1912 book, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, is oftentimes identified as the classic guide to understanding the power of life-cycle rituals on human development. This study argues that ritual performance is an essential mechanism in helping individuals deal with the chaos of human experience and in creating a coherent framework that introduces a sense of order and regularity into people's everyday lives (Kertzer, 1988). In describing this process, Durkheim and his followers identified three functions that rituals fulfill in the construction of self: (a) ritual creates a sense of *sacredness* (although the meaning of sacred often radically differs from one theorist to another); (b) ritual contributes to feelings of *social solidarity*; (c) ritual works to *maintain the social order*. Drawing on these concepts, Schoenfeld (1997) describes a Bar Mitzvah as a socially structured ritual occasion that takes humans out of the world and focuses our attention on what is really valuable. It generally evokes a powerful emotional response in both child and parent as it touches on a host of different inner struggles: it formalizes the transition into new stages and the accompanying sense of responsibility, it makes onerous demands on both the child and parents, and usually triggers positive forms of growth and maturation.

A second point about the primacy of life-cycle ritual refers to the deep sense of order that these rites contribute during a turbulent period of one's life which is oftentimes filled with a sense of instability and fear of the unknown. In many cases, these rituals serve as the glue that binds individuals to each other and to modes of living that have stood the test of time. At the same time, many of these well-anchored rituals invite the participants to imagine innovative ways to find meaning and relevance in their particular cultural, social, and historical context (Grimes, 2000).

These rituals also reflect the way individuals assemble together as a community and celebrate the various stages of life in a dynamic and innovative way. Victor Turner (1969) has labeled this modality of celebration as "communitas," and argues that this is not only a matter of providing a general stamp of legitimacy to a society's structure, but rather gives recognition to an essential and generic human bond, without which there would be no society. Examples of how Jewish life-cycle rituals embody this value have been the focus of numerous educational programs across different age levels and denominations (Musleah, 1997; Ichnold, 2007; Grant, 2007).

Furthermore, all efficacious rituals are pregnant with symbols and symbolism that provide special opportunities for the participants to engage in a process of interpretation and wonder (Marcus, 2004; Rubin, 1995). The multiple interpretive meanings of these symbols reflect different social contextual frameworks and hermeneutics.

Finally, rites of passage presuppose a mystical or supernatural dimension that is oftentimes sought by the individual Jew during periods of liminality and transition. Under these circumstances many individuals seek communion with a transcendent being that provides them with a new sense of time, space, and destiny beyond their finite experience. This alleviates some of the uncertainty and instills a sense of hope and confidence about the impending challenges that lie ahead (Salkin, 1993).

Impact on Identity

A number of American researchers have studied the critical role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ritual on the personal, religious, and ethnic identity of the young person and its impact on the family system. In 1979, Zegans and Zegans interviewed nine boys who had celebrated their bar mitzvah ceremony in a Reform synagogue in order to explore how this process impacted their lives. The results were arresting as all of the boys reported that it enhanced their self-image and perceived image within their larger community. In addition the boys felt a deeper connection to other Jews and a sense of rootedness and attachment to the Jewish people and its values. A later and much larger study by Kosmin (2000) surveyed 1400 families who had celebrated a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Conservative synagogues in order to learn how the ceremony impacted the lives of the youngsters and their families. Over 90% of the youngsters reported that the ceremony was the most important part of the event, in contrast to 8% who stated that the party was, and 2% who felt that the gifts were. Four years later, Kosmin and Keysar (2004) revisited these families

and learned that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience was still regarded as having been a formative and significant experience. Nearly half of the sample (49%) reported that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony continued to be the most important component for shaping the Jewish identity of adolescents and their families, while 29% of the respondents pointed to the training period as a critical part of the experience.

Impact on Family Structure and Identity

Judith Davis (1987) studied the impact of the Bar Mitzvah ceremony on families celebrating this ritual for the first time. She observed four diverse Jewish families, including a blended Conservative family, an intact Reform family, a Russian immigrant family, and a Hassidic family, and reported on how they planned, participated in, and reflected on their first child's Bar Mitzvah. In summarizing the results of her study, Davis suggested that the Bar Mitzvah process is a natural coping mechanism for contemporary Jewish families facing the normative crisis of adolescent transition. More specifically, the Bar Mitzvah process impacts the family system in two distinct ways: on the one hand it introduces new forms of stress and anxiety into the family, and at the same time, it provides a way for dealing with these challenges by drawing on the family's inherent resources to enact change and focus on the road ahead. Vogel's study (2002) demonstrated similar results in Israeli families.

In a related study, Schoenfeld (1993) examined the impact of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony on Jewish families from a social-psychological perspective, invoking the term "reflexitivity and its discontents" as a means to describe the family's approach to this celebration. These families expressed a sense of ambivalence about what it meant to continue a traditional practice in contemporary society. The social celebrations acted as a counterpoint to synagogue ritual, a kind of "hedging one's bets" by building the event around meanings which contrasted with those being expressed in the synagogue. The second theme was uncertainty about the meaning of transition into early adolescence as it occurs in contemporary society. Schoenfeld (1997) pursued this line of thinking in a later article that focused on sociological theory of identity as it emerges in studying family celebrations of Bar/Bat Mitzvah and its implications for family education. The study adopted a research model that is borrowed from the field of contemporary identity and probed its meaning for Jewish families' celebration of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony.

Impact on Social Integration

A different body of research has probed the critical role that religious rituals play in cultivating social integration. This work claims that while in the past, religious and political myths provided members of a community with a sense of their origins and destiny, in today's society, synagogues and other Jewish communal organizations serve as sources for communal identity and affinity. Synagogue rituals thus provide participants with an opportunity to voluntarily identify with the community and

thereby affirm their commitment to its ideals, values, and norms (Cohen & Eisen, 2000). Through song, dress, liturgy, and food, Jews identify with their community. At the same time, the synagogue provides an immediate and unmediated sense of involvement with the "sacred," confirming the world view and indeed the very being of the participant (Durkheim, 1965).

All of these studies underscore the crucial role of life-cycle rituals in general, and Bar/Bat Mitzvah in particular, in shaping and strengthening the personal identity of Jewish adolescents, their families, and the impact of these rituals in forging meaningful bonds with the larger Jewish community. This research also sheds light on the dominant role that life-cycle education continues to play in Jewish educational frameworks worldwide.

Emerging Trends in Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebrations

Competing Agendas

In attempting to exploit the potential impact of Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations, Jewish communities seek to create rituals that on the one hand are anchored in traditional customs and at the same time meet the diverse needs of celebrants and their families. Attempts to reach this goal are outlined in Schoenfeld's (1988) discussion about the ongoing tension between two competing groups about the essential message of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration in contemporary North American Jewish life. Rabbis and educators have championed the "elite religion of Judaism" whereby study and active participation in Jewish ritual will entitle the Jewish child to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. At the same time, parents have assumed responsibility for the "folk religion of Judaism," which emphasizes the importance of the *simcha* (joy and celebration) as imbedded in the traditional party. Both groups continue to pull in opposite directions and the gap between them has grown exponentially, thereby fueling feelings of alienation and mutual feelings of irrelevance. Various attempts have been made to bridge the gap between the competing agendas, but this knotty issue demands more extensive research if it is to be addressed in a constructive and thoughtful way (Schein & Wyner, 1996).

In further considering how to make the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony relevant for modern Jews, Salkin (1991) probed the impact of changing the liturgical service to meet the theological needs of the celebrating family and their community. He suggested conceiving of Bar/Bat Mitzvah as theater and changing the liturgy of the ceremony to meet the evolving needs of modern Jews. His research involved interviewing families who attended the ceremonies in order to determine the extent to which they assimilated new meanings. In addition questionnaires were distributed to 160 guests who participated in the ceremonies and their responses were tabulated. Salkin discovered that the changes in the ceremony positively altered people's perceptions of the meaning of Bar/Bat Mitzvah; in particular these changes impacted the immediate family's perception and attitude. Furthermore, for those people who were active in the synagogue and in Jewish life, the new ceremony tended to

affirm their commitment to the ritual. For those who were more on the periphery of Jewish life, the changes had greater potential to “upgrade” their spirituality. In other words, Salkin’s experiment showed that the further one is from the center of Jewish life, the more effective the ceremony can be in strengthening one’s Jewish identity and sense of spirituality. At the same time, as Salkin cautions his readers, the longevity of this “spiritual high” remains to be seen, requiring additional research.

Re-riting Life-Cycle Rituals

A key feature of rites of passage is their ability to impact, mirror, and be shaped by various social, cultural, and historical conditions. Rituals that don’t reinvent themselves become stagnant and risk becoming extinct or irrelevant. Historically, the process of re-riting Jewish rites of passage has continued to flourish since the Talmudic period (Marcus, 2004). In recent times we have witnessed a growing and significant trend to “re-rite” these ceremonies by a host of groups including feminists, converts, gays and lesbians, spiritual seekers, intermarried couples, adults returning to Judaism, etc. (Friedland-Arza, 2002; Gefen, 2005; Ichnold, 2007; Orenstein, 1994). Reflecting on significant changes in American Jewish life in the twentieth century, Charles Liebman (1999) distinguishes between *ritual* and *ceremony*, whereby ritual is defined as explicit religious behavior that is based on tradition and steeped in the sources, while ceremony is driven by a perceived need to adapt the tradition to meet the evolving needs of the larger group. While the former leans on the authority of the tradition, the latter is more flexible and invites the individual Jew to actively identify with the community and thereby assume his/her place in the larger collective. Liebman notes a dramatic drop in ritual behavior among young Jews that corresponds with the larger American trend of distancing from the formal institutionally based traditions. Concurrently, we witness a flourishing of custom-based ceremonies that cater to the particular needs of Jews who choose to celebrate life-cycle events that are meaningful to them, and are less bound to the inherited ceremonies.

During the past half century new rites have been created and existing ones have been modified and these clearly reflect changes in life styles, gender roles, personal and collective identity, and other social developments (Gefen, 2005). The power and potency of these changes have clearly impacted the teaching of life-cycle programs. One of the most significant and momentous examples of this phenomenon is the emerging trend of adult women and men to celebrating their adult Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies at an advanced age. In fact, there appears to be a far larger number of adult women celebrating Bat Mitzvah ceremonies than there are adult men. The phenomenon is more prevalent today and has generated the creation of new rituals and ceremonies that respond to this expressed need (Adelman, 1990; Levine, 1991; Umansky & Ashton, 1992; Grant, 2000, 2003; Cousens, 2002). As the level of women’s Jewish education has risen and their knowledge base expanded, the desire to celebrate personal milestones has increased dramatically. The surge of interest in

Jewish feminism and Jewish Studies has fueled the creation of academic and popular literature on new rituals and ceremonies for Jewish women. This phenomenon cuts across all streams of Jewish life and is truly recognized as a watershed development in Jewish life and ritology.

Traditionally women felt excluded from the mainstay of Jewish ritual observance and as a result they have seized the opportunity to reclaim their part of the tradition (Vergon, 2006). Furthermore, public celebrations of rites of passage allow women to identify with the larger Jewish community and provide a "safe space" to share these life-transition moments. Thus, celebrating a Bat Mitzvah in a synagogue lends legitimacy and offers public acknowledgement that the woman's place in Jewish life has been transformed in the most dramatic ways (Friedland-Arza, 2002; Goldberg, 1998; Grant, 2007). This new sense of elevated stature is reflected in an interview that Grant (2000) conducted with a woman named Audrey who had never felt comfortable with her Judaism: "There is also no question that being able to read the Torah and Haftarah gives me a stronger sense of identity and of my membership within the community, my synagogue family" (p. 289).

In addition, celebrating the Bat Mitzvah ceremony oftentimes encourages Jewish women to embark upon an ongoing program of Jewish learning that carries serious implications for their religious development (Cousens, 2002; Grant, 2007). It is interesting to observe how these experiences shape the lives of the participants over an extended period of time, including their perceived sense of empowerment, a deeper sense of meaning in worship and religious practice, and intensification of their relationship to the synagogue community (Grant, 2003a, 2000).

A striking characteristic of these new rituals is the attempt to reclaim traditional ceremonies and infuse them with a new-found sense of meaning and relevance that speaks to mature adults. This phenomenon is most evident when one examines the features of older-women Bat Mitzvah ceremonies, where the prevailing practice is to adopt an existing Jewish ritual rather than attempting to create a totally new one. This practice helps older people navigate the aging process and to create a "wise elder" role for themselves within their family, synagogue, and larger Jewish community.

In attempting to delve deeper into this phenomenon, Vergon (2006) considered how Erikson's classic theory of human development may explain the desire of older Jewish women to celebrate a Bat Mitzvah ceremony. She discovered that during their Bat Mitzvah experience, the majority of women were dealing with issues that were consistent with the Erikson stage they were in, and were also revisiting earlier life stages, a point suggested by the Eriksonian concept of epigenesis as a key stage of human development.

A different sort of change and innovation in Jewish ritology appears in studies that were conducted by Schoenfeld (1986) on how the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony functions as a catalyst for social change in various Jewish ideological groups. Schoenfeld posits that because the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a ritual of identification, various ideological groups modified or transformed the ceremony in order to meet evolving social needs. A particular area of interest examines how these rituals were transformed in order to address questions of pluralism that took on immediate urgency in North American Jewish life. An evolving

trend adopts the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony as a means of promoting social networking and philanthropy among young North American Jews (www.jchoice.org; www.globaljsam.ning.com).

In surveying the multitude of new rituals and modification of existing ones that have emerged in the past two decades, it seems imperative that ongoing research focus on the impact of these changes and their educational implications. Potential questions include the following: Who assumes responsibility for creating new rituals and what is the process of conceptualizing as well as introducing these new rites into Jewish communities? How are these new rites presented in the various life-cycle educational programs? How do communities respond to these new developments? What factors contribute to the successful integration of certain new rites and distinguish them from those that never seem to take root?

The Impact of Bar/Bat Mitzvah on Policy Planning for Jewish Education

An area of acute concern to the field of Jewish education relates to the severe drop of Jewish involvement beyond the Bar/Bat Mitzvah period. Two research projects address this issue from a social and policy planning perspective, by interviewing a group of congregation school students and their parents. Bragar Weinglass (1995) conducted a quantitative study of policy and program characteristics that explain enrollment of post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah Jewish students in synagogue school-education programs. The study considered the following characteristics: accessibility to school, synagogue and school costs, and types of communication with parents and students. The characteristics also included indicators relating to the structure and content of classes, recruiting activities, and school-sponsored youth activities. These findings help inform policy makers about the needs and concerns of congregation school students and their families, and can help determine the goals, structures, and educational programs of these institutions.

A later study focused on the motives of teenagers from interfaith families as they weigh the possibility of continuing their formal Jewish education in the post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah years. Levy-Rotstein (2006) conducted a narrative analysis of interviews with students and their families in order to deepen our understanding of the most salient factors that influenced the decision of these teens to continue their Jewish education beyond the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The study examined five case studies and identified the following three factors as firmly impacting the decision-making process: the family context, present and prior religious school experience, and the personal motivation to learn. In summarizing the results of her study, Rotstein claims that teenagers from interfaith families, unlike many of their peers have had successful religious school experiences that have served a key role in their deciding to continue their Jewish education. When questioned about what specific influences were most powerful, the interviewees cited the influence of caring teachers, rabbis, and youth advisors who succeeded in engaging the whole child, and did not focus only on the cognitive parts of the program.

Analyzing Teaching Approaches to Life-Cycle Education

As noted above, few studies have analyzed curricular materials or professional development programs on life-cycle education. The dearth of research in this area is most unfortunate as this knowledge could enrich our understanding about some of the most significant challenges facing Jewish life-cycle education today. Cultural norms, ideas, and values shape, modify, and impact curricular Jewish educational programs in general and life-cycle programs in particular. Barry Holtz (2003) as well as Michael Rosenak (1986) addressed this issue in the context of teaching Bible in contemporary American society, and argued that in attempting to wrestle with competing values between the larger American society and Biblical texts, teachers oftentimes "rewrite" these narratives in ways that seek to bridge the two worlds. This form of "rewriting" is highlighted in two separate studies that examined Bar/Bat Mitzvah programs in Israel and in North America.

Sochachevsky-Bacon's (2008) recent article compared and contrasted three curricular programs that are currently being taught in different educational streams of the Israeli public-school system. The study analyzed attitudes toward gender, theology, and autobiographical texts, and demonstrated how each educational stream interprets these themes in starkly different ways. An earlier project was undertaken by Schoenfeld (1994) in which he reviewed two popular books on the role of Bar/Bat Mitzvah in the North American Jewish context. Schoenfeld's content analysis of these books sought to uncover the historical and social role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah rituals in North American Jewish life. Both studies point to the profound role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Jewish life and the significant impact of the underlying social, religious, and psychological assumptions of the curriculum writers on the various programs.

Over-Representation of Bar/Bat Mitzvah Programs

In reviewing and analyzing curricular programs on life cycle, one is struck by the over-representation of Bar/Bat Mitzvah programs and the glaring absence of other life-cycle passages. This phenomenon begs the question about the unique role of Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations in modern Jewish life, and the implications for educational practice.

Several theses shed light on the inherent appeal of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ritual, and concurrently, explain the over-representation of educational materials that address this rite of passage. In attempting to understand this phenomenon one is struck by the claim that over the past two decades there has been a steady decline in the number of registered Jewish weddings and synagogue-based funerals (Kosmin, 2000). By contrast, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ritual has weathered the storm of erosion, and in point of fact, the number of Bat Mitzvah celebrations has increased exponentially over the last decades. Furthermore, as discussed above, the significant increase of adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations underscore this rite's prominence in contemporary Jewish life.

A second explanation maintains that the vast majority of North American formal Jewish education takes place in congregation schools and culminates with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ritual. Consequently, congregation schools oftentimes target families who wish to celebrate their children's Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony in the synagogue and require parents to enroll their youngsters in these schools for a minimum number of years prior to the celebration. This results in a situation where the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is viewed as the climax of the child's education and thereby becomes a key focal point in the curriculum. This helps create a sense of synergy between the goals of the synagogue and their sponsored schools as synagogues understand that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a critical hook to involve the child and her family in the lives of the congregations. "If one is looking for ways to engage Jewish families in the synagogue, this (the bar/bat mitzvah celebration) is one that obviously works" (p. 234). The power of Bar/Bat mitzvah celebrations to mobilize the family and engage them in a panoply of educational programs has been documented and fuels the synagogues' attempts to promote these rites (Kosmin, 2000).

A third theory argues that schools around the world have grasped the extraordinary potential of extensive Bar/Bat Mitzvah educational programs as a means to engage youngsters in a rigorous and meaningful educational experience on identity formation, and at the same time allowing them to forge meaningful bonds with the larger Jewish community. Bar/Bat Mitzvah year-long study programs are a central educational component in Israeli national schools, and include a battery of group and individual tasks that engage the students for a significant portion of their middle school studies (http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/mishpach/index.htm).

The Emerging Role of Death Education and Laws of Bereavement

Aside from Bar/Bat Mitzvah the only other rite of passage that has been researched to date is death and bereavement. In the 1980s two dissertations focused on the need to introduce death education into formal Jewish settings, and both of them included an analysis of existing programs.

In 1979 Wolowelsky conducted a study on the goals and curricula of selected New York City religious high schools in the area of death education and contrasted them with those prepared for public schools. In the course of his research, Wolowelsky discovered that serious discussion of death and bereavement is all but omitted from the public school not because of an oversight, but because it is considered to be a cultural taboo. This is an inversion of the situation in religious schools where serious discussion of issues related to death was considered to be an integral part of the religious system and is afforded a prominent role in the overall educational program. In cases where death education was omitted from the religious schools' program, it was usually the result of an oversight or caused by the rigid structure of the course offerings. On the whole religious schools felt strongly that high-school students should have the opportunity to clarify their values and express

their fears about death, as the principals of these schools argued that their educational mandate was to teach and develop values rather than simply help students clarify their own value systems.

Elkin's study (1980) presents research, data, and insights concerning an educational program on death, dying, and bereavement for Jewish adolescents. The stated purpose of this study was to examine death-education programs for Jewish adolescents from Conservative and Reform families. Elkin echoes Wolowelsky's claim about the critical role of death-education programs in helping these adolescents develop healthy and positive understandings about the final stage of life, and concurrently deepen their understanding and appreciation about the laws of bereavement.

It is a curious fact that since the 1980s, only one doctoral dissertation has addressed issues of death instruction in Jewish educational settings. Rich (2001) presented a case study that analyzed a process used to create a death-education curriculum for use in American liberal-congregation schools. In presenting his findings, Rich repeatedly underscores the critical importance of death education in the congregation school curriculum, and the need for teachers to confront the range of emotions that can be triggered by engaging in this topic. Furthermore, this study points to the crucial need for keeping parents informed about the implementation of death-education programs and their ongoing involvement throughout the process.

An additional and particularly insightful piece of research on death education examined the dynamics of cultural performance and social dramas at a Reform congregational school in the United States (Reimer, 1997). This study focused on a death education lesson for a group of sixth-grade students and their families, where many of these children were accompanied by their parents and siblings. In reflecting on the educational impact of studying the laws of mourning in this framework, Joseph Reimer claims: “Sitting with these parents and children as they came alive with a heightened level of interest and engagement, I felt as if an electric current were running this group. I could feel the current running through me as well leading me to wonder: what makes the educational moment so alive?” (p. 26). One could argue that a key factor that guaranteed the success of this program was the selection of a unit on death education that met the diverse needs of the students and their families, and thereby highlighted the educational potential of this subject matter for a wide range of Jewish students. As stated above each of these studies emphasized the critical need to teach about death and bereavement in a systematic and candid way; unfortunately, to date the impact of this plea has been minimal.

An Agenda for Future Research

As argued above, the stunning contrast between the number of available life-cycle educational programs and related research studies is most telling. There is an urgent need to conduct research on topics of life-cycle education that will enhance our understanding of current educational practice and concurrently provide new vistas

for introducing this topic in novel and creative ways that criss-cross educational frameworks and new target populations. Herewith is a sample of such topics:

Evaluating the Goals, Content, and Underlying Assumptions of Life-Cycle Programs

In attempting to understand the underlying philosophical, hermeneutic, and educational assumptions of any educational program it behooves the researcher to analyze the content of the particular program and reflect on the variety of ways in which it approaches the subject matter and makes the subsequent "educational translation" (Rosenak, 1987). This examination is not only concerned with the level of difficulty or sophistication of the material, its factual accuracy, its aesthetic presentation, or the assumed background of the student and teacher. Perhaps most importantly, this exercise allows the reader to uncover the program's tacit beliefs about the central purposes of education, the way people learn, preferred teaching styles, the assumptions about the particular subject matter, and the social milieu in which the material will be studied and taught.

Efficacy of Life-Cycle Programs

Our current knowledge about how life-cycle education impacts the lives of students is sporadic, anecdotal, and lacking in depth. This knowledge would prove invaluable in helping us conceptualize a variety of educational programs for Jewish adolescents, adults, families, and the larger community. We recommend interviewing students who have completed a life-cycle course and exploring with them the place that these formative issues played in their studies and their ongoing development. A model for evaluating this impact might focus on the following three areas: knowledge (Dorph, 1993; Grossman, 1990), practice (Marcus, 2004; Rubin, 1995), and the affective realm (Marcus, 2004). Viable evaluation instruments to gauge these indices have been prepared for other areas of Jewish studies, and could be easily adapted for life-cycle education.

Integration of Jewish and General Studies

One of the most promising and innovative ways to introduce Jewish life-cycle education into the lives of Jewish day schools could involve the process of curricular integration. Over the past three decades this approach has attracted much attention in the areas of research and practice in Jewish education and has sparked much debate and deliberation (Holtz, 1980; Malkus, 2001; Pomson, 2001; Solomon, 1984; Zeldin, 1998).

To date, several innovative educational programs have adopted the integration model to educate about life-cycle events. In attempting to highlight the evolution

of the Bat Mitzvah ritual, Regina Stein (2001) traces a host of social, political, and historical forces in the larger American context that shaped and impacted this ceremony. In so doing, she adopts Solomon's use of integration of Judaism and Americanism, and thereby provides students with an engaging and dynamic example of curriculum integration. Similarly, Davis (1987) analyzes how the ongoing search for new adult rituals in the larger American social context has impacted the celebration of adult Bar Mitzvahs. Research projects on curriculum integration for life-cycle education need to explore the inherent match between the subject matter and the stated educational goals and its programmatic implications. In addition, the field would greatly benefit from an evaluative study about the impact of these integrated programs and the challenges they present for large-scale adaptation.

A Standards and Benchmarks Project

The issue of accountability for student achievement stands at the forefront of American education (Malone & Nelson, 2006). Parents, politicians, community leaders, and educators have joined forces to support efforts that will help children attain the types of knowledge, develop the skills, and acquire the ability to become productive citizens. The underlying assumption behind this campaign is that without a firm grasp of projected goals and clear outcomes, our educational efforts will be futile and our students will flounder.

The standards and benchmarks approach carries a series of core implications for Jewish education. A hallmark feature of Jewish schools is their commitment to mission-driven goals that attempt to infuse the learners with a sense of love, commitment to, and knowledge of Jewish life, that criss-crosses the cognitive, affective, spiritual, and normative realms. It seems only natural that Jewish schools would be keen to engage in an educational process that would set benchmarks and standards for their work in Jewish Studies. In 2004, the Avi Chai Foundation supported a project by the Melton Research Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America to introduce a set of standards and benchmarks into the study of Bible at Solomon Schechter, Community, and Reform day schools across North America (www.jtsa.edu/davidson/melton/standards).

This project holds much promise for the teaching of life-cycle education. One of the recurring themes that surfaces in educational circles about the role and efficacy of life-cycle programs in the Jewish studies curriculum is their lack of clarity, a defined role, and purposefulness (Wertheimer, 2007). The Melton Research Center project directly addresses this challenge by seeking to "create mechanisms to map the terrain of the relationship between subject matter (curricular content) and Jewish belief and practice, the common freight of most day schools vision and mission statements." An accessible standards and benchmarks project for life-cycle education would fill a critical role in curriculum development, and carry implications for school self-study, professional development, learner achievement, and lifelong Jewish study.

Over the past two decades life-cycle education has assumed a more prominent and influential role in Jewish life. Recent studies on the power of ritual in general and life-cycle rites in particular, have demonstrated the unique role that life-cycle education can play for contemporary Jews. Social, historical, and cultural trends have helped modify and shape existing rituals and fueled new ceremonies that have caught the imagination of Jewish communities worldwide. As these changes continue to penetrate Jewish life, new issues and challenges will emerge that spawn empirical and qualitative research for scores of researchers in Jewish education.

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Other Religions in Jewish Education

Michael Gillis

In many countries the reality of plurality has given rise to rethinking the role of teaching religion in general education. The different approaches taken in the United Sates, Israel and Britain are reviewed in the chapter. The case maintained here is that there is a rationale for teaching about other religious traditions as a dimension of the Jewish mandate of the school beyond any expectation, legally imposed or otherwise, to include such learning as part of the general education offered. Not only need there be no incompatibility between learning about other religions and Jewish education but, it will be argued, such learning can be viewed as a necessary part of a Jewish education.

A Rationale

The case for cultivating an understanding of other religions within Jewish education may be highlighted by some incidents in the past few years. The first is the controversy over Mel Gibson's film "The Passion of the Christ" (2004), which purported to be a truthful and accurate representation of the events surrounding the death of Jesus. The film gave rise to protests from both Jews and Christians who took the view that it perpetuated belief in a continuing Jewish responsibility for the death of Jesus. It is not possible to make sense of this controversy without some knowledge and understanding of the gospel narratives; the way in which alleged Jewish guilt has been a focus for anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism; changes in recent decades in Christian attitudes to Jews and Judaism, and the ways in which recent scholarship has shed new light upon the events portrayed in the film. With regard to Islam it is impossible to avoid the increasing prominence of the religious dimension of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. So for example the charter of Hamas notoriously cites a Hadith (an ex-Qur'anic tradition of a saying or action of Mohammed) in which Jews are portrayed as treacherous who at some end time will

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be handed over by the very trees behind which they hide. Is this tradition authoritative for all Muslims? Can it be taken as representative of Muslim attitudes towards Jews? Answers to these questions can only be arrived at by some knowledge and understanding of Islam and the history of its relationship to other religions.

Beyond this pragmatic argument lies a deeper rationale that recognizes the cardinal role of plurality in modern life, including in the religious sphere. This plurality is a social fact independent of what value is attached to it. Religious communities live alongside one another on the local level and, through modern means of communication, they relate to one another globally. An understanding of religious traditions is an essential element for understanding our world that education must address. Students need to be prepared to contribute to a cohesive society that includes a variety of religious commitments. They need to know how to react knowledgeably, with understanding and respect to the questions and challenges they will encounter throughout a lifetime of interactions with members of other faith communities.

This general imperative applies also in the context of Jewish education but, it will be argued, simply tacking on a subject to the curriculum without integrating it into the overall Jewish educational goals of the school is an inadequate response.

If many other religions have enjoyed long periods of hegemony in which a particular religion was seen as universal, taken for granted, and the basis for a shared culture, Judaism has for the most part functioned as a minority religion. Interaction with the dominant religions is a cardinal factor in Jewish history, not only in the form of persecution but also through the subtle play of religious and cultural influence (Yuval, 2006). Learning something of other religions is thus also necessary for a proper understanding of Judaism itself.

For many young people Jewish identity is to an extent defined by negative factors – to be Jewish is not to be a Christian or not to be a Muslim. The building of a positive identity requires some positive understanding of difference rather than crudely conceived dichotomies.

Modernity, Pluralism, and Secularization

One possible response to the fact of plurality is the denial of its value. Plurality can give rise to a reactive assertion of exclusive truth that is a feature of religious fundamentalism. At the other extreme is a full-blown pluralism that embraces plurality as a primary value denying the validity of all exclusive claims to truth. Yet another position uses the ideology of multiculturalism to assert the right of communities to maintain distinct beliefs, practices, and social norms, against the demands of the liberal state for shared core values held alongside a tolerance of difference.

Religious educators who seek to assert the privilege of their own tradition without denying the legitimacy of other religious traditions need to confront the inherent tensions in this position. Judaism is, in principle, well placed to cope with this tension as it does not assert universal validity. Other religions can be accepted as approved spiritual paths, provided they meet certain basic conditions (Sacks, 2002).

This understanding of Judaism as a particularistic tradition has important implications for the potential of Jewish education to look outwards to the significance of other religions.

Contrary to the expectations of secularism theorists, religion remains a potent social force alongside, and not despite, modernity. Secularization theory postulated that as modernization progresses religion will lose its plausibility and attempts to reach an accommodation between modernity and traditional belief will be fragile and unstable (Berger, 1967). Secularization theory posited that a prime cause of the erosion of religion by modernity is pluralism (Berger, 1979). Modern societies are inherently pluralistic, valuing personal choice over imposed group obligations. Modern people come to see their religious commitments as a choice rather than a self-evident set of truths. Peter Berger, himself a leading secularization theorist, has led the way in drastically revising this theory in the light of the persistence of religion in its most traditional forms in the midst of modern societies (Berger, 1996; Berger, Woodhead, Heelas & Martin, 2001). Religion, not necessarily in its accommodating and compromising forms, is alive and well and is frequently a formative influence on the lives of individuals (Berger, 1979), on whole societies and indeed on the world in general, as can be seen in the influence of resurgent Islam, thriving ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, and the impact of evangelistic Christianity (Stark, 2000).

Some religious groups are likely to be suspicious of educational efforts to develop a respectful and empathetic understanding of other religions because of a fear that the consequence will be a relativization of religious commitment. It is not possible, therefore, to divorce the approach to other religions from the ideological commitments of the particular educational setting.

Educational Traditions Regarding Religious Education

There are also significant variations of educational tradition in different countries with respect to religious education. In the United States, for example, public schools are prevented by the constitution from engaging in religious education or mandating any religious practice. The Supreme Court decision in *Engel versus Vitale* (1962) gave force to a strict interpretation of the constitution's separation of church and state and outlawed all forms of prayer and religious instruction in public schools (Gash & Gonzales, 2008). Recognizing the importance of learning about religion, curricula have been devised that rest upon a sharp distinction between teaching for religion and teaching about religion.

Other countries have quite different traditions with respect to religious education. In Britain, the 1944 Education Act required that there be a daily act of worship and that religious instruction be provided. It seemed clear in 1944 that while religious instruction was not to be in a particular denomination it was to be in the Christian faith. The word "instruction" also implied that this was not only a matter of learning about Christianity but that belief in Christianity was to be inculcated. Under the 1988 Education Act "instruction" was replaced by "education", but this law, like

the subsequent 1996 Education Act, continued to maintain that religious education was part of the legislated basic curriculum for all government-maintained schools. The common school was still expected to privilege Christianity and to mandate a daily act of worship. Much had changed in British society since 1944 including a rise in secularism and mass immigration. These changes led to a degree of multiculturalism; the notion that "religion" meant Christianity could no longer be taken for granted, even though the new legislation continued its privileged position in religious education. The 1988 Act, therefore, opened the possibility of consultation with non-Christian religious groups in devising curriculum (Jackson, 2004).

In the United States, Jewish schools, which, by definition, are not state schools, are free to educate for Jewish belief and practice. In Britain, where many Jewish schools are government funded, like other faith-based schools, they are free to devise their religious-education curriculum in line with their particular religious orientation. Because of a concern that faith-based schools may cultivate cultural separatism and even conflict, the 2006 Education and Inspections Act provides that all British schools, including government-funded faith-based schools, be appraised for their education for "community cohesion". This is interpreted to include an expectation that pupils learn about the faith and religious practices of others.[1] Jewish government-funded schools may thus find themselves required to teach about other religions. The willingness of Jewish schools to respond to this requirement is closely correlated with the religious orientation of the school (Short & Lenga, 2002).

Other countries reflect distinct traditions and policies of religious education. In Finland, for example, religious education is also part of the core curriculum. The Finnish system, however, provides for separate religious education within the common school, according to the religious affiliation of the students. Even a small number of students of faiths other than the dominant Lutheranism are entitled to separate classes. Jewish children receive Jewish religious education but the curriculum is nevertheless endorsed by the state and needs to conform to the general requirement to include knowledge of other faiths (Honkaheimo, 2007). In European countries where religious education continues to be mandatory, there is a process of negotiating a path from the assumed privilege of Christianity to an approach that acknowledges the multiplicity of religions within each society including secular humanist orientations (Felderhof, 1985; Hobson & Edwards, 1999; Jackson, 2004).

In some countries the requirement to teach about the religions of the world is a requirement within social studies. In the State of Victoria, Australia, the curriculum requires teaching about religion, looking at how religion operates as a social force, and also a study of the origins of religions (VCAA, 2009). In Jewish schools other religions are likely to be taught but quite separately from Jewish studies. While this separation solves a difficult problem for many Jewish educators – how to deal appropriately with other faiths within the Jewish studies lesson – it also seems anomalous

[1]These matters are discussed more fully in Helena Miller's contribution to this volume, "Community Engagement: The Challenge of Connecting Jewish Schools to the Wider Community".

to teach, for example, about the origins of Christianity without a Jewish context and without a Jewish point of view.

In the cases of Christianity and Islam we are concerned with two religions that have an intimate connection with Judaism. They each make explicit assertions about the status of Judaism and there are Jewish sources that make assertions about them in return. They are part of the Jewish story and this could fruitfully find expression in the way they are taught in Jewish educational contexts.

Judaism, Christianity, and Education

Historically, the relationship between Judaism and Christianity has been troubled, with episodes of cruel violence erupting against the background of a view of Judaism as the religion of a people once-chosen and now rejected because of their own rejection of Christ. The image of the two statues, Ecclesia and Synagoga that adorn the façade of Strasbourg cathedral makes this relationship graphically vivid. Ecclesia stands erect and proud holding a staff adorned by a cross in one hand and the chalice of the Eucharist in the other. By contrast, Synagoga is blindfold, her staff broken, and the book of the Law is held facing downwards. The image represents the idea of supersession – the Church is the New Israel that sits in the place of honour once held by the rightly deposed Old Israel of the flesh.

The authority of St. Augustine had previously established the teaching that conversion was not to be forced and that the Jews were to be tolerated if only as witness, in their humbled state, to the truth of Christianity (Fredriksen, 1995b). During the Middle Ages the balance shifted towards a demonization of Jews and Judaism. The unleashing of the Crusades, the violence against Jewish communities of Northern Europe, the emergence of the blood-libel and other accusations led to a perception of the Jew as satanic compelled by his very nature to be the enemy of Christ and Christians. In recent years Jewish historians have turned to focus upon resulting Jewish attitudes towards Christianity during this period. They discover that a fierce hostility towards Christianity became a significant force in Jewish life shaping Jewish images of the Christian and influencing Jewish culture and religious practice.

It should be noted, however, that the attitude of traditional Jewish sources to Christianity and Islam is not necessarily negative. Maimonides (1135–1204), the towering figure of rationalist Jewish thought refers in his great code of Jewish law the Mishneh Torah (Laws of Kings and Their Wars, Chapter 11), to the positive role of Christianity and Islam in the Divine plan for the redemption of the world, despite his general evaluation of Christianity as a form of idolatry. In his philosophical work, Guide of the Perplexed (Part 1 Chapter 71), he refers to the commonly held theological fundamentals of the three religions. Likewise the philosopher and poet Yehudah Halevi (c.1075–1141) regards the other monotheistic religions as having a positive and redemptive role in the spreading of monotheistic belief (Kuzari 4:23). Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697–1776), the controversial but traditionalist rabbi of Altona, had a favourable view of Christianity: His interpretation of the teachings of

Jesus and St. Paul as in no way undermining Judaism, in as much as they are directed to gentiles, anticipates the direction of much recent scholarship on the foundation figures of Christianity. (Letter published in his edition of Seder Olam Raba v'Zuta, Hamburg, 1757.) Among more recent Jewish thinkers there are many who have adopted a positive orientation towards Christianity (Berger, 2002; Heschel, 1966; Lévinas, 1990; Rosenzweig & Glatzer, 1961) while others continue to maintain traditional reservations (Berger, 2002; Soloveitchik, 1964).[2]

In many Jewish educational settings, however, Christianity is only encountered as a negative force in Jewish history. This image does not match the present relationship with Christianity given such developments as the dramatic reorientation of Catholicism towards Judaism since the Second World War. It is not even adequate for an understanding of the complex realities of Jewish Christian interaction in different periods in history. This is not to suggest that the painful episodes in this history be overlooked. A reorientation of the educational approach can not simply be the replacing of one narrative with another.

Changing realities, as well as developments in scholarship, lead to the need for a fresh approach. Such a reorientation can be illustrated by consideration of approaches to the historical figure of Jesus.

The Historical Jesus

Traditional Jewish sources, which are often folkloric in character, have been characterized as embodying "counter-history" (Cohen, 1999). Counter-history is a version of history that feeds off the history of another but subverts that history by reversing its values. There is a Jewish tradition of narrative about Jesus that essentially derives its basis from the Gospel narratives but subverts them. This is the tendency of the fragments in the Talmud that discuss the life of Jesus and the various versions of the "Toldot Yeshu" parts of which some scholars trace back to before the tenth century.

These portrayals would seem to have no basis in historical reality. They are the product of an interaction with a hostile and derisive Christianity. In Christianity, Jesus, as Christ, is the focus of faith. His rejection by the Jews was understood by Christians as an act of obstinate and evil perversity resulting in the rejection of the Jews as God's people. Not surprisingly, Jews needed an account for themselves of this central personality that would explain their rejection of him.

The Christian search for the historical Jesus is an essentially Protestant enlightenment project. Jewish scholars have joined in this search and their approach is distinguished by their tendency to tie Jesus to his Jewish origins and context

[2]The controversy over the pronouncement "Dabru Emet" which sets out a call by a group of Jewish scholars and rabbis for a reorientation of Jewish attitudes to Christianity exemplifies the diversity of views in the present day (http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1014) and for a critique see Levenson, J. D. (2001).

(Flusser & Notley, 1997; Fredriksen, 1999; Klausner & Danby, 1925; Vermes, 1973). The various conflicts and controversies in which Jesus engaged were no more than internal Jewish arguments about the way in which to serve God. The gospel writers, writing after the destruction of the Temple, have an interest in framing these controversies in terms of an outright confrontation between Jesus and the religious authorities of Judaism, but the historian can see through this tendency to the essentially Jewish teacher.

For example, the Sermon on the Mount contains what are known as the "antitheses" in which the Ten Commandments are contrasted with Jesus's own teaching. On the surface, this contrast, "You have heard it said – but I say to you", may seem like a critique of the commandments of the Torah but it is clear on closer reading that Jesus's teaching is not against the commandments but a call for a going beyond the commandments (Flusser, 1979). This going beyond the call of the law (*lifnim mishurat hadin*) is the attribute the rabbis ascribe to the "Hasid" – the pious one who is not satisfied with the bare requirements of the Torah.

Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount that one should return goodness to those who do wrong and give love to those who hate is often taken as a teaching which shows up a contrast between Judaism and Christianity. This view was popularized by the Zionist thinker Ahad Ha'am who identified a distinctive Jewish ethics in contrast to what he considered to be the "inverted egoism" of Christian ethics (Ahad Ha'am, 1992). Jesus's demand is indeed extreme but David Flusser has shown that it is not alien to at least some teachings within the rabbinic tradition (Flusser, 1988). Reading the Sermon on the Mount this way we find a Jewish text, distinctive in its coherence and its demands for supererogatory standards, but not by virtue of this at odds with ideas that find expression in rabbinic literature.

Does this amount to an argument for teaching the New Testament text as a Jewish text? Here we need to advance with care. At one level the text is a Jewish text but one that is embedded within the sacred texts of another faith for which the speaker is not merely a Jewish sage with an identifiably Jewish, if radical message, but a divine and messianic being of cosmic theological significance. Nevertheless, the Jewish educator should be aware of the text's Jewish context in order to avoid false dichotomies and distortions. A significant issue for Jewish educators is the development of an awareness that religious traditions are not necessarily sharply defined entities, just as Judaism itself cannot be reduced to a single clear-cut set of doctrines or ideas.

The emphasis on the Judaism of the historical Jesus is not without its challengers among scholars some of whom emphasise Jesus's identity as a somewhat Hellenized Galilean, influenced by the outlook of Cynicism, preaching an anti-establishment, radically egalitarian, and subversive doctrine (Crossan, 1994). Such views are usually rejected by Jewish scholars who are almost affronted by any tendency to deny the essential Jewishness of Jesus. We thus arrive at a position, rich with irony, in which Jewish scholars resist the attempt to take Jesus from Judaism while some Christian scholars resist the attempt by Jews to appropriate Jesus by subsuming him under the existing currents of first-century Judaism (Fredriksen, 1995a).

A Counter-View

The Israeli scientist and philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz provides a radical counter-view to what has been said here about an approach to the historical Jesus as a way of reorienting Jewish attitudes to Christianity. Leibowitz argues that Christianity is essentially defined by its hostility to Judaism. Its claim to supersession is essential to Christianity. The two faiths are locked in a theological conflict that cannot be resolved except at the cost of the renunciation of the core identity of one of the religions.

Leibowitz is skeptical of any possibility of recovering the historical Jesus based on firm knowledge. What matters is the Jesus of the Church – the Jesus as constructed by Christology – the son of God, God incarnate, the unique path to redemption.

The educational implications of this view are clear. Knowledge of Christianity is important precisely to understand the unbridgeable gap between the two religions which are locked in eternal conflict over the claim of election. In this conflict there can be no compromise. In Leibowitz's view, in as much as a Jew or a Christian blurs this divide, they lose their authenticity as Jew or Christian (Leibowitz & Goldman, 1992).

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, whose essay on interfaith dialogue, "Confrontation", expresses strong reservations about interreligious contacts, held a more nuanced view (Soloveitchik, 1964). This largely philosophical essay continues to carry great weight with many Modern-Orthodox rabbis in shaping their attitudes on this question. There are two major reservations about interfaith dialogue. First, ultimate religious beliefs cannot be shared and communicated. Each religious tradition has its own core beliefs and eschatological hopes which cannot be argued or negotiated. Second, dialogue can lead to an expectation for reciprocal theological or religious change. There is a risk of a blurring of difference in the name of brotherly dialogue leading to loss of faith and religious identity. The meaning and applicability of Rabbi Soloveitchik's argument has been much discussed.[3]

The present discussion is of education not of interfaith dialogue. Indeed it is important to distinguish clearly between these two areas of activity. Dialogue is a complex process requiring not only theological and historical expertise but also an awareness of the political dimension in such contacts. Dialogue is motivated by a desire not only for mutual understanding but also for harmony and reconciliation. The educational discussion should focus on learning and understanding which may foster attitudes of tolerance and respect. It is a recipe for likely confusion if Jewish education attempts go beyond this brief and become a vehicle for reconciliation when basic issues of identity and difference are still being worked out by students.

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[3]See the symposium published online at http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/center/conferences/soloveitchik/

There are nevertheless educational implications raised by Rabbi Soloveitchik's essay. The first is the avoidance of a stance of disputation. Teaching of other religions is not a matter of proving the falsehood of their beliefs or the truth of those of Judaism. A believing Jew does not accept the Christian idea of incarnation or accept the Christhood of Jesus. In a sense, she cannot even understand these ideas. Similarly a Jew does not accept the status of Mohammed as the ultimate prophet or the Qur'an as the supreme revelation. These are not matters for negotiation but there is no need to seek arguments to undermine these beliefs on the part of the adherents of other religions. An avenue is opened up for education on other faiths which does not compromise faith and identity on the one hand, while avoiding triumphalism and polemic on the other hand.

Islam

Islam offers fewer challenges and difficulties for Jewish belief than Christianity. Jewish authorities consider Islam pure monotheism; there is no Islamic doctrine of supersession, nor is there the same record of murderous persecution. At the same time while Jews and Christians have largely made their peace, Jews are seen, largely because of the Middle-East conflict, as being in conflict with the Muslim world. This sense of conflict is deepened by the perception of a wider clash between Islam and the Western world. There are representatives of both Judaism and Islam at various levels engaged in activity aimed at discovering other understandings of the relationship between Judaism and Islam in order to subvert the view, convenient to extremists, of unrelenting conflict.

There are some striking points of similarity between the two religious traditions. Islam like Judaism resists being defined in Western terms as a religion rather than an all-encompassing way of life. Islam, like Judaism, has a highly elaborated system of law governing all aspects of life with traditions of interpretation and precedent. In Islam, at least in principle, religious authority stems from the religious and scholarly standing of individuals rather than fixed hierarchies.

While the relationship between Judaism and Christianity is problematic, its drama offers didactic opportunities lacking in the case of Islam. Furthermore, almost all Jewish education in the Diaspora is conducted in contexts which are, at least at the cultural level, Christian. Islam is a fellow minority religion. One reason for learning about Christianity is the ineluctable reality of living in a Christian environment. Islam does not pose this challenge. At the same time, as the reality of the Muslim presence in these societies is increasingly felt, the need for an understanding of Islam is more pressing.

In the State of Israel familiarity with Islam would seem to be an even more urgent necessity. About one-fifth of the population of Israel is Muslim. The surrounding population both in the territories and in the bordering countries is overwhelmingly Muslim. Most Jews are, however, almost totally ignorant of the beliefs and practices of Islam and their ideas are shaped by the way Islam is depicted in the mass media.

Islamic sources do not relate to Judaism as a "mother" religion or as an "elder brother".[4] In Islam the Qur'an is the perfect revealed word of God. The differences between it and the Hebrew Bible are to be explained by the failure of the Jews to preserve the true revelation once entrusted to them. Instead of preserving this revelation, the Jews distorted and altered it (Sura 2:79).[5] On this point there would seem to be an equivalent to the issue of supersession in Christianity (Lazarus-Yafeh, 1992). Two important distinctions should be pointed out. First there is a difference between the rejection of a people and the rejection of a book; the former would seem to have more dangerous implications. The second distinction is that the claim is not that a previously valid revelation has been replaced but that distortions in the transmission of the revelation have been corrected.

To teach about Islam in its own terms requires that the teacher suspend judgment on the question of who influenced whom and to teach what Muslims believe. In his "An Introduction of Islam for Jews", Reuven Firestone adopts just this approach of non-engagement in the question: "Because this book is an introduction to Islam, we are less concerned with what actually happened than we are with what Muslims believe happened" (Firestone, 2008). In his praise, printed on the cover of the book, the historian of Islam, Marc Cohen writes that the book avoids "succumbing to the temptation to say who took what from whom".

A second focus for considering Islam from a Jewish point of view is the history of the relationship between the two faiths. Marc Cohen has judiciously weighed two alternative readings of this history which he calls the "myth" and "counter-myth" (Cohen, 1994). The myth is that of the Golden Age of medieval Islam represented as a multireligious paradise. The counter-myth denies the myth and highlights periods of persecution and the existence of Islamic legislation that discriminated against Judaism often in humiliating ways. Cohen shows that neither myth nor counter-myth provides an adequate account. His comparison of how Jews fared under Islam and Christianity shows, and tries to explain, how Jews generally fared better under Islam than under Christianity. At the same time, an adequate educational approach will not attempt to overlook the more painful aspects of the relationship between Jews and Islam, such as the inconsistently applied terms of the Covenant of Omar that delineates the terms of the disadvantages Jews and Christians must endure in return for their protection.

Educators concerned about softening the prevailing picture of Islam as intrinsically hostile to Jews and Judaism will look to alternative Islamic voices, often drowned out in the tumult of international conflict, who offer an alternative vision of the relationship between Islam and other religions. A crucial educational imperative here is the avoidance of developing a monolithic view of other traditions. Such views

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[4]This latter formulation was used by Pope John Paul II in describing the relationship of Judaism to Christianity

[5]Maimonides, who considered Christianity to be idolatrous and Islam as a pure form of monotheism, nevertheless ruled that it is possible to explain the Torah to a Christian but not to a Muslim because the Christian and the Jew both regard a shared text as sacred and revealed (Maimonides responsum: Blau 148).

can be convenient for polemic purposes and they offer a simple and clear-cut division of the world but it is obvious that a religious civilization as old, as diverse, and as complex as Islam cannot be reduced to a set of simple propositions (Lovat, 2005).

As our analysis of curriculum examples shows, teaching about Islam presents few difficulties for Jewish education. The doctrinal closeness to Judaism combined with the absence of a tradition of rivalry makes the case quite different from that of Christianity. At the same time the present climate of Jewish-Muslim relations in many sectors makes for difficulties of a different kind that are intensified by a general ignorance about Islam.

Theories of Religious Education

Before analysing some curriculum examples I will review some of the central trends and approaches in religious education and their possible relevance to Jewish education.

Much of this theorizing has taken place in the United Kingdom and other European countries in which religious education is mandatory. The central question that faces religious educators is the reality of religiously pluralistic societies. How should religion be taught in classrooms where students of different religious backgrounds (and students of no religion) are to be found? How are children to be prepared for life in a society in which they are to live peacefully and respectfully side-by-side with believers in a variety of faiths (Hobson & Edwards, 1999; Jackson, 2004)?

Traditionally religious education was confessional in nature; it sought to inculcate in the young of a particular faith community the beliefs of that faith and to provide the knowledge necessary for adequate participation in the life of the community (Thompson, 2004). Such education is open to the charge of indoctrination with the assumption of defined religious truth that the young are to be taught to accept. Confessional religious education can take a variety of forms and may attempt to combine education for religious adherence to a particular faith with learning about and respect for, other religious traditions (Yu-Phelps, 2006). In the current ecumenical climate of interfaith dialogue this has come to be an expectation of Christian education with respect to Judaism. A policy document of the Catholic Church on the presentation of Jews and Judaism states:

> We should aim, in this field, that Catholic teaching at its different levels, in catechesis to children and young people, presents Jews and Judaism not only in an honest and objective manner, free from prejudices and without any offenses, but also with full awareness of the heritage common to Jews and Christians.[6]

There is more than just a liberal religious sensibility at work here. There is a claim that to properly understand their own Christianity, Christians need to learn about

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[6]"Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church", http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/RRJJEWS.htm

Judaism. There is also a consciousness of the dire consequences of the “teaching of contempt” over the centuries. There is recognition that Judaism needs to be addressed as a living religious tradition and not as the backdrop against which Christ and Christianity redeemed the world. Much recent non-Jewish scholarship has been directed at counteracting this view (Gager, 1983, Sanders, 1977). While the Catholic approach emphasizes a “common heritage” and the need to be “free from prejudices”, this does not mean that the Catholic Church has abandoned its beliefs in the centrality of Christ as redeemer or that at some end-time Christian belief will be vindicated in the eyes of all.

A second approach to religious education is phenomenological in emphasis. Many educators adopting this approach worked under the influence of Ninian Smart (1989) and his approach to the study of world religions. Smart approaches religion from a neutral stance, avoiding any element of theological commitment. In studying religions he identified what he called “dimensions” of religions. All religions express themselves in these various dimensions albeit in quite diverse ways. The seven dimensions are:

1. Doctrinal
2. Mythological
3. Ethical
4. Ritual
5. Experiential
6. Institutional
7. Material.

These dimensions provide a basis for comparison between religious traditions and, in curriculum terms, a structure for teaching about different religious traditions. The approach requires at least a methodological agnosticism about the truth claims of all the religions.

The appeal of the approach is obvious as a response to the reality of religious and cultural pluralism. Each tradition is afforded equal respect and status (O’Grady, 2005). Although it is not an explicit claim of the approach, in practice it generally assumes that all religions are equally true (or untrue) or that ultimately they aim at the same thing. The problematic nature of such an approach for an educational setting committed to a particular religious tradition is evident. In multifaith environments also the approach has been criticised for a lack of sensitivity to the actual religious beliefs and affiliations of students. The approach has also been criticised for an emphasis on external structures and behaviours rather than issues of meaning and spirituality (Barnes, 2009).

A third approach flows from a critique of the neutral methodology of the “world religions” approach. The critique notes that by adopting a neutral stance – the view from nowhere – the learner is able to learn a great deal about religion but is unlikely to learn from it. Hence a third approach is advocated that may be labeled philosophical. Here, students study religion and religions as an opportunity to build their own worldview and scheme of meaning. As opposed to the confessional approach, students are regarded as individuals who can be empowered to develop their own

philosophy and worldview, and the study of the ideas of diverse religious traditions can play an important part in this process (Carr, 2007). In recent years there has emerged a rich theoretical literature suggesting different ways in which religious education can make a contribution to children's spiritual development in environments of diversity without undermining their identity and beliefs as members of a particular community (Jackson, 2004). Religious-education theorists grapple with the tensions between respect for students' beliefs and religious affiliations on the one hand and the educational imperative to cultivate autonomy on the other.

This approach is likely to have little appeal for Jewish educational settings of all ideological stripes whose main aim is to inculcate a sense of belonging to the Jewish people and tradition. At the same time it may be that amid the urgent work of inculcation of identity and group norms, the spiritual growth of the individual does not get the attention it deserves. Within the sources of Judaism the approach provides a rationale for the teaching of Jewish thought by exposing young people to the rich diversity of philosophies of Judaism so that they have the means to shape their own orientation from them. In this way Jewish education can go some way in satisfying autonomy as an educational value.

Extending the approach to other religions risks confusion at best and a corrosive syncretism at worst. It is, however, possible to conceive of adult education for those with a mature and settled identity and Jewish worldview being able to engage with other religions and finding in this engagement learning and even inspiration that has an impact on their Jewish self-understanding. This is, however, a sophisticated level of thinking, conscious of boundaries while being aware of their porosity. The ground can be prepared at earlier stages by avoiding the dichotomous approach referred to above with regard to other religions.

An Analysis of Curricula

This section will review some examples of curricular materials relevant to the teaching of other religions in the contexts of Jewish education. Here, curricular materials will serve as proxies for investigating actual educational practice. The examples do not constitute a comprehensive survey of existing materials but rather a sampling that represents distinctive approaches.

A Religious-Thought Approach

One of the most interesting attempts to teach about Christianity in the context of Jewish education is an experimental unit, "To be a Jew in a Christian World", that was part of a curriculum project "Teaching Jewish Values" developed in the 1980s at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University (Cohen, 1983). As the title suggests, this unit is ultimately about what it means to be Jewish for students who live in a context where the majority religion and culture is Christian. In such contexts to be a Jew means "not being a Christian". The presenting problem

is that many Jewish young people cannot give positive substantial content to this essentially negative identity. This approach requires learning about the majority religion.

The curriculum clearly belongs to a mode of religious education that seeks to deepen the existing religious affiliation of the learners. The writers explicitly distance themselves from the neutral approach of comparative religion. The aim of the unit is to help students develop their distinctive Jewish worldview. In this respect the curriculum contains elements of the philosophical approach to religious education with the reservation that learners are expected to work out their personal worldview from within the intellectual and spiritual resources of Judaism.

The writers are sensitive to the danger that teaching about Christianity from a Jewish point of view can lapse into polemic, triumphalism, and chauvinism. They declare their intention to avoid a dichotomous presentation in which Judaism is the negation of Christianity presented in an extreme or one-dimensional fashion. The unit includes Christian texts and viewpoints that can be correlated with Jewish texts as well as modern Christian expressions of a positive orientation towards Judaism. At the same time the material also deals with points of conflict, particularly those from the past such as the charge of deicide.

To illustrate the nature of the curriculum I will focus on the section comparing Jewish and Christian ideas about morality. The material avoids setting up a dichotomy with Jewish morality based upon justice opposed to a Christian morality of self-effacement. Instead the writers do two things. First they show how in modern Christianity there is a movement to review distorted traditional Christian images of Judaism as legalistic, loveless, and tied to the flesh. To do this they use an anti-Jewish text from John of Damascus (c.676–749). This is preceded by an extract from the 1973 "Statement by the French Bishops' Committee for Relations with Jews" which calls for the need for a deeper understanding of Judaism: "It is wrong to oppose Judaism as a religion of fear to Christianity as one of love." The use of texts, both Jewish and Christian, give students direct access to the ideas in question, and it is significant that the modern text sympathetic to Judaism is brought before the text from John of Damascus.

The rest of the section compares teachings of Jesus with rabbinic texts on such questions as supererogatory behaviours (*lifnim mishurat hadin)*, attitudes to wealth and the material world, and love of the enemy. The Jewish texts present a range of viewpoints some of which are quite similar to Jesus's teaching while others are quite different. There is, therefore, no monolithic Judaism that can be opposed to Christianity.

It is, however, problematic to present a text like the Sermon on the Mount as a Christian text as it is problematic to present Jesus as a Christian. If this text is seen primarily as a Jewish text to be viewed against the context of streams in first-century Judaism (themselves reflected in subsequent rabbinic texts) we need not be surprised to find a degree of overlap with Jewish texts.

Over and above these minor criticisms the curriculum is an important attempt to teach about Christianity from within the context of Jewish education while avoiding false dichotomies and self-serving caricatures of the other religion.

A World-Religions Approach in Israeli Schools

The curriculum "Living in the Holy Land: Knowing and Respecting the Other, One God – Three Religions", is written from within the phenomenological "world-religions", approach to religious education (Schoneveld, 2008).[7] The curriculum was developed in Israel by the Centre for Educational Technology with support from the European Union and UNESCO. The approach is that of the study of "world religions" but the context for learning is the coexistence of the three Abrahamic religions in Israel. The curriculum was published in three languages, Hebrew, Arabic, and English and is intended as a contribution to both religious education and peace education.

The material is structured around topics which constitute something like Smart's dimensions of religion: origins of life; origins of monotheistic belief; beginnings of religious community; sacred texts; authoritative, traditional, and interpretation literature; beliefs; obligations; religious leadership.

The curriculum is aimed at students in Israel from the three religions but it is not adapted in any way, apart from language, to the needs and interests of the particular communities within which it will be taught. Muslim students will learn about their own faith with the same measure of neutrality with which they approach Judaism and Christianity. Given the aim of cultivating respect for the other faiths in the context of rivalry and conflict, this approach has certain advantages. It is the combination of looking with respect at other traditions and looking with a certain detachment at one's own tradition that is likely to cultivate greater tolerance and openness. All the same, there is something artificial about teaching in this way to those rooted in their own religious tradition.

While each section concludes with an invitation to compare the traditions, the curriculum is careful to present each tradition independently without reference or comparison to the others. The concluding discussion relates to comparisons with a particular focus on similarities which fits the irenic tendency of the whole project.

The materials avoid the points at which the rivalries and conflicts between the traditions arise, for example, the central Christian beliefs in the divinity of Jesus and that belief in Jesus-as-Christ is a condition for salvation. These beliefs, which are rejected by Jews and Muslims, are mentioned in the text but are not given any particular emphasis.

A Historical Approach

The curricula discussed so far are essentially ahistorical in their approach. Their purpose is to help the student understand the current moment as their present-tense titles indicate: "Being Jewish", "Living in the Holy Land". The final group of materials is essentially historical in character. One practical advantage of this approach

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[7] See also http://lib.cet.ac.il/pages/item.asp?item=12439

is that Jewish history is already part of the curriculum in Israeli schools and in most Jewish schools in the Diaspora and so the learning slots into an existing curriculum framework.

Living as a religious and ethnic minority amid a Christian or Muslim majority was the defining fact of Jewish history for almost two millennia. Any course in Jewish history will inevitably explore this condition. The question is, therefore, not whether to touch upon Christianity and Islam but how. Salo Baron wrote of the need to recover from the "lachrymose theory" of Jewish history according to which this history is a catalogue of persecution and oppression (Baron, 1937). The question to ask of the treatment of other religions in Jewish history textbooks is, to what extent these books present a nuanced view? To what extent do other religions emerge as traditions with a life of their own or merely as agents of anti-Jewish activity?

This is not to suggest that teaching Jewish history can or should avoid the facts of persecution, expulsion, crusade, and pogrom. Even in the Middle Ages, however, as Baron emphasized, Jews enjoyed certain privileges as well as disabilities and they had more opportunities economically and culturally than feudal serfs who made up the bulk of the population.

The two major areas in which the teaching of Jewish history needs to deal with other religions are, first, the continuing unfolding of the relationship with the dominant religion and its effect on Jewish life, and second, the story of the birth and emergence of Christianity and Islam. I will focus on the second by looking at some text books in use in the Israeli education system in secular and religious schools.

A standard text used in many Israel middle schools is "In the Days of the Crescent and the Cross" (Kleinberg & Bar-Navi, 1997). The authors are academic historians with a specialization in Christianity and Islam respectively. As the title of the book suggests, Jewish history in the Middle Ages is to be understood primarily in terms of minority existence alongside the two dominant religions.

When describing the beginnings of Islam the textbook gives a neutral description of the beginnings of Islam and the career of Mohammed as the prophet of the new religion. The book sets aside considerable space not only to historical events but also to explain the principal beliefs, institutions, and practices of Islam. There is a general reference to Christian and Jewish influences on Mohammed but the book states that it is unknown exactly how this influence came about.

The teacher's guide, but not the student text, devotes a page to a discussion of the "Jihad", noting that it is not included among the "pillars of Islam". The term is explained as "effort taken on behalf of Allah". The sense of Jihad as war undertaken to spread Islam is joined by subsequent interpretations that include other forms of effort including financial and spiritual as under the category of Jihad.

The student text includes a section, "Mohammed and the Jews", that refers to Mohammed's disappointment with the rejection by the Jews of the Arabian Peninsula of his revelation and mission. Mention is made of the expulsion of two Jewish tribes and the slaughter of yet a third, the Qurayt tribe.

The text characterizes the attitude of the Qur'an and the Hadith to Jews as "alienated and contemptuous", arising from a desire "to remove all Jewish influence on

faithful Muslims". The text goes on to describe the establishment of the status of Jews and Christians as inferior but protected under Islamic religious law.

The text is mainly concerned with describing the rise of Islam and the character of Islam as a religion. The small space allotted to the relationship with Judaism presents a somewhat harsh view of the position of the Jews during the life of Mohammed and early Islam.

I now turn to the parallel section of the textbook "From Generation to Generation" which was written for religious schools (Doron, 1994). The textbook devotes considerable space to a description of Arab culture before Mohammed. The textbook describes the beginning of Islam and Mohammed in entirely neutral terms presenting the events and personalities as they are represented in Islamic tradition. The text continues to describe the basic beliefs and practices of Islam. It is striking that in this text prepared for Orthodox schools there is no element of criticism or reservation in describing these facts and events (Bartal, 2002).

Following chapters on the early conquests and spread of Islam and on "The Islamic World and its Culture", comes an extended section on "The Jews in the Shadow of Islam", the first chapter of which is entitled "Under the Protection of the Muslims". There is an account of Mohammed's attitude to the Jews beginning with his hopes that they would accept his mission, then his disappointment and anger at their rejection, and, finally, once his rule became established, his adoption of a policy of tolerance and protection. The attitude to the Jews is portrayed in a nuanced way that explains tensions and contradictions within the texts.

Both the textbooks described here show how it is possible to teach about other religions in the context of the teaching of history in a manner which is balanced, neutral, and nuanced. Crucial in this respect is the input of academic historians either as writers or advisers. History can easily degenerate in this area to a polemical narrative if it becomes a tool for the purpose of religious education rather than an academic field with its own canons of evidence and balance.

Conclusion

The study of other religions within Jewish education remains an undeveloped field with important potential as well as attendant risks. It will be argued by some that such study is a luxury for Jewish education with its limited time and resources. In response, I suggest that such study is not only important for understanding the contemporary world but is also an important way to achieve a deeper Jewish self-understanding.

The manner and spirit of the learning is all-important. We tend to rejoice in the many-faceted nature of our own tradition and take pride in the power and subtlety of interpretation and development within the tradition but with regard to others it is all too easy to lapse into a perception of them as monolithic, and to portray other traditions in a manner that is self-serving. An opposing risk is that in the desire to demonstrate understanding and cultivate tolerance the historical record is distorted, and differences and boundaries are blurred. Scholarship in the relevant fields is a

crucial resource for the development of new approaches to the teaching of other religions. This scholarship needs to be considered alongside developments in the theory of religious education together with what can be learned from significant examples of educational practice.

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Talmud: Making a Case for Talmud Pedagogy—The Talmud as an Educational Model

Marjorie Lehman and Jane Kanarek

Introduction

The Babylonian Talmud (Bavli) stands at the canonical center of Jewish tradition. Composed between the third and seventh centuries C.E., the Bavli has been and continues to be studied in a variety of contexts, ranging from religious academies (*yeshivot*) to modern secular universities. Its study has resulted in a long chain of commentaries, including the almost line-by-line commentary of Rabbi Solomon Yitzḥaki (Rashi, 1040/1–1105) and the medieval dialogical commentaries of the Tosafists. Legal codification was also an outgrowth of Talmudic analysis and interpretation and resulted in Isaac Alfasi's (Rif, 1013–1103) *Hilkhot Ha-rif* and Moses Maimonides' (Rambam, 1135–1204) *Mishneh Torah*, to cite two examples. More recently, contemporary scholars in the field of Talmud have utilized a number of methodologies, including, but not limited to, legal, literary, and philological analysis (Ben-Menahem, 1991; Epstein, 1962; Rubenstein, 1999; Saiman, 2006). However, despite the significant attention given to the study of the Talmud, it has largely been overlooked as an educational model. Since, at its core, Judaism is a tradition defined by pedagogical concerns, this omission is particularly striking. Furthermore, despite the many institutions in which Talmud is studied today, it is surprising that the development of curricular models for how to study this work is still in its infancy (Friedman (internet file), Hayman, 1997; Kanarek, 2010; Kraemer, 1981; Kress & Lehman, 2003; Lehman, 2002, 2006, Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education 2007).

This chapter represents a first step in framing the field of Talmud pedagogy. Our goal is to discuss why Talmud study matters as a model for teachers, regardless of whether they teach Talmud. In this regard, our initial foray into the world of Talmud pedagogy will focus on "why" the Talmud is such an important component in the education of teachers, rather than on "how" we should approach these texts when teaching them in our classrooms. We will approach the issue of "why" Talmud study

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matters through an examination of one sugya (or Talmudic unit), Bavli Bava Metzia 33a. This sugya presents the rabbis as men who were engaged in reflecting on their own teaching practice and prompts us to look at them for what they can teach us about pedagogy.

Why Studying Talmud Matters

The relationship between liberal education and responsible citizenship has sparked debates about the components of an education that creates good citizens. Most would agree that irrespective of how one defines the "canon" of liberal education, one of the overarching goals of such an education is to raise reflective citizens who possess the capacity for critical examination of one's self, one's traditions, and the traditions of others (Shulman, 2004a, p. 401). As Martha Nussbaum argues, drawing on the Stoics and Socrates, "the central task of education . . . is to confront the passivity of the pupil, challenging the mind to take charge of its own thought" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 28). Liberal education does not aim to teach its students to defer to authority, be it person or text, or to accept a particular belief as authoritative, whether through tradition or habit. Rather, it, ". . . requires developing the capacity to reason logically, to test what one reads or says for consistency of reasoning, correctness of fact, and accuracy of judgment" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 10). To produce responsible citizens, liberal education aims to develop the capacity to question, to examine issues from multiple perspectives, and to explore a variety of cultures.

For those of us, however, who are committed to the continuity of religious traditions, these goals of liberal education may appear in conflict with a primary goal of Jewish education: the desire to cultivate in our students a sense of embeddedness in an ancient and ongoing tradition. We seek to teach our students to be open-minded citizens of a democratic world who pose thoughtful questions because we want them to be people who are poised to shape and even transform society. Yet, we also seek to teach the importance of sustaining Jewish tradition and to respect that tradition's authority (Rosenak, 1987, pp. 9–10, p. 28). How can our students both learn to respect the authority of tradition and, at the same time, question and criticize that authority, as the liberal educational model demands?

Judaism is a tradition defined by pedagogical concerns. Due to the fact that the acquisition of knowledge is ontologically and historically a core component of Jewish identity, Jews have continuously cultivated methods of teaching and learning (Twersky, 2003, p. 47). In fact, many of the works that comprise Judaism's library exemplify types of pedagogical approaches that grapple in varying ways with the very issue we posed above—the tension between the development of critical thought and the preservation of authority. This characteristic makes Jewish texts fitting models for teachers. In our possession we have a set of texts that comprise ancient case studies useful for exploring the question of how pedagogues interested in religious education should educate in the twenty-first century.

The literary structure of the Bavli makes it a fitting exemplar from the Jewish library through which to pursue this model of liberal education. The redactors of the

Babylonian Talmud adopted a style in which ideational stasis was rejected in favor of a style of argumentation that promotes ever-deeper analysis of already stated laws and narratives. In place of blind acceptance of principles and concepts, multiple angles are considered in an argumentative schema where one rabbi is comfortable undermining the logic of another's ideas. Rabbis are presented as possessing the capacity to reason logically, to evaluate ideas for their consistency, and to justify their views. Literal readings of Toraitic material are overturned, verses from different books in the Tanakh are put into conversation with one another, passages from the Mishnah are reinterpreted, arguments are decided in favor of one authority over another, disputes are left unresolved, and new ideas are proposed. The Talmud thus reveals itself as a book whose style evinces that it is the creation of a citizenry steeped in the tenets that define a liberal education. Yet, within this culture of questioning and dispute, the voices of the Talmud also reveal themselves as acutely aware and reverently wedded to the concept of religious authority. The Talmud juggles both dispute and authority in a manner that needs to be studied carefully for what it can teach us today about how to grapple with these competing ideals.

Talmud study therefore matters as an educational practice for all teachers of Jewish studies, regardless of whether or not they actually teach Talmudic texts themselves. Jewish studies instructors should study the Talmud for what it conveys about how we can teach our students to be simultaneously critical thinkers and embedded within a particular tradition. The Bavli is important not only because of its content, but also because of how it expresses that content. While it never explicitly resolves this anxiety or tension between the privilege to challenge and the value of religious authority, it does not place the two in a dichotomous relationship with one another. Reading the Bavli can help teachers to see the ways in which sustained and close discussion of a topic can open new understandings of that subject within a Jewish educational framework. In addition, because arguments are often not resolved, it can push readers to add their own voices into the discussion, critically examining the Bavli's statements to see which they consider the best position. The Bavli does not force us to choose between critical thinking and authority. Instead, the two speak to one another.

Making a Case for Case Methods: Getting Inside the Text

The challenge, however, is to figure out a way to present the Talmud's texts to teachers so that they see them as pedagogical tools capable of serving as the building blocks for professional reasoning and discourse in their development as teachers. We do not want the Talmud to be defined by a set of vague general principles and maxims that apply broadly to a group of men we call the rabbis. Our teachers need to get inside the heads of these rabbis as they think about teaching. For this reason, we have adopted a model articulated by Lee Shulman, among others (Shulman, 2004b, Shulman & Sato, 2006; Holzer, 2002; Merseth, 1991; Richert, 1991; Wasserman, 1994). Shulman has proposed that learning to provide a liberal education emerges

most effectively from the study of case-like segments that bracket specific dilemmas (Shulman, 2004b, pp. 464–465). Teachers who are presented with individual experiential "chunks" of discourse that are context specific are better able to visualize and grapple with the uncertainty and unpredictability that defines the art of teaching (Shulman, 2004b, p. 465). They are given a means through which they can "store, exchange, and organize their own experiences" (Shulman, 2004b, p. 465). In order to use the Talmud as a means for the pedagogical development of teachers while working within the Jewish tradition, we need to re-present these Talmudic texts as accounts of human experience, that is, as accounts of teaching dilemmas and strategies, each situated in their own time, place, and subject matter (Shulman, 2004b, p. 464). Like our own observations about pedagogy and our inability to generalize about one's experience as a teacher, the Talmud does not speak in general terms about its concepts and ideas about pedagogy. It does not have one uniform approach to the dilemmas of teaching and learning. And, since liberal education entails understanding that ideas develop in particular contexts and at particular moments, case-models drawn from the Talmud help us to cultivate that understanding within the context of the Jewish tradition. The case study is, therefore, a means of translating the sugyot of the Talmud into usable material for teacher education and for bridging the gap between liberal education and Jewish education.

The case study is also an attempt, as Elie Holzer has argued, to think about "what kind of [text] study leads to good teaching" (Holzer, 2002, p. 385). In recommending that we utilize Jewish texts to develop case-models in the training of teachers Holzer correctly challenges the belief that what makes teachers better is either a deeper knowledge of their subject matter or a better understanding of the meta-goals of text study (Holzer, 2002, pp. 378–379). Instead, we argue that the texts of the Talmud, when molded into usable case studies, not only provide teachers with necessary content knowledge, but also enhance the pedagogy of learning how to become more effective in the classroom (Holzer, 2002, p. 385).

That said it is important to note that the Talmud's cases are not actual records of what transpired in the academy. They are images constructed by a set of redactors who may or may not have experienced the events as they are described in a particular text. However, the fact remains that the redactors have left us a document rooted in the cultivation of the value of ongoing study. Although the events they describe and the conversations they record may not be rooted in real-life events and may not have our twenty-first century educational tensions in mind, one can still view the Bavli as testing, analyzing, and grappling with "what is" good pedagogy. Moshe Berger reports that in an introductory Talmud course designed for Jewish educators at the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, the Talmud quite naturally and unexpectedly became a "gateway" to the students' development as Jewish educators. This happened despite Berger's initial objective, which was merely to introduce his students to the world of the rabbis (Berger, 1998, p. 109). As Elie Holzer argues, we can "narrow the cultural gap that separates us from these sources" so that they can speak to our teachers on the level of teacher development (Holzer, 2002, p. 388; Berger, 1998, pp. 109–110, 120).

Yet, while we seek to narrow that gap we do not want to close it entirely. Since teaching often involves negotiating the unfamiliar and operating in multiple cultural worlds (Kleinfeld, 1988, p. 5), a case study that emerges from an unfamiliar context can also be particularly useful. The very strangeness of Talmudic cases can provoke constructive conversation as teachers try to compare the Talmud's pedagogy with their own. For example, recognition of the differences between ancient and modern constructions of societal hierarchies may result in reflections on contemporary social class and gender. Difference as well as similarity can aid teachers in their formation. Furthermore, while teachers think about their own teaching, they become embedded in a cultural world that has always been about a value-laden commitment to pedagogy despite its transformations over time.

Making a Case for a Case Studies' Methodology

In the next stage of this chapter we will bring you inside the world of the Bavli by translating one sugya from Bava Metzia into two teaching case studies. The first will bring us face-to-face with the rabbis as they comfortably read the Mishnah, the canonical text on which the Talmud is constructed, through the lens of other texts. Despite the fact that such a reading practice complicates the issues presented in the Mishnah, the Bavli presents the rabbis as men governed both by the authority of the Mishnah and by the notion that textual complexity is generative and thus a positive force in the development of understanding. The rabbis model the advantages of resisting a more simplistic type of learning where one text has sole authority. Such a case study offers the modern-day teacher an example of what can occur when material that complicates the main subject or topic under discussion is brought comfortably into the flow of classroom discussion.

The second case moves us away from the issue of textual authority and focuses our attention on the issue of human authority. In a culture so strongly identified with preserving tradition and fostering argumentation, the issue of the teacher's authority in the face of his students' questions emerged as a source of anxiety for the rabbis. What was the extent of rabbinic authority? How were the rabbis supposed to view their students and, in turn, how were their students supposed to view them? The challenge is a familiar one as we too consider how to confront our students' questions.

These cases are only two among the many that remain to be developed from the Bavli. They offer examples of how the Talmud can provide teachers with the resources to guide students toward a much-needed sense of humanity as they find ancient Jewish evidence of the conflicts that they themselves confront in the modern world of education. These case studies provide accounts of how the tension between the development of critical thinking skills and the commitment to the authority of a tradition can be generative and constructive rather than destructive. They inform us that it is possible to cultivate a sense of skepticism while, at the same time, build a sense of reverence for tradition that is crucial to strong Jewish identity.

Bavli Bava Metzia 33a (bBM 33a):[1] The Ideational Background

The biblical commandment found in Exodus 23:4 and Deuteronomy 22:1–3 requiring the return of lost objects to their owners becomes the central focus of the second chapter of tractate Bava Metzia. Within a religious universe where one's relationship to God plays a definitive role, this chapter focuses on the material (rather than the spiritual) realm by exploring issues raised by situations involving the loss and return of one's material possessions. Repeatedly, the rabbis attempt to balance their religious need to observe the biblical commandment regarding the return of lost objects with the realities of everyday life that challenge its implementation. What happens if the object has no identifying mark on it and therefore the finder cannot locate the owner? Without an identifying mark will the finder know whether the claimant is the rightful owner? What occurs if the finder does not have the financial means to care for the object during the length of time it takes him to locate the owner? To what extent should he incur financial loss in order to fulfill the biblical command? Do the same responsibilities to return lost objects apply to cases where one finds objects belonging to non-Jews? As the rabbis grapple with these legal issues about the lost objects of individuals, we find that their discussions also become an opportunity for them (and therefore for us) to think about how to grapple with loss on a larger scale. Their conversations about material loss are also discussions about spiritual and religious loss. In the cases that we will bring below the effects of the potential loss of rabbinic, parental, and textual authority are explored in terms of their ability to endanger the acquisition of Torah knowledge.

Case 1: Confronting Textual Authority

From the Talmud's self-presentation it appears that learning began with one small unit of material drawn from the rabbinic canon, the Mishnah. As teachers, we are no different. We also begin with a central body of material, a core text or idea. When we meet the rabbis in the final sugya of the second chapter of Bava Metzia we find them, within the context of discussing the return of lost objects, proposing guidelines with respect to which individuals take precedence in cases of retrieving these lost things.

Mishnah Bava Metzia 2:11[2]

> His own lost object and his father's lost object—
> [retrieving] his own lost object takes precedence.
> His own lost object and his teacher's lost object—

[1] Throughout the remainder of this chapter Bavli Bava Metzia 33a will be referred to as bBM 33a.

[2] For ease of reference we have listed and referenced this mishnah in accordance with printed editions of the Mishnah (Albeck, 1988). However, in MS Kaufman this mishnah appears as 2:13–14. From now on Mishnah Bava Metzia 2:11 will be referred to as mBM 2:11.

> [retrieving] his own [lost object] takes precedence.
> His father's lost object and his teacher's lost object—
> [returning] his teacher's [lost object] takes precedence;
> [this is] because his father brought him into this world,
> but his teacher who taught him wisdom brings him into the world to come.
> But if his father is wise,
> [retrieving] his father's [lost object] takes precedence.
> If his father and his teacher are [each] carrying a burden,
> he removes that of his teacher, and afterwards removes that of his father.
> If his father and his teacher are taken captive,
> he redeems his teacher, and afterwards redeems his father.
> But if his father is wise,
> he redeems his father, and afterwards redeems his teacher.

Mishnah Bava Metzia 2:11[3] imagines a specific circumstance where a person can retrieve only one object and needs to choose between retrieving his teacher's object or that of his father. In such a scenario, his teacher takes precedence. mBM 2:11 then uses this case as a jumping off point to reinforce the value that teachers take precedence over fathers, unless one's father is himself a scholar, by citing other situations. For example, in the event that a teacher and a father are carrying heavy burdens and need assistance, his teacher's needs take precedence. In a case where both a person's teacher and his father are taken captive, he is to redeem his teacher before his father. The value is clearly stated: in rabbinic society teachers, or individuals who possess knowledge of Torah, are valued more highly than one's parents. Status is determined by knowledge.

While the rules as laid out by this mishnah seem quite clear and teachable, the redactors of the Talmudic sugya that follows undermine this clarity. They introduce a source chronologically parallel to mBM 2:11, a baraita (a rabbinic source contemporaneous with the mishnah), that has nothing to do with lost objects, or carrying burdens, or redeeming captives. This text raises new questions and expands upon the initial reading of the mishnah. The baraita reads as follows:

> The Rabbis taught: "His teacher" that the rabbis spoke of [mBM 2:11] is the teacher that taught him wisdom [that is: how to analyze with great insight the collection of rabbinic material found in the Mishnah] and not the rabbi who taught him [rote forms of learning as would be used to teach] Scripture or the [literal sense of the] Mishnah. These are the words of Rabbi Meir.[4]
>
> Rabbi Yehudah says: ["His teacher" is] the [person from] whom one learned the majority of his wisdom.
>
> Rabbi Yossi says: Even if he clarified for [a person the teaching] of one [individual] mishnah [not previously understood] he is considered "his teacher."

The baraita indicates that in order for a person to prioritize "teacher" versus "parent" properly, the term "teacher" needs further definition. It is not, as one might expect,

[3] When we refer to an individual mishnah in a chapter we will refer to it as "mishnah," with a lower case "m." When we refer to the entire collection of Mishnah, we will refer to it as "Mishnah," with a capital "M."

[4] Our translation reflects the interpretation of Rashi.

a straightforward term with an agreed upon definition. The baraita forces us to consider the possibility that there are many different types of teachers and not all types achieve a degree of societal power strong enough to trump one's parent. In Rabbi Meir's estimation, the "teacher" capable of overriding one's parent is only the one who teaches "wisdom." In this context "wisdom" refers to the teaching of a particular method of Mishnaic analysis. It is a methodology that results in the production of the analytical give-and-take of Talmudic discourse. This is not the teaching of the actual text of the Talmud, but rather the clarification, unpacking, and explication of the Mishnah (Rashi bBM 33a). The text of the Talmud as we have it did not exist until many years later. In Rabbi Meir's opinion, the rote teaching of the texts themselves, that is, of Scripture and Mishnah does not give a teacher the power to trump one's parent. The teacher of Scripture or Mishnah, in this view, is valued less than a teacher capable of imparting an analytical ability to one's students. The rabbi-teacher who helps his students to produce new insights from the words of older texts trumps one's parent.

The remaining two opinions presented in the baraita consider the possibility that what defines a "teacher" is the quantity of material imparted to his students. As Rabbi Yehudah argues, the label "teacher" is bestowed only on the person from whom one learns most of what he knows. Read back into the mishnah, only a teacher from whom one has learned a sizable amount of material can override one's parents in the matter of who takes precedence. In this view, what defines a teacher is less the method of learning he imparts and more the quantity of knowledge he teaches. A teacher trumps the parent when he has become the main conveyer of knowledge to the student. In place of the parent, the teacher has become the chief pedagogue in the child/student's life.

The third position in the baraita stands in stark contrast to that of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Yossi claims that within the framework of rabbinic society a teacher capable of overriding one's parent is anyone who enlightens another person with respect to even one detail of a mishnah. Taking a far more minimalist approach with respect to the quantity of teaching content necessary for a teacher to trump a parent, Rabbi Yossi widens the scope of who, in fact, can be termed a teacher. The baraita raises the possibility that teaching happens in small ways as well as large, and that these small moments of teaching may be of equal significance.

By placing the text of mBM 2:11 in conversation with the baraita, the redactors problematize the mishnah and distance their students from any notion that learning this mishnah is somehow a simple and straightforward endeavor. In their view, the Mishnah is not a stand-alone text. More importantly, they model pedagogical fearlessness in the face of new information. The redactors are comfortable acknowledging that such information makes the learning process better. They convey the idea that teachers can be more effective when they are not afraid to introduce information that makes their lessons more complex.

The baraita challenges the clarity of mBM 2:11 and exposes the fact that unless we have a clear understanding of what defines "his teacher," we cannot implement the mishnah's injunctions. By quoting this baraita the sugya freely and comfortably reveals a terminological problem that affects the law. If the term "teacher"

is defined minimally to refer only to the person who serves as a student's central teacher there are not many people that supersede one's father. If, however, the term teacher can refer maximally to anyone who taught another a small amount of information, then parents more commonly assume a secondary position in the teacher/parent hierarchy.

Interestingly, while the sugya seems to resolve the debate of the baraita by defining a teacher as the person from whom one derives the majority of his wisdom, it also strives to support and defend the opinion of Rabbi Yossi. The sugya goes on to refer us to several amoraic[5] examples where the teaching of minutiae earns one the ability to be considered a significant teacher. For example, the amora, Rava, cites the case of Rav Seḥorah who did no more than clarify an obscure type of utensil to which a mishnah in tractate Kelim refers (mKelim 13:2, 25:3). This terminological elucidation alone earned him the title, "teacher." The amora, Shmuel, was known to tear his garments, a display of mourning normally reserved for teachers and family members, upon the death of someone who explained the meaning of a difficult Mishnaic phrase about opening doors in the Temple precincts (mTamid 3:6). And, according to the amora, Ulla, Talmud scholars in Babylonia would tear their garments for their peers because they were continuously engaged in learning from one other; in this regard, each was considered a teacher.

The sugya's extended discussion indicates that the rabbis were not only trying to open the text of the mishnah for further conversation, but they were also concerned about their very identity as teachers. When the Bavli introduces these examples of teachers it is expressing its unease about rabbinic self-definition and status. In other words, at what point did rabbinic teachers cross the boundary line that divided them from everybody else, even parents? And, what was the cost of acquiring the type of knowledge that earned one the title "teacher?" Did it diminish the importance of the parental role or maybe equate "good parenting" with the acquisition of Torah wisdom? The baraita enables us to recognize that the idea stated so distinctly in the mishnah—that rabbi-teachers can ultimately trump even the honor due one's parents—while desirable, is also profoundly problematic. Once the "teacher" referred to in the mishnah can even be the person who does no more than clarify a difficult term or unclear concept, the societal axis shifts to an even greater degree away from that of family. The tension between the rabbi–student relationship and that of father–son is exposed for what it is: a conflict of competing values whereby the attainment of Torah knowledge that weds someone to a rabbi-teacher does not comfortably coexist with the cultivation of a familial bond that connects a son to his father. The three opinions found within the baraita show us that this conflict is not, even for the rabbis, easily resolved.

The rabbis, therefore, are engaged in a struggle over the values that the system they embrace and produce generates. While they begin with a mishnah (mBM

[5] Amoraic material is attributed to rabbis who lived after the close of the Mishnah, that is, approximately between the years 200 and 500. Amoraim in Babylonia as well as in the land of Israel analyzed earlier, tannaitic material found in the Mishnah and in various baraitot.

2:11) and do not reject its authority outright, they comfortably introduce additional material in order to bring more issues and problems to the fore. The rabbis' embeddedness in a textual tradition leads them to place these multiple texts in conversation with one another, expanding their knowledge as they expose questions, conflicts, and doubts. In their estimation, while teaching can be defined many ways, deeper understanding comes only from fearlessly admitting more information into discussions. Certainly, this is a pedagogical tactic not easily welcomed by teachers who may wish to engender more control over their material in the classroom or are fearful that clarity is sacrificed when the subject of a lesson becomes more complicated. But, as the Bavli enables us to see, critical thinking arises out of a commitment to a conversation that is generated by the admission of additional material that problematizes issues more than it resolves them. Ironically, this admission of material brings issues of concern more clearly into focus generating larger questions about what is at stake when one's teacher comes before one's parent. The fact that the questions emerge as a result of a baraita, a contemporaneous source to that of the mishnah with an equal level of authority, indicates that challenges were rooted in authoritative material. The rabbis' sugya establishes the authority of its texts as it questions their very definition.

Indeed, the fact that Talmudic discussions often reach no straightforward conclusion parallels the observations made by those, including Selma Wasserman, who advocate for the case-study method in training teachers. As Wasserman argues, cases heighten ambiguities. Through them teachers become "more distrustful of certainty and increasingly comfortable in a world where there are no easy answers." They learn never to be "satisfied with simple answers to complex problems" and, as a result, develop "habits of thinking" that enable them to behave "maturely and wisely in dealing with the far reaching choices of modern society" (Wasserman, 1994, p. 6; Kleinfeld, 1988, p. 29).

Case 2: Challenges to Human Authority

In bBM 33a we also find the rabbis confronting one of the greatest challenges that we face as teachers: the extent of our own authority in the classroom. Is good teaching about knowing more than one's students? Or, is it about laying the groundwork so that our students, in turn, teach us? Possibly, it is even about knowing how to revel in the challenge that comes in the teaching moment when our students feel enough confidence to introduce an idea about which we, their teachers, know nothing. Thus, we learn from them. In a hierarchical system such as rabbinic Judaism, challenges of any sort to authority might be considered dangerous. When a student teaches his teacher, it implies that a chain of tradition whereby knowledge is imparted from teacher to student has gone awry. Yet, the rabbis of this sugya, albeit with a great deal of anxiety, acknowledge that it is acceptable pedagogical practice for students to teach their teachers. Students can and do offer insights that enlighten their teachers.

This sugya wonders how the law of mBM 2:11 concerning who takes precedence—one's teacher or one's father—plays out when a student assumes the role of teacher to his teacher. Would this student retrieve a lost object for, or pick up a burden for, or concern himself with the redemption of—his father or his teacher—in a case where he taught his teacher something his teacher did not know? Does "his teacher," as referred to in mBM 2:11, always remain the teacher who trumps his father irrespective of the type of pedagogical interchange that occurs between them? Or, alternatively, does teaching his teacher diminish the authority of this teacher and enable his father to supersede him? With the help of the following short Talmudic story, the rabbis of the Bavli invite us to explore the issue of students teaching teachers.

Bava Metzia 33a

> Rav Hisda asked him [his teacher Rav Huna]: What is the ruling about the case of a student [where] his teacher needs him [in order to understand a matter]? [How would we then understand the mishnah with regard to whether the teacher takes precedence or the father?]
>
> He [Rav Huna, thinking Rav Hisda was referring specifically to the student–teacher relationship that existed between them] said to him: "Hisda, Hisda! I do not need you. You need me for 40 years [in order to acquire the knowledge necessary to become a teacher]."[6]
>
> They were angry at one another and they did not visit one another.
>
> Rav Hisda fasted forty fasts [as a sign of repentance] because [his actions caused] Rav Huna to feel dejected.
>
> Rav Huna fasted forty fasts because he [mistakenly] suspected Rav Hisda [of acting disrespectfully].

We can imagine that the subject of the day in the academy was mBM 2:11 and that the rabbis were operating within a world of their own making where the most prized relationships were those of teacher–student and parent–son. Upon hearing the mishnah and the baraita the amora, Rav Hisda, pushed his teacher, Rav Huna, to consider redefining what the mishnah meant when it stated, "his teacher." He presumed correctly that defining the term "his teacher" would have serious legal consequences for how the mishnah would be implemented in the cases that it cited. And so he asked what if a teacher needs his student for knowledge? What if that student is the son referred to in our mishnah? What if in choosing between his teacher and his father with regard to retrieving their lost objects he needs to consider that he successfully enlightened his teacher and his teacher learned from him? Does his teacher still take precedence over his father in such a case or does his father now supersede his teacher because his teacher relied on the aid of his student? In other words, what breaks down if the teacher needs his student for understanding a given matter? Does the fact that a student is capable of teaching his teacher diminish his

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[6]There are two ways to read the phrase "for 40 years." We have chosen to read it in accordance with Rabbeinu Hananel's commentary on bBM 33a. However, it could also be read in connection with the next sentence. In other words, it could be read as follows: "For 40 years they [Rav Huna and Rav Hisda] were angry at one another and did not visit one another."

teacher's authority and make his father more deserving of the honor of superseding a teacher? Is the goal of being a teacher to know more than everybody else or, at least, to know more than those whom one is charged with teaching?

The Bavli does not give us a clear answer. Instead, the Talmudic story exposes all of the anxiety so well known to us when students challenge us, or attempt to overturn our insights, or pose new ideas, or simply teach us something we do not know (Wasserman, 1994, p. 4). Rav Huna's response is familiar. He shudders upon hearing Rav Hisda's question. He immediately presumes that Rav Hisda is trying to outdo him. His insecurities and desire for authority prompt him to dismiss readily the notion that his student has the ability to teach him anything. For Rav Huna, the question posed by Rav Hisda is not a question whose answer is necessary for understanding the mishnah. The question is a personal attack; this student simply wishes to convey that he knows more than his teacher. Rav Huna quickly puts Rav Hisda in his place by informing him that the student always needs the teacher and not the other way around. Knowledge flows in one direction—from the teacher to the student. He also reminds him that the teacher maintains his role as teacher for 40 years. Such a time span must pass before the student acquires enough knowledge to become a teacher himself.

Eventually, Rav Huna and Rav Hisda realize their own failings and each undertakes days of fasting as a sign to themselves and to the other that they regret their interchange. Rav Hisda laments that he caused his teacher pain by asking him an inappropriate question. Rav Huna, in turn, realizes that he mistook Rav Hisda's intentions as a sign of disrespect. Their regret signals the danger of a teacher's unconsidered response to a student who poses a challenging question or adds information to a classroom discussion about which the teacher is unaware. It also signals the way in which a student needs to be trained to pose questions so that the teacher will (correctly) understand his query as a respectful and well-intentioned desire to learn more. We learn from this interchange between a teacher and his student that a student's question can easily be misinterpreted and that such misinterpretation can end pedagogical dialogue.

This Talmudic story conveys all too well that the relationship between a teacher and a student is tenuous. It is a relationship that preys on the insecurities of both teacher and student in a manner that threatens to destroy the learning process altogether. As such, knowledge gets lost. Had Rav Huna been slower to react he might have learned that part of what defines a teacher as a teacher is his ability to learn from a student. He might have found that instead of fasting 40 fasts the two together could have uncovered even more interpretive possibilities about teachers, students, and lost objects. Therefore, as Rav Huna and Rav Hisda point out, it is in the best interest of both teacher and student to maintain the delicate balance that exists between them, just as Mary Haywood Metz argues when she discusses the teacher–student relationship through her real-life teacher–student cases (Haywood Metz, 1993, pp. 108–113). In fact, we infer from our case study that one model of successful teaching occurs when teachers explicitly define for their students the parameters of their relationship and how they understand the meaning of being a teacher. They guide their students in the art of critical thinking by asking questions of the texts that

they introduce into the classroom. They also commend those students who model an acceptable form of questioning by describing the types of questions that are generative and pinpointing those that are destructive. Critical thinking, the continuous discussion and creation of knowledge old and new, emerges when the maintenance of authority is not an end in itself.

In fact, later commentators on this sugya offer two different interpretations of what it means to be a student who teaches his teacher. Rabbi Hananel ben Hushiel of Kairouan (Rabbeinu Hananel, d. 1055/6) suggests that the sugya refers to an intellectually sharp student whose probing questions enable the teacher to gain knowledge. In this model, the student is not necessarily in possession of factual knowledge that the teacher does not have. Instead, the student's intellectual prowess refines what the teacher already knows and helps him to understand the material in a new way. In this light, Rabbeinu Hananel quotes the Talmudic passage found in bTa'anit 7a, "Rabbi Hanina said, 'I have learned a lot from my teachers, and from my peers even more than from my teachers, and from my students more than them all.'"[7] In contrast, Rashi suggests that this student has learned "traditions" (שמועות)—that is, teachings from others about which the current teacher is unaware. Rashi's comment focuses on the student's content knowledge, implicitly recognizing that a teacher's knowledge is not absolute. Students often add material that they have learned in other contexts to their teacher's presentations. Unless there is only one central teacher through which all learning happens such a situation would be impossible to avoid.

While we are not taking sides in the debate between Rabbeinu Hananel and Rashi, we raise their views to highlight the fact these two Talmudic commentators struggle with pedagogical issues that parallel our own. What do we want our students to teach us? What are constructive teaching moments? Are we looking for our students to guide us toward refined understandings of the material that we present or are we hoping that our students will introduce facts and ideas that are unknown to us? Possibly, the answer is both. Either way, as teachers we need to be prepared for how to receive the questions, comments, and ideas that are posed by our students so as not to thwart the effectiveness of the teacher–student interchange.

When we think about the rabbis as teachers and the texts of the Bavli as exploring the dimensions of pedagogy, we find that they do not value passivity in their imaginary classrooms. The Bavli's own terminology conveys its preference for questions and answers, challenges and rebuttals. As we have seen, our Talmudic story about Rav Huna and Rav Hisda opens with the words, "Rav Hisda asked [his teacher Rav Huna]." The Aramaic verb, ב.ע.י. (ask), signals a legal question and is a common Talmudic term. Indeed, asking is a necessity for a student who wishes to learn from his teacher. Through the very act of "asking," Rav Hisda models the kind of student–teacher behavior necessary for developing students who are not passive recipients of their teacher's teachings. It makes us wonder why Rav Huna was taken

[7] Also see bMakkot 10a where Rabbi Yehudah Ha-nasi makes the same point.

by surprise at all when Rav Hisda posed his question. Should he have not expected, even encouraged, the query?

This interchange between teacher and student on bBM 33a introduces us to the humanity of even the greatest rabbinic figures. Although the rabbis of the Bavli are committed to the notion that learning involves the ability to reason logically and to test ideas for their consistency, echoing for us Nussbaum's argument about the aims of a liberal education (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 19), they struggle with the very pedagogy that they wish to nurture. The interchange between Rav Huna and Rav Hisda allows us to observe a teaching moment that is familiar to many of us. We often regret the times when we have dismissed or not listened to our students' questions and ideas in the name of preserving a desired hierarchy. We are surprised at how difficult it is to relinquish our intellectual authority in the classroom. However, we can find comfort in the fact that the Bavli's anxiety parallels our own. We can learn from Rav Huna and Rav Hisda's feelings of regret that it is important to keep our fundamental goal of developing active and critical thinkers at the center of our teaching mission and put our students before ourselves. In enabling and encouraging our students to expand the arena of classroom knowledge we give up a degree of personal authority in the classroom. However, through this two-way movement we grant authority to our texts and to the process that keeps them alive. This was a goal of the rabbis of the Talmud, albeit not easily achieved. It should be ours as well.

Conclusion and Future Implications

The development of both critical thinking and a sense of "reflective skepticism" can dovetail with our commitment to the authority of an inherited tradition (Brookfield, 1988). Within Judaism, and more specifically within the texts of the Babylonian Talmud, Jewish educators can find a disciplinary logic regarding what constitutes critical thinking that preserves older ideas as it critiques and even transforms them. By translating Talmudic texts into case studies teachers can locate a variety of different types of critical–reflective moments. Talmudic texts can provide them with an array of opportunities to assess the manner in which they can develop critical thinking while immersing themselves within a religious tradition. Such texts and the rabbinic pedagogies that they present marshal a type of critical thinking that is both reverent and rooted (Goleman, 2008, p. 1). Much as one can utilize Socratic techniques to criticize Socrates' thought (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 41), one can utilize Talmudic modes to critique Talmudic concepts.

The ideas presented in the above two cases were rooted in a Mishnaic conversation about the return of lost objects. The Mishnaic conversation, in turn, emerged out of a concern for the meaning of a set of biblical verses regarding the requirement to return the lost objects that one finds. The twists and turns of the Babylonian sugya kept these authoritative texts front and center while bringing additional issues to the fore. Using the Bavli as a model for how to encourage critical thinking instructs students that such a mode is internal to Jewish tradition. Earlier texts are interrogated, contemporaneous texts are put into conversation with one another, and students

question their teachers. Questions provoke anxiety and debate fosters intellectual growth. But, at the root of this inquiry is a desire to embed rabbinic tradition in the hearts and minds of its participants. These are not empty rhetorical forms; these are the ways in which the Bavli builds knowledge. When we follow this model, whereby conversations are rooted in a set of authoritative texts, we ask students to learn to speak a specific language and to think along with a particular tradition.

More time needs to be spent studying the Bavli for its pedagogical lessons. It is important to push the boundaries of the discipline of Talmud to include Talmud pedagogy in a more serious way. We need to think about how the rabbis defined pedagogy and to explore the models of teaching and learning that they set up for us. Therefore, our future research will focus on the pedagogy of the rabbis and their definitions of teaching. In addition, our commitment to turning Talmudic material into usable cases reflects our commitment to finding answers to Elie Holzer's question, "what kind of [text] study... lead[s] to good teaching [in the training of teachers]?" (Holzer, 2002, p. 385).

In addition, because teaching and learning have always been integral to Jewish tradition, the task is set before us to explore the pedagogies embedded in other Jewish texts and to think about the degree to which they foster and/or critique Talmudic pedagogy. There are other models of Jewish pedagogy that we can find outside of the Bavli that offer different insights on Jews' attitudes toward teaching and learning. For example, midrashic texts, Jewish code literature, works of medieval scriptural exegesis, and philosophical treatises, to name a few genres, serve as additional resources in our quest to define "what is" Jewish pedagogy. It is then up to us to translate this material into useful teacher case studies that will not only contribute to teacher education, but will also help us to develop a better understanding of the nature of Jewish thought and culture. As such, within the field of Talmud lies a burgeoning field of Jewish pedagogy that bridges the scholarly worlds of Jewish literature and Jewish education.

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Technology: The Digital Revolution That Is Shaping Twenty-First-Century Jewish Education—A Fleeting Snapshot from the First Decade

Brian Amkraut

Introduction

The socio-cultural environment of the early twenty-first century reflects a watershed moment in modern civilization. Rapid developments in technology and communication have transformed not merely how business, governments, and other institutions operate, but also challenge our understanding of the individual's role in society and his or her relationship to the surrounding world. These changes reflect an accelerated process of modernization that has been unfolding for many generations, with unprecedented recent developments. We find ourselves amid the ongoing digital revolution, in which information is easily accessible in seemingly limitless quantities. The individual can connect interactively with unlimited points of access in the virtual universe, constantly defining and redefining the terms of his or her association with other individuals and institutions to suit his or her unique needs. These seminal shifts in contemporary culture profoundly influence an increasingly individualized society and indeed may be transforming Jewish life. The impact of these most significant developments will shape the face of Jewish education as it engages the future.[1]

The Revolution

Assessing the technological landscape at any given moment in the digital age provides what can perhaps best be described as a fleeting snapshot. With respect to judging accurately technology's role in our world, we can only confidently assert that the changes come so fast and furiously that we cannot truly have a sense of

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[1]This study focuses on Jewish life in North America but the pervasiveness of digital culture in an age of globalization makes the analysis applicable to Jewish education on an international level even in Israel with its unique Jewish educational environment. Sherlick and Hong (2008) directly address the issue of technology's influence in Israeli schools.

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what the next wave of change may herald, and that each technological "generation" is shorter than that which precedes it, in accordance with "Moore's law."[2] Nevertheless, this chapter attempts to present an analysis of overarching trends and influences related to the broadest application of digital culture as it can be apprehended in late 2009. It proposes a hypothesis as to how those patterns may influence the world of Jewish education, rather than focusing on specific innovations in software or hardware. A concise formulation: digital culture is a way of thinking, not tied to a specific technology or industry, to paraphrase a 2001 review of the peer-to-peer file sharing phenomenon (Truelove, Shirky, Gonze, & Dornfest, 2001). Trying to list the websites and networks that best demonstrate how Jewish life flourishes in cyberspace or ways that Jewish educators have taken advantage of these developments, both in their classrooms and in the development of the field as a whole, is a Sisyphean endeavor. In the preparation of a scholarly publication on the subject, the landscape can (and usually does) change substantially between the time of composition and appearance in print (Amkraut, 2008). A subsequent lag between the time the work is read broadly by professional peers will likely result in significant digital developments absent from the initial scholarship. If the work in question generates substantial feedback with a computer-mediated discussion group, subsequently allowing for updating the original findings, the work can remain consistently relevant with respect to specific applications. So too the research can stagnate unless the dialogue is sustained. (Therein lies the attraction of electronic publication or simply blogging, as opposed to traditional print media, but migrating to a purely digital environment would be a radical step for conventionally trained academics, where the profession has been defined and evaluated by the criteria of peer-reviewed print publication.)

In fact, the most salient means by which the digital revolution impacts Jewish education are by-products of technology, rather than the technology itself. The fact that the most profound transformations will be seen in the area of social culture—relationships between people, communities, and ideas as opposed to cyberspace in its own right—creates challenges for communal leadership as a whole and Jewish educators in particular. This approach to the twenty-first-century contemporary Jewish life emerges from a widely held axiom among Jewish historians which forms the basic premise of this analysis (Meyer, 1987): In any given era and at any given point on the globe, the realities of Jewish life can only be understood in the context of, and as a reflection of, the surrounding culture in which Jews find themselves. Based on that hypothesis, an accurate assessment of what Jewish life looks like in the early twenty-first century, and perhaps a prediction of where it is headed, depends on appropriately apprehending the milieu in which Jewish life is unfolding. Hence much of the research cited in this overview emerges from the realm of general social observation and not from the Jewish environment per se. The future of Jewish

[2]The theory first posited by Intel co-founder Gordon Moore in 1965 holds that the cost of developing integrated circuitry decreases exponentially nearly every 18 months, thereby improving computing capacity in consumer products in a geometric progression.

education perhaps can help shape, but will undoubtedly be shaped by, the revolutionary forces in communication and technology that are profoundly redefining our social culture.

Educator Responses

The first decade of the twenty-first century has seen a fair amount of attention given to the dramatic changes in the worlds of communication and information technology, and the Jewish education community of course has taken note of these changes, even if it has assimilated these developments less rapidly than the surrounding environment. The overwhelming focus of these efforts has been placed on addressing the so-called “digital divide,” that is the enormous generation gap between the “digital natives,” or so-called “Millennials” (Howe & Strauss, 2000), who constitute the K-16 student population (and slowly but surely some of their parents) and the “digital immigrants” who comprise the overwhelming majority of Jewish education professionals, be they classroom teachers, school administrators, congregational rabbis, or even lay leaders (Levine, 2006).[3] Indeed, this focus has deserved attention since pedagogues do need to be versed in the discourse of the student population.

One can easily argue that on the whole educational practitioners (as is true of their age cohorts in general) have at least developed some basic literacy in computer technology and do increasingly attempt to integrate technology into their educational planning. An earlier concern that older teachers would be hesitant in utilizing email or their school’s websites and electronic educational resources has proven unfounded and indeed a small industry has grown up around the development of Jewish educational tools for the digital age.[4] Furthermore, a cadre of digitally astute Jewish educators and scholars has actively and effectively advocated for incorporating the latest technology and communication developments into the landscape of Jewish educational activity (Grishaver, 2008; Margolis, 2008; Woocher, 2008). In reality most of the professional development activity geared toward bridging this knowledge gap has been skills-oriented: teaching Jewish educators how to make effective power point presentations; how to surf the web for useful Jewish resources; how to educate parents regarding the dangers of internet predators; how to teach courses on-line; and, of course, how to submit grades and communicate with students and parents electronically. Even much of the Jewish education research agenda

[3] A related issue to the developments addressed in this analysis is the demography of Jewish educators which remains heavily skewed toward educators over the age of 40 (Ben-Avie & Kress, 2008, pp. 18–19).

[4] A significant related question, however, is the sustainability of those efforts as an important element of the digital age, and the development of sustainable business models in the midst of the current paradigm shift (see below on Freeconomics). Even as some of the educational resources attempt to shift their services to on-line only models, their longevity remains unclear without sustained philanthropic support (Berkman, 2009).

has been focused on this generation gap, highlighting those initiatives that are working toward bridging the divide and lamenting the fact that the field as a whole seems to operate at least a step behind the broader education community's efforts to incorporate the latest technologies into the classroom (Berger, 2003; Woocher, 2008).

Arguably, these efforts have succeeded in at least ensuring that the older educator population is not entirely ignorant of the computer-generated language of today's students. As important as they may be, such steps often miss the larger more significant cultural shift. In this respect Jewish education hardly stands alone; religious education in general is slower to adapt, reflecting, perhaps, the conservative nature of the field. Thus, in a relatively recent assessment of the field, Goldburg noted the importance of incorporating creative arts for today's students with a focus on the visual, but basically ignored the path-breaking interactive capabilities of the digital age. (2006, p. 1241)

Jewish family educator, Vicky Kelman (2009) has referred to the incursion of technology on day-to-day living by stating explicitly that technology is "invading our lives." Kelman was not advocating that we eliminate technology from our daily routines, but rather was, in her own way, applying one of Melvin Kranzberg's six "Laws of Technology," "Technology is neither good nor bad; nor is it neutral" (1986). As a challenge to conventional modes of interpersonal communication, Kelman's assertion hits the mark, and educators struggle between co-opting technology effectively to further pedagogical aims on the one hand and achieving those goals through limiting the use of technology in the educational environment on the other. Duke University's Alex Roland frames the power of technology in the following way: "It can be what military people call a force multiplier, but humans can decide if that force is used for good or ill" (2009).

Why Revolution?

Adjusting to the latest technologies as they emerge, while necessary, only partly responds to the enormously significant changes in the broader cultural landscape. Undertaking such piecemeal activities without recognizing the tectonic socio-cultural shift unfolding around us is analogous to a physician treating a patient's symptoms with blatant disregard for the underlying causes of an illness, although this metaphor should not be seen as portraying digital culture as a disease to be cured. A historian does not employ the notion of revolution lightly, but indeed the characterization is apt. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines revolution as "an instance of great change or alteration in affairs or in some particular thing" (1971, p. 2533). And applying this term to the digital landscape suggests an intellectual leap that recognizes early twenty-first-century computer technology as not merely the latest electronic communication device to follow telephones, radio, and television in their various incarnations, but rather sees the current moment of the information age as having totally rearranged fundamental social institutions such as community, authority, and identity. Media analyst Clay Shirky asserts that even a development

that we can take for granted and that in and of itself seems modest can have profound implications when viewed within the framework of systemic change.[5] "Email is nice," Shirky writes, "but how big a deal can it be in the grand scheme of things? The answer is 'not such a big deal considered by itself.' The trick is not to consider it by itself... We now have communications tools that are flexible enough to match our social capabilities, and we are witnessing the rise of new ways of coordinating action that take advantage of that change" (2008, p. 20). When digital communication proliferates on a massive scale, to its fully interactive multimedia potential, it can make conventional broadcast and telephonic communication appear primitive.

The technology itself is so radically different from that of the previous communications revolution that it will likely be some time before most of us will truly appreciate the nature of that change. In *Blown to Bits*, technology experts Abelson, Ledeen, and Lewis place the differences between digital technology and its precursors in stark contrast. In their attempt to explain the impact of what they term the "digital explosion," they identify a whole host of areas in which society as a whole, and not merely the arena of information access, is being reshaped by this brave new world (2008, pp. 1–17).

This revolutionary transformation impacts the field of Jewish education on two fronts: (1) In the rapidly changing nature of classroom instruction, both in terms of educational technologies and the evolving relationship between students and teachers as a reflection of digital culture. (2) In the dynamic impact that the social culture produced by our digital environment has had on religious life in general and in the challenges these changes have already posed to our understandings of Judaism. No doubt the latter helps shape the former.

The educational landscape is already adapting. Just one example should demonstrate the potential. The Jewish Publication Society, a vestige of a pre-digital era, has sponsored the construction of what is being called a *Tagged Tanach*, still in development as of late 2009. Yonatan Gordis advocates: "*The Tagged Tanach* is a natural next step in the ongoing Jewish tradition of creative biblical exegesis. This is essentially what we have been doing for generations, revealing layers upon layers of interpretation and understanding. When Web 2.0 meets the Tanakh, the result should be a text that includes everyone and creates a shared sense of ownership and vision for the future" (Gordis, 2009). Stretching one's imagination gives rise to extrapolating beyond the limitations of the *Tagged Tanach* to a totally interactive user generated multimedia *midrash* (commentary on or interpretation of biblical text). Standing one of the basic precepts of Jewish textual interpretation on its head, and reflecting a basic element of digital culture, this development will allow the broad Jewish public an active role in an arena that had consistently been the purview of a limited number of experts.

[5]For a 15-min video presentation from 2009 by Shirky on the revolutionary impact of social media, see http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/clay_shirky_how_cellphones_twitter_facebook_can_make_history.html

To some extent, the question is whether or not these changes in communication technology are indeed of a revolutionary rather than evolutionary nature. And while one is not confident in applying such terminology to a process that is still unfolding and whose course is unpredictable, nevertheless it would seem to be appropriate. The myriad examples that already populate the landscape of contemporary Jewish life, as well as the more immediate evidence from the general society in which we live, demonstrate how radical the changes can be and how fast they will come. Some well-known examples include harnessing the internet to develop grass roots political enthusiasm, "bystanders" using mobile technology to quickly and broadly disseminate news, including audio and video, and bloggers utilizing their own public forums to comment, thereby challenging the whole business model of print and broadcast journalism. Once the notion of a communications revolution is accepted, it stands to reason that such a transformation will profoundly impact the nature of society at large, religious life in general, and the Jewish experience in particular.

A number of social commentators have compared the digital revolution to the era that followed the advent of the printing press, often noting the important correlation between the innovations in media that Gutenberg represented with the radical change in religious life associated with Martin Luther. Luther was not the first cleric to dissent from the Catholic Church's monopoly on Christian authority, but he was the first dissenter to take advantage of "broadcast media" in one of its earliest forms. So too in Jewish life both the *Zohar* and the *Shulchan Aruch*[6] enjoyed wide distribution in the century following the advent of the Gutenberg press, thereby changing the nature of what counted for religious authority in subsequent generations (Brasher, 2004, pp. 14–15; Seltzer, 1980, p. 460).

Over 35 years ago Donis Dondis embraced the notion of contemporary cultural literacy with respect to the visual arts and highlighted a significant historical parallel when he wrote "if the invention of moveable type created a mandate for universal visual literacy, surely the invention of the camera and all its collateral and continually developing forms makes the achievement of universal visual literacy as an educational necessity long overdue" (1973, p. ix). How much more so is such advice an imperative for our society with respect to digital literacy?

Again, educational professionals must recognize that such literacy demands not merely facility with the technology but also a comprehension of the radical shift in communication from the norms of the late twentieth century. While it is true that the field of educational technology is not all that new, and indeed scholars have long recognized the profound impact that popular culture has in shaping students' perceptions of knowledge and their surroundings, "popular culture remains as a teacher who competes with the classroom teacher for students from pre-school through college, whether educators care to acknowledge it or not" (DeVaney, 1994,

[6]The *Zohar* is the primary text of Medieval Jewish mysticism (compiled in the thirteenth-century Spain) and the *Shulchan Aruch* serves as the definitive late Medieval code of Jewish law (compiled in sixteenth-century Palestine).

pp. 356–357). The dramatic change in the current environment is that students themselves play a significant part in helping to shape the very popular culture that, in turn, defines social norms. Perhaps most importantly for educators to internalize, the students themselves know the powerful role they play.

Digital Judaism

From its earliest incarnations, even before the advent of the World Wide Web, internet applications accessible to the general public have been utilized to explore issues of religious identity. Subsequently, they have been harnessed both in the service of organized religion and to enable individuals to challenge the authoritative nature of most religious movements. Quite often the framework for such exploration is the rapid and mass communication of news to a specific group, or the ever-present jokes appropriate for the "in-crowd." And, indeed, for some religious groups, the ongoing opportunities afforded by on-line religious experience as opposed to conventional real-world traditions result in changes that can even transform the character of religion itself (Brasher, 2004, p. 13, and Helland, 2007). For example, do the massively circulated viral communications constitute "Jewish texts"?

Ironically, a hallmark of the digital age, and of software applications in particular, is their innovative quality, and their ability to push the envelope with respect to what can be accomplished via computer. While one can certainly argue that organized monotheism was in and of itself quite revolutionary, typically Judaism as it has been practiced and organized has not been a way of life geared toward experimentation. With the exception of various significant moments in the course of its thousands of years history (such as the advent of rabbinic Judaism, or the emergence of Reform and other denominations), Jewish life has been conservative. Indeed, the most radical innovations to emerge from within the Jewish mainstream (Christianity, e.g., as well as the lesser known Karaism, and Sabbateanism) were generally dismissed as heretical and beyond the realm of normative Jewish life. As Jews take a page from the digital notebook and view innovation not merely as episodic but as central to the twenty-first century, will rapid regular change be tolerated within the bounds of communal legitimacy? Attempts to block innovation in the digital realm, whether due to legal concerns or economic interests, are often viewed by the most active community of on-line entrepreneurs as stifling the very essence of the digital age (Abelson et al., 2008, pp. 218). In an environment where digital footprints have potentially infinite life spans, attempts at digital censorship will probably prove futile.

Twentieth-century marketing organizations, not to mention powerful forces in the conventional media arena, have been slow to adapt to this new reality in which the rules of the game have so drastically changed. The tools of digital networking have empowered end-users, be they members of a tribe, consumers of products, or citizens of a state, to share their voices with one another independent of the forces that have shaped the marketplace for the last few centuries (Shirky, 2008, p. 47).

Not surprisingly, some substantial innovative communal engagement is, in fact, visible on the Jewish landscape, be it in the form of "independent *minyanim*" (Jewish prayer quorums, also refers to congregations not affiliated with established synagogues) (Musleah, 2009) or "cultural events" (Cohen & Kelman, 2005) that emerge from the grass roots—in digital terminology these phenomena demonstrate user-generated expressions of Jewish commitment. Significantly, these examples challenge the hegemony of Jewish establishment institutions, be they synagogues, JCCs, or community federations and they depend on what I have called a "define-it-yourself" Judaism which could be seen as representing a progression from the "do-it-yourself" approach that characterized the *havurah* movement of the 1970s and 1980s (Amkraut, 2007). These innovative approaches challenge not only notions of authority but also conceptions of community, an issue of great significance for Jewish education (Bloomberg, 2007; Wertheimer, 2009)

One could argue for an evolutionary rather than revolutionary progression with respect to individual control over Jewish expression, with contemporary developments merely representing the latest incarnation of deep-seated trends dating back to the pre-modern era (see Figs. 1 and 2). These grass roots developments engender optimism among advocates of Jewish continuity as the tools empower a new generation of engaged leadership. However, the model of end-user creativity raises questions for educators with respect to what will be the consequences of their constituencies in utilizing the power of networks. Consider the dilemma of the modern synagogue and its educational programs: Can education professionals legitimately

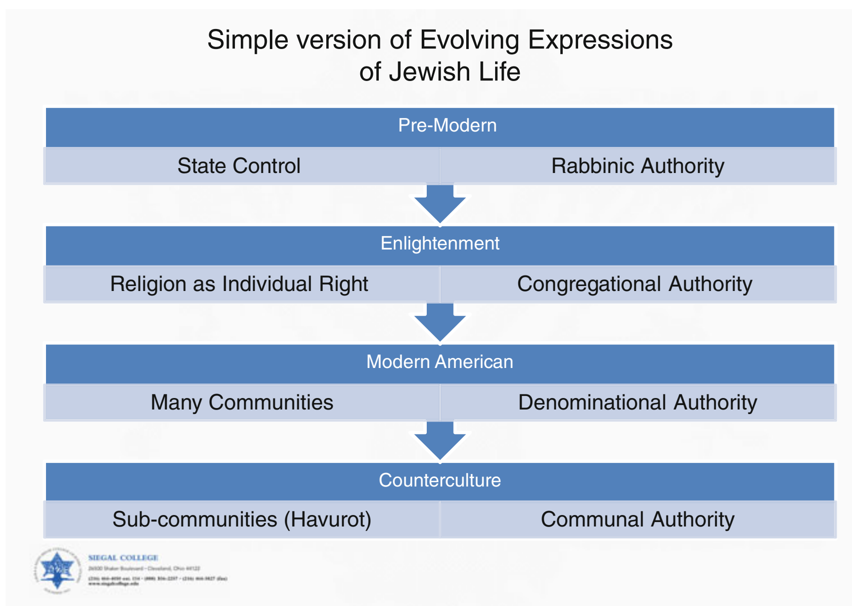

Fig. 1 Jewish authority and historical/cultural context

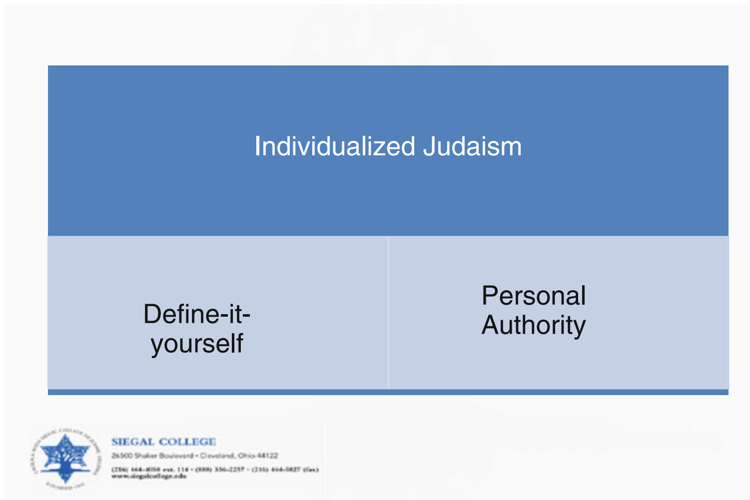

Fig. 2 Authority in the era of individualization

advocate for engagement that may very well obviate the need for the institution itself (Musleah, 2009, pp. 36–38)?

Media analyst Douglas Rushkoff sees the cultural shift as a great opportunity, and argues for the transformation of conventional Jewish life as an imperative.

> Just as the definition of social justice had to evolve over time, so must the definition of what it means to be Jewish. . . Jews who pursued careers in social justice, or who dedicated their lives to the most universally progressive ideals, became known as "lapsed" Jews. . . Though they had merely followed the same path as Moses toward unbiased compassion and selfless activism, they had seemingly abandoned all that was nominally Jewish. Now, Jewish "outreach" efforts are spending millions of dollars each year in a misguided effort [to] get them "back."

Rushkoff continues, "This so-called lapsed constituency might actually comprise Judaism's most devoutly practicing members. It is not these people, but what is considered "Jewish" that needs to change" (2003, pp. 42–43).

One need not agree with Rushkoff regarding the essential core of Jewish life and the Jewish establishment's rejection of these values. But his assertion that grass-roots efforts by unaffiliated or previously alienated Jews can redefine the terms of communal engagement does reflect the social culture indicative of the digital revolution.

Community

The power of the network is such that it can and perhaps should be understood by those seeking to nurture Jewish continuity as an unprecedented opportunity to cultivate a sense of Jewish unity and belonging. The phenomenon of social net-working allows (whether in a virtual environment or physical reality) for otherwise

isolated individuals or small disconnected networks, often tied only marginally to larger entities, to take advantage of those nodes which happen to overlap, thereby linking many networks, large and small, and subsequently creating, perhaps, a meta-network serving to tie the disparate pieces together (Singh, 2007). Jewish educators and/or educational institutions have the opportunity to serve as strategic nodes or to encourage individual students to step into these roles.

To be sure, one can hardly blame communal leadership for lack of imagination in this respect as even many of the most astute business and political leaders have had difficulty grasping the totality of this change. As noted above, the digital era can be perceived as evolutionary rather than revolutionary—as merely the next link in a chain, albeit one whose progressions of late have been increasing at a geometric pace, along the lines of Moore's Law, as mentioned above. Misreading the digital landscape can have dire economic consequences. In Shirky's words, "When a profession has been created as a result of some scarcity, as with librarians or television programmers, the professionals are often the last ones to see it when that scarcity goes away. It is easier to understand that you face competition than obsolescence" (2008, pp. 58–59). In some respects contemporary technology has merely enabled individuals to express themselves in ways consistent with a process that had already been unfolding over the course of the twentieth century and had been shaped by various episodes of significant change during that time. Jeane Twenge, for example, links the individualism so often characteristic of today's teens and young adults to the impact of the social attitudes and parenting styles of the baby-boomer generation who have raised their children and grandchildren with continuous messages of personal empowerment and boundless individual ambition (2006).

There is no doubt a tendency among those in authority to view these developments with trepidation. Quite often the language of concern is overly critical. Take, for example, the pejorative connotation of "individualist," "self-centered," and "narcissistic," terms that could easily describe the cultural orientation of the young generation. But just because the technology and culture permit greater individualization, the changes they usher in need not rupture the social fabric. The ability to construct one's own identity and the fact that these identities are generally not monolithic simply reflects the complexity of human psychology and behavior. But the fact that individuals today grow accustomed to defining themselves on their own terms does not mean they lack the capability of serving the greater good or acting communally. Rather they will demand the opportunity to determine both what exactly that greater good will be and how they will interact at the communal level. In the digital age the very concept of community is continually redefined, just as within the individual multiple parts directly contribute to the greater whole.

Personal Identity

The centrality of identity questions for Jewish education professionals cannot be understated. Indeed, one could argue that Jewish education as an endeavor is a misnomer if by "educate" one means "give intellectual, moral, and social instruction" (Compact Oxford English Dictionary, 2009). While these realms do concern Jewish

educators, the reality of the profession, at least in North America, is that the vast majority of Jewish education could be more aptly defined as "Jewish identity construction." This moniker would be appropriate for most synagogue schools, day schools, and informal educational settings in which the key outcome from the perspective of parents and practitioners is the creation or reinforcement of a strong Jewish identity promoting cultural and/or biological continuity.

Thus, the question of how the digital revolution impacts questions of identity is extremely relevant, and not surprisingly the early twenty-first century has seen a re-examination of this issue. Whether due to inertia, their own ideological sensibilities, or some other factor, most analysts of Jewish life simply cannot break free from attempts to classify Jews according to religious markers. Perhaps this approach is rooted in Will Herberg's claim over 50 years ago, in his seminal *Protestant–Catholic–Jew*, that the age of the secular Jew was past and that Judaism must be perceived in purely religious terms (1955). Even in *Modern Judaism: An Oxford Guide* published in 2005—the chapter titled "Jewish identities" employs a system based on religious denomination or level of observance when classifying Israeli and American Jews (Kopelowitz, 2005, p. 208). Strikingly, the same author in a 2008 study argues for using the term "peoplehood," with all its complexity as the appropriate approach to understanding Jewish identity (Kopelowitz and Engelberg, 2009, pp. 4–10).

With respect to Jewish identification there are at least two related realms in which the digital era poses new challenges. First, the hyper-individualization characteristic of this era allows both for increasingly narrow identity definitions and multiple-identity expressions in line with broader cultural trends such as multiracialism. On-line anonymity allows individuals opportunities to experiment with identity in what may be a protected environment, in which there are few (if any) real-life consequences to adopting innovative religious identities. On the other hand, the request (or demand) to assert one's religious identity for the purposes of an on-line profile in a social network challenges the user either to identify with one or more "accepted" terms of religiousness or to define religious identity on his or her own individualized terms. For many people who are typically comfortable in digitally profiling themselves without much cause for introspection the question of religious identity gives pause. And while the topic is easily avoided or ignored, at least one example of a large social network shows that more than half of the users did choose to claim a religious identity (Wan, 2009).

In the Jewish on-line world the issue of religious identity has been present from an early stage with respect to one of the internet's most popular Jewish spaces, that of on-line dating. JDate ("the premier Jewish singles community online" 8/30/2009) is the most ubiquitous, but there are lesser known variations, particularly for the Orthodox community, such as frumster.com (boasting "5 weddings *every* week" 08/30/2009) and dosidate.com (promoted as "the online dating site exclusively for Orthodox Jewish singles" 8/30/2009). To further complicate matters, among the hundreds of thousands registered with JDate, maybe as many as 10% do not identify as Jewish, but are nevertheless interested in meeting and perhaps marrying someone who is. For many of JDate's Jewish members, the presence of large numbers of gentiles, some of whom contact them, may defeat the purpose of a Jewish singles

network. Yet this issue cannot be all that problematic if so many Jews nevertheless remain active on the site.

In December 2004, David Siminoff, the head of JDate's parent company MatchNet, defended the site's unrestrictive policy: "'I'm not going to tell someone who wants to be part of Jewish culture you can't come online," he said, though he noted that JDate clearly targets Jews. Since that time the company has added a "willing to convert" option in the religion category, and, as of August 2009, allows for the following options in the religious background category: "Reform, Conservative, Orthodox (Frum), Orthodox (Baal Teshuva), Modern Orthodox, Traditional, Conservadox, Hassidic, Reconstructionist, Another Stream of Judaism, Culturally Jewish but not Practising, Willing to Convert, Not Sure if I'm Willing to Convert, Not Willing to Convert." Over the last few years other labels such as secular and unaffiliated have been on the list, but those no longer appear. Why non-Jews would be interested in pursuing romantic relationships with Jews remains an open question. Some non-Jews on JDate claim to believe that Jews simply make good spouses or offer an unexplained fascination with and attraction to Judaism and Jewish people (Richards, 2004).

Attempts to place Judaism in mainstream American religious life, or gentile participation in JDate and fascination with things Jewish, pose significant questions regarding Jewish identity and the redefinition of community. Where does one draw the line? Do you support JDate's Siminoff who refuses to reject those who may be attracted to Jews and Judaism, and perhaps even embrace that position as potentially bringing in "new blood," in an era when Jewish population in the United States is waning? Do you accept the Jew for Jesus student who wants a free trip to Israel on the Birthright program? Perhaps the Israel experience will impact so powerfully that she will revert to the Judaism of her birth. Or do you reject JDate's "unrestrictive policy" because it not only allows non-Jews to participate but conceivably allows anyone to claim Jewishness and join the community on his or her own terms. This position helps explain the ultra-orthodox alternatives to JDate at dosidate.com and frumster.com.

The identity formation question resonated in late twentieth-century Jewish circles as a byproduct of a social culture deeply in touch with so-called identity politics. Various talking points have been proffered to American Jews to promote strong identification with their Jewish heritages: These approaches range from support for an embattled Israel, through nostalgia for the insular life of the European shtetl, the Jewish victimization represented by the Holocaust, to the mystical components of Jewish spirituality. A popular approach in informal Jewish educational settings in 1970s and 1980s was to pose a simple question: "Do you define yourself as an American-Jew or a Jewish-American?" The cultural pluralism of the era saw the return of the hyphen (Lang, 2005). But framing the question as Jewish leadership often did, "which are you?" suggested only two possibilities when it came to identity construction. This approach reflected an expectation that every American identify with his or her singular ethnic background in order to properly fulfill his or her role in the symphony that comprised American society. But this exclusivism does not translate to an environment shaped by digital culture on the one hand and models of

multiracialism on the other. More appropriate is the use of multiple-identity theory or what Robert Jay Lifton called "the protean self" to explain contemporary trends (1999).

On-line behavior reflects this multiple identity phenomenon. An individual conceivably possesses an infinite number of email addresses, screen names, etc., each indicating a different identity, but every one of them authentically representing the same individual. The multiple identity reality of the digital era does not necessitate conflict among the constituent parts, but rather each piece, shaped by the individual to serve his or her needs, contributes to the whole, in a phenomenon Dan Mendelsohn Aviv has called *protean tribalism* (2009, p. 17). Current social psychological theory on identity construction recognizes these changes and puts less emphasis on the group in producing identity and shifts primary focus onto the individual (*The Hedgehog Review: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Culture*, 2002, 1999; and Sula, 2002). Of course, the process of technological progress possesses pitfalls in addition to advantages. Critics have recognized, for example, the dangers inherent in unregulated on-line behavior, ranging from student plagiarism and cyberbullying, identity and financial data theft, to sexual predators trawling the internet in search of victims and using untraceable email addresses to coordinate terrorist activity.

The complications and anxieties of identity construction in the digital era, including multiracialism, simply reflect the complexity of humanity. While these complexities have always been present, the digital revolution both provides a means for expressing multiple identities and engenders a social culture that encourages those expressions. Imagine the challenge faced by the supplementary school instructor who must navigate this terrain with only 2 hours of face-time per week with her or her students.

Just as one may reformulate the concept of identity in general to include the possibility of multiple identities, the role that Jewishness plays in such identity construction is also in flux. Instead of posing a "yes or no" question, the complexity of twenty-first century identities demands a reassessment in more sophisticated terms. One should not ask whether the individual has Jewish identity or not, but rather how are the different Jewish identities defined and how often do they come to the forefront of the individual in question? The question could be posed in the awkwardly phrased, "How Jewish are you?" but should not be understood either in conventional religious terms ("well, I don't go to synagogue too often") or biological terms (I'm one half or one quarter Jewish), though these factors contribute greatly to the construction of Jewish identities. Reflecting digital sensibilities, the question seeks to determine how the different elements of Jewishness (religion, ethnicity, culture, nationality, biology, etc.) shape individuals' various identities, and the ratio need not be fixed but can fluctuate depending on the specific environment.

As Jews marry into non-Jewish families, and as non-Jews choose to identify as Jews through formal conversion or some other process, the identity permutations of successive generations only increase—complicating the question, "Who are your people?" Thus, on numerous campuses, young Jews, whether of mixed or "purebred" ancestry, while not hiding their religious and ethnic backgrounds, appear as

primary movers in student organizations supporting Palestinian national movements and protesting Israeli injustice. Many Jewish communal leaders bemoan the fact that such activism is wasted on the wrong side, and criticize the Palestinian sympathizers as “self-hating” Jews. Yet many Jews, young and old, engaged in such activity see their support of Palestinian refugees as a humanitarian cause, a direct outgrowth of a Jewish component of their identities. Putting all the pieces together consistently is quite often an arduous task, replete with contradictions and confusion.

And while most Jewish education professionals need not concern themselves with student profiles on Jewish dating websites, the issues raised are nevertheless relevant and present in their teaching environments. Teenagers in particular are not merely web savvy but active in accessing Jewish resources and conversations to address questions related to Jewish identity. It is not difficult to imagine a seemingly innocuous student assignment to map the demography of contemporary Jewry. Almost certainly, the web research related to this assignment (and where else is the student likely to turn but Wikipedia and Google) will lead to questions of who is a Jew, various related debates among Jewish leadership in the United States and Israel, and tensions between the concepts of Jew-by-Choice and *halachic* (Jewish religious law) definitions of Jewishness.

Key Issues

The impact of the digital revolution is most apparent in a number of specific areas. The following critical issues highlight ways that changes in communication technology radically alter the landscape in which Jewish education professionals operate.

Anarchy—Virtual environments are not only borderless but often leaderless, in some respects they are the ultimate level playing field or a “flat” world to use Tom Friedman’s phrase (2006). Can Jewish education adapt effectively to the “wild west” on-line landscape without losing a sense of direction? Is the field amenable to this anarchic grass roots model?

Authority—How does Jewish education (or any other facet of organized Jewish life) respond to a world in which respect for authority, or consensus surrounding the notion of authority, is increasingly challenged. The world of Wikipedia allows individual users to assert their expertise regardless of any bona fide credentials. Rabbinic Judaism evolved on the basis of authoritative leadership sanctioned on the credential of knowledge, duly recognized by an established body of scholars. Authorities with respect to information on-line are data-driven or crowdsourced (Howe, 2006), rather than sanctioned by the “experts.”

The Infinite Marketplace—The language of free market economics has been applied not merely to the exchange of goods and services but also to ideas. Jewish educators have had to grapple with this concept and have often attempted to keep Jewish learners engaged by utilizing the market analogy hoping to “sell” a vision of Jewish life that can attract students and parents even in the face of stiff competition. One prominent North American Jewish educator has recently spun this approach

away from the market model of trend spotting and issued a call for "relevance" in a way that encourages personal engagement by students and families (Simhai, 2009).

Freeconomics—In a world where consumers' expectations for certain goods, particularly anything associated with information, is a price continually dropping toward zero, how can the product be scaled to the point that it is economically viable (Anderson, 2008). This challenge is particularly acute in industries whose business models have been predicated on access to information or expertise. To be sure even such sacred cows as the university model of higher education are unlikely to be immune to the digital revolution. Not only must faculty accommodate to a student body that was reared in the global environment of cyberspace, but the very existence of such institutions, the ultimate voices of wisdom and authority throughout the second millennium, are likely to be challenged in the near future (Kamenetz, 2009).

As Rosenberg notes, even as the "business" of publishing faces increasing challenges, more and more people continue to publish on-line. Citing blogging pioneer Justin Hall, he notes the power of emotional commitment in redefining the economics of information access. The result is a potential total paradigm shift away from a model in which the profit motive explained every action in the business world. On the digital landscape "the best content comes from people who love what they are doing," even if there is no money in it. (Rosenberg, 2009)

Redefining the locus for community: Cyberspace versus Physical Space—Since traditional Jewish communal activity depends heavily on physical presence, specifically with respect to religiously oriented activities, the migration to virtual territory enabled by the digital revolution challenges the demand for real-life proximity. The on-line virtual world *Second Life* has hosted prayer meetings, boasts a number of synagogues, and has witnessed the lighting of chabad-size *chanukkiyot* during the festive season. As early as 1996 Temple Emanu-El in New York hosted a Cyber-Seder allowing participants to connect from around the globe, not only passively receiving "broadcasts" of the ritual meal, but enabling them to interact via chatrooms. At one time the cyber-seder had the potential to be the largest on-line broadcast event of its time (Brasher, 2004; Kushner, 1998, p. 76).

Conclusions

Professionals in the field of Jewish education should be cautious in recognizing that technology and the tools it provides are neither good nor bad, but neither are they neutral, so says Kranzberg (1986). The purpose of this analysis is not to pass judgment on what might be called user-generated Judaism. These phenomena and a whole host of Jewish-related content already exist on-line and the broader digital revolution is willy-nilly redefining our social culture. But during revolutionary times the ultimate impact can take a very long time to emerge. As one professor of English language notes with respect to the lack of observable changes in reading/writing skills among digital natives, "this doesn't mean that a revolution isn't going on,

only that its effects are indeterminate" (Bauerlein, 2009). The general education community continues to grapple with the broader meaning of technology in and out of the classroom and its impact on student learning (Bielaczyz, 2006). To the chagrin of some professionals, in the Jewish education realm there seems to be a gap between the hypothesis that the digital environment is reshaping the landscape of Jewish life and the need for measurable data testifying to the return on investment in digital educational resources. As *Tagged Tanach* pioneer JT Waldman noted on his blog,

> Foundations and donors often wait for hard evidence before making large investments. But time is a precious resource too. I understand the need to invest in products and services that have proven revenue streams and measurable impact, but there are more perils for the Jewish community if we continue to lag behind the education and technology trends evolving around us. Maybe losing money isn't as bad as losing the imagination and attention of the youngest members of our community?! The longer we wait in investing in the digital future of Judaism the greater the risk of losing our most treasured members. (Waldman, 2009)

Although many Jewish educators have invested an appropriate sense of urgency in trying to understand the digital language of the next generation, most practitioners remain only tangentially connected to the interactive mass producer culture that proliferates; many Jewish education professionals are only connected to Jewishness in cyberspace through professional listservs or conventional content providers such as www.myjewishlearning.com. In late 2009 there are a number of innovative, technologically astute resources that inhabit the landscape, including but in no way limited to Darim Online (www.darimonline.org), Babaganewz (www.babaganewz.com), PresenTense (www.presentense.org) or Jlearn2.0 (www.etheoreal.com/jlearn2.0/), in addition to the constantly evolving blogosphere; the websites of conventional Jewish education organizations also serve to bridge the gap. While a vital cadre of Jewish educators are actively committing their time and energy to confronting this new reality, ultimately a generational shift may be needed, in that the profession may only truly comes to grips with the revolutionary nature of digital culture when a critical mass of digital natives engages the field of Jewish education whether on a professional or voluntary basis.

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Travel as a Jewish Educational Tool

Erik H. Cohen

Introduction

There is a growing awareness among researchers, educators, and students, of the educational value of travel. In the realm of religious education, the traditional concept of pilgrimage has been expanded to include various forms of religious-educational tourism (Senn, 2002; Tomasi, 2002; Cohen, 2006). The identity-affirming nature of travel and pilgrimage has been well documented particularly among minorities and those with "hyphenated identities" (see, for example, Mazumbar and Mazumbar, 2004; Singh, 2006; Timothy and Olsen, 2006). In Jewish education, the benefit of travel is widely recognized (see, for example, Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004; Cohen, 2008a; Saxe and Chazan, 2008). According to Ioannides and Ioannides (2004, p. 101) "One way in which Jews in America and elsewhere seek to reaffirm and strengthen their affiliation to Judaism is demonstrated through their travel patterns."

This chapter briefly outlines some of the major sociological trends in the general field of educational travel, and then explores in depth the use of travel as an educational tool in contemporary Jewish education. Key challenges and issues in Jewish educational travel are discussed, including shifting Israel–Diaspora relations; preconceived destination images among various sub-populations; differing motivations and goals among travelers and program organizers; and guiding and interpretation at sites. Many parameters of the subject will be addressed, including the impact of age, nationality, previous educational background, level of religiosity, the framework of the tour, and the role of the staff and guides. Each of these is a rich subject in itself and it is not possible in the scope of this chapter to delve into each of these in-depth.[1]

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[1] See, for example, among the numerous articles on the impact on educational travel of these subjects: age (Cohen, 2005; Desforges, 1998; Gibson and Yiannakis, 2002; Reisman, 1993) nationality (Boniface and Fowler 1993; Burns 2005; Reisinger and Turner, 2003); previous education (Cohen, 1999, 2004); level of religiosity (Jutla, 2006); the framework of the tour (Anderson, Lawton,

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Nevertheless, it is important to note this wide range of factors which impact the educational travel experience. The chapter draws on empirical research conducted by experts in the field of educational tourism, including recent research on specific educational tour programs (i.e., Israel Experience, Taglit-birthright, Shoah tourism, and Jewish summer camps). Directions for future research in the field will be indicated.

Travel as a Metaphor for Education

Travel can be a powerful metaphor for education. The teacher acts as a guide, leading the learner through unfamiliar territory. Language invoking images of journeys and exploration has long been used to describe the educational process. The Torah includes numerous stories of personal growth and lessons learned through travel from the journeys of the patriarchs through the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the desert. Maimonides considers the patriarch Avraham's first test by God to be the commandment *lekh lekha*—to leave his homeland.[2] The kabbalistic teacher the Arizal suggested that the purpose of the Exile or Diaspora was educational—enabling the Jews to gather the "sparks of enlightenment" scattered throughout the various cultures of the world. The core prayer, the *Shema*, dictates teaching one's children the laws of the Torah "while sitting in the house and while walking on the way." This approach may in some ways interfere with or block experiential encounter with the natural, physical landscape. At the same time, travel is indicated as a time for learning. Travel is a key concept in the Jewish world, expressed variously in the traditional texts, folklore, and literature and popular culture (Ioannides and Ioannides, 2006).

Travel as an Educational Tool

Travel offers a holistic educational experience. Being taken into a new environment opens the mind to new information and ideas, challenging travelers to integrate new information, concepts, and patterns of understanding. International travel helps develop a cross-cultural perspective. Travel enables, even demands, exploration of a subject with all the senses and with the three modes of cognition, emotion, and behavior. MacCannell (1976, 1992) describes tourism as a cognitive activity through which the traveler seeks authenticity and holism. Cohen's typology of tourism (1979, 1984, 2007) describes a range of travel experiences from the recreational through the existential. Each of these various types of travel experiences may be included within a single tour.

Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Richards and Wilson, 2003) and the role of the guide and staff (Fine and Speer, 1985; Katz, 1985; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006).

[2]This refers to a comment of Maimonides on the Chapter 5 item 4 in Pirkei Avot (Sayings of the Fathers): "Our forefather Abraham was tested with ten trials. . .."

Although it may be argued that travel is inherently educational and that education is inherently a “journey,” an effective educational tour must be intentionally planned. If the program intends to transmit certain ideas and values, these must be addressed during the tour clearly and explicitly (Shulman, 2009[3]). However, it is not possible to plan every detail of the trip, nor is it desirable to do so. The experience should be authentic so that the traveler does not encounter only staged “pseudo-events” (Boorstin, 1964). As Jewish philosopher Martin Buber said, “All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware.” A chance encounter may be a pivotal experience for the traveler—a conversation with the bus driver about a site being visited, a meeting in the marketplace, an unanticipated event (Dr. Zeev Mankovitz, personal communication, 2008; Laubscher, 1994). If the trip is too tightly controlled and exploration of the environment is not possible, the educational value of the tour suffers.

To plan an effective yet authentic educational tour, many parameters must be taken into account. These include factors related to the target population, the destination, and the framework of the tour. Important factors related to the population of student-travelers include demographics such as age, gender, nationality, and religion; their previous knowledge and attitudes about the destination and the subjects to be addressed and their expectations for the tour.

Some researchers have looked at gender differences in terms of motivations, expectations, and interpretations of the trip (Carr, 1999; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Pritchard and Morgan, 2000; Sered, 1999) and differences in the educational experience of male and female students (Blair, Holland and Sheldon, 1994; Grossman and Grossman, 1994). National origin has been found to have a significant impact on travelers’ motivations and expectations. Previous knowledge and attitudes of participants must be considered, so that the itinerary and curriculum of the tour program will be understandable and interesting to participants. Another parameter is the site itself. Jewish educational travel may take visitors to museums, historical and cultural sites, memorialized cites related to the Shoah, pilgrimages to cemeteries, and visits to parents’ or grandparents’ pre-migration homes (for instance, in Poland or Morocco).

The framework in which the travel is carried out also impacts the nature of the educational experience. Does the traveler go alone or with a group? If with a group, what is the nature of the group? It may consist of strangers recruited by a travel agent, which, in turn, may be either predominantly Jewish (as in “kosher” tour packages) or heterogeneous. The group traveling together may be an extended family, members of the same youth group, schoolmates, etc. The experience, clearly, will be different in each of these circumstances. Educational travel spans a wide range of options including: an educational event as part of a vacation (for example, visiting a museum or attending a lecture); short-term educational tours; semester or year-long programs at Israeli educational institutions (high school, college, university,

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[3]Lee Shulman’s presentation (during the closing session of the Multiple Identities Conference in Jerusalem, January 8, 2008) referred to Jewish identities. But his remarks are equally relevant to the issue of Jewish educational travel.

yeshiva); internships with Israeli programs; earning a full degree at an Israeli college or university; and Hebrew language study.

Each of these parameters affects the overall educational travel experience, and must be considered by researchers and Jewish educators attempting to understand this sociological phenomenon.

Jewish Educational Travel: Israel and the Diaspora

The journey has been a foundational element of Jewish identity since its inception. The tension between homeland and Diaspora or exile has been similarly fundamental. For centuries, Diaspora – Israel relations were essentially spiritual and symbolic. Jewish travel to Israel was almost entirely limited to pilgrimages of a very few, devoted individuals. Since the founding of the State, travel to Israel has become a widespread phenomenon. Dynamic and varied Diaspora–Israel relations affect patterns of Jewish travel to Israel and the role Israel plays in Jewish education. Steinberg (1984, p. 103) noted that with few exceptions, "... Diaspora Jewish education in its aims and its content is inherently Israel-oriented..." It has become common in some Diaspora communities for a trip to Israel to be included as a part of the Jewish educational process (although it is worth noting that only a minority of American Jews, the largest Diaspora population has ever traveled to Israel, even taking into account the tens of thousands who came in the framework of initiatives such as Israel Experience and Taglit birthright). The impact of educational travel to Israel is expanded to those who do not travel themselves, in that by now the majority of educators in Jewish educational settings in the Diaspora have spent at least some time in Israel.

Although travel to Israel is a widespread and important phenomenon, it is far from the only type of Jewish travel. Diaspora Jews undertake travel to destinations in their own home countries and other countries which may be strong educational experiences. There are now over a hundred specifically Jewish museums in the world, and many more general museums with exhibits related to Jewish history and culture (Grossman, 2003). Travel to European sites related to the Shoah or to pre-Shoah Jewish communities has grown dramatically in recent years. "Dark tourism" to sites such as former death camps has its own logic and its own educational value, and may be considered types of heritage tourism and pilgrimage (Ashworth, 2002; Beech, 2000; Kugelmass, 1994). The issue of the Shoah is to be presented and perceived differently during a tour of Auschwitz, a visit to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, or a visit to the Holocaust museum in Washington, DC. Holocaust tourism in Europe tends to focus on the destruction of the local Jewish communities (Kugelmass, 1994), visits to Yad Vashem highlights the link between the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel (Auron, 2008, 1994), while the Holocaust museum in DC underscores the fight against racism and the triumph of American ideals over Nazism (Rosenfeld, 1997).

Jewish summer camps are another important example of Jewish travel. During the weeks of the camp, young Jews are immersed in an all-Jewish environment, allowing for every moment to be incorporated in the educational approach (Levinas,

1963, [1997]). For some, particularly those who live outside of Jewish population centers, the camp may be one of the only Jewish milieu in which they have the opportunity to participate (Sales and Saxe, 2002, 2004; Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004; Lorge and Zola, 2006).

Israeli Jews also learn from their travel experiences within Israel and throughout the Diaspora. The post-army tour has become a rite of passage for many young Israelis, and its import in broadening the travelers' understandings of self, home, and the world has been documented (Noy and Cohen, 2006). Israeli schools, youth groups, and other institutions organize educational trips to museums, nature reserves, and historical sites in Israel. Israelis participate in the growing phenomenon of travel/pilgrimage to sites related to Europe to learn about the Shoah in the lands in which it took place. Israeli travel to Diaspora countries to broaden their perspective on Judaism has become more common in recent years. For example, bringing Israeli teachers and counselors to work in Diaspora Jewish schools and summer camps was once considered beneficial primarily for the Diaspora participants. Today the educational benefit to Israeli counselors and *shlichim* (educational emissaries) is also considered (Ezrachi, 1994; Wolf & Kopelowitz, 2003). Israeli teachers reported that a tour of US Jewish educational settings impacted them as individual Jews, as members of Israeli society, and as educators (Grant, Kelman and Regev, 2001).

Many tours for Diaspora youth include structured meetings with Israeli peers (*mifgashim*). Although the emphasis of organizers has been on the educational value for the visitors, the meetings have been found to be powerful and fruitful learning experiences for the Israeli youth as well (Cohen, 2000, 2008a). Following mifgashim between Israelis and Taglit-birthright participants, Sasson, Mittelberg, Hecht, and Saxe (2008) found that the Israeli participants "... indicated that the program made them feel pride—pride in service to the IDF, pride in country, and pride in being Jews. To a significant but lesser extent, the program also made them feel connected to the Jewish people worldwide and cultivated a desire to learn more about Judaism."

Another growing phenomenon in Jewish travel, in which both Israelis and Diaspora Jews take part, involves travel to the various "Old Countries" from which Jews have migrated, particularly in Europe and North Africa. While these are most often organized as family vacations or pilgrimages to holy sites and graves, this type of travel has educational value in terms of historical knowledge of Jewish communities that may no longer exist, and in learning about how Jews lived in different times and places.

Jewish Educational Travel and "Destination Image"

The images travelers have of their destination prior to the trip have been found to have a profound impact on the trip (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Walmsley & Young, 1998). In educational travel organized through schools, youth groups or other community institutions, there is a valuable opportunity to direct the formation of destination image. During orientation programs prior to the trip, participants may

be given information about the destination and helped to form realistic images of it. Participants also receive “structural preparation” for the trip through their larger educational and community environment.

The images Jewish tourists have of Israel are deeply affected by the assumption of a primordial connection between them and the Land. However, these images are not homogenous across the Diaspora. Young Jews from various countries and affiliated with different sub-communities in each country (Orthodox, Conservative/traditional, Reform/liberal) hold different images of Israel, reflecting the prevailing views in their educational systems and communities (Cohen, 2003a, 2008a). Jewish Israelis’ images of *aretz* (the land of Israel) and *hutz l’aretz* (outside the land of Israel) affect the educational value of their travels within and outside their country. Domestically, a spiritualized connection with the land and its sites, transforms hikes in Israel into secular pilgrimages (Katriel, 1995). India and the Far East are perceived as exotic locales for spiritual seeking by many young Israelis, even if their knowledge and expectations of Indian spirituality are superficial (Maoz, 2006).

Motivations and Goals for Jewish Educational Travel

Strengthening Jewish identity, a sense of Jewish Peoplehood and connection to Israel are among the strongest and most widely cited objectives in Diaspora travel to Israel (Cohen, 2008a) and Jewish summer camps (Cohen and Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004; Lorge & Zola, 2006; Sales & Saxe, 2004). It should be noted that participants, particularly young travelers, may consider having a good time with a group of peers a more important goal. Nevertheless, the emphasis on enjoyment does not preclude educational benefits of the travel experience, and in fact may enhance them (Cohen, 2008a; Cohen and Bar Shalom, 2010). While in the early days of the State of Israel it was hoped and expected that Diaspora travel to Israel would lead to *aliyah* (immigration to Israel as a citizen), today there is greater emphasis on the ways in which travel may enhance Jewish identification and participation in the traveler’s home Jewish community (Ari, Mansfeld & Mittelberg, 2003; Cohen, 2008a). “Tours to these Jewish places of death [Eastern Europe] and life [Israel] are used to consider how participants might translate their memories of travel into action at home, that is, in America or other communities around the world...” (Aviv & Shneer, 2007, p. 67).

The goals of Shoah tourism include keeping alive the memory of those who were killed and enhancing feelings of common fate among the Jewish People. For organizers of group tours for Israeli youth to Auschwitz, instilling a strengthened sense of the importance of the State of Israel as a refuge and homeland for Jews is another primary goal.

The Impact of Age

Travel experiences undertaken at different ages necessarily have different educational impacts. Travel undertaken at various ages may complement the development of the individual’s perspective, gradually expanding from one’s self to parents,

friends, community, country, and the world at large (Erikson, 1959, 1963; Piaget, 1972). Educational travel may benefit learners of all ages, and some of the basic factors in a successful educational tour are the same regardless of the traveler's age. For example, the importance of the group among teenaged participants in tours to Israel has been established: Similarly, a study of Elderhostel educational tours found that "Being with like-minded people with common special interests" was important to most seniors who joined the group tours (Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003: 91 citing research by Arsenault, 2001). Nevertheless, the tour program must be adapted for the age range of the participants. Age appropriateness touches on participants' abilities, needs, and preferences in the cognitive, emotional and behavioral realms. Motivations for international study change with age; younger visiting students tend to emphasize tourism and socialization, while older students tend to emphasize educational and professional goals (Cohen, 2003b). Professional goals are further emphasized by those traveling to conferences, seminars or on sabbatical, although tourism and personal development are also important (Griffith, 2008; Cohen, 2008b). Retired tourists on educational tours seek personal fulfillment through new experiences (Ritchie et al., 2003).

The Impact of Nationality

Nationality has been found to have a major impact on Jewish identity, related to differences in the Jewish educational systems of various Diaspora countries and Israel (Cohen & Horenczyk, 1999; Cohen, 2008a; Gitelman, Kosmin and Kovács, 2003; Wettstein, 2002). As noted by Moscardo (1996, p. 376), ". . . interpretation is the key to ensuring the quality of the tourism experience," and interpretation is impacted by cultural values, assumptions, and habitus, which are formed in the travelers' home society. Tourists often travel within enclaves of co-travelers from the same home country, thus extending the impact of the home society into the tour destination(s).

In a survey of Israel Experience participants, nationality was the most discriminate variable for virtually every questionnaire item, including motivations for joining the tour, educational background, attitudes, and values toward Judaism and Israel, and evaluation of the tour (Cohen, 2008a). Groups traveling together are often from the same home country and interaction with locals tends to be limited. Often interaction within the group of co-travelers is more important than interaction with "locals" (Urry, 2002). For example, Israel Experience is groups are almost always homogenous in terms of the participants' home country, and since participants spend virtually all their time with the group. Thus, a tour to Israel may reinforce participants' identity as *American* Jews, *French* Jews, etc., and their commitment to participate in their home Jewish community, in addition to strengthening their attachment to Israel (Comet, 1965; Shapiro, 2001). Indeed, the goal of most Diaspora Jewish educational institutions in organizing tours to Israel is not to encourage aliyah, but rather to expand the knowledge of Israel and Judaism and to strengthen the Jewish identity of Jews in the home country (Cohen, 2008a).

Following MacCannell's (1976, 1992) assertion that the modern tourist is seeking a sense of holism and authenticity, I have noted that Jewish tourists to Israel are

seeking a holistic and authentic Jewish identity. Diaspora Jews may seek that which is difficult to achieve in their home countries. For example, French Jews, raised in a political culture limiting the expression of an ethnically particular community, seek out the experience of the Jewish political culture in Israel. American Jewish youth, living in a culture which stresses individuality and in which the community and extended family have largely broken down, seek out the experience of solidarity offered in group tours and camps. Jewish-American adults may seek religiously meaningful experiences (Grant, 2000).

In a parallel phenomenon, Israelis on the post-army backpack tour, "... spend most of their time with other Israelis, and their conversations revolve to a considerable extent on their military experiences and the complexities of the Israeli society. The trip thus offers them an opportunity to reflect upon their recent past and re-evaluate at a distance their perceptions and attitudes regarding their society and their own place and future within it" (Cohen, 2004, p. 56).

The Impact of Previous Knowledge

Another major feature which may be used to differentiate between educational tourist experiences is the level of previous knowledge of the sites visited and the subjects addressed during the tour. Previous knowledge includes how much visitors know and what they know, think, believe, and feel about the sites and subjects at hand. Tour programs can offer specific orientation sessions to help give participants necessary information to make the tour comfortable and comprehensible. However, long-term "structural" preparation, conveyed through years of community involvement, education and even previous trips, has a greater impact on the educational experience of a tour.

Participants in youth tours to Israel who received extensive formal and informal Jewish education were able to understand and appreciate the tours more than those who came with little or no background (Cohen, 1999, 2004, 2008a). Further, not all structural preparation yields the same type of interpretation. Studies of group tours to Israel and Jewish summer camps found significant differences in attitudes and previous knowledge regarding Zionism and Judaism among participants from Orthodox, Conservative/Traditional and Reform/Liberal families. Structural preparation provides cognitive knowledge and emotionally powerful symbols which serve as keys for accessing the travel experience. For example, a trip to the Kotel,[4] no matter how well planned and guided, would not hold the same meaning for tourists with no previous understanding of or connection to the site as it does for visitors who have for their whole lives been familiar with its symbolic and religious significance for the Jewish People. Studies at pilgrimage sites worldwide have also noted the difference in impact of the trip on believer-participants and non-believer-observers (Coles & Timothy, 2004; Timothy & Olsen, 2006).

[4]The Western Wall or Wailing Wall, the only remnant of the Jews' Temple built during the era of the Israelite kingdom in Jerusalem and destroyed by the Romans in 60 C.E.

Jews of all levels of religiosity participate in travel to Israel (Kelner, 2002; Cohen, 1992; Grant, 2000), to sites of the Holocaust (Feldman, 2001; Greenblum, 1995; Kugelmass, 1994), and to graves of tzaddikim or relatives in “the Old Country” (Kosansky, 2002; Levy, 1997). Such trips may be deeply spiritual experiences for the secular and the religious alike. Nevertheless, the tourists’ level of religiosity affects the nature of the experience and the symbolic-affective ways in which the experience is constructed. Activities or sites which may be moving to one group may be uncomfortable or incomprehensible to another. The goals and motivations for study in Israel were found to differ between students in a religious study program and a university program (Ohayon, 2004). Thus the level of religiosity of the group members must be taken into consideration by organizers and guides.

To the extent that all tourism is staged and that tourism may be understood as a type of performance, “. . . the effect of performance is contingent upon an audience that understands the message” (Edensor, 2000, p. 327). In heritage tourism, visitors who identify with the heritage presented and share the outlook of the interpretation given are more likely to enjoy and to learn from the experience (Katriel, 1993). Jewish summer camp participants who share the religious affiliation of the camp they attend were found to better able to receive its messages (Cohen, in press).

Travelers may also be more or less competent in the act of travel itself. Some travel skills may be refined with age and experience, although in some cases young travelers may be more open, more willing, and able to adapt to new situations. Moscardo (1996) found that the success of heritage tourism is greatly improved if tourists are “mindful.” Also important is the extent to which the travelers try to interact with the local culture and to what extent they remain in their tourist enclave. Among visitors who worked or volunteered on kibbutzim or with community projects in Israel, those who had intense social interactions with their hosts were more satisfied with their experience and were more likely to report that their feelings toward Israel and Israelis improved compared with those who had minimal interactions with their Israeli hosts (Pizam, Uriely and Reichel, 2000).

Educational tours tend to be more successful at strengthening and intensifying pre-existing attitudes toward Judaism and Israel than in radically changing them or creating nonexistent ones. Thus, program organizers and guides must know the depth and nature of the background of their audience. Educational travel programs attempting to recruit participants with varying degrees of background must find ways to make the program interesting for those with more previous knowledge yet understandable for those with less.

The Impact of the Framework of the Tour

The case of the working tourists points to yet another parameter of travel as an educational tool, namely, the framework of the tour. Tourists may travel alone, with family and friends, as part of group tours, and on various types of “working vacations.” Educational tours offering opportunities to volunteer with local projects have gained popularity (Wearing, 2001). These may include extended, intensive programs

such as the Peace Corps, or shorter volunteer work incorporated into a larger tour itinerary. Even if family tours and outings are not intentionally planned as educational trips, they may yield numerous important lessons, particularly when they are related to Jewish holidays or life-cycle events. Each of the different frameworks of tours may be superficial or existentially meaningful, purely recreational or deeply educational, depending on the intention of the organizers and the participants.

Regardless of the framework, educational travel is primarily an informal educational experience. A number of characteristics of informal learning are crucial to its application as a tool for Jewish education, including: a balance between cognitive, affective, and instrumental dimensions of learning; the experiential and interactive nature of the "lessons"; and the emphasis on group dynamics and the social component (Cohen, 2006). The balance between various modes of learning yield changes in participants' knowledge, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors regarding the place visited, the hosts, and the subjects covered. A director of a network of Jewish Day Schools in South Africa (1990, personal communication) found that sending students to overnight camps helped achieve the affective and behavioral parts of the syllabus which are difficult to achieve in the classroom, by offering experiential and interactive activities. For example, the student-campers were more willing and able to learn to pray when away from their daily routine and close to nature. School-sponsored travel links formal and informal educational settings. Recreation and socialization do not simply make the learning more enjoyable, they are an integral part of the educational experience. Various frameworks and types of tours may be more or less "informal" and may manifest different aspects of informality (for an in-depth exploration of this issue, see Kahane, 1997).

One of the most common types of educational travel program is the group tour. In this case, the group functions as a sort of temporary "total institution" (Goffman, 1961), within which all the co-travelers' movements and activities take place. This framework has certain educational benefits, as the itinerary-curriculum may be carefully planned and tailored to the specific group's needs and goals. Additionally, the group itself is important in reinforcing the messages of the tour, providing mutual support during an intense experience, and allowing for a combination of learning and socialization.

Educational travel may also take place independently. In this case, travelers may benefit from educational resources such as guidebooks, museums, and guided tours at specific sites. The experiences of other travelers, often passed on by word-of-mouth at meeting places such as youth hostels, may be important sources of information (Cohen, 2004; Jack & Phipps, 2005; Noy, 2002). It requires significant resourcefulness and competence to effectively plan one's own educational itinerary. Some independent travelers may work, volunteer, or study at various institutions during their journey. Agencies promoting the use of travel as a Jewish educational tool may facilitate this type of educational tourism by promoting avenues for participating in study or work programs. For example, the MASA project helps direct Diaspora Jews to the various opportunities for long-term programs in Israel.

Visiting students represent a distinct type of educational tourists. While in many cases students may study overseas primarily for educational purposes or to broaden their experiences in a general way, Jewish students in Israel are almost always motivated, at least in part, by a desire to explore their Jewish identity (Herman, 1962, 1970; Cohen, 2003b). Visiting students are also interested in touring the country, making social contacts with Israelis and with other Diaspora Jews, with expanding their personal development, and with furthering their academic and professional goals (Cohen, 2003b; Richards & Wilson, 2003).

Taking a wide view of the phenomenon of Jewish travel, organizers may strive to offer a range of frameworks, each of which may be utilized as an educational experience. Some individuals may prefer one type of travel over another. Travelers also may choose different frameworks at different times. For example, someone may come to Israel first as part of a group tour and then return to explore the country with friends in a less structured way. Alternatively, someone may first come informally with family and then return to volunteer on a kibbutz or join a long-term educational program. Diaspora Jews (and other supporters) volunteering in Israel during times of war has been an important phenomenon in travel to Israel, offering a unique type of educational experience (Cohen, 1986; Horowitz et al., 1971) as has the kibbutz volunteer experience (Mittelberg, 1985). A wide range of educational tourism opportunities allow potential travelers to find the framework most appropriate for their evolving needs and interests.

The Role of the Guide

Related to the framework of the tour are the staff and the type of guiding provided. The guide may act as a pathfinder, coordinator, teacher, role model, and cultural interpreter (Cohen, 1985; Cohen, Ifergan, & Cohen, 2002). The recruitment of staff, which may include Israelis, home community members, professionals, rabbis, teachers, and counselors, is an important aspect of planning a Jewish educational tour. Training the staff in various educational techniques also affects the nature of the educational tour. Teacher-guides may mirror the passive and frontal type of lecturing common in classrooms, or they may encourage tourists to question, discuss, and draw their own conclusions about the sites and subjects. In Jewish summer camps, for example, there has been a movement away from seminar-style lessons toward discussions integrated into other activities (Cohen and Bar Shalom, 2010). Also, during some activity units during Israel Experience tours, the counselors engaged participants in open-ended discussions about issues related to Jewish religion and contemporary Israeli society (Cohen, 2008a). The skill of the counselor-guide is of the utmost importance in order to cover a subject adequately while allowing for discussion. At some controversial sites (for example, in Shoah-related tourism), guides may find it necessary to limit the range of discussion in order to preserve the group integrity and to stay in line with the educational goals of the organizing institution (MacDonald, 2006).

Conclusion: The Opportunities and Challenges of Educational Travel

In this chapter, I have endeavored to define the concept of educational tourism, and specifically Jewish educational tourism, as it has been understood until now by researchers and those involved in the field. There already exists quite a significant body of academic literature on the issue, including both strong empirical data and insightful theoretical discussion. Case studies and theoretical contributions in the social research on tourism, ethnicity, and education are valuable in understanding Jewish educational and heritage travel. It may be seen that Jewish travel is part of a global phenomenon in which tourists seek, to varying degrees, emotional connection with their own roots, exploration of the self through encounter with the exotic "other," intellectual stimulation, and an enjoyable break from daily routine. The Jewish case has greatly enriched the study of these phenomena, as much Jewish educational travel is organized by community institutions and is particularly well documented. The Jewish case shows how tours to heritage sites may be used to enhance ethnic-religious identity and encourage changes in related attitudes and behaviors. Jewish educational travel has been found to impact the tourists' relationship to the Jewish community at home, as well as to the site visited. As these are stated goals of many group tours, the depth and persistence of these changes should be tracked longitudinally.

This provides a solid basis for strategizing research and activity in this field in the next decades. What are the major strengths of educational travel? How can it be improved? How can we understand it more fully? And what are the challenges presented?

One aspect which could be further explored is the link between communal Jewish education (day schools, extra-curricular learning, youth organizations) and educational travel. How can travel enhance and advance the educational goals of a school? For example, how can travel organized through a school further an aim such as enhancing Jewish identity? What is the interaction between the school and the tour in terms of staff and curriculum? How can educational tours for teachers impact the school? These questions have yet to be systematically surveyed.

It is clear that travel is an important and widely used tool in the field of Jewish education. Effective school-sponsored travel necessitates the design of a holistic educational strategy. In designing this strategy, the many inter-connected facets of educational strategy outlined in this chapter must be considered including: the role of the staff, the balance between cognitive, affective, and behavioral modes of learning, previous knowledge and attitudes of the travelers, the importance of the social element, and balance between intentional planning and allowing for authentic, spontaneous "teachable moments" (Cohen and Bar Shalom, 2010).

Additionally, there is a need for further study of the educational value of travel undertaken by individuals who do not join groups or programs organized through any institution. Independent travel is particularly common among young adults (ages 18–26). Some study has been done on independent travelers as a sub-group of

educational tourists (Ritchie et al., 2003) and Israeli backpackers traveling abroad (Noy & Cohen, 2006, as discussed above), but virtually no empirical studies have been conducted on the Jewish Diaspora youth who travel to Israel or to Jewish sites in other countries outside the framework of a group tour. These travelers may take part in educational activities such as guided tours, museums, day-long seminars or may volunteer with community projects during their travelers, thus creating their own educational tour. Surveying independent travelers poses logistical challenges, as they are not as easily reached as participants in group tours. Nevertheless, studies of this sub-population would contribute to a fuller picture of Jewish educational travel.

Yet another sub-population which deserves further attention is ultra-Orthodox or *haredi* Jews. Only in recent years have *haredi* Jews begun to participate in educational travel, for example, programs offered through yeshivot or seminaries or field trips for students in haredi schools. One of the first systematic studies is being conducted by Bar Ilan MA student Ety Rehimi (2010), who is investigating the motivations for travel by haredi families and how their travels correspond to their educational and value priorities.

The ways in which Israelis learn from Jewish-Diaspora visitors deserve more research. Stronza's recommendation (2001, p. 261), that "The goal of future research should be to explore incentives and impacts for both tourists and locals throughout all stages of tourism," applies also to research on educational tourism.

Longitudinal research carried out in a variety of settings and with a variety of populations, linked by a "... viable theoretical and conceptual framework and a systematic methodological scheme," (Steinberg, 1984, p. 93) can go far in providing the data and analysis necessary to evaluate and understand what is happening in the field. It is hoped that this chapter offers some useful directions toward this cumulative goal.

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Travel: 'Location Location Location' – A Practitioner's Perspectives on Diaspora Jewish Travel

Jeremy Leigh

Introduction

In the dark years of the recent Intifada in Israel, I was asked by a Zionist educational organization in the UK to assemble a Diaspora – based equivalent of Israel teen tours, for those unwilling or unable (due to parental opposition) to travel to Israel itself. The purpose was both simple and complex: on the one hand, to ensure that 16-year-old Jews would not lose out on the crucial summer tour experience, an accepted rites of passage for Anglo Jewish youth (simple); and, at the same time, to strive as hard as possible to fill the experience with as many of the same value messages about the Jewish People and their connection to Israel, whilst travelling in Europe and not Israel (complex). The idea of somehow 'visiting' Israel educationally, without actually physically going there may not be dissimilar to the challenges of Israel education in the Diaspora, but what complicated matters was the travel element which, in most cases, carries an expectation of actually seeing something tangible, something 'authentic'. Furthermore, this was not to be old style, unreconstructed Zionist negation of the Diaspora, with its fixation on the dangers of Jewish life in the Diaspora. Without being too vulgar, Israel was still to come out on top, the central focus of the Jewish world.

In essence, the planned 'non-Israel–Israel tours' represented a battle between the authority of the narrative versus that of the location. Such was the importance of the narrative that the sites played second fiddle to it since the story somehow had to be told. There were certainly some interesting locations to be utilised: Spain to look at successes and failures of Diaspora life, as well as the crucial component of 'exile'; a cluster of Herzl and early Zionist sites such as Paris (Dreyfus), Vienna (anti-Semitism) and Basle (First Zionist Congress) were also entertained as possibilities. It was agreed that all programmes were to finish by a port, symbolically

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In memory of Elly Dlin z"l (1953–2010), my teacher, colleague and friend who inspired many of the ideas in this article.

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looking to board the ship we could not take to Israel. Collectively, we were to be Moses, looking out to the land, 'seeing' it from afar but unable to enter.

The complicated guidelines set for this unusual programme notwithstanding, the project as a whole was not without merit. It provided yet further proof of just how deeply travel and 'educational journeys' have penetrated educational practice, to the extent that it was worth twisting sites to match the story. It would have been intriguing to contrast the presentation of the same sites with the approach employed on 'hybrid' tours that combine both Diaspora and Israel travel. In these models, the stopover in Europe en route to Israel offers the chance for a similarly constructed Israel-centred narrative. Yet, in actual fact, educators on such programmes tend to skirt the controversies of the Israel–Diaspora relationship, preferring to concentrate a seamless description of history.

Personally, the true value of the 'non-Israel'–Israel tour episode was the prompt it gave to confront core issues that form the basis of this chapter: (1) In what ways can focussed travel to Diaspora Jewish sites draw on or inspire connections to feelings of Jewish interconnectedness and Peoplehood? (2) What other aspects of the identity matrix are most easily visible and accessible through travel to sites of Jewish interest?

Narrative: Peoplehood

In visiting the sites of Jewish past and present, Jews allow themselves the opportunity to connect with the large and powerful story of Peoplehood. This idea is described in more poetic terms by the contemporary Israeli educator Ari Elon in his attempt to connect history and identity. 'Who is a Jew?' asks Elon, 'A Jew is anyone who looks at himself or herself in the mirror of history and sees a Jew' ('From Jerusalem to the Edge of Heaven', JPS, 1996). This simple statement is a powerful building block of the Peoplehood narrative and can be extended in so many ways. In travel terms, the 'mirror of history' is the site, and the act of looking is the 'tourist gaze'.

Tourism too can be an exercise in *self*-recognition, whereby the visitor is able to recognise and even identify with the Jewish drama contained in the site. To a certain type of Ashkenazi traveller, a German synagogue is easily recognisable, reflecting the familiar idea of a synagogue and all that it represents, from back home. The further afield one goes with the sites, the greater the challenge for recognition – what of a Moroccan synagogue, a small Polish *shtiebel*, or simply a stone cellar, as in the case of the excavated medieval synagogue below the streets of Barcelona? For some, brought up in Moroccan synagogues or tiny *shtielblekh*, the cathedral-sized synagogues of Central Europe are no less challenging. Yet throughout, s/he is seeking of a reflection in the familiar mirror of the site.

Needless to say, nothing is that straightforward. Issues of recognition stir up the thorny problem of non-recognition as well. On the one hand, the educator is offering the chance to 'meet' or encounter the personalities and events of the past, by visiting the sites that represent them. However, do they genuinely recognise each other?

I may take a group to visit the sites of Rashi in Mainz and Worms, to somehow 'bring him to life'. However, what if we knew that the same Rashi would struggle to recognise me, the teller of his story, a Reform Jew of the twenty-first century? What if the tourist sees neither her own reflection in the life, character or outlook of Rashi? How do we create a dialogue? Acknowledging the potential for Jewish travel to emphasise the broad notion of Jewish Peoplehood is not sufficient. More useful is to ask what are some of the sub-elements of the Peoplehood narrative that can be supported by travel journeys? Furthermore, what pedagogic strategies are necessary to make the project work? I offer this question as an entry point to the following reflections from the field, all of which are illustrated by reference to case studies (locations).

History/The Past

More than anything else, Jewish travel programmes traverse the pathways of 'history', visiting locations that seamlessly move participant and guide alike up and down the Jewish historical timeline. For better or worse, in most cases sites mean 'where something once happened', and even present tense locations, such as contemporary communities, are often seen as add-ons to assist connectivity between the present and the past. For educators this is anything but straightforward since the past is not an easy domain to navigate. For one thing, history is not necessarily a subject that excites and inspires contemporary younger generations in the way it did previous generations. I am aware, for instance, that visits to former Communist countries speak differently to adults than to teenagers, for whom the Cold War is school book history and not personal life history. The fact is that the past is not all it used to be, so to speak. Post-modernism has successfully managed to deconstruct and relativise most things to the point that history is a battleground for competing versions of constructed narratives.

In many ways, the notion of 'history' and the interest in the past was always an outgrowth of ideology, where the reading and construction of history provided a necessary validation for present-day understandings and actions. So much of Israel tourism, for instance, was founded on the projection of Zionist values – 'our' connection to the land, the projection of a Jewish history that has the Land of Israel as a central pivot with the inevitable journey homewards.

To deepen the understanding of the significance and potential for educational travel, I offer three possible models for presenting the past:, for talking at the sites where the story of our People is seen: (1) documentary and informational ('this arch is from the Roman Period'); (2) collective memory ('here we all stand where our ancestors stood'); and (3) dialogical ('in what way does this building connect with who we are?').

Documentary/Informational

The standard practice of many (most?) travel programmes I have observed is to emphasise vast quantities of knowledge. Guides, including the most accomplished,

entertaining and engaging, invest energy in conveying quantities of information deemed necessary for the experience to be complete. This need not be dry facts and certainly does not preclude the telling of stories, but the purpose is to increase the body of knowledge conveyed. This is the 'great books' approach in which students are required to have acquired the canonised volumes and remembered their contents.

I mention this mode specifically, since as a practitioner I am aware that many participants are convinced that this is what they seek in travel journeys – to be shown things that are interesting, the sorts of things for which guide book are written. I recall the anger of a woman who complained after a lengthy discussion by the site of the non-existent Berlin Wall that she was fed up with discussion, with hearing other participants talk, 'when are you (the guide) going to tell us something? When is the sightseeing going to begin?'.

At its most mundane, this approach is witnessed in the faces of dazed tourist herded around archaeological ruins or museums as gallons of raw unfiltered information about things they neither understand nor care about are poured over them. At its most impressive this is the picture of eagerly attentive tourists walking around the same site, with a different guide alert to the thrilling knowledge being revealed to them at each stone and every exhibit. Again, whether requested or not, the information is valued. This approach is supported via the 'official' interpreters of sites, graduates of guiding courses whose exams test the degree to which future site – professionals have swallowed the library.

Collective Memory/'Standing Before the over Powering Edifice of History'

In this mode, the past is not merely a body of knowledge but a real and living memorial. The mere telling of the story is a type of living monument, replete with meanings and demands on the visitor from the present. Attention should be drawn to the 'collective' as much as the 'memory'. In this mode, the visitor is not alone but part of a great collective or community, connecting past and present. Significantly, however, it is not a democratic collective, since the 'we' of the present is being looked down upon from the 'they' of the past. It is as if to say, 'we' live in 'their' shadow, of all that has gone before us.

This approach has strong relationship to the world of ideologies, which similarly imagines the accumulated collective past experiences as the proof of the ideology. Typically, national movements venerate sites of collective dramas such as political struggle (Dublin's 1916 Post Office Uprising Monument), catastrophes (battle sites) and the significant sites of ideological heroes (Lenin's mausoleum in Moscow; Chmielnicki's statue in Kiev). The visitors, assuming they are members of the tribe, the agreed communities of belief or meaning, become pilgrims joining the project of communal national memory.

In some cases the narrative of collective memory is confused, exposing dissonances between competing collective communities. James E. Young draws our attention to this in his classic work on Holocaust memorials and in particular the convoluted approaches of the Auschwitz curators in choosing a monument to stand

at the end of the railway tracks in Birkenau (Young, 1993). The clash between the communities of Polish state-sponsored socialism, the 'survivors', and an assumed humanity all made for a confused but nevertheless theoretical collective memory. Far more successful is the powerful edifice of Nathan Rapaport's statue that stands at the centre of Yad Vashem. The contrast between powerless Jews of the Diaspora is contrasted with the heroism of the fighting Jew thus acting as an inspiration for present-day Israelis.

The primary example of this mode in action as a full-blown travel programme can be seen in the thousands of people who march through Auschwitz in the annual March of the Living parade. They are not necessarily offered a chance for talking back, but they are most definitely being invited to feel the drama of the historical site. Speeches are delivered, poems are recited and ceremonies completed. Indeed, they ritualise the moment by re-enactment. Standing beneath the shadow of history they are asked to accept its full weight as an act of national responsibility.

Dialogue

Finally, in this mode, we recognise that the site is but one, albeit crucial element in the educational moment of travel. It is joined by the participants and the guide to develop a conversation of meaning and interpretation. In place of the received truth, the participant may seek a truth through their own investigations, by listening, talking and reading. It is possible that some elements may indeed remain sacred but this is not guaranteed. For example, Jewish visitors to Auschwitz are not asked to judge the Jews who were once inmates, or indeed anyone from that time. However, in discussing the thorny question of meaning and interpretation, participants must be able to speak, offer opinions and interpretations of what took place in the camp. The visitor is not obliged to only listen passively to details of the site and its working, nor to recite a pre-written credo of the significance of the site and its message for the future, but to engage in a conversation. Let me offer two examples of this in action drawn from two different parts of the Jewish world.

Volubilis

Sitting in the shade of a tree by the elaborate Roman archaeological site at Volubilis, Morocco, we wished to draw attention to the discovery of a Hebrew shard found many years ago, establishing a second-century connection with the site. A bare mountain, Roman columns and richly preserved mosaics, whilst theoretically impressive only go so far in sparking the imagination. The activity thus focussed on the dilemmas of the second-century Diaspora Jew who may have passed through Volubilis, seeking to understand their mental world and by extension, to find some points of connectivity. The site itself was the perfect expression of 'walking in the footsteps of history' but what if the walk was boring, too distant or meaningless?

We experimented with two activities, both focussing on the period, 50 years after the destruction of the Second Temple. The first activity simply posed one question to be considered by participants, namely 'what advice would you give from the vantage of point of the present to the Jews of second-century Volubilis?' (regarding how to

live their lives). In so doing, we wished to establish a dialogue across time, and, at the same time, humanise the face of the historical interlocutor. Inevitably, the advice tended to focus on issues of cultural identity, strategies for survival, suggestions for religious development and warnings about political relationships with the ruling powers.

The second activity offered specific principles to be prioritised and debated as the survival plan for Jewish life in light of the circumstances of second-century Diaspora life. These were all familiar ideas designed to illustrate commonalities across time, including: developing dietary laws to encourage social segregation; investment in Jewish education; prioritising projects to remember the Temple; building strong bonds with Jews in others' Diaspora communities, etc. In short, neither activity may be regarded as site-specific and yet both brought the present-day dilemma to a specific time and place. Most crucially, however, the subsequent tour of Roman mosaics and columns took on a different context entirely. The miracle of surviving colourful patterns in stone and architectural fashions of the Roman empire could be contrasted with their own appreciation of the site, now as 'insiders', modern-day Jews visiting Volubilis, sharing in the discussion of the legacy contained therein.

Kiev

In the August 2006, as Hizbollah katyusha rockets rained down on the north of Israel, we travelled to Kiev and St. Petersburg. Standing in the square in the old Jewish suburb of Podol, we recalled the famous pogrom that had occurred in the early years of the twentieth century. The appropriate text chosen was the powerful and iconic poem by Chaim Nachman Bialik, 'In the City of Slaughter', not because it was composed in Kiev but because its ideas were as relevant to Podol as they were to Kishinev, from where Bialik had taken his inspiration. In the poem, Bialik famously rounded on the passivity of the Jews in the face of a murderous enemy. The participants listened as the poem was read and one by one, to the last person, related it to its contemporary message – how does one deal with vilification and attack in present times. What conclusions can one draw about history when Jews are still attacked? What if the Jews are vilified by western liberals and not pogromists? Are the rules different now that the Jews have their own state? Indeed, are there limits to the powerful Jew that Bialik so sought? The implicit conclusion throughout was that whilst Kiev and Podol were important and atmospheric, from the visitors point of view, they were also necessary backdrops for a conversation about issues more immediate.

Concluding this focus on the core issue of the past and its variant models of expression, I wish to emphasise that these modes for visiting sites and recalling the story of the Jews need not be mutually exclusive. It can be argued that without a significant knowledge, without information, there can be no intelligent dialogue. Similarly, not every site is about the 'I', the subject of many dialogues, but the 'we' of collective memory.

Furthermore, the concentration on the past is only one of the building blocks for discussing Peoplehood. Beyond mediating the past (through any of the above

approaches) there are other key values that equally comprise core elements arising from the Jewish travel experience: 'sense of place', 'community', 'culture', 'mutuality' and 'self-awareness'.

Place

Yehuda Amichai writes,

> That's why they [Jews] are so dead, and why they call their God *Makom,* 'Place'.
> And now that they have returned to their place, the Lord has taken up wandering to different places, and His name will no longer be Place but Places, Lord of the Places.
> (From 'Jewish Travel', Yehuda Amichai, 'Open Closed Open' Harcourt 2002)

There could be no greater encounter with the Jewish People's complex understanding of place than through travel since, by definition, the educational conversation questions the rootedness of any community, very often offsetting it against an imagined or real Jewish homeland. Indeed, 'Peoplehood' terms such as 'homeland' and 'Diaspora' represent values as much as they do locations. Therefore, the more Jews visit the locations of Jewish history, the greater the confrontation with the meaning of this term. Are the Jews a static people, defined by and always aspiring to be part of a particular place? Or are they wanderers, always seeking a place but never believing it is permanent? In what way does the search for a place change the persona of the Jews themselves?

Venice

There are probably few places so well defined as 'the place of the Jews' as the late medieval Ghetto in Venice. Complicated explanations of its founding notwithstanding, it is the example par excellence of 'place'. But how does one keep finding sites when there are only two streets, a square and five synagogues all of which are closed to the public except when on the 45-min guided tour provided by the museum?

Our entry point for the Venetian Jewish journey was the pier by the Palazzo Ducale and St. Marks overlooking the lagoon and out to sea. We begin this Jewish journey in Venice by consciously choosing a 'non-Jewish site' that seems to sum up the complex meanings of the place. We recall the following local Venetian custom – every year on the second Sunday of May, Venetians gather opposite the church of San Nicolo on the Lido to witness the throwing of a gold ring into the seas around them. In so doing, they continue a ceremony begun on Ascension Day in the year 1000 when Doge Pietro Orseolo II set sail to defeat the Dalmatian pirates who had harried the merchants of Venice. Formalised in 1177, the ceremony became known as 'sposalizio del mare', or the 'Marriage [of Venice] to the Sea' and provides an important starting point in the presentation and discussion of this unique city. Perched precariously on the edge of the sea, Venice is a place defined by insecurity.

What then, we ask, of the Jews and their ghetto perched precariously on the edge of someone else's society, relying on goodwill and partial utility to stop themselves from being thrown out into the sea of wandering? It would seem that Jews, like Venetians have insecurities about where they belong and how they can put down

roots. It is interesting therefore that the inhabitants of the ghetto were divided into 'schools' defined by 'place' – the Italian, the Spanish, the Levantine, the 'Canton' and the German.

In the collective memory mode, the ghetto of Venice is a story of exclusion, a special place for Jews which seems to reinforce the yearning to be somewhere else. Yet the 'dialogical' offers a more complex reading wherein it is apt to question notions of 'inside' and 'outside'. At the ghetto's entrance, the crossing point separating being in and out we read Chad Gadya, the short story by Israel Zangwill telling of the first generation of Jews after the gates were torn down and Jews allowed to live where they wish. The modern and emancipated Jew of the outside returns to see his father on the evening of Pesach and is haunted by the patriarch's stubborn refusal to leave the psychological and cultural ghetto. Torn between the two seemingly irreconcilable worlds, he drowns himself in the waters of the Grand Canal. We achieved two goals, one pedagogic, the use of a story relating directly to where we physically stood, and, at the same time, a text that commented on the wider symbolic value of place that we are all part, i.e. where do we survive better, in the rooted and exclusively 'Jewish' quarter or to navigate the complex waters of modernity outside?

The group of 25 adults showed genuine interest in understanding the fortunes of Venetian Jewry and why its ghettoisation was not, initially at least, a hardship. Its place in the collective memory seemed straightforward as the symbolism of exclusion par excellence. Yet we sought to open this conversation about the true meaning of being somewhere; inevitably, the real discussion became one about the relative comfort and warmth found in the many informal ghettos of today. Venice quickly became a discussion of everywhere but Venice.

Community

Tourists on the highways of Jewish history may ask themselves what are the commonalities that unite the people across time and place? Faith? Culture? Yearning for another place? Community?

By drawing attention to the value of community, we see a micro version of the Peoplehood ideal, namely, that Jews bind themselves to each other for the purpose of self-expression, to share the travails of life and to support and share – they discover themselves as a group and in relation to each other. Community seems the most identifiable connecting point between all periods and locations, since without community, there is no Jewish People, only Jewish people.

Larissa (Greece)

I offer the example of Larissa, making no claim for its exclusive ability to represent the idea of 'community', but simply because it was a highlight – a deep and visceral expression of a community in action. Our Greek Jewish journey went from Salonika to Athens via Veria, Volos, Chalkis stopping in Larissa for Shabbat. Three of those communities have roots going back at least 2,000 years but the marvel

was found in Larissa, a community of the present, noticeably decimated by the Holocaust and more recently by inter-marriage. Yet, we witnessed scenes of thriving and interconnected community life

The scene is easily recognisable, beginning in synagogue with fully vocal prayer (with no special illusions about the meaning of prayer except as a ‘communal activity that we do’ as it was explained); a communal meal with more singing; complete with a special table set aside for the 20 excitable younger members of the community; and the obvious sense of pride contained within this community. There was lots of *spanakopita* and ouzo, much enthusiasm for our company despite almost no common language. The hosts were impressed that we could offer someone to chant a chapter of Song of Songs and the visitors were impressed that they knew almost none of the melodies yet managed to join in. No-one seemed bothered by the laxer than lax approach to gender separated seating. Consistently, it seemed, the Larissa Jewish story was one of interconnectedness and community solidarity. People were proud of their insider-ship. The visitors were impressed that with a community no bigger than a few hundred it managed to express such strong bonds of interconnectedness. In the mirror of Larissa they tried to see themselves.

Leeds

In a totally different frame altogether, I was asked to lead a Jewish tour of Leeds, in the north of England, which was advertised to the Leeds Jewish community. I had been to Leeds twice in my life and so set about reading furiously of its roots, historical past and sociological present, the ups and downs of its relations with the local community and with itself. I learnt about the story of its Jewish schools, its leaders, youth movements, social clubs and sports teams. In a short time, I was an ‘expert’ in Leeds Jewry!

Throughout the tour, I was in ‘knowledge’ mode, after all it is the members of the community who share collective memory, not I. Against the backdrop of my faulty commentary, the participants conversed with each other, recalling the past and arguing passionately about the present. Few wished to address the thorny issue of the future. As well as being a case book example of dialogical education through travel, it was also a full-throated discussion of the meaning of community. Everyone was an insider (except me) and the conversation was largely about the sense of ‘us’. This brief tour was quite different from the conventional ‘journey’, never quite leaving home. Yet in 3 h, the community discussed itself.

Culture

I recall the bizarre moment when, standing by a glass case containing ‘tallitot’ (prayer shawls) in the exhibition in Auschwitz I, one guide asked the group of attentive blue-shirted Israeli youth-movement members, if they all knew what they were looking at. There were not an insignificant number of embarrassed shrugs. The fact that the journey to Poland, to a death camp of all places is what draws a keen and committed member of the Jewish People to recognise or even simply learn about

what many would argue are basic symbols of Jewish religious or cultural life is not something to be taken lightly.

In a different context, I recall the enthusiastic desire by a group of solidly Ashkenazi adults determined to go all out to learn a Ladino rendition of 'Ein Keloheinu' in order that their journey to Salonika be made more authentic.

In both cases, the travel journey presented examples and opportunities for confronting core, even profound moments of cultural experience. In one, the awkwardness of cultural unfamiliarity was the catalyst for change. In the second, there was no embarrassment only a thirst for something more, something intrinsically Jewish but outside their own cultural experience. Ultimately, both were important experiences that reinforced expressions of Peoplehood.

Morocco

We assemble around the site, the grave of one of the Abuhatzera rabbis near the desert town of Erfoud and begin the process of explaining the meaning of Moroccan Jewish veneration of saints and the Hiloula (pilgrimage). We begin by performing some of the rituals. I recite a selection of 'qasida' poem-prayers in honour of the saint whose grave we stand by. A glass of 'mahia' is produced to be auctioned to the highest bidder who will thereby receive the blessing of the saint. The group erupts into righteous indignation at the thought that this custom, central to Moroccan Jewish culture, should be taken seriously by 'people like us'.

Nearby, other Jews are praying furiously with pictures of those whose illness may be cured by the intervention of the saint concerned. The chief prayer is a man dressed exactly like 'people like us', and his commitment to restoring the health of his loved ones is impressive. The group is confused and disturbed, although unsure if they are displaying an unacceptable level of western/Ashkenazi/middle class/cultural superiority or if they still wish to associate with a Judaism that allows the veneration of saints.

The conclusion of this encounter is that travel showcases the world of culture and exposes all who come in its path. What really is Jewish culture? What is Jewish about Jewish culture?

Prague

The Jewish Museum offers an all inclusive ticket gaining entry to a variety of synagogues and the famous Old Cemetery. As one moves from site to site, the museum shares its displays of artefacts saved and preserved from the turbulent past. The museum attempts to present the totality of Jewish Prague via its exhibits. I am loathe to 'guide' museums since they speak well enough for themselves and are best simply discussed at the end. Discussion comes to rest, ironically on the least 'Prague' exhibit, namely, the open text of a seventeenth-century Tanach printed in the city. Its significance lies in the fact that it is the most recognisable of all Jewish artefacts – the layout of the page, the Hebrew letters, commentaries, and of course, the meaning of the text itself. This 'site' epitomises the culture of Peoplehood. Its very familiarity reinforces the point all the more powerfully since in theory one does not

need to be in Prague to see the text. The text is, as others have pointed out, the 'portable homeland' of the Jewish People, and by definition its cultural hallmark. I wonder how that would go down with the 'non-Israel–Israel tour'? It suggests that a battle exists between the physical currency of places versus the spiritual currency of language and text.

Mutuality

In the simplest of forms, the question in this Peoplehood value centres around the oft-quoted adage, *Kol Yisrael Areivim Ze Baze* (all Israel is responsible for one another). I am intrigued to discover if there is a way of representing this through sites and discussion?

Budapest

We are by the site of the medieval synagogue on Tanhacs Mihaly Street on the Castle Hill in Budapest, and tell the story of the community caught on the Turkish side of the Austrian siege of the city in 1686. We are back in history, in the 'knowledge' mode and explaining how the Jews found life under Muslim Turkish rule preferable to that under Christianity. This explains their willingness to take up arms for the Turks to keep the Austrian Catholics out. Yet, as the Austrians broke through, a massacre took place in the synagogue and very quickly our re-telling shifts to the mode of collective memory – the possibility of reciting prayers for the dead and linking this tragedy to many other similar ones from the past. What room is there for the dialogue? In what way does the site invite a conversation? The answer is to be found in the far less famous story of Sender Tausk, an Austrian Jew who was present at the time and intervened with the victorious Austrian authorities after the massacre was over. Seeing the scores of dead Jews in the synagogue and the several hundred in hiding, Tausk stepped up to the plate of history, seeking permission to bury the dead and gain a release for the newly captured Jews. Agreeing upon a price with the Austrians and offering himself and his family as a deposit, he sought to raise the necessary money from around the Jewish world to redeem the captives of Buda. Thus we open the dialogue.

We have the commitment to the mitzvah of 'pidyon shvuim' offered up at this site as a primary case of Jewish solidarity and mutuality. What of its contemporary relevance? The conversation easily picks up steam as participants pose the tough questions: What are the limits of Jewish mutual solidarity? How reactive or able are communities to respond to similar calls? (the example offered is of the 13 Iranian Jews sentenced to death for alleged espionage charges for Israel). How has the passing of time and the emergence of modern Jewish identities altered the basic terms of mutuality? The site establishes a dialogue with another cluster of sites, in Paris, that tell the story of Napoleon's questions to the Assembly of Notables, how does Jewish inter – responsibility contradict other responsibilities such as to fellow citizens?

The last example leads to a re-run of an oft-repeated conversation on the Jewish tourist trail, the limits of identity – it parallels questions of the responsibility of Jews

to recall other victims of oppression, as well as the responsibility of Jews to fight for the countries of their citizenship. Indeed, the very same conversation re-emerges later the next day by the Heroes Synagogue built as a memorial to Budapest Jews who fought for the Empire in the First World War. We recall the account by Ansky of the Jews who emerge from their trenches on the eastern front firing at the enemy only to discover at the moment of death, they have killed a fellow Jew. They die in each other's arms declaring 'Shema Yisrael'.

The ability of Jewish travel sites to stir up deep emotions of mutual solidarity is a likely consequence of Diaspora-based travel where issues of identity are so much to the fore. The flip side of the Peoplehood – mutuality narrative is the charge of dual loyalty. The final discussion at the Heroes Synagogue turns to the story of Jonathan Pollard, an American Jew accused and imprisoned for spying for Israel and the 'dialogue' soon disintegrates into a shouting match.

Self-awareness: Looking Inwards/Outwards

In purely theoretical terms, this concept is not really a sub-value of Peoplehood or a narrative; however, the point I wish to emphasise is that self-awareness and relationship with the outside world is about as pivotal for group identity as anything else mentioned here. If there is one overriding experience of travel common to almost every tourist, it is awareness that 'who I am' is happening continuously throughout the journey. Food, manners, conversation, body language, etc. almost everything that the locals do reminds the traveller of how they do it differently and who 'they' are in relation to 'us'.

Berlin: (Siegersauller)

This towering edifice is a powerful emblem of Prussian militarism, a symbol of late nineteenth-century nationalism and national conflict. Constructed largely out of French cannons, and pock marked with bullet hole from the 1945 Battle of Berlin, the monument seems ironic given the turbulent fortunes of German nationalism in the twentieth century. Theoretically, it is a classic German collective memory site – for Jews it is an opportunity to reflect on the subject of nationalism, citizenship and identity.

Participants arrive at the site via one of the four dark subways that go underneath the busy road. As we walk in half darkness, I play music from a portable CD player, selected specifically to expose the national identity of the group – Land of Hope and Glory/Three Lions/Vindaloo (British), Star Spangled Banner (the USA); Hatikvah (Israeli), etc. The purpose is to engage participants with a variety of familiar and yet powerful symbols of identity. As the participants reach the bottom of the underground stairs leading to the monument, they look directly up at the towering monument above them. On one occasion we set up national flags to welcome them as they emerge into the light so that all that could be seen was a line of bunting, the towering Siegersauler and the sky.

Why put the participants through this ordeal? First to generate a dialogue with the site before we fully experience it. Second, in order to offer the site as an expression

of 'our' exclusion and by definition as a trigger to an array of related questions: Why are nationalist monuments so powerful? Could this have 'worked' for Berlin Jews in the late nineteenth century? Is there a model of national identity that nevertheless seeks out inclusivity instead of exclusivity?

Predictably, certain participants are bothered by the activity for, matters of politeness aside, they fear how it is perceived by other visitors to the site.

Sites

I was once party to a conversation discussing the possibility of replacing actual visits to Israel, summer teen tours that would simply drive around the Ring Road around London. Madrichim would lead the participants in games and songs, hormones would successfully express themselves; there could be time to get off for the occasional swimming trip, campfire, shopping mall or night activity. The centre of gravity on such tours is so inward-looking, it was argued, that the reality of actually being in Israel is often disregarded and the primary site was the group itself. Ridiculous though this idea was, it focuses attention on the significance of sites themselves. What is the nature of the site and how does it work alongside the experience?

Frustratingly, the standard international Jewish travel guides and most local or single country volumes all seem to be involved in a conspiracy to define Jewish sites in the narrowest of terms. Constructing interesting and engaging journeys using the standard 'synagogue, cemetery and memorial' approach seem a guaranteed strategy for an uncreative experience. A better understanding is needed of the nature of sites themselves. For this I offer four models described below.

Sites Where 'It' Happened

This ought to be the easiest category since who will argue with history that 'it' took place there. If Ferrant Martinez did eventually incite against the Jews from the pulpit of Seville's Cathedral then surely, it is a site of great value. In a parallel category are the great rivers of Europe, the Rhine, Vistula, Tiber, etc. all of which have their Jewish stories. The Rhine transported the pioneers of early Ashkenaz to their new homes in Mainz and Worms. Such was the Jewish trade on the Vistula that Sholem Asch described it as the 'river that sang in Yiddish'. Jewish slaves disembarked from the Tiber after their exile in the first century. This category is probably longer than the sum of all the synagogues and cemeteries and it is the task of the creative educator to find them.

People as Sites

The programme in Larissa illustrated a compelling truth regarding travel as an educational instrument, namely, that some of the most powerful sites are in fact people. 'People as site' is a powerful expression of the dialogical potential of Jewish travel, since the one thing you can do with a person better than with a building or memorial is to talk to them! The spontaneous encounters with people are the essence of a truly

educational travel since they demand openness and the immediate ability to squeeze until a good story comes out. In Larissa, an elderly man hobbled his way over to us from across the streets, recognising us as Jews. Within seconds we had learned that he had hidden a few local Jews in the war and that his brother had been executed for that crime. Our tears were rolling before his and the encounter was indelibly etched in the mind of all. Similarly, there is no-one in Sarajevo that does not have a story to tell about ethnic identity and the horrors of war; no-one over the age of 25 in St. Petersburg that cannot say something about life under Communism; no-one in Paris that does not have an opinion about multiculturalism, religious apparel in schools and the implication for identity.

Blindingly obvious it may be, but 'people as sites' is a principle more often honoured in the breach. For many years, groups visiting Jewish Poland rarely approached the tiny Polish-Jewish community for fear of upsetting the narrative of total and utter destruction. The voice of those trying to reconstruct something amidst the ruins did not seem to fit with the 'destruction to redemption' messages of most trips since 'redemption' was supposed to take place elsewhere, not in Poland. Equally insidious was the antipathy towards meeting local Poles, since for many programme organisers and guides, there was a startling inability to distinguish between 1940s German or Austrian murderers and 1990s inquisitive Poles. With the passing of time, some attitudes have changed and Poles, Jew and gentile have come into focus, at least for some.

Invisible Sites

The great conundrum of Jewish travel, must surely be to assess what is the permissible ratio of visible sites to invisible ones? For some this is at its greatest in Holocaust sites – the seven streets of the Vilna Jewish quarter that mean nothing now that there are no Jews. For others the great challenge must surely be Spain where the story is so much larger than the sites available to show it. Five hundred years of not being there inevitably takes its toll on the visibility of Jewish sites, leaving a handful of buildings and some street plaques saying 'Juderia'.

Symbolically, Jewish travel involves much virtual archaeology, which, in educational terms, means creating a picture in the mind or convincing the audience that even though it may not feel that way, the land they are standing on really is 'sacred'. Stripping away the layers of an outwardly mundane appearance and replacing it with jewels of intrigue. In other cases the invisibility is the story itself. The gall that allows the Aristotle University of Salonika to stand on the remains of the largest Jewish cemetery in Europe, destroyed by the Nazis and built over by modern Greeks, is impressive in a macabre sort of way. The absence of a sign or plaque only adds to the drama of the site.

'Jewish' and 'Non-Jewish' Sites/Looking Through Jewish Eyes

It is not post-modernism gone mad to assert that the boundaries that separate Jewish sites and non-Jewish ones need not be defined by formal and standardised

definitions. Few would argue with the idea of synagogues and cemeteries as solidly Jewish sites. What then of churches (in general or specific churches in particular) or indeed any site that has implications for the Jews? The Sistine Chapel, for instance, maybe the high point of renaissance art, but it is also a theological manifesto in which Jews cannot really be neutral on.

Conclusion: Modelling an Alternative Narrative

By way of conclusion I offer an alternative model for Jewish travel, one not fixated on Peoplehood yet no less Jewish.

In the searing heat of a Bosnian summer, I had the opportunity to open a Jewish travel programme on the slopes of a Jewish cemetery overlooking the beautiful city of Sarajevo. I drew attention to how this cemetery built by Spanish Jewish refugees in the sixteenth century had been the front line in the recent Balkan war. My story continued by explaining how, in 1992, Serbian militia had fired down onto the city from one side of the cemetery wall whilst Bosnian Muslims returned fire from the other. Caught in the crossfire, Hebrew inscribed tombstones were left pockmarked from bullets, whilst small holes in the ground showed where landmines had recently been cleared. Some of the graves were those of long deceased Sabbateans, who had died centuries ago still believing that the Messiah had in fact come to banish conflict and restore the light of God to the world. It was, by any stretch of the imagination a powerful site, bursting with symbolism with a rich seam of educational possibilities: the parallel Jewish and gentile experience of displacement and war; the timeless nature of conflict; the ambiguous position of Jews and their story in the memory landscape of Europe; the role of present-day visitors/witnesses in the search for ethnic reconciliation ... etc. And this was only the first site of what was to be a 9-day journey.

Later that evening we met with Tzisko, the cook from the small Sarajevo Jewish community centre who recalled how during the recent war local Jews joined together with international Jewish aid agencies to activate La Benevolencia, a non-partisan humanitarian aid programme to assist people of all national and religious identities. By the war's end, tens of thousands had been fed, cared for or evacuated by the efforts of the Jews. Significantly, La Benevolencia had swung into action in 1992, the year that Sarajevo Jewry joined together with world wide Jewry to commemorate 500 years since their ancestors, together with Muslims were expelled from Catholic Spain.

Sarajevo, its Jews, sites and stories were brimming over with symbolism; just waiting it seemed for an educational interpreter or filter. What was the narrative? On the one hand, it seemed this was the story of a community whose historical experience as refugees and immigrants contrasted so powerfully with its success integrating into the multi-ethnic landscape of the Balkans. In specific terms, it was an illustration of the powerful sense of Jewish ethnos that became so visible in the terrible days of the ethnic conflict that overwhelmed the area in the early 1990s. In short, a narrative of Jewish history, identity, and Jewish–Gentile relations. On the

other hand, maybe there was something more, not merely a story of Jews against an overpowering backdrop of ethnic violence? Maybe this was emblematic of 'history' itself, and the inexhaustible impact of conflict

Over 9 days, the group travelled to Mostar, Dubrovnik and onto Zagreb, via the ancient Jewish centre in Split/Soline and the former Croatian death camp at Jasenovac. Site after site, it became clearer that the Sarajevo cemetery experience had merely been an overture for a longer and deeper journey that continually collided with those meta themes of 'history' and 'conflict'. Sarajevo was after all the city where the 'history' of the twentieth century began, by the bridge where Gavrillio Princip shot Archduke Ferdinand in 1914, triggering the First World War. Through this small expression of conflict, the history of the world was changed forever. We took a few minutes to discuss the forbidden question, 'what if it had not happened. . .?' Or put differently, what history has changed as a result of the First World War?

Site after site, the narrative explained itself. In Sarajevo's National Museum we peered through the protective glass shielding the famous Sarajevo Hagaddah, an original manuscript brought over by Spanish exiles, from the harmful and unfiltered light of the present. The Hagaddah, having escaped Spain, had to be hidden by local Muslims, in bank vaults and other such adventures, to ensure its survival through the Nazi occupation and the recent Serbian siege. The artefact was itself the story of slavery to freedom.

In Mostar, we sat with the head of the community whose grandson and husband were both victims of the recent war and who in spite of everything, and the fact that there are no more than 40 Jews in Mostar, was determined to look optimistically to the future. Despite having the highest level of intermarriage between Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks, Mostar endured total war and mass death. In pedagogic terms, it was here that we studied powerful *midrashim* concerning Cain and Abel, seated by the rebuilt bridge that had once united the different sides of the community.

In Split, the group visited the Jewish cemetery whose prayer hall is now a trendy café whose owners look after the key. It was here that we were on the receiving end of not so latent Croatian anti-Semitism, a series of insults hurled freely and without embarrassment by a middle-aged and respectable-looking man in his fifties. The following day, we were unable to visit the museum at the death camp of Jasenovac where over one hundred thousand Serbs were murdered by Croats since it was a national holiday in Croatia, commemorating with pride, the far more recent expulsion of Serbs from Croatia in the 1990s. The flag of present-day Croatia, containing amongst other things the emblem of the murderous Ustasha party of the 1940s, fluttered above us as we sat in the killing fields, studying our text.

On the last day, the group engaged in conversation with the director of the Zagreb Jewish Old Age Home on the challenge of working with so many Holocaust Jews who, in the light of own their experience of history and conflict, chose to abandon their distinctive identity and become the most Yugoslavian of all Yugoslavs. Again and again we returned to the role of conflict as the ubiquitous force fuelling history. And, so we concluded the programme with a study of two versions of a text we had seen in the Sarajevo Hadggadah, Had Gadya – in both traditional and modern form.

Why suddenly do you sing *Chad Gadya*
When spring hasn't yet arrived and Passover hasn't come?
. . .That on all nights, all other nights I asked only Four Questions
This night I have another question:
'How long will the cycle of violence continue?'
Chase and be chased, beat and be beaten,
When will this madness end?
How have you changed, how are you different?
. . .I was once a sheep and a tranquil kid
Today I'm a tiger and a ravening wolf
I was once a dove and I was a deer.
Today I don't know who I am.
Dizavin abba bitrei zuzim, chad gadya, chad gadya.

(Chava Alberstein, 1989)

Reflecting on the journey, I am struck at how the core conversations were not defined by traditional subject matter of Jewish travel. Unlike Poland travel, for instance, this was not about the persecution of the Jews, although issues of anti-Semitism and displacement were certainly present. Unlike Israel travel, there was no thesis supporting the need for a Jewish homeland, closer ties to the land, or even the centrality of Israel etc., even though most if not all participants were committed Israel supporters. This was travel in the service of a very broad agenda, large universal issues all of which were being interpreted through particularistic eyes.

What made this journey Jewish? If the themes were so universal and the sites and stories drawn from across the board, what defined this as a Jewish journey? Primarily, the answer was the eyes, experiences and texts through which it was filtered: 'Looking at the Balkans through Jewish eyes'. This powerful, albeit for some, controversial notion is most challenging for the educator – developing a tourist experience that sharpens the ability to look with Jewish eyes.

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Section Three: Applications

Introduction

This section of the International Handbook focuses on applications, the ways that Jewish Education is transmitted in particular contexts. The 22 chapters in this section can be divided into three sub-sections that address the settings and audiences served through Jewish education, and the trends in the professional development of the educators who serve them.

Despite David Bryfman's lingering questions about whether it is a sub-discipline itself, ideas about experiential learning are infused throughout many of these chapters, including those of Isa Aron on congregational education, Susan Shevitz on congregations as learning organizations, Alex Pomson on liberal day schools, Lisa Grant and Diane Schuster on adult learning as an activity of community-building, and Shelley Kedar on teacher trips to Israel. Experiential learning also seems to be a popular focus of Jewish philanthropists who fund a wide range of initiatives designed to deliver high-quality Jewish experiences and/or professionalize the field, as noted by Joe Reimer.

Another through-line in these chapters is about how organizations learn. We find this theme first framed by Shevitz and again appearing in chapters about congregational education (Aron), and in many of those concerning teacher development and professional learning (Dorph, Feiman-Nemser, Isaacs, and Sinclair).

A final recurring theme in this section is the significant role of parents as decision makers, as supporters of their children's Jewish learning and as Jewish learners themselves, themes we find in chapters by Aron, Ben Avie et al, Grant and Schuster, Kress, Novick and Glanz, Pomson, and Rotstein.

The first sub-section includes nine chapters that describe a wide range of formal and informal settings for Jewish education. The overall question of how the concept of a learning organization has taken hold in and shaped Jewish educational settings is the central focus of the chapter by Susan Shevitz. She employs the example of Jewish family education to explore the shift from narrow programmatic change to the wider lens of organizational learning. As she notes, learning organization theory is no longer a "transmission of knowledge model" but rather an experiential learning model where the learner encounters the world.

Organizations that continuously learn are also central to Isa Aron's chapter on congregational education. Aron articulates core principles that contribute to a shift from an old paradigm that focused on children and age-graded instruction, to a new paradigm of enculturation, bringing students and their families into a rich Jewish cultural milieu. These principles include more direct involvement of parents in Jewish education both as learners and teachers, and strengthening the connection between Jewish learning and living where learning is done in context. They also focus more on the underlying vision and values of the school where it sees its primary goal as creating community for students and their families, and its primary tasks as creating powerful memories that will implant strong Jewish values and commitments.

Three different authors investigate the world of Jewish day schools and the various audiences they serve. Alex Pomson focuses on how the historical tensions between survivalist and integrationist impulses in Jewish day school development account for some of the most intense contemporary debates surrounding liberal day school education worldwide. As with Aron's findings in congregational education, Pomson points to a shift in the aims of liberal day school education from a paradigm of instruction (concerned with helping children acquire knowledge of the ideas and skills that society values) to one of enculturation (the more broadly conceived task of initiating children into a culture to which they may not already be committed).

A different challenge exists in Orthodox day schools as described by Shani Bechhofer who presents a rich description of the changing landscape of Orthodox education in America. She argues that the decentralized nature of the Orthodox sector, combined with the cultural–reproductive aspirations of a number of ideological movements and strands within contemporary Orthodoxy, produces a variety of institutional and educational pressures upon schools that ultimately result in schools that are more diverse, more competitive, more ideologically differentiated, and also more innovative than ever before.

The Ultra-Orthodox/Haredi world is the focus of our third chapter on day schools in this section. Here, Yoel Finkelman describes trends and challenges in Haredi education both in Israel and the Diaspora, noting how prescribed gender roles require dramatically different kinds of education and different kinds of schools for males and females. Finkelman also points out how isolationist impulses in the Haredi world make it difficult for the academic community to investigate topics that might be most useful for Haredi educators such as effective and ineffective pedagogic methods, best practices, student achievement, knowledge of the curriculum, and effective teacher training.

Two complementary chapters explore the sub-field of informal and experiential education from very different perspectives. First, by means of two case studies Joseph Reimer describes the potentially profound impact that creative collaborative partnerships between business-oriented philanthropists and Jewish educational leaders can have on the field of informal Jewish education. David Bryfman then explores both the theoretical and practical aspects of experiential education and how it has shaped the field of Jewish education in general. He suggests that experiential education is poised to reach a "tipping point" in the Jewish communal landscape and

offers both a language and strategies for helping experiential education to further impact the Jewish identity development of Jewish youth and young adults.

The robust growth of Jewish studies in North American universities is the focus of the chapter by Judith Baskin. She reports that over 230 endowed chairs of Jewish studies exist at 80 colleges and universities with many other positions and programs in Jewish studies present at other North American institutions that are funded internally without outside support. As Baskin reports, while most Jewish studies academics would agree that the teaching of Jewish subject matter in secular universities cannot be considered Jewish education in the traditional sense, it appears that many students are looking for personal affirmation and a strengthening of their Jewish identities when they enroll in Jewish studies courses in higher education.

The final chapter in this sub-section about settings for Jewish learning examines the powerful and potentially transformative impact retreat-based learning can have on adults. In this chapter, Raymond Simonson provides an extensive analysis of Limmud, a cross-communal, multi-generational, volunteer-led Jewish learning experience that began in Britain in the 1980s that now attracts upward of 7,000 people a year and has been emulated by dozens of other communities across the globe. Simonson describes how Limmud's commitment to pluralism, voluntarism, and high-quality Jewish learning account for its success in the UK and beyond.

The second sub-section of the Applications section includes six chapters that explore research about a variety of audiences for Jewish education. These chapters include specific age and/or stage groups as well as focused populations with particular needs.

The very youngest learners are the focus of the chapter by Michael Ben-Avie and his co-authors. They chronicle many of the key initiatives taking place in North America in recent years to enrich early childhood education with more Jewish content and purpose. A key finding of significant import for policymakers is that promoting Jewish identity formation is not an important criterion for parents when choosing a Jewish early childhood education. However, if they perceive and experience the programs as excellent in quality, they do become more engaged in Jewish activities.

The relatively new field of Jewish special education is the topic of the chapter by Rona Novick and Jeffry Glanz. Their research shows that the move toward greater inclusion of learners with special needs has been propelled by parents and secular forces far more than it has by Jewish understandings of disability and difference. The authors explore the factors that have delayed the move to inclusionary practices in Jewish schools and document the need for further research to inform the field.

Shira Epstein's chapter focuses on gender issues, another relatively new area in Jewish education. Epstein documents how formerly evaded topics such as body image, sexuality, healthy relationship building, and sexual violence have become normative parts of many North American Jewish educational programs and professional development initiatives. She also describes how participatory action research between Jewish educators and cohorts of adolescents can transform the landscape of gender in Jewish education.

A different perspective on adolescents is explored by Evie Levy Rotstein in her chapter on children of intermarried parents. Rotstein's research reveals a variety of factors that motivate such teens to continue their Jewish education into their high school years, including family life, parental commitment to Jewish education, a positive religious school experience, and the students' own involvement in the decision to continue. Her case is supported by drawing on a broader literature relating to "resilient youth."

Just as parental involvement is key in the decision of adolescent children of intermarried parents to continue their education, so too is it central to virtually all aspects of Jewish educational engagement, as documented by Jeff Kress. In his chapter, Kress shows how North American parents today are much more active in choosing educational settings for their children than in past generations. Indeed, individualization results in a range of educational choices within the same family. As Kress shows, the ways in which parents relate to other Jewish organizations, particularly synagogues, impact their experiences and expectations of Jewish education regardless of setting.

Choice also appears as a key theme in the chapter on adult Jewish learning by Lisa Grant and Diane Tickton Schuster. Here they present how contemporary social forces have led to new developments in the field and what changes and priorities appear to be shaping the vision and decisions of adult education planners and policymakers today. They provide a conceptual framework moving away from a primary focus on literacy-based learning to a more diversified niche-marketing approach for situating the "where, when and what" of different types of learners and the learning programs and experiences that will meet their interests and needs.

The final sub-section of the Applications section includes seven chapters that offer different lenses on pre-service teacher preparation and professional development from close-up views, to more global perspectives such as an analysis of innovations in professional learning as well as of trends in recruitment and retention.

Michal Muszkat-Barkan examines the personal one-on-one approach of mentoring in her chapter, focusing on how the ideology of teacher-mentors informs their practice. Her research suggests that the professional discussion between teacher and mentor in Jewish studies is strongly tied to personal attitudes. Thus, she claims that goals of teacher mentoring in Jewish education should include enhancing awareness of the ideological–cultural components of personal attitudes toward Jewish practice.

Alex Sinclair focuses on the emerging field of practitioner enquiry. He reports on practitioner research as a form of professional learning, what Schön labeled reflection *on* action. A small body of work in Jewish education already demonstrates how practitioner enquiry can serve as a valuable resource to aid teachers in their thinking and action in professional practice.

Shelley Kedar's chapter on the purposes and practices of Jewish educators' trips to Israel as a professional development experience also connects teacher learning to action. Building on a modest body of research, this chapter introduces a conceptual model for thinking about the purposes and design of professional development

trips for teachers and describes how an educator's Israel trip could serve as a professional development program within three interacting fields: tourism, religion, and education.

Another emerging field of study is addressed by Lisa Grant and Michal Muszkat-Barkan in their chapter on the professional identity formation of rabbi-educators working in a variety of settings. This cross-cultural research explores how Conservative and Reform rabbi-educators in Israel and North America describe their roles and goals based on their rabbinic and education training. This small study urges further investigation to determine whether the professional identity of rabbi-educators is indeed distinct from that of educators or rabbis who perform similar functions.

A broader view of professional development of Jewish educators is taken by Gail Dorph in her chapter. Dorph's exploration of this topic centers on key questions about the principles and challenges in creating and sustaining effective professional development. She then offers three case studies that provide images of effective professional learning that can impact the capacity of teachers to enhance student learning in Jewish schools.

Sharon Feiman-Nemser's chapter presents what she describes as two "experiments" in Jewish teacher preparation, one historical and one contemporary. She examines the development of the Teachers Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York as an example of the early twentieth-century emergence of Hebrew Teachers colleges to provide qualified teachers for communal Talmud Torahs. She then turns to DeLet, a contemporary initiative for liberal day school teacher preparation. In each case, she describes how trends both in general education and the emergence of a new kind of Jewish school influenced the creation of these programs of Jewish teacher development.

This sub-section closes with a chapter by Leora Isaacs, Kate O'Brien, and Shira Rosenblatt on the challenges, successes, and potential facing the field of Jewish education as it moves to recruit, retain, and provide excellent professional development for Jewish educators. The authors assert the need for a systemic approach in linking excellence in teaching and student outcomes. They explore levers for change that directly impact the complex environment that influences teaching and learning in Jewish day and congregational school settings.

As a compilation, these 22 chapters provide us with a broad and rich portrait of the wide range of applications for Jewish education by setting, context, mode, and audience. They emphasize the need for depth and breadth in professional and organizational learning across all settings and offer us a sophisticated research agenda to further our knowledge and growth in all of these varied domains.

Helena Miller
Lisa D. Grant
Alex Pomson

Academic Jewish Studies in North America

Judith R. Baskin

History of Jewish Studies

The significant expansion of Jewish studies in American universities is a relatively recent phenomenon. Although the Hebrew language was included in the curriculum of several of the earliest colleges to be established on the North American continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was taught as part of a theologically oriented curriculum designed to assist potential Christian clergymen in understanding their own religious heritage. Some instructors of Hebrew, such as Judah Monis who taught at Harvard University between 1722 and 1760, were Jews or of Jewish heritage.

Jewish studies at American universities were truly established in the 1890s under the influence of German–Jewish scholarship, specifically the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Scientific Study of Judaism), a post-Enlightenment European Jewish movement dedicated to promoting the rational, scientific, and critical study of Jewish religion, history, and culture. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* reshaped Jewish learning into an academic endeavor that was compatible with the scientific methodologies of the German university while arguing that the Jewish experience had a place in higher education and scholarship. Although pervasive anti-Semitism tended to deny Jewish studies a secure place in the European university curriculum, the *Wissenschaft* approach, furthered by nineteenth-century scholars like Leopold Zunz, Abraham Geiger, and Heinrich Graetz, found an institutional home in the academic rabbinic seminaries of Central Europe (Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994).

In the late nineteenth-century United States, academic Jewish learning was established at secular universities, most often with the active communal and financial support of members of the American Jewish community. In the early twentieth century at least 16 subsidized positions in Semitic studies at major universities were held by Jewish scholars. Many of the donors for these positions hoped that recognition of the centrality of Jewish knowledge and scholarship in the development of Western thought would also hasten acceptance and appreciation of Jews in the

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United States. Certainly, the establishment of positions in Semitic languages and literatures played a role in legitimizing the Jewish and Judaic presence in the American university at a time when being a Jew could still disqualify a candidate for an academic post. Most of the courses in Semitics that these scholars offered appealed to advanced students in biblical and related subjects, both Jewish and non-Jewish; they were generally beyond the interests and ability levels of most undergraduates. Still, their very existence delivered the message that the Jewish literary and cultural heritage belonged in the university curriculum (Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994).

In the second decade of the twentieth century, communal support for university positions diminished as Jewish philanthropists focused on the multiple needs of the large hosts of immigrants from Eastern Europe. In the period between the world wars, American academic Jewish studies took a new direction as the focus on Semitics was replaced with an emphasis on the breadth and diversity of the Jewish experience. This “cultural pluralism” movement, as Ritterband and Wechsler call it, argued that the focus on Hebrew and the Hebrew Bible, and related languages and literatures, was only a small part of Jewish religion, history, thought, and culture. During this era several elite institutions, again with the financial support of generous endowments from American Jews and Jewish communities, established positions in such areas as Jewish history and Modern Hebrew language and literature. These institutions integrated the faculty members holding these positions into appropriate university departments, whether History, English, Near Eastern Languages, or Religious Studies, where their courses became part of the mainstream undergraduate academic curriculum. Such scholars include the historian Dr. Salo Baron at Columbia University. Ritterband and Wechsler write, “Baron studied and taught in both universities and seminaries; communicated with academics and communal audiences; and successfully related Jewish history to general historical themes, while focusing on Jews and Judaism” (Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994, p. 171).

A third phase in the development of academic Jewish studies in North American colleges and universities began in the last third of the twentieth century. The impact of the 6-Day War in 1967 and the Yom Kippur War of 1973, as well as increasing discussion of the Holocaust, inspired many Jewish young people to learn more about their identities and heritage on the university level. The unprecedented number of Jewish “baby boomers” who descended on college campuses beginning in the mid-1960s, particularly in the Northeast, played a role, as did the expanding number of Jews in the professoriate.

Another central factor in the establishment of separate academic entities devoted to Jewish studies was the assertiveness of other ethnic groups on the American campus, including African Americans and Latinos, in advocating academic courses that explored and analyzed their particular historical and cultural backgrounds. Jewish students and faculty, who were rediscovering the richness of their own tradition, also encouraged universities to offer academic courses on the Jewish experience. When these were established, it was generally due to concentrated pressure from Jewish faculty members from a variety of academic disciplines, with the support of Jewish students, and often with significant backup from local Jewish communities

(Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994). Most of the programs founded in this era were financially supported by the college or university, rather than directly by Jewish donors, although often community groups undertook to raise funds for library resources and other program enhancements such as endowed lectureships and scholarship funds.

The emphasis in the 1960s and 1970s on concentrating Jewish learning in one academic program that transcended disciplinary agendas was a decisive move away from the earlier "cultural pluralism" approach that had encouraged the location of Jewish studies scholars within larger departments. The arguments for establishing separate Jewish studies units were similar to those for other particularistic area studies, such as African-American studies and women's studies. For one thing, such academic endeavors were essentially interdisciplinary. For another, without dedicated outside funding it was unlikely that more traditional disciplines would allocate limited and highly contested resources to what many faculty members regarded as marginal and intellectually problematic areas of discourse. Such professional concerns were also a factor in the 1969 founding of the Association for Jewish Studies, discussed below (Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994).

There is no absolute data as to the precise number of positions, programs, and departments in Jewish studies. However, in February 2009, the website of the Association of Jewish Studies listed over 230 endowed chairs in Jewish studies at 80 colleges and universities, including several in Israel, Canada, and Australia (AJS website: Resources: Directory of Endowed Chairs in Jewish Studies). Many other positions and programs in Jewish studies at North American institutions of higher learning and elsewhere are not dependent on outside funding.

Women and Academic Jewish Studies

The contemporaneous growth of the field of women's studies also helped establish the importance of studying marginalized social groups, including the Jews. The conflation of both concerns led to increased interest in the roles and experience of Jewish women. Prior to the 1970s most scholars and teachers of Jewish studies were men; many had moved into the academic world after completing rabbinic training. Jewish historical and textual studies were long seen as a male endeavor and women's lives and contributions were virtually ignored in histories and analyses of the Jewish experience.

A major change in Jewish studies in North America in the decades between 1975 and 2010 is the number of women who have entered the field and climbed the academic ladder from graduate students to professors in every area of Jewish studies scholarship. This sudden appearance of females in the world of academic Jewish scholarship is, of course, the result of the overwhelming changes in the domestic, religious, and communal roles of Jewish women in recent decades as a result of the social, educational, economic, and technological transformations that have characterized life since the end of World War II. The presence of women has transformed the content and methodological approaches of Jewish studies teaching and research.

At the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, most female and male academics involved in Jewish studies teaching and scholarship take for granted the importance of gender as an intellectual category of analysis and consider the constructions and consequences of gender in explicating the many facets of the Jewish experience (Davidman & Tenenbaum, 1994).

Association for Jewish Studies

The 1969 establishment of the Association for Jewish Studies (AJS) was a signal indication of the growth of academic Jewish studies in late twentieth century North America. Initially founded to facilitate communication among a relative handful of Jewish studies scholars, by 2009 the AJS had over 1,800 members, many of whom were PhDs teaching in an institution of higher education. A fifth of the membership consisted of graduate students, representing the future of Jewish studies in North America. The Women's Caucus of the AJS was founded in 1986; in 2009, more than 47% of AJS members were women as compared to just over 10% in the late 1970s (AJS website: Resources: 2007–2008 Membership Survey).

In 1985, the AJS became a constituent member of the American Council of Learned Societies. This acceptance, after several unsuccessful applications, served as final validation that the academic world recognized Jewish studies as "an important and well-populated field of study" with a "unique intellectual focus and interdisciplinary concerns" (ACLS, 1977); it legitimized the field in the larger scholarly arena and it was also significant for the organization's continued professionalization. With offices at the Center for Jewish History in New York City, the AJS convenes an annual conference, administers several book prizes, publishing subsidies, and travel grants, and publishes an academic journal, *The AJS Review*, and a twice-yearly magazine, *AJS Perspectives* (Loveland, 2008; AJS website).

In recent decades, several regional professional organizations have also been formed in North America and hold annual meetings. These include the Midwestern Jewish Studies Association, the Western Jewish Studies Association, and the Canadian Association for Jewish Studies.

Other Professional Organizations

In addition to the Association for Jewish Studies, there are several other professional organizations that focus on disciplines related to Jewish studies. These include the National Association for Professors of Hebrew (NAPH) which holds an international annual conference on Hebrew language, literature, and culture, and publishes the journals *Hebrew Studies*, *Hebrew Higher Education*, and an annual newsletter, *Iggeret* (NAPH website). The Association for Israel Studies (AIS), established in 1985, is an affiliated member organization of the Middle Eastern Studies Association of North America (MESA). AIS, an international society with offices

in Israel, meets annually and also sponsors sessions at the annual MESA meeting (AIS website). The American Academy for Jewish Research, founded in 1920, is a fellowship of senior scholars who are admitted through nomination and election. The AAJR sponsors sessions at the annual meeting of the AJS and awards the Baron Book Prize (AAJR website).

Jewish Studies Instruction

As Jewish studies expanded and programs and departments were established across the United States and Canada, several central questions were raised by established scholars. These included the appropriate qualifications for faculty members in Jewish studies at a time when few universities specifically trained PhDs in that area. They also addressed the necessary components of Jewish studies courses and curriculum for undergraduate and for graduate students. Similarly, Jewish studies faculty debated whether Hebrew language should be a requirement for an undergraduate degree and, if so, at what level of proficiency. Should the focus be on Modern or Classical Hebrew? A non-curricular issue, but one that was of great concern, was the extent to which university-based Jewish studies could or should be expected to address and strengthen the Jewish identity of students (Jick, 1970). Many of these topics continue to be of concern among practitioners in the field at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Lewis, 2006; Meyer, 2004).

The framework for academic Jewish studies varies from institution to institution. In some instances Jewish studies are taught in a separate designated department; in other cases, interdepartmental concentrations or programs in Jewish studies are organized and administered by committees of faculty members holding appointments in a variety of scholarly disciplines. The freestanding Jewish or Judaic studies program or department that awards undergraduate degrees in Jewish/ Judaic studies is increasingly common in the early twenty-first century. Often donor endowments support the hiring of a faculty director and in some cases subsidize additional faculty lines and the administrative costs of the program.

Many but not all Jewish studies programs require several years of Hebrew language and literature study for undergraduate majors and for graduate students. In some colleges and universities students must study Classical Hebrew language and texts; in others Modern Hebrew is required; some offer a choice. The result has been a proliferation of Hebrew language study across North American institutions of higher education to a degree that would certainly not have occurred without the linkage of Hebrew to Jewish studies. Several Jewish studies programs also offer instruction in Yiddish language and literature while those with graduate programs may teach Aramaic, Judaeo-Arabic, and Ladino, among other languages important for access to Jewish texts from various places and eras. Some programs and departments allow students to complete degree requirements by substituting Yiddish or another "Jewish" language for Hebrew.

The diversity of organizational and structural approaches, as well as academic emphases and requirements, remains a characteristic and somewhat problematic

aspect of academic Jewish studies. This lack of consensus on the essential components necessary for a degree in Jewish studies is likely to remain the *status quo* given the broad range of institutions of higher education that offer Jewish studies, the diverse audiences they are serving, and the varying qualifications and interests of faculty who identify themselves with the field. Over the decades a continuing interest in defining the parameters of Jewish studies is evident in the production of textbooks and anthologies of primary texts intended for college and university courses. Collections of course syllabi that offer models of how to approach a range of topics from introductory courses on Jewish history and civilization, Judaism as a religious tradition, Jewish thought, the Holocaust, Israel, women in Judaism, to Jewish Art, aspects of Jewish popular culture, and much more, have been published from time to time so that instructors can have a sense of how their colleagues tackle particular subject matters (Baskin & Tenenbaum, 1994; Garber, 2000). A course syllabus archive is a feature of the AJS website (Resources: AJS Directory of Course Syllabi) and some sessions at the AJS annual meeting address pedagogical issues.

Links with Jewish Students and Jewish Organizations

Most Jewish studies academics at the beginning of the twenty-first century would agree that the teaching of Jewish subject matter in secular universities cannot be considered "Jewish education" in any traditional sense. Their courses are not intended to persuade students of the truth of Jewish beliefs and values nor do they provide guidance on how to perform Jewish rituals. There is no assumption in any academic Jewish studies course at a secular institution that any of the enrolled students are Jews. As rabbi and educator Alfred Jospe once wrote, "the purpose of Jewish studies in the university is the study of Judaism and the Jewish people and not the Judaization of young Jews, the stimulation of their Jewish commitment, or the strengthening of their Jewish identification" (Jospe and Jospe, 2000, p. 78). Similarly, in a 1969 colloquium on academic Jewish studies at Brandeis University that led to the founding of the AJS, Irving Greenberg argued that if the field and the AJS wished to achieve academic respectability, they should not attain "too close an identification with the concerns of the Jewish community and the Jewish civilization." He went on to say that "The teacher cannot serve in good conscience as a spokesman for any one version of the entire tradition or for the Jewish community as it sees itself" (Greenberg, 1970).

Nevertheless, when Jewish studies programs of various kinds were undergoing significant expansion in the 1960s and 1970s, data indicates that a large proportion of undergraduates taking these courses were Jewish. In fact, the presence of Jewish studies courses on any given campus, and the enrollments in these courses, were strongly associated with the number of Jewish students (Ritterband & Wechsler, 1994). Despite efforts by faculty to dissociate themselves from modeling Jewishness, it is clear that many students were looking for personal affirmation and a strengthening of their Jewish identities when they enrolled in Jewish studies courses.

In 2009, this personal expectation is less frequent, although Jewish studies faculty report that they often teach students of Jewish background who have had no previous Jewish education (Cattan, 2004). Many Jewish studies courses and programs have been established at institutions that do not have significant numbers of Jews in the student body, including Roman Catholic institutions. Moreover, as a 2004 article in *The New York Times* reported, a large number of students enrolled in Jewish studies courses are not Jews. Of 250 students enrolled in Jewish studies classes at City College in New York City, including 26 majors and over 150 minors, some 95% were not Jewish (Freedman, 2004). The reasons for this phenomenon are complex but there is no doubt that in an era when Jewish demographics are shrinking, the diversity of students and faculty in Jewish studies will be an increasing reality that further distances academic Jewish studies from other forms of Jewish education.

Nevertheless, academic Jewish studies continue to be perceived as having special ties with the Jewish community, in part because of communal funding support. Most Jewish studies academics are aware of the need to maintain boundaries between their programs and Jewish campus and community advocacy and religious groups. However, they must frequently deal with inappropriate expectations. These can come from some Jewish students, who don't always understand the distinction between academic Jewish studies and their previous Jewish educations; from student leaders and adult professionals associated with campus Jewish organizations who believe Jewish studies should share their parochial missions; and from members of local Jewish communities who suppose that Jewish studies academics will support Jewish causes and concerns, especially when the community or individuals are providing financial resources.

The dilemmas caused by such misunderstandings can be difficult but most Jewish studies academics learn to negotiate working relationships with the different Jewish advocacy constituencies on their campuses and in their larger communities. Positive collaborations may include co-sponsoring events with academic content with Jewish student groups; working with community professionals to construct credit-earning internships in local Jewish schools and agencies for motivated students; and being available to speak to Jewish student and community groups about new developments in Jewish studies research. Many Jewish studies programs on college and university campuses schedule a range of interesting speakers and events that are open to the general public without charge. In these and other valuable ways, academic Jewish studies programs have provided a significant non-denominational source of education about Judaism and the Jewish experience for the larger community, both Jewish and Gentile.

It should be noted that some Jewish studies professors believe that an involved communal role is not only desirable but imperative for the Jewish studies academic. Hal M. Lewis of Spertus College suggests that "Scholarship has much to contribute to the Jewish world outside the portals of the academy as well as inside. The congregations, federations, and Jewish organizations in our communities ought to look upon Jewish studies professors as communal leaders – not merely programmatic opportunities . . . no Jewish community should deliberate its significant issues,

absent the leadership of credible scholars working side-by-side with influential rabbis and respected communal executives" (Lewis, 2006, pp. 131–132). Michael A. Meyer of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is among other scholars who have recently addressed this dilemma (Meyer, 2004).

Donors and Endowments

Since the 1980s, the establishment and expansion of Jewish/Judaic studies in a variety of North American institutions of higher learning has been made possible by the philanthropy of individual donors. The growth of personal wealth in this era, together with increasing communal concern about strengthening of Jewish identity at a formative period in young people's lives, has led to a proliferation of endowed faculty positions, programs, and Jewish/Judaic studies centers, both at public and private research universities offering graduate degrees and at institutions with a primary focus on undergraduate education. Data from the 2000–2001 National Jewish Population Survey indicating that as many as 41% of Jewish students in North America take at least one course in Jewish studies during their undergraduate or graduate careers has added further impetus to such initiatives (National Jewish Population Survey).

There is no doubt that the investment of philanthropic resources to fund Jewish studies has been a wonderful boon for North American colleges and universities and for the field itself. With the economic downturn at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, it is unclear if such philanthropy will continue to be forthcoming. The continuation of programs that are wholly or even significantly donor-dependent may be called into question in a time of declining portfolios and/or shrinking endowments.

Dependence on donor generosity has also raised challenging issues of academic objectivity versus parochial communal agendas; questions of undue emphasis placed on donors' particular interests and propensities; and concern over the increasing amounts of faculty time and effort devoted to fundraising activities. Moreover, additional donor-driven funding for lecture series, visiting scholars, student scholarships, etc., has often placed Jewish studies programs in a privileged and sometimes uncomfortable position in relation to other older and larger academic departments as well as to newer and still struggling academic entities, particularly those with a focus on gender and ethnic studies (Horowitz, 1998). In the best circumstances, Jewish studies directors have found ways to create intellectual and interdisciplinary partnerships with less well-endowed academic departments and programs in endeavors of mutual interest.

While many donors to Jewish studies programs at colleges and universities with significant Jewish student bodies have expressed particularistic concerns about educating Jewish students as a way to strengthen Jewish identity formation, others have chosen to endow Jewish studies positions and programs at institutions, both public

and private, that do not have a critical mass of Jewish students, including colleges and universities in parts of North America with small Jewish populations and at institutions linked to the Roman Catholic Church and various Protestant denominations. These donors, some of whom wished to support local institutions, argued that Jewish studies should be integrated into the academic curriculum of all institutions of higher education; they hoped, as well, that exposing diverse groups of students to academic study of aspects of the Jewish experience would increase understanding and tolerance in the larger North American society.

Communal funding of positions in Israel studies is one area which has proved particularly contentious when scholars who are supported by endowment funds voice views that do not accord with some local opinions about Israeli history, society, and politics. One case that generated significant publicity and played a significant role in a faculty member's decision to leave Jewish studies academics entirely took place at San Francisco State University in 1995 (Mahler, 1997).

International Links

Increasingly, the world of academic Jewish studies is a vibrant international community of students and scholars who meet at conferences and collaborate on scholarly projects across the world. Unlike North America and Israel, where the preponderance of Jewish studies academics are of Jewish background, this is not necessarily the case in Europe, where Jewish studies are attracting many serious students at the graduate level. Recent decades have seen the growth of academic Jewish studies and of Jewish studies professional organizations in Western Europe, in Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union, as well as in Latin America and in China. Among these are the European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS), founded in 1981, with offices in Oxford, UK, which encourages and supports the teaching of Jewish studies at the university level in Europe and furthers an understanding of the importance of Jewish culture and civilization and of the impact it has had on European cultures over many centuries. In Russia, SEFER, housed at the Moscow Center for the University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, is an umbrella organization for university Jewish studies in the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) and the Baltic States.

Many North American programs welcome academic colleagues from Europe, Israel, and elsewhere as speakers and visiting scholars. These international ties have been strengthened for many North American scholars by participation in the World Union of Jewish Studies (the Israeli professional society for academic Jewish studies centered at Hebrew University), which holds conferences every 4 years in Jerusalem.

Jewish studies programs and departments in North America have consistently encouraged their students, undergraduate and graduate, to study abroad for a summer, term, or academic year. Study at an Israeli university is one desirable

possibility, since this provides an optimal way to improve Hebrew language skills and to take detailed courses on a range of topics from archeology of various eras, Jewish art and architecture, anthropological approaches to Jewish practice and ritual, to the sociology and politics of Israel, that might not be available at the home institution. Study abroad with a focus on Jewish studies is also available at universities in numerous other countries, including the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Lithuania.

Since the Second Intifada of 2000, a significant number of North American colleges and universities have placed limitations on Israel study and research options for students and faculty due to security fears and insurance implications. In a number of cases, longstanding programs with various universities in Israel have been suspended. Some institutions permit students to petition to attend study-abroad programs in Israel on the condition that students and their parents sign waivers absolving the college or university from responsibility in case of injury or death. However, students who choose to study at Israeli universities under these circumstances generally lose financial aid while they are abroad and have to negotiate with their institutions for acceptance of credits earned in Israel. While the ease of arranging study in Israel that will be credited at the home institution varies from place to place, the details reported above are accurate for the University of Oregon in 2010.

Future Challenges

Changing demographics in the early twenty-first century indicate clearly that the absolute numbers of Jews in the larger population, including student populations, is in steady decline. The future of Jewish studies in North American universities will depend on the field's continuing appeal to a larger constituency. Most Jewish studies programs design their curriculum and courses to appeal to the broadest possible student audiences; in part this is accomplished by ensuring that their courses fulfill university "general education" and "diversity" requirements. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, more and more students who take courses and choose undergraduate majors and graduate training in Jewish studies are non-Jews who have come to the field out of intellectual curiosity, not out of interest in their own religious or ethnic heritage (Freedman, 2004). Similarly, many scholars and faculty members who work in Jewish studies in North America and abroad are not themselves Jews. This phenomenon is indicative of the increasing integration of Jewish studies into higher education as the field has moved beyond being an academic venture "about Jews, by Jews, and for Jews" (Freedman, 2004). While this "normalization" of Jewish studies within the university is desirable from a scholarly point of view, it also points to potential future conflicts between academic Jewish studies programs and the concerns of the Jewish communities and donors who have thus far been essential to the presence and success of Jewish studies at many North American institutions.

Research Desiderata

Very little systematic and comprehensive academic research on the phenomenon of Jewish studies in North America is currently underway. The last book-length study appeared in 1994 (Ritterband and Wechsler). Given the enormous changes in the field since that time, new scholarly work on academic Jewish studies units and their varying formation histories, academic structures, components, requirements, and funding sources, as well as the ethnic, religious, and gender identifications of participating faculty and students, is highly desirable. Similarly welcome would be systematic comparative research on relationships among academic Jewish studies entities and Jewish student, faculty, and lay communities (both on and off campus); analyses of the varying roles of donors; and studies of how Jewish studies programs, both endowed and supported institutionally, interact with academic administrators and other interdisciplinary academic units. Comparisons of North American Jewish studies and programs abroad in all of the areas mentioned above would also be extremely useful.

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Adult Jewish Learning: The Landscape

Lisa D. Grant and Diane Tickton Schuster

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, adult Jewish learning has become a normative aspect of the North American Jewish communal landscape. This was an evolutionary process that began in the 1980s, when Jewish communal attention perceived a connection between rising rates of intermarriage and low levels of Jewish literacy. As the "continuity crisis" became the clarion call of the Jewish community in the early1990s, communal leaders despaired that a lack of Jewish literacy would contribute to the deterioration of Jewish identity in future generations. The community's educational responses to this challenge were rich and diverse, resulting in the creation of a wide array of initiatives to support the development of Jewish day schools, summer camps, Israel trips, and other educational programs for children and adolescents.

Around the same time, various groups of adults recognized that they lacked adequate Jewish education to make informed decisions about Jewish life in adulthood. For some – particularly parents in Conservative and Reform households whose children participated in the new initiatives – there was the uncomfortable discovery that they themselves were ill equipped to support their children's learning or to integrate the lessons of Jewish education into family life. For others – such as women who had been deprived of Jewish education and individuals exploring midlife spiritual concerns – there was a hunger for learning that would enrich personal meaning making. By the early 2000s, younger generations of college-educated, "postmodern" Jews entered adulthood, asking questions about Jewish identity, seeking new types of Jewish social networks, and responding to new modalities of access for relevant Jewish learning experiences.

Throughout these years, Jewish educational leaders recognized the potential benefits of reaching more learners about more topics in more locations using a greater range of instructional strategies. As a result, across North America a variety of serious and substantive adult Jewish learning programs were created. Highly differentiated from one another in terms of target audiences, content, rigor, venue, length, and mode of delivery, these programs were offered by synagogues,

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federations, Jewish community centers, retreat centers, independent organizations, and consortia.

In 2005, we described the evolution of the field of adult Jewish learning in a retrospective review of the research literature, situating the blossoming of adult Jewish learning in the historical and social contexts of the late twentieth century (Schuster & Grant, 2005). In this chapter, we assess how social forces have led to new developments, updating our understanding of the changes and priorities that are shaping the vision and decisions of planners and policy makers today. Our focus is primarily on programs and experiences of liberal Jews in adult Jewish learning. While Jewish study has been a consistent and integral component of Orthodox Jewish life, Jewish learning in the Orthodox sector has grown significantly as well in recent years, particularly, though not exclusively, among women. However, the engagement in Jewish learning among the liberal strands of American Judaism follows a more cyclical pattern (Sarna, 2005). For most of the twentieth century, adult study was a low priority on the 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 1980s and increasing at a dramatic rate after the "wake-up" call of the 1990 National Jewish Population Study, adult Jewish learning emerged at the center of the religious and communal agenda for the revitalization of contemporary American Jewry. Many Jewish communal leaders believed that increasing Jewish literacy and learning would lead to more meaningful involvement in Jewish practices, philanthropy, and communal life. After the economic downturn that began in 2008 and has seriously impacted American Jewish community, it will be interesting to see whether and how this commitment to adult learning remains. Indeed, there were signs even before the financial crisis that adult Jewish learning had waned as a communal priority.

In the earlier paper, we also noted that over the years, very little communal conversation had taken place at the national level 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 (Grant, Schuster, Woocher, & Cohen, 2004). 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.

With the maturation of the field and a more financially constrained world, it now appears that adult educators are thinking more strategically about whom to serve, how to serve them, and to what purpose. Today, program providers are beginning to articulate a much more purposeful link between adult Jewish learning, leadership development, and Jewish community building. Alongside these developments, we note the emergence of an increasingly differentiated structure for adult Jewish learning programming that responds to the diverse motivations and needs of the adults who participate in such activities.

The landscape we depict is a North American one. However, adult Jewish learning is not exclusively a North American phenomenon. Indeed, there are flourishing initiatives across Western and Eastern Europe, in Israel, and across the Jewish world,

some of which are described elsewhere in this handbook. In addition, some of the programs we mention, such as the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School, are international in scope. Others, such as Limmud New York and the Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning, were inspired in whole or in part by successful initiatives in the UK and Israel.

Using Schwab's four commonplaces as an organizing frame, we describe who today's adult Jewish learners are, the venues in which they learn, the content of their learning, and the characteristics of their teachers. Accordingly, we begin with a description of the increasingly diverse constituencies who now participate in adult Jewish learning activities and consider how various contemporary social and historical factors have affected these groups' learning needs and responses. Next we offer a new conceptual framework for situating the "where, when, and what" of different types of learners and the learning programs that attract them. Then follows a discussion of the evolving roles of adult educators and implications for professional development. Finally, we conclude with suggestions for future research.

The data for this chapter are drawn from a number of qualitative and quantitative studies about North American Jewish adults and their learning experiences. In addition, we supplement our analysis with findings from over a dozen interviews conducted in 2008 about the changing field of adult Jewish learning in the United States. Our interviewees included a geographically diverse group of educational program directors at independent institutions and retreat centers, representatives from various movement and nationally based learning programs, and academics and lay leaders involved in Jewish community programming.[1]

Who Are the Learners?

Over the past 25 years, the expansion of the field of adult Jewish learning has resulted in the growth and diversification of adult learning populations throughout the Jewish community, with the greatest changes occurring in the more liberal sectors. In the 1950s–1970s, learners outside the Orthodox world typically were highly homogeneous midlife adults, either synagogue-going women who sought out daytime enrichment classes taught by male rabbis or post-retirement couples who

[1] Adam Berman, Executive Director, The Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center; Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber, Director of Adult Learning, Union for Reform Judaism; Dr. Sherry Israel, Board Chair, National Havurah Institute; Dr. Betsy Dolgin Katz, North American Director (retired), Florence Melton Adult Mini-School; Lisa Kogen, Director of Education, Women's League for Conservative Judaism; Rabbi Alvin Mars, Director (retired), Mandel Center for Jewish Education, Jewish Community Centers Association; Rabbi Leon Morris, Director, Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning; Rabbi Jeremy Morrison, Director, Riverway Project, Temple Israel, Boston; Rabbi Jay Moses, Director, Wexner Heritage Program; Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, Director, Jewish Outreach Institute; Professor Jeffrey Schein, Siegal College of Jewish Studies and former Education Director, Jewish Reconstructionist Federation; Daniel Sieradski, Director of Digital Media, Jewish Telegraphic Agency; Dr. David Starr, Vice President for Community Education and Dean, Me'ah, Hebrew College.

attended public lectures by high-profile speakers. Today, however, diverse new constituencies of learners have emerged. Distinctive in their motivations and learning needs, these newcomers include

- Young adults, age 21–35, many of whom have participated in university-level Jewish studies classes, Israel trips, and Jewish social networking events. This group is marrying later than their parents and having children later and tend to seek informal, personal, and "open source" Jewish experiences (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2005, Greenberg, 2006) that are not institutionally bound.
- Parents of preschoolers who, though themselves "older" and accomplished in professional roles, feel unprepared to make Jewish educational or lifestyle choices for their families. Parker (2006) reports that Jewish parents are especially receptive to educational programs that help them "take home" Jewish practices and values.
- Parents of school-age children who feel ill-prepared to support their children's learning due to their own inadequate or far-distant Jewish education. Katz and Parker (2008) note that as some Jewish parents "realize that Jewish learning is not just for kids," family educators have broadened and diversified family programming, recognizing that adult-level Jewish learning is an important (and sometimes distinct) component.
- Intermarried Jews and their non-Jewish spouses who have chosen to raise their children as Jews. Olitzky and Golin (2008) describe a variety of "outreach" programs that provide intermarried adults with education that can help them to feel less remote from the established Jewish community and to enrich their Jewish home life.
- Grandparents who feel motivated to function as "interpreters" and "autobiographers" for the next generation and thus benefit from educational programs that help them to explain and model the Jewish legacy they hope will be carried into the future (Sonnheim, 2004; Olitzky and Golin, 2006).
- Spiritual seekers who have turned or returned to Judaism at times of life transition or personal soul searching. Amann (2007) and Thal (2008) describe the experiences of Jewish adults who have engaged in new meaning making, showing how they used diverse adult-educational resources in their quest for spiritual integration.
- Advanced learners. Many Jewish adults who become involved in ongoing study continually strive to expand their knowledge base (Grant et al., 2004). As these adults become Jewishly knowledgeable, they pursue alumni classes offered by the Melton Mini-Schools and Boston's Me'ah initiative, courses at the Hartman Institute and other adult education centers in Israel, and other intensive learning opportunities whether in classrooms or via the Internet.
- Independent and "do-it-yourself" learners who cultivate learning opportunities outside of "traditional" communal organizations, preferring to find and develop their own study resources and learning partnerships. Such learners gravitate to the rapidly multiplying online Jewish learning opportunities, as well as the "emergent

spiritual communities" that encourage egalitarian and democratic participation in the teaching-learning process.
- Jewish professionals who strive to serve the Jewish community by becoming more effective as Jewish adult educators. These include Jewish community center program directors, camp senior staff, Federation community education coordinators, interfaith program organizers, book group conveners, and others who find themselves in situations in which they need to function as adult educators but lack frameworks for planning programs responsive to their learners' needs. In addition, there are advanced learners who aspire to share their knowledge with others, but are unprepared to move from lay to paraprofessional teaching roles (Schuster, 2003b).

Adult Jewish Learners in Context

To put the emergence of new populations of adult Jewish learners in perspective, it is useful to consider several phenomena that have shaped the social and historical contexts of contemporary adult Jewish education. First, since the "wake-up call" of the 1990 National Jewish Population Study, adult Jewish learning has become a central part of the religious and communal agenda for the revitalization of contemporary American Jewish life. Consistent with views expressed by Jewish communal spokespersons such as Barry Shrage (1996), executive director of the Council of Jewish Philanthropies in Boston, and Rabbi Eric Yoffie (1997), president of the Union for Reform Judaism, today there is widespread belief among community leaders that Jewish literacy and learning leads to more meaningful involvement in Jewish practices, philanthropy, and communal participation.

Then, too, with the aging of the Baby Boomer population (and the first wave of Gen Xers who were born in the late 1960s), increasing numbers of Jewish adults are reaching midlife and older adulthood and thus confronting life-stage-related questions – about personal meaning, health, mortality, and legacy – that compel many to look to Jewish spiritual and intellectual sources and resources for guidance and support (Roof, 1993; Schuster, 2003a). As these adults move into their post-parenting and retirement years, they have increased discretionary time to pursue Jewish learning that will enhance personal well-being and enrich intergenerational family life. Moreover, given longer life spans, the post-60 population has many more years in which to explore various Jewish learning modalities. The continuing popularity of Jewish retreat centers, travel programs with Jewish themes, programs for Jewish grandparents, and community-based lifelong learning institutes points to a trend in contemporary Jewish education that is unlikely to diminish in the decades ahead.

The changing role of Israel in American life is a further influence on the design and direction of adult Jewish learning initiatives. For the thousands of young adults who have participated in Birthright Israel trips to Israel, the opportunity to continue dialogue about their relationship to Israel and Judaism is of immediate interest; as part of the "emerging adult" population, these 20–30-year-olds are part of a cohort that questions – and seeks education about – Mideast politics and Jewish identity

with post-modern sensibilities quite distinct from earlier generations (Kelner, 2002; Saxe & Chazan, 2008). Education about Israel may be especially important for a generation of midlife Jewish adults who grew up with no memory of the struggle for the formation of the State; the majority of this group have little firsthand contact with the country, its people, or the concept of Klal Yisrael, and thus may benefit from educational opportunities to learn about the relevance of Israel and its survival to the future of the Jewish people.

A changing social climate over the past several decades has resulted in a Jewish communal *zeitgeist* dominated by individualism, self-determination, and a resistance to authority structures. Cohen and Eisen (2000) reported that increasing numbers of Jewish adults have turned "inward" and look to "the sovereign self" rather than normative Jewish tradition for determining how they regard Judaism, its practice and meaning. Correspondingly, Horowitz (2000) found that over the life cycle many contemporary Jewish adults move in and out of their attachment to Jewish life and observance, with the consequence that Jewish identity frequently is perceived as "voluntary" and considered a choice among diverse alternatives. Given the fluidity of Jewish identity formation and the privileging of independent decision making about Judaism and Jewish life, many Jewish adults are "in flux" and can benefit from educational experiences that can help them to articulate their beliefs and make informed choices. Adult Jewish learning programs that encourage learners to gain a broad understanding of Jewish texts, history, philosophy, law, and values help such individuals to make responsible and personally meaningful decisions about their Jewish lives today and in the future.

Finally, given the rapid dissemination and exchange of ideas afforded by the "information age," there are increasingly diverse numbers of Jewish adults who have access to ever-expanding sources of knowledge about all aspects of Judaism. As more and more adults turn to electronic platforms for education and discourse, the potential for reaching wider constituencies of Jewish learners grows exponentially. At the same time, with the increased self-authorship afforded by Web 2.0 and other media, the risks associated with ungrounded, do-it-yourself Jewish adult education are ever present. Moreover, given the pace of modern life, many adults find that their "extracurricular" learning must be fit into busy schedules that are already burdened and over-extended with work- and family-life demands. Accordingly, even serious adult Jewish learners find themselves hard-pressed to commit to studying Judaism on a regular basis. Although some learners take on the obligation to meet regularly for study programs, the majority of Jewish adults prefer short-term, time-limited learning activities.

Adult Jewish Learning Programs: Changing Communal Responses

When the late twentieth century renaissance of adult Jewish learning first began, the stated purpose was to enhance Jewish literacy and enrich Jewish identity in the North American Jewish community. This commitment to fostering Jewish literacy was

seen in programs such as the Florence Melton Adult Jewish Mini-School, Hebrew College's 2-year Me'ah program, the Union for Reform Judaism's (URJ) Kallah (an annual 5-day adult study retreat), the Wexner Heritage Program (a 2-year leadership development program), and independent institutes (e.g., The Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning in New York; Lehrhaus Judaica in the San Francisco Bay Area; and Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning in Toronto).

Around the time that these programs were established, a large number of North American synagogues embarked on a process of strategic reflection about the place of learning in their overall vision and mission (Aron, 2000; Dashefsky, Grant, Miller, & Koteen, 2002; Herring, 2003; Koteen, 2005). Through these deliberative change processes, synagogues created or expanded their adult Jewish learning repertoires, featuring a broad array of classes, workshops, book groups, film series, retreat opportunities, and other modalities designed to attract new and diverse audiences. A telling byproduct of these "cafeteria style" offerings was the opportunity they afforded Jewish adults who had never been part of any organized Jewish learning experience to meet like-minded peers and develop new social networks.

Despite the rapid growth of adult Jewish learning programs, it also became clear during the past decade that only a relatively small percentage of the North American Jewish community was engaged in any kind of systematic adult Jewish learning. Moreover, even when there was interest, the participants tended to be the same people over and over again. Indeed, the 2000–2001 National Jewish Population study revealed that less than one-quarter of Jewish adults reported attending a Jewish education class or other adult Jewish learning program in the year prior to the survey. Similarly, in a national survey of adult Jewish learning patterns of participation and interests, Cohen and Davidson (2001) found that only 22% of respondents indicated they had attended a lecture on a Jewish theme in the past year, while an even smaller number (16%) indicated they had taken a class on a Jewish topic in the same time period.

Studies of Jewish adults engaged in learning revealed that the most dedicated learners typically were part of the "committed core" in the organized Jewish community. This was true both of those who enrolled in long-term programs such as the Me'ah and the Melton Mini-School, as well as those who participated in retreat settings that are more likely to combine Jewish learning with culture, worship, and other Jewish experiences (Cohen & Veinstein, 2008; Grant & Schuster, 2006; Grant et al., 2004). Compared to the general Jewish community, these learners were more motivated to learn new skills, to become more knowledgeable Jews, to have an intellectual experience, and to increase their sense of connection to the Jewish community. They were also more interested in the study of sacred texts, Jewish history, theology, and other topics that are traditionally associated with Jewish study.

To attract new learners, many community-based program providers began by offering Jewish literacy programs. Over time, however, they found it important to diversify offerings and to become more learner-centered in their planning. Recognizing that relatively few learners are attracted to traditional text study or literacy-based programs, they began to identify other, potentially "serious" learners who are motivated to learn because they want to feel informed as lay leaders

in Jewish organizations or because they want to strengthen their leadership skills. While not interested in conventional literacy programs per se, these learners often seek ways to engage in and enrich their Jewish communal lives through study.

Indeed, in the past decade, more and more program providers have explicitly linked adult Jewish learning, the life experience of the learner, and the dynamic relationship that exists (or could exist) between the learner and his or her Jewish community. Our interviews with adult Jewish learning leaders revealed a significant shift in attitude toward a more differentiated and holistic understanding of the scope and potential of adult learning in Jewish life *writ large*. Our informants' responses reflected their insight into the realities of contemporary Jewish life – a milieu where Jewish identity is voluntary and self-constructed – and their recognition of the need to offer customized programs that can meet individualized needs. They pointed out the limitations of the old model of "casting a broad net" to see how many learners could be "captured," as compared to designing programs for specific learners with specific interests and needs.

The experience of moving from a "one size fits all" approach to "niche marketing" required these educational leaders to rethink how they defined adult Jewish learning and the nature of the populations they endeavored to serve. As Daniel Sieradski, Director of Digital Media for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, commented, "Everyone has different interests. Do you want to reach the Hasidic *ba'al teshuvas* – or the Kahanist fundamentalists – or the organic hippie eco-Jews? You can program for each of those segments."

Moreover, as Dr. Betsy Dolgin Katz, who served as the North American Director of the Melton Mini-Schools from 1989 to 2008, pointed out, this new direction was reinforced by funding decisions by major Jewish foundations. For example, in recent years the Steinhardt Foundation has supported adult-education programs specifically for parents of preschoolers, and the Wexner Heritage Foundation has invested significantly in intensive Jewish literacy seminars for communal leaders under age 45. In talking about emerging trends in the field, Katz opined that "separate from the federation and its institutions, and separate from the synagogues" individual funders and foundations may shape the future of adult learning by prioritizing the kinds of programs to be offered and populations to be served.

Our informants spoke of the importance of program planning and design that provides diverse entry points and anticipates the variegated learning modalities that will serve the wide array of adults who are (or could be) engaged in adult Jewish learning activities. Their insights helped to clarify that today there are at least four broad categories of adult learners, characterized by distinctive needs, expectations, and orientations, who need to be served by the contemporary North American Jewish community. These are (1) learners on the periphery of Jewish communal life, for whom learning is primarily about helping them to engage in Jewish life; (2) learners in the "committed core," for whom learning serves to enrich their Jewish life experience; (3) Jewish lay leaders who need to become more Jewishly informed; and (4) Jewish educators and rabbis who seek to become more effective teachers of adults. Table 1 presents a conceptual framing of the types of programs and methodologies that seem to attract these different groups.

Table 1 Jewish identity and Jewish community building through adult Jewish learning: A sampling of programs and methodologies placed in a contextual framework

A. Engagement	B. Enrichment		C. Leadership development	D. Cultivation of adult educators
	B-1. Literacy focused	*B-2. Experiential*		
Mothers Circle	Melton Mini-School	Jewish calendar	Wexner Heritage	Melton and Me'ah's faculty development programs
(Jewish Outreach Institute)	Me'ah	Jewish life cycle	Hadassah Leadership Institute	
	Skirball	Jewish cooking		
PEP (Melton)			UJC Limudim	Educators' track at URJ Adult Study Retreat
Journeys (JCC) Torah yoga	Women's league institutes Torah and Talmud study	Adamah (Jewish environmental fellowship program (Isabella Freedman)	Local federation programs for community leaders	National Havurah Institute
Big name speakers/ scholars-in-residence	Hebrew	Choir practice	Davening Leadership Training Institute (Isabella Freedman)	Temple Israel Lifelong Learning Institute (TILLI)
	Community-wide Days of Learning	Cantillation classes		
Cultural programs (film festivals, book festivals, concerts, etc.)	Women's League study materials	Shabbatonim		Synagogue-based adult educator training programs
		Torah yoga	Service leading workshops	

Table 1 (continued)

A. Engagement	B. Enrichment		C. Leadership development	D. Cultivation of adult educators
	E-learning (URJ Ten Minutes of Torah, Myjewishlearning.com, Maqom.com)	Bibliodrama Purim shpiels		
	The Women's Torah commentary study guide Synagogue classes			
	B-3. Hybrid Adult bat mitzvah Israel trips Field trips (e.g., Ellis Island) National Havurah Institute North American Jewish Choral Festival Limmud New York Skirball's Artists' Beit Midrash Advanced Torah Academy (Temple Chai) Rosh Chodesh groups			

To clarify the layout of Table 1, note that across the top of the table we denote the types of the learning experiences that appeal to adults who are at different levels of involvement in Jewish life. Column A lists learning activities that focus on *engaging* individuals, such as programs that are targeted at particular developmental needs (e.g., Melton's Parent Education Program); cultural events; and scholar-in-residence programs that feature well-known speakers.

Engagement programs typically appeal to both more minimally involved Jewish adults *and* also to highly affiliated individuals. However, more Jewishly involved individuals are more likely to go beyond activities at the engagement level and pursue the kinds of "enrichment" activities listed in Column B. Within this latter category, we differentiate three types of activities that attract adults who are seeking to deepen their connection to Judaism through learning: literacy-focused programs such as Melton, Me'ah, and text-based study groups (Column B-1); experiential education programs that are designed to enrich some aspect of Jewish living, such as holiday observance, synagogue skills, and home practices (Column B-2); and "hybrid" programs that blend the experiential with the intellectual (Column B-3).[2]

Column C presents Jewish communal initiatives that specifically link Jewish learning with the cultivation of lay leaders. In some cases, such programs focus on Jewish learning to promote deeper Jewish knowledge and commitments among board and committee members of Jewish communal organizations; in other cases, they are geared toward developing skills in leading worship or other aspects of ritual life.

Column D lists programs that link learning and educational leadership development; such activities are designed to enhance the professional and avocational development of adult Jewish educators.

Table 1 identifies a representative sample of the types of programs and modalities that fit within the different categories. Although incomplete (to date, there is no national data base that gathers or updates information about extant adult Jewish learning programs), what seems apparent even with this partial list is that the scope and range of the literacy-based *enrichment* programs listed in Column B are more robust than those listed in the other columns. This trend was articulated by many of our interviewees who described their own recent decisions to expand engagement and experiential programs in order to attract more learners and be more responsive to different learners' interests and needs.

The New Adult Jewish Learning Marketplace

Table 1 provides a graphic representation of the changing "marketplace" of adult Jewish learning and has implications for future planning and policy across the

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[2]Hybrid program opportunities often occur through trips and programs in retreat settings. In addition, "intentional communities" such as independent minyanim and certain synagogue-based groups (e.g., adult *b'nei mitzvah* cohorts and Rosh Chodesh groups) may also fit within this category of programs that integrate serious Jewish learning with Jewish living and celebration.

contemporary North American Jewish community. Insights from our interviewees – all individuals involved in thriving national and local adult Jewish learning initiatives – provided a more nuanced explanation of the emergent trends and needs identified in the table.

Engagement Programs: Reaching Jews on the Periphery

Engaging the unengaged in Jewish learning is certainly no easy task. Our informants indicated that, even when targeted to specific audiences such as parents of young children or adults in their 20s and 30s, even the most basic text study and other literacy-type programs have limited appeal. Indeed, these anecdotal reports are borne out by the research. The relatively few studies of adult Jewish learning patterns consistently show a strong relationship between levels of affiliation and participation rates in adult Jewish learning (Chertok, Saxe, & Silvera-Sasson, 2005; Cohen & Davidson, 2001; Cohen, 2008; Grant & Schuster, 2006; Grant et al., 2004; NJPS, 2000/2001). The richer and more in-depth the program, the more likely the participant is to be highly engaged in Jewish communal life.

Reaching the unengaged is further complicated by the reality that, faced with the multiple "mental demands of modern life" (Kegan, 1998), Jewish adults *selectively* participate in Jewish activities that not only fit into their busy schedules but also are responsive to their individualized learning needs. Rabbi Kerry Olitzky of the Jewish Outreach Institute observed that today's adults seek experiences that are "customized," perceiving the process as similar to contracting with a personal trainer at the gym: "People's time is much more precious... What I see happening is what I would call the personal trainer modality. [People] want the convenience of learning at their own schedule when they want."

Similarly, the URJ's Rabbi Joan Glazer Farber noted that people are interested in finding points of intersection between Judaism and the rest of their lives:

> People are concerned more with how things touch their lives—spirituality, understanding of God; how and why do I connect with Israel? Yes, the Holocaust happened, we need Israel, but what does it mean to me? Not that our learners are self-centered. It's more that, if they are going to take the time to enter a conversation, it has to have an impact.

Farber and others commented that people are seeking meaning and relevance through a variety of ways other than Jewish learning programs and experiences. Enticing or encouraging people to discover the possibility that Judaism may enrich their lives requires offering alternate topics and venues for Jewish learning.

Rabbi Alvin Mars, recently retired Director of the Mandel Center for Jewish Education of the Jewish Community Centers (JCC) Association, noted that his primary constituency – adults who look to JCCs for connection to Jewish communal life – are not people who would sign up for 2-year programs: "We have people who walk through the place; if they're lucky, they'll read a Jewish sign that might turn them on to ask questions." Hoping to "elevate all JCC experiences," Mars developed a 12-session engagement program called Journeys that has "circular entry with no one place to begin or end." Built around highly engaging themes (e.g., wine tasting,

Jewish humor, Israel arts), Journeys sessions are often structured to attract particular age cohorts and emphasize experiential learning. Indeed, Mars indicated that experiential learning is a crucial strategy for successfully engaging adults in Jewish education.

Professor Jeffrey Schein of Siegal College pointed to "public space" Judaism as another approach to make Jewish learning more accessible and inviting, as well as more connected to other aspects of people's daily lives. The URJ's Farber provided some specific examples of this type of program:

> We need to take learning out of the classroom, into the marketplace. We should be holding Jewish book groups at Starbucks, offering Jewish cooking classes at Whole Foods. If there are synagogue groups making chemo caps, they can be studying healing texts at the same time.

The public spaces where this type of Jewish engagement can take place are both real and virtual. The electronic marketplace has particular appeal for young adults and other geographically mobile Jewish populations. Jewish groups on Facebook.com, as well as venue- and community-specific online information resources such as OyBay.com and Jewandthecarrot.com, are all making Jewish learning opportunities more accessible to otherwise hard-to-reach audiences.

Several of those interviewed noted that parent education is another underdeveloped area for potential growth. In many communities, there are Jewish learning programs that target parents of preschool-aged children. Likewise, family education programming is a standard feature of most synagogues today. However, these programs rarely take up issues of Jewish parenting. Outreach programs such as Shalom Baby[3] and Jewish early-childhood education programs have had some success in building social networks for new Jewish parents (Kelner, 2007; Rosen, 2006) but have yet to link their community-building outcomes to education about parenting or Jewish family life. Likewise, Olitzsky reported that the Jewish Outreach Institute has had some success with developing programs for both parents and grandparents of children in interfaith families, but he, too, mentioned that the press of busy lives often constrains participation. As Schein observed, "I'm not sure that it's reasonable to expect people in the prime of their parenting years to participate in a lot of adult learning. [But we can do more to] offer it at the best time and to make it relevant to parenting."

Engagement experiences have the potential to spark interest in deeper and more consistent learning. Accordingly, some programs are now offering a range of learning activities to encourage participants to "start small" and add on later. For example, since 2001, The Riverway Project has used study and ritual experiences to "connect adults in their 20s and 30s to each other, to Judaism and to Temple Israel

[3] Shalom Baby is a program adopted by many Jewish federations designed to welcome and integrate new parents into the Jewish community. It begins with gift baskets but often extends to include a wide range of programs and services designed to support and connect new parents to the Jewish community. For examples, see http://www.jewishphilly.org/page.aspx?id=71620, http://www.ujannj.org/page.aspx?ID=140109, http://boulderjcc.org/index.php?id=19

of Boston."[4] Riverway events first engage unaffiliated Jews by encouraging them to bring to Torah study the kind of critical thinking they acquired as college students. As Riverway's director, Rabbi Jeremy Morrison, explained, as the learners become more involved, there are "stratified learning opportunities":

> Riverway begins with a nice easy approach of "Torah and Tonics" which stresses a critical approach to text. Then we have something called "Mining for Meaning," which takes text study to a more intensive level but is also pragmatic because we study text and history and ritual. In that group, we ask how ritual comes to be around a certain holiday and what the meaning of the holiday is based on text from a critical historical perspective. This past year we launched a 2-year Me'ah course just for people in their twenties and thirties. We wouldn't have had people to [commit to] that more intensive program if they hadn't first gone through the other steps.

Another model of stratified adult Jewish learning has recently emerged on Long Island, where the UJA-Federation of New York's J Learn program has diversified its offerings to target distinct niche markets based on geographic location and learner interests and needs. Originally conceptualized as a Jewish literacy initiative offering 2-year Melton Mini-School and Me'ah courses in various sites across Long Island, J Learn has evolved to a more nuanced set of learning opportunities designed both for engagement and enrichment of audiences, including short-term classes, leadership-development programs, seminars for clergy, and cross-community study events (Grant & Schuster, 2008).

Enrichment Programs for the Committed Core

Table 1 shows three different types of enrichment learning experiences that seem to appeal mostly to groups of learners who are seeking ways to deepen and strengthen their engagement in Jewish life. Our informants indicated that these types of programs have the most potential for fruitful growth in Jewish learning. As Rabbi Jay Moses, Director of the Wexner Heritage Program, remarked, "Generally, the core is getting more energized, more interested, more involved. . . while the fringes are drifting farther and father away." However, even among the core of actively affiliated Jews, the pool of learners who seem to be attracted to formal classroom-based learning is limited. This subgroup consists of a small but significant cadre of advanced Jewish learners who are drawn to the intellectual dimensions of Jewish study. This is the audience for whom most literacy-based classes, community-wide Days of Learning, electronic learning opportunities, and ongoing Torah and Talmud study groups seem to be designed. Some of these learners are already active as lay leaders in their congregations and elsewhere in the Jewish community; others become active as a result of or concurrent with their engagement with Jewish study. Others still are simply *lishma* learners who find personal meaning in serious engagement with Jewish texts.

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[4] http://www.riverwayproject.org/about_us/index.php

Echoing Franz Rosenzweig's (1955) admonition that at all levels of participation in the Jewish community people feel a degree of alienation, many adults still need support for finding their way "from the periphery back to the center; from the outside in." Two of our interviewees noted that even the most involved learners may feel that they, too, are on the periphery. As Professor Schein said, "We have to help people to see that we're *all* moving from the 'periphery to the center' and that you don't have to sacrifice who you are to learn." And the Skirball Center's Rabbi Leon Morris explained that most of today's adult learners come to Jewish education from their own particular vantage point:

> Today there are more students who have their area of interest and it's this little niche of a larger Jewish portrait that they are focused on: history, art, philosophy, literature, etc. Given that we are all on the periphery anyway, it doesn't really matter that one's entree into Jewish studies is located in a specific area of interest. In the end, through that specific area they will come to encounter many other topics and vital areas worthy of study.

An exponentially expanding domain for literacy-based learning is the worldwide web, extending from basic learning sites such as www.myjewishlearing.com and www.Jewishvirtuallibrary.com, to online opportunities for formal and informal text study, to the endless universe of the blogosphere. The latter ranges from straightforward dissemination of information to edgier approaches (such as David Plotz's "The Complete Blogging the Bible," so far at http://www.slate.com/id/2150150) that combine Jewish study with discussions of culture, politics, and social activism. According to JTA's Sieradski, the potential impact of new electronic technology for Jewish adult education is unlimited. He cited a few examples in the following remark:

> You have the National Havurah Committee that has a group writing new Torah commentaries online. You have Wikipedia articles for Jewish content. Now there is a service called Wikibooks: people are typing the entire Mishna and the entire Tanakh in the original Hebrew and Aramaic into Wikipedia. Anyone can annotate, comment, and hyperlink this text. Likewise JPS is doing a project called "the Tag Tanach," where they're taking the entire Tanakh and putting it online and people can keyword and tag different parshiot.

Sieradski particularly noted that e-learning cuts across all age and social groups, affording diverse learners with differing needs and capabilities opportunities to participate in meaningful study:

> There are different people whose needs are suited by different things. Some people may enjoy myjewishlearning.com or interfaithfamily.com or g-dcast.com. You can use the Web to learn to *layn* your bar mitzvah portion or learn Gemara online. You can learn to read Hebrew online or your basic Bible lessons or more advanced halachic reasoning. It's all up to you.

Further opportunities for expanding adult learning options for adults within the committed core may take place through experiential programming that links Jewish experience with Jewish learning and more deliberately contributes to a sense of Jewish community. While some who are drawn to these types of activities may also be interested in more intellectual pursuits of text study and formal classes, others are looking for more holistic education where formal learning is secondary to a

firsthand experience of Jewish community, spiritual growth, and/or Jewish culture. These may include one-off events such as the Women's League "Vashti's Banquet" (a day-long event that combined spa treatments, belly dancing, Persian cuisine and music, and study of midrashim on the Book of Esther), to ongoing programs such as adult Bat Mitzvah. Rosh Chodesh groups and programs that focus on spirituality and prayer, music, holiday and life cycle observance, and/or other aspects of Jewish living fit within this type of blend of learning and living. Within this domain are retreat programs, such as Limmud NY, the National Havurah Institute, Camp Isabella Freedman, and the URJ's Adult Study Retreat, that combine Jewish learning, cultural programming, worship, and celebration. Also included here is a range of niche programs for individuals who want to link particular interests with Jewish life such as Jewish environmentalism, Jewish choral festivals, spirituality institutes, and gourmet Jewish cooking classes.

Programs that Cultivate Jewish Leaders Through Learning

Jewish communal leadership development is another dimension of adult Jewish education. As noted above, some people become lay leaders as a result of their participation in serious literacy-based text study; others begin as leaders and then may seek out even deeper learning opportunities; and yet others are encouraged to study by virtue of their roles as leaders in the Jewish world. Regardless of how these leaders arrive at the study table, they are increasingly being offered opportunities to enrich their Jewish knowledge base and to become Jewishly informed as communal decision makers. As Wexner Heritage's Rabbi Moses noted, "There is a normalization of the idea that a serious Jewish learning experience is helpful if you want to be taken seriously as a leader in the Jewish community. . . there is an increased cachet associated with it."

The Wexner Heritage program is the pioneer among this type of initiative, but we now see other leadership development programs emerging through federations, Hadassah, synagogues, and retreat centers. Some of these programs are designed to help Jewish lay leaders become more Jewishly knowledgeable; others focus on specific skill development such as courses that teach people how to lead worship, chant Torah, or speak Hebrew. According to Adam Berman, executive director of the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center that houses a number of specialized adult Jewish learning activities, participants in these programs take seriously the opportunity to receive certificates that "formally" acknowledge that they have studied systematically to acquire a particular skill set or to take on leadership roles. Moreover, Berman said learners will commit to long-term study – indeed are "hungry for longer commitment" – if it means they will "get something for it. . . something that can actually be put on their resume."

Leadership development appears to be another domain ripe for innovation and program expansion in adult Jewish learning. Presently, little has been published that documents the process or impact of existing programs. Moses commented that beyond the immediate value of leadership development, participants in the Wexner

Heritage program especially treasure the opportunity to be with peers who share common values about service to the Jewish community. The social context of the learning community has been described heretofore (Grant et al., 2004), but the need for a more nuanced analysis of how learning affects leadership development per se is certainly pressing.

Developing Adult Educators

To date, the literature on adult Jewish learning has focused primarily on the experience of the learner, with some attention paid to the setting of adult Jewish education programs. Relatively little research has been conducted about the experience of the teacher or about the preparation and professional development of Jewish educators who work with adults (Grant et al., 2004; Schuster & Grant, 2003; Schuster, 2003b). Our informants mentioned the issue of faculty development with some frequency, indicating that this is a topic that needs to be more systematically addressed in discussions about advancing the field. Presently, the Melton Mini-Schools, Me'ah, and the Skirball Center systematically involve their teachers in professional development activities, drawing on staff resources to assist faculty members in thinking about adult learners, curricular issues, and their own instructional practice. According to Dr. Betsy Katz, the Melton Mini-School's faculty has thrived due to the organization's sustained commitment to faculty conferences, consultations, and online dissemination of instructional materials. Dr. David Starr, Dean of Me'ah, opined that in addition to the program's tremendous success with learners, Me'ah has had "a huge impact on teachers... both in terms of the impact on their thinking about the boundaries between critical and engaged learning, and their connection to the community." Starr reported that Me'ah has "created a conversation" about faculty members' relationship to the materials they are teaching and has provided personal mentoring that "gets them to think about issues." Watching how excited faculty have become about teaching for his program, Starr concluded, "If we had vibrant communities that could promise a job that would be half-time academic and half-time serious adult education in the community, a lot of people would jump at that! If we had the resources, I think that would happen."

The Skirball Center's Morris also reported that his faculty benefits from their experiences as adult educators and from opportunities to systematically reflect on their roles and responsibilities:

> We spend a lot of time at faculty retreats discussing the differences in teaching adults versus teaching in an academic setting. The faculty are encouraged to bring themselves in more and to think about the reality that this isn't learning with the "objectivity" that academia strives for. We are invested in the Jewish lives of the people we are teaching, so the folks coming from universities are thinking about what that means.

Siegal College's Schein has long worked with college faculty who teach in adult Jewish learning programs in the Cleveland area. He finds that some faculty are not comfortable interacting in the non-hierarchical, informal ways that befit much of

adult Jewish study. He speculated, however, that, to make the content of their teaching more accessible to a wider range of adults in the community, faculty members need to re-equip themselves, to come "off the stage."

Schein also mentioned that some Siegal professors now team-teach with members of the college's board of trustees, in an effort to build partnerships across the campus community. A byproduct of this experiment is that board members are now recognizing their own proclivities for teaching – which points to a different issue we found in our interviews: the question of who might be included in the pool of individuals considered suitable to teach Jewish adults. There are many ways this question can be answered. In some communities, adult education is the exclusive domain of the clergy, while in others there is a more level playing field that embraces lay teachers of all ages and ability levels.[5] Presently there are no certification procedures or standards for adult Jewish educators. Professional development of teaching staff for adult education is only rarely considered part of a Jewish organization's agenda. Consequently, the field of adult Jewish learning is still "in formation," and future policies likely will be derived from the many lessons being learned by the current generation of program administrators, adult educators, and adult students.

Some Jewish organizations are experimenting with new models of cultivating adult educators and enlarging the pool of potential teachers. For example, Temple Israel of Boston recently launched an Institute of Lifelong Learning (TILLI), in which synagogue members develop and teach courses based on their own areas of expertise. The idea of developing lay teachers has been supported, as well, by the Reform Movement. One of the criteria by which the URJ evaluates the bi-annual Congregation of Learners awards[6] is the extent to which a broad mix of faculty, including lay people, teach in adult education programs. The URJ also has offered an "educators' track" at its Adult Study Retreat for participants who want to build on their own Jewish knowledge and offer effective adult education courses in their home communities. In the view of Glazer Farber, there is a pressing need for an "institute for teachers of Jewish adults" that can help clergy, lay people, and general educators to improve their practice in Jewish settings. This perspective was echoed by Lisa Kogen of the Women's League of Conservative Judaism, who said that rabbis would greatly benefit by taking courses on adult education and community building.

The issue of how and where to develop quality adult educators is only beginning to be part of conversations in the larger Jewish community. One of our informants expressed concern that because many adult learners want to share what they

[5] An example of an egalitarian teaching-learning community was provided by Dr. Sherry Israel, Executive Committee Chair of the National Havurah Institute. Dr. Israel described the Institute's longstanding philosophy as "Everyone is a teacher, everyone is a learner, there are no gurus." At the Institute's annual study retreat, the policy is that "No one gets paid and you teach a class, then take a class." A similar situation exists at Limmud New York and its many regional offshoots. Here too, faculty are not paid and are expected to fully participate in the life of the community throughout the retreat.

[6] http://urj.org/_kd/Items/actions.cfm?action=Show&item_id=16777&destination=ShowItem

have learned with others, there is a risk of encouraging people who lack sufficient grounding in Jewish studies to become part of the "community of commentators" and to take on teaching roles beyond their reach. As our interviews showed, in looking forward, program planners and communal leaders must keep issues of teacher preparation and professional development firmly planted on the policy agenda.

Future Research

The maturation of the field of adult Jewish learning is reflected not only in the rich array of program options, settings, and orientations to content and learners, but also in the amount of knowledge that we now have about the field. An array of studies provides us with a sense of who the learners are and what they get out of their learning experiences in the short term. However, we do not yet have a clear picture of the long-term impact of Jewish learning on students' behaviors and attitudes, and ultimately on their communities. Longitudinal studies to track these trends would be most useful in terms of designing programs that best fit learners' needs.

While we do not have a comprehensive map of all adult Jewish learning programs and offerings, the conceptual framework presented herein provides a useful way to categorize adult learning for learners with different motivations, interests, and needs. Further development of this organizational structure should be helpful in guiding program planners and design of appropriate curricula and instruction for the various contexts and target audiences of learners.

Our interviews with a sampling of program leaders suggest that North American providers of adult Jewish learning experiences are much more sensitive now to the possibility of diverse entry points for Jewish learning than they were two or three decades ago. Perhaps the most significant finding from these interviews, however, is that adult educators and program designers are much more explicitly articulating a connection between adult Jewish learning and the need to build stronger, more dynamic communities, and to develop Jewish leaders who are better informed and guided by Jewish learning in their leadership roles. Further research is needed to explore how widespread this articulation of purpose is, as well as to measure its impact on the broader community across the different sectors of contemporary Jewish life.

Further research also would be useful to better understand how evaluation studies that are commissioned by program funders are utilized in planning adult Jewish education. As noted here and in our earlier research as well, we do not yet have a solid body of research that analyzes how Jewish educators are being prepared to work with the burgeoning adult Jewish learning population or that explores what constitutes excellent teaching of Jewish adults. Indeed, inquiry into all of these domains to explore the dynamic relationship between learners, teachers, content, and contexts would greatly assist communal leaders and educators in developing a strategic vision for adult Jewish learning for the next quarter century and beyond.

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Congregational Schools

Isa Aron

The congregational school, perhaps the most maligned form of Jewish education, is still the most popular.[1] This chapter reviews the predicaments the congregational school has faced in the past, and offers a guardedly optimistic appraisal of its prospects for the future.

A Brief History of the Congregational School

The percentage of Jewish children enrolled in congregational schools in the United States has varied greatly over time. During the Colonial era, families of means hired tutors for their children, with only the poorest being tutored under synagogue auspices (Gartner, 1969, p. 5); by the time of the American Revolution, these private arrangements began to be superseded by congregational and communal schools (Graff, 2008). A study conducted in New York City in 1909 (Kaplan & Cronson, 1909/1969) found an assortment of Jewish educational venues, including privately run *chedorim* (one-room schools) and institutional schools (run by orphanages and settlement houses), in addition to congregational schools. The authors of the survey (one of whom was Mordecai Kaplan) recommended that the community invest in a nascent institution, the communal Talmud Torah. Promoted by newly established Bureaus of Jewish Education in many major cities, Talmud Torahs flourished in the 1920s and 1930s. But as Jews moved, first to the outer rings of settlement in cities, then to the suburbs, the Talmud Torah, whose staffing model was based on the enrollment of a large number of neighborhood children, was no longer economically viable. Thus, in the 1940s and 1950s, the congregational school became the predominant form of Jewish education.[2] Since then, however, the number of day

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[1]This is only in the United States, which differs from Canada and many European and Latin American countries, where day schools receive public funding.

[2]Over the past few decades, communal Talmud Torahs have largely disappeared from the scene.

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Table 1 School affiliation[3]

Affiliation	Schools	Percent of total
Chabad/Lubovitch	222	12.91
Community/Pluralistic	52	3.02
Conservative	511	29.71
Modern orthodox	54	3.14
Reconstructionist	65	3.78
Reform	676	39.30
Other or no affiliation	140	8.14
Total	1,720	100.0

schools has grown steadily, and both the popularity and the status of congregational schools have declined, explained below.

A comprehensive census of supplementary schools[4] in the United States (Wertheimer, 2008) identified 1,720 schools and a total enrollment of 212,566.[5] Table 1 shows the affiliation of these schools by denominations, and Table 2 the enrollment, by denomination. Wertheimer estimated student enrollment (grades 1–12) in all supplementary schools at 230,000. A comparable census of day schools conducted several years earlier found 172,447 students in grades 1–12 (Schick, 2004). Thus, despite the fact that day schools have eroded their "market share," supplementary schools still enroll the majority (57%) of students.

Table 2 Enrollment by denomination[6]

Affiliation	Schools	Total enrollment	Percent of total enrollment	Average school size
Chabad/Lubovitch	222	8,468	3.98	38.14
Community/Pluralistic	52	7,750	3.65	151.13
Conservative	511	55,915	26.30	109.42
Modern orthodox	54	2,481	1.17	45.94
Reconstructionist	65	6,166	2.9	94.86
Reform	676	121,380	57.10	179.56
Other or no affiliation	140	10,406	4.90	74.33
Total	1,720	212,566	100	123.66

[3] Source: Wertheimer (2008).

[4] "Supplementary schools" is the general category for all schools that meet after school hours or on weekends. In the United States over 90% of these schools operate under congregational auspices. In this chapter the terms "congregational school" and "religious school" are used interchangeably.

[5] Information of this sort had never been collected before, and it proved extremely difficult to identify all the schools, and even to elicit a response from all those that were identified. Wertheimer estimates that 10% of the schools were not reached, though he assumes that these schools are very small.

[6] Source: Wertheimer (2008).

A Beleaguered Institution

The 1950s and 1960s are generally considered the heyday of the congregational school, "an era of growth, expansion and legitimization," in which "synagogue schools became respectable institutions, which engendered excitement, dynamism and hope" (Chazan, 1987, p. 170). Whether or not most congregational schools were as successful as this quote suggests, a significant number are remembered as being so. A number of factors accounted for the success of these institutions, especially in comparison with their counterparts today. The hope and enthusiasm attendant upon the founding of the State of Israel lent a sense of purpose and excitement to studying Hebrew. There existed a cadre of American-born teachers, largely women, who approached their work, part-time though it was, with a strong sense of professionalism. As day schools were still a relatively new phenomenon, congregational schools retained a core of committed, knowledgeable parents. The rates of intermarriage and divorce were lower, as were the number of working mothers. Perhaps most importantly, American society validated attendance at "Sunday" school as part of wholesome, middle-class life (Gans, 1951, p. 333). But even in the 1950s, there were problems with this model, and these problems accelerated with each successive decade.

The Congregational School as "Bar/Bat Mitzvah Factory"

Perhaps the biggest problem facing the congregational school is that a significant plurality, if not the majority, of American Jewish parents are not interested in *torah lishma* (learning for its own sake); rather, they send their children to congregational schools to prepare them for their *bar* or *bat mitzvah*. This instrumental view of Jewish learning fits with the conventional wisdom of an earlier era (and perhaps this era as well) that one's education ends with the acquisition of a diploma. In the minds of parents, religious school is the equivalent of public school, and bar or bat mitzvah is the equivalent of graduation.

The Jewish educational establishment unwittingly lent credence to this view in the 1930s and 1940s when bureaus of Jewish education throughout the United States worked with the Conservative and the Reform movements to link the celebration of *b'nei* mitzvah (there were no *b'not* mitzvah in those days) to formal Jewish study (Schoenfeld, 1988). They set standards that required a minimum of a certain number of years of study, a number of times a week. The exact calculus of years and hours varied, but the principle remained the same. The result was a Faustian bargain: religious schooling became inextricably linked (in the minds of parents, synagogue leaders, and even some synagogue professionals) with preparation for *bar* (and later *bat*) mitzvah. While this assured a steady stream of students in grades 4–7, it made it more likely that these children would drop out after 7th grade; and it reinforced the notion that adult learning was unnecessary and irrelevant. A 1989 study quotes a synagogue board member as saying, "Does the congregation really want quality

education? Maybe we just want kids to make it through their *Bar Mitzvah*" (Schoem, 1989, p. 71).

The problem persists to this day, though it is difficult to gauge its extent. Parents interviewed in a recent study (Kress, 2007) mentioned a range of goals for their children's religious school education in addition to preparation for *b'nei mitzvah*, including carrying on the tradition, participating in a range of home and synagogue rituals, and developing strong moral values. Statistics, on the other hand, tell a different story. Wertheimer's census found dropout rates ranging from 35% in 8th grade and 55% by 9th grade, to 80–85% by 11th and 12th grades. And sociologist Steven M. Cohen notes that surveys of congregational membership consistently find that the distribution of families with children peaks at the age of 13 in Reform Movement, but is relatively constant in the Conservative movement.[7]

A Shortage of Qualified Teachers

The congregational school has been plagued by other problems as well. Shevitz (1988) documented the chronic shortage of teachers, which began as early as the 1930s. Teaching loads in communal in the Talmud Torahs could, if the teacher wished, come close to those in public schools, because these schools operated on double or even triple shifts, and offered teachers additional duties. This created a profession that attracted a cadre of dedicated and well-trained young people; but this newly established profession began to decline with the demise of the Talmud Torah. By the 1960s, only the largest congregational schools ran on double sessions, and even these rarely hired teachers for more than 12 hours a week. A 1998 study of Jewish teachers conducted by the Council for Initiatives in Jewish Education found that 64% of supplementary school teachers taught 1–4 hours a week, and 32% taught 5–12 hours; only 4% taught 13 hours or more (Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Tammivaara, & Goodman, 1998, p. 12).[8] Under these circumstances, it is difficult to attract qualified teachers, and the study revealed just how unqualified these teachers were. Fifty-five percent of supplementary school teachers worked in general education, presumably having some sort of formal training in education, but only 12% had a degree in Jewish studies, while 18% had a certificate in Jewish studies; and 29% had no pre-collegiate Jewish education at all (not even once a week) after the age of 13. As one might guess from these figures, only 19% had any professional training in both Jewish studies and general education.

A Flawed Paradigm

Elsewhere (Aron, 1989) I have argued that the fundamental problem of the congregational school is that it adheres to the "schooling/instructional paradigm." Instruction is the deliberate, formalized process of handing over elements of a

[7] Steven M. Cohen, personal communication, April 30, 2009.

[8] Teachers from three communities were surveyed: Atlanta, Baltimore, and Milwaukee.

culture by those designated as "teachers" to those designated as "students." The schooling/instructional paradigm works best when it is buttressed by a number of incentives: laws which mandate attendance; societal expectations (and empirical evidence) that schooling correlates positively with one's earning potential; and competition for entrance to elite colleges. Lacking these motivators, the Jewish school has suffered by comparison; Judaic studies, even in day schools, continue to be seen as less important than general studies.

I find most persuasive John Westerhoff's (1976) argument that it is a mistake for congregational schools to adhere to the instructional model. Rather, they ought to conceive of their educational task as that of enculturation, the welcoming of newcomers into a culture. This view of culture is very broad, encompassing knowledge, skills, attitudes, practices, and values. A culture is strong when newcomers have daily encounters with well-enculturated veterans. Under these circumstances, the transmission of attitudes, practices, and values does not require any deliberate, self-conscious processes, and the newcomer simply "absorbs" them. Anyone and everyone is a "teacher," and no particular learning sequence is better than any other. For example a community which values reading, and in which everyone over a certain age reads for pleasure, will, in most cases, transmit a love of reading to its children, making it easier for them to learn the knowledge and skills taught in school. Conversely, when a culture is weak, the transmission of attitudes, practices, and values is not automatic, and there is a much thinner context to situate and support new knowledge and skills.

Data from the 1990 National Jewish Population Study suggests that the Jewish culture of religious-school families tends to be weak. The survey divided parents who send their children to religious school into two groups: those who attend only once a week, and those who attend more than once a week. Table 3 shows that fewer than half of those in the first group, and only half of those in the second, light Shabbat candles, to take just one example.

Other data are more positive, with over 95% of both groups attending a Passover seder; over 98% lighting Hanukkah candles; and over 70% having read a book with Jewish content in the past year. It would be difficult to argue, however, that the majority of religious-school children grow up in a strong Jewish culture.

Table 3 Jewish activities in which religious-school parents engage[9]

Activity	Parents whose children attend 1x/wk (%)	Parents whose children attend more than 1x/wk (%)
"Usually" light Shabbat candles	34	50
Attend synagogue more than once a month	35	37
Agree that "Being Jewish is very important to me"	48	72

[9]Steven M. Cohen, personal communication, December 30, 2008.

Enculturation and instruction are not antithetical. Enculturation is the broadest framework; but within this framework, certain knowledge and skills must be taught through instruction. But the knowledge and skills transmitted through instruction will only "stick" when they are appreciated and utilized on a regular basis. The Talmud Torah, for example, saw its goal as providing instruction for a group of students who were presumed to be well on their way to enculturation. While this assumption might have been a reasonable one in the 1920s and 1930s, the progressive assimilation of American Jews since that time has made it increasingly dubious.

For strongly identified, well-educated Jews, instruction and enculturation still function as complementary processes. The family, synagogue, and neighborhood combine to inculcate basic attitudes, practices, and values, one of which is the importance of Judaic learning. Instruction, layered onto ongoing enculturation, proceeds smoothly and successfully. In contrast, for most students attending congregational schools, enculturation is episodic and fragmentary.

The Persistent Grammar of Congregational Schooling

Despite all of its problems, the congregational school remained relatively unchanged during the last half of the twentieth century. New programs in teacher training came and went, as did experiments with alternative settings, like retreats and day camps. The idea with the most traction, family education, was too often reduced to a series of one-shot stand-alone programs (Shevitz & Karpel, 1995).

To many, it seems perplexing that American Jewry, which has mobilized itself to support any number of causes, could not muster the resources to address the fundamental problems of the majority of its schools. But this would not surprise sociologists of education, who find a comparable situation in public education. Tyack and Cuban (1995) attribute the failure of public school reform to the persistence of a "grammar of schooling," a set of underlying assumptions about how schools should function:

> The basic grammar of schooling, like the shape of the classroom, has remained remarkably stable over decades. Little has changed in the ways that schools divide time and space, classify students and allocate them to classrooms, splinter knowledge into "subjects," and award grades and "credits" as evidence of learning. . .. [This] has puzzled and frustrated generations of reformers who have sought to change these standardized organizational forms. (p. 85)

With the vast majority of students attending schools that were organized in similar fashion, it is no wonder that "the public. . . came to assume that the grammar embodied the necessary features of a 'real school'" (p. 107).

Michelle Lynn-Sachs argues that the grammar of religious schooling, remarkably similar in the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish Sunday schools she studied, is doubly intractable. Not only do parents and administrators expect *schools* to adhere to a conventional pattern, there is a "grammar of congregations" that exerts a strong, conservative pull on *congregations* as well. Like other organizations, congregations

"tend to seek legitimacy within their field by conforming to ritualized, expected ways of operating, rather than organizing their work according to purely rational, goal-oriented demands" (2007, p. 63).

With the grammar of religious schooling taken as a given throughout the twentieth century, the education departments of the Conservative and Reform (and later Reconstructionist) movements saw their role as developing new curricula, which they did periodically. But the "system" of Jewish education is "loosely coupled" (Shevitz, 1995) at best, and the channels for distributing these materials were poorly developed; the curricula were utilized in half of the possible schools at best. The Los Angeles Bureau of Jewish Education Teacher Census (Aron & Phillips, 1989) found that fewer than 45% of teachers in congregational schools were given a curriculum by their education directors; a recent study by the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) (Shevitz, 2008) found that 50% of the teachers in Reform congregations use the Movement's Chai Curriculum. Moreover, the absence of qualified teachers who could bring these curricula to life in the classroom continues to be problematic. The URJ study found that fewer than half of the teachers utilizing the Chai Curriculum felt prepared to meet the following stated goals of the curriculum: making Torah real in the students' lives; feeling connected to Israel; becoming more comfortable with *t'filot* (prayers); and developing a personal understanding of *k'dushah* (holiness) (p. 23). To its credit, the URJ has offered a series of local and national workshops for teachers; it sees the curriculum and the workshops as resources for an important group of adult learners.[10]

An Attitude of "Benign Neglect"

Perhaps the most intractable problem of all is the poor reputation of the congregational school, and, hence, the low set of expectations shared by a range of its stakeholders. A 1977 task force convened by the American Jewish Committee observed that supplementary schools

> produce graduates who are functionally illiterate in Judaism and not clearly positive in their attitudinal identification.... [M]ost graduates look back without joy on their educational experience. (p. i)

Many researchers and communal leaders continue to share this dismal view today. Kress (2007) reports that

> [in speaking with] colleagues and Jewish communal professionals, the very mention of religious schools would often provoke a Pavlovian smirk or rolling of the eyes. When I asked about these reactions, I was regaled with countless narratives about negative experiences in religious school or about frustrations encountered as professionals working with religious schools. (p. 143)

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[10] Dr. Jan Katzew, Director, Department of Lifelong Learning, URJ, personal communication, February 27, 2009.

Given the poor reputation of the congregational school, it is no wonder that central agencies, federations and foundations turned their attention to day schools, Israel trips, and summer camps, maintaining an attitude of "benign neglect" toward congregational schools.

The Tide Begins to Turn

Fortunately, the news is not all bad. In the past two decades, congregational schools have begun to change, due to the confluence of a number of factors: increased interest in adult learning; increased attention to Jewish education in general, coupled with an acceptance of the fact that a majority of Jewish children will, for the foreseeable future, receive their formal Jewish education in congregational schools; and the rise of a number of projects whose goal is to transform the congregational school.

The Revival of Adult Learning[11]

For most of the twentieth century, relatively few Jewish adults engaged in ongoing Jewish learning. Synagogues typically had a Torah study group, an "Introduction to Judaism" course, and little else. During the 1980s this began to change. "Lifelong learning" became a buzzword in the secular world. In particular, Jewish feminism prompted women who had not celebrated a *bat mitzvah* as children to do so as adults. In response, synagogues developed the adult *b'nei mitzvah* class, a 1- or 2-year course of study that, to this day, is popular among women, and continues to attract some men, as well (Grant, 2007; Schoenfeld, 1989).

Concurrently, the 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of a number of programs devoted to high-level, ongoing, text-based Jewish learning, including the Wexner Heritage Program, the Florence Melton Adult Mini School, and the Boston Federation's *Me'ah* program (which offered 100 hours of study with Judaic studies professors over a period of 2 years). Having partaken of serious adult study, graduates of these and comparable programs became avid learners, turning to their congregations for more (Grant, Schuster, Woocher, & Cohen, 2004). Synagogues responded with varying degrees of alacrity. Though some developed an impressive array of classes, workshops, and retreats, most concentrated their efforts—and allotted the bulk of their funding—to stand-alone scholar-in-residence programs.

Even when synagogues increased their adult learning opportunities dramatically, they did not always pay comparable attention to the religious school. Because adult education was accorded more status, it was often viewed as a separate undertaking,

[11] This section focuses on the effects of the revival of adult learning on congregational schools. For a much more extensive discussion of adult learning, see Chapter "Adult Jewish Learning: The Landscape" in this handbook.

under the aegis of the rabbi, rather than the educator. Rarely was there much coordination between adult and children's education, nor was there an overall vision for congregational learning as a whole.

Nonetheless, some synagogue schools benefited from a "trickle down" effect. For example, a mother who spent several years in an ongoing Torah study group observes

> The adult learning that a lot of us were engaged in put pressure on the religious school, because suddenly we had an experience that was positive and phenomenal. . .. We realized that what our kids were getting was so old school,. . . and that there was another way to go about this. (Aron, 2009b)

When opportunities to improve the religious school came along, parents like this were ready to participate.

The "Continuity Commissions"

The 1990 National Jewish Population Study (NJPS) was not the first report to raise concerns about the future of the American Jewry, but it managed to create a sense of urgency that prior reports had not. Not only did it find that the rate of intermarriage was 52%,[12] it also found that only 32% of respondents were members of synagogues, fewer than 20% lit Shabbat candles on a regular basis, and only 40% gave to a Jewish cause. (Kosmin, Goldstein, Waksberg, & Lerer, 1991).

One hopeful finding among all of the gloom was that higher levels of Jewish education were correlated with more active participation in Jewish life. The more intensive the Jewish education of NJPS respondents, the more likely they were to join a Jewish organization, give to a Jewish cause, marry a Jewish partner, and practice Jewish rituals (Fishman and Goldstein, 1993, p. 7). As leaders of the Jewish community searched for positive steps they could take in response to this study, they saw Jewish education as an important weapon in the "battle" for Jewish survival. In the words of a 1991 report, "The responsibility for developing Jewish identity and instilling a commitment to Judaism. . . now rests primarily with education" (Commission on Jewish Education, p. 15).

Initially, most of the attention and funding coming out of the various "continuity commissions" of the 1990s was bestowed on pre-schools, day schools, and Israel trips. Over time, however, federations, foundations, and funders have come to see that neglecting congregational schools might mean neglecting as many as half of American Jewish children. A recent JESNA (Jewish Education Services of North America)[13] report put this more positively, focusing on the potential of the synagogue:

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[12]This finding was later challenged by other demographers, but it certainly captured the attention of the public.

[13]JESNA is national resource center for Jewish education and serves as the umbrella organization for local and regional Central Agencies of Jewish Education.

> The synagogue is, in principle, if not yet in practice, an ideal setting in which... Jewish education [as a life-long endeavor] can take root and flourish. For more individuals and families than any other single institution, the synagogue is the embodiment of Jewish community. It is also, at least potentially, a gateway into the full variety and richness of Jewish life, not only within its own walls, but in the larger Jewish community. (2008, p. 1)

New Vision and New Experimentation

The JESNA report listed 11 initiatives undertaken to "improve and renew" congregational education. These are summarized in Table 4.

These initiatives (whose full names are spelled out in the table) are sponsored by a range of organizations. Three are under the auspices of the Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist movements; three (The Goldring/Woldenberg Institute, STAR, and Synagogue 3000) are independent entities; two (La'atid and NESS) are sponsored by Central Agencies; one (ECE) is affiliated with a school of education; one (Legacy Heritage) is a foundation; and one (PELIE) is a consortium of funders.

The goals of these initiatives may be arrayed on a continuum from *improvement* to *transformation*. Advocates of improvement assume that the structure of the congregational school will remain the same for the foreseeable future, and that the greatest need is for new curricular materials, teacher training, and/or more family education. The case for transformation follows the argument made for enculturation offered earlier in this chapter: Given the relatively impoverished culture of liberal American Jews, the overriding aim of congregational education should be enculturation, rather than merely instruction. This calls for a radical change in how the school should be structured, in ways that are discussed in the next section.

While four of the initiatives (those of the denominations and the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute) fall squarely at the improvement end of the continuum, the others are not so easily categorized. NESS, while concentrating mostly on improvement, also engages the education committee and the board, which is a step toward transformation. Legacy Heritage and PELIE support both types of efforts, though Legacy Heritage tends to favor transformational projects. ECE's RE-IMAGINE and La'atid encourage transformation, but also support congregations that do not end up re-structuring their school. And STAR, Synagogue 3000, and ECE's Congregation of Learners project concentrate their efforts on the congregation as a whole.

Transforming the Congregational School

Earlier I argued that the congregational school is doomed to have limited results if it conceives of its task as largely one of instruction, since its students lack the cultural background to appreciate and utilize this instruction. If one accepts this argument, it follows that the century-old paradigm of the congregational school, which focuses primarily on children and takes place in age-graded classrooms, needs to be re-thought. Since 2003, ECE's RE-IMAGINE Project has worked with

Table 4 Initiatives devoted to improving and/or transforming congregational schools

Name of initiative	Sponsoring organization	Primary focus
Experiment in congregational education (ECE) ■ The RE-IMAGINE project www.eceonline.org	Rhea Hirsch School of Education, HUC-JIR	Has worked with over 70 congregations in the United States to ■ Transform them into congregations of learners ■ Re-imagine the religious school
Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life education program www.isjl.org/education	Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life	Serves southern Jewish communities through ■ Creating a common curriculum ■ Traveling educational fellows ■ Annual conference
"Next generation"	Jewish Reconstructionist Federation www.jrf.org	Builds connections among all educational settings serving members of the Reconstructionist movement
La'atid: Synagogues for the future	Jewish Federation of Hartford, CT hartford.ctujcfedweb.org	Works with local congregations and schools by engaging them in an individualized change process
Legacy Heritage innovation project www.legacyheritage.org	An independent foundation	Gives grants to synagogues that are creating new paradigms of congregational education
NESS (nurturing excellence in Synagogue schools)	Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education, Philadelphia www.acaje.org	Works with local schools on ■ Assessment of assets and limitations ■ Training for teachers, educators, and lay leaders
PELIE (Partnership for effective learning and innovative education)	An independent consortium of funders www.pelie.org	Works toward substantially improving "complementary" Jewish education and transforming the reality, perception, and funding of the field
STAR (Synagogue transformation and renewal) www.starsynagogue.org	An independent organization	Designs and delivers synagogue-based initiatives and continuing educational opportunities for rabbis

Table 4 (continued)

Name of initiative	Sponsoring organization	Primary focus
Synagogue 2000/3000 www.synagogue3000.org	An independent organization	Sponsors ■ A leadership network ■ A synagogue studies research initiative
Chai curriculum www.urj.org/chai	Union for Reform Judaism	This curriculum is designed to be used with students in grades 2–7, families with children aged 7–14, teachers, education directors, and synagogue boards
■ Framework for excellence ■ Project Etgar	United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism www.uscj.org	■ Provides benchmarks for the congregation and the school. ■ Project Etgar is a curriculum for grades 6–8

Adapted from JESNA (2008, pp. 2–4).

over 50 congregations to re-envision and re-structure their schools. In addition, at least a dozen congregations have launched their own efforts at transformation, either adapting the models highlighted and profiled by the ECE or devising their own alternative models (Langer, 2002; Margolius & Weissman, 2002; Weissman & Margolius, 2002; Aron, 2009b).

In both RE-IMAGINE and the individual change efforts, the engine for transformation has been a task force, which functions as a "temporary parallel learning system" (Schein, 1999, pp. 130–132). The advantage of a task force, Schein explains, is the synergy that results when stakeholders who don't ordinarily have sustained contact with one another have an opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas. The most reflective and cooperative representatives of each stakeholder group are asked to join the task force. Because the work of the task force does not include quotidian tasks like oversight or budgeting, its members are freed to think in new ways.

The following is a brief overview of a few of the alternative models that congregations (either on their own or through the ECE) have introduced.

The Shabbat Community

One of the oldest and most popular of the alternative models is the Shabbat Community, in which parents attend school along with their children, on either Shabbat morning or Shabbat afternoon (Langer, 2002; Margolius & Weissman, 2002; Weissman & Margolius, 2002). The programs generally include a family worship service, an opportunity to learn as a family, and an opportunity to learn in age cohorts, either weekly or biweekly.[14] A few programs of this type meet on Sunday mornings, and thus may not have a worship component, but adhere to the same basic structure otherwise.

By attending along with their children, parents in these programs demonstrate that Jewish learning is a lifelong pursuit. This model takes family education to its logical extension and can have a profound effect on families. Susan Wolfe, a parent in *Shabbaton* at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills, CA, one of the earliest of these programs, writes

> After 5 years, how has *Shabbaton* affected our family? For one thing, it has demonstrated to our children that Jewish learning is not only for children; we are involved in their learning, and in our own. When they go to religious school, we go to religious school. When we come back together, we each have an experience to share on a common Jewish topic. Additionally, we are practicing what we preach: We tell our children that Shabbat is a time for relaxation and study; each Shabbat, we relax and study with other Jewish families at our synagogue. . . .
>
> But perhaps the most meaningful outcomes have been personal. As much as anything I have learned at Shabbaton, I have learned how very much I have yet to learn. I discovered the depth of my hunger to further my understanding and appreciation of our Jewish heritage. (Aron, 2000, p. 19)

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[14]Students in grades 3–7 generally continue studying Hebrew during the week, alongside their former Sunday-school classmates.

Thinking back on 15 years of *Shabbaton*, its first coordinator, Lisa Langer, comments

> A huge number of adults who had never ever done Jewish learning before became engaged in Jewish learning. It built friendships and community because people saw each other week after week. These family groups became *chavurot* (fellowship groups) for many families. For a lot of people it became their connection to the synagogue.... *Shabbaton* transformed the leadership; at one point, at least 90% of the board had participated in the *Shabbaton* at some point. (Aron, 2009a)

Of course, not all parents are willing or able to spend so much time learning with their children, which is why larger congregations generally offer these family schools as alternatives to the traditional religious school, rather than the only possible option. In these synagogues the percentage of parents participating in the family school alternative ranges from 20 to 60%. This creates a natural experiment, with students who attend the normative school serving as a "control group." While no hard data exists to date,[15] educators in these congregations report that students in the family school are more engaged than their Sunday-school counterparts. Rabbi/Cantor Angela Warnick Buchdal, who led the Sharing Shabbat program at Westchester Reform Temple, notes that despite the fact that families joined the program for a variety of reasons, the effect on the children was nearly always the same:

> At the end of the day, virtually everyone comes out of the experience feeling, "I am a super involved Reform Jew. I am literate with the liturgy, I'm a regular Shabbat goer. Shabbat has become a real part of my week and my family's week. This has become a sanctuary and time for my family." (Aron, 2009a)

Combining Religious School with Day Care

The idea of combining after-school day care with after-school religious school has an obvious appeal for both dual-career and single-parent Jewish families. Kesher, an independent school that has two sites in the Boston area, pioneered this model in 1991.[16] In Kesher's early years, many children attended 4 or 5 days a week. But because of the school's commitment to maintaining a small size and a small student/teacher ratio, it has priced itself out of the after-school market, and the majority of children now attend only 2 days a week. Nonetheless, the essence of Kesher's approach remains the same. Children come straight from school, and spend nearly 2 hours playing and interacting informally with the teachers (who use what they call "incidental Hebrew" for small talk like greetings and directions). Another 20 minutes at the end are spent singing, often with parents participating. In between are

[15] The ECE is conducting such a study and has collected its "baseline" data, before many of these models were launched; it will take a number of years with this model (and others) running, before data for comparisons can be collected.

[16] The two sites are incorporated separately, but share their curricula, and maintain close ties.

two 50-minute teaching blocks, one devoted to *Yahadut* (Judaism), the other to *Ivrit* (Hebrew). Kesher's leaders believe that the informal time blocs are as important as the formal ones. To quote the website,

> To think of Kesher as only a Hebrew school/after-school misses the essence of what makes Kesher special. Though Hebrew school and after school are still at the core of what Kesher does, since its beginning, Kesher has become a community.[17]

Essential to this model is the ongoing presence of the teachers, who are available to be with the students from the moment they arrive, 4 days a week.[18] In fact, teachers are on site 2 hours prior to the arrival of the students, in order to plan their lessons and meet with their supervisors.

The director of a school that adheres to this model takes care to impress upon new teachers that the informal part of the day is just as important as formal class time:

> Teaching here isn't just teaching *Yahadut* (Judaism), just teaching *Ivrit* (Hebrew). We talk about this all the time that teaching begins from the moment the kids get off the bus or the moment they are dropped off from their car pool. (Aron, 2009b)

Teachers find that this emphasis on enculturation, as well as instruction, gives them a great advantage in relating to the children:

> These are all things that I didn't have in my prior religious school teaching experience: Really taking the time to talk about kids, what their needs are, who their friends are, who is more sociable, who needs a different kind of help. We try to really focus on not just the outstanding and most troublesome kids but also the kids who could, in other systems, kind of fall through the cracks. (Aron, 2009b)

This model includes relatively few family education programs. There are annual family dinners for each grade, and *havdalah* (the ceremony marking the end of Shabbat) get-togethers for everyone approximately every 6 weeks, along with a variety of packets that are sent home. Nonetheless, parents in these schools feel very connected, perhaps because the school is so small and relations between parents and staff are so close. One father notes

> Kesher is not only the kids' educational resource, but also their Jewish community. . . . I think that for people who are either not Jewish but married into interfaith marriages, or people who are very secular in their orientation, or just ambivalent, who haven't gotten around to joining a synagogue, this is a central focal point for their Jewish life. (Aron, 2009b)

Given how many Jewish families have a need for some sort of after-school care, it is surprising that this model has not been adopted in any congregational school. To date, the model has been exported to two additional sites (one in a JCC, the other independent), in New York City. This replication was facilitated by PELIE, which has plans to promote it in other locations as well.

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[17] http://www.kesherweb.org/about.php

[18] At one branch there is an abbreviated program on Fridays, to accommodate families that need day care on that day.

Deconstructing and Reconstructing the Religious School

The most recent attempts to re-structure the religious school take an expanded view of learning, and situate it in new settings and/or new time frames. The oldest of these experiments was piloted in 2002; the newest are, as of this writing, still in the planning stages; by the time this book is published, there will undoubtedly be new examples around. Here is a sample of these new configurations:

- The Beit Midrash program at Temple Beth Elohim, in Wellesley, Massachusetts, situates most of the learning in the home. Students in grades 3–5 read books and do a variety of projects with their parents, coming to the synagogue on Sunday afternoons every 6 weeks to discuss the reading and do joint activities. Families in this program also get together regularly for Shabbat dinners and *tzedakah* (social justice) projects; 6th and 7th graders in the Ma'asim Tovim program at Beth Elohim are involved in ongoing *tzedakah* projects, combined with short text-study sessions, in lieu of Sunday classes. High school students in the synagogue's Havaya program attend weekend retreats, and meet in *Havurot* (fellowship groups) that combine an activity like drama, hiking, or social justice work, with text study.[19]
- The MASA program at Temple Shaaray Tefila, in New York City, plans to take families on a variety of "journeys," with different themes each year. The first of these, Celebrations, focuses on the Jewish holidays. Families come for 3-hour preparatory sessions, and then celebrate holidays together.[20] At least one Los Angeles congregation is planning a similar model.
- The Nisayon program at Temple Judea in Tarzana, California, substitutes day camp for religious school. Campers attend for 2 weeks in the summer and a week during winter break. In addition to t'fillot, singing, Israeli dancing, and the usual camp activities, there are two 90-minute classes each day. During the school year, students in grades 4–6 are tutored in Hebrew at their homes. In addition, there are 11 family events throughout the year.[21]
- Students and parents in Limmud Mishpacha at Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York City meet once a week in small groups at people's homes, and twice a month all together on Shabbat morning.[22]
- The Morei Derech Project at Temple Beth Sholom in Roslyn, New York, pairs families who are looking for greater Jewish involvement with *Morei Derech* (literally guides), "Jewish Life Coaches" who will help these families make the connection between the synagogue and their homes and navigate their Jewish journeys.[23]

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[19] http://www.bethelohim-wellesley.org/learning/index.php

[20] http://www.shaaraytefilanyc.org/school/masa.php

[21] http://www.templejudea.com/news.php?bridge_id=91

[22] http://cbst.org/children.shtml

[23] http://209.85.173.132/custom?q=cache:kOujOAaR2n4J:www.tbsroslyn.org/bulletin/2008–06.pdf+More+Derech&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1&gl=us, p. 12.

Common Principles

All of these alternative models, whether relatively established like the "Shabbat Community" or a more recent experiment, like MASA, share a commitment to at least two of the following four principles of enculturation:

(1) Rather than delegating Jewish education to the synagogue, parents are directly involved as either learners or teachers.
(2) It is not assumed that the connection between Jewish learning and Jewish living will happen automatically. Learning is done in context—*t'fillah* as part of a service; *tzedakah* among those who need it; celebration on the holidays; and so on.
(3) The school sees one of its primary tasks as creating powerful, memorable moments, which will implant strong Jewish values and commitments.
(4) The school sees one of its primary goals as creating community for students and their families.

Challenges that Remain

The opening paragraph of this chapter promised a "potentially optimistic" appraisal of the state of the congregational school today. The oldest of the alternative models, the Shabbat Community and the combined after-care/supplementary school, are permanent fixtures in the landscape; their replication/adaptation is proceeding slowly but steadily. The fate of the newer experiments is as yet unknown. Undoubtedly, some of these new approaches will catch on, while others will not.

An estimated 30–50 synagogues have restructured all or part of their schools in the ways described above; and many others have focused more on enculturation, through all-school "happenings," project-based learning, and more frequent and concerted family education. But while there is justification for cautious optimism, a great deal of work remains to be done. In this section I will highlight some of the issues the congregational schools face today. These include inertia, the continual pressure from parents to reduce the number of hours of instruction; the challenges of teaching Hebrew; the paucity of new models for post-bar/bat mitzvah education; and the shortage of both educators and teachers.

Can Synagogues Overcome Their Inertia?

To paraphrase the proverb made popular by Hillary Clinton, it takes a community to improve (or transform) a congregational school. For too many decades, the task of improving the congregational school was left to the educators, education committees, and central agencies of education; too few rabbis, synagogue boards, or federations, and too few leaders of the Jewish community at large saw this as their responsibility. This situation has begun to change, in *some* synagogues. The success of ECE, L'atid, and NESS is due, in no small part, to the fact that they have recruited congregational leaders who are more prominent and have more influence than those

who typically sit on the synagogues' education committees. Too many schools, in contrast, seem to be mired in the status quo.

Only certain types of congregations are poised to take a close and candid look at their religious school, and work to either improve or transform it. A forthcoming study (Aron et al., 2009, 2010) analyzes the accomplishments of eight synagogues that had participated in either ECE or Synagogue 2000 (S2K) and were able to make and sustain significant changes. These congregations were compared to eight others that also participated in these projects, but were unable to either make changes at all, or to sustain the changes they had introduced. All of the former synagogues shared, to a greater or lesser degree, a set of characteristics: they had a sense of sacred purpose; they viewed their activities holistically; they were highly participatory; they attempted to engage people in meaningful ways; they were reflective; and they were innovative. The study's authors called these congregations "visionary," in contrast to the other eight congregations, which they termed "functional." These other congregations are well run, but they are more limited: their congregants have a "fee for service" mentality; they are segmented in their functioning; they expect passivity, rather than active participation; they evoke a feeling of detachment; their leaders are not particularly reflective. Not surprisingly, these synagogues resist transformation, and they often resist improvement, as well.

And there is yet a third set of congregations that this study did not look at—the dysfunctional ones. These are congregations whose day-to-day operations are fraught with problems: they might be unable to balance their budgets; there might be ongoing battles between members of the staff, or between the clergy and the lay leaders; and so on. It is difficult to know just how many synagogues fall into this third category, but anecdotal evidence suggests that there are many. Before these synagogues can begin to even improve their schools, they must at least become functional. The denominations do their best to advise and support these congregations, but helping them overcome their inertia is a major challenge.

Pressure to Reduce Even Further the Number of Days of Instruction

The story of the congregational school might be told as that of a series of battles between parents and educators over the number of days of instruction. The Talmud Torah often met five times a week; the congregational schools of the 1950s met three or even four times a week. In the 1990s and the first half of this decade, many schools faced (and lost) the battle to maintain 3 days, rather than two (Aron, 2007; Reimer, 1992, 1997). Today, the pressure is mounting for schools to meet only 1 day a week, and a number have already succumbed.

As argued earlier in this chapter, instruction should not be the primary task of the religious school. When days of instruction are replaced by family get-togethers, projects done at home, *tzedakah* projects, and the like, the gain in enculturation may far outweigh the loss in instruction. But many of the schools that have severely reduced instructional time have not added family time or service learning.

Creating Attractive Alternatives for Post-bar/bat mitzvah Education

Whatever the cause of the high dropout rate after *bar/bat mitzvah* (be it the assumption that "graduation" is at age 13, or the increased academic pressures on high school students), a contributing factor is the dearth of creative, engaging programs for adolescents. Synagogues that have devoted their efforts to creating a flexible array of options that appeal to teens with different interests, such as Temple Beth Elohim (described above) have stemmed the dropout rate; 70% of their high school students are enrolled in some form of Jewish education. The "village" that rallied to create and promulgate alternative models for younger children must now help congregations devise equally attractive programs for the post-*b'nei mitzvah* students.

What Kind of Hebrew Should Be Taught and What Can Be Accomplished?

Because attendance at religious school is linked to preparation for bar/bat mitzvah, most schools teach *siddur* (prayer book) Hebrew. But the Hebrew of the *siddur* is grammatically complex and largely removed from the students' day-to-day experience, with concepts that are difficult to grasp, especially when one does not have a "prayer life." Realizing how difficult it is for students to retain the vocabulary of the *siddur*, most schools concentrate on making sure that the students can decode or recite the prayers, rather than understanding the basic vocabulary or grappling with the concepts. However, there are other choices that might make more sense. Kesher, for example, focuses on Modern Hebrew; the school Reimer studied taught Biblical Hebrew; and Hebrew Literacy or a technique like TPR (Total Physical Response) (Asher, 1993) might serve as useful complements to a *siddur* Hebrew program (Aron, 2004b). None of these alternatives are ready-made, which is why it will take the proverbial "village" (publishing houses, central agencies, etc.), to make them available and accessible. There are still champions of the Hebrew language in our midst; hopefully some of them will take up this challenge.

The Shortage of Teachers and Educators

To reach their full potential, religious schools must be led by at least one highly qualified professional and staffed by well-trained teachers. The good news is that congregational educators can earn relatively high salaries. The bad news is that the shortage of qualified personnel persists. The Wexner, Davidson, Mandel, and Jim Joseph Foundations have made generous fellowships available to those studying to be Jewish educators. It is hoped that this will attract a much larger pool of students.

The shortage of religious school teachers, on the other hand, appears to be chronic. With over half of the teachers teaching less than 10 hours a week and

nearly a third teaching less than 4 hours a week (Aron & Phillips, 1989), teaching in religious school can only be a part-time job for all but a few. Central Synagogue in New York has employed full-time professional educators to teach in the religious school for a number of years. When not teaching children, these educators write curriculum, meet with families, and run other programs within the synagogue (Kaiserman, 2007). While a number of other congregations are attempting to replicate this teaching arrangement, only the most affluent synagogues will be able to raise the necessary funds. The pool of potential teachers includes college students, under-employed young adults, day school and public school teachers, and congregants who see teaching as an avocation. Some of these teachers have weak Judaic backgrounds; others may lack teaching skills. Much can be done to work with these teachers to help maximize their potential (Aron, 2004a), but only with communal help will most synagogues be able to bear this burden.

An Agenda for Future Research: Studying Experimentation and Success

The spirit of experimentation has been accompanied by a new and welcome trend in scholarship, with research that focuses on success, rather than failure. Two earlier ethnographic studies (Heilman, 1992; Schoem, 1989) highlighted the insufficiencies and internal contradictions of the congregational school. In contrast, Joseph Reimer (1997) set out to find a school "with the reputation for maintaining broad educational excellence." As its title, *Succeeding at Jewish Education,* suggests the resultant book presents a more positive picture, though it does not shy away from the problems of congregational education. The book portrays classroom sessions that vary from excellent to troubling, and probes both the enthusiasm and the ambivalence of parents and the professional staff. Another work, *Best Practices in the Supplementary School* (Holtz, 1993), collects short essays highlighting some of the best features of supplementary schools throughout North America.

Two upcoming works continue this line of research. A book on synagogue transformation (Aron 2009a) contains a chapter on three synagogues that transformed themselves into Congregations of Learners in the past two decades, a process that involved both improving the traditional religious school and creating parallel alternative models. Most ambitious of all is a study commissioned by the Avichai foundation (Wertheimer, 2009), which yielded 10 case studies of supplementary schools, six of which are under the auspices of congregations. While not all of these sites proved to be equally excellent, among them were some outstanding examples of what can be accomplished in a synagogue school, when a combination of community resources, national projects, foundation grants, and, most importantly, visionary educators and rabbis, and committed lay leaders come together.

As efforts aimed at both improvement and transformation continue, the need for additional research is clear. A full research program would include, but not be limited to portraits (such as those in the Avichai study) and ethnographies (such as Reimer's) of alternative models; studies of the impact of these programs on children,

their parents, and the congregation as a whole; an exploration of the motivations and competencies of both actual and potential pools of teachers; and deeper inquiries into the pedagogic content knowledge needed to teach Torah, Hebrew, and other subjects.

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Day Schools in the Liberal Sector: Challenges and Opportunities at the Intersection of Two Traditions of Jewish Schooling

Alex Pomson

The contemporary Diaspora liberal Jewish day school (a religiously non-orthodox or non-denominational all-day school that provides both Jewish and general education) has its origins in two distinct traditions: one integrationist, one survivalist. The first tradition, with its origins in the lofty goals of not-yet-emancipated eighteenth-century German Jewry, saw the Jewish school as a bridge to participation in civic and national life (Eliav, 1960). The second tradition, forged in the early part of the twentieth century by a generation of Jewish immigrants to the United States fearful for the survival of Judaism, saw the day school as a fortress to prevent Judaism being overwhelmed by contemporary society (Schiff, 1966).[1]

Over the last 200 years the fortunes of these traditions have waxed and waned. As Jews achieved emancipation and gained relatively equal access to public education, the first, integrationist, tradition lost much of its raison d'être. The all-day Jewish school seemed not only an anomaly, but an unpatriotic impediment to upward social mobility (Syme, 1983). However, with an almost global movement "to expand and equalize educational opportunities for all classes of citizens [having] brought about a perceived deterioration in the standards and quality of public education" all over the world (Himelfarb, 1989), Jews, over the last quarter of a century, have once more begun to conceive of private all-day Jewish day schools as a preferred route to social and educational success much as the *Haskallah* [Jewish Enlightenment] pioneers once did.

The survivalist tradition, a direct descendent of the traditional *Heder* with its curriculum of intensive Jewish study, appealed, at the start of the twentieth century,

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[1] A third Hebraist/Socialist tradition flourished during the middle years of the twentieth century, first in Central Europe and then, after the Shoah, in survivor outposts in Latin America, Canada, and Australia (Frost, 1998). Conceived as "the instrument of an ideology rather than an instrument for the education of children in terms appropriate to them" (Adar & Chazan, 1977), the schools inspired by this "revolutionary" tradition survive only in Israel, or in the Diaspora, in an almost unrecognizable form.

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only to a small and often impoverished minority in Europe and North America. Yet, over the last half century, as orthodox Jewry has experienced a demographic and ideological revival, and as non-orthodox Jews have exhibited increased concern about whether their "grandchildren will be Jewish," many parents and policy makers have come to see the Jewish day school with its core curriculum of Jewish study and experience as the most effective means for guaranteeing the survival of Jews and Judaism in open societies.

Below I sketch the particular features of these two day school traditions since, as I suggest, outside Haredi (ultra-orthodox) communities, they no longer exist as alternatives, but are increasingly seen as complementary if not always compatible models for Jewish schooling. I argue that the challenges in reconciling these traditions account for some of the most intense contemporary debates surrounding liberal day school education, in relation to educational goals, curriculum content, marketing, and recruitment. I survey these debates as well as other central trends in liberal day school education. Finally, I review the questions and concerns that have been of most interest to researchers of day schools in general (and of liberal day schools in particular), and finish by proposing a research agenda for the next decades of day school research. Throughout, I use the label "liberal" to refer to a range of schools that Schick (2005) identified in his census of North American Jewish day schools as Conservative, Reform, or Community. Although it may be more precise to define these schools as non-orthodox and/or non-denominational, it is clumsy to describe them in terms of what they are not (that is, as neither orthodox nor denominational); it would also be misleading to convey a sense of them as lesser or non-normative.

Origins

The first modern all-day Jewish schools were opened under the influence of Jewish Enlightenment thinkers in the late eighteenth century, in Berlin and then in other German cities (Katz, 1978, pp. 126–7). These schools differed from previously existing institutions for the provision of Jewish education by delivering a curriculum that included both Jewish and secular studies, not just study of traditional Jewish texts, and by their being open to all Jewish children, not just the offspring of the wealthy or the learned. The intent of such schools was, in the words of Naphtali Herz Wessely, one of their earliest ideologues, to ensure that "the Children of Israel will also be men who accomplish worthy things, assisting the king's country in their actions, labor and wisdom" (Wessely, 1995). In the case of the Berlin school, in fact, non-Jewish students were also admitted since it was assumed that social and academic contact between Jewish and non-Jewish children would facilitate integration and cooperation between them as adults (Eliav, 1960, pp. 76–77).

As I have argued elsewhere (Pomson, 2009), the most fully realized institutional expression of this educational vision was seen at the end of the nineteenth century in England, where by 1899, the Jews Free School (JFS), with more than 4,000 students, had become the largest school in Europe. According to one historian of

the school, the JFS was conceived by its founders so as "to refashion the young by taking them off the streets and putting them in a modern Jewish school where they would learn artisan skills and English manners" (Black, 1998, p. 33). The student body was almost entirely made up of the children of poor immigrants, and the school was widely admired for gathering "within its walls. . .the children of those who are driven here by persecution, making of them good and desirable citizens of our beloved England" (Quoted by Black (1998) from an article in *The Sphere* subtitled, "Where Russian Jews are made in to good British subjects"). In the words of Louis Abrahams, headmaster at the start of the twentieth century, the school sought to "wipe away all evidences of foreign birth and foreign proclivities, so that children shall be so identified with everything that is English in thought and deed, that no shadow of anti-Semitism might exist,. . .[and] they may take a worthy part in the growth of this great Empire" (Black, 1988). This outcome – known by admirers and critics as "Anglicization" – was forged, it was claimed, on a bedrock of Jewish religious values, but it is notable that although the school was conceived as a religiously orthodox institution, rarely was more than one hour a day devoted to instruction in Jewish values and associated Jewish texts. The remaining five or six hours of daily instruction were devoted to a broad curriculum of general studies as well as to preparation for various artisan trades.

The rhetoric of the Berlin *Maskilim* and the JFS patriots may be alien today, but in functional terms their view of what the Jewish day school promises is not so different from what is proposed by those who currently promote day school education. The Day School Advocacy Forum, a community-based network in Boston, advises, for example, that "day school marketing and advocacy should focus on the quality of math, science and English" (Lieberman Research Worldwide, 2004). Adopting a more scholarly stance, researchers commissioned to explore the question, "what difference does day school make?" found that "day schools provide top-notch preparation for a broad range of colleges and universities, including those that are the most selective" (Chertok et al., 2007). In both these cases, the day school's appeal to liberal Jews is assumed to be contingent on its capacity to serve (and to be seen to serve) as a portal to academic and material success in the wider society.

This view of the day school's purpose is quite different from that inscribed in, what I called above, the survivalist tradition. When all-day Jewish schools were established in the United States in the years between World War I and World War II, following a short-lived experiment in day school education by Reform Jewish educators in the nineteenth century, they were animated by a different impulse (Zeldin, 1988). While Jewish immigrants widely regarded the nation's public schools as gateways to the opportunities promised by America, Jewish day schools were regarded by their founders as "fortresses" or "bulwarks" to protect Judaism from being overwhelmed in America. While public schools were, in the words of one Cincinnati leader, "temples of liberty [where] children of the high and low, rich and poor, Protestants, Catholics and Jews mingle together, play together and are taught that we are a free people" (Gartner quoted by Sarna, 1998), day schools were seen as training grounds for the future leadership of the Jewish community; its priesthood,

as Dushkin (1948) put it. In the words of one prominent school leader writing at mid-century, these schools, with a curriculum that devoted at least the first half of every day to the study of traditional Jewish texts, provided “the safest assurance for the continuation of Jewish life and the survival of Jewish culture” (Lookstein, 1945).

In their early years, this conception drew a chorus of disapproval, most famously from the proponents of “Americanization,” in what Dr Samson Benderley coined the “double school system,” “a system of Hebrew schools which our children can attend *after* their daily attendance in public schools” ((Sarna, 1998, pp. 16–17) emphasis in original). From the perspective of those who criticized the day school, its undoubted promise of “Jewish group survival” came at too high a price, what one opponent called, “the price of segregation.” The schools’ establishment pointed towards “narrow intellectual and social horizons, to a sect-divided society, and to an isolated Jewish group” (Grossman, 1945). And yet, in recent years as rates of intermarriage have soared and as levels of Jewish literacy have plummeted, segregated schooling has no longer seemed too high a price to pay for nurturing a Jewish renaissance among liberal Jews (Shrage, 2007), or at least for improving the odds that young Jews will choose to raise their own children as Jews (JESNA, 1999).

The confluence of these two traditions (the days school’s promise of both superior academic outcomes *and* of lasting Jewish engagement), along with other social forces such as, what one might call, Jewish *embourgoisement* (the inclination and capacity of middle-class Jews to pay private school fees), and the confluence of multiculturalism and “school choice” politics (each of which legitimate the withdrawal of minorities from an often deteriorating public education system) have fueled both demand for and supply of day school education, in North America especially, but also in other countries such as England and France (Cohen, 2007; Pomson, 2004). By 2007, a majority of all Jewish children in Britain, aged 4–18, attended Jewish day schools, up from 20% in 1975; in the United States more than a quarter of Jewish children attended day schools compared to 10% in 1975; and in France close to 40% attended day schools compared to 16% in 1986 (JPPPI, 2007; Schick, 2005). While much of day school growth over the last 50 years – in Europe as well as North America – can be attributed to natural population growth among ultra-orthodox Jews (still, the great majority of those enrolled in the schools), the increased numbers of liberal day schools and the enrollment of an unprecedented number of students in such schools has been remarkable. The first non-orthodox day school in North America opened in 1951, some 50 years after the first orthodox day school. Today, there are approximately 165 day schools either affiliated with non-orthodox denominations or organized as pluralistic or non-denominational institutions, with their enrollment estimated to be just under one-fifth of the total day school population (Schick, 2009). Growth on this scale has attracted popular comment and scholarly inquiry (Beinart, 1999; Miller, 2001; Murphy, 2001; Prager, 2000; Wertheimer, 1999). It has also led to speculation, especially since the acute financial downturn of 2008, as to whether such rates of growth can be sustained in changed economic circumstances (Rosenblatt, 2009; Sarna, 2009; Schick, 2003).

Issues

If the Jewish day school's appeal to liberal Jews has been fueled by the confluence of integrationist and survivalist traditions, this confluence also accounts for some of the most intense debates that surround schools. Scholars and practitioners debate whether such historically distinct goals can be fully compatible, or whether, as one influential educational magazine put it, parents will inevitably find schools to be either "too Jewish or not Jewish enough" (Davis, 2007). Theorists for liberal day school education have argued otherwise. Walter Ackerman, a day school headteacher at an early stage of his career, writing three years before the Conservative Solomon Schechter Day School Association was founded, made an argument that has been repeated down the years: "The public school is concerned with the child as an American; the afternoon religious school is concerned with him as a Jew; the Conservative day school is concerned with the child who is heir to two traditions, and addresses itself to the synthesis of this dual heritage within the embracive framework of Torah" (Ackerman, 1961, p. 47). A generation later, following the creation of the first Reform day schools in 1970, Michael Zeldin, the most prolific theorist of Reform day school education, again contended that liberal schools were fully able to serve multiple goals. "They provide a holistic environment for transmitting Jewish culture, embody a commitment to the core values of Reform Judaism, meet the demands of today's social realities by providing excellence in secular education with an emphasis on ethnic identity, and concretize the mandate to invite Jews to participate in Jewish life" (Zeldin, 1992, p. 75). While, latterly, the philosophical tensions or "dissonance" between the different purposes served by liberal schools have been more fully explored, in relation to Reform schools by Zeldin himself (1998) and by Ellenson (2008), and in relation to community (non-denominational or pluralistic schools) by Grumet (2003), the overwhelming impression created by the theoretical literature on liberal day school education is that these schools do indeed promise their students the best of all worlds: a relatively strong general education, and an immersion in core Jewish literacies and behaviors.

Empirical research reveals, however, that the combination of integrationist and survivalist conceptions within a single school has been less seamless than the pioneers of liberal day schooling might have hoped. Ingall (1998), studying the same Reform school over a number of years, found its leadership wrestling between nurturing progressive Jewish values among students and satisfying parental pressure for more academics and more competition. Hyman (2008), conducting intensive doctoral research in a Reform Jewish high school, found a confused set of educational purposes reflected in a disconnect between what she called the intellectually vigorous "jungle gym" atmosphere in general studies classes and the fearful or apologetic "china shop" sensibilities in Judaic studies. Marom (2003), in a case study of vision-driven leadership in a non-denominational community day school, revealed how without deliberative leadership, the community day school with its multiple purposes can easily become "a cacophony of voices, a melee of pedagogical stimuli, and a marketplace for the transmission of skills" (p. 329).

Perhaps the richest vein within which the competing/multiple purposes of the liberal day school have been explored is in relation to its curriculum, that is, in how its purposes are, and might be, translated into a program of learning planned and guided by the school. As seen above, the theorists of day school education had hoped that liberal schools would provide students with a holistic experience, and with equal access to a dual heritage. Over the years, a number of theoretical models and examples have been developed for how this might be done. Lukinsky, a pioneer in this respect, proposed a set of concepts for the integration of curriculum across Jewish and general studies (Brown & Lukinsky, 1979), as well as within the disciplines of Jewish studies (Lukinsky, 1978). Holtz (1980) mined his experience teaching both Talmud and English Literature in a liberal day school to propose the "thematic integration" of subject matter that "draws on the best thinking of both Jewish and non-Jewish minds." Solomon, as the principal of a liberal day school committed to "creating integrative experiences" for his students, provided a case study drawn from his own experience (1989), and also a more theoretically grounded map of what integration promised (1984).

Despite the best intentions of curriculum designers, the organization of schools, the preparation of teachers, the disposition of students, and what Tyak and Tobin (1994) call, the "grammar of schooling" have all militated against such outcomes. As Ingall and Malkus (2001) show, the terrain that connects Jewish learning with the rest of the curriculum is a "border-land" that requires careful negotiation between powerful interest groups, who tend to pull in different directions. As a result, there is often a disconnect between practices in the Jewish and general studies classroom, or what Bekerman and Kopelowitz (2008), in a study of the teaching of Jewish texts in liberal schools, call a secular/religious dichotomy. In her research on moral education in a range of school settings, Simon was surprised to find that in a liberal day school with a school mission statement that highlights "the idea of the integration of 'secular knowledge' and 'Jewish ideals'," "serious discussion of moral and spiritual matters are primarily relegated to religion classes" (Simon, 1998, p. 42). Tanchel (2008) and Hyman (2008) show that even in liberal day schools, Judaic studies teachers often seem reticent to challenge students to engage in the kind of critical thinking that is the hallmark of the general studies curriculum, although Tanchel shows how this might be done by taking up her own experiences teaching Biblical criticism in a community day school. It seems, as Zeldin (1998) indicated in an influential programmatic piece, that successful "integration and interaction in Jewish day schools" calls (challengingly) for schools to pay attention to all four of what Bolman and Deal (2003), in their influential sociology of organizational change, identify as the frames of school (actually, all organizational) life: human resources (concerned with the needs of individuals in an organization), structure (concerned with organizational efficiency), politics (where members of an organization compete for power), and symbol (where members find meaning and inspiration).

One last realm where the tensions created by the confluence of integrationist and survivalist conceptions have been evident is in relation to the marketing of schools. During the early decades of the liberal day school, it was widely assumed that many if not most parents were attracted to non-orthodox schools *in spite of* their Jewish

curriculum, seeing them as superior alternatives to a decaying public system. These assumptions were confirmed by research conducted by Kapel (1972) and Kelman (1979) and they continue to be highlighted by advocates for Jewish day schools who strongly emphasize the capacity of schools to serve as outstanding providers of general education. More recent research suggests a more complex picture: of parents wrestling with commitments both to public education and to Jewish engagement (Shapiro, 1996), of "students and parents navigating among [multiple] worlds" (Goldberg, 1999), of liberal parents looking for and finding meaning for themselves in their children's Jewish school (Pomson & Schnoor, 2008), or of the day school satisfying deep values that liberal parents discover they want for their children (Prell, 2007). What more recent research shares with earlier studies of the liberal day school is recognition that a majority of those parents whose children attend liberal day schools today did not attend such schools themselves. This not only makes the marketing of schools more challenging, it also places a strain on schools to generate a shared and reasonable set of expectations among those they serve.

Trends

As the mission of the liberal day school has evolved to include both an integrationist and a survivalist agenda, and as its clientele has changed, so schools have been asked to assume an accumulating burden of social tasks. Jewish children were once expected to acquire knowledge of Judaism, develop attitudes about the Jewish world, and learn Jewish behaviors from people and places in their immediate surroundings – in the family, at the synagogue, even on the street (Dash Moore, 1987; Kanarfogel, 1992; Marcus, 1996). Today, responsibility for the emotional, moral, and interpersonal development of Jewish children has been increasingly devolved to schools (Himelfarb, 1989). In many ways, the challenges posed by these changes are similar to those that face public school educators who have also been called upon by governments to take up roles once performed by families, religious institutions, and workplaces. In recent times, schools have been asked, among other things, to instruct children in how to drink sensibly, eat healthily, vote conscientiously, and have sex responsibly (see Crowson, 2001; Driscoll & Kerchner, 1999; Dryfoos, 1994).

For Jewish day schools, one of the most surprising ramifications of these developments is that schools have become some of the major providers of informal Jewish education, a field once considered the preserve of youth movements and summer camps. Faculty trained to teach academic subjects in classroom settings are now asked to provide Jewish experiences such as religious holyday celebrations, residential Shabbat retreats, and trips to Israel that were once the responsibility of synagogues, families, or youth groups. These changes are challenging schools as is seen in professional journals for Jewish teachers that discuss, for example, how to nurture spirituality in day schools (*Jewish Educational Leadership* 5:2 (2007)); how to make the most of "educational travel and student exchange" (*HaYediyon* (Passover 2006)); and how to respond to the demands of "The evolving day school" (*Jewish Education News, 24*: 2 (Spring 2003)).

Inevitably, perhaps, research literature has only slowly emerged to capture and examine aspects of these changing roles. Kress and Reimer (2009) have studied how students experience *Shabbatonim*, school-organized Shabbat residential retreats. Aviv (1999) looked at the messages conveyed to the students who participate in school Israel trips, and Pomson and Deitcher (2009) researched the experiences that schools provide outside the classroom to connect their students with Israel. One expects that more research will follow as schools cultivate these newly acquired responsibilities. For the moment, the professional literature on day schools suggests that liberal schools in particular may have undergone a shift from a paradigm of instruction (concerned with helping children acquire knowledge of the ideas and skills that society values) to one of enculturation (the more broadly conceived task of initiating children into a culture to which they may not already be committed). This is much like the shift called for a generation ago in Jewish supplementary schools by Aron (1989) and others.

Another concern to emerge from the evolving profile and purposes of schools relates to their capacity to serve an increasingly diverse student body. For most of the twentieth century, day school families were, typically, synagogue members, residents of Jewish neighborhoods, and had been recipients of a relatively intensive Jewish education themselves (Ackerman, 1989). With few exceptions, day school parents were Jewish by birth, orthodox in denominational orientation, and married to other Jews. Paying for all-day Jewish schooling constituted therefore the most complete expression of an intensely engaged Jewish identity. Today, in many countries, Jewish day schools have successfully recruited increasing numbers of families with diverse religious commitments. Many of the families being drawn to Jewish elementary schools lack an intensive Jewish education of their own and, as seen above, depend on schools to teach their families Jewish practices and ideas that extended Jewish families had previously been able to provide from their own social and cultural resources (Pomson & Schnoor, 2008). At the high-school level this phenomenon takes on an even more challenging aspect, with liberal high schools in recent years enrolling a significant minority of students who had not previously received an intensive Jewish elementary school education. Schools must figure out how to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse group of students sitting in their classrooms (Kashti, 2007).

Most of the literature to focus on this issue relates not to the question of pedagogic differentiation (how to teach a single class of students whose knowledge base is very different from one another) but, rather, is concerned with matters of religious pluralism, that is, how classrooms and schools can enable students with diverse religious commitments to feel comfortable and secure. Kramer (2003), for example, has outlined what special tasks are called for from those teaching in these circumstances. Conyer (2009), too, clarifies what in conceptual and educational terms a commitment to pluralism demands of a liberal Jewish school. Baker (2008), writing as the head of what he calls “an intentionally pluralist” high school, details the “core pillars of Jewish identity. . .the broadly defined norms of practice and belief” with which such a school expects students to engage. Lastly, Wasserfall and Shevitz, as

part of a longitudinal research project, have explored the language that the teachers and administrators in a pluralistic high school use to talk about pluralism (2006), and how students come to understand what pluralism and Jewish community mean (Shevitz & Wasserfall, 2009).

There is one more concern that has increasingly surfaced with the evolution of the liberal day school's profile and mission – one that relates to the financing and cost of day school education. Of course, the heavy burden of day school finance has never been limited to schools of one denomination or another. But as day schools have started to appeal to a greater diversity of Jewish families, speculation has increased about the extent to which the high cost of private day school education (rather than issues of principle) has been a deterrent to the wider enrollment of liberal Jews. At the same time, it is commonly assumed that while highly affiliated and highly orthodox Jews are less sensitive to increases in the cost of day school education because of their a priori commitment to parochial Jewish schools, moderately affiliated families will be much more likely to withdraw from schools if their fees continue to rise.

There have been very few studies to examine or test these assumptions. The exceptions include a study by Cohen (1999) of the school-choice preferences of conservative Jews in relation to income. He found that cost sensitivity was "a key obstacle to expanding day school enrollments among those who are already sympathetic to day schools." In similar fashion, by running a theoretical econometric model derived from what was known about the families in Toronto already enrolled in day schools, Abba (2002) also predicted that a relatively limited reduction in school fees would result in significantly increased enrollments. Some communities and national foundations have run local experiments to test the sensitivity of families to changes in day school costs, but these exercises have not generally resulted in published research or publicly available reports (see Continental Council for Jewish Education (2003) for a summary of such experiments). Mainly, then, the literature that debates these issues tends to be cautionary, speculative or, in the worst cases, alarmist (Baker, 2006; Lauer, 2001; Prager, 2005; Schick, 2003; Wertheimer, 2001).

Day School Research: The Larger Context

While most of the literature discussed above focuses on issues provoked by or integral to the development of liberal day school education, a great deal of day school research is not limited to schools of one denomination or another, but is concerned with the day school as a genus, distinct from state/public schools (Valins, 2003), from other kinds of parochial or ethnically constituted schools (Feinberg, 2006), and/or from other private schools (Herman, 2006). In a chapter of this length, it is not possible to survey all of the themes that have emerged in this research; some have recently been surveyed by Elkin and Hausman (2008) and by Pomson (2009). In the space that remains here, I argue that despite its recent proliferation, empirical research concerned with Jewish day school education tends to remain

focused around two primary themes, and as a consequence I suggest where the most significant lacunae continue to exist in this field.

Empirical research into all-day Jewish schooling has tended to be concerned with inputs and outputs; it is interested primarily in those who teach in or lead schools, and in those who graduate from them.[2] As a consequence, this has produced an ever-thickening appreciation of the motivations, dispositions, beliefs, experiences, and satisfactions of those who teach and work in day schools in general and also in liberal schools. A number of doctoral studies have focused, for example, on the identities and characteristics of teachers and principals in liberal schools (Dorph, 1993; Kramer, 2000; Markose, 1998; Reiss Medwed, 2005). While Ingall's (2006) study of the short-lived careers of three idealistic and well-qualified day school teachers remains the only book-length study in this field, there is an accumulating body of peer-reviewed work that thickens our understanding of those who choose to become day school teachers (Backenroth, 2004; Pomson, 2005; Shkedi, 1993). Finally, although sometimes harder to access, in recent years there have been a number of important commissioned reports concerning day school educators that compare them with other personnel working in other sectors of Jewish education (Ben-Avie & Kress, 2007; Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Tamivaara, & Goodman, 1998; Schaap & Goodman, 2006).

Research on the outputs of day school education has been no less prolific, constituting a kind post-mortem obsession with the lasting effects of day school education on the Jewish identities and behaviors of graduates. Although, one might have expected that, to have validity, studies of this kind would need to be of a scale that goes beyond the efforts of individual doctoral candidates, a number of doctoral dissertations have examined different outcomes of day school education (see, for example, Charytan, 1996, and Shapiro, 1988). More commonly, these matters have been explored as part of larger projects that seek to compare the impact of day schools with other vehicles for Jewish education (for example, Fishman & Goldtsein, 1993; Chertok et al., 2007; Cohen & Kotler-Berkowitz, 2004). There have also been a small number of case studies focused on the impact of individual schools on their alumni (Dickson, 2004; Jacobs, 2003). The combined "message" of these studies is that day schools do have a superior impact on measures of Jewish identification when compared with other forms of Jewish education. But, then, as Chertok et al. (2007) caution, because of the relatively recent development of liberal day school education, there is currently a lack of data systematically gathered on the long-term impact of this educational option.

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[2] Of course, there has also been no lack of theoretical work on day schools. This has concentrated around the questions of, first, what are the distinctive goals and outcomes of day school education and how might these be extended or transformed; and second, what is the place of the different disciplines of Jewish studies in the day school curriculum, and what are the relationships of these disciplines to one another and to the general studies curriculum. I do not discuss them here, since this work is well reviewed by Malkus elsewhere in this volume.

A Day School Research Agenda

Research on the liberal day school continues to proliferate. This intellectual activity reflects the fact that the emergence of the liberal day school – and its integration of what I have called survivalist and integrationist conceptions of Jewish schooling – represents nothing less than a reassessment of what it means to be Jewish in the world (Sarna, 1998). Nevertheless, there are two significant lacunae in the field's research literature whose redress would serve its further development. First, while it is generally agreed, as the last section showed, that all-day Jewish schooling has a positive effect on measures of Jewish identification that no other educational vehicle can match, little is known about why Jewish day schools produce the effects they do. We don't know, for example, to what extent these positive effects are a consequence of what children learn and experience in school, or are a banal outcome of the fact that Jewish children spend so much time together in these settings. The Jewish school remains a black box, what happens inside hidden from view. A first task in the development of day school research is analogous to the cognitive revolution in the study of teaching that moved from the investigation of the inputs and outputs of teaching to an examination of what goes on inside the teacher's head. We need to know what goes on inside schools.

Of course, literature of this kind exists in abundance in the field of general education, where it is as likely to be produced by sociologists, ethnographers, and historians as by practitioners writing in an autobiographical or confessional vein. There is no shortage of evocative accounts of life in schools and classrooms that in turn both shape and are shaped by theories of schooling. Such literature is rare, however, when it comes to Jewish day schools (The careful studies of classroom life in day schools by Lehmann (2007), Krakwoski (2008), and Hyman (2008) are, however, recent promising exceptions that demonstrate how nuanced doctoral work can contribute to the field).

A second task for research is that of developing a crosscultural mode of inquiry. The Jewish day school has emerged as a popular and frequently normative option for the education of Jewish children in almost every community where there are at least 1,000 Jewish households. The day school is an international phenomenon, and there have been studies in a wide variety of international settings (such as the Czech Republic (Foltynova, 2007); Denmark (Anderson, 2008); and Argentina (Goldstein, 2009)). There are sharp differences between the ways schools are funded, governed, and educationally organized in different countries, yet there has never been an attempt to compare the commonalities and differences between schools in a systematic and theoretically grounded fashion. In the same way that studying the insides of schools would open up something of a black box, so studying the outsides of schools – their contexts – in relation to their particular cultural settings would clear a good deal of the mystery that surrounds them.

The emergence of the liberal day school has been one of the most unexpected developments of Jewish social life since World War II; it may prove one of the most significant. Few sectors of Diaspora Jewish education provide so many opportunities for research. As the bibliography below demonstrates, a great deal has been written

about this phenomenon over the last 50 years. Looking out on this field while it wrestles with challenges posed by the post-2008 "great recession," one suspects that there are still many twists and turns to come whose story is yet to be told.

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Day Schools in the Orthodox Sector – A Shifting Landscape

Shani Bechhofer

Composition of the Field of Orthodox Schools

Although Orthodox Jews constitute only 7–9% of the total Jewish population in America, roughly 79% of all Jewish day schools are Orthodox and an estimated 99% of Orthodox children attend day schools (Wertheimer, 1999). Reflecting these numbers, it is estimated that soon, a quarter of a million children will be enrolled in Orthodox K-12 schools in North America.[1] Today's field of Orthodox Jewish schools in America (the geographic focus for this chapter) includes approximately 466 elementary schools and 361 high schools spread across Orthodox communities of various sizes in 34 states (Torah Umesorah, 1993, 2002, 2007).[2]

About 45% of Orthodox schools are located in the Orthodox geographical core, namely New York and New Jersey, and in particular Brooklyn, Rockland County NY, Lakewood NJ, and Bergen County NJ. The remaining 55% are almost evenly split between large Orthodox communities (such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Baltimore, Cleveland, and Detroit) and small Orthodox communities.

Table 1[3] shows the approximate distribution of schools across categories of identification. For purposes of this overview, schools are divided into Hasidic[4], Haredi,

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[1] Conversation with Rabbi Dovid Bernstein of Torah Umesorah.

[2] Any attempt to count schools must grapple with the problem of the diverse organizations and structures characterizing Orthodox schools. Given the market orientation of this chapter and the need to create comparable numbers across categories, each division was counted as a school. Thus if a community had one boys' elementary school, one boys' high school, and one boys' K-12 school, it was counted as two boys' elementary and two boys' high schools. Similarly, a school with separate girls' and boys' divisions in different buildings and with different principals was counted as two schools.

[3] All numbers in this section are based on publicly available documents. Even in these documents, details such as founding dates, identification, and educational structure are not available for each school.

[4] The largest American Hasidic groups are Belz, Bobov, Satmar, Skverr, and Vishnitz.

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Table 1 Current identification distribution of schools

Haredi	305(37%)
Modern Orthodox	194 (23%)
Hasidic	147 (18%)
Lubavitch	108 (13%)
Sephardic	44 (5%)
Specialty	37 (4%)

Table 2 Current distribution of level and gender options

Elementary school options	466	166 boys 155 co-educational 145 girls
High school options	361	198 boys 32 co-educational 131 girls

Table 3 Current geographic distribution by school identification

	Core Orthodox communities	Large Orthodox communities	Small Orthodox communities
Haredi	145	124	30
Modern Orthodox	27	65	88
Hasidic	130	9	9
Lubavitch	11	25	53
Sephardic	27	15	1
Specialty	32	6	2

Modern Orthodox, Lubavitch[5], Sephardic, and specialty[6] schools.[7] Table 2 shows the approximate distribution of schools across levels and gender. Table 3 shows the approximate geographic distribution of schools across categories of identification. These numbers do not reflect the demographic distribution of *children* in these school categories. For example, Hasidic schools tend to be much larger, on average, than either Haredi or Modern Orthodox schools (Schick, 2005).

[5]Information based on list provided by The Merkos Chinuch Office run by Rabbi Nochem Kaplan, Director. See www.chinuchoffice.org.

[6]Such as schools for outreach to new immigrants from the former Soviet Union or to unaffiliated Jews.

[7]Schick (2009) devised six ideological identifications for Orthodox schools; I have chosen to refer to all Religious Zionist schools, whether modern or centrist, as Modern Orthodox to reduce the interpretive nature of these categories. All of these categories aim to capture the most salient dividing lines among Orthodox day schools, but it should be recognized that the boundaries between even these categories are blurry, and that within each category there exist distinct subgroups. Additionally, many schools have shifted in emphasis over the years, which is why these categories are broad.

Table 4 Number of new American Orthodox schools founded

1960s	84
1970s	117
1980s	148
1990s	155
2000s	Numbers not yet available

Table 5 Year of founding by school identification

	Before 1960	1960–1984	1985–present
Haredi	55	85	141
Modern Orthodox	74	61	38
Hasidic	35	66	41
Lubavitch	20	31	38
Sephardic		20	14
Specialty	1	13	25

Aside from outposts in upstate New York, virtually all Hasidic, Sephardic, and Specialty schools are located in core communities. Almost half of Haredi schools are located in core communities, a third are in large communities, and the remaining 15% are in small communities. The opposite is true for Modern Orthodox schools. Half are located in small communities, about a third in the large communities, and only 15% in core communities. Lubavitch schools are even more likely to be found in small communities.

The rate of growth in the number of Orthodox day schools in America has increased over time, as displayed in Table 4.[8] Indeed, these numbers may open questions about the oft-quoted truism that by the 1990s, non-Orthodox day schools were the fastest growing phenomenon in the American Jewish community. The founding rates across school identification are displayed in Table 5.

Not all categories have experienced the same pattern and pacing of growth. For instance, Haredi schools are the largest and institutionally fastest-growing sector of the field with over 300 schools. More than half of today's Haredi schools were founded after 1985. The Modern Orthodox schools are an older group; more than half of today's Modern Orthodox schools were founded before 1965. Hasidic schools have increased at a fairly regular rate. In the next sections of this chapter, larger developments in American Orthodoxy are explored in order to understand the story behind the numbers presented above.

[8] This analysis is necessarily limited by its reliance on schools' self-reports of dates of founding to Torah Umesorah; by lack of information from at least 28 schools that were not included in the directories; by missing data on location, gender composition, identification, and dates of founding among some of the schools in the directories; and by the lack of information on schools that closed before 1993.

Ideological Diversity and Competition

Unlike other denominational day schools, Orthodox schools do not have institutional ties to a central movement-affiliated seminary. This is not a new development. Over 60 years ago, Nardi (1944) expressed frustration that, “Despite the growth in the number of Jewish all-day schools, no national or communal organization has succeeded in gaining control of any of the already existing schools. The fact is that very few [schools] of any kind are willing to accept authority from any quarter, either from an educational bureau or even from an Orthodox organization. Each [school] board is intent upon meeting its own problem and upon going its own way without outside advice or direction” (Nardi p. 19).

This reflects a broader reality. As Waxman (2003) notes, “Although . . .Orthodoxy is the smallest of the major American Jewish denominations. . .it is also the most diverse. Orthodoxy has neither a single seminary nor a single rabbinic organization. It is comprised of a variety of philosophies and movements” (p. 409). These philosophies and movements generally have no one institutional home, however, and their identities are often contested or interpreted differently by different groups. The primary strands within American Orthodoxy are typically referred to as Haredi and Modern Orthodox, although these labels are problematic. Using the term Haredi for Americans, for example, obscures the “vast differences” (Waxman, 2003, p. 410) between Haredi institutions and social organization in Israel and America. Additionally, in some popular discourse “Modern Orthodox” is a label distinct from “Centrist Orthodox.”

The larger strands are to some extent represented by national umbrella lay organizations. These include Agudath Israel for Haredim, both Hasidic and non-Hasidic, and the Orthodox Union for Modern and Centrist Orthodoxy.[9] But these organizations exercise no formal authority over individuals or institutions, and the people who identify with them are in no way monolithic in viewpoint.

Blurring Boundaries and Nuances of Difference

In fact, some current sociologists of Orthodoxy have presented a compelling case that the Modern Orthodox/Haredi divide, at least in the United States, is no longer as salient in the real world as it may be to sociologists or ideologues, a conclusion that Waxman (2007b) suggests is “perhaps the most significant development in contemporary American Orthodoxy” (p. 169). Ferziger (2007) agrees that the spectrum of Orthodox beliefs and practices is much more nuanced than this bifurcation would imply.

The stereotypical depiction of Haredim as secularly uneducated, economically dependent, isolationist historical revisionists tends to implode under the scrutiny

[9]Some would list Chabad-Lubavitch as a third strand, as they are not identified with Agudath Israel or the Orthodox Union and have a separate international organization.

of empirical research. Many American Haredim attend college, work as professionals, and enjoy aspects of American high or popular culture. Gonen (2001), for example, found a high representation of non-Hasidic Haredi men in occupations requiring "highly qualified personnel" (p. 24) and noted the "common practice" of combining *yeshiva* and college study. He attributed this to the flexibility generated by the coexistence of norms of religious study and breadwinning among American Haredi men. American Haredim exercise, listen to popular Jewish music, and read self-help literature, none of which would be considered acceptable among Israeli Haredim (Waxman, 2007b). Despite scholarly and popular interest in deconstructing Artscroll and other Haredi publications to discover historical inaccuracies and inconsistencies, Caplan's (2005) analysis suggests that Modern Orthodox historiographers are actually quite similar to Haredi historiographers in their approach to "the meaning of history and how the past should be studied and evaluated, certainly on the level of popular religion" (p. 361). Israel has great significance to American Haredim. "Contrary to popular mythology, they are overwhelmingly not anti-Zionist and certainly not anti-Israel" (Waxman, p. 148).

Similarly, a monolithic depiction of the Modern Orthodox as acculturative, cosmopolitan, lax in observance of *Halacha* (Jewish law), committed to coeducation, and unwaveringly supportive of the Israeli government, does not do justice to the variety of styles of American Orthodox lived experience outside of Haredi Orthodoxy. Neither does the depiction of a society tilted rightward, its members slipping into the Haredi abyss.

To understand American Orthodox schooling without resorting to stereotypes requires insight into these trends. The blurring of boundaries is clearly evident, for example, when examining the changing norms regarding gender in Modern Orthodox schools. The practice of educating boys and girls together (coeducation) has historically represented a dividing line between Hasidic and Haredi schools on the one hand, and Modern Orthodox schools on the other. Torah Umesorah, the organization dedicated to founding Orthodox day schools since 1944, deemed it acceptable to create coeducational elementary schools in smaller communities due to economic necessity. Coeducational high schools, however, were not considered acceptable, and parents were encouraged by Torah Umesorah to send their children to separate gender high schools in nearby large Orthodox communities. In contrast, coeducational high schools were founded by Modern Orthodox communities. Even today, 60% of coeducational schools are located in small Orthodox communities, with only 27% of single-gender schools located in those small communities. There are far fewer coeducational high schools than elementary schools (see Table 2).

In recent years, however, coeducation has become less valid as a distinctive marker of Modern Orthodoxy. Since 1975, one-third of the new Modern Orthodox schools founded have been gender separated. Numerous coeducational schools[10] have instituted some form of gender separation. Today's Modern Orthodox schools

[10] Based on observational and anecdotal evidence; the numbers are not available.

Table 6 Gender and education in American Modern Orthodox schools today

Boys only – 11 schools		Elementary	2
		High school	9
Girls only – 13 schools		Elementary	2
		High school	11
Boys and girls separate –17 schools	Different sections of building, all learning gender separated	Elementary	10
		High school	7
Fully coeducational – 89 schools		Elementary	77
		High school	12
Modified coeducational – 56 schools	Early grades coeducational, older grades[a] separate gender	Elementary	21
	Early grades separate gender for Judaic studies only; older grades completely separate gender	Elementary	22
	Judaic studies separate gender, general studies coeducational	Elementary	1
		High school	12

[a]The cut-off points vary among schools.

practice both coeducation and gender separation in various formats and formulas, as depicted in Table 6.

Just as Modern Orthodox schools are shifting in regard to gender separation, Ferziger and Waxman both argue that there is a change in the sectarianism which had characterized Haredi Orthodoxy. While this sector has not become pluralistic, they argue, it has developed new models that involve Haredim in inter-communal activity. Agudath Israel is politically active, engaging in extensive lobbying on a variety of issues on local and national levels. Ferziger (2007) documents the rise of the community *kollel* beginning in 1987,[11] "a new concept in Jewish education and collective activity… [that] emphasizes inclusiveness, communal involvement, and working with a broad range of Jews" (p. 119). He contrasts this move toward "promoting unity among Jews of all orientations" to the Modern Orthodox *kollelim* that have been founded since 1994, which have drafted graduates of Israeli *yeshivot* and Yeshiva University "primarily to buttress Modern Orthodox educational institutions" (p. 122).

Both Ferziger and Waxman claim that the sectarianism of Haredi Orthodoxy and contrasting openness of Modern Orthodoxy do not, in fact, reflect deep ideological

[11]A *kollel* is an institution in which men may continue their Talmud study for several years after marriage. Ferziger describes three stages in the development of Haredi *kollelim* in America, which at first existed almost exclusively in the core communities of New York/New Jersey; the second stage beginning in the 1970s with the establishment of somewhat traditional *kollelim* in smaller communities; and the third stage beginning in 1987 with a distinct focus on outreach beyond the Orthodox community.

convictions but are rather a product of each group's self-confidence and sense of security as a force on the American Jewish scene. The Haredi community feels secure, religiously autonomous, and confident that their style of Orthodoxy will survive. In contrast, the Modern Orthodox feel "beleaguered and defensive," and are therefore "much more likely to engage in intellectual discussions among themselves rather than to actively reach out beyond their border" (Waxman, 2007b, p. 149).

Continuity Challenges: Preserving Modern Orthodox Ideology

Concerned observers have argued that American Orthodoxy has become "Haredized" and that Modern Orthodoxy has been "in crisis" and even "under siege" (see for example Heilman, 2006; Helmreich & Shinar, 1998; Sacks, 1984). The organization Edah, with its tagline "the courage to be modern and Orthodox," was formed in 1996 partially out of this concern. In 2000, Rabbi Avi Weiss established Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, a rabbinical school which advocates for a more "open" Orthodox rabbinate than that presumably being fostered at Yeshiva University, historically the intellectual home of Modern Orthodoxy.

Some contemporary researchers, however, have taken issue with this alarmist analysis. Waxman (2007b) claims that most of those who identify as Modern Orthodox have done so "behaviorally rather than philosophically" (p. 139). It is the less rigorous practice of *halachic* minutiae, rather than a religious philosophical stance towards the State of Israel or an ideological commitment to worldly knowledge, that defines Modern Orthodoxy, at least for the laity. Ferziger (2007) argues that even if it is true that the Modern Orthodox have become more stringent in ritual observance, it is because of the significant increase in Jewish learning among both children and adults, rather than the abandonment of Modern Orthodox ideals. Waxman (2007b) cites Galinsky (2008),[12] who found that the opening of *yeshivot* and the expansion of Jewish knowledge that took place in late thirteenth and early fourteenth century Spain also resulted in increases in piety and more rigorous observance of *mitzvot* and *halakhah*, because of increased awareness in the general population about many domains of *halakhah*.

These researchers acknowledge the difficulties facing Modern Orthodoxy as a movement. Waxman (2007b) argues that it is hard for K-12 schools to socialize children into Modern Orthodoxy because of its emphasis on personal autonomy, and because of the "distant intellectual coolness of the philosophical modern Orthodox" (p. 142). But it seems that there are other challenges to perpetuating Modern Orthodox ideology as well.

One of the key elements differentiating Modern Orthodox schools from the varied forms of Haredi schools is the centrality of the State of Israel to their school's identity. In fact, this ideological commitment is considered essential to the very definition of Modern Orthodoxy (Liebman, 1965; Heilman, 2005; 2006; Schick, 2005). Modern Orthodox schools struggle, however, with defining and unpacking

[12] At the time the manuscript had not yet been published.

the nature of this commitment and its implications for educational practice. Schools seem eager for guidance; this is one of the few domains in which curricula have been developed externally and adopted by schools enthusiastically.

Pomson and Deitcher (2009) posit that both Modern Orthodox and non-Orthodox schools are "engaged in enculturative work. . .seeking to cultivate commitments and inculcate values by providing students with formative experiences" (p. 34). The challenge, in their analysis, is that schools are "uncertain about how best to translate their commitments into practice" (p. 34). Issacs (2009), on the other hand, argues that the fundamental challenge of Israel education is not the problem of how to successfully transmit Zionist values and commitments, but rather of what those values and commitments ought to be.

Modern Orthodox schools have indeed, for the most part, avoided articulating definitive statements of their particular Religious Zionist ideology in favor of adopting bland, non-committal slogans. An explicit written commitment in the mission statement to a particular understanding of Religious Zionism is highly unusual. In fact, the mission statements of dozens of Modern Orthodox schools (along with those of many Conservative and pluralistic Jewish day and high schools) utilize, verbatim, language developed by the Avi Chai Foundation as their sole articulation of the school's stance toward Israel and Zionism.[13] Because of its intended use by the Foundation as a minimum standard of support for Israel in order to qualify for funding, it is abstract and vague enough not to commit schools to a particular interpretation or stance on Israel, or to specific educational practices. It also contains no reference whatsoever to religion, spirituality, or even Zionism. It is striking that so many Modern Orthodox schools adopt such an abstract, secular articulation of a central element of their mission and distinctive religious identity, especially those schools that seem to have invested a great deal of thought into the articulation of other elements of their mission statements.

The Israel education curriculum in Modern Orthodox schools, when it exists, is commonly enacted as Israel advocacy training (Pomson & Deitcher, 2009). Two popular curricula, "Eyes on Israel" and "The David Project" (2009), function essentially as training programs for Israel advocacy and activism.[14] Both teach students to recognize distortions in the media's reportage of Israel, supply facts to provide students with a counter-narrative, and emphasize their focus on developing students' critical thinking skills.

These curricula are in line with Modern Orthodoxy's typically strong support for the right-wing stances of the Israeli Religious Zionist Orthodox (Waxman, 2007a). In Spring 2009, Jewish Action magazine, the official publication of the Orthodox

[13]The statement reads, "The creation of the State of Israel is one of the seminal events in Jewish history. Recognizing the significance of the State and its national institutions, we seek to instil in our students an attachment to the State of Israel and its people as well as a sense of responsibility for their welfare" (www.avi-chai.org).

[14]"Eyes on Israel" is a free curriculum for middle-school and high-school students created by CAMERA (the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America) to help students develop a critical approach toward what they see, read, and hear about Israel in the media.

Union, published a review of Libby Kahane's book *Rabbi Meir Kahane: His Life and Thought (Volume One: 1932–1975).* The reviewer (Rakeffet-Rothkoff, 2009) pens an enthusiastic personal tribute to the late Rabbi Kahane, the man he "met and adored" as a youth in the Bnei Akiva youth group. The magazine's editors chose to highlight the following quote from the review: "If ever a human being felt the pain and anguish of his brothers, it was Meir Kahane." That this piece was printed in the official publication of a prominent national Modern Orthodox organization, without contextual commentary or response and without recognition that the political party founded by Kahane is outlawed in the State of Israel, underscores his enduring legacy and warrants attention in any serious exploration of American Modern Orthodoxy.

Regardless of the "what" of their Religious Zionist vision, Modern Orthodox schools also struggle to determine the way they ought to nurture these commitments in practice. Religious Zionism is typically implemented as an extension of Hebrew language instruction, or at special event celebrations of *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* (Israel Independence Day) and *Yom Yerushalayim* (Jerusalem Day*),* and for schools in or near New York, participation in the annual Israel Day Parade. Israel education is still often seen as the responsibility of the Hebrew teacher in high schools. Yet as it becomes clearer that most Modern Orthodox schools are failing to create literate Hebrew readers and speakers despite instruction in Hebrew language and *"Ivrit b'Ivrit"* (teaching Judaic subjects in Hebrew) systems (Safran, 1990; Stadtmauer, 1990; Wolowelsky, 1990), the role and prestige of the Hebrew department and the rigorous enforcement of *"Ivrit b'Ivrit*" practices in schools have taken a major hit.

Whatever its antecedents, and they are hotly debated, this sense of failure in Hebrew instruction, in practice, relegates Religious Zionist education to the low end of the prestige continuum in many schools. As Modern Orthodox schools wrestle with the issues of cheating, drugs, promiscuity, religious apathy, and the challenges of infusing *Tefillah* with meaning or spirituality (Eliovison, 2008; Fluk, 1987; Goldberg, 1981; Kessler, 2007; Margolese, 2005; Soloveichik, 1972; Unterman, 2000), educating for an unclearly defined Religious Zionism appears to be a less compelling imperative. This creates the ironic reality of schools that claim Religious Zionism to be at the core of their mission, and yet relegate actual Religious Zionist education to the edges of their attention, or to certain days of the year.

For schools that claim a Religious Zionist orientation, the task ahead remains the articulation of an ideology of Religious Zionism in the Diaspora that resonates with today's educators and students. This task calls for working out how actually to convey this ideology to students in a way that will be likely to generate an enduring commitment to Religious Zionist ideals.

These issues present a real challenge to the continuity of Modern Orthodoxy. For years, Modern Orthodox parents and educators experienced concern and disappointment as they noticed alumni of their schools becoming more religiously stringent, and rejecting Modern Orthodoxy in favor of a Haredi lifestyle, during their year or two in Israel, where 90% of graduates go after completing high school (Berger, 2007). This transformation became such a high profile, universally acknowledged pattern that a slang term for it developed*: flipping out*. This process "manifests itself

in a change of outward appearances (including a change of dress and hairstyle), college and professional choices, and a changed attitude toward secular society and culture" (Berger p. 71).

The search for a cause and a remedy for this phenomenon has led to the floating of both a number of hypotheses and proposed solutions among Modern Orthodox educators and leaders. One approach has been to psychologically contextualize and normalize the phenomenon as part of normal adolescent development (Fowler, 1981; Jacobson, 2007). It is said that during the year in Israel the typical student is in the period of identity formation and role moratorium, in which the developmentally appropriate task is "solidifying an identity independent of one's parents" (Jacobson, p. 138).

A second approach has focused on the deliberate design and orchestration of the "year in Israel" experience to create the ideal environment for identity transformation. Finkelman (2003), for example, finds that Israeli *yeshivot* (and presumably seminaries) structure students' experiences during that year in order to maximize the likelihood that they will be able to "transform the students into more ideal, Haredi laymen. These programs aim to resocialize students out of 'flawed Modern Orthodox values'" (p. 2). He deconstructs the Talmud *shiur* (pedagogy) format, the charisma of the Talmud instructors, and the total environment created by the year in Israel, to reveal the latent goals enacted through them.

A third approach, not always explicitly linked to the issue of flipping out, emphasizes the fact that many teachers in K-12 Modern Orthodox schools are personally from a Haredi background (Gonen, 2001). Educational leaders and parents fear that these teachers exert a subtle influence on their young charges, undermining the ideology and religious stance of the school. Helmreich and Shinar (1998), for example, have suggested that the shortage of Modern Orthodox teachers is a significant factor in the "slide to the right" in American Orthodoxy. The Haredi teachers, referred to as "agent provocateurs," enter Modern Orthodox schools and serve to undermine their message, replacing it with a more Haredi one (see also Wertheimer, 1989 and Spolter, 2004).

The argument that the year in Israel undermines 12 years of effort invested by Modern Orthodox schools (Fowler, 1981; Heilman, 2005; Helmreich & Shinar, 1998) rings somewhat hollow when one examines the reality of the weak and diffuse form of Religious Zionist education many schools have actually provided. Rather than focus blame outward on the role of Haredim in undermining Modern Orthodox values, some critical reflection and serious research on the values and practices of Modern Orthodoxy as lived experience, especially in schools, could yield important insight for those to whom the continuity of Modern Orthodox values is important.

If Berger (2007) is correct in his analysis, the social construction of the *flipping out* phenomenon as a crisis has been somewhat out of proportion, possibly in an effort to connect it to arguments about the rightward swing of American Orthodoxy. Berger found that almost all of his study participants ended their year(s) in Israel with their commitments to completing their college education and to their career plans intact. In the final analysis, what is possibly most noteworthy about the prominence of this issue in the Modern Orthodox sensibility is the underlying anxiety it

reflects about the viability of Modern Orthodoxy as an enduring set of behavioral norms and as a compelling *weltanschauung*. As described next, Haredi society is experiencing its own version of this continuity anxiety.

Continuity Challenges: Perpetuating the Haredi Society Through Schooling

If the late 1980s was a time of increased Haredi confidence as it faced outward, it was also a time of developing Haredi concern facing inward. Orthodox mental health professionals and educators expressed concern over a growing trend of drug abuse and promiscuity among a subculture of teenagers from Haredi families.[15] These children were going "off the Derech (path)." Some educators who had been involved in outreach to non-observant Jews began to redirect their efforts to reaching inward to draw alienated young people back onto the path.

Nefesh International, The International Network of Orthodox Mental Health Professionals, was founded in 1992, its published mission to bring Orthodox Jewish mental health professionals, educators, and rabbis together to network and collaborate on issues affecting the Orthodox community. According to its website, Nefesh today has 560 members worldwide, and an annual conference that draws 300–400 people. Nefesh, with its Haredi rabbinic advisory council, created a legitimate forum for surfacing and discussing Haredi societal problems. Psychologists, social workers, and other mental health professionals were catapulted into the center of Haredi communal discourse and as advisors to its highest levels of rabbinic leadership.

In the mid-1990s, the "crisis" of the Jewish family and teenage dropouts was the topic of sessions at the national conventions of Agudath Israel and Torah Umesorah, and articles in The Jewish Observer (Wolpin,1996a, 1996b, 1999). In 1996, Agudath Israel itself founded Project YES (Youth Enrichment Services), which created hotlines, school and job placements, teen mentoring programs, and other interventions to support disengaged youth.

By 1999, the Metropolitan New York Coordinating Council on Jewish Poverty estimated that 3,500 Jewish teens in Brooklyn alone were engaged in at-risk behavior. But it was the November 1999 "special issue" of The Jewish Observer devoted entirely to "Children on the Fringe. . .and Beyond," that served as a watershed, powerfully moving the problem out of the backrooms and into the public discourse. A second issue of The Jewish Observer was published shortly thereafter on the same topic, the editor explaining that they had decided to extend the conversation due to the unprecedented number of responses and letters elicited. These publications opened a public conversation at the national level that has not yet abated. The subsequent explosion of programs for teens, parent support groups, teacher training

[15]For example see: www.timessquarerabbi.com, www.rabbihorowitz.com, www.abrahamtwerski.com.

sessions, and telephone hotlines further attested to the resonance of the issue within the Haredi community.

The communal search for causes and remedies continues, although unfortunately, and perhaps unsurprisingly, no large-scale, rigorous social science research study was ever launched; so the dimensions, contributing factors, and consequences of this crisis are not known empirically. While more careful study of the written and oral communal discourse around this subject is needed, as pioneered by Finkelman (2009) for example, anecdotal evidence points to blame being attributed alternately to parents, teachers, school systems, secular western culture, the community's spiritual failings, and Divine decree. While parents blame schools and schools blame poor parenting, communal leaders and publications have generated a more circumspect discourse. Children are easily tempted, they say, and some teenagers, such as those with learning or attention disabilities or difficult family circumstances, are especially vulnerable to the dangerous influence of the secular world and its values (Russell & Blumenthal, 2000). Like their Modern Orthodox counterparts, these Haredi leaders accept blame for having allowed these bad influences into their community's midst (in this case through technology), and resolve to repair the breaches in the ideological wall. On the other hand, a popular book titled *Off the Derech: Why Observant Jews Leave Judaism* (Margolese, 2005) summarizes the popular positions on this issue after conducting key informant interviews, and then argues that troubled teens are not as much attracted to the outside world as they are seeking to escape their own.

One concrete Haredi response has been the attempt to shield children from harm by banning the Internet or significantly limiting its use. The primary concerns in this regard are that through the Internet children will access immodest images and will socially network with strangers, with the opposite gender, with members of the "off-the-Derech" subculture, and with non-Jews. Many schools in the core communities now have policies that require parents and children to attest to the child's lack of access to Internet in the home. Unlike other segments of the Jewish community, there are a significant number of Haredi families who do not utilize the Internet at all, personally or professionally. It remains to be seen whether strict avoidance of the Internet will come to serve as a defining feature of a subgroup of Haredim, or whether the ruling will ultimately prove to be unsustainable. Meanwhile, researchers have to be aware that computer-use patterns are currently very different in the Haredi sector than elsewhere in the Jewish community, which has implications for everything from survey administration to cultural interpretation.

It is arguable that the impact on Haredi education of the November 1999 Jewish Observer issue is analogous to the impact of the 1990 National Jewish Population Study on the larger Jewish education field. Both served as wake-up calls warning of a breakdown in the system; both spawned a large number of interventions, programs, and agencies, of variable quality but all well meaning; and in their rush to fix both crises, funders and educators alike have tended to work independently of one another, sometimes duplicating efforts, and often failing to learn systematically from their own or one another's experiences. Perhaps more significantly, however, both have released tremendous energy and creativity on the part of professional

educators and lay leaders. It is doubtful whether so many Haredi schools would feature resource rooms, parenting workshops, Orthodox school counsellors, remedial reading programs, even teacher training programs, were it not for the heightened awareness of their potential role in keeping vulnerable children "on the *Derech*."

Institutional Diversity and Competition

A sense of creative urgency among educators and parents has been engendered by this heightened awareness in the Orthodox public of the impact of school on children's religious identification or alienation. In the Modern Orthodox community, the perception of a slide to the right led many to conclude that a stronger ideological foundation in Modern Orthodoxy was needed at the K-12 level. In the Haredi community, concern over an increase in children "off the *Derech*" led to advocacy for new approaches: a kinder, gentler, more child-focused and positive environment; a more sheltered, selective, safe environment to prevent exposure to negative cultural influences; schools that would embrace children's individuality; or schools that were professional enough to deal effectively with learning differences (Grossman, 2002; 2007).

Some established schools have adapted, shifted, and generally been responsive to these parental and communal concerns. They have managed to change in deep ways so as to fit new religious sensibilities and concerns, new ideological trends, new economic conditions, and new educational ideas. These changes come at a cost, however, engendering either alienation of some factions of school communities, turnover in key educational personnel, or reduced confidence in the school's stability, all of which can adversely affect recruitment and fundraising, and thus institutional survival, at least in the short term.

As often as not, however, the response to the continuity concerns has been the establishment of new schools that would presumably be more successful than the existing institutions at preventing negative outcomes. There is much scepticism among Orthodox parents and lay leaders that changing existing school cultures is possible. At the periphery of the educational field, in fact, the phenomenon of Orthodox families homeschooling has been gathering momentum for years, although the number of these families is not known and the antecedents of these decisions have not been rigorously studied (Siegel, 2004).

Shift from Community to Ideological Loyalty

The institutions of advanced Talmud study in which most Orthodox school and synagogue leaders receive their training are numerous and varied. Rich yet subtle ideological diversity exists among students and instructors even within those institutions solidly identified with a primary strand in American Orthodoxy, such as Beth Medrash Govoha in Lakewood, NJ, with its 4,300 adult Talmud students, and

Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary at Yeshiva University, with over 300 rabbinical students.

Graduates of these and other institutions have founded new schools of their own, each with its own specific interpretive vision of Jewish life and learning. This cycle of ideological elaboration and institutionalization has helped to generate a host of niche markets and related educational institutions that identify more or less with umbrella groups and established ideologies. By positioning themselves as more authentic representatives of particular ideological communities, or more responsive to particular concerns, than the larger, older schools, they have successfully created cultural understandings of their identities that protect their specialist niches (Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000).[16]

Many of the older schools in large and small communities were founded as community-serving institutions in the early years of their local Orthodox community's development. Parents and school supporters were often involved in building other community organizations as well. The challenges of diversity were seen as surmountable because of shared values of unity and community.

Over time, however, new priorities have altered the hierarchy of values among many educators, lay leaders, philanthropists, and parents. The trend to open new schools has been enabled by the concurrent shift from community to ideological loyalty.[17] Today's parents want to send their children to schools that reinforce their values and religious identification, and that do not flinch from taking stands on issues of importance to them, whether that be the celebration of *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* [Israel Independence Day] or protection from the Internet. Not only has American Orthodoxy continued to splinter into ideological communities based on ever-finer-grained differences, but the salience of these differences has concurrently risen in the identity definition of individuals and institutions. Ideological loyalty has intensified and risen in the hierarchy of values, over loyalty to local community.

In a common scenario, an Orthodox school that has served a community over the course of a decade or more finds itself facing a breakaway school; the strategies for holding the school community together are no longer effective. While at one time, one constituency may have acceded to the demands or needs of another constituency for the sake of "keeping the school together" or maintaining communal harmony, that constituency is no longer willing to compromise on its own needs and demands. This can be an expression of a new, more militantly ideological generation of lay leadership emboldened by the rhetoric of its national spokespersons and publications; or this could come about because of the accumulated frustrations

[16]See Carroll's theory of resource partitioning (1985) and a fascinating study of resource partitioning in the microbrewery movement (Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000)

[17]This chapter does not explore the role of economic prosperity in the 1980s and 1990s in the explosion of founding of new schools . While increased wealth was certainly necessary to this development, it is not sufficient in itself to explain spending choices, although see Diamond's (2000) argument to the contrary.

and disappointments of decades, set off by an incident and/or somehow reaching the breaking point.[18]

In a world of increasingly splintered Orthodox identities and thus, narrow niches, the "generalist" schools with the mission of serving their local Orthodox communities, which at one time dominated the Orthodox day-school field, are losing ground to the specialist schools serving niche markets (Carroll, 1985).

Implications of the Competitive Marketplace

As would be predicted by a typical organizational density-dependence model (Hannan & Freeman, 1989; Hannan, 2005), once the Orthodox day school achieved legitimization as an institutional form, it has continued to spread and diversify, and only market forces can slow the field's growth. Indeed, a diverse and competitive market exists. The Orthodox consumer in most communities can now select from among a variety of identifications and multiple interpretations of each identification. Schools in small Orthodox communities tend to have fewer resources but greater flexibility in interpreting ideological identifications. Schools in large communities with several schools of a variety of identifications tend to face intensive competition for market share to remain viable. In the core communities there is a population scale to support a wide variety of schools serving specific populations or niches.

The shifting of market share from the large, established community schools to an increased number of smaller niche schools has its own consequences. On the one hand, schools targeting narrow segments cannot grow very large and will never have scale advantages of the larger and usually older schools. Thus the communal cost of supporting the burgeoning field involves not only the support of a greater number of schools, but that of funding many small schools that appeal to a limited number of supporters and that are not cost efficient (Schick, 2009, p. 18). On the other hand, the reduced market share of the large, established community schools has allowed for the flourishing of diversity. This has enriched the field and increased options for parents choosing schools for their children.

In the core and large communities, where there is a robust competitive environment, Orthodox schools are to a great extent market driven, and thus particularly vulnerable to the expectations of their audiences (Polos, Hannan, & Carroll, 2002), which may include potential parents, potential teachers, community leaders, local philanthropists, and national organizations, networks, and leaders. Against the backdrop of shifting priorities and ideological boundaries, and anxieties over continuity, these expectations are ambiguous and often unstated.

In this environment, a school's competitive advantage may depend on perceptions of legitimacy and prestige. Legitimacy and prestige are hard to win, easy to

[18] There ought to be considerable research on the causes and history of breakaway schools because of their tremendous economic impact; but it does not appear that this phenomenon has been the subject of any scholarly inquiry.

lose, and difficult to restore. Thus, claims of greater ideological legitimacy have become convenient and potent tactics for attracting students in this competitive market. Efforts to build or maintain prestige require focus on positioning the school in the field's status structure (Podolny, 1993). These pressures are dangerous in that they can draw the energy and attention of lay and professional school leaders away from the substantive issues of education, and can distort decision making to the detriment of school quality.

The danger is exacerbated by the longstanding challenge of funding, which the current recession has brought to a head. Despite its growth and differentiation over the years, from a financial perspective Orthodox schooling is based on a model whose sustainability rests on expectations of heroic self-sacrifice on the part of parents, lay leaders, and educational professionals. The pervasive informal, familial culture among both lay and professional members of Orthodox schools creates the perfect environment for conflict avoidance, lack of accountability and transparency, unclear standards, improvisation rather than planning, and relationship games (Bechhofer, 2004). These organizational habits make it unlikely that schools and communities will face uncomfortable truths about the quality of their offerings and of their lay leadership structures, and re-examine the values, premises, and market assumptions upon which they were founded (Litman, 2007; Dym & Hutson, 2005; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Heifetz, 1994). Yet these dispositions will be needed if schools are to maintain a continued commitment to educational quality and substance in a financial model that pits quality, financial viability, accessibility, and ideological fidelity against one another.

Conclusion

The decentralized nature of the field of Orthodox schooling and the evolving relationship between the various segments of Orthodoxy have led to a dramatic increase in the number of Orthodox day schools over the last three decades, under the predominant paradigms of ideology and specialization. Increasingly finer-grained differences in religious beliefs have developed and become more salient. Additionally, members of both Modern and Haredi Orthodoxy have become publicly concerned about dilemmas and challenges to their ideological continuity. For these and other reasons, the community-inclusive Orthodox school model has been challenged, and in an increasing number of communities displaced, by smaller schools with fidelity to specific visions of religious life or alternative educational approaches.

The Orthodox day-school field is large and diversified enough for ecological analysis of field dynamics to yield insights into both the market conditions in which individual schools operate and the larger communal dynamics in which American Orthodox schooling is situated. This chapter has introduced some fruits of this analysis, demonstrating that the field has grown more diverse, more competitive, and more innovative.

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Early Childhood Education

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It was an exciting day in the lives of the four-year-old class. They had planned and prepared for this event for months. It was time for 24 children to leave their safe, secure and serene environment and move on to the next step in their lives. Parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends were entering the building with cameras, flowers and presents. The energy was palpable. The teachers were in the classrooms with the children sharing their last minute instructions. The children could hardly contain themselves.

Behind the scenes that same morning, I had the privilege of working with Jake who was distributing the programs. After the programs were placed on approximately 90 chairs, Jake realized we were ten programs short. He came to me with a very specific directive. "Joanie, we need ten more programs, go upstairs and make ten more copies, okay?" Realizing, after all, that Jake was just turning five, I asked him if he thought we should make more than ten copies, in case other visitors showed up for the celebration. He looked at me in such a way that I will never forget, and repeated his directive, but this time used his hands and all ten fingers to emphatically state, "I counted the chairs, we are ten short, and we need only ten." I reluctantly said, "Okay, I will be right back with the copies." As I stood at the copier for what seemed like an hour trying to decide if I should respect Jake's decision and make ten more copies, knowing I would probably have to go back upstairs to make more when more people arrived, I pressed the number ten on the copier machine. As I watched Jake proudly and competently place each program on the remaining ten chairs, I realized how empowered and capable this young boy felt.

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Jake's story is about quality in Jewish Early Childhood Education (JECE). The research that we present for the first time in this chapter demonstrates that JECE impacts the engagement of families in Jewish life. The analysis also reveals that this is a far more complex process than simply intensifying the Judaic content of the educational program. The key factor is the level of excellence of the JECE program's underlying "operating system." It is worth considering that the parents who rate that their children's JECE programs operate at a superb level are more open to enhancing their lives with Jewish connections. Thus, for many parents the promotion of children's Jewish identity is not an important criterion when choosing a JECE program. However, if they perceive and experience the JECE programs as excellent and well-run, they will become more engaged in Jewish actions after they enroll their children as a "side effect." While Joanie Smeltz's finger was suspended over the copy button, she was making a cross-roads decision. The decision that she made to listen to children, respect them, and provide them with opportunities to make decisions for themselves exemplifies the level of excellence essential to influencing the lifepaths of the children and their families' formation of a strong relationship to the Jewish people.

In JECE, there are many talented directors and teachers, beautiful buildings, sparkling curriculum, small classes in safe surroundings, and educators willing to personally change in order to promote children's learning and development. The problem is that the ground is shifting. Haynes, Ben-Avie, and Gilliam (2000), of the Yale Child Study Center, explain the roots of what is known today as Universal Pre-Kindergarten. At the Yale Child Study Center, a collegial debate raged between Edward Zigler and James P. Comer that was to span decades—until the two decided to collaborate. Associated in the public mind with Head Start was Edward Zigler, Director of the Office of Child Development and Chief of the Children's Bureau in Washington, DC. He was later to join the Yale Child Study Center. James P. Comer, associate dean of the Yale School of Medicine and founder of the Yale Child Study Center's School Development Program, was well aware of Zigler's work and the newly established Head Start.

At the heart of the matter were children walking through the doors of elementary schools who were not "ready" for school, according to the school staff. In response, Zigler took the lead in establishing a new national infrastructure to "immunize" the children against the negative developmental experiences that they were likely to encounter in schools. This infrastructure became known as "Head Start." If it is possible to "awaken" or "spark" young children's development, and thus accelerate the developmental process, should not early childhood programs organize themselves in a way that would make this happen? This was the central premise of Head Start. The US government could have taken the approach to wait until the children reach kindergarten and address the achievement gap at that educational level. Instead, the US Economic Opportunities Act of 1964 launched Head Start, a program for 3- and 4-year-old children that was designed to help children overcome the deprivation caused by poverty. By way of contrast, Comer took the stance that if the problem inheres in the elementary schools, then the best solution was to fix the "bad" schools. In his approach, the aim of early childhood education is to provide underprepared

children with positive developmental experiences—not to solve the problem that the *teachers* in elementary schools were underprepared to educate all children.

A renewed interest in early childhood education emerged with the launching of the Goals 2000 education initiative by President Clinton in 1994 which stated that by the year 2000 "all children will start school ready to learn." The statement admitted that not all children were ready. The mood at the time was captured by Hayes, Ben-Avie, and Gilliam (2000): "Labeling a child unready for school may serve to release the school from the responsibility of promoting that child's development. Given the potential of schools' early intervention programs to act as positive catalysts in the lives of children, we ask *Are schools ready to promote development among all the children?*" (p. 93). The results of model preschool programs and large-scale preschool programs that were newly published at that time provided solid evidence of the long-term impact of early childhood education. Consistent with the theme of this chapter, the most relevant finding was: "High quality programs clearly have the potential of improving the school readiness of these children and can often lead to remarkable long-term effects in terms of improved functioning in school, work, and life" (p. 99).

Today's universal pre-kindergarten is designed to provide all preschool-aged children with an opportunity to learn in a supportive, high-quality, literacy-rich educational environment prior to entering kindergarten; as a state-funded initiative, all families have access to this free program. It is free—and here inheres the challenge to Jewish early childhood education (JECE). Consider the school choice decision that many Jewish parents face when weighing free public school versus expensive Jewish day school education. Until the introduction of universal pre-kindergarten, we, the authors, could have thought that we were very close to actualizing the hopes that we had when we were voices in the wilderness calling for attention to be paid to early childhood within the Jewish community. Up until recently, we could have expected natural growth to occur in JECE as more and more school communities learned about the learning and developmental outcomes among young children like Jake in Jewish early childhood education (the latest estimate of the number of children in JECE is 123,000 in total, of which about 104,000 are Jewish. This estimate is based on Schaap & Goodman, 2004). With the introduction of universal pre-k, this natural growth is not as assured. Now that families have an absolutely free option for early childhood education, JECE programs will increasingly need to demonstrate excellence in order to recruit and retain families.

Despite the introduction of universal pre-k, Jewish early childhood education has the potential to thrive. At this crossroad, the next best step is to consider anew the premises underlying Jewish early childhood education. Fortunately, this work of reflection and action has already started. In 2007, the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE) convened a session for Jewish early childhood professionals at the national conference (authors of this chapter who were affiliated with CAJE include Eli Schaap, Ilene Vogelstein, and Pat Bidol-Padva). The result of that discussion was a draft statement on *Key Elements for Creating a Jewish Early Childhood Education Program* (http://www.caje.org/earlychildhood/JewishEC-DraftStatement.asp). The aim of Jewish early childhood

education is addressed in the opening section of the "Key Elements" document. This opening section is noteworthy because of the dual focus on children and on families. The statement also articulates engagement in Jewish life as the outcome.

> The purpose of Jewish early childhood education (JECE) is to lay the foundation for life-long Jewish engagement by supporting the development and enhancement of the Jewish identity of children and their families through Jewish knowledge, Jewish values, and Jewish experiences.

Key Elements for Creating a Jewish Early Childhood Education Program concludes with a section on excellence. The focus of this chapter, therefore, is on excellence in Jewish early childhood education, specifically within a North American context.

Voices in the Wilderness

Influenced by *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* (National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2000), a partnership was established in 2002 to begin the development of a set of quality indicators, anchored in relevant theory and research, for describing excellence in Jewish early childhood education. The partnership with the Center for Applied Child Development (CACD) at Tufts University's Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development was initiated by one of us (Ilene Vogelstein). The seeds of this partnership were sown in 1979 when a group of six women met at the conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) at what was to become the first meeting of the Jewish Caucus of NAEYC (later renamed the National Jewish Early Childhood Network). These "matriarchs" were the early childhood professionals in Baltimore, Washington, DC, Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago.

In 1998, the Mandel Foundation published *The Teachers Report: A Portrait of Teachers in Jewish Schools*. Among the findings, the report noted that 55% of the early childhood teachers had received no Jewish education after the age of 13, 22% had received no Jewish education before the age of 13 and only 15% had received a day school education before the age of 13. The report surveyed teachers in three communities (Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Atlanta). When the report was shared with the Baltimore leadership, the family of The Children of the Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Foundation decided to invest in Jewish early childhood education and established Machon L'Morim: Bereshit.

In June 2000, The Children of the Harvey and Lyn Meyerhoff Philanthropic Foundation convened a regional conference on Jewish early childhood education. At the conclusion of the conference, the attendees agreed to contribute funds to obtain more information regarding the Jewish early childhood education profession. In this way, the Jewish Early Childhood Education Partnership, a partnership of six philanthropists, was launched. The funders later contributed to the establishment of a permanent national home where advocacy, research, and services could be offered to this emerging field. The home was the Early Childhood Department at the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE).

CAJE partnered with the Center for Applied Child Development (CACD) at Tufts University's Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development. This research, coupled with the demographic research on Jewish early childhood programs (Vogelstein & Kaplan, 2002) and the impact of a Jewish early childhood education on families (Beck, 2002), was a catalyst for intensifying the discussions identifying the issues facing Jewish early childhood education.

In developing the quality indicators for Jewish early childhood education, the Tufts researchers (2004) rejected using "developmentally appropriate practices" as the standard. All of the accreditation guides that were reviewed and critiqued referred to standards of excellence that were developed by the National Association for the Education of Youth Children (NAEYC), the leading (non-Jewish) accrediting agency in the country for early childhood programs. These standards emphasize the importance of "developmentally appropriate practices" (DAP). The researchers from Tufts commented on this term: "This somewhat overused term for excellence in early childhood education is rarely defined in detail; as a result, the phrase *developmentally appropriate* is subject to multiple interpretations. For example, some early childhood educators believe developmentally appropriate means that children are using hands-on materials. This simplistic definition may lead them to over-emphasize the importance of activities, even if those activities have no clear learning goals" (p. 2). Thus, the quality indicators were listed under six categories: (1) Program development and leadership; (2) Curriculum, instruction, and assessment; (3) School and classroom environment; (4) Interactions with children; (5) Partnerships with parents and families; and (6) Partnerships with host institutions.

From the work of the partnership between CAJE and Tufts emerged such initiatives as The Alliance for Jewish Early Education, the Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative (JECEI), the development of a new Jewish Child Development Associates (CDA) degree, and the partnership among seven institutions of higher learning to develop an initiation course for educators in Jewish early childhood education. JECEI was funded by several Jewish philanthropic institutions in 2004. According to JECEI's logic model, the initiative increases the capacity of lay and professional leaders to effect change in schools and communities. In December 2005, The Alliance for Jewish Early Education was established. The Alliance is open to any international, national, or communal organization addressing Jewish early childhood education. In this way, professionals holding a national, international, or communal portfolio in Jewish early childhood education have an opportunity to learn, grow, and support each other while they collectively advocate, network, and collaborate to advance the field of Jewish early childhood education. The examples used in this chapter draw on our experiences in these organizations and the research we conducted in our professional capacity.

Development as the Aim of Early Childhood Education

While there are over 1,300 Jewish early childhood programs in the United States (CAJE Early Childhood Department and JECEI, 2003), there is not consensus regarding the aims of Jewish early childhood education. What should JECE

promote? Coleman and Hoffer (1987) in their description of the basis for private schools write that the "school is an extension of the family, reinforcing the family's values. The school is *in loco parentis*, vested with the authority of the parent to carry out the parent's will" (p. 3). According to this approach, the aim of JECE is to help create the next generation in the "image of the preceding one" (p. 4). By way of contrast, an alternative approach builds on the families' hopes and aspirations for their children. Education is seen as a way to improve society by promoting developmental outcomes that will result in the second generation becoming *different* than their parents (for example, more engaged in Jewish life). Thus, it is enticing for Jewish organizations to see JECE as a way of promoting Jewish continuity. The second approach also opens the door for educative institutions to promote the learning and development of both generations at the same time.

Both of these approaches have to wrestle with the transmission of Judaism's very large sociocultural inheritance (*m'dor l'dor*). On one side of the equation is an inheritance that is comprised of all the group life-events of Jews as well as the accumulated wisdom of thousands of years. On the other side of the equation are very small children.

Young children may not understand, yet, the knowledge of past generations encased within concepts embedded within the sacred texts. Through guided play, however, they will encounter language, behavior, attitudes, and practices associated with these concepts. Vygotsky (1978) maintained that it is possible to "awaken" or "spark" child development. As a Jew, it is not surprising that Vygotsky dealt with the psychological mechanism through which a large sociocultural inheritance is transferred to young children. This psychological mechanism is concept formation, because embedded within concepts are ideas, values, and historical events from past generations. Consider the concept of the "the presence of G-d in the world." Other concepts are the "world to come," "divine providence," and "tzedekah" (charity). Vygotsky explained that thought and language are intertwined. In this way, young children develop the ability to think conceptually. Initially, young children develop pseudo-concepts, verbal labels that are initially without content. For example, a child may know the verbal label of "covenant" or "Tikkun Olam" (responsibility to change one's self and thereby the world). Vygotsky considered the development of pseudo-concepts as a critical step in the process of developing actual concepts. Thus, young children may engage in Shabbat activities at their JECE programs, even if they do not have yet a fully developed grasp of the essence of Shabbat as a "sanctuary in time," to quote Heschel (1951, p. 29). Without the verbal label, actual concepts will not emerge later in time. Through which activity do children form everyday concepts? Play!

This approach stands in contrast to the "academic-oriented" preschools that seek to give children a "head start" through direct instruction. For example, Haynes et al. (2002) observed educators in early childhood centers compelling 3-year olds to "write" their names before permitting them to play. Play was considered an activity on the periphery of the core mission of academic learning— "recess," as it were. The approach of the Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative (JECEI) is to draw out the competencies of children through play to inquire, explore, wonder in order that

they actively process everyday experiences under Judaism's framework of thoughts, emotions, actions, and ways of partaking in community.

At the Yale Child Study Center, the study group on play investigates the mental actions involved in children's fantasy play. For example, Mayes and Cohen (2006) observe that "*just pretending* provides a world where the child is able to try out relationships, identifications, and solutions" (p. 130). For 3–5-year-old children, imagination represents a special mode of mental functioning that motivates them toward increasingly complex relationships with others. Mayes and Cohen (2006) explain:

> With a capacity for imagination, relationships with others are colored both by the child's previous experiences and by his imagined wishes and beliefs. The capacity for sustained imaginary play emerges in parallel with the child's acquisition of an understanding of how the actions and words of others reflect and are motivated by their feelings, beliefs, wishes, and memories, each actions of mind. Such an understanding allows the child to imbue the persons in his imaginary play with complex feelings and desires towards others, and to create the stories, or an inner world, by which he defines himself and through which he will continue to view and define his external world. (p. 145)

Unfortunately, early childhood programs have become increasingly "academic-oriented." To illustrate, *The Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter* ran an article under the following headline: "Play: The New Dirty Word." In the article, Mary Mindess (2001) wrote: "Play is extremely important. It's part of being human. It shouldn't get lost in the push toward higher standards. It is, in fact, one of the factors that contributes to higher standards, as well as to psychological and social well-being. When we discourage free time for play, a great deal of creative energy is lost to the individual, and ultimately, society becomes the loser" (p. 7). Unfortunately, children are playing less these days as academic lessons are introduced as early as preschool. Mindess describes the prevalent attitude: "We've got to give children the right start." She translates this phrase to mean, "We've got to give children the best chance to get the highest test scores" (ibid).

Similar to Dewey (1938), Comer recognized that activities had to be meaningful to the children in the here-and-now, and not only in service of a far-away goal. Thus, the first curriculum that he designed addressed the children's social skills, and not their test scores. He is steadfast in that it is all about relationships. The relations that children form in early childhood education could serve as a template for all future healthy relationships. This is especially important because children at this age "strive always to learn how to be, how to act, how to cope, how to adapt, how to solve problems" (Noshpitz & King, 1991, p. 319). It is for this reason that an excellent JECE program builds into the schedule of the day time for children to explore relationships with others—and with themselves. Time for self-discovery, time for self-expression through such means as music and art, time for experiencing the ways of partaking in community, time for engaging in group play, time for engaging in fantasy—all these are characteristics of excellent JECE programs. James Fowler (1986) made a similar point in his description of the stage of faith that is relevant to young children (pp. 236–232): Stage I Intuitive-Projective faith is the fantasy-filled, imitative phase in which the child can be powerfully and permanently influenced

by examples, moods, actions, and stories of the visible faith of the adults who are meaningful to the child.

The Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative (JECEI), as an approach that incorporates Fowler's key teachings about faith development, falls into the constructivist and progressive educational "camps." Constructivism focuses on the knowledge and meaning that learners make from their experiences. Learners are active participants, not just recipients of knowledge. Learners participate fully in the educational process including setting direction of what is learned, how it is learned, and evaluating or reflecting on the educational experience. Progressivism similarly focuses on the importance of experience, but adds to the conversation the larger significance of education to a people, society, culture, or nation. Dewey's (1938) emphasis on the need for educating citizens for democracy to survive and thrive greatly influenced modern education in the United States for both children and adults. The schools of Reggio Emelia have embraced him as a major thinker in formulating their philosophy and approach.

The schools of Reggio Emilia offer an education based on the theories of Dewey and Vygotsky among others, but elevated to a new level of practice. For example, the schools of Reggio have developed the practice of documentation of children's work to a level unforeseen beforehand. In general, early childhood programs tend to be oral cultures and, therefore, activity-based learning activities soon fade from memory. Documentation makes the process of learning visible to children, educators, families, and community members. In this way, the documentation sparks reflection and growth. However, the approach of Reggio Emilia cannot be simply replicated, despite the claims of numerous schools billing themselves as "Reggio schools" who have only copied specific methods and tools. At the foundation of the holistic approach of Reggio Emilia is an historical and culturally specific vision of what it means to live a full life as a citizen in an Italian democracy (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998). This represents both the goal of education and the values that are embodied in the educational practices of the schools. Thus, to develop a Reggio-inspired JECE program entails understanding and articulating an historical and culturally specific vision of what it means to live a full Jewish life in contemporary society.

Other types of schools are constructivist and/or progressive without being Reggio-inspired. Montessori early childhood programs of which there are some Jewish early childhood programs share many of the same foundational ideas about children and their capabilities and importance to society as do Reggio-inspired schools. Yet, Montessori schools have their own distinctive approach to early childhood education. Play theory is a popular approach that many Jewish schools have embraced either for their school as a whole or as an educational strategy (e.g., play with blocks). Informed by Piaget's understanding of development among others, play theory supports the notion that children learn and grow not just cognitively, but in terms of social and emotional growth, through playing with their peers. Play allows children to discover lessons about life.

The greatest intersection between JECEI and the Yale Child Study Center's Comer Process is the use of child development as a framework for decision making.

In professional development academies of both initiatives, educators learn to see children's everyday experiences from a developmental perspective. To illustrate this point, consider the case of the boy and circle time. The teacher sang a song to signal the transition to announce that it was to circle time. All the children ran to the mat—except for Jacques. He continued playing in the block area. The teacher finally went over to him and asked, "Did you not hear the song we sing to announce circle time?" He replied, "I heard the song." She said, "When we sing the song, everyone is to stop what they are doing and come to the circle." He then asked, "What's with you teachers?" It's not hard to understand why a teacher might view the interaction through the "lens" of order and discipline. Thus, her response was to punish the child. Was there another "lens" she could have used to interpret the interaction? For example, JECEI, uses seven lenses, big ideas about Jewish living and learning to inform the educational process. If she had viewed the situation through the lens of *b'tzelem elokim* (the image of God) which JECEI associates with cultivating the potential of each child, then perhaps she would have cheerfully clapped her hands together and remarked, "What a great question! Let's go to the circle area and talk about why do we feel that it is necessary several times a day to gather all the children together for circle time? Would you like to start the discussion?" In this scenario, she "listened" to what the child really wanted to ask—and not to how he phrased his question. Through showing educators how an interaction may be considered from different perspectives, they learn that children's behavior is a form of communication, and an opportunity for individual children and the whole community to grow.

The lenses that JECEI uses are concepts that are embedded with ideas, values, and historical events form past generations (http://jecei.org/lenses.html). Consider the lens of *Hit'orerut* which alludes to the mystical concept of G-d awakening those who slumber. JECEI took this concept and applied it to early childhood education: Awaking (Amazement and Gratitude). From the outer reaches of the universe to the smallest atoms, there is much in the world to fill us with amazement and respect. Wonder fuels a culture of inquiry and reflection. By way of contrast, educators who view children through the lens of order and discipline are likely to see children "getting into things," making "messes," and "excessively mischievous."

JECEI today uses the lenses as a framework for decision making as well as a set of guiding principles: Ideally, the lenses are manifest daily in JECEI early childhood centers in the ways they structure their time; curricula and classrooms; the quality of relationships with the children, educators, and host institutions; and the partnerships JECEI forges with the families. The lenses are a response to the ambivalence of what is "Jewish" in Jewish early childhood education.

When the educators learn the different concepts ("lenses") through which to interpret everyday occurrences in classrooms, then a "mindfulness" emerges, to use Ellen Langer's (1994) term. As a result, children's cognitive structures develop "which select and categorize information, and serve as reference frames for thinking and acting" (Pepitone & Triandis, 1987, p. 481). In this way, a mindfulness to these concepts emerges both among the educators and the children, and the process of transmitting a very large cultural inheritance to the children is initiated.

With development as the aim of Jewish early childhood education, the focus is on the intersection between Judaism's sociocultural inheritance and children. As mentioned above, this intersection is facilitated through concept formation. While young children may form only *verbal labels* in their minds of certain concepts, the groundwork is set for them to fill in these verbal labels with rich content through play and direct instruction later in school.

For the home and school to create a "conspiracy on behalf of children," to use a common expression within the Yale Child Study Center's School Development Program (Comer, Haynes, Joyner, & Ben-Avie, 1996), both the educators and family members need to learn not only the ideational content of these concepts. Educators and parents also need to learn how these concepts provide a rhythm to the week, month, and year. They also need to experience, along with the children, how everyday activities commonly considered to be secular may become laden with meaning when viewed through the lens of Jewish thought; hence the importance of professional development for educators and parent education.

The key difference between Jewish early childhood education and Universal Pre-K is the implication of the educative process for the families. Even from the beginning of the rapid growth in early childhood programs in the United States following the close of World War I, children's play was not the only educational purpose of early childhood programs. During this period at the Yale Child Study Center, Arnold Gesell established a program that was to serve as a model. Gesell's articulation that children's behavior develops in a patterned way, through predictable stages (e.g., the "terrible twos") still resonates with many parents today. In 1924, Gesell wrote, "Should the nursery school become a thinly disguised day nursery for the custody of children, its future is doubtful." Rather, Gesell advocated that early childhood education should become "an educational adjunct to the home for the instruction and guidance of parents and ultimately for pre-parental training" (Ames, 1989, p. 134). The US Economic Opportunities Act of 1964, which launched Head Start, was designed to help children overcome the deprivation caused by poverty. Josh Kagan (2002), New York University School of Law, explains that "Civil rights activists and academics united behind Head Start, both hoping that it would lead to some kind of reform of public education and involve parents more productively than typical public schools" (p. 517). For some schools, parents are important to the extent that their involvement strengthens the education of the child. Parents are asked to help out in the classroom, serve on a Parent-Teacher Organization, or are consulted when a problem arises with a child. While these can be warm and welcoming communities, their explicit agenda and approach does not focus on meeting the needs of parents. Other schools are family-centered where the families, and not just the child, are viewed as part of the educational vision and goals. For example, a family-centered school might provide to parents: learning and support on areas of interest or need and opportunities for building relationships and community with peers. Thus, the Jewish community, primarily due to concerns regarding Jewish continuity, views JECE as an effective lever for involving parents in the life of the JECE program and thereby for impacting their engagement in Jewish life. For this reason,

JECE schools may intentionally engage and facilitate the learning and growth of parents both as parents and as adults.

JECEI's work in the field demonstrates the importance of providing families with rich Jewish learning that challenges them intellectually and connects to their emotional lives as parents. Moreover, families benefit when JECE provides them with a sense that they are part of a community of Jewish families that learn and celebrate together and support each other in times of need. To this list, the Yale Child Study Center and JECEI would advocate that parents become partners in education. This is most effectively accomplished by developing governance and management structures that function well when family involvement is seen as far more than "something nice to do." Rather, parents-as-partners is at the core of the school enterprise. With effective governance and management structures, families become engaged in promoting the well-being of all the children in the school, and not just that of their own children. One such structure is the School Planning and Management Team—an umbrella committee that coordinates all the initiatives bombarding the school, often with mutually exclusive goals. The School Planning and Management Team is comprised of families, school administrators, educators, community representatives, and all those who have a stake in the life success of the children. The School Planning and Management Team and other school structures are described in Comer, Joyner, and Ben-Avie (2004).

Research and experience in educational and organizational change point toward several key factors that are characteristic of successful change efforts. Through setting up governance and management structures to anticipate and manage change, the collective energies of JECE will not be diffused by putting out one fire after another. To make these governance and management structures function well, learning and development cannot be limited to only the children. Administrators, educators, and families need to change the way that they work and interact with one another. The governance and management structures will thereby change the underlying "operating system" of the JECE.

In this manner, the educators in Jewish early childhood programs build school communities characterized by healthy relationships, increased capacity to successfully promote children's learning and development, and passion for Jewish life. The natural outcome of the commitment to creating community through healthy relationships is that families and educators collaborate to influence the lifepaths of the young children.

Outcomes

Goodman, Schaap and Bidol-Padva (2008) administered an inventory to parents who enrolled their children in JECE programs that were affiliated with either the JECEI or Project *Kavod* II, which focused on the work conditions of Jewish early childhood educators. The two initiatives have different goals: JECEI is a long-term initiative that seeks to achieve excellence over a period of 3 or more years in a

school and in a community; Project *Kavod* II was an innovative 1-year initiative in the Greater Palm Beach area that engaged the hearts and minds of lay and professional leaders in a joint exploration of Jewish early childhood education. Both initiatives sought to better understand the identity, perceptions, and characteristics of the parents of the children enrolled in the early childhood programs.

The online parent inventory was administered at 7 JECEI Jewish early childhood programs (which had a response rate representing 79% of the families) and at 7 Project *Kavod* II JECE programs (which had a response rate representing 69% of the families). In total, 1,159 completed the parent inventory. On the inventory, the parents were provided with a list of possible reasons why families may enroll their children in JECE programs; they were asked to list their three most important criteria that they used when they selected their children's programs. One would assume that families who are not interested in transmitting the faith culture of the institution would not send their children to an institution that is incompatible with their beliefs. However, location, convenience, and cost are more frequently stated than faith-based beliefs. Hence, the importance of exploring the reasons why parents enroll their children in Jewish early childhood education. On a 5-point scale, ranging from "Not at all important" to "Very important," the most important factor was the quality of the staff and educators (4.88). This criterion was closely followed by the quality of the child development program (4.77). Thus, the original selection criteria were driven by the families' search for an excellent early childhood education for their children.

To discern the Jewish-related criteria of the parents' selection criteria, they were provided with a list of "characteristics" they desired that their children would acquire as a result of enrolling their children in the programs. Jewish areas of learning and development were included in the list of criteria. The two top criteria were related to child development, and not Jewish life. They were the children's development of a strong sense of competence in their abilities as well as the development of strong social skills.

The parents' original selection criteria represented the families' priorities prior to enrolling their children in Jewish early childhood education. Also on the parent inventory there was a section in which the parents were presented with a list of Jewish actions (e.g., attend adult Jewish classes, celebrate Shabbat). They were asked to indicate how often their family participated in the following before and after enrolling their children in a Jewish early childhood program. The average rate of change was computed by averaging the differences of the scores observed over time (that is, the pre-test score was subtracted from the post-test score). The following two items had the greatest rate of change: "Read Jewish books or sing Jewish songs" (0.69); and "Celebrate Shabbat" (0.63). Among the Jewish parents in JECEI educational programs, there was a 28% increase in their participation in parent education programs after enrolling their children.

Does Jewish early childhood education impact the engagement of families in Jewish life? An analysis of the data indicates that this is indeed the case. The analyses also revealed that this is a far more complex process than simply intensifying the Judaic content of the educational program. The key factor is the level of

excellence of the JECE program's underlying "operating system." These statements are based on a series of data analyses (e.g., principal component factor analysis, internal consistency reliability analysis, regression). The factor that measures excellence is comprised of the quality rating that the families assign to different aspects of the programs' operation (e.g., "The program is well planned and efficiently run.").

In summary, for many parents the promotion of their children's Jewish identity is not an important criterion when choosing a JECE program. However, if they perceive and experience the JECE programs as excellent and well-run, they will become more engaged in Jewish actions after they enroll their children as a "side effect." This finding has important consequences for how the Jewish community considers its investment and planning for these JECE programs. This finding aligns well with JECEI's premise that a long-term transformative change effort to improve early childhood programs in schools and communities will lead to the families' Jewish connectedness. It is worth considering that the parents who rate that their children's JECE programs operate at a superb level are more open to enhancing their lives with Jewish connections. It is this willingness of families to expose themselves to unaccustomed experiences that marks the initiation of Jewish journeys.

To confirm the finding that the families' ratings of the JECE programs' level of excellence predict, in part, their engagement in Jewish life after enrolling their children in JECE, the scores of the JECEI parents were compared with those of the Project *Kavod* II parents. JECEI's change model focuses on improving the underlying operating system of Jewish early childhood education in a way that Project *Kavod* II did not. The JECEI parents had higher ratings that were not due to chance on the extent to which the program influenced the Jewish part of themselves, the school climate, and the knowledge and skills of the teachers.

Moreover, when comparing the scores of the JECEI families both in-married (two Jews) and intermarried with the scores of the Project *Kavod* II families, the JECEI families had statistically significant higher scores on the likelihood of furthering their children's Jewish education through enrollment in an Israel experience and/or Jewish camp. They also showed greater interest in the possibility of enrolling their children in a Jewish day school. Also, an increase was noted in the engagement in Jewish life of non-Jewish spouses after enrolling their children in JECEI early childhood education. JECEI has a way of reaching out to intermarried families, and it is effective.

Throughout our lives, our understanding about how the world works and our place in the world entwine with our sense of our own emotional and behavioral capacity and habits, as well as with our sense of community (Ben-Avie, 2008). Developmental outcomes of the process of forging a strong relationship with a religious community are framed in terms of thoughts, emotions, actions, and partaking of community (especially through language). A first analysis that was conducted predicted the families' thoughts, emotions, and ways of partaking of community—but especially their actions. The second also predicted the families' thoughts, emotions, and actions—but especially the ways of partaking in the Jewish community. In both cases, the most important predictor dealt with how well the JECE programs function. These findings validate JECEI's approach to change: The most

effective leverage for enhancing families' engagement in Jewish life is improving the underlying operating system of Jewish early childhood education.

Creating Excellence in Jewish Early Childhood Education: Standards for the Preparation of Qualified Educators

The most important criterion that parents had when selecting their children's early childhood program was the quality of the staff and educators. One of the concerns from the Tufts study mentioned at the beginning of this chapter was the impact of the large number of educators with limited Jewish knowledge employed in Jewish early childhood education. Studies on educators in JECE (Holtz, 1993; Vogelstein & Kaplan, 2002; Gamoran, Goldring, Goodman, Robinson, & Tammivaara, 1998) noted the lack of professional training in education and/or Judaica. In-service training, while available to most early childhood professionals, was inadequate for addressing sustained change initiatives; the training focused on either Jewish content or early childhood pedagogy. Finding qualified, skilled early childhood educators is difficult considering the low status and the low level of compensation. Finding professionals who are trained in early childhood development, skilled in current best practice, and who are knowledgeable about Jewish customs, practices, and traditions, is extremely difficult—especially in smaller Jewish communities.

The aims of The Alliance for Jewish Early Education include the articulation of a global vision of excellent Jewish early childhood early childhood education and advocacy to establish professional and program standards of excellence (the Alliance is open to any international, national, or communal organization addressing Jewish early childhood education). The Alliance raised the question of what knowledge, skills, and attitudes professionals entering the field of Jewish early childhood education should have. In order to address that problem, the Alliance invited representatives from all the Jewish institutions of higher learning to discuss the feasibility of developing a common course for all professionals entering the field. The goal of the Alliance was to work collaboratively to ensure more early childhood professionals obtained a basic licensing requirement. It is important to note that in 2006 only two Jewish institutions of higher learning were offering courses that integrated Jewish content and values with early childhood development and pedagogy. For non-Jewish educators, in particular, this was a glaring need. So, too, among Jewish educators without a solid background in Judaism.

The representatives from the seven institutions of higher learning developed an initiation course. The course was designed to explore the connection between early childhood settings and the broader Jewish community and the relationship between effective practice and one's own connection to Judaism. By consensus, the following learning objectives were agreed upon:

- Be familiar with current trends and practices regarding the integration of Judaic and General educational practices in Jewish early childhood programs ("blending").

- Understand the principles behind high-quality Jewish early childhood education and reflect on models of high-quality Jewish early childhood programs.
- Identify and understand the network of relationships within the Jewish community that early childhood programs are a part of and brainstorm strategies for developing those relationships.
- Design educationally purposeful environments and experiences that integrate Jewish concepts and content in routine activities that are commonly considered to be secular.

The course was conceived as a stepping stone to entering a degree program at an institution of higher education. In the fall of 2008, the Board of Jewish Education of New York City offered the initiation course to new professionals. In the spring of 2009, the first Jewish CDA graduates received their certificates.

At the same time, as the group was working on the common course, a parallel group was working on the standards for the number and type of credentials expected of early childhood Jewish educators. Up until that point, there was not a national organization that was recognized by all Jewish communities as being responsible for licensing Jewish early childhood professionals. Moreover, there were not standards for the preparation of qualified educators in Jewish early childhood education.

The standards group created five levels to advocate for pay scales that reflect the educators' credential level. For example, Level 1 consists of two courses in Jewish Studies plus a Child Development Associates (CDA) degree or a Jewish CDA. Level 5 is a Masters in Jewish early childhood education or an MA in early childhood education with four graduate level courses in Jewish topics and four graduate level courses in early childhood education.

When we started, in 2001, there were approximately four national organizations or institutions addressing Jewish early childhood education (JECE). Today, there are 23 organizations in North America and Israel that address JECE in some way.

Conclusion

Jewish early childhood education in the United States is at crossroads. JECE could either succumb to market forces in the face of free Universal Pre-Kindergarten or expand. Given that JECE impacts the lifepaths of families as well as the children, an effective leverage for influencing families would be diminished if JECE does not thrive. And to thrive, the quality of JECE's operating systems will need to rise. When a school is constantly operating in a crisis mode, the school community does not have the wherewithal to engage in the type of long-term, global planning that leads to improved learning and developmental outcomes for students and their families. By way of contrast, well-functioning schools focus the full attention of the school community on the learning and development of children and their families.

What is the most effective intervention? Schools revise the curriculum, try to reshape schooling along the lines of the business sector, bring in motivational speakers for drive-by professional development workshops, and implement family

education programs. Without governance and management teams that create community, all these different initiatives lead to program fragmentation, duplication, conflict, and the waste of psychological energy. Mandating change—without creating the conditions that would make change possible—is not useful at all, even counterproductive (Comer, 2004). Promoting excellence in JECE takes changing the way people interact with one another in behalf of the children and their families. It is all about relationships.

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Experiential Jewish Education: Reaching the Tipping Point

David Bryfman

At 8 years I attended my first sleepaway camp. Mixed with the emotions of leaving home for the first time are also the memories of the singing, playing games, having late night discussions, and my first simulation activity—involving a lot of running around at night and stealing flags off the British or some other dastardly enemy of the Jewish people. Ten years later I boarded my first international flight, to spend a year in Israel with the members of my youth movement, some of whom had been there with me at that first summer camp. From a journal entry 1 month into my journey I recounted that “nothing could prepare me for my first time in Israel. There is something about being here, overlooking Jerusalem alongside Agnon, Shemer and Amichai, none of who are unfamiliar to me, that is now bringing out emotions and connections that I never really understood.” Jump forward almost two decades and amid conducting my own research, I witness many of the similar learnings, emotions, and connections, but this time in the experiences of hundreds of Jewish youth on yet another continent and in a new millennium.

What I am describing is hardly the unique path of an individual. In many ways it is the ubiquity of my journey that is significant. Experiences like these have provided the most profound moments of Jewish experience and learning for tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Jewish youth. Although the impact of informal Jewish education has seldom been questioned, it has only been relatively recently that some of these key Jewish educational experiences have garnered communal attention and resources on par with other more formal institutions of Jewish learning.

The purpose of this chapter is not to further accentuate the somewhat artificial divide between informal and formal settings of Jewish learning. What I am describing in this chapter, whether it occurs in these formal or informal contexts, is a philosophical and pedagogical approach that bridges both of these settings and is united under the banner of experiential Jewish education. The focus on the group, the role of educator as facilitator, the implicit nature of challenge within these activities, the framing of the experience within a Jewish context, the active engagement of learners in their own learning, and the role of reflection by individuals upon these

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experiences are just some of the major characteristics which constitute experiential Jewish education. In articulating what it is, and what it can strive to become, it is hoped that this chapter will further elevate the field of experiential Jewish education as one of the most powerful and viable strategies to develop and maintain the positive individual and collective identity of Jewish youth and young adults.[1]

This chapter is written at an important juncture in the development of the field of experiential Jewish education. Depending on one's vantage point, the world of experiential Jewish education has never looked brighter; more communal and media attention, more philanthropic and communal dollars, and more participating numbers all serve as high indicators of success. An alternate view acknowledges that despite the successes of relatively few larger entities, many more grassroots, long-established organizations, along with many emergent informal Jewish educational initiatives, are struggling to find their place in the Jewish communal landscape of the twenty-first century. Regardless of whether one regards the glass of experiential Jewish education to be half-full or half-empty, almost all would agree that despite all that has been achieved more is certainly possible. But unlike many other previous calls to see this type of Jewish education succeed and flourish, the onus within this chapter is placed firmly on the field of experiential Jewish education to take the necessary next steps to reach its Tipping Point, its "moment of critical mass, the threshold, the boiling point" (Gladwell, 2000, p. 12).

Why Informal Jewish Education

Informal Jewish education is pervasive, in terms of both the numbers participating in its various forms and the significant impact that these experiences are having on people. Even so, at the outset of a chapter such as this it remains necessary to articulate precisely what it is that we are discussing. The work of Barry Chazan to define informal Jewish education remains the reference point for all discussions about this topic:

> Informal Jewish education is aimed at the personal growth of Jews of all ages. It happens through the individual's actively experiencing a diversity of Jewish moments and values that are regarded as worthwhile. It works by creating venues, by developing a total educational culture, and by co-opting the social context. It is based on a curriculum of Jewish values and experiences that is presented in a dynamic and flexible manner. As an activity, it does not call for any one venue but may happen in a variety of settings. It evokes pleasurable feelings and memories. It requires Jewishly literate educators with a "teaching" style that is highly interactive and participatory, who are willing to make maximal use of self and personal lifestyle in their educational work. (Chazan, 2003)[2]

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[1] Although I do believe that experiential Jewish education can and should also be offered to adults, the arguments in this chapter, although applicable to an adult audience (as well as to younger children), are based primarily on my research and experiences with the youth and young adult population.

[2] For a further analysis of the evolution of the term, including the eight characteristics that he considers essential to informal Jewish education, see Joseph Reimer's chapter in this handbook.

Despite the work of a few to discuss the field as whole (Reimer & Bryfman, 2008; Reimer, 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2007; Reisman & Reisman, 2002; Reisman, 1979), most studies have opted to treat the individual settings where informal Jewish education takes place as discrete entities. Although differing in their levels of short- and long-term impact, almost all research in this domain has found that Jewish summer camps (for example, S. M. Cohen, 1999; Farago, 1972; Fox & Novak, 1997; Joselit Weisman & Mittelman, 1993; Keysar & Kosmin, 2001, 2004b; Lorge & Zola, 2006; Sales & Saxe, 2002, 2004), Jewish youth groups (for example, Ben-Avie & Goodman, 2009), and Jewish travel programs (especially those to Israel) (Chazan, 1994, 1997, 2002; E. H. Cohen & E. Cohen, 2000; Israel & Mittelberg, 1998; Saxe & Chazan, 2008; Saxe et al., 2004; Shapiro, 2006) all contribute significantly to the development of individual and collective identity among Jewish youth and young adults.

In citing these references I fall into the some of the very traps that I am trying to avoid. First, although experiential Jewish education does exist in Jewish summer camps, travel programs and youth groups, it can, and does also exist in a much larger array of Jewish settings, including schools, congregations, and universities. Second, much of the research cited above fails to capture the essence of what these experiences look and feel like, and often assumes that uninitiated readers know of the "magic" or the "wonder" that occurs in many such environments. The scarcity of qualitative research in Jewish education, in general, means thick descriptions of environments where Jewish learning influences the affective, behavioral, as well as the cognitive dimensions of individuals are rare. Where researchers have embarked on more ethnographic portrayals of these environments, especially of Israel trips (Frank, 1996; Goldberg, Heilman, & Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002; Kelner, 2002; Shapiro, 2006), the understanding of these phenomena has been greatly enriched. And third, by drawing attention to specific settings where experiential Jewish education takes place, I further accentuate the fact there is an absence of large-scale meta-analyses that would help us better understand what constitutes the field of experiential Jewish education, what it looks like, and why it should be considered an essential sub-field of Jewish education.

Recently, I joined a virtual Jewish community in cyberspace. There I was able to learn and experience Jewish life in a way that is presumably foreign to many. My avatar can light Shabbat candles, float on the Dead Sea, and participate in a Passover Seder. As more iterations of experiential Jewish education continue to evolve, the adage of "you know it when you see it," if it was ever adequate, is an increasingly insufficient starting point for many related discussions. In providing an analysis of the field of experiential Jewish education today and what remains its greatest challenges, I hope to show that experiential Jewish education exists in many different types of settings, that its powerful essence can be conveyed, and that it justifies the stature which it has achieved to date in certain domains and will continue to develop more broadly in the future. To do so, this chapter begins by providing a comprehensive definitional approach to what experiential Jewish education is and what it is not.

Reaching the Tipping Point

Almost 10 years after Malcolm Gladwell's (2000) "The Tipping Point" was first released and found its way onto many Jewish bookshelves and conference schedules, it is my contention that despite some major inroads, the development of considerable momentum and even achieving some major accomplishments, experiential Jewish education has yet to reach its point of peak success. For this to occur a few major things need to occur, none of which are insurmountable for a Jewish community whose agenda continues to be dominated by a determination to promote and preserve Jewish identity.

I come to this conclusion largely because of some Jewish educational experiences; specifically, I refer to Birthright Israel (Saxe & Chazan, 2008) and Jewish summer camping (Sales & Saxe, 2002) that have already blazed a trail which the field should be primed to follow. Some might argue that it is because these relatively few larger institutions have attracted unprecedented philanthropic, media, and communal attention, that other smaller organizations have been unable to assert themselves on the communal landscape. However, these signals, along with a mixture of hope and optimism, lead me to suggest that the Tipping Point for what is often referred to as informal Jewish education is not only attainable, but achievable, in the not-too-distant future.

To its detriment, the world of experiential Jewish education is a disparate and decentralized one. Further complicating matters, as intimated above, there is no broad consensus about what the term means and there is disagreement whether or not it even constitutes a field. Nevertheless, my experiences working and interacting with many of the key practitioners, thinkers, and institutions in this domain have led me to the conclusion that, regardless of any technical definition of what constitutes a field, the phenomenon of informal Jewish education does exist and, more importantly, it must be considered an extremely significant force within efforts to promote Jewish identity in the contemporary world.

In order for this growth and acceptance to take place, a radical shift in the way informal Jewish education represents itself needs to occur. A re-claiming of terminology might first appear to be semantic but ultimately is integral as an initial step in this struggle. The term informal Jewish education was initially bestowed upon those Jewish educational organizations that were not schools. Even though some proponents of informal education have attempted to define this term (Chazan, 2003) *informal Jewish education*, by its very label it still describes what it is *not* instead of what it *is*. Re-labeling this enterprise as *experiential Jewish education* better describes the type of learning that is at the essence of this pedagogy: learning that occurs when the mind meets the heart and is translated into actions, whereby learner experience something, reflect upon the experience, and learn from the experience for themselves. As will be articulated throughout this chapter, the terms *formal* and *informal* are relevant in that they describe the settings where Jewish education is taking place, however, it is the term *experiential Jewish education* that best describes the type of learning that is occurring within them—and the term that I will use throughout this chapter to more accurately reflect what it is that is being described.

The bulk of my research and practice over the last 5 years has taken place in youth organizations in North America and Israel, and this is largely reflected in the research and examples upon which this chapter draws. With the addition of the United Kingdom, a region that has contributed somewhat to the literature of informal Jewish education (Rose, 2005), and more significantly to that of informal education in general (Smith & Jeffs, 1990), the examples that I cite largely mirror the global development of the field. While I can certainly attest to the idiosyncratic nature of the various communities and organizations where I have lived and worked, I believe that this chapter reflects the current state of experiential Jewish education, regardless of geographic or institutional boundaries.

As well as outlining the current state of experiential Jewish education, primarily through redefining the "field," this chapter will describe three major strategies that experiential Jewish education must undertake in order both to consolidate its place in the Jewish educational landscape and excel by moving even closer toward its Tipping Point: (1) Developing robust and compelling instruments to measure its success; (2) Creating systematic and comprehensive professional development programs; and (3) Building and maintaining a comprehensive unifying structure (or structures). These are the three major strategies that I believe are necessary for experiential Jewish education to become entrenched as a valued commodity within Jewish communal life. While at face value there may seem to be nothing new about these three strategies, combined they signify major changes taking place both in the Jewish community and in the rapidly changing word in which we live.

Formal, Nonformal, Informal, and Experiential Jewish Education

At the heart of the struggles facing experiential Jewish education has always been the inability to adequately define the phenomenon. It, therefore, remains necessary in a chapter such as this to articulate a meaningful definition and understanding of experiential Jewish education. To assist with these definitions, it is important to look first at how "formal," "nonformal," "informal," and "experiential" are defined in general education.

Formal Education: Within general education, the term *formal education* refers to learning that occurs in a structured system that includes chronological assessment, specific teacher qualifications, and is often government regulated. Formal education has been described as the learning that takes place in "the form of age-graded and bureaucratic modern school systems or elders initiating youths into traditional bodies of knowledge" (Livingstone, 2006, p. 204). Jewish schools, with their core practice often being the transmission of Jewish knowledge and skills, and often characterized by the physical presence of classrooms, trained teachers, and assessment tools, are the paradigmatic examples of formal Jewish education. There is little question that Jewish schools are also sites of Jewish socialization, but until relatively recently their dominant modus operandi was the transmission of a cognitive-based knowledge and skills set. As will be seen later, those formal Jewish institutions

that have adopted a more experiential approach to Jewish education and socialization have been able to embrace a more holistic approach to their students' Jewish journey.

Nonformal Education: *Nonformal education* is the deliberate and systematic learning, often with an emphasis on skills, that takes place in less traditional educational institutions (Husén & Postlethwaite, 1994). In a Jewish context these nonformal structures traditionally included Jewish summer camps, youth groups and travel programs. Increasingly several other Jewish institutions, including congregational schools, community supplementary schools and certain aspects of some Jewish day schools, could be classified as nonformal.

Informal Education: The term *informal education* describes the incidental transmission of attitudes, knowledge, and skills (often with an emphasis on attitudes) that occurs through daily lived experiences (Husén & Postlethwaite, 1994; Smith, 1996). In a Jewish sense, this is the learning that a person often undergoes, for example, by participating in Jewish rituals or communal life. It can also refer to the moments of Jewish learning that occur in everyday life outside of the parameters of what are generally considered specifically Jewish contexts or settings.

Nicholas Burbules, in a compendium of articles about informal education, distinguishes between nonformal and informal learning on the basis of the degree of *structure* and the degree of *intentionality*.

> Nonformal education is characterized by some kinds of structure (though different ones from formal educational institutions and processes), and includes some level of conscious intent to achieve learning, whether by overt teaching or other means. Informal education, as I understand it, is more continuous with the activities of everyday life, in which some teaching and learning might occur, but largely in an unintentional and tacit way. (Burbules, 2006, p. 282)

Experiential Education: As will be analyzed further, *experiential education* focuses on the transactive process between teacher and student that takes place within the learning environment and content (Itin, 1999), and that allows learners to directly experience, and reflect upon these experiences, in order to increase their knowledge, develop skills, and clarify personal values (Kolb, 1984). In a Jewish sense, experiential education, as it is described here, is known to take place in summer camps, on trips, in retreat settings, as well as in many day schools. Recognition of this broad scope of possibilities is essential for better understanding experiential education as a philosophy and pedagogy that can occur in multiple institutions rather than in any specific setting.

With these definitions in mind, it is important to recognize that what Jewish education has traditionally referred to as informal Jewish education, is more precisely what the general education world refers to as nonformal education. Specifically, in his seminal piece on the topic, the eight characteristics that Barry Chazan identifies as being essential to informal Jewish education resemble elements that would often be present in many nonformal learning environments (Chazan, 1991, 2003).[3]

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[3]The eight characteristics that Chazan defined as part of his philosophy of informal Jewish education—person-centered Jewish education; the centrality of experience; a curriculum of Jewish

Experiential Jewish Education

This language is essential as we transfer the discussion to a Jewish context. Informal education refers to the incidental Jewish learning that takes place in everyday life. Formal and nonformal describe the different types of settings where Jewish education takes place. As my colleague Joseph Reimer and I have argued in recent articles, "experiential Jewish education," a term first used by Bernard Reisman (Reisman & Reisman, 2002; Reisman, 1979), is a more accurate and compelling depiction of the educational processes taking place within many different types of Jewish educational institutions today (Reimer & Bryfman, 2008) and it is this *experiential Jewish education* that should also be of greater interest to researchers and educators alike.

To further understand these distinctions and what constitutes *experiential Jewish education*, it is also necessary to examine what is meant by both "experiential learning" and "experiential education."

Experiential Learning: According to Aristotle, "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them," (Aristotle, 1998). This principle encapsulates much of what the term experiential learning has come to mean especially in contrast to didactic or traditional learning. However, it is important to recognize that not all experiences lead to learning. As David Kolb suggests, four conditions need to be met for genuine knowledge to be gained from an experience:

1. The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience;
2. The learner must be able to reflect on the experience;
3. The learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience;
4. The learner must possess decision-making and problem-solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience (Kolb, 1984).

As mentioned in the description of informal education, experiential learning takes place all the time in the Jewish world. Jews are constantly engaged in unstructured, incidental activities that cause them to analyze, reflect, and learn from their experiences within the broader context of their Jewish identities.

Experiential Education: In contrast to experiential learning where an educator is not necessarily present, *experiential education* necessarily focuses on the transactive process between the teacher and students who are directly experiencing the learning environment and content (Itin, 1999). Experiential Jewish education explicitly refers to the purposeful learning that occurs when an educator and learner interact, and that causes learners to experience something for themselves. To adapt a definition from the Association for Experiential Education, experiential Jewish education can be defined as:

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experiences and values; an interactive process; the group experience; the "culture" of Jewish education; an education that engages; and informal Jewish education's holistic educator—are still clearly present when experiential Jewish education is done well.

> A philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase their Jewish knowledge, develop skills and clarify values. (The Association for Experiential Education in Gilbertson, 2006, p. 9)

The key elements of this definition include its focus on the direct experience of the learners and their subsequent focused reflection in order for growth to occur (Dewey, 1938). This type of learning can be considered as diametrically opposed to what Dewey refers to as traditional education or what Paulo Freire vividly describes as the scholar depositing knowledge into the assumed-empty bank accounts of their students (Freire, 1970).

The work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi about achieving a state of flow is useful to consider in the context of good experiential Jewish education. According to Csikszentmihalyi, flow describes a person's mental state when he or she is fully immersed in what he or she is doing. In a state of flow, a person's full energy is dedicated to contributing toward the success of the process that the activity offers (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). When an individual is climbing down a rock face or kayaking down a river, evidence of flow within an individual might be obvious. The challenge for experiential Jewish educators is to create sophisticated programming that can engage learners at such a level of intensity within meaningful Jewish experiences. As Reimer and I have described, it is this element of challenge that often distinguishes education from socialization, primarily because it enables individuals to achieve the state of flow necessary for meaningful and enduring learning to take place (Reimer & Bryfman, 2008).

This lengthy theoretical introduction has considerable implications for the practice of many Jewish organizations. Central to these practical implications is the realization that the false dichotomy between what has been incorrectly labeled *formal* and *informal* Jewish education has largely disregarded the reality of Jewish education today. It is this *process* of experiential Jewish education that should most concern us, rather than the various settings in which Jewish learning takes place.

What We Know About Experiential Jewish Education

Largely focusing on discrete informal settings and programs, there have been very few attempts to synthesize our cumulative knowledge about experiential Jewish education. While some could claim that this proves that the field is not a unified one, or even that there is no field at all, I suggest that this is more a feature of individual researchers being drawn to specific experiences, or of specific philanthropic foundations selecting specific organizations or programs to research. Where meta-analyses have taken place they often highlight many of the common features that exist across settings and institutions and subsequently consolidate these experiences within the broader field of experiential Jewish education (Chazan, 1991; Reimer & Bryfman, 2008; Reimer, 2007).

Perhaps, suggesting that experiential Jewish education is being taken more seriously, there has been an upsurge in the number of research studies that have focused on the impact that specific settings of experiential Jewish education have on individuals. These studies have examined a variety of settings including summer camp (Keysar & Kosmin, 2001; Sales & Saxe, 2002, 2004), the Israel experience (Saxe & Chazan, 2008; Saxe et al., 2004), Jewish youth groups (Ben-Avie & Goodman, 2009; Fishman, 2007; Teenage Research Unlimited, 2006, 2009), and Jewish Community Centers (S. M. Cohen & Blitzer, 2008). Interestingly, there are also some studies that have focused on more typically formal settings, including supplementary schools (Wertheimer, 2009), that have also paid attention to the experiential learning taking place within these environments. A handful of studies have also looked at the relationship between the education taking place within a variety of different settings including one study that looked at the interaction between summer camp, congregational school, and youth group in the lives of Jewish youth in the Conservative Movement (Kosmin & Keysar, 2000).

The variety of research methodologies that these studies have employed is beginning to supply us with an accumulating body of knowledge. Whereas once the dominant research form was survey-based, with many quantitative studies reporting on how many Jews were involved in which programs, a new generation of qualitative studies has elucidated the experiential learning process taking place within these environments. Such methodologies have included ethnographies, open-ended interviews, and focus groups all of which have better contributed to our understanding of what is taking place in these settings rather than who is attending them (examples include Bryfman, 2009; Kelner, 2002; Shapiro, 2006). The ambitious longitudinal study on which Ramah has embarked (Keysar & Kosmin, 2004a; Kosmin & Keysar, 2000) is one of the few studies in the Jewish community that has looked at the long-term impact of experiential Jewish education in such a systematic and focused manner.

Perhaps most significant among all of these studies, especially in terms of research methodology, are those conducted on Birthright Israel. Birthright Israel studies offer the unusual possibility to employ an experimental design that includes a control group. Whereas many other studies are unable to isolate the impact of multiple variables, these studies are designed to identify the impact of a single experience on the identity development of individuals, by comparing those young adults who were accepted on the 10-day journey to Israel with those who were not. While such a design is highly desirable and valuable, it is extremely rare (Saxe et al., 2004; Saxe et al., 2009).

In most instances, when such experimental designs are not possible, studies that have looked at the whole experience of individuals, not just their Jewish influences, are extremely important (Kadushin, Kelner, & Saxe, 2000). Designs that have adopted an ecological systems approach have been able to look at the multiple variables that influence the identity development of individuals (Kress & Elias, 1998; Kress, 1998).

This new generation of studies also highlights the willingness of Jewish Federations and foundations to invest in studies of experiential Jewish education.

While there could always be more research, foundations such as the Avi Chai Foundation (Sales & Saxe, 2002) and the Jim Joseph Foundation (Sales, 2006a, 2006b) have highlighted the important connection between research, philanthropy, and experiential Jewish education in the twenty-first century. Whereas, once, the agendas of these various organizations were disconnected from one another, current economic times, as well as common sense, demand that they work more closely together.

Earlier I claimed that experiential Jewish education has not reached its full potential and that as a field it continues to struggle to gain legitimacy as a powerful and desirable tool to develop positive Jewish identity. Nonetheless, several studies have shown that when experiential Jewish education is successful, there is little doubt that it has tremendous positive impact on the identity development of Jews. However, in the field of experiential Jewish education the gap between successful and less successful educational experiences is large, and therefore it might be more accurate to say that as a whole experiential Jewish education has been unable to assert itself as the equal of formal education that generally demands higher standards of excellence.

The Challenges Before Experiential Jewish Education

The research conducted to date highlights what I consider to be three great challenges that lie before experiential Jewish education: (1) Developing robust and compelling instruments to measure its success; (2) Creating systematic and comprehensive professional development programs; and (3) Building and maintaining a comprehensive unifying structure (or structures) to organize the field of experiential Jewish education. All three of these elements are essential if experiential Jewish education is to reach its Tipping Point.

Developing Robust and Compelling Instruments to Measure the Success of Experiential Jewish Education

> *I am so grateful for being able to do March of the Living. It has been the most meaningful time of my life. The contrast of the tainted Poland with the beauty that is Israel has changed my life.* (Anonymous, March of the Living participant)

Phrases like "I had the time of my life" or "life-changing experience" resonate for many who have been part of powerful Jewish learning experiences, especially immersive experiences including pilgrimages to Poland, trips to Israel, and Jewish summer camps. While educators may beam with pride when they hear such reactions, for researchers such comments are insufficient measures of success. The adage that "we know good experiential Jewish education when we see it" may ring true for many educators within the field, but such measures are increasingly seen as an inadequate measures of success. While there always will be a place for anecdotal evidence, there is also a need to develop more comprehensive mechanisms to evaluate experiential Jewish education.

Better evaluation of experiential Jewish education only will become possible when institutions are better able to articulate not only *what* it is they are trying to achieve, but *why* it is that they are trying to achieve these things. Vision statements must be vivid idealized descriptions of a desired outcome that inspires, energizes, and helps create a mental picture of what each organization ultimately aspires to achieve. It is in relation to these vision statements that the success of organizations must be measured.

I contend that it is largely because of the lack of compelling visions that experiential Jewish educational institutions lack adequate measures of success. Instead of asking if they are moving closer to their ultimate objectives and real purpose, they have focused on measuring whether consumers were satisfied with the services provided or how many people participated in specific programs and activities. Often fueled by funders (foundations and federations alike), these measures seldom reflect what really matters—the learning outcomes and impact of these experiences on the development of identity within individuals.

I am involved in some recent initiatives that are beginning to articulate learner outcomes in experiential Jewish education. Initially, these discussions were based around trying to identify specific behaviors, attitudes, skills, and knowledge that were considered important for learners to achieve in various settings where experiential Jewish education takes place. As these discussions progressed, it was realized that assessing the success of these experiences based on learner outcomes was of secondary importance, compared to the ability to identify what were the major goals and purposes of such education. For example, while knowledge of Hebrew language was considered important as a skill to be able to converse with other Jews, or partake in Jewish ritual life, it was considered more important as illustrative of a learner's connection to fellow Jews and Jewish tradition. While identifying specific learner outcomes (possibly in the domains of behaviors, attitudes, skills, and knowledge) and developing indices within these domains that can be measured remain important, further attention must also be paid to the meta questions of what it is that experiential Jewish education wants to achieve, and why it is uniquely poised to do so.

To be fair, this is neither a critique of individual institutions nor of experiential Jewish education alone, but of the broader field of education in general, and of Jewish education in particular, that has rarely looked seriously into questions such as these, and struggled to address adequately the question of what success in Jewish education should and could look like.

Professional Development of Experiential Jewish Educators

One of the primary obstacles for experiential Jewish education is the inadequate credentials of educators in the field. Without intensive, quality professional development opportunities, experiential Jewish education will remain the domain of energetic and passionate young Jewish women and men whose primary motivation is often to offer today's youth opportunities similar to ones they were able to experience in their younger years. While their enthusiasm is critical, the inability

of these educators to adapt their own experiences to contemporary times ultimately ensures that much of Jewish education remains dated and irrelevant for the youth of today. This limited capacity to conceive of new programs and structures is intensified by the fact that most experiential Jewish educators lack the theoretical, philosophical, and pedagogical base that is mandated for many of their counterparts in formal Jewish educational settings.

In many regards the term professional development is a misnomer. Many of the educators in this domain are anything but professional educators, often committing to this work as a summer job, for supplemental income and frequently with little or even no financial remuneration.

However, these realities do not mean that experiential Jewish educators could not and should not undergo intensive and extensive training and development. Some may rightly argue that the success of experiential Jewish education is due to the fact that it has, by and large, been facilitated by young adults who in many instances are not much older than the participants themselves. I would argue that the reliance on youth and enthusiasm, instead of training and professional development, is ultimately damaging to the field as it furthers the argument of critics who look upon experiential Jewish education as being less serious and less significant in the lives of young Jews than those institutions that employ more credentialed educators. I also argue that youthfulness and enthusiasm, and training and professional development, are not mutually exclusive and that a balance needs to be met between these two artificial constructs. Whether we call it professional development, training, hadracha, or capacity building, the suggestion that young people cannot receive ongoing professional development is something that the field of experiential Jewish education must reject. Where organizations have invested in this type of training, the limited data available indicate that a more qualified cadre of experiential Jewish educators has emerged (Sales, Samuel, Koren, Gribetz, & Reimer, 1997). Many key aspects of experiential education can be learned in education schools. Concepts such as constructivist, project-based, and discovery learning all resonate within the framework of experiential Jewish education. The emergence of several academic courses, classes, and programs focusing specifically on experiential/informal Jewish education at various academic institutions—including American Jewish University, Hebrew College, Hebrew Union College, Hebrew University, Jewish Theological Seminary, and less academic programs including the Institute of Informal Jewish Education at Brandeis University, the Machon Le Madrichei Chutz L'Aretz (Institute for Youth Leaders from Abroad), and Melitz—all signal promising changes for the field. But these institutions seldom, if ever, meet together, rarely talk with one another, almost never exchange ideas, and have little consistence in terminology when talking about their work. For the field of experiential Jewish education to advance, these institutions must begin to work together to establish a common discourse surrounding the theory of experience within experiential Jewish education. Not only will this aid in the creation of sophisticated professional development for experiential Jewish educators, but it will also catapult the field to greater heights.

In reality most training that experiential Jewish educators undergo does not occur in university settings or in long-term immersive programs. These programs are

lengthy, expensive, and require a commitment far greater than most experiential Jewish youth educators are willing or able to make. As a result, the vast majority of professional training and development that experiential Jewish educators receive is conducted by the organizations within which they work and takes the form of seminars, retreats, and conferences. While undoubtedly better than nothing, these programs are often rushed, poorly resourced, lack expertise and fail to address the fundamentals required to excel in this field. What would be ideal is a combination of long-term professional development programs, internships, followed by ongoing training in the various forms described above.

While many of the elements of such an overall experience might exist they do so in isolation from one another. What would an ideal program to train and develop experiential Jewish educators look like? What knowledge would they need to have and what skills would they need to learn? It is precisely because pieces of this equation exist within various organizations, and have never been brought together, that I am led to a third major challenge that I believe experiential Jewish education needs to confront in order for it to advance—the unification of the field.

Unifying the Field of Experiential Jewish Education

Experience has taught me that just because the field as a whole has not achieved its full potential, this does not indicate a lack of success within the field. In fact the very opposite might be the case, with successful organizations able to grow and develop at the expense of other institutions. Accordingly, I prefer to adopt the paradigm that ultimately the sum of the parts will indeed lead to a greater whole.

The current global economic crisis has brought about several significant changes in the Jewish non-profit world that were perhaps inevitable and even necessary. In order better to advocate for the field of experiential Jewish education, a more collaborative venture needs to be launched.

However, juxtapose this belief with the reality that North American Jewry is seeing the decline of several national organizations—specifically those related to Jewish education—and the thought of more umbrella-type organizations may seem far from reality.[4] Nevertheless, networking and collaboration remains essential as processes that can only take place within forums that work together to advance the field as a whole.

The unification of the field of experiential Jewish education today will necessarily look very different to how it was previously conceived. A few central elements necessary for the field to advance could include—the establishment of a national (or international) body, credentialed status to become a member of the field, a

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[4]Specifically, I refer to the demise of JEXNET, the Network for Experiential Jewish Youth Education (formerly the NAA (the National American Alliance for Jewish Youth), an organization that existed solely to advance the cause of experiential Jewish education. I also point to the collapse of CAJE (Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education) and recent media reports that point to the struggles of many other national Jewish organizations.

recognized conference that brings together practitioners and researchers, and a journal (academic or otherwise) that serves to promote both research and practice. Other elements would also emerge, some consistent with other sub-fields of Jewish education and others unique to experiential Jewish education.

Unlike other models of national organizations in their first iteration, this new unifying model for experiential Jewish education will be one that shares, develops, and cultivates expertise. It will necessarily utilize the principles of the Web 2.0 society in which we live, both as an organizing principle and as a means of interaction. Although initially conceived as a web-design principle, the concept of a Web 2.0 world now refers to a broader understanding of the way people live and interact with one another, both as consumers and generators of information in a collaborative and democratized fashion. As an organizing principle, a unifying body designed with Web 2.0 principles in mind will harness the wisdom of hundreds, if not thousands of experiential Jewish educators to advance the field (Surowiecki, 2005). The conventional wisdom that a few experts will be able to promote and advocate for the field is a relic of the past. This new model elevates the role of practitioner to expert—or at least as one of many experts—whose accumulated knowledge will be utilized to promote, advance, and advocate for the field of experiential Jewish education. In this way, those in the field, together with researchers and academicians, would be able to generate what it would take toward better understanding both evaluation and professional development within the field of experiential Jewish education.

Such a body will rely almost certainly on new technologies, especially those that utilize social networking capabilities to advance its cause. As Clay Shirky, a consultant on the impact of interactive media in society, indicates, this new technology will both serve to gather information and also enable new kinds of groups, like the one I am suggesting, to form (Shirky, 2009). Currently, this technology is fairly dispersed and unmonitored, but I am suggesting that a unified body would be able to utilize the technologies of today and tomorrow, and with vision and direction, be able to harness the collective power to advance the field of experiential Jewish education and achieve the force necessary for the field to climb to its summit. Without such a unified effort, it is difficult to conceive of a time whereby experiential Jewish education will be able to forge ahead as a field. Without such efforts, the result will be multiple institutions, across various informal Jewish settings, doing their own thing, resembling the status quo, and unable to grow and develop the field of experiential Jewish education to its full potential.

Reaching the Tipping Point of Experiential Jewish Education

In the introduction to this chapter I posited that experiential Jewish education was at a crossroads. Despite my personal optimism, I do not believe it contradictory or alarmist to suggest that the very existence of many experiential Jewish educational programs and institutions might also be at risk. To avoid such doomsday scenarios, those within the field must take proactive measures by implementing the three key strategies I articulated as necessary for the field to reach its Tipping

Point: (1) Developing robust and compelling instruments to measure its success; (2) Creating systematic and comprehensive professional development programs; and (3) Building and maintaining a comprehensive unifying structure (or structures). All of these must become key features that will demonstrate that further investment in experiential Jewish education is warranted.

In this chapter we have seen that the efforts to define *experiential Jewish education* are far greater than a semantic endeavor. By better understanding what experiential Jewish education is, we move a lot closer to realizing why it is such a powerful force within the Jewish community, specifically in the development of positive Jewish identity. That being said, it is also important to suggest that another key indicator of its success will be realized when experiential Jewish education has become so entrenched within the fabric Jewish life that articles and chapters defining and explaining the field will become obsolete.

As educators we anticipate that better quality experiences will have a greater stickiness factor—in that they will be successful because they have an enduring impact (Heath & Heath, 2007). Furthermore, we believe that participation in more meaningful Jewish activities will have a greater positive impact on identities and will lead to greater rates of participation and engagement in Jewish life. While these assumptions are difficult to prove they remain ingrained among those who consider experiential Jewish education to be one of the most powerful, if not the most powerful tool available today—to foster positive personal Jewish identity, to develop a collective sense of belonging to the Jewish people, and to enhance a deep-rooted commitment to making the world a better place in which to live. The struggle to convey this core message remains one of the greatest challenges confronting the field of experiential Jewish education today.

Future Research Agenda

This chapter does not attempt to provide a meta-analysis of experiential Jewish education. However, highlighting some of the recent studies conducted within this field, it focuses attention on several of the issues in experiential Jewish education that require further research and analysis. I suggest the following research projects as being important steps in both uniting and advancing the field of experiential Jewish education:

(a) A compendium of case studies of experiential Jewish education.
(b) Development of instruments capable of evaluating the outcomes, impact, and success of experiential Jewish education.
(c) Compilation of theoretical research that constitutes the literature necessary to understand experiential Jewish education.
(d) An analysis of current professional development programs and opportunities for experiential Jewish educators that enables the field to identify what gaps exist in this arena. Such a study should also focus on those professional development programs that exist in the general field of experiential education and

related fields. In doing so, such an analysis would also enable the formulation of appropriate opportunities that are currently not being offered to experiential Jewish educators.

(e) Investigation of what creativity and innovation look like in the field of experiential Jewish education, so that organizations can remain relevant.

(f) Conducting more longitudinal studies that look at the long-term impact of experiential Jewish education, even though it will be difficult to isolate the impact of specific experiences on the identity development of individuals.

(g) For the sake of unifying the field, more meta-analyses need to be carried out, bringing together disparate organizations and programs so that a more comprehensive discourse surrounding the field can emerge.

A great deal of what we can learn about experiential Jewish education already exists in other fields—whether it be general education, business, sociology, or psychology, to name but a few. Certainly, much can also be learned by looking at examples outside of Jewish contexts. It also goes without saying (especially in an *International Handbook of Jewish Education*) that this research should not be restricted to North America or Israel. Experiential Jewish education should know no geographic boundaries; and the broader the insights, the richer the field will become.

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Gender: Shifting from “Evading” to “Engaging”—Gender Issues and Jewish Adolescents

Shira D. Epstein

Introduction: Gender as a “Hot Topic” in Jewish Education

In recent years, “gender” has emerged as a prism through which Jewish educators discuss adolescents and Jewish identity, communal participation, and programming. Several Jewish organizations and journals have recently spotlighted this area of focus: the Union for Reform Judaism sponsored a symposium on gender and Jewish education as a pre-conference to its 2007 Biennial Convention and dedicated an issue of *Torah at the Center* to this topic, and The Lookstein Center’s Spring 2008 issue of *Jewish Educational Leadership* and the February 2009 issue of *Sh’ma: A Journal of Jewish Responsibility* have each utilized gender and Jewish education as its theme. The category of gender and Jewish education has a wide scope that spans a spectrum of topics. Some practitioners and researchers focus on implications for schooling, such as learning differences between boys and girls (Goldberg & Gurian, 2007; Tannenbaum, 2008), gendered reading of Jewish text (Reimer, 2007), and assumptions about adolescent male learners (Baker, 2009). Others have championed educational initiatives on gender and sexual identity (Brill, 2007), sexuality, and healthy relationship building (Epstein, 2007; Grumet, 2008; Seidler-Feller, 2009), as well as staff development and training for Jewish youth practitioners (Benjamin, 2007; Epstein, 2008a). The diversity of topics indicates an emergent desire to address the concerns of teen participants within both formal and informal learning settings.

Gender issues also serve in educational circles as a lens through which adults express anxieties about disruption in teens’ active participation in Jewish life. Many have underscored a crisis in male adolescent Jewish communal involvement (Fishman & Parmer, 2008; Saxe & Kelner, 2001; Saxe, Kelner, Kadushin, & Brodsky, 2000) and disconnection to formal and informal Jewish education (Kuriloff & Reichert, 2009; Meyer, 2009; Pollack, 2007; Sax, 2007). Others have used the phrase *at risk* to describe Jewish girls, accentuating the prevalence of destructive

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experiences such as disordered eating or sexual violence and the potential impact of such experiences on girls' desire to engage in intimate relationships (Altmann, 2008; Shalom Bayit, 2007). In response, there has been a heightened interest in utilizing Jewish content as a means for discussing gender issues (e.g., Adelman, Feldman, & Reinharz, 2005) and fostering adolescent resiliency (Goldfein, 2005; Steiner-Adair & Sjostrom, 2008).

This chapter will discuss the various initiatives that have stemmed from recent attention to the topic of Gender and North American Jewish Education, highlighting curricula, professional development and educator training programs, and research studies. The discussion begins with further consideration of why gender has become a topic of focus in Jewish adolescent education.

A Social Constructivist Approach to Gender

Although practitioners often utilize the terms "gender" and "sex" interchangeably, they are not transposable terms (Glasser & Smith, 2008). In contrast to "sex," which connotes the biological definition ("male" or "female"), "genders" are actively constructed, and continuously reconstructed, through interactions in context–specific surroundings (Crawford & Unger, 2000; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Phoenix, Frosh, & Pattman, 2003). Gender rules and behavioral norms are discursively developed and accepted in social institutions (Biklen & Pollard, 2001; Butler, 1999). Gender is viewed as an "ongoing process" (Thorne, 2005, p. 61), through which young people continuously learn how to perform socially defined expectations. For example, the gendered norms for dressing like a "girl" are vastly different in an ultra-Orthodox school than in a public school setting, and attitudes toward what qualifies in a Jewish youth group as a male-specific prayer ritual will vary according to denominational context. In both these examples, adult-developed policies shape what institutions accept as "male" or "female" behavior.

Adolescents and Gender Roles

A social constructivist perspective toward adolescence and gender makes visible the ways in which educators have attempted to correct perceived deviations from predefined expectations. "Gender" serves as a trope for adult anxieties about preparation of youth for future familial duties, and educational policies become conduits for maintenance of traditional roles. For example, during the early twentieth century psychologist G. Stanley Hall successfully advocated innovative initiatives such as all boys' school sports programs and male-run student government as a means to countering the fear that increased female presence in public schooling was depleting boys' virility. Engagement in physical and civic pursuits would conserve male sexual energy, and activities for girls such as domestic science classes and cheerleading would counterbalance intellectual activity, which he believed diluted reproductive organ functions (Hall, 1904). Hall and his supporters asserted that these school reforms would solve the problem of "at-risk" adolescents, who were

being led astray by their libidos, "sexually charged beings who needed. . .focus" (Lesko, 2001, p. 49). The reforms would ensure that teens' sexual energy would be conserved for procreation.

While the initial purpose behind cheerleading, school sports, student government, and domestic science has transformed, their genesis highlights how educational interventions can be impacted by concerns regarding teens' ability to fulfill expected family roles (Epstein, 2009a). Curricula that favor discussion of puberty solely as a process of preparing the body for procreation can delimit honest discussion about adolescent experience of emerging sexuality and desire.

Views of Adolescent Sexuality, Gender Identity, and Sex Education

Current discourse of sexually "at-risk" youth reflects a desire to contain and control adolescents' discussions about intimacy. In recent years, popular American media has reported what has been perceived as an epidemic of meaningless teen sex and in Jewish circles, of promiscuity at *b'nei mitzvah* parties (Flanagan, 2006). This perspective positions teens as a bundle of out-of-control hormones (Lesko, 2001) that need to be reigned in through educational initiatives that preach against premarital sex, such as the popular American sexual education response of teaching abstinence only until marriage (AOUM) (Fine & McClelland, 2006). However some maintain that an AOUM response serves to uphold an unfounded myth of "lost innocence" (Bogle, 2008; Parker-Pope, 2009; Warner, 2009), as statistics demonstrate that teen sex has declined 6–8% in the past few decades (Eaton, 2008). Others oppose AOUM interventions' confinement of conversations about sexuality to the risks of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), their omission of discussions about love, friendship, power and sexual violence, and gender identity (Fine & McClelland, 2006; Gilbert, 2004; Rofes, 2004), and censorship of dialogue about resources for teens. Bruckner Bearman's (2005) findings that 88% of those who took "virginity pledges" ultimately engaged in premarital sex and that incidences of unprotected sex were 30% higher than their non-pledging peers call into question the effectiveness of AOUM sexuality education.

Adult labeling of adolescents as "at risk" impacts the range and scale of institutional and curricular initiatives on sexuality (Talburt, Rofes, & Rasmussen, 2004). Educators construct interventions and define solutions *for* teens, rather than viewing teens as having agency to co-create programming and self-reflect (Lesko, 2001; Rasmussen, 2004). Fine and McClelland (2006) found that teens desired sexuality education that allowed for conversation "where we're asked what we think, what we want to know" (p. 326). This perspective can extend to the way educators engage youth on varied gender issues, as opportunities to "imbue both youth and institutions with agency" (Talburt et al., 2004, p. 3) and offer a discourse of empowerment and student voice. It suggests the possibility of creating programming that includes critical discussions about the choices and dilemmas that Jewish teens face. As described below, Jewish institutions have developed initiatives to help teens dialogue about

their experiences and utilize Jewish values as a lens through which to discuss gender issues.

Gender Initiatives in Jewish Adolescent Education

Until recently, Jewish educational gender initiatives consisted of a mere handful of formal curricula (Gorsetman, Ament, Hurwitz, & Svirsky, 2005; Novick, 1994). In the past 7 years, organizations have developed a range of youth and professional development initiatives; many of the programs were driven by research advocating programming that encourages teens to talk openly about experiences of and attitudes toward friendship, intimate relationships, power dynamics, sexuality, and their bodies (eg; Brown, 2003; Tolman, 2002). They emphasize the importance of dialogue with Jewish teens, recognizing that young people value "the critical role of caring and supportive adults" (Fine & McClelland, 2006, p. 315) and are based on the premise that behavioral change can occur as discussions take place within a Jewish framework. Below, I highlight current significant contributions to the field of gender and Jewish education.

Curricula as an Educational Response

Scripted curricula's roadmaps of clearly delineated goals and objectives (Doll, 1993; Kliebard, 1986) offer standardized ways for Jewish educators to talk about sensitive subjects. Several Jewish organizations have developed curricula to address "evaded" topics (AAUW, 1992, p. 75): body-image issues, sexuality, healthy relationship building, gender identity, and sexual violence. The curricula interweave skill-building activities and conversations about self-concept, relationships with others, and prevalent "social codes," perceptions of the gender-acceptable ways of behaving in peer groups (Finders, 1997). Scripted curricula offer open-ended questions for the facilitator, e.g., "Are there ever times when you feel pressured by friends to be in a relationship or 'get more experience?'" (Epstein, 2006, p. 28). Many include introductory sections that emphasize the ways in which resources and materials link Jewish content to adolescent concerns; the developers offer ready-made connections for educators between socio-emotional issues and Jewish values (Adelman et al., 2005). Several curricula share common Jewish themes (the initiatives listed below are described in detail later in this section):

- *B'zelem Elokim*: We are created in the image of the divine, are mirrors of the divine, and have a Jewish obligation to treat all with respect (*Beyond Miriam, Foundation for Jewish Camp; Life Values*, *Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future; Love Shouldn't Hurt, Shalom Bayit; Sacred Choices, Union for Reform Judaism; Yad B'Yad, Faithtrust Institute;*
- *Tzni'ut*: *Tzni'ut,* the Hebrew word for modesty, is "being confident in your innermost core and wanting to live from that core" (Adelman et al., 2005, p. 86). It

offers a lens for deciding what information to keep private and what to share with others (*Life Values, Sacred Choices*);

- *Supporting Friends:* It is a Jewish obligation to support others in times of need (*Strong Girls, Jewish Women International*). "You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor"—Leviticus 19:16 (*Love Shouldn't Hurt*).

As these three categorizations demonstrate, curriculum developers have utilized Jewish texts and themes as frames for exploration of gender issues within formal and informal Jewish educational programming. I highlight below both coeducational and single-sex programming initiatives that aim to address healthy relationship building with Jewish adolescents, and further describe Jewish values and texts that are incorporated into curricula.

Learning Together: Coeducational Curricular Programming

The proliferation of programming has precipitated a divide on the most effective structure for honest dialogue. Curricula on dating abuse and relationships that foster cross-sex conversation (Orenstein, 1994) are built upon a deep-seated educational view that coeducation can lead to positive changes in power dynamics (Tyack & Hansot, 1992). Three Jewish coeducational programs have taken up the call for sexuality education that teaches about partnership and positive models of relationships (Fine & McClelland, 2006; Phillips, 2000): *Yad B'Yad* (Eliav, 2005), developed by the Faith Trust Institute with the goal of offering a Jewish response to teen dating violence; Shalom Bayit's *Love Shouldn't Hurt* (2007), self-described as the only Jewish dating violence prevention curriculum designed for middle school, high school, and college learners; Jewish Women International (JWI)'s *When Push Comes to Shove. . .It's No Longer Love* (Arts Engine, Inc (Producer), & Mandel, E. (Director) 2005), launched in 2005 as the centerpiece of its healthy relationships initiative for high school and college students.

The three curricula share the common goal of utilizing Judaism as a lens for discussing healthy relationships and dating abuse. The curriculum designers desire to teach skills for building loving relationships such as communication techniques and methods for respectful disagreement. All three initiatives integrate Jewish texts and themes into activities. *Yad B'Yad* incorporates the Jewish values of *Kavod* ("respect"), *Shalom Bayit* ("peace in the home"), and *Ahavat HaBriot* ("love for all God's creatures") (Eliav, 2005, pp. 7–8), and draws upon biblical narratives (eg., Isaac/Rebecca) and liturgical texts (e.g., *Eshet Chayil*, "A Woman of Valour") to open conversations about power dynamics in relationships and proscribed gender roles. *Love Shouldn't Hurt* (2007) draws upon Jewish values such as *G'milut Chasadim* ("acts of loving kindness") and *Kedushah* ("holiness, related to being created in the image of God"). *Push*'s Discussion Guide (JWI, 2007) suggests text study of the *Purim* narrative to guide discussion on status and power in relationships, and utilizes the Tamar/Amnon (Samuel II) narrative to help participants discuss the prevalence of "victim blaming" in instances of sexual, physical, and emotional violence and abuse.

While data on implementation does not exist, impact of the initiatives is evidenced in partnerships between organizations. For example, in 2008–2009 the Greater Houston National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) partnered with *Love Shouldn't Hurt* to implement the curriculum in area synagogue schools, and United Synagogue Youth has collaborated with JWI to develop training sessions and a study sourcebook on healthy relationships for its 2009 international convention (Stein, 2009). Such partnerships have elevated discussions and awareness of dating abuse and violence in the Jewish community.

Strong Girls and Good Guys: Single-Sex Curricular Programming on Healthy Relationships

Jewish Women International (JWI) developed three initiatives to help teens discuss relationships and gender roles in single-sex contexts, with the intention of creating safe space for discussion and of tailoring activities to distinct engagement styles and socio-emotional needs of boys and girls (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Tyack & Hansot, 1992). Each of the curricula is designed to help Jewish teens explore themes of power dynamics, status, and equality within friendships and intimate relationships (Brown, 2003; Phillips, 2000).

Strong Girls, Healthy Relationships: A Conversation on Dating, Friendship, and Self-Esteem (Epstein, 2006) is a 12-h curriculum for 13–15-year-old Jewish girls that weaves together discussion of intimate relationships and friendships. As the author, I crafted the curriculum upon the premise that "self-esteem stems from self-knowledge" (p. 3), and that empowerment emerges from the ability to express feelings within a supportive relationship. Participants discuss the elements of healthy relationship building, the role of compromise and negotiation within friendships and intimate relationships, and how to support friends who have experienced abuse. Biblical texts (e.g., Hagar/Sarai narrative) are utilized to open up conversations about power and control. I modified the initial curriculum into a 4-1/2-h version for 12–15-year-old girls: *Strong Girls!: Friendships, Relationships, and Self-esteem* (Epstein, 2008b). Participants discuss contemporary definitions of "dating" and explore methods for connecting with their intuition, or "inner voice." The condensed curriculum complements JWI's initiative for 12–14-year-old boys, *Good Guys!: Partnership and Positive Masculinity* (Kaplowitz, 2008), which aims to help participants "understand how to be a positive force and make healthy relationship decisions" (p. 6). Like *Strong Girls, Good Guys* explores issues of power, control, and self-esteem. Participants utilize biblical texts (e.g., Joseph and his Brothers) to consider messages they receive within Judaism around "being a man." The curriculum is contextualized within a framework of "positive masculinity": that "Healthy power is power used to do good; not to dominate or destroy. . ." (p. 5). As the titles suggest, the curricula address tacit assumptions that "aggressiveness" is a male role, "goodness" is a feminine trait, and that females should adopt responsibility for creating and maintaining healthy relationships within heterosexual partnering (Brown, 2003).

Judaism as a Lens for Making "Holy" Choices

Three initiatives encompass the view that Jewish ethics, values, and traditional texts can promote discussions about sexual choices and desires (Ruttenberg, 2009). Though each originates from differing ideological and theological stances, they share the common message that Jewish tradition can aid adolescents in making challenging decisions about their bodies, sexuality, and relationships. *Sacred Choices* (Novak-Winer, 2007) was designed specifically for Reform congregational schools and camps. In 2008, Tzelem, an initiative of Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future introduced *Life Values and Intimacy Education* (Debow, 2008), which self-describes as the only comprehensive sex education curriculum for Modern Orthodox day schools in grades 3–8. The goal of *Life Values* is to offer a "Torah-framed" (p. 23) discussion of intimacy, sexuality, and love. For example, the curriculum presents puberty in the context of *Hashem's* (God's) way of preparing bodies to be able to have children, and as a pathway to learning self-restraint and control. Likewise, the curriculum teaches that because the physical body houses the soul, pleasure is not an end-goal; *mitzvot* (commandments) are vehicles for elevating sexual experiences to spiritual acts. Sessions include discussion of the centrality of marriage and family to Judaism, *tzni'ut* (modesty) as a concept that guides dress, speech, and restraint in exposure to sexual information and images, and reproduction and infertility.

Like *Life Values* (Debow, 2008), *Sacred Choices* (Novak-Winer, 2007) celebrates the ways in which Judaism can serve as an "antidote"(p. 4) to popular messages and media regarding the immediacy of sexual pleasure; it teaches that our bodies and souls are gifts from God, and that Judaism values mutuality and *kavod* (respect) as core elements in any healthy relationship. The middle and high school curricula utilize Jewish texts to guide discussions about decision making and sexual ethics within friendships and relationships (www.urj.org/sacredchoices). The middle-school modules address the balance between respectful communication and healthy assertiveness, and reflect the Reform movement's stance that middle-school students should not be engaging in sexual relationships. High-school modules explore gender roles and Jewish definitions of masculinity and femininity, and use biblical and philosophical texts to discuss the difference between love and lust.

Educators' widespread implementation of *Sacred Choices* and *Life Values* within their respective denominations' formal and informal youth programs and summer camps has enabled discussions that otherwise might have been evaded. Non-denominational efforts have also utilized Judaism as a catalyst for self-reflection about sexuality. For example, the *JGirl's Guide*'s (Adelman et al., 2005) chapter on "Becoming a Woman" acknowledges Jewish girls' sexual feelings and desires (Tolman, 2002), stating that "The way you feel about sex and sexuality is unique to you. . .You may begin to have sexual fantasies and desires now. . .It's all part of experiencing your new womanly body" (pp. 99–100). Resources such as the *JGirl's Guide* provide further entry points for connecting adolescents to Jewish views on gender and sexuality.

Including Adolescent Voices

Prepackaged materials and programs provide valuable resources for Jewish educators. However, curricular interventions can offer a false sense that the few brief sessions have fully explored and changed participants' ingrained behaviors and beliefs. Additionally, the above-described curricula and training programs are premised upon adult-defined understandings of what young people both need and want to know. Recently, however, three Jewish organizations have placed primacy on dialogue with teens about their lived experiences (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003), asking them to co-imagine and participate in the creation of programming that explores Judaism, relationships, and self-identity. The 14th Street Y, Ma'yan: The Jewish Woman's Project, and Moving Traditions have launched initiatives that emphasize adolescent voice and agency, the latter two shaping programmatic and research agendas.

The 14th Street Y's (http://www.14streety.org) *Girls Theater Project* (GTP) is a developing model for utilizing the arts to facilitate Jewish adolescent girls' exploration of the common issues they face. During its pilot year (2008–2009), a select group of girls participated in weekly workshops with playwright/educator Joyce Klein to explore topics that the girls had suggested, including friends, college, boys, the body, Judaism, and family. Through writing exercises, structured conversations, and dramatic improvisations, the girls shared their views, concerns, and dreams for the future. Klein then incorporated the girls' recorded comments into an original theater piece, titled *Becoming*. Evaluative data (Epstein, 2009b) demonstrate that the girls' discussions included diverse opinions about their connections with religion, interactions with boys, and experiences of competition within friendships. An expanded pedagogy might allow a shift from generating material for adult-written script (Wolf, 1993, 1994, 1995) to teen engagement in joint decision making and co-facilitation of youth theater activities, which Heath (1999, 2001) suggests can help adolescents develop leadership qualities. The 14th Street Y is developing pre- and post-performance workshops to cultivate "exploratory talk" (Barnes, 1992, p. 28) with female audiences about beliefs, experiences, and identity, and deepen the potential for utilizing drama to help girls imagine their "possible selves" (Knox, 2006; Markus, 2006).

Ma'yan and Moving Traditions are developing models through which Jewish adolescents might become agents of change (Gore, 2003). When Ma'yan (www.mayan.org) launched *Koach Banot* (Girl Power) to support Jewish communities seeking to strengthen existing girls' programming, its staff felt that they needed to know more about the ways that girls themselves describe the key issues in their lives. They developed *The Ma'yan Research Training Internship* (RTI), which includes girls in the framing, designing, executing, and reporting of research on Jewish American adolescent girls' experiences and attitudes (Benjamin, 2009). Participatory Action Research (PAR) is used as a means to hear directly from teen girls and "creat[e] a space of shared power and trust, in order to spark dialogue around issues relevant to their lives" (Ma'yan, 2008a), as well as engage the interns in practices of critical reflection, power sharing, and perspective taking. Staff explain

that the *RTI* invests authority and power in the interns, “disrupting the usual hierarchical structure of youth programming” and the common practice of “representing girls exclusively through our own lens as concerned adults” (Ma’yan, 2008b).

During its inaugural year of 2007, teen interns and Ma’yan staff designed a study that included the following research questions: *What do we know (or think we know) about American Jewish teen girls? What do we want to learn about them?* (Ma’yan, 2008a). The team designed two original surveys that were distributed to self-identifying Jewish American teenage girls between ages 13–19. The interns analyzed 227 longer survey responses and 85 short-answer survey responses, with the vast majority of respondents 15–17 years of age (Benjamin, 2009). Data suggest that Jewish girls experience intense pressure to meet adults’ and friends’ expectations to juggle school demands, social life, and extracurricular activities (Ma’yan, 2008a). An unanticipated finding was that surveyed girls are actively engaged in Jewish life and in exploring their Jewish identities, and are committed to taking on leadership roles. The findings suggest several implications for Jewish educators’ interactions with adolescent girls. Jewish youth professionals have the potential to interact and engage with Jewish girls (Benjamin, 2009) and “provide a sort of oasis, away from the pressure [of daily life]” (Ma’yan, 2008b). In addition, Jewish girls’ desire for leadership roles suggests that adults need to foster opportunities to both explore and practise roles that require power and authority. An intern reported that one survey respondent’s note that “We are the next world leaders; if we don’t try to help, who will?” suggests the desire for girls to develop leadership capacities through Jewish youth programming (Ma’yan, 2008b).

Ma’yan’s initiative demonstrates a paradigm for power sharing with adolescents. According to Ma’yan staff, joint research promotes possibility for “establishing new models for leadership and participation in Jewish youth programs” as “the process was, ultimately, just as important as the finished product” (Ma’yan 2008b). One intern shared, “Other programs, they`re basically telling you things. While here, we’re like figuring out all these things, find out all the information for ourselves” (Ma’yan, 2008b). Another stated, “We really got to talk about what we wanted to talk about and discuss what we wanted to discuss” Ma’yan, 2008b). A third intern offered an endorsement for adults jointly developing projects that engage adolescents in opportunities to critically reflect: “By focusing on ourselves, and being a little introspective, for a little while, will really help us learn more about ourselves and will make us more effective in trying to apply what we know to the greater world” (Ma’yan, 2008b).

Like Ma’yan, Moving Traditions is offering a new structure for including teens in gender-in-Jewish education research and program development. Moving Traditions launched the *Campaign for Jewish Boys: Where have all the Young Men Gone?* in the fall of 2007 with the goal of better understanding why boys are dropping out of organized Jewish life after Bar Mitzvah age, and examining how to strengthen boys’ Jewish identity and encourage connection and commitment to the Jewish community at large (www.movingtraditions.org). Moving Traditions convened the Round Table on Jewish Life and the Development of Adolescent Boys with the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education and the Center for the Study of Boys’

and Girls' Lives. A cross-disciplinary group of 26 leaders raised key themes for future exploration. One adult-defined theme, that boys should be involved in the creation of their own programming, was confirmed and reasserted in follow-up research with Jewish boys.

Moving Traditions organized semi-structured focus group interviews (November-December 2007) in Denver with 41 Jewish boys predominantly affiliated to the Jewish community through involvement in their synagogues, Jewish camps, and Jewish youth organizations, as well as 20 parents, and 4 day school teachers (Reichert & Ravitch, 2008). Researchers found that while boys expressed their desire for meaningful Jewish exploration, they were dissatisfied with the offerings available to them. The researchers suggest the need to develop opportunities for boys' agency within the Jewish community: "Jewish boys must be permitted to access opportunities for religious education and cultural connection based on their own determination of their needs" (p. 38). The researchers further suggest that rather than defining for Jewish boys who they *should* be, adults need to create spaces where the boys can feel comfortable exploring who *they themselves* want to become. In addition, the findings suggest that boys desire to collaborate in design, development, and implementation of innovative programming. Findings are being tested in Moving Tradition's current action research and will be reported on in the forthcoming Framework for Working with Jewish Boys. The framework will include research on adolescent male development, a toolkit of effective techniques for working with Jewish boys, including marketing strategies, and a program for 8th and 9th grade boys with six meeting plans, including activities and resources for use across settings and denominations. The program content will enable boys to discuss topics of masculinity and their identities within a Jewish context.

Successful implementation of the types of power-sharing models that are summarized above requires partnering with seasoned adult facilitators. The next section describes professional development and teacher education initiatives designed to foster adult comfort level in addressing socio-emotional issues within both formal and informal Jewish educational settings.

Systemic Change Through Professional Development and Teacher Education

Previous academic discussions about Jewish educators' teaching on relationships, gender stereotypes in Jewish texts, and gendered perceptions of Jewish rituals (Kaplan & Reinharz, 1997) are now resurfacing, as professional development and teacher education initiatives have proliferated to support educators in identifying gaps in knowledge (Epstein & Less, 2009), resistances to addressing difficult subjects in teaching (Fine & McClelland, 2006), discomfort in discussing specific issues (e.g., Tolman, 2002), and resources for expanding pedagogy (Epstein & Less, 2008; Leone-Perkins, 2008). Several organizations have developed training initiatives to support educators in understanding that changes in adolescent practice and growth in understanding are recursive (Lesko, 2001; McLaren, 2003), and require continual

discussions that are responsive to learners' needs. The professional development and teacher education projects described below offer space for Jewish educators to examine their practice of facilitating dialogue and learning opportunities with teens on gender and sexual identity, body image, and Jewish identity.

Educator-Training Initiatives to Promote Systemic Change

Recent training initiatives offer possibility for systemic change in the ways that Jewish institutions develop a culture of inclusion and in which youth practitioners build practices of active listening, mentorship and non-judgmental dialogue (Brown, 2003). Their designers acknowledge that deep-seated gender inequities and violent behaviors such as sexual harassment, bullying, self-harm, and abuse cannot be stemmed through institutional policies and penalties alone (Orenstein, 1994). Rather, systemic change can occur through shifts in the ways that schools, camps, youth groups, and synagogue programs mindfully address power dynamics, and cultivate connections between learners as well as between adults and teens. They share messages of empowering educators to take a proactive role in dialoguing with teens, and recognize that the act of "naming" gender-related concerns can lead to deeper conversation (Brown, 2003, p. 223). The five initiatives below offer frameworks for educators to examine their practice of addressing overarching teen issues of body image, self-image and esteem, gender identity, and friendship and relationships, and offer means for reflection on how they respond to gender-related moments that arise in teaching.

Long-term change in teaching practice can emerge from opportunities for educators to "self-audit" and reflect upon how they do or do not facilitate dialogue with learners about the "evaded curriculum" (AAUW, 1992), the delicate subject areas related to gender that are sometimes avoided (Epstein, 2008a). As project director of the Jewish Theological Seminary's initiative *Evaded Issues in Jewish Education*, I co-developed *Educational Jewish Moments* (Epstein & Less, 2009; jtsa.edu/evadedissues). An *Educational Jewish Moment* (EJM) is an "off the page" moment that can arise as Jewish educators hear student remarks, questions, or conversations related to gender issues (e.g., pressure to "hook up"; use of derogatory language such as "slut," "fag," or "bitch"). The *EJM* methodology offers a schema for educators to engage learners in dialogue and make connections to Jewish values and resources, through a four-part methodology:

(1) NAMEing: Identifying key gender issues by asking clarifying questions such as, "What did you mean when you said. . .?"
(2) SELECTing: Choosing a type of response, such as pausing a formal lesson to talk about what just occurred
(3) CONNECTing: Integrating resources, such as referring to Jewish values or textual sources
(4) INTERJECTing: Considering how to craft the response in a way that feels authentic to the educator

The *EJM* training sessions teach educators to identify moments when they might name aloud connections between Judaism and a wide variety of gender issues with which learners grapple. Other professional development initiatives have focused on educating practitioners on specific issues. The Foundation for Jewish Camp's *Beyond Miriam* (Goldfein, 2005) resource guide for camp directors and the Orthodox Union's *Hungry to be Heard* (Diamond, 2008) documentary-style DVD were developed on the premise that issues such as body image can be systemically addressed when educators are more educated and aware of the prevalence of eating disorders and destructive behaviors such as self-mutilation (i.e., "cutting"). In turn, leaders can develop support systems for adolescents. The guide and DVD both suggest opportunities for demonstrating Judaism's emphasis on *Bezlem Elokim,* that we are all "Godlike." For example, *Beyond Miriam* instructs camp counselors to "create a bunk poster with pictures of each girl and nice things written below describing the many Godlike attributes that each girl possesses" (Goldfein, 2005, p. 35). The two resources emphasize the role that positive messaging can play in shifting the culture and attitude of Jewish institutions around body image-related concerns.

Like *Beyond Miriam* (Goldfein, 2005) and *Hungry to be Heard* (Diamond, 2008), *Kyriya Leshenuyi – A Call to Action for Raising Strong Healthy Jewish Girls* (http://www.bishviliforme.com/index.html) was developed with the goal of initiating systemic change in the ways that adults talk with adolescent girls about their bodies. Jewish educators are familiarized with the resources of *Bishvili: For Me* (Steiner-Adair & Sjostrom, 2008) a Jewish companion guide to *Full of Ourselves* (Steiner-Adair & Sjostrom, 2006). *Full of Ourselves* (FOO) self-describes as effecting positive changes in "girls' body image, body satisfaction, and body esteem, and girls' knowledge about health, nutrition, weightism, and puberty" (xi). *Bishvili* aims to strengthen Jewish girls' body and self-esteem and offer resiliency skills through connection to Jewish values, rituals, and texts. For example, the *Bishvili* compendium asks facilitators to insert the following prayer into an *FOO*-suggested "body appreciation relaxing" guided meditation (2006, pp. 15–16): "We praise you....with divine wisdom You have made our bodies...I will praise you, God, for I am awesomely and wondrously made" (2008, p. 11). Facilitators then ask, "How does connecting your body to God change how you think about and live in your body?" During another exercise, *Bishvili* instructs facilitators to ask girls questions such as, "What are some ways Judaism transforms eating into a holy process?" (2008, p. 4).

Initiatives such as these just described can impact the ways that Jewish practitioners incorporate dialogue about body image; a small-scale study of *Bishvili* revealed its success in increasing girls' connections to Jewish values (http://www.bishviliforme.com/index.html). However, one is not required to participate in training in order to facilitate the *FOO* or *Bishvili* activities. In contrast, Moving Traditions has developed a model for centralized training of all adult group facilitators for *Rosh Hodesh: It's a Girl Thing!* (www.movingtraditions.org) monthly programming for middle- and high-school girls. Leaders of the local groups connect issues such as body image, family dynamics, popularity, and friendships to Jewish values, themes, narratives, and holidays. Since the program's national launch

in 2002, it has trained over 650 educators. In a survey of 2007–2008 *Rosh Hodesh* participants, 75% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “Compared to when I began *Rosh Hodesh* I now. . .feel more connected to other Jewish girls.” Of the respondents, 77% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I feel close to the group leaders” (Goldsmith, 2008). Survey results suggest the key role that group leaders play in fostering a sense of community and belonging within an all-girl setting, offering a contrasting model to what Brown (2003) describes as the stereotype of the aggressive, “mean girl” presented in recent literature (e.g., Wiseman, 2002).

While programs such as *Rosh Hodesh* focus on training practitioners to foster community building, others encourage educators to examine the culture within their institutions. Recognizing that teen sexuality is an uncomfortable and often taboo subject, Keshet Boston (www.keshetboston.org) has launched the *Shalem Education Project* to prepare Jewish educators and youth professionals to be change agents in their institutions, as they learn how to develop and implement action plans for fostering Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Queer (GLBTQ) inclusion and identify resources for support. Educators discuss how the documentary film *Hineini: (Fayngold & Keshet, 2005). Coming Out in a Jewish High School* (2005) can be used as a catalyst for conversation with teens about the boundaries of inclusivity within their own community. They learn how to utilize the film’s story of a female student’s fight to establish a gay-straight alliance at a Jewish high school in the Boston area to spark dialogue on the possibilities and challenges of embracing pluralism and diversity. The accompanying *Curriculum Resource Guide* (Hammer, Westheimer, & Jacobs, 2008) provides lesson plans, Jewish text study, and resources on GLBTQ issues. Participants explore how to facilitate discussions on the Jewish obligation to stand up for others in times of need and support, what it means to be a “straight ally,” and the Jewish value of creating a community that embraces difference.

Impact of Academic Teacher Education Programs

Systemic change in gender and Jewish education can occur when educators are engaged in ongoing reflection on their roles as “responsive educators”—responsive to the questions, concerns, and connections that adolescent learners offer. Research has explored the ways in which Jewish academic preservice programs prepare novice teachers to engage in continuous inquiry about their own teaching and response to gender-related concerns (Barth, 2004). As emerging Jewish educators reflect upon their practice within a community of learners, they consider what Orenstein (1994) refers to as the “hidden curriculum” that often impedes systemic change in addressing subjects such as harassment, bullying, and sexuality in schools: “All the things that teachers don’t say, but that you learn in class anyway” (p. 270). What are the cultural messages that they convey through the curricula they teach, the books they assign, the pedagogical choices that they make, and the comments they offer? In addition, they raise questions about the possibilities and limitations of their roles in cultivating student empowerment (Darder et al., 2003).

I have developed Participatory Action Research (PAR) in order to simultaneously inquire into my practice as a teacher educator and support four novice Jewish educators' inquiry into their practice of addressing gender issues with their own learners. The four participants were former students in the course *Perspectives on Gender and Education* (taught at The William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education of the Jewish Theological Seminary). Research questions emerged directly from our joint engagement in the praxis cycle of reflection and action on our teaching (Brydon-Miller, 2001; Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Lather, 1991; Weis & Fine, 2000): *What is the role of teacher education in developing the field of gender and Jewish education? How do former graduate students view their developing roles as Jewish educators who address gender issues in their teaching settings?*

I have crafted case studies of the four former graduate students: Kayla, a day-school teacher, discussed the ways in which her desire to launch a Girls Advisory Group for her middle-school female learners was an outgrowth of preservice emphasis on self-inquiry on the ways in which she addresses gender issues (Epstein, 2008a); first-year teacher Adena dialogued about her decision to organize a series of girls-only and boys-only lunches as "interventions" to heightened relational aggression between her second-grade learners; second-year teacher Keren shared the dilemmas she faced in engaging middle-school boys in learning activities; Gabe, a graduating college student, reflected on how our course discussions on dating abuse lead to his integration of conversations about the elements of healthy relationships into his Jewish fraternity's Big Brother-Little Brother program. The study suggests that engagement with "gender and education" in preservice learning helps novice formal and informal educators consider their roles potential roles as change agents in the ways their Jewish institutions address adolescent gender issues (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Zeichner, 1994). This is best achieved by simultaneously exploring scholarly work around issues of gender and education and applications to teaching. It is this participation in praxis that leads to tangible changes in the ways gender issues are addressed.

The research suggests that reconstructed approaches to practice (Johnston, 1994) emerge from ongoing professional development on gender and education. Early career educators balance numerous competing pressures and demands and are more apt to address complex issues connected to socio-emotional health and well-being when perceived as imperative, relevant, and inherent to teaching (Boler, 1999; Ellsworth, 1997). In addition, educators need opportunities to examine the broader discourses that tacitly inform their work with adolescents (Thorne, 2005). Structured opportunities to pose questions, seek advice, and engage in collaborative dialogue can enable shifts in the ways that Jewish educators view their role in addressing sexuality, harassment, and body-image issues with adolescents, as well as consider connections to Jewish content. Engagement in praxis enables educators to become change agents in the ways that their Jewish sites respond to the needs of their learners.

Conclusion: Advancement of Praxis-Based Research

The curricula and initiatives described above offer varied lenses for discussing gender and Jewish education, each sharing a common goal of preparing youth to fully engage within the Jewish communal structures of school, synagogue, and informal learning and relationships of family, friendships, and intimate partnership. Many offer occasions for dialogue and reflection, and several cultivate adolescent leadership. Communities of Jewish educators can partner with cohorts of adolescents to develop Participatory Action Research models for researching their institution-based gender practices (Ma’yan, 2008). PAR-oriented studies offer the possibility of continuing to engage both educators and learners in examining established policies and pedagogy, and conduct scans of current support systems and resources for learners. Future studies can continue to investigate what teens want to discuss and the programming they seek to design. Potential adolescent-adult partnership can transform the landscape of gender in education. Within the PAR model, “research findings become launching pads for ideas, actions, plans, and strategies to initiate social change” (Cammarota & Fine, 2008, p. 6). Further research that focuses on praxis can offer an empowerment that, as Gore (2003) suggests is done “with” rather than “for” others.

While this chapter evidences the breadth of Jewish programming and curricula available, scant empirical research exists on the impact of these initiatives on institutional culture. An agenda for future research will advance initiatives that encourage and enable learners and educators, alike, to become critical analyzers of their communities’ policies and norms, and how they can become enactors of change. As this agenda further develops, researchers can further investigate the efficacy of praxis-based models and the ways in which they might support reflection on approaches to teaching. Systemic solutions can continue to take hold as educators deepen and expand their pedagogy, and actively progress communal discourse from language of crisis to language of opportunity and possibility for teen programming.

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Informal Education: The Decisive Decade – How Informal Jewish Education Was Transformed in Its Relationship with Jewish Philanthropy

Joseph Reimer

Introduction

Informal Jewish Education in North America was transformed by its interaction with Jewish philanthropy during the decade from 1997 to 2007. As an active participant in that interaction, I have a story to tell about how that partnership developed. In this chapter, I have also drawn on the available literature to tell that story. I have highlighted two cases – that of Birthright Israel and the Executive Leadership Institute of the Foundation of Jewish Camp – to raise questions about this developing partnership. The key question is: How can powerful philanthropists and change-minded Jewish educational leaders learn to better understand one another's perspectives to productively partner to create lasting positive change for Jewish life in North America?

Jewish Philanthropy and Jewish Education

> Amid all the changes that have taken place within the American Jewish community during the past 15 years, few are as striking and significant as those in the fields of Jewish philanthropy and Jewish education. These two areas have experienced fundamental shifts, independently and in relation to each other.

Thus Cardin and Prager (2008) open their examination of how these two fields have deeply influenced one another over the past 15 years. Their insights lay the groundwork for my more detailed examination of the interaction between Jewish philanthropy and the sub-field of informal Jewish education.

They tell a familiar story of the rise of the Jewish private foundations. The 1990 NJPS, with its alarming news of the sharp rise in the intermarriages between Jews and non-Jews, set off a deeply felt alarm that perhaps the Jewish enterprise in North America was endangered by the forces of assimilation. Jews would become the next disappearing minority group unless the leaders of the community took wise action to

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counteract these demographic trends. Jewish education – broadly understood – was viewed as the best available 'medicine' for this 'condition.' It was widely assumed that the federation movement would take the lead.

> For years the Jewish federation system was widely and justifiably recognized as a fundraising juggernaut. It was the self-proclaimed 'central address' of Jewish giving; the largest federations collected and allocated tens of millions of dollars each year through a well-choreographed, consensus-driven, and deliberative process in which volunteer leadership worked very closely with their professional counterparts. (ibid., p. 537)

But the federation system proved slow-footed and uncertain in responding to this internal crisis of continuity. Federations largely did not have the expertise to parse the subtle strategies needed to creatively engage the next generation of increasingly uninvolved Jewish youth.

> At the same time as the federation system began to grapple with these challenges, a significant number of existing and potential donors with substantial personal wealth and influence began to take a greater interest in the future of the American Jewish community. Many of these philanthropists and foundations turned to the federation system for guidance and partnership. . .With a few notable exceptions, what these philanthropists discovered about the federation world did not impress them. They found a system responding to the situation in a slow, bureaucratic fashion, failing to recognize the true extent of the problem at hand. (ibid., p. 538)

The 1990s witnessed a sharp rise in the number of private foundations (Fleishman, 2007; Tobin, 2001). Among these were those whose mission focused on building a more viable future for the Jewish community. These foundations began to develop "programs they believed would be more effective in the struggle to reverse the troubling trends" (ibid.). Jewish philanthropists invested widely within Jewish education. But the investment in informal Jewish education – particularly in the Israel experience and in Jewish camping – was extraordinary. I will explore how that philanthropic investment has transformed this sector, and will raise questions about how philanthropists and educators have negotiated their working relationships.

What Is Informal Jewish Education?

No one has worked harder to define informal Jewish education than Barry Chazan. Chazan (1991, 2003) has offered clear conceptual parameters for this sector, advocated for its importance, and combated common misunderstandings that persist.

Chazan argues that it is *not* helpful to think of informal education as all the Jewish education that takes place outside of schools. For that defines informal education by *what it is not*: it is not what takes place in schools. This reduces informal education to the "not-formal" and underestimates the complexity of what takes place at school. Jewish education is too broad and complex to be divided into two domains: formal and informal education.

Chazan argues that while many identify 'education' with their school experience, they overlook that cooking with grandma in her kitchen was also educational as was singing and dancing on Shabbat at their summer camp. *Education* – as Cremin (1977) taught – is a broad term that describes the varied ways that we learn from

significant models important cultural content and values. We should focus on informal education to capture the richness of the *experiential learning* that takes place at many times and in many settings in our lives.

Chazan contends it would be a strategic error for the North American Jewish community to invest all its resources in schools, for we need to be educating a wide variety of Jews at multiple moments in their lives. Schools are primarily for the young. Many Jews are seeking meaningful communal participation not easily found in a classroom. We have to become experts in bringing people together to celebrate their Jewishness, share their Jewish meanings, and learn their traditions. Learning how to provide Jews with those meaningful experiences is the business of informal Jewish education.

Chazan views informal Jewish education as an approach to bringing Jews together to learn about their Judaism. This approach has clear characteristics. To be fully realized, informal Jewish education is characterized by:

1. Beginning with the needs of the individual participants
2. Creating group contexts in which individual and group learning is promoted
3. Developing a trusting atmosphere
4. Encouraging participants to explore and clarify their own Jewish values and commitments
5. Learning from their own experiences
6. in a curriculum of Jewish experiences and values
7. that create a culture of Jewish involvement
8. and is facilitated by a holistic Jewish educator.

At heart is the commitment to *learning from experience*; not isolated experiences, but a variety of Jewish experiences as part of a well-articulated Jewish educational program. These planned experiences will take place in a supportive educational environment in which the very culture of the place educates. Participants will have as their role models holistic Jewish educators who will teach by example and help shape the experience of others. Their genuine interest in the participants' lives and openness to sharing their commitments form the foundation for this educational approach.

Chazan teaches that informal Jewish education is an approach that requires professional skill, imagination, and planning. His is a call to the Jewish community to take seriously the potential of this approach for transforming Jewish lives. But the history of this sector tells a different story.

A Historical Background

Sarna (2006) records that Jewish summer camps – the earliest form of informal Jewish education – began over a century ago. Jews were not the first to start summer camps, but quickly followed the example of their Christian neighbors and began their camps by the turn of the twentieth century. Summer in the city posed threats to

the well-being of children and communities provided funds to take Jewish children out to the 'fresh air' of the country.

By 1936, there were 88 communally run Jewish camps in North America with astounding variety. Camps were run by federations, JCCs, Zionist organizations, Yiddishists, and others. There were philanthropic camps for the poor and private camps for the affluent. There was a Jewish camp to reflect almost any shade of Jewish life (Isaacman, 1976).

Camps came up first to meet a necessity, but soon Jewish educators discovered their educational potential. There were early private camps whose founders were deliberate in using camp as 'a laboratory for religious education' (Sarna, 2006, p. 31). A more sophisticated effort was initiated at Camp Cejwin in 1922 (Stern, 2007). Many others were to follow and camps became a primary setting for informal Jewish education.

Following closely behind was the creation of Jewish youth movements. The first was Young Judaea. With the rise of Zionism in the early twentieth century came the formation of Zionist youth societies. In 1909, "a special conference was held to create a movement dedicated to advancing the cause of Zionism, furthering the mental, moral, and physical development of Jewish youth and promoting Jewish culture and ideals" (YJ website). Young Judaea as a national youth movement was born.

A similar pathway led to the formation of BBYO. In 1922 in Omaha, Nebraska, a few Jewish boys got together to form a Jewish fraternity which they call AZA – Aleph Zadik Aleph. Their fraternity was a mix of a social club and study group. A year later, they attracted the attention of Sam Beber who had big aspirations and saw in this local club the seeds of a national movement (Baer, 1983).

Beber was active in Bnai Brith and dreamed of forming a national youth organization. He threw himself into the task of writing a constitution for this national organization, helping to start clubs in other cities, and sponsoring a national convention. Beber was successful in attaining sponsorship from Bnai Brith and funding from local chapters (ibid.). AZA clubs for young men sprung up primarily in the Midwest.

In California, the women of Bnai Brith began to sponsor clubs for their teenage daughters. By the 1930s, there were a growing number of Bnai Brith Girls' clubs (BBG). The spread of girls' clubs was by word of mouth on very modest budgets. When the membership in BBG rose sharply, the women formed a national organization to oversee the growth. In 1943–1944, AZA and BBG were united into a single organization called BBYO (ibid.).

For all their differences, Young Judaea and BBYO had these similarities. They began as local initiatives by youth to organize themselves in social clubs. The youth sought help from adult organizations that responded with financial and organizational support. That adult structure became essential for the growth of the movement. But neither movement was identified with a religious denomination.

As Sarna (2006) notes, after the end of the Second World War, American Jews began to more decisively affiliate with the main religious denominations. The Conservative movement was the first to begin organizing youth in the 1920s in

an organization that did not last. The Reform movement began its youth movement in the 1939 and NFTY persisted and grew. The Conservative movement tried again successfully when beginning USY in 1951. While there were many ways that Orthodox youth organized themselves, in 1954, NCSY – with its ties to Yeshiva University – began to develop. Thus from the mid-1950s, these Jewish youth organizations developed – with clubs opening throughout North America.

The world of informal Jewish education was broader than described in this short history. But the main points are as follows: (1) These were organizations focused on serving Jewish youth, particularly teens, which were (2) complementary to – not substitutes for – formal Jewish education. (3) They relied heavily on adult volunteers and part-time advisors as well as (4) a few Jewish professionals who provided national and regional leadership. (5) All the youth organizations were 'ideological' in that they represented a particular set of articulated values that the adult organization hoped to transmit. (6) All realized that American teens sought enjoyable leisure-time activities that were as crucial to sustaining membership as was the Jewish value system they espoused.

A View from 1990

In 1988, Mort Mandel, a prominent Jewish lay leader from Cleveland, working in close collaboration with Professor Seymour Fox and Annette Hochstein, convened the Commission on Jewish Education in North America. This 2-year gathering brought together a broad-based group of prominent North American Jewish leaders – both lay and professional – to consider the big questions facing the community. Most particularly, they discussed how Jewish education could be deployed more effectively to insure the future of the Jewish enterprise in North America. This commission can be seen as the launching event in which the newly emerging private Jewish foundations claimed leadership for the future direction of Jewish education.

In 1990, the Mandel Associated Foundations commissioned Professor Bernard Reisman to write a report on the state of Informal Jewish Education. This was one of several reports by scholars to help inform the members of the Commission on various sectors of Jewish education and how that sector could best contribute toward Jewish continuity.

Reisman (1990) wrote a report that covered the principles of informal Jewish education as well as the many settings of informal Jewish education. Reisman offered a set of recommendations "to optimize for the American Jewish community the potential inherent in this process [of informal Jewish education]." They included:

- to upgrade the professional status of those working in this field
- to help synagogues become more responsive to the needs of their congregants
- to upgrade the summer camps – both staff and facilities
- to invest in more effective research to investigate best practices in this field (pp. 60–64).

The Commission, however, did not adopt any of these recommendations in its final report (1991). By reading that report, one would barely find any references to informal Jewish education. In retrospect, Reisman and Chazan were the two voices calling for the community to create a field out of what in 1990 remained a disparate set of organizations that each operated on its own. There was as yet no field of informal Jewish education, and as such, it was not surprising that the Commission passed over Reisman's recommendations.

Turning a Corner in the 1990s

For all the effort invested in the Commission, it was not its report that galvanized the North American Jewish community, but rather a much drier document that had little to do with the Jewish education – the National Jewish Population Survey 1990 (Kosmin, Goldstein, & Waksberg, 1991). Suddenly, a much broader circle of Jewish leaders and philanthropists was actively concerned with the very questions that the members of the Commission had been considering.

> In particular the leadership came to believe that substantial numbers of their children and grandchildren were at risk of losing their connection to Judaism. Their response took the form of enhancing support for intensive Jewish educational environments such as day schools, Jewish summer camps, campus programs, university-based Jewish studies programs and Israel educational experiences. Funding for all of these from Jewish philanthropic agencies and individuals increased. (Saxe and Chazan, pp. 27–280)

By the 1990s, almost all the national youth organizations had long been sponsoring Israel educational experiences (Chazan, 1994). They also had close relationships with their movement's summer camps. After decades of laboring alone in the fields of informal Jewish education, they found themselves potentially more in the eye of the Jewish community and its private foundations. But how could these disparate organizations present their youth programs to a community poised to increase its funding for Jewish continuity? One response was to create an umbrella for all the national Jewish youth organizations that could speak for this sector in a coherent voice.

Forming the NAA

The move toward greater cooperation resulted in the formation of a new umbrella organization called the North American Alliance for Jewish Youth (NAA). The first act of this newly formed umbrella was to organize a conference for Jewish youth professionals from across the spectrum of the community.

That conference was announced in the fall of 1996 in a letter that heralded the formation of the NAA and listed 16 member organizations. These included both denominational and Zionist youth organizations, summer camps, and providers of Israel experiences.

The letter announced that the NAA conference "will bring together approximately 400 Jewish Youth Professionals." The authors noted that "informal education is now taking its deserved place in the world of Jewish identity building, continuity, and education."

Three individuals would be honored at the conference. Two were informal Jewish educators and the third was Charles Bronfman. His inclusion was significant. Bronfman stood virtually alone among the major Jewish philanthropists in championing this cause. By the mid-1990s, Bronfman was actively working with others to create Israel Experience, Inc., an advocacy agency for travel to Israel. It was widely recognized that the youth organizations that sponsored Israel experiences could be recipients of support from this new initiative. Charles Bronfman was a key player and the NAA wished to play on his court.

The conference in March 1997 took place and was followed by annual conferences for the next decade that drew hundreds of youth professionals from these varied organizations. This annual gathering represented an important step forward for this field which had never before brought together youth professionals in those numbers or offered the workshops and presentations that defined what a Jewish youth professional across organizational lines needs to know.

But the NAA never accomplished much more than sponsor that annual conference. The NAA was largely run by volunteers who were doing this work on top of their regular demanding jobs. Those volunteers never succeeded in connecting with philanthropists like Charles Bronfman. The NAA represented an old world of informal Jewish education. As the twentieth century was nearing the end and with the Jewish world rapidly changing, these organizations were not well positioned to partner with the emerging Jewish philanthropists. Perhaps as a result, the NAA – after a decade in existence – first reorganized as JEXNET, briefly attracted foundation funding, and then went out of business (Bryfman, 2009).

Charles Bronfman

We do not know why Charles Bronfman did not connect with the NAA, but that he did not is central to our story. For Bronfman, scion of the famous Bronfman family of Montreal, had by 1997 emerged as the leading philanthropist supporting both the Israel experience for teens and more broadly, informal Jewish education as a way of engaging greater numbers of Jewish youth. After having founded the CRB Foundation in Montreal, he and his wife moved to New York to begin a new foundation with broader ambitions to be called the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies (ACBP).

Bronfman was passionate about Israel. He could see that the two largest Jewish communities, Israel and North America, were moving apart from each another. His passion was to bring together young Israeli and North American Jews to form common bonds as Jews. He also believed that no other experience could enliven the hearts of North American Jewish youth as a significant visit to Israel (Saxe and Chazan, pp. 4–5). Never a great student himself, Bronfman believed that the most

significant learning came through direct interaction with other people, places, and events. He was close to Chazan and learned that this kind of learning was called "informal education." Bronfman emerged as its champion.

Starting Israel Experience, Inc. was an initial attempt to bring a business perspective to the field of informal Jewish education. While the Jewish youth organizations had been running well-regarded Israel trips, the number of Jewish teens who went on these trips was still quite limited. Bronfman knew from his business experience that if one wished to attract significantly larger numbers of people to buy a product, that product needed to be marketed to attract their attention and interest. Yet Jewish youth organizations were primarily offering these Israel trips to their own members and not marketing them to the majority of Jewish teens. Bronfman felt it was precisely these less affiliated youth who could benefit most from an Israel experience (ibid., pp. 9–10).

Who was the intended audience for informal Jewish educational programs? This key question stood as a potential divider between Bronfman and the NAA Jewish educators. I remember a gathering of informal educators convened by the Bronfman initiative. One of the leading educators – passionate about the Israel experience – explained his perspective on increasing the numbers of youth in that organization's Israel experience. He said that these trips were designed primarily for youth who had been active in their movement. Those teens, he added, were familiar with the rules and norms of that movement and could be trusted to behave in Israel. To recruit a whole new group of youth would open their educators to the risks of handling teens whose behavior might be completely unacceptable.

That perspective was antithetical to Bronfman's vision to reach the majority of less affiliated Jewish youth. As a proud Jew who himself never affiliated with these movements, Bronfman identified with these other youth and was certain that they could be trusted – under appropriate supervision – to have a meaningful Israel experience.

Yet Israel Experience, Inc. was to serve the existing youth organizations by providing new tools to attract greater numbers of teens to their Israel trips. But this initiative would be short-lived. Jeffrey Solomon, President of ACBP, in retrospect has called this initiative "a failure" – a $19 million dollar investment "which produced no additional kids going to Israel" (Ruskay & Solomon, 2009, p. 7). This significant initiative – which might have connected the existing youth organizations to the emerging philanthropic world – did not work for reasons that will need to be explored in greater depth.

The Institute for Informal Jewish Education at Brandeis University

In a 1998 conversation with Jeffrey Solomon, I learned that ACBP might support a university-based institute dedicated to creating a more professionalized field of informal Jewish education. I leaped at this opportunity. Soon, the Institute for Informal Jewish Education (IJE) was established with a generous 5-year grant to

Brandeis University. This would be the first institute based at a research university in North America to sponsor academic research on Jewish teens, create a professional leadership institute for this field, and initiate new programs to engage under-engaged youth.

As its first act, the IJE commissioned an empirical study of the Jewish teen population of the Greater Boston area. This study confirmed in detail what was commonly known: Jewish teens after their bar or bat mitzvahs begin to disengage from Jewish education. There is a big drop-off at age 13 and then a gradual drop-off year by year until the end of high school (Kadushin, Kelner, & December, 2000). These findings raised the question that would guide the subsequent work. What could the IJE do to slow this process of disengagement and help shape a field that would be more responsive to the needs of today's teens?

The IJE claimed that informal Jewish educators need to rethink their traditional approaches and learn to aim their arrows more precisely to hit the targets of contemporary teen interest and availability. The IJE aspired to recreate experiential Jewish modalities for teens by taking these steps:

- Create a Professional Leadership Seminar for promising young professionals from across the field to take on future leadership;
- Create a grants program to fund a few innovative programs most likely to attract under-engaged Jewish teens;
- Work with communities across North America ready to bring innovative youth programs to their teens (Reimer & Shavelson, 2004, p. 4).

These years (1999–2004) proved to be both exciting and humbling: exciting because we were able to implement the three primary strategies for change. They were humbling because even so we made little progress in the largest challenge: engaging under-engaged Jewish youth.

Two moments stand out in our struggle to achieve our primary mission. The first came when we were working with our first group of young leaders who were intensely devoted to the cause of informal Jewish education. When they were to devise new projects to reflect all that they were learning at the Leadership Seminar, we, the staff, assumed their projects would be aimed at engaging under-engaged teens. But many members of the seminar balked at that suggestion. Those teens were too hard to reach. They believed they had their hands full working with teens that were still engaged. They wanted to rev up the base of the committed kids; our notion of reaching further out in the community to the disengaged seemed too academic to be taken seriously.

Respecting practitioner wisdom, I thought perhaps we were asking for too much. There would be a better opportunity when the next year we launched our grants for innovative practice. These grants were designed precisely for those organizations that were experimenting with programs to engage Jewish teens who had fallen away from active involvement.

I was very encouraged to receive 86 grant applications. Choosing just four grantees seemed daunting, but surely these select few would share our goals.

However, I was in for another surprise. When we first met with the four grantees, a crucial misunderstanding surfaced. "While we saw the grantees as pioneering new approaches, they saw themselves launching new programs for their organizations that would work in their accustomed ways. While we wanted them to place special emphasis on recruiting under-engaged youth, they were primarily interested in marketing the program to whichever teens would be most interested" (Reimer & Shavelson, 2004, p. 26).

We worked out with each grantee a definition of "under-engaged youth" that worked for their context. Together we learned that to work successfully to attract these less enthused youth, an organization had to make that a priority and limit the more involved teens from filling all the program slots. It takes more ingenuity and flexibility to engage teens for whom the Jewish component is not the best hook. But all this could be done and the results were that teens that were once indifferent could develop interest and involvement.

But we also learned that had the IJE not insisted on this extra effort, even these Jewish organizations would probably fall back on the accustomed path of serving primarily youth who show the greatest interest. This field primarily serves the teens that line up to gain Jewish experience, and those teens unintentionally block access for the less engaged kids. Clearly, the IJE did not have the clout to change that well-established pattern.

Birthright Israel

Even had the IJE met with greater success, we would not have attracted much notice. For within a year of our beginning, ACBP undertook with its partners a much more ambitious initiative: launching Birthright Israel (BRI). The story of this launch and its growth has been told elsewhere (Saxe & Chazan, 2008). The focus here is on how that growth illustrates the emerging intersection between Jewish philanthropy and informal Jewish education.

When philanthropist Michael Steinhardt approached Bronfman to partner to launch Birthright Israel, Bronfman brought to the table much more than money. He and his team had learned a great deal of what *not* to do and what *could be* done from the years in which they had experimented with the Israel Experience, Inc. (ibid.).

BRI emerged from the new philanthropic environment that Cardin and Prager (2008) describe. Within that environment some foundations choose to work alone and some to work in partnership with others (Fleishman, 2007). These two venture philanthropists – Steinhardt and Bronfman – had a big dream which they spearheaded. But they never worked alone. They sought partnership with existing Jewish organizations – especially the federation system and the State of Israel – as well as other philanthropists.

BRI marks both true innovation and a bridge with much that came before – especially in the Israel experience. It is vital to understand both where BRI broke with past practice and where it built upon that practice. I begin with three features of BRI that differed sharply from previous Israel experiences.

(1) *The gift of a free trip*. That was the attention-grabber. While most previous Israel experiences came with a hefty price tag, Steinhardt and Bronfman insisted that to grab the attention of young people who had shown no previous interest, BRI had to give the gift of a free trip. "In focus groups on college campuses we learned that young Jews were neither connected to Israel nor inspirationally moved by their own Jewish connection... The gift was designed to confront those realities" (Solomon, Cardin, & Gedzelman, 2009, p. 75).
(2) *The 10-day trip for college students and young adults.* Equally audacious was the decision to market this trip to college students and young adults. For 40 years, the Israel experience had been designed primarily for high-school students and had usually run for 4–6 weeks. There was little track record of attracting 18–26-year-olds to this experience. Yet the founders reasoned correctly that a free 10-day trip would have special appeal to this older group.
(3) *Those who had been on an educational trip to Israel were not eligible.* The founders were clear who their audience was: not those who were most committed, but those who had shown little previous interest. BRI had a singular mission: to reach and influence the majority of Jewish youth who have been in danger of losing any connection to Jewish commitments (Saxe and Chazan, pp. 14, 98).

In these pivotal decisions, we can see how these philanthropists thought differently about the Israel experience than had the Jewish educators who had designed the traditional Israel experiences.

Coming from the business world, these philanthropists brought a marketing perspective. They were comfortable playing a numbers game. What they most cared about was finding a way to make a difference in the lives of young adult Jews who had not been hooked on Judaism. They believed that a quality experience in Israel could light their Jewish fires, and aimed for *much larger* numbers to come to Israel. Their message to this group was: "If it takes a free trip to get you to Israel, here is the gift. If you only have 10 days, we can do it in ten. If you want to bring friends, just have them sign up. If you want winter, fine; if summer is better, we have those trips too. Just sign up and come."

Calling this program 'birthright' means that it is yours for the asking. It does not matter what kind of Jew you are, if you ever received a Jewish education or had a bar mitzvah. One Jewish parent is all it takes. No one before had made *that* offer in these numbers. Nothing represents a sharper break with Jewish communal tradition than this offer: *we take you as you are and ask in return only that you take this trip seriously – however you define that*. To these philanthropists, the important question is not what kind of Jew you will be, but whether you will choose to be Jewish in any meaningful sense. If the answer is yes, all else is mere commentary (Solomon et al., 2009).

By contrast, for most Jewish educators, all else is *not mere commentary.* Most Jewish educators begin from a particular Jewish value system. We became educators because we have a values-message to communicate and a wish to influence young

Jews to develop in certain directions. When seeking work, educators choose to work where we feel most identified with the values of that organization.

Most Jewish organizations sponsor an Israel experience with two goals in mind. They primarily want their youth to experience Israel and develop a close relationship with the Jewish homeland. But they also want those youth to experience Israel from a particular angle. They want this trip to solidify both the tie to Israel and to their movement. They place the Israel experience so that it will culminate earlier experiences in that movement and serve as a powerful bonding experience with peers and educators. They want the participants to feel "We all cried at the *kotel* together and love Israel and now feel even more committed to working for our movement."

From that educational perspective, numbers matter, but only to a point. Educators try to convince a maximal number of their charges to come on their movement's Israel experience. They raise money to subsidize those trips. But they are not primarily looking to provide an Israel experience for Jewish teens that dropped out at bar mitzvah.

Those kids would not feel at home on these movement trips that serve as culminating experiences; for they have not been part of the earlier socializing experiences.

Education and marketing often do *not* lead to the same conclusions. Informal Jewish education has aimed to exert a deep influence over those youth who have pursued this interest over time. A marketing approach seeks to attract those who had little previous interest to try something new (Reimer, 2006). Following a marketing strategy, BRI chose to break from the traditional Israel experience that developed from the 1950s through the 1990s (Chazan, 1997). The question of interest is how these two different languages – marketing and informal Jewish education – can productively communicate with one another.

Having emphasized the break in tradition, we need also note that these philanthropists and their partners did not seek to erase the history of informal educational experience, but rather to build upon it.

> The founders realized that to make BRI 'work' they would need professional guidance from those who knew the mind-set of their target audience and understood education. The program would have to be more than a tour; it would need to have rich emotional and intellectual content, yet be attractive enough to tens of thousands of young adult participants. . . Perhaps the key development that made BRI feasible was collaboration between the philanthropists and educational trip organizers. Unlike prior efforts, BRI was conceived as a partnership – not only among funders, but also between BRI and organizations that had the ability to recruit and provide educational programming for young adults. (Saxe and Chazan, p. 12)

Bronfman, Steinhardt, and these professionals knew that to be an effective instrument for promoting Jewish identity, BRI would have to embody the characteristics of a good Israel experience that incorporate an informal Jewish educational approach. That realization led to their partnering with providers whose educational staffs were trained in that approach and who were also open to trying new practices for a new clientele.

A Partnership Between Marketing and Informal Education

To create a 'transformative' program, the BRI founders took some unprecedented steps. First, they decided that the BRI organization would not itself be running Israel trips, but would hire providers to design and implement those Israel experiences. Second, they decided not to limit the providers to the traditional Jewish youth organizations, but to open the competition to for-profit touring companies that might offer the less traditional youth more attractive options. Third, they decided that the BRI organization would exercise its control over the quality of these experiences by being very clear to the providers about the goals of the BRI curriculum and the expectations of what each BRI experience must contain. At the same time, they would be flexible in allowing each provider to implement those goals and expectations as they thought best within the BRI paradigm (Saxe and Chazan, pp. 12–13, 124–25).

How has this balancing act worked out? Providers know they only have 10 days to accomplish a broad set of educational goals. Their challenge is to use those 10 days to the fullest – to engage the minds, hearts, and hands of the participants. Their relationship with these young adults will be short-term. Their primary educational goal is to open minds and initiate a dialogue about being Jewish that hopefully others will continue back in North America. That entails designing a program that raises a lot questions and possibilities, but leaves the participants feeling excited and thinking "I want to know more and seek further engagement."

BRI is an instance where a marketing perspective and an educational perspective *can* share a common goal. In this case, a satisfied customer is an eager learner, and an engaged learner will be a future customer for more Jewish experiences. When the participants emerge both as well-satisfied customers who truly enjoyed their trip and as more engaged Jews who are open to further Jewish exploration, the program works well on both fronts. That can only happen – I would contend – when both perspectives are built into the planning and implementation process and when both sides – philanthropists and educators – respect each other's agenda as legitimate and helpful.

The Foundation for Jewish Camp

One organization that has taken to heart the lessons of BRI is the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC). Jewish summer camps have stood at the heart of informal Jewish education from the beginning. But there was no single organization devoted to furthering the larger enterprise of Jewish camping until the formation of FJC in 1998. (It was originally named the Foundation for Jewish Camping and later changed its name.)

FJC was initiated by a pair of Jewish philanthropists, a married couple, Rob and Elisa Spungen Bildner. The Bildners had been participants in the Wexner Heritage Program and felt inspired to give back. As parents of school-aged children who were not attending Jewish day schools, the Bildners were concerned to find other

contexts for their children to form Jewish friendships and build a Jewish identity. Both remembered fondly the summers they had spent at summer camps and wondered why Jewish summer camps were not receiving the kind of philanthropic support that Jewish day schools had. That was when the idea of starting a foundation that would support Jewish camps began to form. Their interest was with residential (and not day) camps and the majority of these camps are run as non-profit organizations. They decided that their newly minted public foundation would have at its mission enhancing non-profit residential Jewish mission camps (Bildner, 2009).

The Bildners had entrepreneurial business experience and sought as their professional partner a well-regarded informal Jewish educator. They selected Rabbi Ramie Arian to be the first executive director. Together, they sought to convince the larger community that Jewish camps could be a powerful address for providing large numbers of young Jews with a powerful Jewish living experience (Bildner, 2009).

It proved at first a hard sell. While most had been to Israel many times, few Jewish philanthropists had ever attended Jewish camps or sent their children to one. Over the years, Jewish mission camps had done little to change their image in the community and had little attraction to Jewish philanthropists. This situation prompted Elisa Bildner to write: "The sad and ridiculous irony is that non-profit Jewish overnight camps, one of our community's most effective resources for transmitting identity and fighting assimilation, are among our least supported" (Bildner, 2002, p. 4).

Arian put forward a clear program for what the Jewish philanthropic community could do to maximize the effectiveness of Jewish camping.

> We need to create many more camps in the Jewish community to accommodate the many children who want to attend but are closed out. But more than additional space, we need to upgrade our camps to match or exceed the state of the art in the secular camp world. Many of our camps suffer from years of 'deferred maintenance' and need significant upgrades to their buildings and grounds. (Arian, 2002, p. 3)

In addition, he argued, Jewish camps need better programming, higher pay for staff, more money for scholarships, and incentive programs to encourage Jewish families to choose Jewish camps. It was a well-conceived analysis of what it would take to turn Jewish camping from an educational system that served only a very small percentage of Jewish children to one that served many more.

Yet that message did not take off. After a few hard years, the Bildners began to feel that the philanthropic community was becoming more receptive to the message that informal Jewish education could be a powerful tool for Jewish continuity (Bildner, 2009). But the program of investment in Jewish camps that Arian outlined would cost many millions of dollars and FJC was only slowly raising the needed funds. Raising those larger sums would call for new leadership (Vichness, 2008).

The FJC board turned for new leadership in 2004 to Jerry Silverman, a successful corporate leader who also had been an active lay leader in the Ramah movement. The Bildners believed Ramie Arian had built credibility for FJC; but now was the time to raise much larger sums. With Silverman's appointment FJC underwent a transformation. Silverman saw the success that BRI enjoyed and understood that for Jewish camps to fulfill their mission, they would have to attract and retain a much

higher percentage of Jewish families. Jewish camps had been serving around 5% of available Jewish youth. To become a credible answer to philanthropists' concerns about Jewish continuity, camps would have to demonstrate that they had appeal beyond these most committed Jewish families.

Like Steinhardt and Bronfman, Silverman is primarily a marketer. That low percentage of market penetration is for him totally unacceptable. Jewish camps may be serving the educational needs of their committed clientele, but how can one be satisfied knowing that 95% of all Jewish children in North America will never spend a summer – or even a week – at a Jewish residential camp? If you believe in the power of Jewish camping, he contends, you have to be committed to increasing its market penetration (Silverman, 2008).

That was not a new idea for FJC, but Silverman made those numbers the primary focus of FJC. The board set as a goal that in 5 years FJC will double the number of children attending Jewish camps. They agreed that Jewish camps had many other needs, but in meeting those other needs, FJC would also seek to attract and retain far larger numbers of Jewish families to Jewish camping.

Silverman (2008) never saw raising the numbers of Jewish campers as simply a matter of better marketing for the existing programs. For unless Jewish camp leaders offer their potential market an excellent camp program, they will not compete with both private camps and other growing summer program options for the attention of Jewish families. Attaining excellence is a pre-requisite to attracting more market share. Excellence in camping is a complex matter. For a Jewish camp to be competitive, it has to display excellence in many of its features.

Silverman was convinced that leadership matters crucially in determining the future of these camps. Private camps have an advantage of being led by directors who often remain at the leadership helm for several decades (given their financial stake in the camp's success). But Jewish non-profit camps hire camp directors who often have little direct training for this complex role and less of a personal stake in the future of the camp. As a result, many Jewish camps have suffered from unsteady leadership and a lack of long-term strategic planning and development. Silverman knew from his experience in the corporate sector that a well-crafted leadership program can make a significant difference in an executive's capacity to lead with vision and more skill.

In the fall of 2004, Silverman invited me and Richard Levin, a corporate coach and business consultant, to join him in developing a new executive leadership program for Jewish camp directors. He saw a tremendous need to invest in camp directors and thereby raise the bar in the pursuit of excellence. He wanted all three perspectives represented in this effort: his business-marketing outlook, Levin's expertise in developing executive presence and communication, and my expertise in integrating Jewish educational and value perspectives. When we developed an initial conception of the curriculum for ELI – the Executive Leadership Institute – he and Elisa Bildner secured initial funding from the Marcus Foundation.

Focusing on the many conversations we had in planning and implementing ELI, I will reflect on what it meant to be part of an active collaboration in which I represented the perspective of informal Jewish education while they represented the

perspectives of corporate marketing and developing executive talent. This is a brief case study of a dialogue-in-action in preparing a leadership institute for Jewish camp directors.

Developing and Implementing ELI

In trying to decide how I could play a constructive role within ELI, I spoke with Alvin Mars who was initiating *Lechu Lechem*, a leadership program for camp directors from the JCC movement supported by the AVI CHAI Foundation. In that initiative, the goal was to provide those camp directors with a deepening Jewish experience through which they would grow as Jewish learners and provide more knowledgeable Jewish leadership for their camps. That was not the premise of ELI, and I had to decide: Could I join an effort that would primarily focus on developing business-oriented skills like marketing, customer service, and fund-raising? I could agree only if I came to believe what is a cardinal principle for Silverman: increasing the numbers of Jewish children going to Jewish camps is itself holy work. I did decide that getting many more children to Jewish camps for several summers is the best chance of their having an intensely meaningful Jewish experience, and that was worthy of my time and effort.

Once I joined this team, what would my contribution be? What is the role of a Jewish educational leader on this team? The obvious answer is to provide a set of experiences through which the participants can engage in Jewish learning and develop ideas about Jewish leadership at camp. It remains important that the discourse within a leadership program not be entirely captured by the lingo of corporate culture and that participants be reminded that as much as the program asks them to stretch to become more competent executive leaders, those skills work in the service of bringing more children to a rich Jewish experience. Their role is to be the Jewish host of this enlarging Jewish tent called camp.

But there is a role beyond the obvious. I found that business-oriented people – even when sympathetic to the goals of Jewish education – do not understand the perspectives of Jewish educators. For example, take the question of camp size. Silverman and I were discussing a particular Jewish camp that is considered to be top quality and has been full with a waiting list. From Jerry's perspective that camp is ripe to grow and should consider opening a second camp. He said private camp owners would seize that growth opportunity. But this director – a good Jewish educator – believes that this camp is of an ideal size, and its relatively small size presents educational advantages she would be loathe to give up. Indeed for many Jewish educators creating an intimate community is an educational ideal. But that line of reasoning baffles Silverman. Why is this educator reluctant to grow this camp when that opportunity is to be seized?

My role got to be to mediate between these two perspectives. I could explain to the educator that Jerry is not criticizing her for preferring the small camp, but he is passionate about bringing that experience to more children. I could also suggest that there are ways to grow, which need not destroy that feeling of intimacy. I could explain that this educator is not simply risk-aversive, but takes genuine pride in the

camp community she has helped to create. If she were to grow her camp, it will have to be while still preserving that feeling of intimate community.

Why is this mediating role important? I fear that business-oriented leaders with access to philanthropic funds will simply not understand the perspectives of many Jewish educators. In parallel, I fear that many Jewish educators will outwardly agree to go along with the wishes of such funders, but inwardly resist those funder's ambitious change strategies. When these two sides talk past each other, it creates the conditions for maximal misunderstanding which could result in undermining serious efforts at changing Jewish education in North America.

In the early years of BRI, Jewish educational leaders like Barry Chazan and Irving Greenberg played crucial roles in mediating between the philanthropists and the providers of the Israel experience (Chazan, 2008). At ELI, Richard Levin and I played that role. One feature of the ELI program has been the opportunity for camp directors and FJC leaders like Jerry Silverman and Skip Vichness to talk and understand one another's perspectives. I believe that ELI has worked hard to create the kind of dialogue that the broader sector of informal Jewish education urgently needs.

Beyond ELI, FJC has created many opportunities to increase the numbers of campers attending Jewish camps. But thinking ahead, it will be up to the camp directors and their lay partners to keep up the momentum that FJC and other funders – like the Grinspoon Foundation – have now initiated. Foundations can only launch initiatives; the fate of those initiatives is in the hands of educational leaders who will either embrace this mission or allow it to fade. I believe, the more that camp directors are brought into this conversation, the more likely they will be to embrace these goals over time.

Conclusion: The Need for Greater Dialogue

> There is no single answer to the challenges of strengthening Jewish identity in a highly open society. . . Family foundations have a great role to play, but if they become absolutist, they can undermine the whole community and over time weaken it. (Ruskay & Solomon, 2009, pp. 6–7)

The annals of educational reform in North America are replete with well-intentioned initiatives that were launched with great hope, but over time produced little substantive change (Fullan, 2007). Current Jewish philanthropists might miss the primary lesson of these past efforts: *it takes more than money, intelligence, and good will to bring about lasting change*. It takes as well a truly collaborative effort by funders, educators, and families to come to an understanding of what they all want to change and what realistically they need to do together to make that change happen over time (Sarason, 1971).

I have presented two cases – BRI and FJC – in which there have been interesting efforts at collaboration and dialogue between the perspectives of business-oriented philanthropists and Jewish educational leaders. This partnership has been integral to the initial success of these programs and there is much more to learn about how philanthropists and educators can productively work together to bring about enduring

change. I am not arguing that these cases present an ideal scenario of partnership, but that philanthropic efforts to make change in Jewish education is less likely to succeed over time if one side of this partnership dominates the other and does not attempt to reach mutual understanding and agreement.

The danger of domination is much greater for philanthropists who have the money and the power. There is a danger when philanthropists – based on what they have learned through their business experiences – assume those lessons apply directly to the world of education. There is no question that business perspectives have much to contribute to improving the reach and effectiveness of Jewish education. But in the long run, education is about creating a cultural change – a change in how North American Jews value their Judaism and view themselves as Jews. That adaptive change cannot be accomplished by technical or marketing means alone. It will take a deeper, more visionary effort that perhaps only the most gifted leaders can imagine and effect (Heifitz, 1994).

In the immediate future, I see no more promising path than that of partnership and dialogue between Jewish philanthropists and educators. Philanthropists, anxious to see quicker changes and more measurable outcomes, need to also think more long-term. When their initial funding is over, what will sustain the changes that they are hoping to initiate? What will their funding leave in place over time that will insure that their fondest hopes will outlast their last dollar invested (Fleishman, 2007)?

Many Jewish educators need a crash course in adapting to these changing times. When the Bildners became passionate about Jewish camps, they could articulate what few Jewish educators could: that no matter how well individual camps or camp movements might be doing at any given time, if the larger world of non-profit Jewish camping does not change its mode of operation, these camps are in danger of losing their small slice of the summer market. No camp or movement stands alone. They are all part of an industry – summer leisure for children – that is rapidly changing. Jewish summer camps can either step up on the balcony to see those changes coming or face being washed away as almost happened to companies like Chrysler and General Motors.

There is no turning back the clock on the decade when Jewish philanthropy and informal Jewish education became deeply intertwined. Philanthropists now see the promise of informal Jewish education. The institutions of informal Jewish education have become dependent on the support of philanthropists. But beyond this mutual interdependence, what have these two sides learned from one another? To what extent have they come to better understand their partner? To what degree are they learning to work more effectively as partners? My assumption is that much of the Jewish future in North America hinges on answers to these questions.

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Intermarriage: Connection, Commitment, and Community

Jewish Education and Teenagers from Interfaith Families

Evie Levy Rotstein

Introduction

While the phenomenon of intermarriage represents one of the most important challenges facing American Jewry today, it is interesting to note that few academic researchers have examined the lives of the adolescents from interfaith families. This chapter provides much-needed insight into the lives of these adolescents and considers the role of Jewish education in developing a sense of Jewish commitment and continuity for this population.

According to National Jewish Population Survey data, 32% of children from interfaith families are being raised as Jewish (Phillips & Chertok, 2004 based on NJPS 2000–2001). The survey findings indicate that 33% of children are being raised as Christian, and 25% as both Jewish and Christian (Phillips, 1997, p. 49). The subject of intermarriage evokes considerable response in the Jewish community because it arouses basic fears about group survival. There are two aspects of concern. The first is the sheer matter of numbers. How many children of interfaith families will remain Jewish? The second consideration is one of identity and commitment. What will be the quality of affiliation of the interfaith family?

There are those researchers who believe that children from interfaith homes are lost to Judaism (Bayme, Greenwood, & Block, 1998; Wertheimer, Liebman, & Cohen, 1996), and there are others who argue that this does not have to happen. Phillips and Chertok (2004) remind us that we cannot dismiss children of intermarriages: "Intermarried households are diverse, and those raising children exclusively as Jews are far from a lost cause" (p. 10).

With the rising numbers of interfaith marriages and community concern about the decrease in Jewish population, the question of teen involvement in both formal and informal education is becoming significant. The American Jewish community has been struggling with the fact that there is a relatively large number of students (68%) who do not continue their Jewish education post-bar/bat mitzvah into the middle teen years (Kadushin, Kelner, & Saxe, 2000). The impact of this attrition rate

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has far-reaching effects in light of the reality that the adolescent years are the developmentally appropriate years for identity formation. "By default, today's Jewish school whether afternoon, Sunday, or day school, carries a bigger proportion of the burden of Jewish identity training than in the past" (London & Frank, 1987, p. 11). The Jewish community has taken modest measures to develop awareness of this issue and to create programming that will reach out to teenagers to increase religious affiliation and participation in Jewish activities. Programs such as Israel teen tours, leadership training summer institutes, and various social action mitzvah corps, are some examples. One of the major contributions of the Reform movement to the continuation of Jewish education through high school has been the emphasis it gives to the life-cycle ceremony of confirmation.

The relationship between adolescent Jewish education and adult commitment to Jewish life has been explored in a number of research studies in the last 30 years (Cohen, 1974; Fishman & Goldstein, 1993; Mayer 1983; Fishman, 2007a; Phillips, 1997, 2000). Findings indicate that Jewish education into adolescent years is a significant predictor for Jewish engagement as adults, and yet it is common knowledge that the American Jewish community is faced with great attrition rates for post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish teens involved in formal and informal Jewish educational programs (Kadushin et al., 2000).

A study conducted by the Union for Reform Judaism in 2008, entitled *Portraits of Learning*, found that the retention rate in Reform congregations for post-bar/bat mitzvah is 47% and 32% after confirmation in the 10th grade. Rabbi Jan Katzew, the director of the Department of Lifelong Jewish Learning, states: "We need to stop the teen recessional out of synagogues and out of the Jewish community. Teens are too precious to lose. We need them to succeed us and to exceed us as adult leaders and members of the Jewish community, as teachers and students of Torah and as lovers of Israel and of God" (Katzew, 2008).

These data challenge Jewish educators to better understand what they might do to actively engage teenagers in the Jewish community, particularly those from interfaith families. The goal of this chapter is to add to our understanding of what motivates these young adults to continue their Jewish education throughout their high-school years.

Adolescence, Retention, and Intermarriage

Research about the role of Jewish education specifically in the lives of teenagers is minimal. Some recent studies offer insight into the adolescent Jewish world and highlight a number of significant points. The Jewish Adolescent Study (JAS) (2000) conducted by Kadushin et al. explored the various influences on Jewish affiliation in adolescence such as family, school, peer group, and neighborhood. The study investigated the lives of teens from diverse levels of Jewish commitment and from many different communities. In an effort to deepen understanding of the American Jewish

adolescent experience, the study examined attitudes and behaviors in all aspects of teenagers' lives. One of the more challenging findings for Jewish educators concerned the widespread negative attitude toward supplementary Jewish education, with the rate of enrollment decreasing from 60% in the 7th grade to 22% in the 11th grade. "There is a steady move away from the Jewish community as *b'nei mitzvah* enter the demanding world inhabited by other American teenagers" (p. 71). The study showed that teenagers increase the time they devote to homework, school-based extracurricular activities, and paid employment, but that Jewish activities are seemingly peripheral and marginal. The teenage respondents did express the sentiment that being Jewish was important, and nearly two-thirds of the adolescents thought it was important to raise their own children as Jews. Finally, most teens felt that their parents strongly influenced the decision to continue formal post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education. "Just over half of the parents either required or strongly encouraged post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education, and this parental mandate or support was the strongest predictor of actual enrollment" (p. 72).

In another study by Kosmin and Keysar (2000) entitled *Four Up – The High School Year, 1995–1999*, approximately 1,300 teenagers were interviewed twice during 4 years. The first phase of the research involved interviews of 13–14 year olds, and the second phase involved interviewing the same teenagers when they were 17–18 years old. The study revealed that there is overwhelming consistency between the responses of the teenagers at both ages. A large percentage of the 13-year-old students (42%) enjoyed their Jewish education most of the time, whereas 37% of the 17-year-olds felt the same way (p. 24). The study made a clear statement regarding the influence of parents. "Parental engagement in Jewish life shows a clear correlation with the pattern of teenage involvement. Jewishly engaged parents tend to produce Jewishly engaged teenagers" (p. 47). The study also highlighted the response to the question, "How important is it for you to marry somebody Jewish?", with the highest proportions of affirmative responses (75%) coming from those who had attended Hebrew high school (p. 45).

Phillips determined that the more years one attended Hebrew School, the stronger one's Jewish belief and practices are (Phillips, 1997). His previous (1993) *Survey on Mixed Marriage* found that "respondents who continued past age 13 in even a 1 day-a-week school married non-Jews less often than those in more intensive schools who terminated their Jewish education at age 13" (Phillips, 1997, p. 16). He further indicates that adolescent involvement in either formal or informal Jewish education, two or more years of Jewish sleep-away camp or involvement in a Jewish youth group or an Israel teen trip can make a difference in friendships and dating patterns. These are the experiences, then, that have a significant impact on rates of intermarriage and adult Jewish identification.

In a study for the Union of Reform Judaism for teenagers from both in-married and interfaith families, Schaap (2008) notes that what distinguishes "high retention schools is that they display a culture encouraging retention based on a widespread agreement from the stakeholders that this is an important goal" (Schaap, 2008). This

explicit goal can strongly influence teenagers to continue their post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education. Analysis of the findings yields other significant factors that lead to high retention rates:

- The role of friends and peers – Jewish learning is intrinsically social. Friends are the binding forces. The top factor that all stakeholders agree influences retention rates is the desire of teenage students to be with their friends.
- The parents' role – Ranked second in importance is the statement that parents encourage their children to attend the school. Successful congregations are not just focusing on retaining students but are also making strong efforts to retain parents.
- Family programs and retreats – Both the high-school students and their parents indicate a significantly higher participation rate in family programs and retreats.
- The student's desire to be an active participant in the congregation – In the interviews, several experts indicated that students like to feel that they are significant contributors to a community and thus are seen as key members of their community, rather than being seen as a passive group that is "being served." In high-retention congregations, more high-school students are acting as teachers' aides and are singing in the choir.
- The role of the rabbi and other congregational professionals – In high-retention congregations, the students and their parents are significantly more likely to acknowledge the personal encouragement by the rabbi especially, but also by the other professionals such as the educational director and the teachers.
- The teachers and the educational content – The content of the learning does hold significant relevance for students and their parents. They are likely to rank high as factors in deciding to stay in the school the actual learning and the statement that the topics are relevant to their lives. The teachers at high-retention schools play an important role not only by encouraging the students to continue in the school, but also by making the Jewish learning exciting and relevant (Schaap, 2008).

In 2005, the Greater Boston Jewish Community published a study which indicates that intermarried families choose to raise their children as Jews when the families are themselves deeply engaged in Jewish practice (Chertok, Phillips, & Saxe, 2008). Within Reform-affiliated families, intermarried families with Jewish children are generally as observant as endogamous[1] Jewish families, and their children become B'nai Mitzvah at the same rates. The study reveals that although exogamous[2] families tend to join synagogues later than endogamous households, and a smaller percentage of their teenage children continue their formal Jewish education past their bar or bat mitzvah, many participate in synagogue life in similar ways to other Jews.

[1]This term is used to describe marrying within one's religion.

[2]This term is used to describe marrying outside one's religion.

Building on this literature, my own research used a qualitative study to explore the lives of adolescents from interfaith homes, listening carefully to discern what influences their decision to continue their Jewish education through the 12th grade. What emerged was a composite that represents the interplay of factors: the family life, peer relationships, the religious school experience, and finally each student's individual motivation and needs. Utilizing the following case study, one can better understand the significant factors involved for the teenager to be socially and educationally active in the congregation and the Jewish community.

Marlena: Leading the Way

The Family

Sixteen-year-old Marlena stands in the doorway and welcomes me into her home. We begin with the background information about her family. Marlena explains that her family has been a member of the temple for their "whole lives." She says this with conviction and emphasis. She is eager to communicate that being part of the temple is a significant piece of her family story and that it is the reason that she is working at the temple now. She further portrays her mother's connection to religion by saying that she is "not really religious." Marlena's mother Sheryl confirms this fact. Sheryl conveys a sense of pride when she states that her daughter, Marlena, has gone one step further and learned to read Hebrew for her bat mitzvah. When Sheryl was growing up, it was not the norm for a young woman to become a bat mitzvah. Marlena has internalized her mom's thinking in the following passage and shares the positive attitude she has developed regarding her Jewish sense of self.

I mean, they always joke around 'cause like my dad is pretty Catholic and like my mom is not crazy like Jewish . . . like she wasn't brought up like that. She's not like that now. We don't go to temple all the time. And like I am very into being Jewish. I have an interest in religion and I think it's really interesting and I like to learn about it. I like to *learn* about Jewish traditions, and I like to *practice* them and *do* the different things, and I'll always like to *make* Shabbat dinners and *bake challah*. They're like, I don't get it. I'm just so into it. I like it. I think it's interesting and I like learning about Jewish customs. I like practicing it too, so . . . I do more Jewish stuff than my parents do (Interview, February, 2003).

Marlena uses verbs that illustrate the specific actions that she takes to demonstrate her Jewish connection. She says that she likes to "*learn, practice, do, make and bake*" (my italics) Shabbat dinners. She is able to define what she likes about being Jewish in very specific terms. Marlena has translated her Jewish learning experiences into meaningful Jewish activity.

When I ask Marlena to convey her perceptions regarding her parents' interfaith situation, she is quick to relate that her father, Lou, doesn't really care that she and her brothers are being raised Jewish, but her mother does. Marlena's mother, Sheryl, describes how her children became involved with the temple through participation in the children's choir. The children have literally brought the parents to the religious

services, and the parents are both proud and happy to watch their children lead the service and even participate in the children's choir. Sheryl is eager to share the fact that her husband continues to be so supportive of his children's participation in the junior choir. Though she doesn't sing in the public school choir, Marlena tells me that the reason she likes the choir so much is because it gives her the opportunity to be with her friends.

Reaching Out

From the outset, Marlena focuses on the many specific ways in which she actively expresses her Jewish self. First, she is president of the youth group. When I asked her why she became involved, she said, "I was interested in working with the youth group, since I enjoyed leadership positions and wanted to get involved in an organization." Her most significant accomplishment is that she was chosen to be the teen representative on the Temple Outreach Committee. The Outreach Committee organizes activities and programs for interfaith families and addresses ways to include the non-Jewish spouse in temple life. In addition, since she is the president of the youth group, Marlena has been appointed the teen representative to the temple board of Trustees. Marlena realizes that she has been given a position that gives her a sense of responsibility and purpose. She expresses the fact that she feels valued as a teen participant of the temple board and likes the fact that she has been given the opportunity to share her perspective as a child growing up in an interfaith family.

Marlena's work with this Outreach Committee, the temple board, and the youth group has been a positive experience. Her voice becomes animated and she smiles with a sparkle in her eyes. She speaks about this part of her life with a great deal of excitement. Marlena's community service has had a big impact on her. Gaines (2003) notes, "Service has the capacity to radically alter the paradigm of teen empowerment. Community service provides much more than individual involvement in the Jewish community and in the larger world. In a very real way, doing community service allows a hands-on, participatory approach to being a positive force in society" (p. 4).

Smith (2003) observes, "American religious congregations represent one of the few remaining major social institutions in which adolescents participate extensively that emphasizes continuity of interaction. . . .This creates the possibility for youth to form significant relational network ties that cross age boundaries" (p. 25). Marlena communicates her dedication to this volunteer project as an extension of her dedication to the temple and as a result of her positive Jewish educational experience.

Sheryl offers her perspective on Marlena's continuing post-bar/bat mitzvah by saying that, "It's never been a discussion, quite honestly. It's just been assumed" (Interview, February, 2003). I question Sheryl by asking her, "Do you think it would be different if the school wasn't such a positive experience?" She answered by saying, "Possibly. I couldn't say because it has always been a positive experience

for them. I'm sure if it was a negative experience; if it was a different type of environment, the situation would be different" (Interview, February, 2003).

My Teacher – My Leader

Marlena is very definite that one of the reasons she has continued her Jewish education is the result of the positive relationships she has developed with certain people in the temple. She builds a very strong case to support the fact that many teachers in the religious school and particularly the student rabbi have played a significant role in her life.

Marlena uses language that describes her emotional connections to people. The context of her narrative is one of relationships and feelings. She speaks about "getting close and having a special bond" and "becoming pretty close" with the new youth advisor/ rabbi. She seems to be proud that she has formed a relationship that feels comfortable and close, while most teens would never go to speak with a rabbi. There is a tone in her voice that expresses the happiness she feels that she can "talk to my rabbi." Research conducted by the National Study of Youth and Religion discovered that 72% of teens find their religious congregation a place to talk about problems (Denton, Pearce, & Smith, 2008).

Marlena describes the numerous and meaningful existential discussions she has had in her confirmation classes. She explains that her Jewish education has provided other important opportunities to discuss big ideas. "I think it has really defined my morals and how I might see the world and how I see other people. That's a lot of what we discuss now that we're like older and we're in class" (Interview, February, 2003). The fact that Marlena mentions the issue of morality as a product of her continued Jewish education is congruent with the research conducted by Kosmin and Keysar (2004). They report that for their sample, the second most important element of being Jewish is "leading an ethical and moral life" (p. 19).

One Direction – Two Religions

Marlena gives thoughtful response to her perspective of religious choice. She sees herself as only Jewish and not a mélange of two religions. Marlena's parents have actually aligned themselves with the smallest percentage of interfaith parents who have selected Judaism to be the only religion in their family. They fall into the smaller cohort of 39% of intermarried couples who are raising their children Jewish as compared to the 53% who are "not being raised Jewish" (Fishman, 2004, p. 7). As her father Lou states, "It worked for us – it may not work for others."

Lou attests to the fact that holiday celebrations are important family gatherings and states that "We are really a close family. I don't think my sisters and brother who are married to Christians, make any bigger deal out of the holidays than I do. It's just really a time to get together" (Interview, 2003). It is interesting to note that Cohen and Eisen (2000) describe the holiday Jewish experience in a similar fashion,

"Holidays celebrated throughout the year, with observance heavily focused on the family at home, therefore constitute the master script of Jewish involvement... Family is thus not only the site and vehicle for holiday observance, but its most important meaning and motivation" (pp. 186–187). For both Lou and Sheryl, holiday celebrations whether Jewish or Christian, provide the closeness and valuable sharing that is important to them.

The Good School

Perhaps the most illuminating aspect of Marlena's story is the way in which both she and her parents pay tribute to the excellent religious school at the temple. There are numerous times when they emphasize the way that the synagogue and the school have positively influenced the children and the parents in the community.

In one conversation, Marlena described some of the highlights of her learning experiences. I was not surprised to hear her speak of the field-trips and the guest speakers who have come to the school. I heard the theme of "engagement" and the issue of active learning and making meaningful connections. Expanding the walls of the classroom to the community and places of historical interest provides students with authentic learning.

Many components of the religious school program have contributed to Marlena's decision to continue her Jewish education to the 12th grade. She has built positive connections with some of the teachers, a caring relationship with the student rabbi, and found value in many of the learning activities. I am impressed that she is able to articulate the inter-relatedness of the entire experience and remembers so many of the details of the specific curriculum.

Marlena has explored many different ways to be part of her synagogue community. She has found a place that she feels valued and accepted and is treated as an adult. She willingly assumes different leadership roles and is given a great deal of support by the teachers, the rabbi, and members of the temple board. She enjoys the fact that she has chosen a path that is not the norm among her peers, and that she can practice what she has learned. Marlena has found many opportunities to be an active member of the Jewish community and she feels both comfortable and committed to linking Jewish learning with Jewish living. She is able to look into the future and see continued ways of connecting to the Jewish community both in college and later into adulthood.

Implications

What can Jewish educators and community professionals glean from Marlena's story and the stories of other students interviewed for this research. How we can possibly use this data to enhance our work with interfaith families, the school community, and finally our students? Though Marlena's story is certainly not the majority case for children of interfaith families, it is all the more important to

learn from her experience and to better understand the factors that contribute to the successful Jewish engagement of teenagers.

How Families Respond Makes a Difference

Marlena's story points to the fact that parents who are intermarried have a crucial role in supporting their children's educational choices. When Jewish education is a priority for the Jewish parent, and when parents acknowledge that Jewish learning has benefits for teenagers as well as for younger children, it makes a difference in the attitudes of teens from interfaith families. The question for Jewish educators is why some parents understand the value of Jewish high-school education and other parents do not. How can we utilize the influence of parents who support continued learning to help shift the perception of the other parents who don't? The Jewish community, together with the rabbis, cantors, teachers, and principals, must provide a unified message that post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education is in fact critical for the teenage population. The first step is to clearly articulate the position that formative Jewish learning is valuable and essential to adolescent development. When parents feel positive about Jewish learning, they are able to communicate their expectations.

If the community and/or congregation can establish an expectation that Jewish education extends through the high-school years and that Jewish learning is a life-long endeavor, parents will shift their thinking. In my experience, when parents view post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education as an important component of their teenagers' lives, the teens are committed to learning. One educator comments:

> Some parents care an awful lot, and they do what they should do, which is to put their foot down and say, look, you don't drop out of junior high school just because you're thirteen. Why do you think that you should stop going now just because you had a bar mitzvah? The whole point is Jewish education and not having a bar mitzvah. Parents who understand that tend to put their feet down and once you do that, the child has to go. And of course those who went to confirmation themselves or had a good Hebrew high school experience tend to assume that their children will continue. (Interview, 2003)

This statement reinforces the fact that teenagers are responsive to their parents' feelings and values. This is further supported by the research of Jewish teenagers (Fishman, 2007; Kosmin & Keysar, 2004) and by the larger National Study of Youth and Religion (Smith & Denton, 2005)

> What we learned by interviewing hundreds of different kinds of teenagers all around the country is that the vast majority of American teenagers are *exceedingly conventional* in their religious identity and practices. Very few are restless, alienated, or rebellious; rather, the majority of U.S. teenagers seem basically content to follow the faith of their families with little questioning. When it comes to religion, they are quite happy to go along and get along. (Smith & Denton, p. 120)

Parents need to be part of the educational process from the beginning. When congregational religious schools are committed to building strong programs that cultivate community and personal relationships, parents will begin to see the value of the experience and support Jewish education throughout the teen years. Parents need

to feel empowered to encourage their teenagers to continue their Jewish education. It is important for synagogues and religious schools to include outreach to parents, both the Jewish and non-Jewish parents. Dr. Ismar Schorsch, the former Chancellor of the Conservative Movement's Jewish Theological Seminary, wrote a similar message in a Torah commentary over 10 years ago in 1994: "We should not miss an opportunity to give the non-Jewish spouse of our son or daughter a chance to savor Jewish experience. We should start from strength by taking them into our family and exposing them often to the emotional warmth, ethical standards, intellectual power and artistic beauty of Judaism" (Retrieved May, 2005 from http://learn.jtsa.edu/topics/parashah/576f3/pinhas.shtml).

Leadership – Fostering Caring Relationships

I contend that synagogue schools are in fact part of the solution in keeping teenagers of interfaith families engaged and connected to Jewish life. We look to the congregation to emphasize the value of continued Jewish education. Aron (2000) stresses the role of the synagogue in reaching out to families.

> For the last decade, leaders of the American Jewish community have been wringing their hands over the 'continuity crisis,' whose most obvious symptom is the rising rate of intermarriage, but whose ancillary symptoms include lower rates of affiliation and observance. . . . Synagogues have tended to be seen as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution. . . .Synagogues have the potential for reaching people on a continuous basis throughout their lives and in the context of their families. (p. 7)

Does the professional leadership in the congregation realize the extent to which it can affect a change of vision regarding Jewish education? All the research about educational change points to the fact that the process of change begins with a clearly articulated vision on the part of the school leadership (Evans, 1996).

Professionals play a significant role in conveying this message. Principals, teachers, rabbis, and youth group leaders do have the power to build meaningful relationships that can influence the decision to continue Jewish education. These relationships are highly valued by teenagers, and they cherish the sense of connectedness they feel by being part of the synagogue community. For teens from interfaith families, this sense of belonging to the Jewish community is perhaps even more critical. If we consider the concept of a *kehillah kedoshah* (holy community) as a paradigm for this vision, we can build a foundation for our students to be part of a cohesive and supportive community. Synagogue professionals must understand the critical leadership role they play in encouraging all teenagers, and specifically those from interfaith families, to continue Jewish learning. They are not necessarily trained to work specifically with adolescents and may not understand the developmental need to build strong personal relationships, with both peers and adults. This is an aspect of professional development that requires careful consideration. The professional leadership in the congregation must develop skills and strategies also to reach out to the parent community for support and to connect with teenagers as well.

The Jewish community is beginning to realize that it is important to build strong leadership capacity for Jewish educators. The Leadership Institute for Congregational School Educators sponsored by New York School of Education at Hebrew Union College and the Davidson School at the Jewish Theological Seminary, funded by the UJA Federation of New York, is a result of the growing understanding that a new perception is needed to help educators view themselves as important change agents in the community and to be "charismatic adults" for teenagers. This two-and-half-year professional learning initiative involves 40 principals from both the Reform and Conservative movements, and is designed to build leadership capacity, pedagogical skills, and enhance Judaic knowledge. One of the major goals of the program is to empower educators to create successful schools where shared leadership and collaboration are the building blocks of dynamic learning communities (Wald & Castleberry, 2000).

Re-imagining Jewish Education

Participation in volunteer Jewish leadership experiences during the high-school years is a significant influence to support learning for teenagers from interfaith families. Whether it is the *madrikhim* (teen assistants) program working with elementary age children, the *Gesher le Kesher* program working with 8th graders, being active in a youth group, or creating significant *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) projects, the teenagers in this study expressed the fact that these experiences influenced their decision to continue their Jewish education. In another study of Jewish teenagers, Leffert and Herring (1998) found that volunteer experiences were also powerful predictors of adolescents' involvement in Jewish activities. They found that adolescents who volunteer report significantly higher levels of involvement in Jewish-sponsored activities and value Jewish education and Jewish knowledge. They report further "that if young people can be involved in volunteer or service activities, there is increased likelihood that they will feel that Jewish learning is an important part of their lives and identities as they reach later adolescence and make the transition into early adulthood" (p. 55).

We learn something very important from the students' accounts of the impact of these types of experiences. Our schools must create opportunities for all teenagers to choose among many volunteer options. These would require careful design and structuring and must include time for personal reflection and meaning-making. It is important for teenagers to express their individuality by having choices and finding volunteer situations that are meaningful (Arnett & Jensen, 2002).

The second implication for the field of Jewish education involves building religious school communities that develop strong connections to authentic Jewish living in an open and accepting environment. Marlena and others in this study identify certain aspects of Jewish learning that they found engaging or that provided meaningful connections to their lives, and which made them feel comfortable and supported. They are able to define and characterize these learning experiences in specific detail.

What does engaging Jewish education look like, and how do we strive to provide this kind of experience for our students? I suggest that Jewish learning needs to be personally meaningful. Personal meaning-making is learning that connects an individual to Judaism and Judaism to the individual. Each learner has the opportunity to make Jewish learning a Jewish living experience (Aron, 2000). Creating memorable learning experiences frames knowledge acquisition in vivid experiences, meaningful relationships and connects the individual to emotions, senses, and intellect in ways that create a lasting impression.

Formal religious organizations, while being in a position to assist adolescents in the identity search process, often abdicate such a role (Markstrom-Adams 1992). Religious schools must provide opportunities for a dialogue between parents and teenagers to further exploration of Jewish identity and commitment. It is crucial that parents are brought into the conversation, to help teenagers define the role that Judaism plays in their lives. Parent/child reflections and shared narratives can strengthen the connections between our students and the Jewish community. In speaking about all faith communities, Christian Smith and M.L. Denton (2005) succinctly states, "... parents should be viewed as indispensable partners in the religious formation of youth" (p. 267).

Yearning and Learning

Some students from interfaith families demonstrate a desire to further their Jewish learning which is fostered by the many positive experiences they have had through the years. One educator reflects, "The kids were talking about the confirmation ceremony, and I asked them how many were here in religious school because they were forced to come. No one raised their hands and they all started telling me that they really like coming to learn. You have some kids who are going to go no matter what" (Interview, 2003). We Jewish educators must acknowledge that many of our students have a true desire to learn. Educators, who have high expectations that reflect a teacher's deep belief in a student's capacity to learn, are able to be highly effective.

All religious schools need to have high standards and expectations which convey the message that Jewish learning is important. In addition to having high expectations, Jewish educators must continue to explore important adolescent concerns and frame them within a Jewish context. It is essential to design Jewish high-school programs that address existential questions and contemporary dilemmas that connect to the world outside the school. Resources and texts must reflect adolescent concerns and provide the Jewish perspective. An example is the curriculum presented to the 68th Biennial conference for the Union for Reform Judaism entitled *Sacred Choices: Adolescent Relationships and Sexual Ethics.* Yoffe (2005) describes his perspective on adolescent concerns and the lack of support from the Jewish community.

> The simple truth is this: Our kids are frustrated by the combined failure of their parents and their synagogues to offer them practical help here. More often than not, hookups leave them

> depressed, confused, and guilty. But very few of them see the synagogue as a place to go for support, or their Judaism as a source of comfort and direction. And they wonder why. Since we have told them again and again that Judaism is an all-embracing way of life, they expect that their tradition will have something to say about matters of such importance. (Retrieved November, 2005 from www.urj.org)

In addition to grappling with these critical adolescent issues, students want to expand their Jewish knowledge to help them understand the broad existential questions in life that assist in building a strong sense of self. During the last several decades, "religious individualism" has dominated the landscape of American religion. The notion that "an individual should arrive at his or her own religious beliefs independent of any churches or synagogues" (Roof, 2003, p. 139) has an impact on the way in which we must involve Jewish teens in the educational process. This makes our challenge as Jewish educators a significant one; we must offer educational experiences that provide varied opportunities to cultivate deep and meaningful connections to the Jewish community and the synagogue.

Concluding Thoughts

What can we learn that will make a difference in the way we might plan for students from interfaith families? We see that the family plays a central role in the decision to continue post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education. When the Jewish parent communicates a positive response to their children's active involvement in the Jewish community it does have a significant impact on the teenager. It is evident that the role of the Jewish parent is crucial in defining expectations and shaping the home environment. In this qualitative study, it doesn't seem to matter if the Jewish parent is the mother or the father, but it is significant for the non-Jewish parent to be either very supportive of Jewish engagement or not involved at all. Sibling and grandparent relationships also play an important role and have considerable impact on the teenagers' decision.

The religious school experience, both during the elementary years and during the beginning years of high school, has a great deal of influence in the decision to continue on to 11th and 12th grades. Many of the programs, trips, retreats, and curricula are appreciated and perceived as meaningful contributions to their strong Jewish connections and the decision to continue. Marlena, like others in the study, finds many of her teachers to be positive role models. The teenagers express their satisfaction with the fact that they are able to build trusting friendships with teachers, rabbis, youth group advisors, and other adults in the community, and that these individual relationships are very significant. Social relationships with peers are critical for these teenagers, and they enjoy the "special" nature of these religious school friendships. Being involved in youth group or the synagogue's *madrikhim* program extends social ties to the congregation and offers the teenager a position of value and honor in the community.

Teenagers from interfaith families are inspired to continue their Jewish education because they are interested in learning and growing spiritually. Their quest for

knowledge simply for its own sake – *Torah Lishmah* – is an integral aspect of the decision to continue. The need to understand the spiritual and existential questions of life, which is part of a normative process during adolescents, is another motivating factor. Finally, these teenagers have revealed that their decision to continue Jewish education into the 11th and 12th grades is influenced by their individual experiences in making meaningful connections to their religious school friends, their teachers, rabbis, and youth group advisors and to the curriculum that links Jewish values and Jewish living.

Like resilient youth, who develop a positive attachment to school and therefore defy their cultural environments (Bernard, 2003; Brooks & Goldstein, 2001), these teenagers, unlike many of their peers, have had successful religious school experiences which foster their desire to continue their Jewish education and act in a counter-cultural manner. They attribute their meaningful Jewish learning experience to the powerful influence of caring teachers, rabbis, and youth advisors who are able "to engage the whole child, not just the cognitive but the social, emotional, physical, and spiritual parts. They also understand that student motivation is driven by the need for love and belonging, respect, autonomy/power, mastery, challenge, fun, and meaning, and that successful learning experiences are designed to meet as many of these needs as possible" (Bernard, 2003, p. 121). Creating the opportunity to connect Jewish learning to Jewish living is the foundation of the role of service to the community. The resilient youth literature points to the fact that schools and classrooms that have been successful are often described in terms of "a family, a home, a community – even a sanctuary" (Bernard, 2003, p. 125). This is the very sentiment shared by the Jewish teenagers in this study as well.

Suggestions for Future Research

Sociologist Egon Mayer clearly states, "Those who ignore the potential for Jewish continuity amongst the descendants of the intermarried, given the magnitude of their numbers, are also condemning hope in the American Jewish future" (Mayer, 1994, p. 78). Moreover it is critical for Jewish educators to focus their attention on how to better engage teenagers both from interfaith families and those with two Jewish parents.

The Reform Movement in America has embraced the concept of outreach to interfaith families and has developed many programs and educational materials to support the endeavor. Both the Conservative and Orthodox branches of American Jewry have been less willing to do so. Though the number of interfaith families who raise their children exclusively as Jews is low, many children from a dual-religion household are in fact being exposed to Judaism.

While seeking to shed light on the factors that motivate teenagers from interfaith families to continue their Jewish education, I have discovered that there are many possibilities for further research in the field. More specifically, questions that emerge from this study include further investigation of the following:

- The role of the teacher, rabbi, and youth group leader is an integral factor in the decision to continue post-bar/bat mitzvah Jewish education. What kind of professional training is necessary to guide these professionals to be effective "charismatic adults"? How would this professional development provide innovative models to advance meaningful personal connections to Jewish teenagers from interfaith families?
- There is a potential area of research which involves the teenage quest for spiritual connections. A study of Generation Y (Greenberg, 2004) found that while "the Baby Boom was characterized as a 'generation of seekers,' their offspring, Generation Y, is a 'generation of individuals' " (p. 5). Young people believe it is possible to be "religious" or "spiritual" without belonging to a church, synagogue, or mosque. I suggest that students from interfaith families have a particular pull toward a spiritual quest; I believe that it would be worthwhile to investigate the belief systems of students who do not continue their Jewish education. How do teenagers from interfaith families understand the role of Jewish community in their quest to answer the existential questions of life?

Children from interfaith families are a growing percentage of the students in our religious schools. It is critical that we take their experience into consideration when we design learning for Jewish teenagers. Like the young people in the resilient youth studies, teenagers from interfaith families are bucking the trend and choosing a different set of counter-cultural decisions. We know that most Jewish teens drop out of religious school and that it may seem counter-cultural to continue beyond bar/bat mitzvah; this is even more so the case for students who come from interfaith families. The ultimate success of continued Jewish learning for teenagers from interfaith families is directly related to the success that the individual student feels in finding deep and meaningful connections to both the people in the congregation and to the learning environment.

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Learning Organisations: Learning to Learn – The Learning Organisation in Theory and Practice

Susan L. Shevitz

The Development of the Concept of "Learning Organizations"

The field of organizational development incorporates many different views of the exact nature of the problems and, hence, the solutions facing American organizations, whether profit or non-profit, religious or secular, small or large.[1] These views entail different foci and different units of analysis, the individual, the group, or the system, and argue for different innovative remedies ranging from system-wide "re-engineering of the corporation" (to use the phrase popularized by Champy and Hammer's highly influential book [1994]) to Argyris and Schon's focus on changing group perception and behavior (1978), or Schein's examination of the role of the leader in creating a culture (1992).

Some theorists and practitioners, discouraged by seemingly intractable problems in all sorts of organizations, began turning to ideas about how people learn in order to find ways to promote lasting improvement. In 1990 Peter Senge, then head of what is today SoL, Society for Learning Organizations at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, synthesized a range of complex ideas and approaches in the best-selling book he wrote with several co-authors, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization.* The concept wove together personal, organizational, and societal visions of what successful organizations would look like. According to Senge (1990, p. 1) learning organizations are places

> where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective assumption is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

This view suggests that in most settings people's creativity and capacities are largely untapped and that in an increasingly complex world, where people are

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[1]See Beckhard, R. What Is Organization Development? In *Organization Development,* ed. Joan Gallos, 3–12, Sage Publications and Burke, W. Where Did OD Come From? in the same volume, 13–37, for a short history of this field.

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interdependent in powerful, new ways, people need to create the knowledge and capacities to deal with conditions. Relying on precedent and on outdated assumptions would not help organizations advance the innovative approaches that are needed in a globalized and interdependent world. Senge's approach to learning organizations is a call to both a vision and a methodology:

> We are taking a stand for a vision, for creating a type of organization we would truly like to work within and which can thrive in a world of increasing interdependency and change. (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 32)

Learning organizations embody characteristics that Senge claims are generally in short supply in most organizations: (1) they create a culture based on love, wonder, humility, and compassion (he used the Buberian distinction between I–It and I–Thou relationships where the former are objectified, instrumental relationships and the latter are characterized by mutuality, directness, openness, and presence); (2) they develop ways to sustain generative conversations and concerted action; and (3) they see work as part of "the flow of life as a system." (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 32) While this might seem to be a "soft" approach to organizational effectiveness, it was based on years of work with corporations of all sizes. Senge and his team developed five "disciplines" that they claim need to be learned and used if significant organizational improvement is to take place. They are the basis of organizational learning:

- Systems thinking: Looking at the widest possible understanding of a system to consider ways things influence each other over long periods of time and at great distance; move from breaking things down into their smaller, manageable parts to see the systems and patterns; this entails seeing the world as consisting of a whole made up of wholes;[2]
- Personal mastery: Continually clarifying and deepening personal vision, developing attitudes and skills that help people see reality more objectively;
- Mental models: Exploring and questioning the assumptions and generalizations one brings to situations (i.e., mental models) and how they influence thought and action and developing new, more appropriate mental models;
- Building a shared vision: Surfacing shared "pictures of the future" that elicit people's deep commitment rather than grudging acceptance or compliance;
- Team learning: Attending to the ways the team members interact that impede learning and creating ways to incorporate the disciplines as it does its work.

These disciplines help individuals and groups within the organization – and through them the organization – to develop the flexibility, adaptability, and productivity to excel by tapping the capacity and commitment of people at all levels of an organization to develop new understandings and forge new approaches. Senge's critics charge that he seriously underestimates the political realities of organizational life so that although organizations might use his ideas, very few "come close to

[2] Aronson, D. *Intro to Systems Thinking* provides an accessible exploration of the concept; Aronson host *The Thinking Page* (http://www.thinking.net).

the combination of characteristics that he identifies with learning organizations." (www.infed.org/thinkers/senge/htm). Gavin, writing in 1993, moved away from Senge's interest in personal development as it relates to organizational effectiveness and instead provides a more concrete definition that links learning to performance – i.e., making use of what is learned. He argues that a learning organization "is skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights" (1993 p. 1). Looking at business models, Gavin extrapolates several building blocks associated with organizations that learn:

- Systematic problem solving that uses data and also inquires about underlying assumptions;
- Experimentation that looks for and tests new knowledge in an environment that has incentives for risk taking, creativity, and assessment (of the new ideas and approaches);
- Managers who are trained to support these activities and to be result oriented;
- Learning from past successes and failures;
- Learning from other organizations and sectors (Gavin, 1993, pp. 81–91).

As organizational theorists relied on educational insights into learning, educators began to adapt the model to schools. Michael Fullan and his colleagues at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in Canada (as well as others working in the United States and the United Kingdom), provided the theoretical underpinnings for changing educational settings in ways that are consistent with Senge's approach. He wrote a series of books rich in theoretical and empirical data about ongoing attempts to improve schools and school systems and resisted oversimplification by dealing with the different levels within schools and school systems that need to change in order for improvements to take hold (See Fullan, 1991, 1993, 1999, 2005, 2007, 2008). Among the points that Fullan emphasized is that "theories of change and theories of education need each other" (1999, pp. 20–22) and that learning has to take place both within the setting and with the external groups that are also involved in the change. This means that, no matter where it occurs, enabling and supporting new ways of learning that lead to new ways of acting is critically important. Senge's group, eager to help real organizations become learning organizations that effectively deal with their challenges, also published field books including *Schools That Learn.* This provides the conceptual framework as well as specific tools to help the school itself to develop a learning orientation so that learning takes place in the classroom, school, and community and among all the stakeholders (Senge et al., 2000). Fullan produced a similarly practical volume, *Leading in a Culture of Change* (2004) designed to help educational leaders root desired changes in their systems.

Those who assume that learning is the hallmark of educational settings might be perplexed by these forays by educational organizations into the field of organizational development with its emphasis on helping organizations learn. Education is, after all, about learning. The American public, however, had been barraged by evidence that individual students and educational organizations were not learning what they needed to in order to succeed. Standardized tests, high-school graduation

rates, problems of literacy and numeracy, and other data indicated that learning was not happening for many students in the American school system.[3] In addition to those who called for strengthening students' basic skills, many critics of American schooling argued that the *type* of learning students need is more sophisticated than recall and use of received information. While this critique was hardly new and had been powerfully made by John Dewey decades earlier, it took a contemporary twist: new technologies that create easy access to unimaginably huge amounts of information and the challenges of globalization require learners to make sense of new situations. Their job is to know how to harness and use information – in essence, to create new knowledge and approaches. Schools, on their part, need to create new instructional models to meet these new demands (Senge et al., 2000, "Orientation"). In order for students to learn in new ways, the different levels of the school system need to become involved: teachers need to know how to learn in this way and then to promote this kind of learning in their classrooms; in order for teachers to do that, schools need to be organized and administered in ways that would support this kind of teacher learning; this, in turn, requires systems that value the new learning, as well. Change, the argument went, would come only when all these levels were addressed and the stakeholders' orientations to learning and to each other would change. *Schools That Learn* gave tools to help people interested in education move forward. Hundreds of other books and trainers promoted orientations to school reform (sometimes called restructuring); many drawing on the insights developed in the Learning Organization approach.

Attempts to Develop Learning Organizations in the World of Jewish Education

The critique of education was not limited to the public sector. In the Jewish world, as well, there was ongoing dissatisfaction with the status quo. As the Atlanta Jewish Times announced on a 1999 cover page, "Reinventing Hebrew School. Most of Us Went to It. Many of Us Hated It. We Need It." Serious studies of Jewish congregational schools looked at different aspects of the failure, or to use Isa Aron's phrase, "the malaise of Jewish education." (1989) Federation heads, foundation directors, educators and academics all expressing the sentiment, much like that about public schools, that something "had to be done" to improve the situation.[4] Fears about

[3]The 1983 government report, *A Nation at Risk,* was a clarion call that charged that the population of the United States was too poorly educated to compete in the global economy. This ushered in a period of intense efforts to reform American education on all levels: national efforts (the best example is the No Child Left Behind reform bill) complemented state, local, and school-based efforts.

[4]For other examples see David Schoem's 1989 ethnography, *Ethnic Survival in America,* that vividly portrays deep problems with afternoon schools; Alvin Schiff's controversial 1998 study, *Jewish Supplementary Schooling: An Educational System in Need of Change.* New York: Bureau of Jewish Education.

the intermarriage rate and the future well-being of the Jewish community in North America coalesced as the "continuity crisis" as a 52% intermarriage rate reported by the 1990 Jewish population study (Rosov & Isaacs, 2008, p. 522). Were Jewish education more effective, the popular argument went, then there would be less intermarriage. This reasoning carried both explicit accusation and implicit hope: Jewish education was not effective; it needed to – and could – improve. And since roughly 85% of Jewish children who received a Jewish education were in congregational schools, these schools were considered the first line of defense.

Even before the learning organization wave, there were attempts to look at Jewish education systemically. By the mid-1980s several elements coincided to provide more energy and funds toward efforts to improve Jewish education. Forward thinking executives in Jewish federations, first in Cleveland and Boston, realized that the historic precedent of federations not directly funding congregations – by then being considered the "gateways" to Jewish life – was no longer reasonable and they began to develop and support programs intended to improve Jewish education. In 1993 Boston asserted its mission for its Commission on Jewish Continuity and Education:[5]

Creates connections between people and to the Jewish tradition

Engages teenagers with Jewish values and provides them with life-changing experiences

Helps assure the continued vitality of Jewish life in Boston

Builds a community of Jewish learners of all ages

Empowers synagogues to be a central resource in family life

Allows parents to transmit a love of Jewish learning to their children

Develops professional educators and volunteer leaders

Places day school education within the reach of every family.

Other federations followed and began to fund, and sometimes to themselves run, new modes of Jewish education.

Federations' growing support was augmented by the increased involvement of Jewish family foundations interested in Jewish education.[6] Foundations and philanthropic partnerships began to fund Jewish education, as well. Some philanthropic partnerships worked with particular types of Jewish educational settings (for example day schools or camps) while others invested in a wide range of different Jewish

[5]One of the earliest, Boston's Combined Jewish Philanthropies, experimented with a five-pronged model (Shevitz, 1992) and followed with a long-term commitment to Jewish education (see http://www.cjp.org/page.aspx?id=68824).

[6]Examples are the Mandel Foundation, with a long history of supporting Jewish education, the Covenant Foundation that was devoted to "supporting initiatives and ideas and the practitioners who have developed and harnessed them to change the face of Jewish education across the span of a generation" (http://www.covenantfn.org/splash/), the Whizin Foundation which, with its interest in Jewish family life, jumpstarted the field of Jewish family education, and Avi Chai Foundation whose commitment to Jewish education is clear from its mission (http://www.avi-chai.org/bin/en.jsp?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=zone&enZone=AboutUs&enInfolet=Mission.jsp) Others have since become involved.

educational personnel (e.g., heads of day schools, congregational school principals, Hebrew teachers, etc.). In addition to providing funding, the federations and foundations provided another tool with the potential to encourage organizational learning: accountability. They required evaluation of the programs they funded. Before this, systematic program assessment was infrequently done. These mandated evaluations represented a turning point because systematically gathered information could enter the system. Often the evaluations were proprietary but sometimes what was learned was presented in academic or professional forums so that the general knowledge could be shared.

The example of Jewish Family Education (JFE) allows us to trace the shift from narrow programmatic change (the problems would be "fixed" by adding new programs to what was being done) to the wider lens of organizational learning. When JFE emerged in the late 1980s, its pioneers hoped that JFE would "transform" Jewish education and be an effective antidote to the child-focus which emerged as the implicit goal of the school was to prepare students for Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies. By involving parents in their children's Jewish education, educators expected that parents would become good role models for their children, engage more deeply in Jewish life, and that the religious schools would become more relevant and exciting to the children (Wolfson, 1998; Bank, 1998). Some communities realized that to succeed, a community would need to do more than develop new programs; teachers would have to retool if they were to deal successfully with parents and children (both together and separately), prayer services would have to change if they were to become welcoming environments for families with small children, the school would need to modify its curriculum, and so on (Shevitz & Kaye, 1991). At the University of Judaism's (now American Hebrew University) Whizin Center's annual Summer Institute – the primary incubator of Jewish family education – participants were exhorted and instructed to "think systemically," rather than programmatically. Thinking about family education as a program to be added to the ongoing religious school rather than understanding it as a profound shift to thinking about the family as the unit to be educated limited its effectiveness in some settings. This is *not* to suggest that family education was a failure; much good continues to happen as a result of it. Some settings were able to make the perceptual shift and became learning organizations that changed the very way they thought about and delivered Jewish education. But many places were not ready to change their mental models and look systemically at the situation. For that, different learning was required.

From the learning organization perspective, the planners in family education needed to recognize the level at which different stakeholders (in addition to the teachers and children) had to become engaged and what they would need to learn in order to think and act in new ways. In order for the family to be seen as the educative unit, teachers, administrators, parents, other members – really all people who would be directly or indirectly involved – would have to undergo a perceptual shift in order to develop new skills and understandings. To give a small example, if families were aggressively courted to attend Shabbat services, those leading services had to be ready to engage the families with all the wiggling, whispering, and movement that young children bring. Congregants who were the "regulars" at the services had to be

willing to open themselves to a different dynamic in the service.[7] This is an example of what Fullan means when he writes about the need for both internal and external partners to learn in order for an innovation to succeed (Fullan, 1999, pp. 31–62). It requires new thinking and new ways of acting on the part of many players who are directly involved (such as teachers, children, parents) and external groups (such as congregants, clergy, custodians).

Some evaluations of early efforts in JFE began to shape the field. Boston, in particular, invested in developing a cadre of Jewish family educators and providing support for their work. Evaluation was an important part of the effort so that lessons learned from early efforts could shape subsequent work (Shevitz, 1998; Sales, Koren, & Shevitz, 2000). Other innovations tried to more explicitly use the learning-organization approach while also applying some of the lessons emerging from JFE. One of the early projects provides the clearest example, both because it was early and, more significantly, it incorporated research and consistently produced analytical and descriptive books and papers from which others could learn (Aron, 2000; 2002; Aron, Lee, & Rossel, 1995).

Concerned about the uninspiring schools found in many congregations, in 1993 the Hebrew Union College Rhea Hirsch School of Jewish Education organized a conference to explore questions related to congregational education (the papers were published in a 1995 book [Aron, Lee, and Rossel]). Several of the presentations looked at the context beyond the individual school. Woocher (1995) brought sociological, ideological, and historical forces to bear on the construction of a new framework for Jewish education; Reimer (1995) looked specifically at the interactions between a congregation and its school when educational change was attempted and argued that education had to become the "favored child" if it were to succeed; and Shevitz (1995) considered the non-linear and non-rational aspect of change and suggested ways to look at the wider system as part of a change process.

The Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE) resulted from this effort and from the experience and theoretical assumptions of several academics at Hebrew Union College whose work involved them in congregational life. The ECE recruited congregations that were willing to engage in an intense two-plus-year process through which each one would look inward at its values and aspirations and outward at the new conditions and opportunities in the community. This deliberation, which also involved text study, would yield a new vision for what Jewish education could become. It was hoped that with the clarity of a shared vision, the team would then align the congregations' plans and programs with the new vision – often creating new approaches and programs.

Influenced by the work of Senge and Fullan, the ECE also believed that the congregants and professionals involved in each setting had to themselves become learning communities in which they would become more comfortable with each other as well as with the use of Jewish texts and values. Participants would be pressed to recognize their own "limiting assumptions" about congregational

[7] As experimentation continued, pragmatic solutions to the challenge of organizational learning developed. Some congregations decided to hold "Tot Shabbat" services separately or to designate specific services as Tot Shabbat events.

education and be willing to explore new ideas about Jewish education and congregational change in the quest to transform congregational education. As its critics are quick to point out, the ECE relies heavily on group process. It teaches that this type of reflection and learning is never done; it needs to be embedded in all they do. Aron providing the framework for the ECE, explains why she chose the term “self-renewing” for the project:

> I have chosen the term “self-renewing” to emphasize the reflexive and cyclical nature of this activity, the fact that much of the learning is internal, and that the learning is incomplete without concomitant action. (Aron, 2002, p. 8)

These words echo the writing of Senge and Gavin. They assume that the kind of learning required for transformative change in education is deep and far reaching. Asking people to reconsider the purposes of Jewish education and, consequently, the ways Jewish education is organized and provided, requires that they relinquish or modify their assumptions about how things are – and how they ought to be. In addition, people need to think systemically, engage people who have diverse views, and be empowered to share in decision making and leadership.

A major challenge to this approach occurs when the team that incubates the new ideas has to move them into the larger context, in this case from the planning group that is committed to the new approaches to the rest of the school or congregation that is not. The strategy most often used in schools is to provide some form of “professional development” for teachers and information to others affected by the change. As Sarason argued decades ago (1971 and 1996), these approaches just about guarantee that the intended changes will not occur. As frequently noted, teachers and other stakeholders generally can outlast the many changes thrust upon them without really changing anything significant in how they do their work. Adaptive change and innovation, however, require that people rethink their basic assumptions. For example, a teacher could use new materials designed to replace rote Bible learning with inquiry methods but still teach the way he or she always taught, or a congregation might move to an educational model incorporating informal programs but be unable to provide excellent informal Jewish education. Sarason’s insight was that this tendency is not a function of teacher inadequacy or resistance but rather a profound misunderstanding of the culture of schools and how things change (Sarason, 1971/1996).

Learning organization theory advances Sarason’s argument. It insists that learning is no longer a “transmission of knowledge model” in which knowledge is organized into a set curriculum which is presented by the expert to the student. Instead the learner encounters the world and, sometimes, a teacher in order to produce knowledge, an approach Barth calls “experiential learning” (Barth, 1998, pp. 96–97). Applied to Jewish education, this suggests that the people closest to the educational process in the congregation, for example – whether teachers, parents, youth educators, leaders, or clergy – have to experience and incorporate the new ways of thinking and acting. It requires reassessing and revising old assumptions and beliefs. These ideas are at the heart of the approach of the ECE and other projects like it. When successful it develops the capacity for the ongoing reflective action needed to succeed over the long haul. This kind of purposefulness is an

ongoing process. As the rabbi of a congregation that has been involved with the ECE for many years comments,

> What was unique about our congregation's experience is that we're still doing it. I talked to lots of colleagues who said, "oh yeah, ECE, that was a wonderful thing, yeah yeah yeah, it was a great year." What, are you kidding? We're actually now only beginning to tackle the really deep systemic things and the reality is that it's part of the culture of the temple that we do this.[8]

Learning Organizations and Staff Development

Over time the ECE realized that congregations needed more support and knowledge to help stakeholders throughout the congregational system (such as clergy, parents, preschool teachers, youth educators, teachers, etc.) learn how to teach and learn in ways that would more closely align with their re-imagined aspirations. Toward this end, it ran a pilot project[9] in one region with teams from congregations that had already undergone the ECE process. Small teams of educators, clergy, and lay leaders went through a set of learning experiences in order for them to understand and then develop the type of teaching and learning that their innovations would require. Two factors were important to the project: (1) the teams would have enough time and support to grapple with the new approaches to teaching and learning and to integrate them into their understanding of Jewish education and (2) that this would be done as a team so that the new assumptions would be shared and would be more likely to permeate the system.

This approach to the staff learning is different than the workshop model that Sarason had critiqued. It posits that teachers have to learn differently themselves in order for them to teach and guide their students differently. The same logic applies to principals and other school leaders (Der Bogert, 1999). The school, as an organization, must expect and support the new ways of learning by all its constituents. This is what is often meant by the term "learning communities." As Barth writes,

> We want nothing less than a cadre of new school leaders. . . who are lifelong learners themselves, modeling the most important purpose of a school; learners who value and trust learning from experience for themselves and who know how to rigorously craft and structure experience so that it yields important personal learning for students, teachers and parents. We want to see the school principal take the big risks necessary to ring the bell atop the schoolhouse of the twenty-first century, so that it may become both a community of learners and a community of leaders. (Barth, 1998, p. 99)

Many recent approaches to staff development are based on these ideas. In general education, the National Staff Development Council [NSDC] asserts that the most

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[8] Personal email correspondence between Isa Aron and the rabbi (sent to author on 2/1/09).

[9] In this region the ECE process was called RE-IMAGINE and the pilot project was RE-IMAGINING Professional Learning. The pilot, which was showing promising results, was not continued due to funders' changing priorities (I was co-principal of the evaluation of this project. These comments are based on empirical data, discussion with ECE leaders, and representatives of the funder).

significant determinant of whether students learn well is the quality of the teaching and that "teaching quality is improved through *continuous professional learning* which is done as a group in a community" (Hord, 2008, p. 10). Teachers previously have operated as "sole proprietors" who work in isolation. Not only do they not learn from each other, but the school – as an organization – has no way to develop a philosophy and approach that is widely shared by its stakeholders. In organizational terms this means that what is learned stays private and does not help the school develop and improve (Hord, 2008, p. 11). The point of continuous teacher learning in a group is for teachers to engage in purposeful, collegial learning in order to improve teaching effectiveness so that students learn successfully (Hord: 13). Like Garvin's approach to Senge's learning organization, discussed earlier, the NSDC links the purpose of the group learning to the specific goals that are at the heart of the school's mission. Some programs that foster this kind of professional learning at the school level have developed in the Jewish education context.[10] They all face difficult structural challenges: conducting frequent meetings requires finding the time and funds to support the endeavor. They also face difficult conceptual challenges: learning new ways of learning and incorporating them on an ongoing basis requires guidance, practice, and enthusiasm. The model incorporates to varying extents the five disciplines identified by Senge as essential if an organization is to learn: systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, and team approaches. It is commonplace for projects intended to transform Jewish education to require the formation of some sort of team although the make-up and roles of the team vary widely among the different initiatives (see for example Synagogue 2,000 [now 3,000], some PEJE [Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education] grants for day school, JECEI [Jewish Early Childhood Initiative], the Legacy Heritage Innovation grants, among others).

There are critiques of models that try to engage people in the kind of learning that Senge and others advocate. Too much time is spent on the process of team building, exploring mental models, and developing a shared vision; it could more effectively be used to develop the new approaches. Sometimes mastering the disciplines becomes an end in itself rather than leading to effective action. In addition, the members of the team, having bonded, might feel possessive about the new approaches and find it hard to involve others. It is sometimes hard to move from vision and design to wide-scale implementation while maintaining fidelity to the vision.

Using Information to Foster Organizational Learning

In order to learn, valid information about the system is needed. At least three units of analysis are relevant to Jewish education: the wider system in which Jewish

[10] Examples include the Mandel Teacher Educator Initiative, study groups at individual day and congregational schools, peer-supervision methods being developed at some schools, teacher teams at the Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative, and projects sponsored by central agencies of Jewish education – in Philadelphia, Boston and New York, to name a few.

education operates, the communal system comprised of the different educative settings and organizations in Jewish education, and the individual organization or setting. There are powerful obstacles for getting and using this information. At the communal level, there is no real system but rather many autonomous and semi-autonomous organizations that relate to each other when they need and want to. This reality is seen at the organizational level as well; schools and congregations are "loosely coupled systems," to use Weick's terminology, where the various parts of the system operate in semi-autonomous arenas and do not necessarily or regularly share information or coordinate actions (1976). There is little slack at any level within this "system"; this makes gathering and using data difficult. It is correctly perceived as an extra responsibility, especially when the present demands to run the school, staff the camp, and so on, are so pressing. In some settings, the professionals may not be comfortable with research-based information or know how to interpret and use it. In addition, many congregations and schools have notoriously poor records and lack historical and empirical data. Even simple descriptive statistics are often hard to access or are non-existent. All these conditions make it difficult for Jewish education organizations to learn and need to be addressed in order for organizational learning to take place.

Information and Knowledge from Evaluation and Accountability Efforts

The availability of philanthropic dollars over the last 15 or 20 years has created pressure for information that would help funders consider the impact of their philanthropy. As federation and foundation funding became available for innovation, the beneficiary agencies, whether schools and other settings, became accountable for the expenditures. Funders wanted to know whether new programs were meeting their goals and if the intended impacts were being achieved. Rosov and Isaacs trace the impact of the 1990 population study on the increased demand by funders for program evaluation (2008, p. 522). Simultaneously, a cadre of sophisticated Jewish educators and social scientists in agencies and universities throughout North America and Israel have been available to conduct studies and help groups interpret and use the findings.

While this emphasis on program accountability is a positive development, if looked at from a learning organization perspective there are clear limitations. Program and impact evaluation[11] do not necessarily reveal much about the level of organizational learning that goes on. We might infer that some organizational learning is present when a program shows positive outcomes, though that might not

[11] By program evaluation I mean the systematic gathering of valid data that determine the extent to which a program is meeting its stated goals and suggest ways to improve the program. By impact evaluation, I mean following the participants in a program to see whether the longer-term intended impacts are occurring (for example, does going to Jewish summer camp lead to a positive Jewish identity as measured by specific traits?) in later life.

be the case. There can be positive outcomes (increased ability of students to chant prayers, for example) without reaching the long-term impacts that are sought (incorporating some form of Jewish praying in their lives going forward). But program and impact evaluation do not generally look at the organization's capacity to learn in the way that Senge and others understand organizational learning.

Sometimes the results of evaluations and other related research with policy implications have become available and generalizable findings are shared at conferences and through papers. There are several sources of information and I mention only some of them. JESNA's (Jewish Education Service of North America) Berman Center has evaluated many innovative programs (see http://www.jesna.org/program-centers/berman-center/our-projects). JESNA's Lippman Kanfer Institute provides current thinking about emerging issues in Jewish education (see http://www.jesna.org/program-centers/lippman-kanfer-institute/our-projects). The Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University has conducted a great many studies related to Jewish identity as well as evaluations of international, national, and local innovations that have useful information for many Jewish educational settings and are available through its web-site (See http://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/). The Berman Jewish Policy Archive at New York University's Wagner School and the Jim Joseph Foundation have more recently begun to make information from studies available on their websites. Some of the studies are commissioned by specific organizations and are not available, but many are and the Center has also issued many reports, books, and articles that discuss the findings and new trends (see http://dcoll.brandeis.edu/handle/10192/22946/browse?type=title&sort_by=2&order=DESC&rpp=100).

Some academic and general publishers have published books that provide essential information that is very helpful in the Jewish educational context. For example, see the Hebrew University's Melton Center for Jewish Education (See http://melton.huji.ac.il/eng/ktav.php) and the Mandel Leadership Institute (http://mandel.mli.org.il/MandelCMS/English/VirtualLibrary/Publications/). In addition, some of the web-sites of North American agencies such as PEJE (Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education) and the URJ (Union of Reform Judaism) include research on education and reports of relevant educational topics. The Avi Chai foundation continues to release studies about aspects of Jewish education of interest to the field (see http://www.avi-chai.org/bin/end88e.html?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=Zone&enZone=Publications). Most recently these include Wertheimer's 2005 "Linking the Silos: How to Accelerate the Momentum in Jewish Education Today" and his 2008 "A Census of Jewish Supplementary Schools in the United States, 2006–2007" and 2009 "Schools that Work: What We Can Learn from Good Jewish Supplementary Schools" have stimulated discussion within the field. While these resources and others not mentioned provide valuable information, unless they are used in ways that challenge and deepen the thinking of those who are involved in the educational settings, they really do not contribute to the development of learning communities. This is why many of the recent attempts at educational improvement in the Jewish community have built in specific times and, sometimes methodologies, for analysis and reflection.

One congregational school developed another model that fosters both research and reflection within a learning community. This congregation engaged an independent evaluator who regularly provided feedback and helped the educational team analyze and improve its work (Kur, 2009, p. 3). While focused at first on evaluating specific new programs that the congregation was piloting, the evaluator helps the staff question their assumptions, probe their thinking, and develop new approaches in a supportive way that enhances learning (Kur, 2009; Aron & Moskowitz, 2009). As the director of lifelong learning at the congregation, Kur writes,

> One of the best things an evaluator has done for us... is to bring an independent, objective mind to the table when we are planning a new project, program or curriculum – a person who can identify potential gaps in our thinking and push us to define with specificity what we want to accomplish. (2009, p. 3)

The educational team, on both staff and lay levels, is dedicated to ongoing reflection and adaptation as they create a powerful educational paradigm.[12]

Issues to Be Considered

Can We Learn More About What Is Really *Happening?*

It is not surprising that ideas that influence American society, in general, and education, in particular, shape what occurs in the Jewish community. In this case, the learning-organization approach seems intuitively appropriate for Jewish educational settings. The importance of questions in Jewish tradition is compatible with the reflective and probing approach advocated by the learning-organization theory.

Once a phrase that meant something quite specific slips into popular usage it can be indiscriminately used and misused. It would be helpful to know more about what is taking place on the communal and organizational levels, especially where they self-identify as learning organizations. To what extent do they embody the meaning of the term? Educational researchers tend to be more interested in identity formation, educational philosophy, the transmission of knowledge, and other elements close to the teaching and learning process than they are to the decision-making and organizational processes that support or impede successful learning. Using the learning-organization perspective, especially the five disciplines, as a way to explore how Jewish educational organizations operate and change (or do not) would be a valuable contribution to both the literature and the practice of Jewish educational leadership. With few cases that inform the reader in a grounded, illustrative way of the ways Jewish educational organizations "learn to learn" there is a need to understand both the big-picture view (macro level) and the view of the specific details as they play out at, the micro level. Both views are sorely needed.

[12] See Aron and Moskowitz (2009) for a fuller portrait of this congregation.

Can Educational Organizations Sustain the Effort to Become Learning Organizations?

We know from the general literature and from the experiences within the Jewish educational sector that becoming a learning organization takes effort. Sustaining it requires commitment over long periods of time. It is not a technique that, once achieved, ends. It requires a change of mind-set by asking people as individuals and groups to continually explore their assumptions ("mental models"), develop shared understandings and goals, learn new ways of thinking and acting, and to embrace a sense of "becoming."

Jewish educational settings are resource-poor environments. There is rarely, if ever, enough time, expertise, money, or energy to do all that is needed, let alone all that is possible. Congregations and schools get caught up in day-to-day operations and respond to the immediate issues that arise. It is difficult for them to be proactive. We need to explore which Jewish educational settings sustain the effort to become learning organizations and how they do it.

We know from the experience of different experimenting Jewish communities that becoming a learning community is often stimulated through external funding for new projects (for example, the ECE, Synagogue 2000/3000, Mandel Teacher Educator Initiative among others) stimulated the efforts in some day and supplementary schools to try to become learning communities, a point also noted in Wertheimer's (2009a,b) studies. They provide the structure, expertise, and personnel to help organizations learn the new approach without neglecting their ongoing work. In a series of field and resource books, Senge and his team (1994, 2000) provide practical tools to help people master and use the disciplines and in his *Dance of Change* he addresses the limitations of insufficient time and support by providing some practical tools. Many of these ideas, such as integrating initiatives, using unstructured time, and making use of coaches and mentors, can be adapted to Jewish educational settings (1999, pp. 67–102).

Can the Learning Organization Be Successfully Scaled Up?

Large, multi-unit organizations interested in becoming learning organizations are counseled to start on a small scale and then to move the innovation out to other units until there is a critical mass using the approach. Once this tipping point is reached, the organization more generally thinks and acts in consonance with the new approach. Moving from the small unit to the larger organization – in their words, addressing the challenge of diffusion – is a difficult step (Senge et al., 1999, pp. 418–486).

As we have seen, this strategy has been used in some of the Jewish community's change initiatives. Small leadership teams are formed to learn, deliberate, and plan together. Successful teams initiate changes in their settings and stimulate other groups to share their approaches. Because the leadership team experience is intense, and its participants bond around the shared experiences, it is frequently hard to engage the larger organization in a meaningful way. Sometimes the planning group

takes on a life of its own; in a sense it becomes a counter organization interested in its own separate identity more than in helping to strengthen the larger organization through its efforts.[13] Strategies for moving the approach into the organization must be developed early if change is to become widespread. The use of coaches, CoPs, cultural levers, and data can all help (Senge et al., 1999, pp. 417–456).

Will Information Be Used?

The lifeblood of learning organizations is information and assumptions that can be openly tested and explored. Jewish educational organizations most often operate with a paucity of information and rely on assumptions that are not necessarily articulated, let alone tested. For example, there is very limited, if any, reliable information about student learning or the relationship between how teachers do their work and what students experience and retain. Decisions about curriculum, pedagogy, and much else are made on the bases of assumptions that are often not explicit and, therefore, not discussable. For example, it is widely asserted that teaching liturgical Hebrew deepens students' prayer experience or organizing groups by grades is the best way to support learning. Each of these positions is supported by assumptions about the nature of learning, the relationship of knowledge to experience, and much more. In addition, there is scant empirical information that looks at the issues, whether benefits of organizing students according to interests and/or aptitudes (rather than chronologically) or the outcomes of different approaches to liturgy. From the perspective of learning organization theory, information that relates to these questions needs to be used in an environment of inquiry and learning – and this would generate productive new ideas. To what extent will Jewish educational settings be prepared and able to develop new sources of information and learn to use them in timely and appropriate ways?

Does Becoming a Learning Organization Make a Difference?

A specific change theory is embedded in the learning organization approach: by becoming a learning organization the school (or camp, etc.) will become better at what it does. This will translate into better environments for teaching and learning so that the students will be more positively affected by their religious education. Put another way, although there are many benefits for Jewish educational organizations to become learning organizations – staff may become more involved, planners may be more intentional about school programs, and so on – ultimately we want to know whether becoming learning organizations supports students' learning and strengthens the positive impact of religious education. Research that looks at the organization's internal learning processes and capacities in relationship to outcomes and impacts is needed.

[13]The data are drawn from the evaluations of the ECE and Synagogue 2,000 conducted by the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

Conclusion

The beginning of A.A. Milne's beloved children's classic, *Winnie the Pooh,* begins with the scene of little Christopher Robin, holding the bear by one arm:

> Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it. (A.A. Milne (1926), p. 1)

There is a sense that many of today's Jewish educational organizations want to do better but they too, always busy, can't quite stop in order to figure out how. Accustomed to their own realities, each organization continues to act on many of the same assumptions that have framed its actions in previous decades, even when they do not want to.

The learning organization approach asserts that there are other ways to understand and act upon current conditions but it takes a concerted effort to develop the capacity to recognize and act on them. This entails cognitive and emotional growth through an ongoing process of learning and using the five disciplines – and more. It requires that the group has skill, tenacity, and courage. It also requires time and flexibility. The claim that this approach makes, as applied to Jewish education, is that in order to create settings that will be meaningful in today's world, Jewish educational organizations need to change in significant ways. Without blueprints or formulae, they need to learn how to learn and, in doing so, they will become communities capable of generating and sustaining powerful Jewish educational conceptions that address contemporary conditions and timeless aspirations.

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Limmud: A Unique Model of Transformative Jewish Learning

Raymond Simonson

Introduction

A key challenge for everyone involved in Jewish education is creating engaging frameworks that are most effective at assisting participants in the lifelong process of acquiring Jewish knowledge, skills, values and ideas whilst enabling them to explore and develop their personal connections to Jewish culture, history, ritual, tradition and spirituality. In the British Jewish community, we hope that such experiences lead to the next generation becoming proud, enthusiastic, committed and knowledgeable members of the Jewish people, who are active and creative in the Jewish dimension of their lives. In short, a key goal is to develop educational frameworks that target what is central to the aims of contemporary Jewish education – the development of positive, authentic Jewish identity and identification. Because of this belief shared by many in Jewish educational circles, there has been a noticeable drive in recent decades in the British-Jewish community to significantly increase the quality, variety and accessibility of educational frameworks and opportunities. This has also led to the search for and growth of additional and alternative methodologies, settings and programmes as anxious community leaders attempt to stem the tide of young adults drifting away from the community (Miller, 1991, p. viii).

With this in mind, this chapter will examine what has become regarded as one of the most vibrant, dynamic and successful examples of alternative educational projects in the Jewish world: Limmud. This chapter will explore the key factors that explain how this unique model has become a powerful vehicle for working towards the above-stated general aims of Jewish education, and why it has been referred to in British Jewry as: "the jewel in our community's crown, as well as a focus of emulation throughout the Jewish world" (*The Jewish Chronicle*, 03/01/2003).

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What Is Limmud?

Limmud was initially established in 1980 as a small conference for Jewish educators. This first Limmud event, inspired by the four founders' experience of CAJE in North America, saw approximately 80 British Jewish educators gather from across the denominational, cultural and organisational spectrum to learn with and from each other in a retreat-style setting. The success of this first event led to the call for an annual conference, which began to regularly grow in size, scope, reach and impact on the wider Jewish community.

Three decades on, Limmud is now a world-leader in cross-communal, multi-generational, volunteer-led Jewish learning experiences. It has become British Jewry's premier adult education initiative, with over 7,000 people involved in at least one Limmud activity each year. Its flagship event, the week-long Limmud Conference, is now a landmark in the Jewish calendar, annually attended by over 2,000 participants from across the globe. Alongside this, Limmud attracts ever-increasing number to LimmudFest, its summer outdoor learning and culture residential retreat during the month of Elul; 15 Regional Limmud teams organise Day Limmud conferences in their local communities across the length and breadth of the UK, with over 3,000 people participating in any of six different Day Limmuds each year; over 2,000 people receive a weekly "Taste of Limmud" cross-denominational *parsha* (weekly Torah portion) commentary each week written by a different Jewish educator – all Limmud presenters – from around the world; and over 750 Limmud volunteers engage in learning, training and development sessions, meetings and seminars around the UK throughout the year.

Most strikingly perhaps, is the rapid and unprecedented growth of Limmud across the world. As the new century began, a handful of grassroots activists from Jewish communities in Northern Israel, the Netherlands and Australia who had all experienced Limmud Conference as participants, began planning the first Limmud events outside of the UK. With the guidance and support of experienced British Limmud volunteers and one part-time professional, nascent teams were formed in these communities and their inaugural events were held with much success. Within a few years as increasing numbers of overseas participants of Limmud's events in the UK began to enquire about developing the model in their own communities, Limmud responded by forming Limmud International to oversee this unanticipated growth. By 2008 Limmud International, under the chairmanship of Andrew Gilbert – one of Limmud's most experienced and respected volunteer leaders (and former Chair of the organisation during a key period of growth in the 1990s) – was supporting over 40 Limmud communities around the world providing mentoring, training, development and guidance to the local volunteer leadership. From Budapest to Buenos Aries, Cape Town to Colorado, Los Angeles to Lithuania, Modi'in to Moscow, Sweden to Serbia and from Turkey to Toronto, more and more diverse Jewish communities have been adopting Limmud's approach to Jewish learning with passion and vigour. In 2008 alone, 15 new communities outside of the UK joined the growing Limmud International family.

This chapter will attempt to understand why so many individuals and communities have chosen to embrace Limmud's unique model of Jewish education; what values underpin this model; and what has led it to being described as: "one of the strangest and fastest-growing phenomena of the Jewish world, one that may be transforming how large numbers of Jews gather and study... it may be a new sociological phenomenon" (Haviv Rettig-Gur, *Jerusalem Post*, 31/12/2007).

Guiding Values and Core Principles

On the surface, Limmud is similar to other existing models of Jewish education, such as tried and tested modes of informal education widely in use throughout the arenas of youth movements, summer camps and retreats; and the paradigms of lifelong learning that drive the success of many synagogues' and JCCs' programmes. However, a closer examination of some of Limmud's underlying values and driving principles reveals a counter-cultural and often counter-intuitive model.

Valuing Diversity

One of the defining features of Limmud which was not only radical when it was founded, but which has caused it to be attacked and criticised by a minority of the establishment in every decade since, is that it is a truly cross-communal organisation. One of Limmud's core values declared on its mission statement is: "We value diversity in all we do. We believe in the richness of our diverse community and create cross-communal and cross-generational experiences" (see www.limmud.org/home/about/mission/). As such its activities are open to any type of Jew from all areas of the community – regardless of affiliation (or lack of it), socio-economic background, age, gender, sexuality, level of knowledge, belief or any of the other typical dividing lines found within the Jewish community – and attracts to its events a greater mix of different types of Jew from the widest range of backgrounds than can be found at almost any other Jewish learning event.

Despite claims of some of its critics to the contrary, Limmud does not consider itself to be ideologically pluralist, and nor does it desire to be. Rather than saying that it values every stream, denomination or political leaning equally and that each are valid and contain equally important truths, Limmud simply says that it has no wish to engage in that debate at all. Instead it places a higher premium on the concept of *Am Yisrael* and *Klal Yisrael* – of Jewish peoplehood. In fact explicitly stated in its mission statement is: "Limmud does not participate in legitimising or de-legitimising any religious or political position found in the worldwide Jewish community... Limmud has no part to say in the debates between/across denominations. Limmud will programme its events in such a way as to avoid religious or political conflict" (ibid.). Instead of focusing on that which divides Jews, Limmud

seems to share Professor Michael Rosenak's belief that there "is a manifest desire on the part of most educated Jews for community of association and for some agenda that those associated will have in common" (Rosenak in Fox, Scheffler, & Marom, 2003, p. 191).

Limmud's commitment to diversity and cross-communalism is one of the reasons for its increasing popularity, but is also the cause of some of its greatest challenges. It strives hard to ensure its educational programmes represent a balance between different Jewish ideologies and religious and political viewpoints, thus reflecting the diversity of its participants. However, this results in accusations from various opposing sectors of the community that Limmud leans too far to the other extreme, whether this be, for example, left or right, Zionist or anti-Zionist, Orthodox or non-Orthodox and so on. The most notable example of this is that even after nearly three decades Limmud has failed to be accepted by much of the leadership of the mainstream Orthodox movement of the UK (The United Synagogue – the US), with only a handful of the over 50 US rabbis participating and teaching at Limmud's events. Indeed, a number of highly respected Orthodox rabbis and teachers from outside of the UK have commented in the past that the London Beth Din (rabbinical law court of the United Synagogue) explicitly requested that they do not accept Limmud's invitation to participate in their events. Responding to such claims made in the *Jerusalem Post* in December 2007, Rabbi Dr Nathan Lopes Cardozo (teacher, writer and Dean of the David Cardozo Academy in Jerusalem) explained why he has politely rejected such requests and participated at a number of Limmud Conferences: "My response to the Beth Din of London stated my concern that when I eventually stand in front of the Heavenly Court, the Lord will ask me why I did not participate when there was an opportunity to influence thousands of people and provide them with a glimpse into an open-minded and authentic kind of Orthodox Judaism. What would I answer?" (*Jerusalem Post*, 29/12/2007).

Limmud's leadership endeavour to avoid becoming embroiled in debates over what constitutes the "right way" with regards to any Jewish subject, and do not permit such discussions as sessions during Limmud events. Limmud only allows debates or arguments on different Jewish viewpoints or ideologies to take place where they are judged to be *l'shem shamayim* (for the sake of heaven), believing that these debates "can make a positive contribution to furthering our education and understanding" (see www.limmud.org/home/about/mission/). Whilst many applaud this approach as it means Limmud can provide a rare "space in which diverse sections of the Jewish world can meet and moreover meet without antagonism" others are less positive, suggesting that this simply "reveals a deep desire on the part of British Jewry to wish away difficult, problematic and intractable conflicts" (Harris in Rabinowitz, 1998, pp. 39–54).

This neutral position is a delicate and often difficult one to maintain as it leaves Limmud open to the type of criticism personified by veteran columnist and former Chairman of the Governing Board of the World Jewish Congress, Isi Leibler. In one of his public criticisms of Limmud, prompted in part by the participation of former Head of the Jewish Agency and Speaker of the Knesset Avrum Burg at the 2007 Limmud Conference, Leibler accused Limmud of "regularly inviting

speakers who represent the antithesis of Jewish values". Leibler rejected Limmud's explanation of the underlying principles and values that guide these decisions, with the derisory: "It is surely grotesque for Limmud to justify such participation on the grounds that 'for the sake of learning' we try to get a wide range of presenters." (Originally published in *Jerusalem Post*, 29/01/2008. Available at http://www.israpundit.com/2008/?p=113.)

Limmud's leadership maintain that they do not intentionally seek controversy and only invite presenters on merit of what they might add to the intellectual debate within the context of enabling the participants to grapple with issues of interest to a broad Jewish audience. However, these tensions between different sections of the Jewish community and the public brickbats thrown at Limmud seem an unavoidable side-effect of pursuing an agenda of diversity and cross-communalism in a community that is better known for its conservatism. These are challenges that Limmud's volunteers are not always best-equipped to face, and they may need to develop a greater level of sophistication over coming years.

Volunteerism and Empowerment

Limmud is a great example of a truly grassroots, volunteer-owned, volunteer-led organisation. From the very beginning it was built by friends who shared a common passion for Jewish learning and engagement in its broadest sense. Limmud was something they were involved with of their own volition, motivated in part by the genuine camaraderie that existed and flourished between team members. None of the professionally staffed organisations around the British-Jewish community have initiated any of Limmud's activities or events – although over the years, some have carried out the important task of providing support to the growing organisation.

Voluntary organisations are not exceptional in and of themselves. In fact, it is estimated that in the UK alone there are around 12 million adults (approx 25% of the adult population) involved in volunteer work (Smith in Deer Richardson and Wolfe, 2001, p. 142). Without the army of volunteers who put in hundreds of thousands of hours of unpaid work every year, most Jewish communal organisations would simply cease to exist in any relevant sense. Where Limmud is different from many of these organisations though is in the nature of the volunteer relationship with the organisation. As articulated by Jacqueline Nicholls, Jewish educator, artist and longstanding Limmud volunteer: "Limmud is not about providing a service for others. . .but is rather about providing an educational Jewish experience for our community and ourselves. The volunteers 'own' the events with their ideas and their energy" (Nicholls in Boyd, 2003, p. 199).

The key concepts here are empowerment and ownership. Limmud volunteers do not give of their time simply because they feel that Limmud is providing a worthy and important service to other people. Whilst that is a noble and legitimate sentiment that drives a significant amount of the essential volunteerism in the Jewish community, it is by no means the driving force behind volunteering within Limmud.

Instead, Limmud is an organisation "of the people, by the people, for the people", enabling the Limmud community to create the Jewish educational experiences that they themselves want. The agenda is not set and delivered top-down, but is created, developed and delivered bottom-up by those who wish to respond positively to the critique they have of the community, or even to the criticism they have of how Limmud currently does certain things. These volunteers also continue to be (along with thousands of other people) the participants of the events and experiences that they create. Therefore, the volunteers have a fundamental interest in ensuring the educational projects are relevant, creative, dynamic and of an extremely high quality – projects that they themselves would benefit from as participants.

Limmud was an incredibly counter-cultural concept within the very formal mainstream British-Jewish community against which it emerged in the early 1980s. In this context it was antithetical to have a successful organisation, completely independent, where all decisions were taken by the same people who would both implement and be participants in the very events that they themselves were planning and executing. Even more so to have an organisation that rather than discouraging external criticism, has always used such opportunities both to improve what it does and to grow the volunteer base, by encouraging those with the critique to take responsibility for driving the change or fixing the problem. By responding to those with a criticism of Limmud with an invitation to become actively involved in improving it, the organisers have always felt that they could help facilitate the actualisation of ever more people's ideas and visions (Nicholls in Boyd, 2003, p. 198). This is not necessarily the way for the senior leadership of any typical British-Jewish communal organisation to act, especially in the early 1980s.

After three decades, Limmud remains true to its original informal, grass roots volunteer ethos. Organised through a system of teams, volunteers take responsibility for every single aspect of running the organisation and its educational projects and events. Everything from organisational strategy and policy-making, to public relations, budgeting and fundraising is in the hands of the volunteers who are empowered to own, shape and lead the organisation. This includes the recruitment and management of the two or three full-time professional support staff that Limmud now employs.

Whilst the overall structure is more systematic now than it was in the early 1980s in response to the size and reach of its ever-growing activities, much about the informality of the voluntary leadership culture remains the same. Social ties and the culture of friendship still play a significant role across the organisation. Teams consist of people from different backgrounds who genuinely want to work together, and who believe they are engaged in something of real value and import. They meet regularly and frequently, mostly in each other's homes, both as a whole team and in their smaller sub-teams. They develop meaningful relationships that matter beyond the task they are engaged in. They share Shabbat meals, *chaggim* (Jewish holidays) and family celebrations together. Crucially, they engage with each other as equals, regardless of age, Jewish background or socio-economic status. Whilst it may not be always obvious from the outside, this social capital plays a significant part both in Limmud's strength and in the continued motivation and

dedication to Limmud demonstrated over the long term by a considerable amount of volunteers. As Professor Mark K Smith appositely notes in an article on social capital: “Interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric. A sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks (and the relationships of trust and tolerance that can be involved) can, it is argued, bring great benefits to people” (Smith, 2007, www.infed.org/biblio/social_capital.htm).

What these volunteers have in common is that they all have the desire and ability to “give of themselves because they perceive Limmud as something they can contribute to and impact upon” (Nicholls in Boyd, 2003, p. 198). This is something that Limmud actively encourages. Indeed, within its mission statement and proudly displayed in its printed materials and on its website there are various relevant proclamations including “we encourage all participants to take an active part in all that we do”; “we are all responsible for the communities that we create; everyone has an important contribution to make”; and “we inspire people to be ambitious about their contribution” (see www.limmud.org/home/about/mission/).

One of the practical ramifications of a genuine belief that everyone truly has “an important contribution to make” is that Limmud operates largely as a meritocracy. The vast majority of Limmud volunteers contribute to building the Limmud community through their time, energy and passion, rather than with large financial donations. They invest vast amounts of “sweat equity” to build their Limmud community through sheer determination and hard work. And those who are in the most senior positions – the Chairs of the major events and teams, as well as the Limmud Executive (the board of directors and charity trustees) – are there by virtue of what they have contributed over a number of years, and what they continue to give. They are those who have given the most of themselves and who have demonstrated they are able to continue to give at an exceptionally high level of quality and impact.

Limmud’s meritocratic and empowering approach to volunteer leadership is particularly appealing to younger generations who see that in this “adult” organisation, neither their age nor their bank balance is barrier to the level they can get involved or to the roles they can take on. And of course, the benefits of the aforementioned social capital are equally appealing as they are able to widen their communal networks and build new and genuine social ties at the time when they have left the relative comfort of university and youth/student movement life. Indeed, a by-product of the social nature of volunteering within Limmud is the increasing number of long-term relationships and partnerships that have grown out of the volunteer community over the years. Anecdotally at least, this seems to be another motivating factor for many new volunteers, especially those in their early mid-20s.

Educational Philosophy and Approach to Learning

At the heart of everything that Limmud does is a commitment to high-quality, inspiring Jewish learning. In many ways it is difficult to define Limmud through a particular educational philosophy in the way that one can with more traditional

educational organisations. Indeed, a participant of any Limmud event is likely to be presented with a wider range of different (and even competing) educational approaches, beliefs, methodologies and styles than they have ever encountered under one roof. However, as with most things Limmud, on closer inspection one can determine underlying core principles and values that determine the learning milieu.

In the centre of Limmud's mission statement is "Limmud's Promise", which is: "Wherever you find yourself, Limmud will take you one step further on your Jewish journey". Like much else about Limmud, this seemingly simple statement represents a fairly radical concept when set against the context of the Jewish education field. The vast majority of Jewish educational organisations and projects have specific outputs and outcomes that they are aiming to achieve. These traditional educational structures focus their energies on taking their students along a set path in order to end up in a set place – from point A to point Z, via points B, C, D, and so on. Limmud, however, sees its task as providing the framework and some tools to enable people to move along their own paths, not necessarily to point B or C, but simply to some position beyond point A. Limmud, in fact, neither concerns itself with what the individual's starting point is nor prescribes a precise endpoint, instead putting its energies and resources into providing multiple paths that are engaging and compelling enough to convince each individual that they should – and can – explore any of them, with the explicit goal of moving. Thus it could be argued that a fundamental guiding principle of Limmud's educational approach is that it ought to be transformational (in the long term at least if not immediately).

In their chapter on adult education in a temporary residential learning community for Jack Mezirow's book *Learning as Transformation*, Dr Judith Beth Cohen and Deborah Piper focus on four critical components of such a learning community if it is to facilitate transformative educational experiences: "the setting, the breakdown of roles among those attending. . ., the element of time, and the structural paradoxes of the curriculum" (Beth Cohen & Piper in Mezirow, 2000, p. 208). We can look at the example of Limmud Conference through these four lenses to gain a better understanding of how it has become such an impactful educational enterprise.

Setting: Setting has always had an important role to play for Limmud. From the earliest days of the Limmud Conference in the serene settings of Carmel College – at the time, a Jewish boarding school in the Oxfordshire countryside – to the current home at the University of Warwick in the Midlands, Limmud's organisers acknowledged the importance of taking people out of their day-to-day settings and creating a temporary physical community. Almost all participants leave their hometowns and travel to arrive at this new location, thus beginning the sense of "one step further on your Jewish journey" with a literal, physical journey.

As with the most celebrated summer camps across the Jewish world, Limmud puts much effort into creating a feeling that one is removed from one's day-to-day world both geographically and perceptually. From the moment one arrives at the gates of the university, one is greeted by huge banners proclaiming that this is Limmud Conference. Before one has even stepped into a classroom, a multitude of signs, posters and banners, all carrying the familiar Limmud logo, colours and unique font will have been passed at every turn. The only people that Limmud participants are likely to encounter for the duration of the event are other Limmud

participants, all identifiable from the familiar logoed badges bearing their names, and the programme handbooks and logoed drinks flasks in their hands. The buildings and rooms are transformed with much care and attention by an army of volunteers, so that a vestibule becomes a completely redecorated "Café Limmud" with kosher snacks and drinks and Israeli music playing through the speakers; a seminar building is turned into a fully equipped "Young Limmud" youth camp base; and student union nightclub turns into the "Limmud Shuk" filled with sights and sounds of dozens of Jewish organisations and sellers of Judaica. All rooms are renamed and re-signed accordingly, and large maps of this new Limmud world adorn the walls of corridors and sprout plant-like from poles around the grounds.

Many observers have commented on the attention to detail that goes into this physical transformation that takes place. Limmud's aim here is to create a temporary space where the participant is fully surrounded by multiple stimuli to enhance their Jewish journey. The intended effect is to create a positive Jewish environment that can affect the senses and ultimately the identities of the participants. As noted by Jonathan Boyd, specialist in contemporary British Jewry: "Limmud transforms the social, cultural and educational context into something that is unrecognizable from the rest of the year, and in doing so, enables the context to speak to and influence the individual in a whole host of ways" (Boyd, 2006, p. 33).

In their study of North American summer camps, Leonard Saxe and Amy Sales refer to this creation of a temporary world separated from home, school and work life as a "Brigadoon-like place" where "time and space are compressed" and "everyone seems to live in the here and now" (Sales & Saxe, 2004, pp. 47–48). One of the effects of this is the ability to create a positive atmosphere conducive to learning and potential change, where participants naturally feel more open to new ideas, more comfortable in experimenting and safe to question and be challenged. For Limmud this is not left to chance and is an explicit objective of the organisers. Nicholls has written that part of the organisation's educational aims are to create "a warm and welcoming atmosphere", acknowledging that providing high-quality educators and dynamic, challenging sessions alone will not achieve the goals unless there is also a "warm atmosphere where people feel they want to be and learn" (Nicholls in Boyd, 2003, p. 198). Therefore, the volunteer teams responsible for "Participant Care", "Families & Crèche" and "Space & Decor" play as crucial a role in Limmud's attempts to achieve their overall educational goals as the educational "Programming Team". There is an appreciation of Smith's assertion that in order to create effective, transformational educational programmes, we "need to attend to physical surroundings" and construct environments that "foster conversation, democracy and learning" (Smith in Deer Richardson and Wolfe, 2001, p. 146).

In recent years the voluntary leadership of events such as Limmud Conference and LimmudFest have displayed a growing sophistication in their use of site to increase the overall educational impact on the participants. They have expanded each event over an ever greater number of different spaces and structures, spread out across whichever site they inhabit. In doing so, participants are encouraged to move physically around the site and explore the many paths and corridors that lead to the sessions, lectures, performances, crèches, exhibitions, meals and so on. Some

destinations are easy to reach whilst others prove slightly more challenging or are further away from the central areas. Cohen and Piper highlight how this physical sense of journey, choice and exploration can act as a powerful, if implicit "metaphor for the educational journey" that the organisers want the participants to embark on. In their experiences this type of setup can arouse an "infectious sense of curiosity" in the participant, who naturally brings this sense into the classroom, thus creating a "sense of quest and discovery" conducive to transformative educational experiences (Beth Cohen & Piper in Mezirow, 2000, pp. 208–9).

Breakdown of roles: One of the unique features of all Limmud events is the breakdown in roles of those in attendance. Crucial to this is a simple but very powerful statement, laid out as one of Limmud's core values in the mission statement that declares: "Everyone can be a teacher and everyone should be a student". If we break this down, we see that there are three key elements of this which sum up much of Limmud's overall ethos. First, an overarching belief that *all* Jews ought to be involved in learning. A second aspect which may not be immediately obvious is that at Limmud events the teachers should equally be students. Thirdly and perhaps most radically, is the claim that *everyone* is capable, in some way, of being a teacher too. This is in part due to that fact that Limmud "wants people to keep moving and to keep learning; and teaching is a key part of that learning" (Nicholls in Boyd, 2003, p. 199); but also a genuine egalitarian belief that we all have something to learn from each other. This means that in the programme, alongside world famous Jewish educators and thinkers and leaders of their respective fields, sit the dentist with an enthusiasm for and great knowledge of Jewish genealogy and the full-time mother who is passionate and articulate about the poetry of Yehuda Amichai. Both of these may get their one chance in the year to teach their passion to others whilst at a Limmud event. Even more inspiring for them is when they realise that one of the "students" in their class of 20 is the Knesset Member or Yale Professor or Nobel Prize winner who earlier that day they listened to along with another 350 participants.

Putting these three aspects together leads to a highly egalitarian and democratic approach to education which runs through Limmud's DNA. Nicholls explains that at all Limmud events "there is no separation between the presenters and the students. All are participants" (Nicholls in Boyd, 2003, pp. 198–199). The hierarchies and differentiations usually found in educational establishments between teacher and student – and perhaps including auxiliary administrative staff, volunteers and "senior" lay leadership – are non-existent in a Limmud setting. Everyone stays in the same choice of (fairly sparse) accommodation, eats the same food in the same dining rooms with no "top table", dresses relatively casual, and has the same style of name badge, with their first name printed large above their surname. No titles or recognition of status on display – no "Rabbi..." or "Professor..." on badges or indeed in the programme books[1]. The presenters are not paid an honorarium

[1]Other than in the mini-biography of each presenter that is included in the handbook in order to ensure participants have all relevant information they may need to help them make informed choices (see below).

(they all voluntarily contribute their time and the majority of them also pay their participant fees to attend) and do not have access to a VIP area or faculty lounge. They eat and drink and socialise and study and debate and discuss alongside all other participants.

This role diffusion creates a particular egalitarian culture in which the potential intimidating distance between teacher and student is minimised as the playing field is levelled (Cohen & Piper in Mezirow, 2000, p. 210). One of the effects of this atmosphere is that genuine and impactful conversations and relationships flourish between who we would traditionally label as students and teachers. These often grow out of sessions as the presenter continues to discuss key points of interest raised with one or more of the students after the session in the informal setting of the bar or over a meal. They also often begin before the learner has even appreciated that their partner in dialogical exchange is one of the invited "teachers". To educationalists from Freire to Smith and Chazan, these continued stimulating conversations and social encounters play a powerful role in developing identities, shaping beliefs and framing our understanding of ourselves and the world[2]. The belief is that through genuine dialogue both educators and students can develop their capabilities to become critical thinkers and shapers of their own worlds as they learn with and from each other.

Some critics of Limmud point to the limitations of an educational experience that does not give the learner much chance either to immerse oneself into any one specific subject at great depth or to methodically develop an understanding through a more traditional learning cycle of *classroom study → reflect → draw new conclusions → bring new conclusions back to the classroom → build on conclusions with classroom study*, and so on. Indeed, it has been noted that "one does not sink roots into a topic at Limmud. Rather, for an hour, one dips gently into it and pulls out" (Haviv Rettig-Gur, *Jerusalem Post*, 31/12/2007). Whilst there is some truth in this, it misses the crucial point discussed above that the learning takes place well beyond the boundaries of any one single session/lesson. Indeed, some argue that the sessions simply act as a catalyst to the main learning, which takes place in the less formal, more natural settings throughout – and after – the event (Boyd, 2006, pp. 30–31). However, not even the keenest Limmud advocate would argue that simply attending a few sessions on one topic at a Limmud event is an equal substitute for a fuller course of study through one of the more traditional routes. Those seeking deep meaningful enlightenment on any one subject are likely to be disappointed if that is their primary goal for participating at any of Limmud's events.

The element of time: Time plays an important role in the transformational nature of the educational process at Limmud's residential events. First, participants have the freedom to build their own timetable. Unlike evening adult education classes or university, there is no set time where each student must attend set lessons. The detailed programme books list all sessions available at any one time, but as much as participants can choose which topics and teachers interest them, they are also free to choose which session slots they will attend and which they will miss altogether.

[2]For more, see in particular Jeffs and Smith (1999).

Sessions are programmed throughout the day and do not even follow the traditional norm of stopping for lengthy meal breaks. As with almost everything else with Limmud, the participants choose how they wish to make use of their time – and this is an unusually empowering aspect of the experience.

For the majority of the participants during a residential Limmud event, time is used differently from their day-to-day existence – much like the setting differs as outlined above. The vast majority of participants either work or study full or part time. Outside of the Limmud setting they have a whole host of responsibilities that commands their time, from work to domestic chores to the daily commute. For many, Limmud provides the rare luxury of a break from daily responsibilities and concerns, a suspension of real time, enabling the individual to focus almost uninterrupted on their learning and development, a key factor in maximising the long-term impact of the experience (Beth Cohen & Piper in Mezirow, 2000, p. 212). Kosher meals are provided precluding the need to shop, cook or clean; accommodation is within walking distance of session rooms to avoid the need to spend time commuting each day; inclusive childcare facilities are provided on site so that for large parts of the day someone else is looking after the children; and so on. The various volunteer teams referred to above that are as integral to the success as the programming team, put significant amounts effort and resources into maximising the opportunities for participants to concentrate on their learning experience as uninterrupted as possible.

Structural paradox of the learning programme: A structural paradox exists within Limmud's educational events insomuch as whilst an extremely detailed daily schedule of sessions has been put together by a team of volunteers each participant is completely free to build her own unique programme of study. There is no tutor or course director dictating what topics one needs to take, and no notion of a required set of credits to complete the course. Whilst there are many experienced people – Limmud volunteers, respected educators – willing to give their opinion and recommendations, it is entirely up to the individual to make her own choice. Cohen and Piper acknowledge that "moving away from a teacher-directed format to becoming the active subject who creates her own curriculum is a powerful transition to make" and that this transition plays a significant part in the transformational nature of such an educational endeavour (Beth Cohen & Piper in Mezirow, 2000, p. 216).

There is a belief in a strong element of self-directed learning at place within Limmud. Whilst not in its purest form (given that although there is a wide choice for the learner, it is not infinite, but instead "limited" to some 950 or so sessions and 300–350 different presenters), this is the self-direction that was championed by one of the most influential figures in the field of adult education, Malcolm Knowles. Knowles argues that where individuals take the initiative in their learning, they learn more, and learn better, than passive learners who are taught what others decide they should learn. He claims that as adults make crucial decisions on a regular basis, we should also be trusted to make decisions about our own learning. He explains that proactive, self-directed learners who make their own choices "enter into learning more purposefully and with greater motivation. They also tend to retain and make use of what they learn better and longer than do the reactive learners" (Knowles, 1975, pp. 14–15).

The key concept for Limmud participants here is choice; every individual is empowered and encouraged to choose between multiple topics, diverse presenters and different learning styles. During the week-long Limmud Conference, there are on average between 15 and 25 different sessions taking place at the same time, as many topics, under any one of 10–15 different subject tracks, and utilising as broad a range of methodologies as possible. Each session is described in the handbook that every participant receives, with details of the track, topic, title, learning methodology, level (and if necessary, required prior knowledge) and presenter. In this way the participants are empowered to make an informed choice. Rather than being guided along a conveyer belt of a one-size-fits-all set curriculum, each individual learner creates his or her own study programme to fit his interests or meet her needs; to explore new topics never previously encountered, or find comfort in familiar and favourite subject matter. Each person may arrive with completely different personal aims for their learning, but each may leave feeling their goals have been achieved.

In his seminal work "Liquid Modernity", Polish-Jewish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman examines how modernity's emphasis on the individual has had significant impact on notions of society, largely due to the primacy of concepts of freedom, choice and self-determination of the individual. He writes that "it is up to the individual to find out what she or he is capable of doing, to stretch that capacity to the utmost, and to pick the ends to which that capacity can be applied best – that is, to the greatest achievable satisfaction" (Bauman, 2000, p. 62). Limmud plays into this modern trend by offering multiple options and different entry points. Any Limmud event offers something very similar to Bauman's description of a "buffet table set with mouth-watering dishes" (Bauman, 2000, p. 63) for the individual to choose from based on what they feel may give them the greatest satisfaction.

Amongst the effects of this approach are a fairly radical (certainly within the mainstream British Jewish community) democratisation of Jewish education and empowerment of the learner. Whilst it is true, of course, that Limmud's organisers have made certain choices in advance in order to shape the programme and ensure that particular presenters are part of it, one of their fundamental aims is to ensure that the "buffet table" contains as wide a range of Jewish dishes as possible, and that all dishes are as "mouth-watering" as can be. In order to achieve this variety, the presenters and sessions are determined in part by a 20–30 strong team of programming volunteers who invite some 50–60% of the presenters and encourage them to offer sessions on suggested topics of interest; but also in part by anything from 100 to 200 other individuals who, as described above, are participants who have one or two sessions they wish to present.

This democratisation of the educational programme has seen Limmud described as a "whole new Wikified Jewish world", in reference to the immensely popular online dictionary Wikipedia (Haviv Rettig-Gur, *Jerusalem Post*, 02/02/2008). This uniquely modern phenomenon which has become arguably the world's most popular encyclopaedia is written and edited by its readers, with a set of checks and balances in place to help ensure accuracy. Its popularity has been attributed to a belief "that the combined, continually-edited knowledge of the multitude is more accurate and useful than that of individual experts" (ibid.). Similarly, whilst the

overall programme of a Limmud Conference may be shaped, modified and balanced by the programming team, it is essentially built by 300–400 people, who have all contributed at least something to the feast.

It is clear to conclude from this so-called "wikified" approach that the organisers genuinely do not wish to dictate exactly what or how the individual should be learning. This is unlike the majority of Jewish education initiatives where the organisers determine everything from content to learning style to ideological message, and all students go through the same programme, or a variation of it. Instead, every Limmud participant can freely choose his path of learning without any teachers, *madrichim* (guides), or tutors setting the curriculum to be followed. As such, the learning process at Limmud is empowering as it "reinforces the individual's intellectual autonomy" (Haviv Rettig-Gur, *Jerusalem Post*, 31/12/2007) – a highly attractive feature, especially to the younger generation of Jewish adults who are immersed in the age of the internet with its seemingly limitless ability to enable the user to build one's experiences of the world around oneself.

The most effective learning within Limmud takes place through continual and genuine dialogue between presenters and participants, and between participants and other participants. In order for this to happen, the educational activities and environment are – influenced by the thinking of Carl Rogers – consciously constructed to be participant-centred, with the organisers and presenters/teachers "prizing the learner, his feelings, opinions, person" (Rogers, 1969, p. 109). That is not to say that each individual session at a Limmud Conference is purely participant-centred as they are based around the materials or concepts that each presenter has prepared to teach before knowing who her students will be. Rather, Limmud places the individual person in the centre of the overall educational endeavour and acts out a belief in John Dewey's assertions that the learning will be greatly enhanced if it is an interactive, engaging process for the learner (Dewey, 1938, pp. 18–19). This conviction influences almost all key decisions that are made in the planning stages of any major Limmud event, as the Limmud leadership believes that it is central to achieving a genuinely transformational educational experience. Underlying this approach is a profound trust in and respect for the ability of the individual and her commitment to her own learning.

It should be noted that for some there are clear downsides to this "wikified" approach to building the programme, and in particular with adhering to an educational philosophy based on the belief that "everyone can be a teacher and everyone should be a student". Whilst for Limmud's organisers this remains a noble statement of intent, to others it represents a significant weakness in the Limmud's attempts to be taken seriously as an educational organisation. The egalitarian approach that sees all presenters afforded the same status also means it can be difficult to judge in advance which sessions will be of the highest quality. As explained, many of the presenters will have submitted sessions and written their own short biography without being known by the organising team. An enthusiastic amateur may happen to be an inspiring teacher or fascinating speaker, but there is no guarantee that knowledge and enthusiasm for a subject alone will translate into a worthwhile session. The Amichai-adoring mother, or the dentist who loves Jewish genealogy referred to

above, may have all the passion but none of the skills needed to present an interesting session. This can be incredibly frustrating for the more serious learner who has sat in angst with the programme handbook trying to choose which session to go to in that hour and which of the others he will have to miss.

Conclusion and Recommendation for Future Research

Perhaps the essence of what makes Limmud such a powerful, successful, transformational endeavour in the field of Jewish education was best captured by the world's oldest Jewish newspaper, *The Jewish Chronicle*, when its Judaism Editor and chief writer wrote in 2009: "Limmud has caught the imagination of Jews worldwide because it offers a broader, more open experience of Jewish community, rather than one bound by hierarchy and convention or riven by religious compartmentalisation. A place of 'yes, we can' rather than 'no, you can't'... It's easy to think that this is the Jewish community as many think it should be: democratic, egalitarian, inclusive, willing to encourage experiment and exposure to different ideas and views" (Simon Rocker, JC, 08/01/2009).

Limmud is not seeking to provide the be-all and end-all Jewish educational experience that leaves all participants with a fully rounded sense of Jewish identity or a complete understanding of how to live a meaningful Jewish life. Instead, following the Freirean tradition it acknowledges its participants as "beings in the process of becoming – as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality" (Freire, 1972, pp. 56–57) and wishes to play a role in helping them take one step further on their journey. Limmud's leadership understand that their events and activities act for some as Jewish educational "spas" for those who need a break from their daily routine in order to immerse themselves in a reinvigorating pool of Jewish learning and community; and as a catalyst for others to embark on further Jewish learning.

Dewey taught that the skills, knowledge and values that one learns from any particular situation are not ends in themselves, but if successful become "an instrument of understanding for dealing effectively with situations which follow" (Dewey, 1938, p. 44). Those involved with running Limmud believe that what people take away from their experience at any Limmud event will become such instruments of understanding as they continue to take further steps on their Jewish journeys. Whilst there is no set endpoint for its participants, we can clearly ascribe to Limmud one of Professor Barry Chazan's definitions of effective Jewish education, in that it has a "conscious intent or desire to affect the Jewish character of people – the way they think, feel, and behave" (Chazan, 1991, p. 306). Feedback regularly gathered by Limmud suggests that this is true of a majority of participants, who, through Limmud, encounter a unique community built on principles of egalitarianism, cross-communalism and respect; guided by such values as empowerment, diversity, freedom of choice and mutual responsibility; and with a commitment to "expanding Jewish horizons". If that is true, then how much more so for the community of volunteers who explore these and other concepts all year round, and who put them into

action as they create the events, projects and the community that they themselves want to be part of. In almost every community around the world where there is an active Limmud group, it is these volunteers – particularly of the younger generations – who, inspired by their involvement are now amongst the key protagonists driving the rejuvenation of Jewish life, learning and community development, and who are at the forefront of initiatives that are engaging ever-growing numbers of young adults.

Limmud is perhaps a surprisingly under-researched phenomenon. There is little empirical evidence to back up the claims of its leadership, even if there is strong anecdotal support. Of the many potential research projects that might be proposed, I recommend priority be given to the following:

1. *The transformational impact on the individual* – What part has Limmud played in strengthening the Jewish identities and lives of regular participants of its events over a 5, 10 and 15 year period? To what extent does involvement in Limmud lead to involvement in the wider Jewish community?
2. *Limmud's contribution to the British-Jewish community* – How has the UK Jewish landscape changed in the past three decades and what contribution has Limmud made to this? Limmud's leadership – and many observers – believe that Limmud has created fertile ground that has enabled other cross-communal or pluralist organisations, and innovative, creative events and projects to flourish. Without Limmud, would there now be, for example, Jewish Book Week, JCoSS, JCC for London, Jewdas, Wandering Jews – all who have experienced Limmudnikim amongst their leadership and who have followed in Limmud's wake – and others? What have any of these organisations learned from Limmud's experiences, successes and challenges; and gained from its existence and popularity?
3. *Limmud's impact on the Jewish world* – The rapid growth of Limmud around the world is astonishing, and numerically, by any criteria, Limmud International could be said to be a huge success. But what does success mean in qualitative terms? To what extent are the outputs and outcomes impacting on the quality or development of Jewish life in any of the communities where Limmud now has a presence?

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Mentoring: Ideological Encounters – Mentoring Teachers in Jewish Education

Michal Muszkat-Barkan

Introduction

A major goal of mentoring teachers[1] is to enhance teachers' professional growth, by increasing their reflective abilities (Glickman, 1990; Zeichner & Liston, 1985; Pajak, 2002).[2] Culture- or religion-based curricula, such as Jewish studies, are embedded within an ideological context. Thus, the ideological context in Jewish studies is an aspect of every lesson and decision taken in the classroom. Teaching Jewish sources is inherently related to the ideological orientation of the participants in the process (Cohen, 1996; Shkedi & Nisan, 2006), including students and their communities, as well as teachers and mentors (Muszkat-Barkan & Shkedi, 2009). Thus, the goals of teacher-mentoring in Jewish education should include enhancing awareness of the ideological-cultural components of personal attitudes toward Jewish resources. This may enable teachers and teachers' mentors to elucidate their own considerations in choosing subject matter for teaching and "translating" it for current learners.

Despite its centrality, the influence of the ideologies of teachers and of teachers' mentors on teachers' professional development has received little critical attention to date. In addition, the effects of the mentors' ideologies on the mentoring process have been rarely recognized or discussed. The aim of this chapter is to define what is unique in the mentoring of teachers in Jewish education as related to the ideologies of participants. This is important because it can help mentors to be more reflective about their practice: to understand what they do and why they do it, and to understand how various components of their beliefs affect their practice of mentoring.

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[1]In this article I use the term mentoring as a general term for many kinds of in-service teacher training. See a broader discussion of the terms "mentoring," "clinical supervision," and "coaching" below.

[2]I refer especially to the developmental and reflective models of clinical supervision, see for example Pajak (2002).

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This may help mentors identify how their practice is related to their Jewish cultural ideologies. Eventually this may help define needs for mentors' in-service and pre-service training.

Using a qualitative research methodology, I indicate how the personal ideological orientations of both teachers and mentors affect mentoring processes in Jewish education. Based on the case described below and the literature reviewed I discuss how these orientations can be addressed in order to enhance teachers' professional growth.

Background

The Context and Goals of Teachers' Professional Development

There are various ways in which the ends and means of in-service teacher professional development are described. Most commonly the ends of professional development include increasing teachers' professional capabilities; promoting effective teaching practices; encouraging personal and professional growth; and changing school culture (Harris in Firth & Pajak 1998, pp. 12–13). Models for professional development are based on different assumptions regarding teachers' learning, the aims of teachers' development, and the settings in which these processes take place (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, 1997; Silberstein, 1998). Teachers' professional development occurs in the context of staff development or in the processes of socialization of new teachers, as part of school improvement or standardization efforts, or in the course of curriculum development (Adey & Hewitt, 2004; Harris, 1998).

A key component of every professional development process is understanding teachers' professional knowledge: What is it that teachers need to know that will improve their professionalism? What kind of knowledge is it and how it is developed? The answers to these questions affect both the aims and the means of professional development processes (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Cochran-Smith, 2001; Pajak, 1993). According to approaches that see professional knowledge as an autonomous body of information, mentors should be experts whose role is to introduce and transfer knowledge to teachers, while teachers are those who are expected to acquire and implement the knowledge, what Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) call "knowledge *for* practice." From another perspective, the professional knowledge of teachers grows with their ability to reflect on their experience and to create generalizations regarding their goals and patterns of teaching; this is what Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999) call "knowledge *in* practice" thereby emphasizing reflection in action as a main component of professional development (Schon, 1988; Shkedi, 1996). This concept promotes a more dialogic professional relationship between teachers and their mentors. According to a third concept, "knowledge *of* practice," teachers are experts and their knowledge is created by collaborative learning and critical discussion of their practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Giroux, 1988). Examining various programs of professional development in Jewish education can reveal assumptions regarding "professional knowledge" in this field. I would like to promote the question of what is that knowledge and how it can be developed by those who are in charge of this task.

The Teachers' Professional Developer: Changes in Terminology and Goals

Teachers' professional developers are often school principals or experienced teachers who serve as role models within their schools or who are called in by outside authorities to guide novice teachers and to promote professional development within schools. The outside authorities might be administrators in teacher training programs, municipal education authorities, or curriculum publishers. Teachers' professional developers are known by one of the following terms: supervisors, mentors, cognitive coaches, trainers, or facilitators. Distinctions between these terms are often related to different understandings of the tasks involved, the status of the participants, and the nature of their relationships.

Table 1 Common descriptions of teachers' mentors, coaches, and supervisors roles[3]

	Mentoring	Coaching	Supervising
The mentee	Beginning teachers	Not restricted	Not restricted
The professional approach	A holistic approach concentrated on helping the novice teachers to "survive" and become competent teachers	A practical approach: the coach trains the teacher and practises with him/her relevant professional skills	An evaluative approach, sometimes based on hierarchy of roles
Characteristics of the trainer	An experienced, appreciated teacher within the school or the teacher training institute	A professional trainer, sometimes trained as a coach	A superintendent or a school principal with an official role

The term "mentor" is invariably used for experienced teachers who work with novice teachers (Godsoe, Ament, & Heilpern, 2007). Yet, the definition of "novice" is flexible, and mentoring programs can be directed at heterogenous groups of teachers in schools, regardless of their professional experience (Portner, 2005, p. 9; Goldsbery in Pajak & Firth 1998, pp. 428–462). Mentors and coaches are described as having different roles: "the work of the mentor is more concerned with the holistic needs of the beginning teacher, including social-emotional needs and personal concerns, while coaches are more concerned with technical proficiency" (Portner, 2005, p. 113). "A critical difference between the role of mentor and the role of supervisor is that a mentor can not be an evaluator" (Portner, 2005, p. 7). However, many times these roles are mixed.

"Supervision for instruction" is rooted in hierarchical relationships (Goldhammer, 1969) but has been transformed in recent years into professional development. This change is reflected in the emergence of the term "clinical supervision." Clinical supervision is a process of teacher professional development

[3]Based on integration from various sources, for example (Oliva & Pawlas 1984, p. 5; Costa & Garmston [Hebrew edition] pp. 2–4; Zachary, 2000, pp. 2–6; Rubinshtain 1999 pp. 19–21).

that focuses on a cycle of observing the teacher's work, analyzing it, forward planning, re-observing, etc. (Glickman, 1990; Goldhammer, 1969; Oliva & Pawlas, 1984). Teachers' mentors and cognitive coaches are supposed to observe teachers' practices and discuss them with them (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, 1997; Costa and Garmstone, 1999).

Even though different bodies of literature are concerned with teachers' coaching, mentoring, and supervision, the term "mentor" is invariably used as a general name for the professional developer role (Zachary, 2006). Over the years, the objectives of the mentoring relationship have evolved from the mentees learning to an approach rooted in adult learning. "This learner-centered shift . . . requires that a mentor facilitate the learning relationship rather than transfer knowledge to the learner" (Zachary, 2006, p. xv).

In this chapter I use the term "mentoring" to denote professionals who are responsible for teacher learning and professional growth. These mentors are experienced teachers who are appointed to work with teachers in order to increase their capacities and educational achievements in the area of Jewish studies teaching. I prefer the term "mentoring" because of its personal connotation (Davis, 2001, p. 3). Even though teacher–mentor relationships may not be voluntary, they are always personal.

Teachers' Mentoring: Goals and Means

Since mentoring processes entail a meeting between two parties, a teacher and a mentor, hierarchy and the roles of the participants have gained considerable attention. Glickman (1990) presented a "developmental model" of clinical supervision that includes four approaches that differ in the degree of responsibility and the control of the teacher and mentor (or what Glickman calls the "teacher-supervisor") over the mentoring process. This model is applicable to the various possible settings of teacher–mentor relationships and to the evaluation of teachers' needs and the mentors' capabilities. The four approaches to "clinical supervision" according to Glickman (1990) are:

Directive-control behavior: The supervisors are dominant; they set the agenda of the conferences, direct the teachers, and define the parameters of success.

Directive-informational behavior: The supervisors act as the teachers' teachers; they introduce alternatives to the teachers and provide them with useful knowledge.

Collaborative behavior: The supervisory conference is a dialogue that includes the supervisors' and teachers' different roles and experience. The supervisors encourage the teachers to share responsibilities for and control of the process.

Nondirective behaviour: This model focuses on the teachers, their professional world, capabilities, and choices. The teachers lead the conference and set the agenda, and they are responsible for suggesting interpretations, designing solutions, and implementing them. The supervisors' role is to encourage the teachers in these processes.

Although a collaborative and nondirective approach is presented as one of several optional approaches, in a broader developmental context it also represents a shift from a traditional-authoritarian model of mentoring to more democratic models that are based on partnership. This move is somewhat similar to concepts of adult learning, representing a shift from product-oriented to process-oriented mentoring (Zachary, 2000, pp. 3–4).

Many researchers emphasize reflectivity as the main aim of professional conversations among professional developers and teachers (Blasé, 2003; Costa & Garmston, 1999; Zeichner & Liston, 1985; Silberstein, 1998). Pajack (2000) argues that teaching and learning can be understood only in the students' and schools' social, historical, political, and cultural contexts. Mentors, coaches, and supervisors are urged to empower teachers through helping them to deepen their interpretive skills, and increase their awareness of cultural influences on the learners, on curricula, and on the teaching environment (Bowers & Flinders, 1991; Costa & Garmston, 1999). Teachers are encouraged to revisit their own beliefs and become critical and reflective about their assumptions and their taken-for-granted practical choices. This approach assumes that teachers have the ability to improve not only their own teaching but also the entire curriculum and the surrounding educational culture (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Glickman, 1990; Zachary, 2006). This emphasis on partnering between mentor and teacher, aimed in turn at generating more reflective abilities, points to a conception of professional knowledge that is a unique amalgam of personal, contextual, and intellectual components.

How should this understanding affect teacher mentoring in a cultural or religion-based curriculum, such as Jewish studies?

Teachers' Ideologies Are Embedded in Any Educational Process

The pedagogical content knowledge of teachers is described as a combination of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge that develops in relation to the theory learned and experience gained by every teacher. Pedagogical content knowledge is influenced by personal values and beliefs (Schon, 1983; Van-Manen, 1991), including the teacher's perceptions of what is desirable (Nisan, 2009; Shkedi & Horeczyk, 1995). In other words, teachers' pedagogical content knowledge is influenced by their personal ideologies.

Ideologies are intimately related to actions (Althuser, 2006; Lamm, 2002). Thus, teachers' stances regarding education, culture, and society, as they experience it, must be influenced by their beliefs. Teachers' ideals, values, and perceptions regarding the desirable lead their practice (Hansen, 1995). Every curriculum is based on an ideological orientation toward the subject matter and the culture, as well as toward other aspects of the teaching and learning process (Apple, 1990; Schremer, 1999). Interpretation of culturally based texts is affected by the teacher's personal orientation toward the text (Holtz, 2003).

Decisions that are made by teachers in the process of implementing curricula reflect their personal perspectives: they have to "translate" subject matter to "subject

matter for teaching" and these processes are linked to personal beliefs regarding the nature of the subject matter and its relevance to the students' lives (Shkedi & Nisan, 2006; Alpert, 2002).

Teachers' Ideologies

Lamm (2002) distinguishes between three main educational ideologies: *socialization*, *acculturation*, and *individuation*. These ideologies differ in their views of what education is, who the ideal graduate is, and in their description of the role of teachers and teaching. "Socialization" strives to train the students for their roles as functional adults in society, and the role of the teacher is to be their trainer for that purpose. According to an ideology of "acculturation," the ideal graduates are scholar-adults who feel comfortable with their culture. Teaching is aimed at instilling knowledge and an appreciation of heritage, and the teachers are the students' role models. The ideology of "individuation" focuses on supporting the unique growth of each student into an autonomous adult. The main teaching task therefore is to release the students from *a-priori* commitments to the authority of the subject matter and to help them find their own "voice" (Lamm, 2002).

Researchers have characterized teachers' educational ideologies as a complex and often contradictory system of loyalties: loyalty to the students, to the content, and, at the same time, to the teacher's own personal ideals (Muszkat-Barkan & Shkedi, 2009; Shkedi & Horeczyk, 1995).

Ideologies in Jewish Education

Jewish education inherently interprets Jewish identity, values, and commitments (Goren D., 1994; Ben-Peretz, 2005), and expresses the explicit and/or implicit ideologies of participants (Ben-Basat, 1997). Educational ideologies include the educators' perspectives on the role of the subject matter (Lamm, 1988, 2002). In Jewish studies, ideologies are manifested in the educators' approaches to teaching Jewish sources, as well as in their prioritizing of contents as "subject matter for teaching" (Holtz, 2003; Shkedi & Nisan, 2006). Teachers are the main players at this scene (Goren D., 1994; Luz, 1994), sometimes without being aware of their important role or even without being invited to bring their personal and professional input.

I have previously classified (Muszkat-Barkan, 2005) Jewish-cultural ideologies according to their degree of identification or criticism toward Jewish culture. These approaches represent a continuum, rather than separated entities:

Identification: The students ought to acquire the core body of authentic Jewish constructs, identify with them, and be committed to them (e.g., Rosenak, 1995; 2003; Ahad Ha'am, 1913; Twersky, 2003).

Critique: Learning Jewish culture should occur without a priori commitment to its authority or expectations regarding its relevance to the learners' life. This

approach calls for critical reading, and awareness of the modern perspective of the learners (e.g., Zakovitch, 1995; 2003; Brinker, 2003).

Critique-identification combination: This is a combination between identifying with one's culture and a critical perspective vis-à-vis any cultural paradigm (e.g., Luz, 1994; Simon, 1986; Schweid, 2000).

Teachers' Mentoring and Ideologies in Jewish Education

Teachers' mentoring is a unique personal encounter within the professional educational system. How, then, can one understand the role of the mentor and the effect of ideologies on the underlying assumptions of both mentors and teachers? Such ideologies may remain implicit during mentoring meetings (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Grundy & Hatton, 1995). For example, in a report on mentors' knowledge after working with teachers in Jewish day schools, there is no reference to the Jewish context of the teachers' task (Godsoe et al., 2007). The only reference to this context is to the importance of introducing novice teachers to the school philosophy. Is it because novice teachers are occupied with more basic questions? Or is it because mentors and teachers are educated to leave behind any personal ideology as if it is not relevant to their professional discussion?

Research regarding the role of teachers' and mentors' ideologies in teachers' mentoring is limited. Particularly, there is a limited account of the unique challenges faced by mentors and teachers in Jewish education. In the following case study, I discuss the ways in which teachers and teachers' mentors deal with their personal ideologies in teachers' mentoring. Based on the case presented I then describe what I understand as the unique challenges and directions for mentoring teachers in Jewish education.

Methods

The data presented herein were generated in the course of a broader study on the role of ideologies in teachers' mentoring.[4] This study was conducted according to the principles of constructivist-qualitative research (Stake, 2000). The general questions of the study were the following: What roles do the different ideologies of mentors and teachers play in the mentoring of Jewish studies teachers? What are these ideologies, how they are manifested in the mentoring process, and how do they affect it? The sub-questions were ultimately defined only after the final analysis of the data and the construction of a "grounded theory" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The research aim was to describe and understand the subjects of the research through their own language and interpretations of their unique experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tzabar-Ben Yehoshua, 1997).

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[4]Previously (Muszkat-Barkan, 2005), I used the term supervision to translate the Hebrew terms "hanchaya" or "hadracha." In this chapter I use the term mentoring for the reasons explained below.

The research focused on 14 participants; teachers and mentors, within the framework of four case studies. Each case included one mentor and the teachers that he or she mentored. Three of the four mentors served as official supervisors in Israeli public high schools that prepare students for the matriculation exams, in Jewish Studies. Two of the mentors were mentors in Bible Studies, one a mentor in Jewish Philosophy, and one a mentor in TALI[5] elementary schools. All of the mentors were known as experienced and successful teachers. The 10 participant teachers were all mentees of one of the four mentors.

In this chapter I present one of the four cases broadly and use what I have learned from the other cases to generate findings and discussion.

Case Study: Mentor Rachel

Rachel is in her 50 s. She has been working in the TALI system for 25 years as a general and Judaic teacher and this is her fifth year as a TALI mentor. Rachel describes herself as an "open orthodox-observant Jew." Rachel sees her main role as a mentor in enabling teachers to create connections to Jewish content so that they will be able to teach the Judaic resources in ways that are close to their world. At the same time she feels responsible that content chosen by the teachers will be "authentic" to the Jewish world. Rachel tells about her work with a particular teacher in one TALI elementary school:

> The teacher had prepared the "Bulletin Board for the Month of Cheshvan" following our meeting, and I felt that as much as we tried to bring Judaism to the teacher it was not picked up, so I told the teacher: "Let's make the board look more Jewish."
>
> . . .Then suddenly we were painting big clouds that had written on them, "*mashiv haru-ach u'morid hagashem*" ["who causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall"]. Now, when someone looks at the board, this is the sentence that jumps off the wall after the word "Cheshvan." So we cut out the display [together], I really took her by the hand.

Rachel believes that the teacher is the one who needs to choose the materials for teaching. Yet, she is critical and feels that these materials are not "Jewish enough." Rachel is fluctuating between encouraging the teacher's autonomy in creating the bulletin board and "taking her hand by hand" in order to create a "more Jewish" bulletin board.

Who is responsible for curricular decisions: the teacher or the mentor? What kind of professional dialogue can be expected when the mentor feels responsible for the professional growth of the teacher and at the same time for the Jewish agenda of the school?

Rachel feels that she is responsible for bringing Jewish content knowledge to the teachers. Her goal is to enhance the Jewish content in the schools. As she puts it,

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[5]TALI is a nationwide network of over 120 Israeli public schools that are committed to providing pluralistic Jewish education. http://www.tali.org.il/

> For several years now I have been talking about it – where to bring in prayer, because in school they don't have prayers, they don't learn about prayers. In the fifth grade they have a little introduction to the *Siddur* [prayer book], and that's all. So this year I suggested that we bring in a 2-day prayer curriculum for all grades.

For Rachel, the prayers and the language of the *Siddur* are central components of Jewish culture and experience. Thus, she argues with the school's avoidance of prayer and with the short introduction to the *Siddur*.

Rachel tends to see her primary mentoring aim as encouraging teachers to teach content that is central to the Jewish world, according to her beliefs. But what happens when the teachers have different perceptions of the core of Jewish culture? We can see such a conflict in the following report from Sharon, a veteran Judaic studies teacher, who works with Rachel:

> Sharon: So the mentor,. . . She really wanted us to incorporate prayers in the school in first and second grades. I was toning her down on certain things, I told her it won't fly here. . . . It was very important to her that the children learn about *Zom Gdaliah, Taa'nit Esther* [Jewish fast-days]. She would fax stuff to me [. . .but I think that] it doesn't do anything for the children. I can make a connection between *Zom Gdaliah* and [the assassination of Prime Minister], Rabin, but I don't want to do it just as she wanted . . .so it was very difficult, really very difficult for her.

While the mentor sees learning about the festivals, and experiencing and learning the prayers as her professional contribution, the teacher sees it in a very different way. The teacher interprets such input as foreign to the school and as dictating a Jewish message that is not oriented to the school's population. Rachel had tried to introduce some ideas regarding how to promote prayers in the school but got negative reactions from the teachers.

> Rachel: The teacher's reaction to my ideas was "Not now. " So I felt hurt, and here I have to differentiate my personal feelings from what is going on: I felt that Judaism is being hurt, I am being hurt. [. . .] because I am. . . my aim at school is to lead it [Judaism] forward and not backward.

The mentoring orientation of Rachel reflects her identification with Jewish culture and a desire to acculturate the teachers within the Jewish world, directing the process within the boundaries of what she perceives as legitimate to Judaism. Her personal Judaic approach affects her professional framework, her perception of what is the "language" of Judaism (Rosenak, 2003), and thus the sense of what needs to be introduced to the students is directly related to her own perception of Judaism. The ideology of the mentor is reflected here in the construction of the subject matter of Jewish studies through a decision about what is at the core of Judaic studies and what is not.

While Rachel directs the teachers to focus on what she sees as the core Jewish constructs, she also seeks to engage them in the process of personal knowledge development. She wants them to find their own identification with central components of Jewish culture. Rachel avoids confrontations over ideological differences, and strives to create alternatives that will enable the teachers to find Jewish components with which they can identify, without having to expose and directly discuss

their own beliefs. The consequence of this approach is that sometimes the teachers accept Rachel's suggestions and interpretations on Jewish curricula resources, and incorporate them into their teaching. On other occasions, when the mentor's suggestions do not fit their orientations they might ignore those suggestions. As one of the teachers says,

> "I listen to her ideas. If I like them, I take them and if not – in the class I am on my own. . ."

Yet, this is not the only pattern of ideological interaction between the mentor Rachel and the teachers she works with. A different behavior is described by Rachel regarding her work with veteran teacher Dina, when Dina became a teacher of a TALI class within the school.

Rachel tells that at the beginning Dina was angry about becoming a TALI teacher, because she saw the TALI principles as religious and felt that they contradicted her own beliefs:

> Rachel: I had to show Dina that Judaism is more than black and white. I looked for materials and interpretations that would allow her to find her own voice. I wanted her to see the plurality of Judaism.

Dina trusted Rachel. She accepted her professionalism and did not hesitate to ask her provocative questions but at the same time accepted her guidance. Both of them felt that their professional connection was a fruitful one.

Rachel sees herself as the teacher of the teachers she works with. She believes that her role is to enrich their Jewish content knowledge so that they will feel competent and be motivated to teach more Jewish content in their classrooms. She wants the teachers to be more knowledgeable and she is certain that the Jewish tradition is so wide as to enable every teacher to find within it her/his own orientations and those of their students.

There is a difference between the two professional encounters involving the same mentor, but with two different teachers. Both teachers were secular and had different ideological approaches toward Judaism from that of the mentor. In the first encounter there was no explicit dialogue regarding the reasons for the teacher's resistance to the Jewish pedagogical choices of the mentor and regarding the differences between their perceptions of Judaism. In the second encounter the differences provided the starting point for the mentoring relationship. Here, both the teacher and the mentor described an experience of mutual listening and openness. The teacher was active in expressing herself and the mentor made an effort to bring Judaic content that suited the teacher's world. Neither Dina nor Rachel could have anticipated the educational outcomes of their meetings. They both noticed that the outcome of the process was different from what they had planned in advance and that it evolved through the course of their dialogue. In contrast, the encounter with Sharon was frustrating for both the teacher and the mentor, since both of them avoided discussions regarding the ideological differences between them. As such, the professional discussion was about what should be taught while ignoring the question of why and what for, as if attitudes and beliefs were irrelevant. At the end, the mentor felt that the school was taking a step backwards in teaching Judaic studies and the teacher felt that the mentor did not understand the school's orientation.

A Framework for Discussing Mentors' Ideologies: A Proposal

This representative case study and others as well show that either an explicit or an implicit ideological discourse between teachers and mentors can have a profound impact on the mentoring process. Mentors' ideologies affected the selection of subject matter for teaching, in its preparation and interpretation, as well as the way in which the mentors dealt with teachers' own ideologies.

In order to analyze the effect of mentoring ideologies on the mentoring process, I describe the characteristics of mentors' ideologies and propose a framework for the discussion of the inter-relationship between the components of mentors' ideologies. I suggest that the individual mentoring ideology (defined below as a "mentoring orientation in Jewish studies") can be characterized according to two main components: a Jewish-cultural component, and an educational component. The individual combination of the Jewish cultural and the educational components determine the mentoring orientation in Jewish studies and the ways by which mentors' orientations are expressed in the mentoring process.

1. *Jewish-cultural component*: This component includes the mentor's attitude toward Jewish content and Jewish texts, how they are understood, and how they should be studied (Holtz, 2003, pp. 73–102). In an earlier work, I classified Jewish-cultural ideologies according to their degree of identification or criticism toward Jewish culture (Muszkat-Barkan, 2005). These approaches represent a continuum rather than separate entities. They include *Identification, Critique, and a Critique-identification combination* (as described above). For example, in the case presented here, the mentor expressed "identification" toward the Jewish content. She wanted the teachers and students to acquire the core body of what she perceived as authentic Jewish constructs.
2. *Educational component*: Above, I used Lamm's (2002) classification of educational ideology: *acculturation*, *socialization,* and *individuation* to describe the educational attitudes of the mentors. There is a close interaction between and alignment of educational ideologies and teachers' professional development and mentoring approaches.

   To analyze mentoring approaches I use Glickman's classification of supervisory behaviors (1990). This classification includes varying degrees of responsibility and control as exercised by both the mentor and the teacher in relation to the mentoring process. In *directive-control* and *directive-informational* behaviors the mentor leads the professional encounter with teachers. The mentors set the agenda and provide the teachers with "useful knowledge." Both behaviors reflect a professional development perception of "knowledge *for* practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) that sees professional knowledge as an autonomous body of information. In this approach, the mentor is an expert whose role is to introduce and transfer the knowledge to the teachers, while the teachers are those who are expected to acquire and implement the knowledge. The *collaborative* mentoring approach is conceived as a dialogue, despite the mentors' and teachers' differing roles. This behavior leads to generation of "knowledge *in*

practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) where the professional knowledge of teachers grows with their ability to reflect on their experience.

The mentor's role in a *nondirective* approach is to encourage teachers to set the agenda for the mentoring process, suggest interpretations, design solutions, and implement them. This may lead to creating "knowledge *of* practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) where teachers' knowledge is generated by collaborative learning and critical discussion of their practice. Interestingly, in my research I did not observe "nondirective" supervisory behavior among the mentors studied. While the reasons for this finding are yet to be explored, this may be related to the central role of ideologies in mentoring Jewish studies teachers that makes it hard for the mentors to stay neutral and act in a nondirective fashion.

Based on this framework, I propose the following three mentoring orientations in Jewish studies that use three Jewish concepts to describe various relationships between mentor and mentee: (i) a collaborative-provoking mentoring orientation, termed "*Hevruta*" (ii) a directive mentoring orientation, named "*Rav-U-Moreh*," and (iii) a control-functional mentoring orientation (a mentoring focused on achieving implementation), named "*Posek*." Usually a single mentoring orientation is used by each mentor but sometimes mentors use different orientations in relation to different teachers and curricula.

In the case presented here, the mentor saw the aim of Jewish education in terms of acculturation. She wanted the teachers to be able to bring the core of the Jewish culture to their students in order to "upgrade" the Jewish culture of the school. She believed that content knowledge is crucial to the Jewish background of the teachers. Thus, the acculturation educational ideology was related to a directive-informational behavior: the mentor looked for ways to enrich the teachers' Jewish content knowledge so that they would bring it to their students. When the mentor was open to ideological discussion her approach became more collaborative and the meeting took an exploratory course. The combination of these components defines the *Rav-U-Moreh* mentoring orientation (as shown in Table 2).

Jewish Studies Mentoring Orientations

"*Hevruta*" Collaboration Learning

This orientation combines a critical attitude toward the Jewish sources without a-priori commitment to their authority (Zakovitch, 2004, Brinker, 2003) with an educational ideology that sees the role of the teacher as responsible for increasing the autonomy of the individual student ("*individuation*" (Lamm, 2002)). According to this orientation, the subject matter is a tool for enhancing the learner's capacity, and not an end in itself. The role of the teacher is to help the student to find his or her own voice free of any authority. This ideology encourages a critical educational dialogue toward common sacred assumptions regarding Jewish content (see, e.g., Lamm, 2002, pp. 316–318).

Table 2 Mentoring orientations in Jewish studies and their components

Jewish-cultural component[a]	Educational components		Mentoring orientation in Jewish education
	Educational Ideologies[b]	Supervisory Behaviors[c, d]	
Identification	Acculturation	Directive-informative	*Rav-U-Moreh*[e]
Critique	Individuation	Collaborative	*Hevruta*
Critique or identification	Socialization	Directive-control	*Posek*

[a]Muszkat-Barkan (2005)
[b]Lamm (2002)
[c]Glickman (1990)
[d]As stated above, the " non-directive" behavior was not observed in the current study. For possible explanations, see p. 890 above.
[e]The mentoring orientation of *Rav-U-Moreh* is characterized by the combination of directive-informative behavior and an educational ideology of *acculturation*. It may be combined with the *identification* Jewish cultural ideology or with the *critique-identification* ideology, both Jewish cultural ideologies that the mentor might feel he/she needs to instill in the teachers and their students.

According to this orientation, teachers' professional development is rooted in "knowledge *in* practice" (Cochran Smith & Lytle, 1999). In the context of mentoring in Jewish education this implies that Jewish content is developed within the particular context of a Jewish cultural orientation, and within a school community that includes students and parents, as well as teachers. This orientation is characterized by collaboration between mentor and teacher that is aimed at knowledge development (Zachary, 2000). The mentor sees herself as a "Hevruta," a partner for the process of joint learning. The term "*Hevruta*" traditionally means two people who study Jewish text together.[6] Here I use this term to describe the collaboration and partnership between the mentor and the teacher in the reflective exploration of the teacher's practice. During this process the mentor not only guides the teacher but also reveals her own pedagogical content knowledge.

Reconstructing the subject matter for teaching often requires the mentor to ask provocative questions during mentoring meetings regarding the teacher's assumptions and beliefs, in order to enhance awareness of tacit perceptions. The mentor perceives the stimulation of such discussions as a part of her role as mentor.

The role of the mentor according to this orientation is to guide deconstruction and reconstruction processes, so that teachers become more critical of their own beliefs and practices as well as regarding myths that are embedded in the curriculum. The mentor should be aware of her own assumptions, and be ready to expose them.

[6]See a description of "*Hevruta*" in teachers' professional training settings in Eli Holtzer (2002) and in the chapter of that name above. I use this term as a description of collegiality partnership between a mentor and a teacher in the reflective exploration of the teachers' practice.

"*Rav-U-Moreh*": The Directive Mentoring Orientation

This mentoring orientation is based on the Jewish cultural approach of *identification* and commitment to the authority of Jewish culture and tradition (Rosenak, 1995; 2004; Ahad Ha'am, 1913; Twersky, 2003). This mentoring orientation sometimes includes a combination of critical orientation with identification (*Critique-identification*), inculcating a desire to identify with one's culture while encouraging a critical perspective vis-à-vis any cultural paradigm.

The educational ideology related to the *Rav-U-Moreh* orientation is acculturation, but can be also socialization (Lamm, 2002). The mentors see their primary responsibility as increasing the teachers' "knowledge," capabilities, and motivation to bring Jewish content to the classroom. The main assumption according to this orientation is that obstacles to identifying with Jewish culture are related to the lack of knowledge or personal connection of students and teachers to Jewish culture. Thus, it is hoped that the professional engagement of teachers with Jewish culture will model a similar engagement for their students. The role of mentors is to expose teachers to the richness of Jewish culture so that they will be convinced that it can be valuable to their students.

This professional development orientation can be defined as "knowledge *for* practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). The role of the mentor is to present to the teacher a body of "pre-made" knowledge freighted with the mentor's interpretations, and to direct the teacher toward what is perceived as the best way of introducing this knowledge to students.

In these terms, mentors see themselves primarily as the teachers of teachers. The Jewish term of *Rav-U-Moreh* emphasizes the responsibility of the mentors for increasing the knowledge of their students as well as the hierarchy between them. The "*Rav-U-Moreh*" is supposed to "keep the Torah"[7] and pass it on to his students. Mentors holding this orientation may feel that they have to protect the Jewish content from being misunderstood. They feel responsible for ensuring that the teachers represent Jewish content to their students in proper ways. Therefore, in mentoring meetings they actively direct the teachers to select materials for teaching, and interpret them, encouraging *identification*.

Mentors that hold this orientation may attribute ideological differences between them and the teachers to the teachers' lack of understanding of the true meaning of the Jewish cultural sources. They try to avoid confrontation with the teachers, but when resistance becomes explicit they will try to explain and to "teach" the teachers, seeking to encourage greater empathy with the Jewish sources. One of the important goals of mentoring according to this orientation is to lead teachers to find ways of interpretation with which they can identify and feel comfortable. Open discussions with teachers may occur when the mentor is sure that the teachers' resistance doesn't come from devaluing Jewish sources.

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[7]Lamentations/Eichah Rabbah, Petichtah 2, ed. Buber 1b: "Who are the guardians of the city? They are the teachers of the written Torah and the oral Torah/tradition that contemplate, review, and preserve the Torah day and night." See also Aberbach (1982).

Directing teachers to find their own personal meaning in the Jewish sources can be perceived as a declared goal of professional development or as a means to increase the teachers' motivations. Personal discussions might be perceived as an integral part of the mentoring meetings or as a (welcomed) deviation from the agenda.[8] Perhaps not surprisingly, in this research, mentors who hold the "*Rav-U-Moreh*" orientation were orthodox Jews who work with secular teachers, and expressed identification with Jewish sources.

"*Posek*" Functional Mentoring Orientation

This mentoring orientation is outcome driven. The mentor sees her role as directing the teachers to improve the performance of their students, regardless of the students' or the teachers' personal approaches toward Judaism or education. The term "*Posek*" is related to the traditional role of rabbis in determining the normative behaviors of Jewish individuals and communities.[9] This orientation is predicated on the educational ideology of socialization (Lamm, 2002). According to this concept, the teachers' goal is to train students to become active members of society. In terms of Jewish education this can be translated into instilling habits (*Hergel*, in the words of Twersky, 2003, pp. 82–83) that assure the continuity of the community. Professional development is perceived as "knowledge *for* practice" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), i.e., providing the teachers with what is required in order to achieve the goals of society. The mentor (as a "*Posek*") has the authority and the relevant knowledge for this task. The mentor directs and controls the selection and interpretation of Jewish contents in a way that is expected to fit the desirable students' outcomes (Glickman, 1990).

The socialization approach in this mentoring orientation is expressed as a commitment toward an external authority, such as students' achievements in standardized testing such as matriculation exams. The mentor might expect that the teachers' Jewish orientation will be identical with the Jewish orientation of the official curriculum of the state system. Mentors might see ideological differences as an obstacle, especially for orthodox teachers who teach in the secular public system. According to this perception those teachers must put aside their personal beliefs but at the same time mentors may doubt if it is possible. This is reflected in mentors' comments arguing that orthodox teachers working in the secular system can not identify with the contents and messages of the system's curriculum; they cannot leave behind their personal orientations and therefore are unable to teach it in the way that is required by the system. Accordingly, the mentors hardly ever discuss

[8] In previous research (Muszkat-Barkan, 2005) I divided the orientation of *Rav-U-Moreh* into different titles because of two distinct emphasis among mentors in relation to the personal component in the professional development processes. Looking at the data again, I see many commonalities in the various components of their mentoring orientation in Jewish education and merge them into one title.

[9] A relevant discussion on the influence of the personal ideologies of the rabbi on his way of making normative decisions, "Psikot," is discussed in A. Rosenak (2009). See especially pp. 2–3, 138–139.

their own Jewish orientation. They feel that as mentors they need to represent the school system's attitudes and socialize the teachers to do so too. In this way, the mentors dictate the "right" attitudes needed for teaching and expect that the teachers will "do their duty" accordingly.

Mentors with this mentoring orientation can thus be defined as "*Posekim*" because they direct the teachers to observe external standards of the educational system (that can be described as *Halacha* [a legal/normative requirement]), rather than be affected by individual approaches.

Conclusions and Further Directions

The Presence of Ideology in Professional Mentoring Discussions

The study reported here shows that the personal ideologies of teachers and mentors are an influential presence within the processes of teacher mentoring in Jewish studies. By integrating conceptions of Jewish-cultural and educational approaches, it has been possible to define three mentoring orientations in Jewish studies. The mentoring orientations of "*Hevruta,*" "*Rav-U-Moreh,*" and "*Posek*" reflect presumptions regarding teachers' knowledge, teachers' professional growth, and the mentors' role in Jewish education.

The Association between the Jewish-cultural and the Educational Components

A general correlation could be observed between the Jewish-cultural and educational components: the Jewish-cultural approach of critique was associated with the educational approach of individuation, and with a tendency toward a more collaborative mentoring approach. The Jewish term "*Hevruta*" denotes the perception of professional development as a collaborative inquiry of partners.

The Jewish-cultural approach of identification was associated with the educational approach of acculturation, and was reflected in a tendency toward a more directive mentoring approach. This association can be explained by a traditional perception of the teacher as a role model who represents and translates the Jewish resources for students. In the mentoring context, the term "*Rav-U-Moreh*" represents a traditional educational ideology that sees the aim of education as acculturating the students to the dominant culture. It assumes that the role of the teacher as well as of the mentor is as a mediator and sometimes protector of that culture.[10] In a Jewish educational context this leads to hierarchical relationships.

The functional mentoring orientation – "*Posek*" – relates to a normative – behavioristic attitude. Both can be correlated with the approaches of critique or identification as much as those are the expected standards for Jewish education in

[10] Idealization of teachers as knowledgeable and well respected was a rabbinic trope, and it didn't always reflect the reality of the relationships between a teacher and the community. See Gafni (1999).

a specific setting. Thus, if the critical approach toward the Jewish sources is an external requirement it will not reflect an educational ideology of individuation, and won't lead to a more democratic mentoring. The primary commitment of the *Posek* is that teachers will meet the system's standards and be socialized with them.

Mentors' Commitments and Teachers' Ideologies

While the teachers in my study expressed their primary commitment to their students, the mentors expressed the ideologies of the systems they represent. This is reflected in the commitment of the mentors to the formal curriculum which they invariably defend (Muszkat-Barkan & Shkedi, 2009).

The mentors studied were aware of the influence of the teachers' ideologies on their pedagogical content knowledge and practice, and sometimes saw these ideologies as a potential obstacle for teaching Jewish studies. However, at the same time, the mentors did not acknowledge the influence of their own ideologies on their mentoring orientation and practice. For the most part, the mentors avoided direct discussions of their own and of the teachers' personal approaches regarding the Jewish content, possibly because they perceived such a discussion as a threat to the mentoring process.

Different mentoring orientations can be used by the same mentor, as exemplified in the case study presented above. Rachel moved from a more directive to a more collaborative approach, a move from the *Rav-U-Moreh* approach, to a partnering or *Hevruta* orientation. The readiness of both the mentor and the teacher to discuss openly the ideological tensions led to the change expressed in the mentoring process.

My data showed that the professional knowledge of both teachers and mentors developed during the mentoring meetings. The mentoring process provides opportunities for teachers and mentors to reexamine their own perceptions, especially when they are willing to deal with their ideological orientations.

In light of the observed reluctance of both teachers and mentors to discuss their own ideological orientations during the mentoring meetings, increasing their awareness to the effects of such discussions may be of critical importance. Such open discussions of the ideological contradictions can create an ideological "map" (Geertz, 1990) for the participants and enable them to deal with different opinions and reconsider their own views, during "deep talk" with teachers, colleagues, and among themselves (Himley & Carini, 1991). The findings of this study therefore support the call for mentors to become more aware of teachers' personal attitudes (Bowers & Flinders, 1991). The teachers in the current study echoed these calls, arguing that their mentors did not pay enough attention to, nor respected, their ideological orientations.

Will Ideological Discussion Lead to Ideological Indoctrination?

Some authors have argued that when Jewish cultural ideologies are allowed into an educational system they can be used as a tool for indoctrination or "thought control" (Apple, 1990; Schremer, 1999; Lamm, 1988). While such concern is

understandable, my study shows that in Jewish education, both Judaic-cultural and educational ideologies inevitably act as motivating forces for both mentors and teachers, as others have suggested in different contexts (Hansen, 1995; Nisan, 2009; Palmer, 1998). My study suggests that an open and reflective ideological intercourse can actually protect against such ideological indoctrination. It can create opportunities for both teachers and mentors to reexamine their own ideologies, in a professional-personal setting, and can therefore serve as an opportunity for professional development.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. *Mentors' professional knowledge*: Further research on the mentors' professional knowledge is needed. Such research may elucidate ways to help mentors become more reflective about their practice and about teachers' needs. Defining mentors' knowledge may help mentors develop awareness and flexibility regarding their own role perception.
2. *When should we invite ideological discussions into the mentoring process?* Further research is required to define when discussions between teachers and mentors regarding their respective cultural and educational ideologies can promote teachers' professional development. Elucidating the various levels of reflection that could be achieved in such discussions may help mentors and teachers define the influence of these on the professional growth of teachers.
3. *Teacher training*: The professionals' ability to discuss Judaic approaches may influence mentoring meetings as well as the teachers' practice. Exploring such practices might affect the training of Jewish Studies teachers. Future research may explore in what ways ideological sensitivity can influence teachers' in-service training.

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Parents and Jewish Educational Settings

Jeffrey S. Kress

Introduction: The Challenges of Ecological Complexity

To summarize the intersection of parents and Jewish educational settings[1] is to attempt to encapsulate in static prose a dynamic and interactive system. More accurately, it is an attempt to summarize several dynamic systems and the interactions among them. Such a description, focusing on components of the various systems and their points of intersection, would be able to encompass parts of the picture, but these parts would inevitably add up to less than the "whole." Moreover, excellent reviews and original research on aspects of this topic have recently been published and are cited frequently throughout this chapter (in particular: Goodman, Flexner, & Bloomberg, 2008; Pomson & Schnoor, 2008; Wertheimer, 2007); it is not my intention to reiterate in detail their contents. Rather, my goal is to provide a structure for understanding multiple elements of this complex system.

Psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 14) described such complex systems as *ecologies* of development or education.[2] Ecological developmental systems consist of several components, each of which has the potential to impact on one's behaviors, attitudes, and learning:

1. the roles and relationships in which one is a direct participant, referred to as *microsystems*, which bring experiences, rules, and expectations that shape development (for parents, for example, a place of employment; for students, a school);

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[1]It is understood that parents are also agents of Jewish education. The focus of this chapter, however, is on the parents as they relate to educational institutions.

[2]Bronfenbrenner generally used the term "development" as opposed to "education" to refer to the process of growth on many levels—cognitive, affective, social, identity, and group membership, etc. Since the goals of Jewish education encompass a similar range of outcomes, Bronfenbrenner's analysis applies to the current situation even though it is grounded in an "education" context.

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2. connections among microsystems (referred to as *mesosystems*, such as, from the standpoint of a parent, the interaction between a child and his or her teachers, each of whom has direct "microsystemic" connections with the parents);
3. contexts in which an individual does not directly participate but which nonetheless impact on the individual's experience, referred to as *exosystems* (a teacher's organization or union is an exosystem from both the parents' and child's perspective; neither is a member, unless the parent is also employed by the school, but the organization creates policy that impacts upon the experience of both).
4. social and/or cultural norms, expectations, assumptions, beliefs, or shared understandings, referred to as *macrosystems*; for example, the idea that Jewish children should have a bar or bat mitzvah that involves certain ritual and celebratory components; or a communal vision that Jewish education is central to the survival of the Jewish people in the face of anti-Semitism and/or intermarriage.

While Bronfenbrenner's original formulation did not include a temporal dimension, later articulations described a fifth component, the *chronosystem*, or the understanding that the individual as well as the entire set of ecological relationships has a history, a course of development preceding the current point in time. It is not just the array of roles and relationships existing at any given moment that holds developmental potential; the evolution of these elements over time is also relevant. As such, for example, an understanding of the chronosystem would predict that the way in which a parent interacts with a child (a microsystem) at a given point would be influenced by, among many other things, the history of such interactions leading up to that point.

Of course, each of the five ecological components functions in relation to all of the others. As a brief example, a parent's interaction with the teachers at a school (from the parents' point of view, a microsystemic interaction) will be shaped by, to provide just a partial list, his or her relationship with the child (microsystem), the child's relationship with the teachers (mesosystem), policies set by the school leadership (exosystem) regarding parent interaction, the perceived norms (by parents and teachers alike) regarding accepted modes of interaction with teachers (macrosystem), the parent's own history of interaction with teachers in his or her past educational experience (chronosystem), and the prior interactions between the parent and the teacher in question (also chronosystem).

Further complicating the matter, an individual's developmental ecology cannot be separated from those of others; similar to Ezekiel's circles within circles, ecologies are seen as "nested" among one another. While a parent's ecological system may include a direct microsystemic relationship with a teacher, that teacher has his or her *own* set of ecological relationships. Also, the composition of a system varies depending on the reference point. A parent and a child have a direct microsystemic relationship (from the perspective of the parent and child) which, from the point of view of the teacher, may be primarily an exosystem in which she does not participate but which impacts on her role. An important implication of the nesting of ecologies is reciprocal interaction among those ecologies. If one could imagine a diagram of ecological systems, the arrows among those systems would have arrows on both

ends. As parents influence the development of their children, for example, children, in turn, help shape the actions, attitudes, and knowledge of their parents. As parents bring their developmental history (chronosystem) into an interaction with a teacher, that teacher is, in turn, influenced by her own developmental history.

I begin by identifying the complexity of the situation not as an excuse or explanation for falling short of capturing the enormous richness of the story, as will inevitably be the case. Rather, my intention is to set up a framework for understanding this intricate system of relationships. Further, such complexity is the rule in developmental/educational settings and, therefore, it is into this web that both educators and researchers alike peer as they try to make sense, either as a matter of applied practice or as an analytic interpretation, of any given piece of information emerging from an interaction or observation at any particular point in time. A parent speaking with a teacher in a school hallway, or with a researcher in the context of an interview, shines light on parts of the system, but because the system is ever-evolving and extends beyond any single participant, the picture that emerges is more like a snapshot taken with strobe-lighting than a documentary video. Elements of the system are likely to be unknown and potentially unknowable by that parent, let alone the educator or researcher with whom she or he interacts.

Implications of this complexity are discussed later in this chapter. For now, this introduction should serve to set the proper perspective for the reader for understanding the material that follows. In the next section, I will highlight some of the ecological elements involved in the intersection of parents and Jewish education. The theory and research described bring together many of these "strobe-light" photos. They are, by necessity, described as discrete elements, or elements with relatively simple points of intersection with one another. The reader should imagine these elements as interrelated, with changes in one area holding the potential to change the system as a whole along with all of the component parts.

Parents and Jewish Education: Ecological Elements

Today's Parents

As parents are the node around which this analysis centers, it is worth highlighting themes emerging from recent findings with regard to Jewish parents and families.[3] Data from the 2000–2001 National Jewish Population Survey in the United States show that, in that country, Jewish parents of school-age children are overwhelmingly likely to have themselves received some form of Jewish education, and that this education is overwhelmingly likely to have taken place in a supplemental school (Cohen, 2004; Phillips, 2008). Along with high levels of Jewish education, intermarriage is also common among the parents of children receiving Jewish education

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[3] This is not meant as a demographic overview, but rather a discussion of data most relevant to the intersection of parents and Jewish education.

today. Phillips (2008) reports that slightly less than half of Jewish children under the age of 18 come from families with two Jewish parents. “In other words, what once was the ‘typical’ Jewish family consisting of two Jewish parents living together with their children is now the exception rather that the rule” (Phillips, 2008, p. 66). The increase in intermarriage is associated with an overall decline in numbers of children receiving a Jewish education (Phillips, 2008; Wertheimer, 2008).

The intersection of trends in work status (a parental microsystem) and gender roles (a macrosystemic “norm”) also has implications for the interaction of parents and Jewish schools. The Jewish population is increasingly likely to have both parents participating in the workforce (Wertheimer, 2008). It is generally mothers who take the role of “managers” of the family (Prell, 2007), regardless of whether or not they are employed full-time in paying jobs. “In the realm of mother as manager her attention to children’s education is paramount, it is one of her key portfolios” (Prell, 2007, p. 9). Mothers, again regardless of employment status, tend to be the ones that adapt their schedules to accommodate a child’s needs and logistical constraints. As such, “[w]omen assume responsibilities for children and family that make them key to an understanding of how the family’s Jewishness is shaped and how children are educated” (Prell, 2007, p. 9). While mothers with full-time employment value their dual role, they nonetheless experience role-conflict (Prell, 2007). Parental employment status and gender roles interact, with the result that “mothers, particularly non-working mothers, are more likely to be the face of the family in the school” (Prell, 2007, p. 14).

Not surprisingly, between work and childcare, parents feel that they have very little personal time (Prell, 2007). The challenge of making time for Jewish education within the demands of extracurricular activities, work, and children’s social lives, particularly for those in middle school when the logistics of navigating the “*bar/bat mitzvah* circuit” has the potential to create stressful situations for parents and families (Fishman, 2007; Kress, 2007).

Parents’ conceptualizations and beliefs about parenting are important determinants of parenting behavior (Sigel, 1985). Prell (2007) found that parents talk about Jewish parenting in terms of specific family and communal rituals and practices, even if the family actually observes few of these. Because these items involve the management of family time, these often fall under the mother’s purview. Parents not raised within Judaism, in contrast to Jews by birth, will often use terms related to spirituality and a relationship with God with regard to both parenting and expectations of Jewish schooling.

Finally, parent involvement in adult Jewish education can also be seen as an important exosystemic factor. Research has pointed to the flowering of adult education initiatives and the broad impact these may have. In particular, the discourse of adult learning has shifted from content learning to meaning-making, or Jewish education framed within a process of developmental growth (e.g., Grant, Schuster, Woocher, & Cohen, 2004). This highlights the dynamism of this system—at the same time that a youth is learning in school, a parent’s Jewish experience is evolving through experiences out of, as well as associated with, the school (as discussed below).

Setting the Child's Ecological Stage: Parents as Decision Makers

School is a central microsystem in the experience of a child, who may spend more waking hours there than in any other setting. In making decisions about their children's education, parents are setting the parameters for this important element in the ecology of childhood. The most consistent finding with regard to parents and Jewish educational decision making is that parents have, in general, become much more active in choosing educational settings for their children than they have been in past generations. "Whereas Jewish parents at mid-century enrolled their children in the closest synagogue school, today's families are more apt to insist on just the right fit between *each* child and the type of schooling they choose to deliver that education" (Wertheimer, 2008, p. 14, emphasis in the original). Wertheimer (2008, p. 14) sees this as "consumer orientation" toward education and a "greater insistence on quality."

Individualization of educational choices to meet the needs of individual children results in a range of educational decisions even within the same family, with different children potentially receiving different forms of Jewish (and secular) education. Again, it is mothers in particular that tend to assume the lead role in assuring that the unique educational needs of their children are met, though educational decisions are often made more jointly (Prell, 2007). Ecological complexity suggests that while "parents" are an ecological unit, each parent also has his or her own ecological system, with some overlapping and some unique elements. For example, as we have seen above, mothers tend to have a stronger microsystemic connection with schools than do fathers (for whom the school may be more of an exosystem, experienced through their spouse). This has implications for parental decision making. Because of their more frequent exposure to the school, a "mother's perceptions of the school will clearly influence how the family may respond to children's educational needs" (Prell, 2007, p. 14).

The primary dimension of decision making discussed in the literature has to do with the choice between day school and supplemental school education.[4] The range of reasons provided by parents illustrates the numerous ecological factors that can influence a parent's decisions. These include cost, lack of the parents' own Jewish knowledge, and concern that a child may become more observant than a parent would prefer (Kress, 2007; Pomson, 2007; Prell, 2007). Logistical concerns can be a factor in educational decision making; distances to and from various educational settings and the availability (or unavailability) of transportation options can help determine the viability of various options (Fishman, 2007; Kress, 2007). The quality of the local public schools is also pertinent, with excellent public schools complicating a decision to pursue a private school education. Parents also consider the particular learning needs of each individual child and the perceived ability of the local schools (secular or day) to provide for such needs.

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[4] Actually, the decision is often framed in the literature as whether to send a child to a day school or not. Supplemental school is often seen as a "default" position (Kress, 2007).

Macrosystemic beliefs and perceived norms are also relevant. Some parents see it as un-American to reject a public school education; they feel conflict "between an ideology of diversity and a loyalty to the American public school system, and a commitment to 'Jewish continuity,' their stated responsibility to transmit Jewish culture" (Fishman, 2007, p. 191). Further, some parents believe that a day school education does not prepare a child for the "real world," and want their child to encounter more diversity than they believe exists in day schools. Cohen and Kelner (2007) posit that an overall declining concern about ghettoization may help explain the growth in day school attendance among non-Orthodox Jews. These authors find little statistical relationship between income and the decision to send a child to day school. Rather, such decisions were found to be predicted by a variety of indicators of Jewish engagement.

Day or supplemental school is only one of the educational choices facing Jewish parents. Even among those for whom day school education is essentially a given (because of macrosystemic norms related to day school education, primarily among Orthodox Jews), there is a process of choice regarding which day school would be best for a child, at least in geographic areas in which a variety of choices can be found (Prell, 2007). Among parents of children in supplemental school, this second level of decision (regarding which religious school to send a child) is generally predetermined by a prior decision (made based on a variety of issues) regarding which congregation to join. That is, parents see themselves as choosing a congregation (because of the "feel," the rabbi, geography, the denomination, etc.) and not specifically a school (Kress, 2007). As independent, "community" (non-congregational) supplemental schools become more common; such decisions may become more complex and should be explored further.

Some components of school choice can be seen as relatively straightforward, involving a rational comparison of the relative benefits and shortcomings of the available educational options. However, chronosystemic factors such as a parent's personal/educational history also play an important role in these decisions. Pomson (2007) sees school choice within the evolving narrative of parents' lives. Choosing a day school "emerges, then, from a particular mix of relationships, experiences, and events, but it should not be seen as a terminal moment in which an adult with a fully formed Jewish identity makes a decision about the Jewish life of another. . .choosing a school for one's children both clarifies and changes the meaning one attributes to past experiences from one's own life" (Pomson, 2007, p. 120).

With regard to decision making related to Jewish education for teens, Fishman (2007) describes several factors considered by parents and their teenage children alike. These include social/peer factors, educational quality, the potential for Jewish education to serve as "a possible resume or portfolio builder, or as a resource for networking for future career advancement" (Fishman, 2007, p. 191), competition for time from other activities, and prior experiences, particularly bad experiences, teens have had with Jewish education. It is important to note that teens in Fishman's study reported that their parents' expectations and desires figured strongly in their decision to remain in Jewish education past their bar/bat mitzvah. Even when parental influence was particularly powerful, in terms of the decision to initially remain in Jewish

education post-bar or bat mitzvah, Fishman (2007) found a surprising number of teens that embraced the decision even when they felt that they were initially "forced" to do so. This is consistent with research findings showing that teens, rather than rushing to reject their parents' ideals as typically portrayed, are strongly influenced by their parents' value systems (Smith & Denton, 2005).

Parent Involvement in Schools

Once a decision regarding an educational venue is made (and it is acknowledged that this is not a one-time event; decisions may be reconsidered and re-made), there are a variety of ways in which parents can be involved in schooling. In this light, the school serves as a microsystem for the parents as well as the children, and parents have the potential to provide a mesosystemic bridge for a child between school and home environments. Inherent in the discussion of parental involvement is the assumption that actions that parents take can enhance the learning experience of their children (Epstein & Sanders, 2003). Attending and participating in school events, helping children with homework and assignments, and even asking a child about his or her school day are all forms of parental involvement.

Drawing on the ideas of Boleman and Deal, Pomson and Schnoor (2008) provide a framework of four modalities of parent involvement in Jewish day schools.

1. The *Structural Frame* describes parents as volunteers, stepping up to fill needed roles that the school would have difficulty staffing with paid personnel. The authors provide a variety of examples ranging from serving as chaperone for school events to helping in the office. Parents recognize the pragmatic need for their help (usually initiated by school personnel who seek volunteers) and see it as a chance to become more engaged with the school and with their child's education in general.
2. The *Human Resource Frame*, similar to the Structural, involves parents volunteering for the enhancement of the school. However, involvement in this category is generally parent-initiated (rather than educator- or administrator-initiated) and involves provision of a service that, in benefiting the child of the volunteering parent, benefits the school community more broadly as well. Parents coaching sports teams or running other extracurricular activities in which their children (and, of course, others as well) participate are an example of participation in this category.
3. The *Political Frame* describes the involvement of parents in the governance and policymaking of the school. This can happen formally (e.g., through a position on a board) or informally (e.g., through expressing their opinions to school leaders). Participation of this type brings the potential for contentious interactions and may call upon a parent to voice publicly opinions about Judaism and/or education that were previously a matter of private belief.
4. The *Symbolic Frame* involves parent participation in (or attendance at) communal events and celebrations. Occasions such as model *seders*, while often viewed

skeptically by educators, can be emotionally meaningful moments for parents for whom they serve as public recognition of their children's milestones.

Kress (2007) found only limited involvement of parents in supplemental schools, mainly involving occasional attendance at school events (e.g., model *seders*) and contact with school personnel regarding logistical or educational concerns. However, some parents volunteer in, or are employed by, the supplemental schools, and some schools use parents in a variety of important roles. Parents of supplemental school children also serve on school committees. Prell (2007) points out that findings such as this exist in stark contrast to the more active and involved role that these same parents may take in their child's secular school. One exception to this general lack of involvement may be the functioning of parents as educators in supplemental schools. Because of personnel needs, parents are often called upon to teach in such schools (e.g., Aron, 1997; Kaplowitz & Feiman-Nemser, 1997). Also, parents are involved in governance of such schools through participation in education and synagogue committees, though there is a large degree of variation in the degree of activity and involvement of such committees among synagogues.

The Impact of Children's Jewish Educational Settings on Parents

In all ecological systems, those that take action or exert influence are themselves influenced through the relationship. The discussion up to this point has focused on parents as the more active partner in the parent–school relationship, being the ones to make educational decisions and to become involved in the school. Emerging research points to the impact of a child's Jewish educational experience on parents. To begin with, parents are also learners themselves in a variety of ways. They learn from their children, who bring home information, customs, or practices (including songs, or newly learned Hebrew words) which may be unfamiliar to parents. More subtly, participation in a religious–educational community may lead parents to reexamine their current modes of Jewish engagement in light of newly encountered macrosystemic norms or perceived expectations. Further, schools may address educational efforts to parents directly, through "adult education" initiatives, possibly linked to that which their children are learning.

Research findings point to the strong association of a child's participation in Jewish education and the participation of a parent in an adult learning program. "Half of the respondents [to the 2000–2001 NJPS] with children currently enrolled in Jewish education reported participating in some kind of adult education during the previous year as compared with only 13% of respondents whose children were not currently enrolled" (Phillips, 2008, p. 65). In addition to learning in parallel, parents are also involved as learners alongside their children. Jewish family education, as described by Kay and Rotstein (2008) addresses not only children but also parents as adult learners (of Jewish content and also issues related to parenting), the interaction of parents and children, and the development of the family as a unit.

Of course, the association between a child's and a parent's learning cannot be assumed to be a result of a child's school experience. However, theorists speculate about how the involvement of a child in a Jewish educational setting can facilitate a parent's pursuit of adult Jewish education for themselves. As their children enter Jewish schools, parents, already involved in considering issues of Jewish identity for themselves and their families, may become aware of the limitations in their own Jewish knowledge and/or be motivated to enhance the child's school experience through their own learning efforts (Katz & Parker, 2008). Katz and Parker (2008) see the emergence of parents as recipients of Jewish education as related to a number of Jewish and general social trends. As attendance at day schools and Jewish summer camps increase, parents may find that their children's Jewish knowledge soon eclipses their own. Further, there is a growing unwillingness on the part of parents to cede responsibility for instilling Jewish identity to the schools. Finally, there is a general trend, in and out of Jewish education, toward ongoing education for adults.

These trends coincide with a growing appreciation on the part of educators that "[t]he role model parents can provide their children as engaged learners is invaluable in demonstrating the seriousness of Jewish education. Moreover, the well-educated parent, it has been argued, might serve as a powerful advocate for higher educational standards" (Wertheimer, 2008, p. 16). Katz and Parker (2008) discuss the developmental context of young adulthood (while acknowledging the increasing age-span at which adults are having children) and point to literature showing the priority young adults put on contributing to both family and career, and their particular interest in "practical learning" (p. 155). They also cite some evidence that younger adults, in contrast to older adults, are more apt to change their behavior in response to Jewish learning. Parents, pursuing learning and other forms of Jewish involvement, may hope to inspire their children's Jewish education through their own example (Fishman, 2007).

Parents of students in day schools (Pomson, 2007) and supplemental schools (Kress, 2007) have also described the impact of their children's schools on their Jewish experience. While neither study of these two studies was designed to quantify the extent of such impact (that is, to ascertain how many parents were impacted and how strongly), they did provide converging results about the form that impact may take. A child's participation in both types of schools has the potential to result in a parent's pursuit of adult learning, including learning from one's child as well as seeking structured learning opportunities to address deficits that might have come to light through seeing a child's gains. Beyond knowledge, a child's school experience can enhance the range of family Jewish ritual practice as well as what Pomson (2007) refers to as *enculturation* or "increasing integration of Jewish culture into [the parents'] lives" (p. 135). Finally, day schools and supplemental schools can both create social connections with other Jewish parents. Kress (2007) also points out the potential for supplemental schooling to lead to friction in a family as children may resist attending and parents may resent additional demands on their schedule. Though this issue is not discussed in the parallel Pomson (2007) study, day schools certainly hold the potential to bring up similar concerns within a family.

There is also evidence that Jewish education may play a role in *maintaining* changes in the Jewish experience of a family in addition to initiating such changes. As an ecological approach would suggest, reduction in environmental support for a change, through withdrawal from an educational setting, for example, would attenuate changes associated with that setting. In this vein, Fishman (2007), found that:

> When teenagers stopped attending Jewish schools after bar/bat mitzvahs, they reported that their family Jewish observances and activities, such as Shabbat service attendance, gradually declined without the reinforcing effect of Judaic discussion in classes and invitations for holiday celebrations with classmates' families. In contrast, when they continued attending Jewish schools after bar/bat mitzvah, family activities tended to remain constant. (p. 189)

Acknowledging History: Parental Chronosystems

It is significant that parents not only *are* learners, but *were* learners. Many Jewish parents had some form of Jewish education in their youth; parents who are not Jewish or did not grow up as Jews may have had religious education within their own faith traditions. Regardless of their religious schooling, all parents were students in some type of educational setting in the past. These experiences can exert strong influences on the expectations, attitudes, and affects that parents bring with them in experiencing their children's education. Further, parents' past experiences with Judaism, Jewish communal organizations and professionals can color their current attitudes toward Jewish education and Jewish educational settings.

To begin with, there is evidence that the decision a parent makes regarding a child's Jewish education is predicted by the decisions their own parents made for them (that is, the type of Jewish education they received). Overall, there is an intergenerational cycle of Jewish commitment and Jewish education with parents more engaged with Jewish ritual and communal life disproportionately choosing day schools (Cohen & Kelner, 2007). Furthermore, a parent's past experiences may operate on a more emotional or attitudinal level. A parent's "personal–historical context" (Pomson, 2007, p. 117) is an important component in understanding his or her choice of, and experience of, a child's education. A particularly powerful interaction of current experience and personal history occurs while "visiting a school and finding something parents themselves missed in their own childhoods ad perhaps all of their lives up to now" (Pomson, 2007, p. 119).

Cohen and Kelner (2007) hypothesize that "Jewish involvement yields higher aspirations for children's Jewish development, which leads to belief in (or hope for) the efficacy of day schools, which in turn promoted day school utilization" (pp. 82–83). Research from general education suggests that the impact of a parent's educational history on his or her expectations for a child may be mediated by their negative self-feelings with respect to that education (Kaplan, Liu, & Kaplan, 2001). As such, the affective experience of the parent's education may be an important factor in decision making.

Parents' decisions about their children's Jewish education are steps along a parents' Jewish journey as well as that of a child's, and the interaction of parents and

Jewish educational settings must be understood within this broader context. Fishman (2007, p. 191) found that:

> Many parents felt ambivalent about who they were as Jews, and they were interested in talking about the ways in which decisions about their children's education became a stage on which their own mixed feelings were acted out.

Further, the broader communal context frames the relationship of parents and Jewish education. In particular, the ways in which parents relate to other Jewish organizations, particularly synagogues, can have an impact on their experiences and expectations of Jewish education (Fishman, 2007; Kress, 2007). For example, a warm feeling or experience of caring from a rabbi or, conversely, a feeling of disenfranchisement from the synagogue, can color a parent's view of a supplemental school.

A parent's own educational history can also influence the way he or she understands or interprets a child's school experience. Early experiences create schema, or frameworks of understanding that integrate knowledge, beliefs, emotion, and attitudes, related to Jewish education that, in turn, serve as filters for the processing of new information related to Jewish education (Kress, 2007). Kress (2007) found that parents' negative experiences with supplemental school education can cast a pessimistic view of their child's education in such settings even when the child's experience has been, by the description of the parent, more positive. Of course, a child's complaints are likely to reinforce such a schema, which can lead to what Prell (2007) describes as parents coming to the conclusion that there is an "inevitable dilemma—how to make children enjoy and learn in a meaningful way" (Prell, 2007, p. 25).

The issue of the maintenance of negative parental schema regarding supplemental school education provides an interesting example of the interaction among various ecological issues, including a parent's history, a child's current experience, the involvement (or lack thereof) of the parent in the school and the interaction (or lack thereof) between parents and children around the school experience. Explaining the persistence of negative supplemental school schema even in the face of admitted evidence countering these negative assumptions, Kress (2007) writes,

> While schema can change based on disconfirming data, it is noteworthy that parents generally had very little direct experience with the religious school, especially as children grow older. . .Until the actual event of the bar/bat mitzvah, when a child gets to demonstrate his or her gains, parents may experience this focus on synagogue ritual as a decrease in emphasis on home ritual, thereby further adding to the difficulties (already imposed by developmental issues, increasingly busy schedules, etc.) of interacting with their children around religious school activities. (p. 153)

Coupled with findings, discussed earlier, that in general parents have generally limited involvement in their child's supplemental school education, Kress (2007) continues:

> Negative preconceptions and limited involvement constitute a negative feedback loop. Parents with negative schema are unlikely to be motivated to become involved in the school. This lack of involvement both decreases chances for parents to encounter data that may exist to disconfirm their schema, and may also reinforce children's own misgivings about religious schooling.

Future Directions

While emerging research is painting a more complete picture of the dynamic interaction between parents and schools, and, of course, more research is called for in those areas, there are some topics which have been generally overlooked in the literature. For example, while research has been conducted about choices among educational options, we know less about the nature of decisions to maintain or change these initial decisions. What factors lead a parent to change a child's initially chosen educational venue?

Further, little is known about parents and informal Jewish educational settings. How do the dimensions above (parent as decision maker, the reciprocal impact and involvement of parent and educational setting, the parent's educational history) play out with regard to the experience of, and decisions regarding, youth in summer camps, youth groups, and the like? This issue becomes more salient with the emergence of research supporting the efficacy of informal Jewish education (e.g., Cohen, 2007). Looking specifically at camping as a case in point, several questions can be raised: Based on what factors do parents choose to send their children to a Jewish summer camp? How do they choose between the ever-growing array of "specialty camps" (e.g., sports camps, computer camps and even, as I recently learned about, circus camp, at which campers learn juggling and other skills) and those with a more Jewish educational focus? How do "Jewish style" camps, or camps in which a vast majority of campers are Jewish but have no Jewish ritual or educational elements, fit into the equation? In what way do parents' own camping experiences influence their choices? Anecdotally, we hear of more parents concerned with the cost of paying for both day school and summer camps. As the efficacy of camps in promoting Jewish outcomes becomes better documented, how do parents decide where to allocate their funds? What rituals do campers bring home with them, and to what degree are these maintained in the home and community?

Likewise, little international data are available related to the topic of parents and Jewish schools. An ecological perspective, however, would suggest that the functioning of any system would be sensitive to local trends; the number of potential inputs into a system creates the potential for idiosyncratic outcomes. In fact, this can be seen as a direction for all research, in North America and beyond: to explore local ecologies and to compare and contrast these, with the goal of understanding the key variables that drive the system (e.g., geography, size of local Jewish population, educational options, etc.).

The impact of increased adult Jewish education on the relationship of parents and schooling is a topic of further research as well. As parents participate in (independent) adult education, or learn (formally or informally) through a child's experience in a school, or participate in parent education programs, they may bring with them not only increased "literacy" (i.e., familiarity with Jewish subject matter) but also may develop motivation for involvement in their children's education and, perhaps, even a new conceptualization of Jewish education as a life-long process of meaning-making. What are these changes in attitude and conceptualization and how are they manifested in the intersection of parents and schools?

The attitudes of educators toward parents and parental involvement are also in need of further exploration. Educators often speak of parent involvement with ambivalence, lamenting lack of parent concern for their children's education while resisting parents' attempts to exercise too much influence over what goes on in the classroom. Gruber and Trickett (1987) describe the dynamics of parent involvement as quite complicated, involving structural elements of schools that impede the full participation of parents as full partners to educators in public schools. Grossman (1999) talks about the potential for educators (in general education) to assume that the values of the families in which they themselves were raised—in which education and parent involvement in education may have been prized—are also the values held by the families of their students. Disappointment can result when parents make decisions which educators see as inconsistent with these values. Just as parents seem to hold schema, or preconceived attitudes and opinions, about religious schooling, it seems likely that educators may hold preconceptions about parents as well. This can be seen in the articulated assumptions on the part of religious school educators that parents are "Only in it for the *bar/bat mitzvah*" and of the implied judgment of educational and communal professionals that the parents sending a child to a supplemental school are in some way uninterested in the Jewish development of that child. An ecological framework would suggest that opinions such as these might color an educator's interaction with parents, possibly leading to further alienation on the part of a parent.

The impact of the increase in so-called "non-traditional" family constellations, particularly same-sex couples, on schools is also a matter for inquiry. The broadening of the macrosytemic norms regarding same-sex unions has the potential to impact on the language and images used by educators and also calls into question how schools are addressing—both with students and in their own policies—the various *halachic* opinions related to the issue.

Finally, this chapter is being written during a time of severe economic turmoil in the United States and beyond. This economic downturn has had and will continue to have an impact on parents and schools. It is likely that shifts in the ecological system will result. Might financial challenges to school necessitate more or different parent involvement in lieu of paid professionals? How will economics impact decision making?

Conclusion: Harnessing Complexity

Trends point toward parents increasingly seeking educational venues, Jewish and/or otherwise, that best meet the needs of each individual child. While often discussed as a static choice point, parental decision making takes place within a dynamic of evolving components including the nature of the family and its individual members (particularly the changing perception of the needs of the child in question); the school, its leadership and personnel, and the instructional methods and curricular focus of any given grade; and the nature of the interaction among child, parents, and

school. As such, while we can look at parents and Jewish education at a given point in time, the relationship is one of constant motion.

How can such an ever-changing relationship be managed? Certainly, it would not be enough to market different educational options, let parents decide, and assume that a steady course would be set into motion. What would be needed is the involvement of the parents in a process, or an ongoing dialogue. However, there is reason to believe that such conversations are not the norm. Kress (2007, p. 168), commenting on interviews with parents about expectations for supplemental school education, notes that “it appeared that many had not been posed with this question before nor had they previously articulated their ideas about these issues.” Even in settings with high levels of parental involvement, it cannot be assumed that parents and educators have engaged in sustained discussion about parental goals and expectations.

Opportunities to articulate educational goals and expectations for their children, and possibly also for themselves (Aron, 2000), cannot only capture the thoughts of the moment, but in creating an expectation of, and space for, reflection on the topic can call upon parents to consider, and possibly question, their assumptions and to realize alternate possibilities for their children’s (and their own) Jewish growth. Educational transitions provide particularly apt entry-points for such conversations between educators and parents and

> can provide an opportunity for an educational leader and/or rabbi to engage parents in a serious discussion of their goals and hopes for their children, what they want their children to gain from the experience, what they expect from the school, how they can help in the process of achieving these goals, etc. This conversation can be repeated at various intervals, and can even take place with students (particularly at the older grades). (Kress, 2007, p. 169)

The articulation of parental expectations would thus become part of the educational process itself. Not only would this lead to more direct communication of needs and concerns, but could also serve to provide an opportunity for reflection on the part of educators, parents, and children alike. Such an approach acknowledges the interactive nature of the relationship between parents and Jewish educational settings and uses this understanding as a springboard for growth.

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Practitioner Enquiry and Its Role in Jewish Education

Alex Sinclair

What Is Practitioner Enquiry?

In the world of education, it sometimes seems as if there are two separate endeavors going on. The world of research and theory asks its questions, comes up with its findings, its theories, and its hypotheses, writes papers, and holds conferences. Meanwhile, the world of practice goes about its business: planning, teaching, debriefing, facilitating, grading, meeting, assessing, talking. Sometimes these worlds brush against each other; usually they do not. Sometimes, researchers and practitioners have the greatest of respect for each other and view each other as collaborators and colleagues; often they do not. Educational practitioners may view education professors and researchers as "out of touch with reality" and "stuck in the ivory tower"; and education researchers may view practitioners as doing work which, while objectively important, they are grateful that they personally no longer have to do.

While both practitioners and researchers are rightfully wary of panaceas, in this chapter I argue that practitioner enquiry is a critical endeavor that not only unites the worlds of research and practice, but also has the chance to improve both research and practice simultaneously.

There is nothing so practical as a good theory: the aphorism, originally Kurt Lewin's, was often used by Seymour Fox in his teaching, and can be found in an adapted version "there is nothing as practical as a great idea" in his writing (Fox, 1997, p. 1). What Fox meant by his use of the aphorism, I would suggest (which is not necessarily the same thing that Lewin originally meant), is that the world of theory and research, when refracted and utilized appropriately, is an extremely powerful tool that can have a real impact on practical questions and concerns. Conversely, the best educational research is work that directly responds to, challenges, highlights, or investigates real questions of practice. Practitioner enquiry adds a third layer to this discussion, namely, that the practitioner and the researcher can be the same person.

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History of Practitioner Enquiry

Practitioner enquiry has a long history. When Piaget made hypotheses based on his observations of his children's development, that was practitioner enquiry (Matthews, 1980). When Dewey's students reflected on their pupils' work in the laboratory school, that was practitioner enquiry (Tanner, 1997). Indeed, Dewey was one of the first to advocate research by teachers on their own practice. In 1929, he wrote,

> It seems to me that the contributions that might come from classroom teachers are a comparatively neglected field... For these teachers are the ones in direct contact with pupils and hence the ones through whom the results of scientific findings finally reach students. They are the channels through which the consequences of educational theory come into the lives of those at school... As far as schools are concerned, it is certain that the problems which require scientific treatment arise in actual relationships with students. (cited in Hubbard & Power, 1999, p. 4)

Several recent surveys of practitioner enquiry indicate that practitioner enquiry as a discipline has existed, in one form or another, since the mid-twentieth century. Zeichner and Noffke (2001) identify five traditions of practitioner enquiry: first, the action research tradition, beginning with the work of Kurt Lewin, and brought into the educational world by Stephen Corey, Dean of Teachers College at Columbia University, in order to improve teachers' instruction; second, the teacher-as-researcher movement in the United Kingdom, led by Lawrence Stenhouse (1975), John Elliott, and others; a North American teacher research movement, basically independent of the British one; the tradition of self-study research, in which teachers explore their own practice; and the tradition of participatory research, which has mostly taken place in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2004) employ a slightly different tack in surveying the field, and rather than a historical overview, they offer six terms that are part of the "conceptual umbrella" of practitioner enquiry (they prefer "practitioner inquiry" to "practitioner research," on the grounds that it is more resonant with the community of practitioners. I follow their preference; there is no significance in the spelling of the word here "enquiry" rather than "inquiry"). The six terms they discuss are action research, teacher research, self-study, narrative/autobiographical inquiry, the scholarship of teaching, and finally, using teaching as a site for research. They call the term practitioner enquiry itself "protean" because of this blurriness in its meaning (609).

Despite this protean nature, Cochran-Smith and Lytle are able to identify seven common elements in all these variant traditions of practitioner enquiry: practitioners also function as researchers; practitioners' knowledge is a valuable and important resource for thinking about teaching; practitioners' professional contexts are the sites for inquiry and their professional practice is the focus; there are blurred boundaries between practice and enquiry; questions of validity or, in their preferred term, trustworthiness, are raised by critics (on this, more below); the enquiry has a systematic rather than ad hoc nature, especially in its focus on what students are learning; and finally, the importance of the inquiring community of professional peers in making public the knowledge gained by practitioner enquiry.

Despite these longstanding and variant traditions, most researchers agree that it is not until quite recently that practitioner enquiry has really become widespread. Cochran-Smith and Lytle suggest that although various forms of teacher research were discussed throughout the twentieth century, it was during the 1980s that teacher research gained new standing because of its potential to lessen the divide between theory and practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004, p. 603). Indeed, the same two researchers, as late as 1990, were still writing that "few teachers participate in codifying what we know about teaching, identifying research agendas, and creating new knowledge" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, p. 2).

The Version of Practitioner Enquiry Discussed in This Chapter

It was in the 1990s that the field of Jewish education began to be influenced by practitioner enquiry, and many of its manifestations in Jewish education follow what Zeichner and Noffke call the self-study tradition, or what Cochran-Smith and Lytle call "Using teaching as a site for research." Most of the rest of this chapter therefore focuses on this particular tradition of practitioner enquiry and its manifestation in Jewish education.

This type of practitioner enquiry began to flourish in the 1990s, when several researchers began publishing studies of their own teaching, using a wide variety of data (including classroom videos, transcripts of the chalkboard, student work, and teacher journals). These studies truly bridged the worlds of theory and practice: from the researcher's perspective, they added new knowledge and understanding about a wide variety of educational questions, and from a teacher's perspective, they were exemplars of reflective practitioners thinking about their professional questions. What was most innovative about this research was that the researchers were all genuinely educational practitioners as well, splitting their time between the academy and the field.

One of the most articulate of these practitioner enquirers was Magdalene Lampert, whose book *Teaching Problems and the Problems of Teaching* (2001) is a paradigmatic example of this kind of research. In the book, Lampert studies a single teacher: herself.

> Using [a problems-based approach to Mathematics], I teach them [my students] that they all can learn and that they can do it in school. But I do not attempt to prove that teaching with problems "works." I explain what kind of work is involved in doing it in an ordinary classroom in relations with students and subject matter. (p. 1)

One initial observation about practitioner enquiry, highlighted nicely here, is that it is one of the most helpful ways in which we can deepen our knowledge of pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) in a particular subject. It is no accident that many of these early practitioner researchers were students of or otherwise connected to Lee Shulman. Lampert echoes Shulman's critique of the polarization between subject matter and pedagogy when she writes,

> Conventional academic categories would have me limit a scholarly investigation of this work either to an analysis of the curriculum or to a study of the instructional methods... Decomposing the practice of teaching into curriculum, instruction, students, and content leaves troublesome gaps, rendering the most fundamental aspects of the work invisible. (p. 28)

Lampert's book is replete with examples of her attempts to recompose the study of her own teaching. Her work, like all work in this subfield of practitioner enquiry, is at its heart an exploration of pedagogical content knowledge. As such, some of her work is somewhat inaccessible to the non-mathematician. This is perhaps to be expected and even desired, if the term pedagogical content knowledge is to be taken seriously. After all, it is subject-*specific* pedagogy, and if I don't understand the subject, I shouldn't expect to understand its pedagogy.

This example helps distinguish this kind of practitioner enquiry from action research, one of its other traditions. Action research is usually focused on shared problems within a wide community of practice. This kind of self-study practitioner enquiry is a little different. As Hubbard and Power note (1999, 2003), while it may lead to large-scale educational change, its initial and primary focus is always on a particular and personal context: how do my students' questions change after participating in certain activities? What happens when my students choose their own reading material? How do my colleagues change their practice after participating in in-service workshops? And so on. Lampert's approach clearly falls under this rubric. However, *practitioner enquiry is most significant when its results move beyond particular educational contexts and speak to wider questions faced by educators in general*; in that sense it is similar to many other types of qualitative research. Chazan discusses this tension between the particular and the general in his study of his own high-school algebra classroom.

> And I do not expect that my experience generates a set of findings that can be readily applied by others. That said, this sort of stance toward teaching does not imply that one cannot draw conclusions from experience... I have found fault with commonplace views of mathematics for their chilling effect on discussion in the mathematics classroom... I hope to have contributed to a growing literature in which problems of teaching practice are viewed from the perspective of the teacher and seen as intellectually challenging and important, without implying that such problems have "solutions". (Chazan, 2000, p. 149; see also Heaton, 2000)

A good example of the felicitous move from particular to general is Ball and Wilson's (1996) research on how moral issues are addressed in the teaching of mathematics and history. Their own individual, necessarily particular experiences as teachers, speak also to wider questions of morality in the hidden curriculum in general. In this chapter Ball and Wilson make precisely that move: they begin with specific analysis of their own teaching, and then quickly use those insights to make some remarkable arguments about teaching and education in general; (incidentally, for a long list of early works of this type of practitioner enquiry, see the in-text citation that Ball and Wilson offer at the beginning of this article). So Wilson begins by thinking about her own teaching from a somewhat narrow, pedagogical perspective:

> I felt like I was being sucked into a black hole of student understanding, a veritable whirlpool of misconceptions… I found out even more about things we needed to examine, to question. At the same time, I felt like I was getting pulled further and further off the central topic: Why Lansing was the capital of Michigan, and what a capital was. (p. 161)

However, she soon moves on to much bigger questions:

> How do you deal with children's preconceptions about others – for example, Matthew's assumptions about the homeless? (p. 163)

In Ball's section of the article, on teaching fractions, this move is made even more clearly. She begins with several pages of typical practitioner self-investigation, with careful analysis of students' language, attention to the minutiae of specific classroom interactions, and reflection on what her students are actually thinking, much of which has the tone and scope of this excerpt:

> I considered the two girls' apparent understanding of the content. I wondered about what Mei was saying. What did she mean when she said, "I'm not saying the numbers are the same. I'm just saying the part you shade in is the same." Did she think 4/4 and 5/5 both represented one whole? And what was Cassandra focusing on? Numerals? The number of pieces in each rectangle? (p. 167).

Ball then moves onto profound questions of morality in education: what is her responsibility to her students' legitimate arguments, even when they are different from mathematical convention? How does she balance her moral commitments to her students with those to the teacher they will encounter next year? What difference does it make to her responses to her students that they are girls? Or come from a variety of ethnic minorities? Ball and Wilson conclude that one cannot separate the moral from the intellectual in teaching: they are "fused." Whether or not one agrees with their analysis, their argument, or their conclusion, one must be struck by the way in which they build a profound philosophical discussion around their reflections on their own practice, and how their practitioner enquiry becomes not just a springboard to a complex philosophical debate, but actual, valid, legitimate arguments within that debate.

From these examples, we can begin to see why practitioner enquiry is so important. It is a unique way of looking at education which bridges between theory and practice, taking both equally seriously.

Practitioner Enquiry and New Media

The development of this form of practitioner enquiry may be understood in a particular historical context, too: the emergence of new, multimedia technologies. Before the 1980s, the only teachers who could see themselves recorded on videotape were Hollywood actors pretending to be teachers. When camcorders and other new technology became more accessible and affordable, new vistas for practitioner enquiry suddenly opened up; indeed, it is probably no exaggeration to say that this kind of practitioner enquiry would have been impossible without those technological developments. While other earlier traditions of practitioner enquiry (such as the British

school, led by Stenhouse (1975), Elliott, and others) did not depend on these technologies, this kind of practitioner enquiry, with its focus on self-study and analysis of one's own documented teaching, is highly technology dependent.

An important early work that recognized and explored this new technological frontier was *Teaching, Multimedia, and Mathematics: Investigations of Real Practice*, which Lampert co-authored with Ball (1998). In this book, Lampert and Ball set out an agenda for teacher education that is rooted in reflective investigation of multimedia samples of actual teaching practice. This isn't strictly speaking "pure" practitioner-enquirer investigation, because their agenda is directed at how their materials can be used by learning teachers, but the practitioner-enquirer mode of thinking is present throughout the book (I return to the place of practitioner enquiry in teacher preparation later).

Lampert and Ball were the pioneers of the use of new technologies in practitioner enquiry. Nevertheless, that technology had its limits.

> At this point, we found ourselves bumping up against the ever-changing boundary between what we could imagine and what was real in the world of new technologies. The dream of hypermedia developers in the 1980s was that large and diverse collections of information. . . could be stored electronically, accessed instantaneously, cataloged and cross-referenced in multiple ways for multiple users, and – most important of all – linked. . . Most fundamentally, we learned that what we were able to imagine far outstripped the multimedia hardware and software available at the time to consumers in the educational marketplace. (pp. 55–57)

Today, those limits have been radically reduced. The kind of technological arrangements that required expensive equipment, often operated by specially trained technical personnel, when Lampert and Ball began, are now available to any teacher at much more affordable costs and are for the most part layperson-operable. As an educator, in virtually any physical space or context, I can do all those things that Lampert and Ball dreamt of, at nominal cost. While practitioner enquiry can certainly be conducted without using new technologies, it is much richer when done using videotape, scanned documents, online survey assessments and evaluations, saved smartboard files, and the like. Contemporary technology offers the practitioner enquirer a wealth of potential data sources that were simply unavailable in the past, and it is thus likely that this mode of research will further develop in the coming years.

Practitioner Enquiry in Educational Training

Practitioner Enquiry as Teacher Professional Development

It is a mistake to see practitioner enquiry as just another kind of research, where the word "practitioner" is merely a substitution for "ethnographic," or "statistical," or any number of other qualifiers. We must also take note of the "practitioner" side of the phrase. That is, as well as whatever emerges from the research itself, practitioner enquiry is a form of reflective practice itself that is to be encouraged and advocated. Its fruits are in research *and* in practice. The habits of practitioner enquiry are closely

related to those of the "reflective practitioner" (Schön, 1983, 1987), and those of the kind of reflective teachers who we would like to see inhabit the profession. We should note that there is a subtle but important difference between practitioner enquiry and Schön's notion of the reflective practitioner. The latter refers primarily to what Schön calls "reflection in action." Schön's distinction between these two areas is illuminating:

> We may reflect *on* action, thinking back on what we have done in order to discover how our knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome. We may do so after the fact, in tranquility... our reflection has no direct connection to present action. Alternatively, we may reflect in the midst of action without interrupting it. In an *action-present* – a period of time, variable with the context, during which we can still make a difference to the situation at hand – our thinking serves to reshape what we are doing while we are doing it. I shall say, in cases like this, that we reflect-*in*-action. (Schön, 1987, p. 26, his italics)

The practitioner enquirer is therefore engaged in a somewhat different activity from Schön's reflective practitioner, and it's important to note this, because Schön's work has (rightly) been so influential that the ubiquity of his coined phrase might impinge on or blur the importance of practitioner enquiry. Practitioner enquiry is in essence reflection *on* action. The practitioner-researcher, while not denying the importance of Schön's reflection-*in*-action, nevertheless believes that really significant results can be achieved from looking *back* at the educational act, using as much documentation as appropriate or necessary.

Zeichner and Liston (1996) discuss several critiques of Schön's work from the perspective of reflective teaching. These critiques include Schön's ignoring of the importance of social or dialogical work in teacher reflection (indeed, it is noteworthy that many practitioner-researchers collaborate in pairs), and his lack of attention to contextual or milieu-based details that influence teaching. Zeichner and Liston, basing themselves on the work of Griffiths and Tann, two teacher-educators from the UK, suggest that Schön's work be seen as two or three levels within a five-level chart of teacher reflection (Table 1 below):

This helpful table positions practitioner enquiry at levels 4 and 5 and, to my mind, indicates that while Schön's notion of the reflective practitioner has become a fashionable and ubiquitous term, it is really a stepping stone, a mile marker on the first few steps on the way to practitioner enquiry. In research terms, the results of levels 4 and 5 are more likely to be robust and permanent, given the written and

Table 1 Five levels of teacher reflection

1. Rapid reflection	Immediate and automatic reflection-in-action
2. Repair	Thoughtful reflection-in-action
3. Review	Less formal reflection-on-action at a particular point in time
4. Research	More systematic reflection-on-action over a period of time
5. Retheorizing and research	Long-term reflection-on-action informed by public academic theories

Zeichner and Liston (1996, p. 47)

documentary nature of both data and analysis; thus while levels 1, 2, and 3 in the table are important in the realm of practice, levels 4 and 5 (the levels of practitioner enquiry) are perhaps more significant for the world of research.

Practitioner Enquiry in Teacher Preparation

While most practitioner enquiry is written by teachers with several years of experience behind them, it is also increasingly seen as an important resource for teacher preparation and induction. In the widely acclaimed and documented teacher-preparation program at Michigan State University, study of one's own teaching is one of the areas focused upon and a course entitled *Reflection and Inquiry in Teaching Practice* consists of 6 credits out of a total of 48 (Carroll, Featherstone, Featherstone, Feiman-Nemser, & Roosevelt, 2007, pp. 22–23). One of the professional standards for their teaching interns is "work on developing their practice by raising questions and investigating problems and issues that arise in their teaching and seminars (59). One of the themes of the teacher-preparation program at MSU is "inquiry":

> Finally, we learned about the complexities and importance of making inquiry a central thread in the teacher preparation program... Because teachers need the habits and skills of inquiry in order to get good at what they do, and stay good at it as they travel along a changing river, inquiry is a cross-cutting theme in the Team One program... Introducing a program-long curriculum of inquiry... showed [prospective teachers] how they might become makers, not just consumers, of knowledge in teaching.

While the preservice teachers in this program were not fully fledged teacher-researchers, it is clear that they were being trained to be able to inhabit that role in the future, and it is also clear that the habits of investigation into one's own teaching (as well as that of others) were seen by the program leaders as core intellectual and professional habits that aided the interns in their journey to becoming teachers (see also Ball & Cohen, 1999).

Another important benefit of researchers engaging in practitioner research is a level of credibility that is attained in the eyes of practitioners. As Seymour Fox warned (1972, 1997), educational change is unlikely to happen unless teachers are both able and willing to enact it. And (as we noted earlier) one of the greatest complaints of practitioners is that educational scholars live in the "ivory tower" and are unconnected to practice. Scholars who are engaged in practitioner research have more chance of attaining credibility among the community of practitioners and thus influencing practice with their ideas and research.

Critiques of Practitioner Enquiry

Recent surveys of practitioner enquiry in general education have noted several critiques that have been made of it. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into these critiques in depth. Cochran-Smith and Lytle suggest five main complaints

made against practitioner enquiry: first, a skepticism that educators thinking about their own practice can actually produce "knowledge" as it is epistemologically understood in the research world; second, a methodological claim that teachers are untrained and unprepared to do proper research (see also Huberman, 1996); third, a critique related to the first two, but specifically rooted in the science-based approach of the Federal Government's educational agenda, in which initiatives like No Child Left Behind rely strongly on more traditional empirical data; fourth, a political critique, suggesting that practitioner enquiry is often motivated by politics rather than pure research; and fifth, a critique that suggests that practitioner enquiry is either highly personal, and therefore not generalizable, or is a valuable professional development tool, but not research.

Zeichner and Noffke (2001) offer a similar but not identical list of critiques. They also focus on teachers' lack of training in research methods, and on the positivist critique that practitioner enquiry cannot be generalized from small environments into larger claims. In addition, they raise the concern that practitioner enquiry takes away from teachers time that could and should be spent teaching, and finally, an interesting suggestion that practitioner enquiry may lead to "stagnation" among teachers who believe that certain ideas have, through that enquiry, been "proven," and that they therefore may cease questioning them (pp. 298–299).

None of these varied critiques is entirely without basis. Nevertheless, as Schwab (1964) has taught us, the syntactic structures of a discipline are never neutral choices, and what appear to be disputes over "knowledge" in the discipline of educational research are in fact disputes over the selection of appropriate syntactic structures. It probably behooves us to view the dispute over the legitimacy of practitioner enquiry in this light.

Practitioner Enquiry in Jewish Education

Practitioner Enquiry in K-12 Jewish Educational Settings

In Jewish education, practitioner enquiry is still in its infancy, but a small number of practitioner researchers have already created a modest corpus of interesting studies. In the following section, I discuss a few such studies.

A recent study by Susie Tanchel (2006), focusing on her own practice as a Bible teacher in a community high school, has its research roots directly in the work of Lampert and others already noted. Tanchel taught Bible in a community Jewish high school. Her approach to Bible sees Biblical scholarship in general, and source criticism in particular, as an essential interpretive approach to which to expose Jewish high-school students. Yet the teaching of source criticism is a highly complex educational dilemma, fraught with difficult questions about its effect on Jewish identity, its developmental appropriateness, its "Jewishness," and so on. In the field of Bible education, many writers have struggled with these questions; see, for example, the treatments by Greenberg (1959, 1990/1995), Dorph (1993, 2002), Holtz (2003),

and Sinclair (2004). However, practitioner enquiry offers extra and perhaps more authentic ways to shed light on these questions.

So, for example, Tanchel's practitioner enquiry can do what neither Greenberg, Dorph, or Holtz are able to do in their thinking about the identical research questions: it can investigate the thoughts and voices of her own students, who have actually learned about the documentary hypothesis with her. Her research contains many illuminating windows into the reactions, both cognitive and spiritual, of her high-school students. When she writes that:

> They struggle mightily with how to integrate this material into their religious experience and wonder about the far-reaching implication of doing so. These include concerns about the continued sacredness of the text. (Tanchel, 2008)

We, the readers of the research, know that this is not a cognitive psychologist wondering what might happen, nor a Biblical scholar ruminating on possible implications. It is a real teacher, documenting and analyzing actual reactions received from her students, which took place in the framework of her own classroom teaching. Tanchel juxtaposes her students' reactions with a discussion of the pluralist vision of the school, and offers curricular warrants for the teaching of the documentary hypothesis for a variety of different typologies of student: typologies that are, again, drawn from her own direct classroom experience.

Thus when Tanchel concludes that teaching the documentary hypothesis "offers students openings to continue crafting their own theologies, establishing their own relationship to Jewish sacred texts, and envisioning their own Jewish lives," the reader is aware that her conclusion is rooted in her observations and analyses of her own teaching of actual teenagers in a real-life setting. Tanchel's research position as practitioner enquirer may therefore add more to our knowledge of the problem than research methods that are rooted in philosophy, external interviews, or the discipline itself. As we saw with Ball and Wilson in mathematics and history, practitioner enquiry is able to move from discussion of a particular context onto more general and wider conclusions about the teaching of a subject in general: indeed, about teaching in general.

While Tanchel's probably represents the fullest piece of practitioner enquiry to date in the teaching of Bible in Jewish educational contexts, there have been a few other forays into this area: Epstein (2004), who reflects on her own classroom use of "tableau" as a creative midrashic method; Cousens, Morrison, and Fendrick (2008), who, like Tanchel, discuss the use of the contextual orientation to teaching Bible (Brettler, 2005; Holtz, 2003), but with adults rather than high-school students, and my own experiment (Sinclair, 2005) with practitioner research on Bible, which taught me that when one person is doing the teaching, philosophical reflection on that same teaching, and the written analysis of the former in the light of the latter, powerful and significant insights can be gained.

Just as we noted earlier, with regard to the contribution of practitioner enquiry to the preservice preparation of teachers and their in-service professional development in general education, so too in Jewish education, the potential contribution of practitioner research for improving practice is great. There is no more effective

way to improve practice than encouraging practitioners to be more reflective and research-minded about their own work. "A teacher-researcher is not a split personality, but a *more complete teacher*" (Hubbard & Power, 1999, p. 3, their italics). In an ideal world, every educator would also be a researcher on his/her own educational practice. In cutting edge in-service curricular projects, like the Melton-AVI CHAI Standards and Benchmarks project, or the Mandel Teacher Education Institute, teachers are encouraged to research each other's classrooms and to investigate their own teaching using video and student work artifacts. And when we think about Jewish educational research agendas, the more that research is directly rooted in the real and tangible issues and questions of educational life, the more it is likely to be compelling, meaningful, and useful.

Practitioner Enquiry in Jewish Tertiary Settings

Elie Holzer's (2006) and Orit Kent's (2006) work on the Beit Midrash component of a teacher-preparation program is an example of practitioner enquiry in a tertiary setting (see also Feiman-Nemser, 2006). Holzer and Kent are both faculty members in a teacher-preparation program, educators whose daily business is to help their students become more skilled Jewish teachers. Holzer and Kent's studies of their work use the same method as Ball and Wilson (1996) did: they begin from the particular and move to the general; from data and interpretation of their own particular program and the students in it, toward more grandiose goals about the field of teacher education in general.

In one statement made by Kent, we can see this move from the particular to the general happening in three clearly discernible steps. "For the last three summers," writes Kent, "I have been collecting data from a modern *beit midrash* [a traditional Jewish study hall, now often used to refer to many forms of non-academic communal Jewish learning] that I co-design and co-teach. . . my study of *hevruta* [the format of traditional Jewish learning, in which students study text in pairs while engaged in conversation and debate about the text] learning in the *DeLeT beit midrash* is intended to help develop a conceptualization of this often used but seldom studied form of learning." We can break down this statement into three steps as follows:

1. "For the last three summers I have been collecting data from a modern *beit midrash* that I co-design and co-teach. . ." *[step 1: practitioner researcher credentials]*
2. "My study of *hevruta* learning in the *DeLeT beit midrash" [step 2: particular, narrow-focused study of particular practitioner context]*
3. "Is intended to help develop a conceptualization of this often used but seldom studied form of learning" *[step 3: suggestion that the practitioner enquiry may have larger and broader applications]*.

These three steps represent in skeleton form the research rationale of this particular version of practitioner enquiry.

Two further comments are worth making here. First, Kent's research method is so entrenched in this particular-to-general mode of practitioner enquiry that she argues that from a close reading of just *one* hevruta session between two of her students, she is able to draw out conceptual conclusions that are applicable to a wider field. Second, while Kent's interpretation is informed by a variety of theoretical frameworks, such as research on teaching and learning, cooperative learning, classroom discourse, and norms of social interaction, it is also clear that her own wisdom of practice as the co-designer and co-teacher of this program informs and enriches her interpretation of her data at least as much as these external theoretical frameworks. An outside researcher, examining the same data with the same external theoretical frameworks, would not have been able to write the rich research paper that Kent, as practitioner-researcher, was able to.

Another practitioner-researcher in a Jewish tertiary setting is the emeritus professor of theology at the Jewish Theological Seminary, Neil Gillman. Gillman, although he does not use the formal language of practitioner enquiry that we have so far explored in this chapter, is, I would suggest, a practitioner enquirer nevertheless. Gillman's writing, as well as focusing on "pure" subject matter, also focuses on his reflection on his own work as a teacher of Jewish theology. His collection of essays, *Doing Jewish Theology*, contains two articles that explicitly deal with his teaching and many more in which the subject occurs implicitly. In these essays, Gillman (2008a, b) refers in an organic fashion to his research questions as a teacher, to statements his students have made and written, to documentations of and reflections on his own pedagogical content knowledge (again, he doesn't use that term himself), and to the ways in which his classroom activity has changed over the years: all elements that fit squarely into the discipline of practitioner enquiry.

Gillman's stance as a practitioner enquirer has been an inspiration for some of my recent work, as seen below.

Suggestions for Practitioner Enquiry in Jewish Educational Contexts

We have seen that the teaching of Bible is one area of Jewish education that has seen some early practitioner enquiry work. This chapter ends with a series of suggestions for practitioner enquiry in various other areas of Jewish education.

Formal educational contexts in the general educational world have been the ones that have been most researched by practitioner-enquirers, and the day-school context in the Jewish world is fertile ground for such work. The formal educational setting contains many structural elements that facilitate practitioner enquiry, such as the easy availability of electric outlets, possibilities for substitutes or colleagues to assist with data collection, the increasingly widespread adoption of technology and software such as PowerPoint presentations, smart boards, and online forums, that can be saved and documented, and the large quantity of written student work available for study. It behooves us to train preservice teachers in the skills of practitioner enquiry and to create as many opportunities as possible for in-service teachers to practise

these skills. Schools of education should be encouraged to include practitioner enquiry classes in their requirements, just as MSU does.

However, practitioner enquiry need not only happen in formal, full-time educational contexts. Summer camps, Israel trips, congregational schools, and alternative Shabbat services are all contexts which are well suited to serious and systematic practitioner enquiry. While these contexts may have greater logistical barriers than practitioner enquiry in the day school, creative solutions can almost always be found for practitioner enquirers in these and other contexts.

One example of an educational context that could be greatly illuminated by more work by practitioner-researchers is the organized trip to Israel, or what is often known as the "Israel Experience." We have a reasonably significant corpus of research that investigates different aspects of the sociology and culture of the educational and social experience of participants in various forms of Israel trip. These include ethnographic studies of teenagers' trips (Goldberg, Heilman, & Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002; Heilman, 1999); participant-observer reports of adult education and professional development trips (for example, Pomson & Grant, 2004); conceptual or philosophical discussions about the very nature of the Israel trip (for example, Kelner, 2002); and various evaluations of trips' efficacy along a range of measurable criteria (Saxe & Chazan, 2008). (Most recently, see Kelner's (2010) extensive study of Birthright trips). What we don't have is practitioner enquiry, and I would argue that our thinking about the Israel experience would be immeasurably improved by such additions to the research corpus. In this and other informal contexts, there are many practical, financial, and logistical barriers that are greater than in formal contexts, but it is clear that this is the direction that we should be moving in.

A Vignette: Practitioner Enquiry on the Israel Experience

I end this chapter with a brief summary and analysis of a practitioner enquiry paper (Sinclair, Backenroth, & Bell-Kligler, 2010) in the context of the Israel experience, in order to illustrate the kinds of thinking that practitioner enquiry can contribute to Jewish education. The practitioner-enquirers – Backenroth, Bell-Kligler, and Sinclair (the author of this chapter) – are all practitioners as well as researchers of Jewish education. The subject of our research was a seminar in Israel for students doing an MA in Jewish Education at the Davidson School of Education of the Jewish Theological Seminary. This seminar has run annually since 2004, and the three of us, to varying extents, have been its creators, leaders, and evaluators since its inception.

The seminar is entitled "Visions and Voices of Israel" and attempts to bring these young educators-in-training into innovative professional conversations about Israel education and engagement. We are interested in having them explore what it might mean to engage with Israel with all its complexities; how to create commitment to Israel because, despite, and along with, its realities (Gringras, 2006; Sinclair, 2003, 2006, 2009).

As practitioners, one thing that we noticed in our students' responses to the seminar over the years is that many of them find it troubling and painful to move from

what might be called a “romanticized-idealized” relationship with Israel to one that is more complex and nuanced. Some students ended the seminar with these feelings of pain and even anger unresolved. To further complicate the picture, we began to see an emerging phenomenon of students coming back to us 2 or 3 years after their time on the seminar, and saying that only after that extended period of reflection have they begun to truly see its profound educational benefits. Our own sense of unease was deepened by considering the educational career and approach of one of our senior colleagues, Neil Gillman. As we noted above, he can also be seen as an example of a practitioner researcher in a tertiary setting. Like us, Gillman seeks to move students from romantic understanding to more complex ones. His theology classes confront and challenge students with the implications of Bible scholarship for traditional understanding of revelation. In a recent exploration of Gillman’s philosophical and pedagogical positions, it is suggested that Gillman is “disturbing” to some students; Gillman nevertheless “believes that the potential discomfort associated with confronting such an understanding of marginality – not only for the philosophically minded, but rather for all of his students – is a necessary step in the professional preparation of rabbinical students” (Tauber, 2007). To what extent are Gillman’s struggles the same struggles with which we as Israel educators must also grapple? As practitioner-enquirers, we decided to explore these difficulties ourselves.

The Process of Practitioner Enquiry

What, then, as practitioner-enquirers, did we do? What is the process of practitioner enquiry? To begin with, we spent a lot of time reading, analyzing, thinking about, and talking about our students’ responses to the program. Each year our students filled in extensive evaluations, using online data collection software; through these evaluations, we were able to probe the thinking of our students in the immediate aftermath of the seminar. We also collected and analyzed many emails that we had received from students days, weeks, and months after their time in Israel. Since the seminar required no formal written work on the part of the students, these evaluation responses and emails became our primary window into what our students were thinking, feeling, and asking. We did not, as Ball and Lampert did, watch our students on videotape, transcribing and analyzing their words, but, through this internet technology, we were able to collate a large quantity of authentic student voices.

As we analyzed our students’ voices, we also went back and analyzed our own planning and thinking. We went back over emails we had sent each other, planning documents we had written, and handouts from activities that we had run. We tried to reconstruct and reconsider our intended outcomes, and compared these with our students’ voices.

We then sought to contextualize our findings within theoretical and conceptual frameworks offered by educational, sociological, and psychological researchers. Not content with just stating that this was what we had seen, we attempted to place our observations within wider frameworks. We moved (as Ball did, above) from the particular to the general.

This chapter is not the place for an extended discussion of the interpretations we made, or the conclusions we drew. Briefly, we began to understand that it is not easy for students to move – or, more accurately, be moved – from their previous romanticized-idealized relationship with Israel into a more complex, multidimensional, "reality"-based relationship. Foundational beliefs are subverted; deep-held convictions are questioned; identity based on comfort must instead be based on disequilibrium. We were aided by the approach of Kegan (1982), who claims that transitions from one stage of identity to another involve leaving a consolidated self behind before any new self can take its place; until a new balance is achieved, the individual feels a loss of control and is in a state of disequilibrium. As we reflected on our own practice, we saw that it may well have been this sense of disequilibrium that our students found most upsetting. Our research therefore led us to some tentative conclusions about how to interpret this phenomenon present in some of our students' immediate frustration and subsequent belated understanding: namely, that we should accept these transitions as necessary and perhaps even desirable parts of the educational process that we hoped they would go through. Our research also led us ask to further questions about our own practice: is it okay to leave students in disequilibrium? How might we provide better scaffolding to help them move beyond that disequilibrium into a more nuanced but consolidated position? How do we respond personally to students who express anger and frustration? As we have seen several times so far in this chapter, practitioner enquiry enables us to move from particular contexts to larger educational questions.

The advantages of practitioner enquiry in this research setting are clear. On a most basic level, the feedback loop between practice, evaluation, and re-imagined practice based on evaluation, is much shorter when practitioner enquiry is the mode of research used for evaluation. Outside researchers would have to spend a considerable amount of time learning about the program, its goals, language, and details; talking with us, the practitioners, to help develop the research questions; and then interpreting and formulating the data into a form in which it could be usefully channeled back to us. Instead, we, as practitioner researchers, were able to do all three of these steps much more quickly, and most often, not in linear, but in a more helpful circular fashion. As we do the research, we become more skilled practitioners; as our practitioner skills and knowledge base develop, our research questions and analytical tools become sharper and more focused; as knowledge from our research is created, it is transferred to the field in "real time."

Looking Forward: Encouraging Practitioner Enquiry in Jewish Education

Practitioner enquiry, therefore, holds significant promise as a mode of research for the field of Jewish education. What steps can we make in the field of Jewish education in order to encourage and seed further research of this type? I would suggest that there are two major areas in which we need to make progress: appropriately, given the nomenclature of this mode of research, those areas are, on the one hand,

persuading enquirers (researchers) to do more as practitioners, and on the other, persuading practitioners to do more as enquirers.

First, there are many researchers in the academic world of Jewish education who used to be practitioners. A glance through the list of authors of this handbook will quickly indicate that the vast majority of writers have also been practitioners too. Some of these experiences may have been in the dim and distant past, as teachers or camp counselors and division heads, but for some of the researchers in our field, their experiences as practitioners are closer and perhaps even current. How many researchers of Jewish education teach adult-education classes in their local communities? How many writers in this handbook teach a session every now and then at the local summer camp, day school, or synagogue school? My guess is (certainly among the younger members of the field) that the number is quite considerable. And, of course, if we consider the teaching of graduate-level classes in Jewish education, nearly all the writers in this handbook are, like Neil Gillman, practitioners too. The field of Jewish educational research would be greatly enriched if we were able to provide incentives for researchers to increase the amount of time they spend being practitioners and to use that time as grist for their research mill. This means that academic institutions must rethink structural questions like what counts as course load for educational researchers, and what kinds of achievements should be considered in making decisions about tenure. These two structural issues in particular are significant barriers for practitioner enquiry, and those interested in seeing more practitioner enquiry in Jewish educational research would do well to seek to lower those barriers (I would also suggest that practitioner enquirers have significant pedagogical advantages in the teaching of graduate-level classes, given their proximity to the field and therefore their increased sensitivity to the actual challenges their students will face; nevertheless, this issue is beyond the scope of the current chapter).

Second, there are many practitioners in the field who, with the right incentives, assistance, and structural facilitation, could make valuable contributions to educational research. There are dozens of thoughtful, reflective, research-minded day-school teachers who could offer significant papers on the myriad issues of day-school education: barriers in achieving differentiated instruction; approaches toward pluralism in text study; the tension between the goals of Hebrew language acquisition and philosophical classroom discourse; and so on. There are dozens of congregational school principals who could offer significant papers on questions like the influence of the milieu on the learner; formal versus informal educational methodologies in the congregational school context; possibilities for professional development in environments with many part-time staff members; and so on. There are dozens of camp directors, division heads, and camp heads of education, who could offer significant papers on questions like the most successful enculturating frameworks within camp; the place of children with special needs in the camp environment; the contribution of outdoor education to Jewish educational philosophy; and so on. In these questions, and countless others like them, the field of Jewish educational research is simply missing the voices of these potential practitioner enquirers, and the field is impoverished as a result.

Several recent initiatives have sought to tap into these potential contributions to practitioner enquiry. The Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University has developed a project on Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy in Jewish Studies. This project spawned two conferences, the first in 2005, and the second in 2008, on the teaching of Bible and the teaching of Rabbinic literature respectively. The purposes of this project are immediately recognizable as supportive of the work of practitioner enquiry:

(1) Teachers of Jewish studies at all levels and settings share common questions and may productively engage in collaborative inquiries, even if they arrive at different answers.
(2) Jewish education ought not to be isolated from the academic pursuit of Jewish studies scholarship.
(3) Meaningful research into the practice of pedagogy in Jewish studies can and should be conducted by teachers at all levels and settings, both within and outside of academia. The subfields of Jewish studies will benefit from the development of a "scholarship of teaching," much as has occurred in the fields of mathematics, history, and elsewhere (http://www.brandeis.edu/mandel/projects/bridginginitiative.html, retrieved July 13th, 2009).

A conference on Israel education, held at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education of the Hebrew University in 2009, also contained several papers in the area of practitioner enquiry.

What else could Jewish educational systems do in order to facilitate such contributions by practitioners? It is my belief that an award must be established to enable educators in varied contexts to apply for funding that would enable them to conduct practitioner enquiry research projects. Practitioners would apply to this award with a research project proposal, and each year, a certain number of awards would be granted to successful applicants. The awards would provide funding to the applicant's educational institution with the proviso that the funds be used to grant the applicant a reduction in course load or administrative responsibilities significant enough to enable the person to spend the year doing some serious practitioner research.

It has been said that a structural weakness in Jewish education is that it consists of many "silos" that are not sufficiently linked together (Wertheimer, 2005). In the context of Jewish education as a whole, certainly as presented in this handbook, the two biggest silos that are not yet linked are the worlds of educational theory and educational practice. It is high time that we linked those two silos together.

If the field of Jewish education could make the necessary structural changes in order to facilitate practitioner enquiry from both of these sides – enabling researchers to get out in the field more and apply their research skills to their own practical endeavors, and granting practitioners the time to do serious enquiry on their own practice – then, as a field, Jewish education would be immeasurably enriched.

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Preparing Teachers for Jewish Schools: Enduring Issues in Changing Contexts

Sharon Feiman-Nemser

Skepticism about teachers and teacher education runs deep in American society and both have been easy targets of criticism by sympathetic and unsympathetic observers. The familiar quip says it all: "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach; those who can't teach, teach teachers." Such sentiments are deeply rooted in beliefs about gender, social class, and intellectual activity. They also reflect the history of teaching and teacher education in the United States, a story of professional aspirations colliding with social forces and political realities.

Since the establishment of normal schools in the mid-nineteenth century, the question of how best to recruit and prepare teachers has been hotly debated. Some leaders like Cyrus Pierce, president of the first normal school, concentrated on "making better teachers," but their ideals were quickly overwhelmed by the insatiable demand for teachers to staff the rapidly growing public school system. Still, the debate continued among advocates of technical, liberal, and professional education as normal schools became teachers' colleges in the opening decades of the twentieth century and some of the most prestigious universities created departments and schools of education (Borrowman, 1956).

A projected teacher shortage and persistent concerns about the achievement gap heightened concerns about teacher quality and qualifications at the start of the twenty-first century. Despite general agreement that teaching matters and growing empirical support for this claim, there is still no consensus about how to get good teachers. Some advocate strong programs of professional preparation (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2006), while others argue for alternate routes that bypass most requirements in favor of academic background and on-the-job learning (Finn & Madigan, 2001). Despite changing times and conditions, questions about recruiting and preparing teachers persist.

Where does Jewish teaching and teacher education fit into this narrative? One might expect that the high value Judaism places on learning and intellectual achievement would result in a high regard for Jewish teachers and an appreciation for the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they need to do the important work of Jewish

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education. This is far from the case. As Leo Honor, an important figure in the movement to modernize Jewish education and professionalize Jewish teaching in the twentieth century, writes,

> One of the anomalies of Jewish life has been the contrast between the intensity with which Jews. . .have concentrated upon the task of instructing the young to live in accordance with the precepts of Torah and their comparative lack of concern with the qualifications of the personnel entrusted with the responsibility of performing the duties which this task entails. (Gannes, 1965, p. 177)

The shortage of qualified personnel is a recurring theme in the history of Jewish education in America, linked to the improvement of Jewish schooling and the future of Jewish life in this country. For the early-twentieth-century reformers, replacing the old fashioned *melamed* with American-born, American-trained teachers was a key element in modernizing Jewish schools and safeguarding the future of Judaism in the new world.

Concerns about the quality and quantity of Jewish educators persist today as career opportunities for women expand, young people anticipate having multiple careers, and issues of status and remuneration persist.

This chapter examines two "experiments" in Jewish teacher preparation, one historical and one contemporary.[1] The first occurred in the Hebrew teachers colleges, established in large Jewish communities before, during, and after World War I to provide qualified teachers for "modern," communal Talmud Torahs. The second is currently taking place in a handful of programs designed to prepare teachers mainly for community and non-Orthodox day schools which have sprung up since the 1980s. In both cases, the emergence of a new kind of Jewish school which depended on a new kind of Jewish teacher led to the creation of new programs of Jewish teacher preparation.

Two vantage points frame this inquiry. First, I want to understand these Jewish teacher-education initiatives as educational responses to a set of conditions, needs, and aspirations within the American Jewish community and among its educational leaders. So I ask, what circumstances led to the founding of these new programs for Jewish teachers? What were/are the programs like? What ideas about the role of the teacher and the purposes of Jewish education guide(d) the selection of content and the design of learning opportunities?

Second, I am interested in how these experiments in Jewish teacher education relate to prevailing ideas and practice regarding the education of teachers. Thus I consider the teacher training programs offered by the Hebrew teachers colleges in relation to developments in American teacher education in the early twentieth century. I also consider how contemporary efforts to prepare day-school teachers relate to current ideas and debates about the preparation of teachers in the twenty-first century. My goal is to bring together lines of historical and contemporary inquiry in Jewish education with general scholarship about teaching and teacher education

[1] Special thanks to Gail Dorph, Jon Levisohn, and Alex Pomson for their thoughtful feedback and to Jonathan Krasner for directing me to historical sources.

to identify and illuminate some enduring issues in the preparation of teachers for Jewish schools.

The chapter has two main sections. In the first, I briefly examine the rise of the Hebrew teachers colleges, then focus on the teacher training program at the Teachers Institute (TI) of the Jewish Theological Seminary. I chose TI as my example because of its national and local status and its eventual relationship with Teachers College, Columbia University, a pioneer in professional teacher education, leadership development, and educational research. The second section focuses on the recent development of a handful of programs designed to prepare teachers mainly for non-Orthodox day schools. Here my example is DeLeT (Day School Leadership in Teaching), a program I created at Brandeis University in 2001. In both sections, I consider how each of the focal programs relates to prevailing ideas about teacher education. A brief conclusion offers some comparative observations and suggests an agenda for future research.

From *Melamdim* to Professional Teachers

Between 1881 and 1914, unprecedented numbers of Jewish immigrants came to the United States from Eastern Europe and settled mainly in large cities. These immigrants faced enormous challenges in building a life and making a living. They embraced free public education as the key to becoming American and securing a better social and economic future. Without a communal system of Jewish education, they had difficulty providing an adequate Jewish education for their children to supplement their secular studies.

The immigrants tried to transplant the educational institutions they had developed in Europe, including the *heder*, a one-man private Hebrew school for young boys, the *yeshiva*, and the *Talmud Torah*, a charity school for children of the poor. Some, inspired by cultural Zionism and the revival of the Hebrew language, created schools modeled after the *heder metukan*, or improved heder, where they pioneered the natural method of teaching Hebrew, *ivrit b'irvit,* as a living language (Dushkin, 1918; Pilch, 1969; Rauch, 2006). These eventually inspired the modern Talmud Torahs which reached their high point in the 1920s.

Jewish educational leaders surveying the state of Jewish education at the time found “medieval” and “modern” forms of Jewish schooling, often existing side by side (Dushkin, 1918; Hurwich, 1958; Kaplan & Cronson, 1949). They directed most of their critique at the infamous *hadarim* where untrained teachers used rote methods to produce a mechanical reading of Hebrew. Most Jewish children received no Jewish education at all, and those who did learned little and often developed negative attitudes toward Judaism. Something had to be done.

Visionary leaders thought the problem should be tackled at the communal level. They believed that the future of Jewish life in America depended, in part, on the preparation of American-educated Jewish teachers who would embody the old-world tradition of textual knowledge and love of learning and the new-world commitment to modern methods of scholarship and pedagogy. Their vision found

expression in the Hebrew teachers colleges, established in major Jewish cities to train Jewish teachers and advance Jewish learning.

The Hebrew Teachers College

Two related developments enabled the formation and growth of the Hebrew teachers colleges—the creation of "modern," communal Talmud Torahs and the takeover of their curriculum by members of the Hebraist movement in America. In response to the problematic state of Jewish education, Jewish communal organizations established local boards or bureaus of Jewish education, beginning with New York in 1910. These agencies created community-wide schools based on the Talmud Torah model.[2] According to Mintz, the incipient Talmud Torah movement represented a kind of "popular front" for young men and women committed to the Hebraist ideology. They turned the supplementary Talmud Torahs into "Hebrew" schools by advancing an intensive Jewish education based around *Eretz Yisrae*l, the Hebrew language and a cultural Jewish nationalist interpretation of the Bible, Jewish history, and the Jewish holidays (Ackerman, 1993; Mintz, 1993).[3]

Most of the Hebrew teachers colleges were established after World War I as larger Jewish communities began to address the needs and problems of Jewish education in an organized way.[4] Besides their stated purpose of training teachers, they offered advanced Jewish study to Talmud Torah graduates, eventually setting standards for the lower schools and becoming the capstone of local systems of Jewish education.

As their name implies, they had a strong *Hebraist* ethos fostered by the study of Hebrew language and literature and by the use of Hebrew as the medium of instruction. Each institution reflected the personality of its leaders and local community, yet for all the differences between them, the Hebrew teachers colleges had a remarkably uniform "language-centered and heritage-centered" curriculum (Janowsky, 1967, p. 331).

The Hebrew teachers colleges never fully met their goal of supplying all or even most of the Hebrew teachers needed by the market. Still they produced a considerable number of graduates[5] and established a new model of Jewish teacher

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[2]Benderly saw the Talmud Torah as the most promising model because it was a communal institution like the public school and because it had already been reshaped into an afternoon school so as not to conflict with public schooling.

[3]School systems inspired by this model were created in New York, Boston, Baltimore, Detroit, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, and Chicago.

[4]The institutions established during this general time frame include Gratz College, Philadelphia (1898); Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary, New York (1910); Baltimore Hebrew College (1919); Herzliyah Teachers Institute, New York (1921); Hebrew Teachers College of Boston (1921); Chicago College of Jewish Studies (1924); and Cleveland College of Jewish Studies (1926).

[5]Margolis (1964) states that 2,191 teachers graduated from the six Jewish teacher training institutions which he studied (Gratz, Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, Boston Hebrew College, Herzliyah, Teachers Institutes at JTS and Yeshiva University) from the times of their opening

preparation which raised the standard of Jewish schooling in their area. Surveys of the early courses of study reveal some common patterns (Dinin, 1967; Margolis, 1964; Ackerman, 1989), for example, the subordination of pedagogy to subject matter and the lack of differentiation between education for teachers and education for scholarship.

While such generalizations provide an overview, they convey little of the enacted curriculum and culture of these institutions. For that, I turn to the program at the Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Established in 1909 to supply trained teachers for the Jewish schools of New York City, the Institute served as the prototype for Hebrew teachers colleges around the country and influenced Jewish education far beyond the confines of New York.

Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary[6]

Solomon Schechter, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary, recognized the urgent need in America for trained teachers. In 1910, he appointed Mordecai Kaplan, a 28-year-old graduate of the Seminary, as principal of the Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Thus began a most exciting experiment in Jewish teacher education.

Under Kaplan's leadership, the Institute became a partner with the newly established Bureau of Jewish Education, a center of Hebraist culture, and a platform for Kaplan's teaching of "reconstructionist" Judaism (Kaufman, 1997). Shortly after the Institute was established, the Jewish community of New York (the *Kehillah*) created the first Bureau of Jewish Education and appointed Dr. Samson Benderly as its director.[7] Kaplan's collaborations with the Bureau and with Benderly, the father of modern Jewish education in America, placed the Teachers Institute at the forefront of these reforms.

Benderly needed teachers for his modern Talmud Torahs and the Teachers Institute needed students to train. The requirement that schools under the Bureau's supervision could not hire untrained teachers enabled the Institute to become a full-time school offering 18–20 h of coursework during the weekday mornings, rather than relying exclusively on part-time or evening classes. The Institute reorganized into two divisions, an academic course for those who wanted to continue their Jewish studies, and a professional course for aspiring Hebrew teachers. This change

through 1950. Hurwich (1958) gives a figure of 1,885 graduates among the eight institutions he studied—the same six as Margolis plus Baltimore and the Hebrew Training School for Girls in New York—from their beginnings through 1949. He concludes that this output met 20–25% of the need.

[6]This portrait draws heavily on David Kaufman's (1997) detailed and illuminating account of the development and early history of the Teachers Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminar.

[7]Benderly emigrated to the United States from Palestine in order to complete his medical studies. He settled in Baltimore where he pioneered the use of *ivrit b'ivrit* in an experimental Hebrew school. Benderly eventually left medicine to devote himself to Jewish education.

coincided with a move in 1916 to new quarters close to the immigrant neighborhoods where most of the TI students lived. During the 15 years that the Institute spent at the Hebrew Technical Institute on the Lower East Side, the faculty and students created a self-conscious, educative community and TI became “the leading vocational school for Jewish teachers in America” (Kaufman, p. 587).

The collaboration of Kaplan and Benderly not only influenced the recruitment of TI students, it also affected the choice of faculty, the shape of the curriculum, and the character of the institution. The faculty included a group of European-educated Jewish scholars and Hebrew writers, and a group of Americans, including some Seminary rabbis trained by Kaplan, specialists in the arts, and two “Benderly boys.”[8] This composition reflected Kaplan’s idea about living simultaneously in two civilizations—American and Jewish. Among the Eastern European, yeshiva-educated faculty were religious teachers who could convey the culture of Eastern Europe to young American Jews and *maskilim* (enlightened ones) who embodied the Hebrew nationalism and cultural Zionism that inspired Benderly and his followers. The latter group profoundly influenced the culture of the Teachers Institute, making it a center for Hebraist culture in America (Ackerman, 1993; Kaufman, 1997).

Hebrew, Bible, Jewish history and religion were the core subjects and this became the model at other Hebrew teachers colleges (Dinin, 1967). Hebrew, the main language of instruction, was the primary subject and the “heart” of the culture at TI. The Hebraists were more interested in contemporary literature than “sacred texts” and taught Torah as a literary and historical source and the classical basis of modern Hebrew literature. They “suffused the classroom with their passionate Hebraism” and promoted the use of Hebrew outside the classroom as well (Mintz, 1993, p. 92).

The arts also played an important role. A course in “Jewish Music and Methods of Teaching Jewish Songs,” was introduced in 1924, followed by courses in graphic arts, drama, and dance. Besides these formal opportunities for arts education, folk dancing, group singing, and student dramatic productions were regular features of life at the Institute, contributing to a strong sense of community.

Still, the central element of the TI experience was Kaplan’s course in “Religion,” as Kaufman (1997) explains, “If Hebrew and the arts were the heart and soul of the curriculum, then Kaplan’s course in Biblical interpretation and Jewish thought was its mind” (p. 602). Kaplan taught from the opening of TI until his retirement and he used the course to work out his ideas about Judaism as an evolving religious civilization. Offered in 1- or 2-h-a-week lessons over 3 and eventually 4 years, the course covered (a) Biblical interpretation; (b) ceremonies and liturgy; and (c) ethics.

[8]Benderly searched out male college students who might be recruited for careers in Jewish education. He arranged for them to teach in the Bureau’s experimental schools and to study with Kaplan and other TI faculty. Many received doctorates from Teachers College, Columbia, where they studied with Dewey, Kilpatrick, and other well-known progressive educators of the time. Known as the Benderly boys, these men disseminated Benderly’s ideas by serving as leaders in Hebrew teachers colleges and heads of bureaus of Jewish education around the country.

The essence of the course was Kaplan's approach to Biblical interpretation, as he explained, "I teach my subject from the evolutionary point of view and I regard it as necessary to help students to adjust themselves to the problems of modern life" (Kaufman, p. 602).

While Kaplan's course left some students confused, it opened the eyes of others. Reactions ranged from "breaking up my orthodox views" and "losing my sense of a personal God and the desire to pray" to gaining "more real faith" and "new ways to think about God, Torah and the Jewish people" (Kaufman, pp. 604–605). Looking back on his studies with Kaplan at the Teachers Institute, philosopher Israel Scheffler (1995) writes that the experience "plunged him into a turmoil of belief" (p. 134). For many students, Kaplan's course and the whole experience at the TI was "a journey of personal transformation" (Kaufman, p. 606).

Details about education courses are harder to come by. The Institute offered the first courses in pedagogy in l916 when Leo Honor was hired to teach history and pedagogy. These included courses in the history of Jewish education in the United States, the curriculum of the Jewish school, and methods of teaching Bible, ceremonies, liturgy, and Jewish music (Margolis, 1964, p. 84). Plans for giving students opportunities to observe and practise teaching were also developed, but not implemented until later (Gannes, 1965, pp. 190, 204). Overall, pedagogical training remained a secondary consideration.

This changed to some extent when the Institute moved uptown in 1930 to its own spacious, new building adjacent to the Seminary. Kaplan negotiated a joint program with nearby Teacher College, Columbia University, which enabled students to earn a Bachelor of Science degree from Columbia and a Bachelor of Jewish Pedagogy degree from the Teachers Institute in 5 years. The first 2 years were devoted to Jewish studies at the Institute. The last 3 years were divided between Jewish studies, general education, professional studies, and supervised teaching.[9] The Institute's attempt to open an experimental and practice school at Temple Ansche Chesed in 1939 was unsuccessful as Margolis (1964) explains: "Financially, pedagogically and administratively, the school was not ready for experimentation. Its limited staff and limited number of classes made it of little help in practice teaching" (pp. 117–118).

With each strengthening of the program, the Institute increased admission requirements. At first, admission was limited to young people at least 16 years old with an elementary knowledge of Hebrew. Once Hebrew high school graduates were available, the Institute required 3 years of attendance at a secular high school, 2 years of Jewish study beyond elementary school, and sufficient knowledge of spoken Hebrew to participate in courses taught in Hebrew. When the Institute was reorganized into three departments—Preparatory, Academic, and Teacher Training—admission to the latter required graduation from an academic high-school course or completion of the courses in the Preparatory Department. These requirements remained unchanged until 1925 when a new kind of requirement

[9] In 1924 the New York legislature gave the Seminary the right to confer the degrees of Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of Jewish Pedagogy.

was added. Successful applicants had to possess, in the opinion of the faculty, "the personal qualifications essential to success as teachers" (Margolis, 1964, p. 91).

What were those qualifications? Benderly maintained that the successful Jewish teacher needed the same qualifications as the public-school teacher, with particular stress on an inspiring personality, a thorough knowledge of Judaism, and understanding of the American Jewish child, religious enthusiasm, and faith in the future of American Jewry (Gannes, p. 187). Having moved next door to Teachers College,[10] one of the premier schools of education, the Teachers Institute had contact with leading exponents of a professional education for teachers. What were their views and how did they fit in with the program for teachers at TI?

Teacher Education in the Early Twentieth Century

The Hebrew teachers colleges were established during a period of enormous expansion in every sector of teacher education and much debate about teacher education.[11] The main issues concerned the place of general education, its relation to professional preparation, and the balance of a liberal and a technical emphasis in the professional sequence (Borrowman, 1956). Although teacher education was largely viewed as a technical undertaking, there were countervailing ideas about how the normal school ideal of superb craftsmanship could be integrated with the liberal arts ideal of the literate teacher. Teachers College was a leading exponent of that position.

Between 1895 and 1930, normal schools converted to teachers colleges, spurred by sky-rocketing demands for teachers and by pressure from their own students for affordable, accessible higher education. Teacher education entered the university through a second route as elite institutions, including Columbia University, created chairs of pedagogy which quickly became departments and eventually colleges or schools of education. On university and normal school campuses, academic faculty who considered general education and subject matter knowledge sufficient preparation for teaching distanced themselves from educationists who advocated specialized training for teachers. A deep rift developed between these two groups which never really healed.[12] Ironically, this was also the time when medical education moved to the university, but no one questioned whether medical training should be both scientific and practical.

Some important thinkers called for the coordination of general/liberal education and professional education on the grounds that teachers need to understand the aims of education and the child as learner as well as the content to be taught. If teachers were to rely on their own intelligence rather than follow the directives of others, they needed a broad social vision of education and an understanding of the social

[10] Teachers College, founded in 1897 as the New York College for the Training of Teachers, affiliated with Columbia University as a professional school of education. According to Borrowman (1956), TC became the "ideal" university-level professional school, embracing the traditions of both liberal and technical education (p. 119).

[11] For different versions of this history, see Borrowman, 1956; Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Labaree, 2004; Lageman, 2000.

[12] A similar divide often separates Jewish educators and Jewish studies scholars.

and psychological factors affecting learning. This position was articulated in a study by the Carnegie Foundation (Learned et al., 1920) on the professional preparation of teachers and in an essay by Dewey (1904) on the relation of theory and practice in education.

The Carnegie study argued that in order to meet the demands of modern society, teachers needed a professional education that promoted intelligence and insight. William Bagley, a co-author of the study and a faculty member at Teachers College, favored a unified program which avoided the distinction between "academic" and "professional." He objected to special methods separated from content, calling instead for college-level subject-matter courses in which approved methods of teaching were modeled and discussed. Bagley and his colleagues decried the common practice of adding a few education courses to a general college course.

Dewey's 1904 essay dealt with a central issue in professional education—the relationship of theory and practice. Dewey agreed that teacher preparation required a certain amount of practical work and he outlined two approaches with different purposes:

> On the one hand, we may carry on practical work with the object of giving teachers-in-training...control of the techniques of class instruction and management, skill and proficiency in the work of teaching. With this aim in view, practice work is of the nature of apprenticeship. On the other hand, we may use practice work as an instrument in making real and vital theoretical instruction—knowledge of subject matter and principles of education. This is the laboratory point of view. (p. 318)

Dewey favored the laboratory view. He outlined a sequence of field experiences designed to help prospective teachers gain an understanding of principles of learning, the organization of subject matter, and classroom management before they undertook independent practice. The quality of both laboratory and apprenticeship experiences depended on the quality of the schools that served as observation and practice sites.

For many deans and professors of education at the time, the teaching hospital attached to university medical schools was a model for laboratory schools where educational theories could be tested and applied research conducted, while student teachers learned to adopt an experimental stance toward their teaching. Teachers College opened four demonstration and practice schools serving different student populations and educational purposes, but they rarely lived up to Dewey's vision[13] In fact, the ideal of serious professional education for teachers was more often a dream than a reality. Still, it was in the air as Kaplan and his colleagues taught aspiring teachers at the Teachers Institute.

TI and Prevailing Ideas about Teacher Education

The course of study for teachers at the Teachers Institute in its early decades aimed to produce graduates, mainly female, with a unique Jewish literacy, a love of Jewish culture and learning, and confidence about the future of Judaism in America. More

[13] For a discussion of the fate of practice schools, see Clifford & Guthrie (1988), pp. 109–116.

academic than professional, the curriculum made little distinction between "education for elementary and secondary teachers and training for scholarship" (Janowsky, 1967, p. 337). What graduates learned about teaching children is harder to discern.

The academic orientation of the TI curriculum is evident in the space devoted to Jewish studies compared with education. The emphasis on Judaics reflects the collegiate status of the Institute and the fact that students often took education courses at secular colleges where they studied. It also reveals the skepticism of scholars toward the study of pedagogy.

Jewish literacy at TI privileged Hebrew over knowledge of classical texts and treated halacha and mitzvoth as customs and ceremonies (Mintz, 1993, p. 91). The formal curriculum and the institutional culture produced graduates who were models of Jewish living. Did it also teach them how to turn their adult knowledge of Judaism into teachable content and learning activities for young students and how to address children's questions about God, miracles, or the historicity of the Bible?

From their education in the Jewish arts and their participation in the rich cultural life of TI, graduates likely formed images of how the arts could enrich and enliven the curriculum and how holiday celebrations could foster positive attachments to Judaism. Did they also have opportunities to consider the purposes of Jewish education in America and develop a progressive vision of what that education should look like? For example, would they agree with Dushkin (1918), a Benderly disciple, that "instead of teaching Hebrew or Bible or prayers or Talmud, the Jewish schools should teach Jewish children, and, for these purposes, the selections from the religious-national treasure house of the Jewish people should be such as will best prepare these children for their life as American Jews?" (p. 317). How did they understand the religious and/or cultural needs of their future students, sons and daughters of immigrants who might not share their passion for Hebrew?

Samuel Dinin, an instructor in history and education at TI, identified several "unsolved problems" with the program. He thought the Institute needed a model school like the Horace Mann School at Teachers College to serve as a laboratory for and existence proof of the program's vision of progressive Jewish schooling. Dinin also thought the program paid too much attention to the Jewish past and not enough to the Jewish present. "There is too much emphasis on subjects and texts…and no discussion of economic or vocational problems facing Jewish young people today, nor of Jewish community life and organization in this or other countries" (1967, p. 80).

Preparing Professional Day-School Teachers

Well before the start of the twenty-first century, Jews individually and collectively secured their place in the social, economic, political, and cultural life of this country. Still, the challenge of how to be Jewish in America endures. While signs of Jewish creativity and renewal abound, there is hard evidence of declining numbers, weakening ties, and widespread Jewish illiteracy. Some observers see a small, engaged Jewish minority and a large majority of unengaged and indifferent Jews. Others

suggest that between the highly involved and the uninvolved is a big, diverse middle whose Jewish identity and connections fluctuate in relation to life stage and circumstances.

If being Jewish in the twenty-first century has become a matter of individual choice, what can be done to encourage this choice? In a move back to the future, communal leaders have turned again to Jewish education as the key to Jewish continuity. In the last 30 years, the forms and venues of Jewish learning have expanded to include every stage of the life cycle from early childhood to senior citizenship. Jewish education has come to mean much more than Jewish schooling and Jewish schools have taken on expanded functions traditionally met by home and community. The proliferation of options for Jewish learning is partly a response to the contemporary preoccupation with individual choice and personal meaning, but it leaves open the question, Jewish education for what. While scholars and educators examine alternative visions of Jewish education, the fundamental issue, why be Jewish, begs for a contemporary answer.

The Expansion of Jewish Day Schools

In this context, one of the most unexpected developments has been the growth of non-Orthodox Jewish day schools and the diversification of the day-school student population. This represents a change of heart and a change of place in the larger society. The early-twentieth-century leaders in Jewish education believed that Jewish schools should not interfere with “America’s cherished plan of a system of common schools for all the children of all the people” (Dushkin, 1918, p. 138). Alexander Dushkin, one of Benderly’s followers, wrote this at a time when the newly arrived Jewish immigrants were facing the challenges and uncertainties of life in America. Fifty years later, after a long and distinguished career in Jewish education, he changed his mind:

> . . .There has grown up a third generation of American Jewry whose parents are American born and who. . .feel themselves at peace as citizens of the American democracy. . . In the years ahead, it will be increasingly obligatory for Jewish educators to promote the establishment of day schools as the intensive core of the American Jewish school system. . .to include 25% of our children. (1967, pp. 44–48)

Interestingly, Dushkin’s recommended percentage fits the current numbers, though perhaps not the demographics he had in mind. According to the National Jewish Population Study (2000), Jewish children today receive more full-time Jewish schooling than their parents’ generation, with 29% attending a day school or yeshiva, as compared to 12% of Jewish adults who attended Jewish day school or yeshiva. While most day school students come from Orthodox homes, increasing numbers of non-Orthodox families have chosen a day-school education for their children.

Day-school enrollments took off in the 1940s as different Orthodox groups advocated intensive Jewish education to insure the survival of traditional Jewish life in America. Some wanted to segregate their children from secular learning and outside

influences, while others sought to combine strong Jewish and secular education.[14] After World War II, the Conservative movement set up day schools to perpetuate its brand of Judaism, founding the Solomon Schechter Day School Association in 1964. After many years of opposition to the idea, in 1985 the Reform movement passed a resolution supporting day schools.

Schick (2009) reports 800 day schools, up from 676 in 1998 and 759 five years ago. Of these, 200 (25%) are non-Orthodox, which includes 98 community schools, 17 Reform schools, and 50 Solomon Schechter schools. Most of the growth in the non-Orthodox sector occurred in community day schools which reported a 40% increase in the last decade, mainly at the high-school level.

Outside the Orthodox community, day schools educate a relatively small segment of Jewish children compared to congregational schools. Still, some communal leaders and Jewish educators believe that non-Orthodox Jewish families need day schools even more because they are more integrated into American society and more at risk of assimilation. Others see day schools as an effective way to foster strong Jewish identities and sustain a vital Jewish community.

The growth of non-Orthodox day schools led some to wonder where teachers would come from, particularly teachers who could help realize the vision of community day schools. The prospect of full-time teaching positions, concerns about a shortage of qualified teachers,[15] and a belief that a new kind of teacher was needed made it possible once again for visionary funders and educational leaders to contemplate full-time Jewish teacher-education programs.

New Programs to Prepare Day-School Teachers

Since the start of the twenty-first century, a handful of programs were launched with generous support from Jewish foundations and funders, including the PARDES Educators Program sponsored by the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Israel, Melamdim sponsored by the Shalom Hartman Institute in Israel, and the DeLeT (Day School Leadership Through Teaching) Program sponsored by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles and Brandeis University.[16] These well-subsidized programs vary in length, substantive focus, institutional sponsorship, and terminal degrees, but they share a commitment to enhancing the

[14]In 1935, there were 16 day schools in the US enrolling 4,600 students. By 1965, there were over 300 elementary and secondary schools with over 55,000 students. Torah U'Mesorah was established in 1944 and set out to create day schools in every community. The National Council of Beth Jacob Schools was founded in 1947, to promote schools for girls, modeled after those in Poland (Pilch, 1969, pp. 140–144).

[15]Ben-Avie and Kress (2006) found that 46% of all day-school teachers are over the age of 50 and will likely retire within 10 years and 24% of Judaic and general studies teachers are recent hires. Whether the latter finding is a reflection of teacher turnover or school growth, it suggests the need for strong preparation and induction to increase teacher retention.

[16]Three other programs created around the same time were short-lived—the Jewish Teacher Corps, Ha-Sha'ar, and a new masters program in Religious Education at the University of Pennsylvania.

quality of teaching and learning in Jewish day schools by preparing passionate and knowledgeable day-school teachers at the elementary, middle, and/or high-school levels.

The lack of research about these initiatives limits what we can learn from them in systematic ways. For example, we cannot tell if different candidates are attracted to different programs, what vision of day-school teaching animates them, what learning opportunities are provided in courses and field work, how long graduates of different programs stay in teaching, and what kind of teachers they become. Because I know the DeLeT program from the inside and because it has been the focus of some research at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education, I present it as an example of one contemporary program designed to prepare beginning day-school teachers.[17]

The DeLeT Program

The DeLeT (Day School Leadership Through Teaching) program was started in 2001 because Laura Lauder, a visionary venture philanthropist, wanted to help address the shortage of qualified teachers for liberal elementary day schools, particularly teachers who could teach both general and Jewish subjects in an integrated way.[18] Impressed with Teach for America (TFA), a service-oriented program that recruits talented graduates from elite colleges and universities for 2 years of teaching in hard-to-staff public schools, Lauder wanted to create a prestigious, selective, intensive fellowship to recruit and train day-school teachers.

Lauder organized a group of funders who supported DeLeT during its first 5 years when it functioned as a national fellowship program.[19] She invited Michael Zeldin, professor of Jewish education at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and me, newly arrived at Brandeis University, to design and launch the program at our respective institutions. During the planning phase, a national design team articulated beliefs about teaching and learning and the mission of liberal Jewish day schools in order to lay a strong conceptual foundation for the program. When DeLeT became part of the educational offerings at HUC-JIR and Brandeis, these ideas provided a common framework for faculty, mentor teachers, and students in both sites.[20]

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[17]DeLeT is part of three research projects at the Mandel Center: a longitudinal survey of alumni from HUC and Brandeis; a comparative study of beginning teachers in Jewish, Catholic, and urban teacher-education programs, and a study of DeLeT's Beit Midrash for Teachers. For more information, see www.brandeis.edu/mandel.

[18]DeLeT, the Hebrew word for "door," is designed to open a door to a career in day-school education. Jonathan Woocher created the name which stands for "day school leadership through teaching."

[19]DeLeT now benefits from generous funding from the Jim Joseph Foundation which enabled the program to continue.

[20]At Brandeis, DeLeT became the Jewish day school concentration in the Master of Arts (MAT) in Teaching Program. At HUC, DeLeT became one of several certificate programs.

DeLeT is a full-time, 14-month, post-BA teacher preparation program that combines Jewish and education studies with an intensive internship. Fellows spend two summers on campus taking courses and participating in cocurricular activities. During the intervening school year, they spend 4 days a week in a local day school, learning to teach with the support and guidance of experienced (mentor) teachers and clinical instructors. During their internship year, fellows return to campus 1 day a week to continue their formal studies.

The program links a vision of liberal day-school education with a vision of the kind of teacher the program aims to prepare. According to the DeLeT MAT Handbook at Brandeis (2008), the central task of Jewish day schools is to enable students "to form integrated identities as they study and experience their dual heritage and responsibilities as Americans and as Jews" (p. 4). To advance this vision, DeLeT aims to prepare elementary day-school teachers who "(a) take students and their ideas seriously; (b) create democratic classrooms infused with Jewish values and experiences; (c) make meaningful connections between general and Jewish studies; (d) welcome parents as partners in children's education; (e) value Jewish text study as a core Jewish activity; (f) learn well from experience" (Feiman-Nemser & Zeldin, 2007, p. 6).

Several elements stand out in this formulation. The list gives primacy to pupils and their capacity to think. It signals the Jewish day-school teacher's responsibility to model and teach both Jewish and democratic values and to help students learn to be citizens in two communities. It implies that such learning may be enhanced by curricular integration. It highlights the value of learning from texts and from experience for both students and teachers (Hammerness, 2007)

At Brandeis, five strands or components make up the DeLeT curriculum: classroom teaching, subject-matter pedagogy, learners and learning, Jewish literacy and identity, and field studies which include a practicum in teaching reading, an internship, and classroom research. A seminar on teaching, tightly coordinated with the internship, runs through the program and provides a context for learning about planning, classroom instruction, assessment, classroom organization, management, and culture. Subject-specific methods courses address the learning and teaching of core subjects in the elementary curriculum, both general (mainly reading and math) and Jewish (Torah, prayer, holidays). A seminar on becoming a Jewish educator enables DeLeT students to clarify their personal stance on basic theological and ideological issues and consider the implications for day-school teaching.

The first summer emphasizes teachers as students of Jewish texts. As the year unfolds, the focus shifts to teachers as students of children, learning, subject matter, and teaching. The overall goal of the program is to prepare reflective teachers with a strong beginning practice and an identity as Jewish educators, whether they teach Jewish studies, general studies, or both. Those who come with a strong Judaic studies background often end up teaching Jewish studies, but all are prepared to integrate Jewish themes into their teaching, situate classroom experiences in a Jewish frame of reference, and serve as Jewish role models. According to the latest alumni survey, administered in 2009, 40% of the DeLeT graduates teach general studies, 40% teach Jewish studies, and 20% teach both.

DeLeT also works to build a professional learning community that models the intellectual and ethical dispositions teachers should foster in their own classrooms. One vehicle for doing this at Brandeis is the Beit Midrash for Teachers where students in their first summer are paired with students in their second summer to study classical Jewish texts about teaching and learning. As *hevruta* partners learn to listen to each other and the texts and to frame and refine their interpretations, they begin to form habits of mind and heart that shape their approach to text study and the study of teaching and learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2006). Thus the Beit Midrash helps foster a community of critical colleagues who support each other's learning during the intense year of DeLeT and beyond.

A signature feature of the DeLeT program which distinguishes it from other Jewish teacher preparation programs past and present, and from programs like Teach for America, is the year-long, mentored internship.[21] The opportunity to observe and assist experienced teachers as they work with students across the school year, to be part of a day-school community and to interact with parents and administrators is strong preparation for teaching. Besides their mentor teacher, each fellow has a clinical instructor who helps them connect what they are learning at the university with what they are doing and learning in their internship classrooms.

Contemporary Discourse in Teacher Education

DeLeT and other contemporary programs for preparing day-school teachers emerged during a period of intense debate about the quality and control of teaching and teacher education. Basically there are two strategies for getting good teachers. The first, associated with the deregulation agenda, relies on recruitment and selection. The second, associated with the professionalization agenda, relies on providing people with opportunities to develop the capacities required for effective teaching. The two agendas reflect different assumptions about teaching and learning to teach.

Deregulators take a minimalist approach. They advocate reducing or removing requirements ("barriers") so that more and different people will be attracted to teaching. Since the mid-1980s, the proliferation of alternative routes to teaching has dramatically changed the landscape of teacher education and the number of teachers prepared through such routes has grown exponentially. Alternative certification programs have also succeeded in attracting a different pool of candidates, more diverse with regard to race, age, and gender and, in some highly selective programs, academic qualifications.

The second strategy associated with professionalization rests on a view of teaching as a clinical practice that depends on the purposeful use of specialized knowledge, skill, and judgment in the service of student learning (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). According to proponents, developing professional teachers depends on high-quality initial preparation and

[21] DeLeT is an example of an "eased-entry" program compared with "fast-track" programs like TFA which place teachers in classrooms as teachers of record after a brief summer of training.

continuous professional development. Exemplary preparation programs feature extensive, carefully supervised fieldwork integrated with courses that cohere around a shared vision of good teaching.

Advocates of professional teaching and teacher education are critical of the narrow definition of a "highly qualified teacher" enshrined in *No Child Left Behind*, the federal legislation enacted by the Bush administration in 2002. According to NCLB, verbal ability and subject-matter knowledge are the relevant indicators of teacher quality. Accordingly, articulate liberal arts graduates with academic majors in their subject area should be able to figure how to teach while doing it.

Clearly teachers cannot teach what they do not know, but teachers must also know how to transform their knowledge into teachable subject matter with a structure and logic that students will understand. They need multiple ways of representing core concepts and explaining big ideas. They also need to know what students may find confusing or difficult and how to approach those topics in intellectually honest and age-appropriate ways (Ball & McDiarmid, 1990; Wilson, Shulman & Richert, 1987). An academic major does not provide this kind of subject-matter knowledge for teaching.

One obstacle to promoting a professional view of teaching is the belief held by many that teaching is relatively straightforward work, not "an extraordinarily difficult job that looks easy" (Labaree, 2004, p. 298). Because everyone has been to school, everyone thinks she/he knows what teaching involves. Teaching also seems straightforward because we all engage in a kind of teaching, "showing, telling, and helping others," as part of our daily lives. This contributes to the notion that teaching is a "natural" skill, not something learned through rigorous professional preparation (Ball & Forzani, 2009).

But classroom teaching is different from the everyday showing, telling, and helping that we do as parents, spouses, and friends. Inside the classroom, teachers perform a wide range of activities—explaining, listening, questioning, managing, demonstrating, assessing, inspiring—all aimed at promoting the learning of 25 or more diverse students. Outside the classroom, teachers design instructional plans, assess student work, interact with colleagues, parents, and administrators. Based on a deep understanding of classroom teaching, some leading teacher educators are now recommending that the curriculum of teacher education be (re)centered on core tasks and activities that beginning teachers must understand and enact (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman & McDonald, 2008).[22]

The simple dichotomy between "alternative" and "traditional" teacher-education programs is breaking down as researchers discover more differences within than between categories. Moreover, since the effect of any program is a combination of selection and learning opportunities, the solution to the problem of teacher quality may depend on balancing strong recruitment with rigorous opportunities to learn about teaching through connected coursework linked to supervised field experience (Grossman & Loeb, 2008, pp. 184–185).

[22]The recentering on practice is a counter measure to what some see as an over-emphasis on teacher planning, reflection, knowledge, and beliefs.

DeLeT in the Context of Contemporary Teacher Education

Where does DeLeT fit in contemporary discourse on teacher education? Clearly the program reflects the professionalization agenda in its goals, structure, and curriculum. The model of an integrating teacher is appropriate for the elementary grades where most teachers are generalists, but the day school's dual curriculum poses challenges. In terms of recruitment, DeLeT offers some of the same incentives as other highly selective alternate route programs, but program leaders face trade-offs in their effort to recruit strong candidates.

DeLeT incorporates many features associated with programs that have a positive impact on teachers' preparedness and performance (Darling-Hammond, 2000). These include (a) a clear vision of teaching and learning that gives the program coherence; (b) well-defined standards of practice and performance used in program design and student assessment; (c) a core curriculum based on knowledge of child development, learning, and subject-matter pedagogy, and taught in the context of practice; (d) strong partnerships with schools; (d) extended clinical experience integrated with coursework; and (e) extensive use of pedagogies that relate theory and practice (e.g., child study, performance assessment, classroom research).

Overall, DeLeT has succeeded in recruiting academically able, Jewishly committed candidates with diverse backgrounds and experience. Many DeLeT fellows attended top-ranked universities where they majored in a variety of subjects, including Jewish studies (57%).[23] Nearly three-quarters enrolled in DeLeT within 2 years of college graduation; the rest came to day-school teaching as a second or third career; 39% place themselves outside conventional denominational labels. The rest are equally divided between Conservative (22%) and Reform (22%), with 12% identifying as modern Orthodox. In terms of their own Jewish education, 35% attended a Jewish elementary day school and 20% attended a Jewish day high school. The rest participated in other forms of Jewish education (supplementary school, camping, Hebrew high school); 71% spent time in Israel touring, visiting, studying; 9% grew up there (Tamir, Feiman-Nemser, Silvera-Sasson, & Cytryn, 2010).

Incentives like a year-long internship, full tuition scholarship, a modest living stipend, the chance to earn a state teaching license, and an advanced degree support a selective-admission process and help broaden the pool of candidates. Program leaders puzzle over accepting people who are exploring a possible career in day-school teaching or sticking with people who seem to have such a commitment. Unlike some service-oriented programs where people teach for 2 years and then move on to other careers, DeLeT aims to build a cadre of teacher-leaders for Jewish day schools. So retention is as important as recruitment.[24]

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[23]The ranking of colleges and universities is based on SAT scores, using data and guidelines from the College Board (http:/www.collegeboard,com)

[24]Besides the 14-month program of initial preparation, DeLeT offers support during the first 2 years of teaching and continuing professional development opportunities for alumni. This reflects the program's vision of a professional learning continuum (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

A second trade-off facing program leaders has to do with candidates' Jewish studies background. Some outsiders question whether DeLeT should ever accept someone with a strong Jewish identity but a limited Judaic studies background, but that misses a central aspect of the program. DeLeT prepares elementary day-school generalists who see themselves as Jewish educators, whatever their teaching assignment. This represents a sea change in how people think about day-school teacher preparation. In the past, day schools outsourced the training of elementary generalists to general schools of education. DeLeT prepares teachers who identify with the Jewish mission and contribute to the Jewish life of the school. Whether they teach general studies, Jewish studies, or both depends on their background and interests, and the needs of the field.

Conclusion

Separated by almost a century, the program for teachers at the Teachers Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary and the DeLeT program at Brandeis University, and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion were launched at times of transition, experimentation, and uncertainty in the American Jewish community (Sarna, 1995; Woocher, Rubin-Ross, & Woocher, 2009). Both programs were created to prepare Jewish teachers for a kind of Jewish school that would not have existed in each other's era. Just as a 5-day-a-week supplementary Talmud Torah is hard to imagine today, so a non-Orthodox day school, especially a pluralistic one, was unthinkable in the opening decades of the twentieth century. The invention of these new institutions under different historic circumstances to help perpetuate Judaism in modern America reflects an enduring faith in the power of Jewish education.

The teacher training program at TI and the DeLeT program offer different answers to this question: What do Jewish teachers need to know, care about, and be able to do, and how can they be helped to learn that? In this concluding section, I use these differences to highlight some enduring issues about the curriculum and pedagogy of Jewish teacher education. I close with a call for research on the preparation of day-school teachers. In the current climate of accountability, school leaders, educational researchers, and policy makers want to know what kind of teacher education produces teachers who stay in teaching and make a difference in students' lives and learning. Jewish funders, day-school leaders, and teacher-education providers also need answers to this question.

A report commissioned by the National Academy of Education[25] outlines three broad areas of knowledge, skill, and commitment that teachers need to be effective: (a) knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals in relation to the purposes of schooling; (b) knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts; and

[25] A synthesis of several decades of research and practical experimentation, this framework reflects the current state of research and professional consensus about what teacher education needs to accomplish.

(c) knowledge of teaching (e.g., instruction, assessment, management) (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005, p. 10). The TI and DeLeT programs emphasize different kinds of knowledge across these domains.

While the Teachers Institute emphasized Judaic subject-matter knowledge, the DeLeT program emphasizes pedagogical knowledge. It is not surprising that a collegiate program preparing teachers for an intensive Jewish afternoon school would focus on Judaic content, including Hebrew language skills, while a graduate level, professional preparation program for elementary teachers in all-day Jewish schools would emphasize general and subject-specific pedagogical knowledge. We should not, however, let this difference reinforce the familiar and persistent separation between content and pedagogy and between the student and the curriculum.

Teachers need a solid grasp of their subject matter and an understanding of their pedagogical aspects (Shulman, 1986). Such knowledge helps teachers make important content accessible to a range of learners.[26] Moreover, since teachers teach particular content to particular students in particular contexts, they also need to know how to get to know their students as individuals and learners, create, and maintain a productive learning environment, monitor student engagement and understanding, and promote moral and civic development.[27] These responsibilities require principled and practical knowledge best learned in the context of practice.

A persistent challenge for teacher education is creating well-designed field experiences that serve the purposes of both laboratory and apprenticeship. Securing appropriate schools of observation and practice was an “unsolved problem” for the Hebrew teachers colleges. On the other hand, DeLeT makes extensive use of pedagogies that help future teachers link theory and practice and develop a beginning repertoire of curricular, instructional, and assessment strategies, including a year-long internship. Strong field experiences have clear goals, frequent opportunities for practice with feedback, modeling by more expert teachers who make their thinking visible, multiple opportunities to relate coursework to field experiences, and structured opportunities for analysis and reflection (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005, p. 410). Such arrangements depend on long-term partnerships between day schools and teacher-education programs based on mutual self-interest and a negotiated vision of good teaching and learning.

The importance of knowing one’s students has its parallel in teachers’ self-knowledge. Teaching and learning to teach are deeply personal work, engaging teachers’ emotions as well as their intellect and shaping their personal and professional identities. We saw how Kaplan provoked TI students to confront and transform their own religious beliefs and practices. Similar transformations occur in the DeLeT program as teacher candidates explore their Jewish identities in a

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[26]Preparing subject matter teachers is especially daunting at the elementary level where teachers are responsible for multiple subjects. This is a continuing challenge for the DeLeT program.

[27]The DeLeT standards place these teaching responsibilities in a Jewish framework. Standard 2 calls for teachers to know their students as individuals, learners, members of families, spiritual beings. Standard 3 calls for teachers to create classroom learning communities infused with Jewish values and experiences.

pluralistic environment and consider what it means for Jewish educators to be "textpeople" (Heschel, 1966). If we want day-school teachers to support their students' religious, cultural, and spiritual development, we need to attend to these aspects in teachers.

Research in teacher education emerged in the last half century as an identifiable field of inquiry. Amid contemporary debates about how to get good teachers, there are increasing calls for research that identifies the critical elements of teacher education that produce teachers who have a positive influence on students. The existence of different pathways to Jewish day-school teaching creates a unique opportunity to gather data about (a) who attends different programs; (b) what kind of preparation they receive; (c) what sort of work environment they enter; (d) what they are like as teachers. With comparable data about individual teachers, their preparation, and their schools, we can examine how these factors interact to promote (or inhibit) a sense of preparedness and success. Understanding which combinations yield the most committed and effective teachers can help strengthen the design of programs to prepare day-school teachers.

Research in Jewish education is still a young enterprise with few structural supports for serious and sustained inquiry. This makes it hard to mount a program of research in Jewish teacher education. At the same time, support for such an investigation would signal a new regard for the preparation of day-school teachers and the work of day-school teaching. It would also produce usable knowledge to inform policy and practice.

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Professional Development of Teachers in Jewish Education

Gail Zaiman Dorph

Introduction[1]

In the last decades, a consensus has emerged concerning both the importance and the critical features of high-quality professional development for teachers.[2] Grounded in the idea that students' educational experience depends on the caliber of teachers' instructional skills, this chapter explores the following questions:

- What makes it challenging to create effective professional development for teachers in both general and Jewish education?
- What are the critical principles of effective professional development?
- What happens when these principles are implemented in Jewish educational settings—what do these principles look like in action, what seems to work, and what obstacles arise?

To provide images of the kind of professional learning experiences that can profoundly improve the capacity of our teachers, the chapter concludes with examples of principle-based professional development in Jewish educational settings. These examples also suggest that more effort and research are needed to figure out how to make these kinds of experiences even more effective and more common.

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[2]In particular, see three recent reports of large-scale studies: Barber and Mourshed (2007); Darling-Hammond et al. (2009); Porter et al. (2000).

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Challenges to Creating Effective Professional Development for Teachers

Four challenges face Jewish and general education as we aim to create effective professional development for teachers. The first two relate to teachers and teaching; the second two relate to professional development and professional developers.

Teachers Often Lack Solid Preparation in Their Subject Matters for Teaching

While many of the challenges of professional development arise both in general and Jewish education, the issue of teacher preparation appears in a unique form in Jewish educational contexts. In a study of Jewish education in three diverse American Jewish communities, researchers found that only 19% of teachers, across Jewish school settings—this includes day, pre and congregational schools—have professional preparation in both Jewish Studies and Education (Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Tammivaara, & Goodman, 1998). The situation does not seem to have changed dramatically over the course of the last decade. When we look only at Jewish studies knowledge, the lack of subject-matter knowledge is the most extreme in congregational and early childhood settings and least extreme in day school high schools, where generally teachers have subject-matter knowledge. Additionally, teachers affiliated with the Orthodox movement have more Jewish studies background (Gamoran et al., 1998). In a more recent study of day and congregational schoolteachers (Ben-Avie & Kress, 2008), a somewhat different set of questions were asked to learn about professional-level teacher education in supplementary and day school settings. On the Jewish studies dimension, findings indicate that in day schools 53% of teachers had received some Jewish studies courses in college; 22% were Jewish studies majors; 8% were rabbis. Among congregational schoolteachers, 4% were rabbis; 19% were Jewish studies majors; 60% had taken Jewish studies courses in college. While the majority of teachers had degrees beyond a BA, 44% of day school teachers, and 68% of congregational schoolteachers did not have teaching certificates.

This lack of subject-matter expertise poses real challenges for the curriculum of professional development in education in general and in Jewish education in particular. In general education, the claim is often made that teachers are unprepared to teach their subjects (Ma, 1999; Stodolsky, 1988); however, there is probably no one teaching a math class who has not studied math at least through high school. Yet, it is common for teachers of Hebrew in many Jewish schools to have weak knowledge of Hebrew[3] (Gamoran et al., 1998) and for teachers of Bible to have no experience studying the Bible either as children or as adults.

[3]When ascertaining the knowledge base of teachers in Jewish schools, researchers ask participants to rate their fluency in reading Hebrew, translating Hebrew, and speaking Hebrew.

So, unlike other contexts, where one might rely on teachers' content knowledge (sometimes solid; sometimes not) and work on developing pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), professional development in Jewish schools needs centrally to attend to content knowledge. What would it take for teachers to "get up to speed" in Hebrew or Bible as they teach those subjects? In order for professional development to be effective in the sphere of Jewish education, it needs to grapple with the fact that teachers may be both novice instructors and also novice students of the subjects they are teaching.

Teachers Often Have a Mimetic View of Teaching and Learning

The dominant instructional mode in both Jewish and general education over the past generation fits what Jackson (1986) refers to as the "mimetic tradition." In this tradition, instruction has been widely designed as though people learn through transmission—by listening carefully and then remembering or practicing what they have heard. Considerable research, however, has shown that learning involves not imitation and replication, but change and transformation (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999; Jackson, 1986; Kegan, 1982). Often referred to as transformative or constructivist, this paradigm suggests that learning is not additive, but requires internal change. Further, this research demonstrates that learning—of skills and facts along with big ideas—is more effective when it is experiential and interactive. This vision of teaching and learning emphasizes conceptual understanding and the social construction of knowledge. Following Dewey (1938), it claims that learning generally does not take place in isolation, but most often occurs in social situations where teachers and students (and students among themselves) discover and make meaning through their interactions with the subject and with each other. Since most teachers have learned within the "mimetic" paradigm, their years of experience as students are unlikely to support them in teaching in the constructivist/transformative paradigm that we currently understand as most effective. This suggests that effective professional development, rather than just adding to teachers' repertoire of skills, will also help teachers transform deeply engrained understandings about the nature of teaching and learning.

Most Professional Development Is Aligned with the Mimetic Model of Teaching and Learning

Unfortunately, most professional development experiences reflect the mimetic or "delivery" tradition. Think of the models we most often see—the one-shot workshop that focuses on generic teaching skills, the "make and take" workshop that focuses, for example, on teaching a Jewish holiday, in the one-size-fits-all community learning day. Typically, all of these are more aligned with the mimetic model of learning. They tend to focus on generic pedagogical skills, rather than on specific pedagogical approaches that align to the uniqueness of the various subject matters. Typically,

these experiences do not build images of transformative teaching and learning and do not help teachers reconsider their modes of teaching, so the possibility of their having lasting value on improving practice is limited.

There is a double challenge, then, in supporting teachers to adopt a transformative model of teaching: Teachers have had an "apprenticeship" of learning throughout their youth that suggests to them that learning is about transmission. Further, teachers' experiences of professional development reinforce this point of view. It makes sense that the modes of professional development be aligned with the modes of teaching that we are trying to promote; therefore, we need professional development to be not just informative, but transformative. Both the curriculum and pedagogy of professional development for teachers need to be redesigned in order to meet this double challenge.

Most Professional Developers Have Not Been Prepared to Create Learning Experiences That Reflect This New Model of Teaching and Learning

The first three challenges suggest the fourth challenge: how to support the "new" professional developer (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Stein, Smith, & Silver, 1999). They too "suffer" from the same maladies, i.e., they were educated in a mimetic fashion and they have experienced mimetically inspired professional development. Our current understanding about teaching and learning demands that professional developers create and implement transformative professional development for teachers. The challenge we (in Jewish and general education) face is formidable. We need to simultaneously change the nature of learning experiences for children, for teachers, and for professional developers.

Professional Development: Curriculum and Principles

In the last decades, a consensus has emerged about the critical principles of effective professional development for teachers that takes into account this transformative vision of teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Knapp, 2003; Little, 1993; Porter, Garet, Desimone, Yoon, & Birman, 2000; Sparks & Hirsch, 1990). These principles suggest designing learning opportunities that change teachers' *thinking* about teaching and learning and also affect their teaching *practices*. Not surprisingly, these principles are aligned with a more general constructivist vision of teaching and learning.

Curriculum of Effective Professional Development

In the teaching and learning model proposed here, there are three elements that are always present: teacher, student, and subject matter. Additionally, there is a fourth factor referred to as the "environment" that includes such things as a classroom, a family, a synagogue, or professional development setting. Figure 1 depicts what we

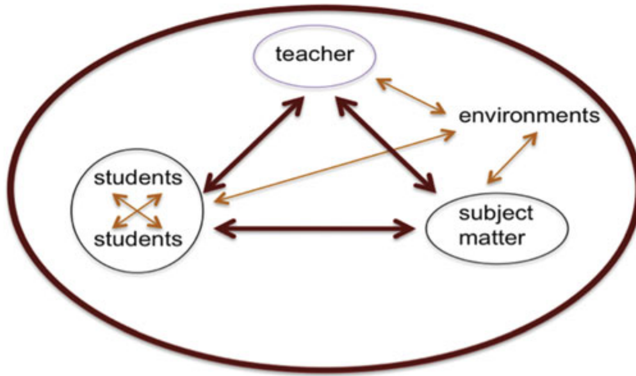

Fig. 1 Student instructional learning triangle

might think of as the default situation, where a teacher teaches students in a classroom. The arrows in between the vertices depict the interactive nature of teaching and learning. Let us consider this triangle.[4]

This interactive triangle (Cohen, Raudenbusch, & Ball, 2003; Hawkins, 1967; McDonald, 1992; Sizer, 1984/1992) is an attempt to describe enacted teaching. It indicates that opportunities for student learning reside in interactions of students with each other, with their teachers and with the subject(s) they are studying.

> Nearly all formal learning in schools involves the interactions of three actors: the student, the teacher, and the subject of their mutual attention. The character of this triangle is subject to change, varying from pupil to pupil, teacher to teacher, subject to subject, day to day, even minute to minute. (Sizer, 1984, pp. 151–2)

Figure 2 includes the same three elements: teacher, learner, and subject matter and the same conception of the dynamics of the relationships. But, in Fig. 2, the professional developer is in the teacher's role. The professional developer's students are the teachers who participate in professional development sessions, and the "subject matter" is "teaching and learning" itself, that is, the entire student instructional triangle. It is worth noting the parallel processes between student and teacher learning.

In studying this triangle, we see that opportunities for teachers' professional learning reside in the interaction among professionals, the subject matter of professional development, and the professional developers. These opportunities for learning can take place outside of the practice of teaching, in workshops, courses, and in study groups designing curriculum or examining student work; or within practice itself, through mentoring and peer coaching (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 1998 and 2001; Knapp, 2003).

Most importantly, the triangle illuminates the "content" of the subject matter of professional development. The curriculum of professional development for teachers is not adult study of the subject matter (no matter how rich that may be). It is, rather, learning Humash, Siddur, Talmud, and other topics *for the purposes of* teaching

[4]This graphic appears in Cohen et al. (2003) with an additional circle around it to depict the environment.

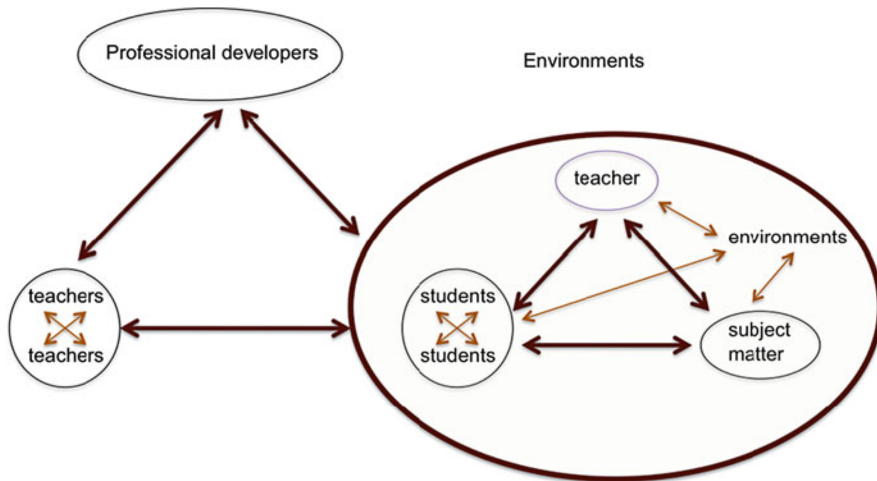

Fig. 2 Teacher instructional learning triangle (Deborah Ball introduced this graphic into the design and curriculum work of MTEI in 1996)

them to specific learners in specific contexts—what Shulman (1986) called pedagogic content knowledge. As Dewey (1902/1964) said, teachers must be able "to psychologize" the subject matter (p. 352). This means that a teacher must be able to "view the subject matter through the eyes of the learner, as well as interpret[ing] the learner's comments, questions, and activities through the lenses of the subject matter" (McDiarmid, Ball, & Anderson, 1989, p. 194). Integrating the study of subject matter with issues of teaching and learning provides a path toward addressing the first challenge raised in this chapter—that teachers in Jewish education may be novices at the subject matter and novice teachers (see Appendix for the extension of this approach to thinking about the curriculum for the professional developer). Focusing on pedagogical content knowledge supports teachers in gaining expertise in both subject matter and teaching at once.

Principles of Effective Professional Development (PD)

Educational researchers[5] argue that to affect teachers' thinking and practice, professional development programs should:

1. Take place within teachers' regular work day or work week
2. Continue over time with sessions building on each other

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[5]There are different versions of this list (Bolam & McMahon, 2004; Knapp, 2003; Little, 1993; Stein et al., 1999). On most lists, "align with new standards" is a key feature. As Jewish education does not have a standards movement to which these PD interventions could align, I have omitted this feature.

3. Model active learning
4. Foster a collegial, collaborative environment
5. Focus on building teachers' pedagogical content knowledge
6. Include learning in and from practice

The first two principles speak to the structural characteristics of these initiatives; the next two involve the norms, social contexts, and processes of learning; and the last two relate to elements of the content of the curriculum itself. As I unpack these key features, I will situate them in the contexts of Jewish education in order to help illustrate implications for professional development in these settings.

Take Place Within Teachers' Regular Work Day or Work Week

It is clear that increasing the number of hours that teachers learn together will not in and of itself improve the quality of learning for their students, but without such time set aside for learning, no change can be expected. Teachers' work in Jewish educational settings needs to be redefined. We can no longer assume that the teaching role includes only preparing and teaching one's class, coming in 15 minutes before, leaving directly afterward, and attending an occasional teachers' meeting. Making time for teacher learning requires thinking creatively about how to build this into teachers' ongoing work. How might the work of teachers be designed so that they have time to think, talk, and learn together? Depending on the setting, it might mean paying teachers for an extra evening or Sunday afternoon a month; it might mean figuring out a system of release time, which may involve paying a substitute or organizing times for teachers to work together during electives; it may involve changing the nature of teachers' meetings and taking care of logistical issues through written communication.

Continue Over Time with Sessions Building on Each Other

Recent research has shown that it takes (at least) between 30 and 50 hours or more for professional learning experiences to begin to effect changes in teachers' thinking and practice; it likely takes even more to support enough change in practice to effect student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Knapp, 2003; Wayne, Kwang, Pei, Cronen, & Garet, 2008). In Jewish education, a study done in five communities (Holtz, Gamoran, Dorph, Goldring, & Robinson, 2000), reported that 37% of programs met for only one session, and another 49% met for between two and five sessions. Just 12% of programs met for six or more sessions: even those programs included only 18 or fewer hours of learning time. Thus, none of the programs were sustained enough to have a reliable impact on teachers' thinking or practice.[6]

[6] A recent JESNA (Jewish Educational Services of North America) study (2008) suggests that professional development opportunities attended by teachers in day school and after-school programs,

Model Active Learning

If teachers are to create "transformational" learning environments where students learn to challenge each other, question ideas, and build new knowledge, it makes sense that professional development for teachers model these features (Lieberman, 1996). Active learning is often mistakenly conflated with interactive techniques, like using manipulatives in mathematics or learning centers when studying Israel. Creating active learning environments is not the opposite of learning from frontal teaching. Aiming for understanding and using one's knowledge is the hallmark of this kind of learning.

What might it look like to apply the principles of active learning to professional development settings? This paradigm suggests that we think about teachers as learners who would benefit from learning opportunities that encourage curiosity, inquiry, analysis, and reflection. Professional development that models active learning supports teachers by creating opportunities for them to work with their colleagues on real problems, to share their own work, and give and receive feedback and build new professional knowledge.

Locate Professional Learning in a Collegial, Collaborative Environment

In an intensive study of the norms of ten Jewish schools in one community, Stodolsky and her colleagues (2006) found that teachers report a congenial atmosphere in which they were generally helpful to one another and could count on one another. Yet there was little indication that this congeniality translated into meaningful professional discourse among teachers. Only a few schools (3 of 10) reported regular collaboration among teachers on instructional matters, such as coordinating curriculum.

Despite congenial relationships, the work of teaching is overwhelmingly solitary (Lortie, 1975). Teacher-writers Troen and Boles (2003) reflect on the way the isolated nature of teaching practice affects teachers' learning:

> . . .isolation means that each teacher must learn things by trial and error. . .Teachers have few opportunities and little encouragement to work together and learn from one another. . .and collaboration and teamwork are not the cultural norm. (pp. 69–70)

Teacher isolation prevents teachers learning from one another and building professional learning communities. Professional school cultures that support teacher learning (Little, 1987), on the contrary, feature sustained interaction among teachers about teaching and learning.

However, just creating opportunities for teachers to talk together will not create such communities, for the social norms of conversation do not necessarily lead

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still are mostly in programs of 1 day. Only 13% of teachers in complementary (after school) schools and 16% of teachers in day schools have participated in programs of 4–6 sessions.

to meaningful learning. It might be fair to say that most adults do not know how to engage in constructive yet critical conversations with their peers, to function as "critical colleagues" (Achinstein & Meyer, 1997; Lord, 1994). In their conversations with each other, teachers tend to practice the conventions of politeness that are common in the wider culture. In most circumstances, teachers refrain from asking probing questions about a colleague's practice, even when they have the opportunity to talk about professional issues because they do not want to "rock the boat," to appear critical, or to create tension with their colleagues (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001). As Lord suggests, teachers must be willing "to serve as commentators and critics of their own and other teachers' practices" (p. 185). This challenge suggests a question. How can we create professional development opportunities in which the unfamiliar norms of critical colleagueship are valued, and explicit experience, practice and support for engaging in these kinds of behaviors are provided?

Focus on Pedagogic Content Knowledge

In research on programs of professional development in five American Jewish communities, only 13% focused on Jewish content per se, and another 18% focused on methods for teaching a particular Jewish content. The remaining programs (69%) centered on issues of pedagogy, leadership, or other topics without articulating a concrete connection to Jewish subject matter (Holtz et al., 2000). Given most teachers' lack of Jewish subject-matter knowledge, creating professional development opportunities that deal both with Jewish subject matter and also with issues of teaching and learning those subjects is of critical importance.

The goals, challenges, pedagogic strategies of subject matters are different one from another (Stodolsky, 1988). Teaching Hebrew is different from teaching Bible, Values, Rabbinics, or Jewish Customs and Practices. Articulating this point, Shulman described pedagogic content knowledge as follows:

> [Pedagogical content knowledge consists of knowing]. . .for the most regularly taught topics in one's subject area, the most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations—in a word, the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others. . ..[also,] an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult; the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of those most frequently taught topics. (Shulman, 1986, p. 9)

If Shulman is right, we need to think about how to provide forums to help teachers in the varied settings of Jewish education develop appropriate pedagogic content knowledge.

Jewish education calls for yet another kind of knowledge related to content. It is the knowledge related to the theological and ideological issues inherent in the subjects we teach as well as the demands of each particular setting. For example, we know that students are troubled with such issues as: Who wrote the Bible? Does God

answer prayer? How can one believe in God after the Holocaust? How can I support Israel when I do not support its policies toward the Palestinian people? Professional development for teachers would certainly need to include opportunities to encounter multiple authentic Jewish approaches to these ideas, and opportunities for them to develop ways to articulate their own beliefs. What would professional development look like that would give teachers the inner and external resources they need to deal with thorny issues related to foundational beliefs and ideas raised in the questions above?

Learn in and from Practice

Teachers often claim that they learn the most about teaching from experience, but teaching experience alone does not create good teachers. Experience is a great teacher when one has the opportunities, practices, and support to learn from experience. Teacher educators have designed a variety of approaches to help teachers learn in and from practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999). Strategies for supporting teacher learning include investigating records of practice—like student work, videos of classrooms, curriculum (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Grossman, 2005; Lampert & Ball, 1998)—and creating opportunities to "rehearse and develop discrete components of complex practice in settings of reduced complexity... approximations of practice" (Grossman & McDonald, 2008). Examples of the latter include planning lessons or units, role-playing explanations or responding to questions, simulating various lesson openings. All of these practices have the potential to provide the support necessary for teachers to learn from their experience of teaching.

How Do These Characteristics Take Shape in the Context of Real Professional Development in Jewish Educational Settings?

Given the varied contexts and realities of Jewish schools, can these principles become hallmarks of professional development in these settings? To explore this question, I offer a set of case studies, drawn from the work of the graduates of the Mandel Foundation's Mandel Teacher Educators' Institute (MTEI). Founded in 1995, MTEI prepares senior Jewish educators to design and implement professional development for teachers that embodies the principles and practices outlined in this chapter, while addressing the challenges of Jewish education (Appendix). MTEI has four main goals:

1. To promote a vision of Jewish education that:
   - Takes subject matter seriously
   - Emphasizes text study
   - Values children's thinking
   - Fosters children's collaborative learning
   - Sees teachers' learning as central to teaching

2. To support participants in creating a collaborative culture for teacher learning in their schools.
3. To help participants develop deeper and useable Jewish content knowledge.
4. To help participants develop a repertoire of professional development principles and practices that engage teachers in the study and improvement of their teaching.

Multiple evaluations of the MTEI program and its graduates over the last decade have shown that the graduates of the program have enacted professional development initiatives that are consonant with the principles discussed above (Dorph, Stodolsky, & Wohl, 2002; Stodolsky, 2009; Stodolsky et al., 2006; Stodolsky, Dorph, & Rosov, 2008; Stodolsky, Dorph, Feiman-Nemser, & Hecht, 2004).

The programs described below are examples of three such programs not designed by academics or educational researchers; rather, they are initiatives constructed by practicing educators in the field. They can be thought of as "existence proofs"—that is, they present solid evidence that the model of professional development described, though challenging, can be learned and enacted in Jewish educational settings. I have selected these three cases as examples because each takes place in a different setting, has different goals, and uses different professional development strategies. Yet they all feature rigorous, cumulative, collaborative learning opportunities that engage teachers in challenging their ideas and each other while thinking carefully about issues of teaching and learning. Although these examples emanate from American settings, international studies of education support these very same principles and practices—and I am confident that with attention to context could be applied in other Jewish communities across the globe (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Bolam & McMahon, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Day & Sachs, 2004).

Case 1: Day High School—Creating Professional Learning in a Collegial, Collaborative Environment

Tamar[7] and Aaron, faculty members in a large Orthodox day high school, designed this initiative. Tamar was the head of the language department; Aaron was a teacher in the rabbinics department. Together, they instituted an optional teacher study group, open to all faculty members. Given the typical divide between teachers of Jewish and general studies in Jewish day schools and the disciplinary divide among departments in most high schools, this was a bold move in and of itself. Between 16 and 22 teachers, out of a possible 36, participated regularly. They met once a month during a 42-minute lunch-break for an entire school year. None of the teachers were compensated for their time, although Aaron and Tamar did receive very modest remuneration for playing a coordinating role.

[7] All the names used in this chapter are pseudonyms.

Tamar and Aaron had two goals:

1. To get teachers talking about their practice in a way that opened up a sense of curiosity about teaching strategies and teaching decisions.
2. To create a professional learning environment for teachers.

There were two aspects to their program: (1) a study group in which teachers studied videos of classes in order to practice observing and discussing teaching and learning in a safe context, and (2) classroom observations in which group members would visit each other's classes and then discuss teaching and learning in their "real lives."

The group began by examining a video of a teacher who did not teach in their high school, before moving on to study videos of Tamar and Aaron and one other faculty volunteer. In order to make these videos both practical and engaging, Tamar and Aaron edited a 42-minute class length video into 15-minute clips, carefully selecting some moments they thought represented their best teaching and some representing "problematic" moments. During each of the sessions, the group discussed what they had noticed, working as partners (hevruta-style)[8] to talk about particular topics raised in the discussion of the video-clip.

Although it had been rare at this school for veteran teachers to observe each other unless someone was having trouble and needed advice, teachers in the group made time to visit each other's classrooms, and reported that the opportunity was "intellectually stimulating" and "fun" and that the spirit of these conversations was open and trusting.

Teachers wanted to continue discussing issues that emerged in their study group, and so they self-organized four additional study sessions. One such issue involved the question of when and if it is appropriate for teachers to share personal stories or information in class. Another session involved teachers exploring the role of reinforcement in learning and the nature of reinforcement that is appropriate during the high school years.

Aaron and Tamar measured their success by (1) the large proportion of teachers who attended all the sessions (2) the fact that teachers made the time to observe each other (3) the comments teachers made, and (4) the additional sessions that teachers set up for themselves. In their evaluations, teachers reported loving the intellectual inquiry in which they were engaged. Although Tamar and Aaron did not have data to show how much teachers actually changed their teaching practice, they did witness changes in the dimension of colleagueship and in how the teachers talked about their teaching.

[8]Hevruta study is a traditional method of Jewish learning, which involves two people studying a text together helping each other ascertain its meaning.

Case 2: Congregational School—Building a Collaborative Environment for Part-Time Teachers to Focus on Student Learning

The principal of a congregational school for over a decade, Lucy had always offered professional development to her teachers (there are nine teachers on Lucy's faculty; the average length of employment in her school is 11.5 years). These sessions were usually facilitated by outside experts and were "stand alones," not tied to each other in any substantive way. Although not paid for the time, teachers were contractually obligated to annually attend about 18 hours of professional development. The 18 hours often included the orientation at the beginning of the year, a community professional learning day, and several discrete sessions during the year.

After participating in a year-long professional development program led by an MTEI graduate, Lucy began to facilitate her faculty's professional development and work with her teachers in a more sustained fashion. Her goals were similar to those of Aaron and Tamar; she wanted to support teachers talking about their practice in ways that opened up a sense of curiosity about teaching and learning and to create a professional learning environment for teachers. There was one big difference—Lucy's starting point. Lucy was concerned that when she spoke with her teachers after observing them teach, they did not seem to focus on what children were learning. This focus was of critical importance to her. In order to work on all these goals, she decided to study videos from the MTEI videobank[9] with her teachers.

After 2 years, Lucy decided she wanted to move teachers' attention to student learning in the "real life" of their congregational school, and she introduced a methodology called Japanese "Lesson Study" (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998). This strategy involves several deliberate steps: Teachers design a single lesson collaboratively; one member of the group teaches the lesson, while others, including the co-planners, observe it; the lesson is filmed and is analyzed by the group which has watched it; and then the lesson is revised and re-taught by others. Lucy modified the process in order to "make it work" in her setting and time frame.

The first time she tried it, Lucy and her faculty planned a session on Psalms that was part of the curriculum of the sixth grade. They used printed curriculum materials as their jumping-off point. The lesson they created added an opening exercise that framed the lesson and other exercises to help their students find the content more meaningful. These activities included having students look at greeting cards as ways of expressing gratitude and other emotions, reading Psalms, and finally writing their

[9]The MTEI videobank (2000): Reading the classroom as text: a videobank and resource guide for investigations of teaching and learning, is a project of the Mandel Foundation. It includes tapes and transcripts of lessons in congregational schools, textual, and student curriculum materials relevant to each lesson, examples of student work, and suggested activities that professional developers can use in conjunction with these records of practice.

own Psalms. Lucy and the teachers were delighted with the student engagement in the lesson and felt that the opening exercise did help the students "get into" the notion of expressing gratitude via the written word.

The following year, Lucy and her faculty once again engaged in lesson study. This time, they planned a session about Hanukkah. Lucy added an additional dimension to the design: She taught the lesson twice—once to each of two different fifth grade classes. The lesson included students studying in groups, presenting their learning to the class, and collaborating on the development of skits. Teachers also created a "pop quiz" to assess students' learning. Between the first and the second teaching of the lesson, the teachers assessed the students' learning and redesigned aspects of the lesson. Between classes, teachers suggested that Lucy work more actively with the students' small groups, listening as they worked and asking probing questions to encourage their thoughts. The second class did better on the pop quiz than the first class.

Lucy felt that the seminars succeeded in establishing a collective collegial forum for teachers to share their ideas and learn from each other. In particular, Lucy felt that teachers were becoming more reflective and were focusing on teaching in ways that would enhance student learning. In an interview study done after the first 2 years of the program, teachers' comments support Lucy's assessment. The following comments give some sense of their experience and their learning midway through the experience just described:

> [I am] trying to have a big idea when I am teaching . . . critically looking at myself.. . . Okay these were my goals, did I get there? If I didn't get there, where did we go? How can I start this again next week? (Lisa)

> When we have a chance to meet professionally like this, this is a whole different story. It is so wonderful to be able share ideas and share thoughts and share methods with colleagues in this way that wasn't really afforded to us before, when it was like meeting style or you know, somebody else coming here (Rivka).

> I think it put teachers on the same wave length. . .Where are we as a group of teachers? My kids are going on to other teachers. We are all teaching the same kids. If we have different ideas, having a team philosophy. We do it differently, but have the same goals (Mimi). (Stodolsky et al., 2008)

Case 3: Central Agency Sponsored Initiative—Increasing Pedagogical Content Knowledge

This central agency sponsored program was a year-long professional learning experience, including a trip to Israel, focused on teaching about Israel. In contradistinction to the two other programs, this one was highly subsidized. Participants paid only $750 for the 10 day Israel trip that was core to their learning experience. In addition, among the 30 educators who participated, there were both novices and veterans. The participants delivered services to children and youth from fifth grade through high school in both formal and informal settings. The group met monthly during the academic year.

Two central agency consultants, Susie and Sarah, directed this initiative, which had two distinct goals: (1) increasing participating educators' knowledge and connection to Israel, and (2) engaging these educators in a collaborative and interactive learning experience that they could use as a model for creating active learning for their students. Susie and Sarah designed an intervention using the principles of problem-based learning (PBL), which is a strategy that challenges students to find and use appropriate resources and work cooperatively in groups to better understand and seek solutions to real-world problems.

Sarah and Susie wanted to connect participants to Israel via interests and passions that they trusted would be shared by their participants and which could connect them to Israel's land and people. They chose to focus on environmental issues in Israel and asked group members to choose among six different aspects of Israel and the environment. Participants formed teams to investigate issues, such as water, sustainable communities, air, animals, plants, and land.

Susie and Sarah framed problems on which team members did research over the course of the months prior to the 10-day Israel trip. For the group studying sustainable communities, Susie and Sarah framed their problem as follows:

> Israel has not developed a strong carbon free energy strategy. As Israel's energy demand grows, Israel continues to invest in natural gas, a carbon-based energy source that is imported from Africa, rather than develop solar energy that is local and more sustainable. . . .
>
> What does Israel need to do to develop more carbon-free/solar alternative energy for use inside Israel? What barriers exist and how can Israel get past them? What Jewish sources can inform our thinking about sustainable environments and the importance of using alternative energy? (Written communication from Susie and Sarah)

In Israel, the group visited Kibbutz Lotan, a sustainable community in action, where members are dedicated to making their kibbutz totally self-sufficient in terms of energy. They saw solar panels and ovens, and multiple creative ways in which this kibbutz reuses and recycles products and materials that others would relegate to garbage or waste. Participants had a chance to ask experts and regular kibbutz members about their thinking about alternative energy sources and to probe the obstacles to spreading these strategies more widely. Participants crawled in and out of igloo-like solar huts, shaped bricks from mud and straw and baked them in the sun, and baked brownies in the solar ovens. They developed an experiential understanding of what it means to be energy independent—off the national grid.

When the participants returned from Israel, members of all the groups organized a fair for each other (and invited guests) to share what they had learned about the problem they had been studying and created problem-based learning experiences for their students. One example of team members' engagement with their own students serves as an illustration of this work. Students did a project on improving the school environment by using found materials in the waste bins of the synagogue and creating lightshades and artistic sculptures. Students shared their learning, displaying pictures of different stages of the PBL learning process along with a variety of artifacts that illustrated their work, e.g., the identified problem, the worksheets that they created indicating what information they needed to gather to learn more about the issues, evidence of group work and evaluation.

Given the relatively short time line and the ambitious goals of the project, Sarah and Susie were able to see that educators were indeed working with their students on PBL learning experiences. They wished that funding for the program had been longer than 12 or 13 months so that they could monitor and assist participants in the program develop PBL learning experiences related to Israel and other curriculum-based projects, but worried that inviting participants to join an 18-month initiative would have put them off.

Analysis of Cases

When we examine these three cases, we see the enactment of the principles of effective professional development (see Table 1). Each case was embedded in a different context, each was at least a year in length and involved multiple sessions that were linked and each involved serious, collaborative work on the part of participants. Facilitators carefully chose goals for teachers' learning and provided learning opportunities, which encouraged teachers to engage in inquiry into the practices of teaching and learning. The facilitators created active learning environments through developing records of practice (videos in the case of Aaron and Tamar; problem-based learning challenges in the case of the Susie and Sarah consultants) and also "approximations of practice" (co-planning, evaluating, and re-planning a lesson in the case of Lucy; the learning fair in the case of Sarah and Susie).

These cases give us a sense of what is possible, even within the significant constraints of the real world of Jewish education. Yet each of these cases seems a bit precarious, for each relied upon energetic leadership and groups of teachers that were willing to go beyond the call of duty and beyond their paid hours to work together on improving their teaching craft. The third also relied on a generous grant to support educators' trips to Israel. For these kinds of programs to be sustainable over the long term, they would need to be built into the system more fully. This kind of ongoing learning would need to become part of a teacher's job description, part of the regular school day and school year, and part of the educational budget. In the meantime, the cases are inspiring stories of what is possible when teachers find ways to learn together, investigating their practice, in a context of curiosity and trust.

Table 1 A comparison of the three PD cases

Principles of effective PD	Day high school	Congregational school	Central agency
Cumulative and ongoing	X	X	X
Job embedded	–	X	–
Active learning	X	X	X
Collegial, collaborative environment	X	X	X
Pedagogical content knowledge	–	X	X
Learn in and from practice	X	X	X

Conclusion

From the perspective of scholarship and developing a more extensive knowledge base, this chapter suggests a variety of avenues for future research related to teachers' knowledge and practice. While we know that it is possible to produce professional developers who can design and implement quality programs infused with the principles of effective PD, we do not know much about the impact of these initiatives on participating teachers' ideas about teaching and learning and their classroom practice.

In terms of pedagogic practices, we need to study what and how teachers modify their teaching practices based on their PD learning experiences and whether any of the changes "make them" more effective pedagogues. Do any of the PD practices change the nature of communication in the classroom; help teachers become more powerful designers of active learning experiences; encourage the development of powerful pedagogic content knowledge?

With regard to student outcomes, the gold standard for assessing effective PD in general education is the connection between professional development for the teacher and students' achievement. Although there is insufficient research[10] on this relationship in general education, there is even less in Jewish education.[11] Moreover, in Jewish education outcomes for student learning are underspecified even when goals are stated. In order to track the impact of PD on student learning, we would have to take the arena of learning in Jewish subject areas more seriously and be willing to invest in substantive work on developing clear and worthwhile outcomes for Jewish learning in the variety of settings in which it takes place.[12] Assessments of student learning that can produce data about changes in students' knowledge and understanding will also need to be developed.

Other avenues of inquiry relate to professional developers and their education and practice. We can ask questions about professional developers that are similar to those asked about teachers and students. Starting with the notion of outcomes, if the gold standard of evaluating the effectiveness of teacher professional development is change in student outcomes, does it not make sense that the gold standard for professional developers is "teacher outcomes?" Does the PD offered using the new paradigm suggested in this chapter help teachers develop more effective teaching practices? We have little research in general or Jewish education that provides a window on this question (Stodolsky et al., 2008; Wayne et al., 2008). Based on research in general education (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Knapp, 2003), this chapter has

[10]Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Porter et al., 2000; Wayne et al., 2008.

[11]The Jewish Educational Services of North America (JESNA) evaluation (2006) of the Nurturing Excellence in Synagogue Schools (NESS) project used student attitude toward education and continuing beyond Bar Mitzvah as measures of outcomes. Although they are both very important, neither is the kind of subject-matter outcome being measured by current educational research.

[12]See the Benchmarks and Standards Project for an example of such work in the area of Bible teaching and learning in day schools, a project of the Melton Research Center of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

suggested that there is an isometric relationship between the education of students, teachers, and professional developers. Because there are few programs designed to develop professional developers, there is little to no research that examines this premise in an empirical way. As we try to make more robust PD an ongoing feature of teacher work, we could benefit from more research that investigates these questions.

Policy Implications

Because we are addressing a practical problem here, that is, the improvement of teachers' practice in the service of improved student learning, there are other implications as well. If we believe that students' learning is connected to teachers' learning, and we want to improve students' learning, we know what to do:

- Make ongoing learning part of what it means to be a teacher
- Set aside time, money, and human resources at each school and central agency to design and facilitate professional development that follows the principles outlined in this chapter
- Develop programs for the "trainers of trainers"

What can be done to help make this a reality? Because of the complexity of the issues, action needs to come from all the stakeholders who care about the supporting the work of teachers and improving the learning experiences of students. For academicians and professional developers, the implications are obvious:

> Professional Developers: provide principle-based PD; develop rich cases of principle-based professional development to augment those offered in this chapter; develop records of practice that could be used in the learning opportunities for teachers and professional developers.
>
> Academicians and Educational Researchers: prepare personnel to lead PD efforts; evaluate PD programs[13] and their impact; investigate the impact of PD on teachers' ideas and practices; study the impact of PD on teachers' practice and student achievement.

Other stakeholders also need to step up to the plate in order to create the necessary climate and infrastructure supports for the implementation of professional development as a leverage strategy to improve the field of Jewish education. For example:

> Parents: let the principal know that you value both professional development for teachers and those who are skilled in providing it; use parent education committees to help finance and structure in the time for this work.
>
> Teachers: demand that ongoing professional learning opportunities be built into your contracts.

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[13] Sales, Samuel, and Koren (2007) and JESNA updates include listings of PD offerings, but one cannot ascertain which, if any, are grounded in the principles of effective PD.

School Leaders: support ongoing professional development for your teachers by building in time and opportunities for PD; create formal positions (part-time or full-time depending on size and complexity of your institution) for professional developers; support the ongoing professionalization of those who will plan and lead these initiatives in your institutions.

Central Agency Personnel: develop personnel and programs that offer PD and/or consult and support school based personnel in planning and facilitating principle-based PD.

Foundation Supporters and Personnel: encourage the development of and support for grants (and the development of grants) for PD that embody these principles.

This call to many stakeholders draws attention to an issue that goes beyond the educational challenges that this chapter addressed. It is clear from the cases presented in this chapter that even very experienced, knowledgeable teachers value substantive, collaborative professional learning opportunities. It is also clear that leaders can be prepared and supported to head up such ambitious initiatives. What remains unclear is the extent of Jewish communal commitment. How committed are we to student learning and, by extension, to teacher learning?

Appendix[14]

In the same way that teachers need to think about the student as learner, the professional developer must think about the teacher as learner. The subject matter of the curriculum for professional developers is the learner instructional triangle as well as the teacher instructional triangle. It includes engaging with fellow professional

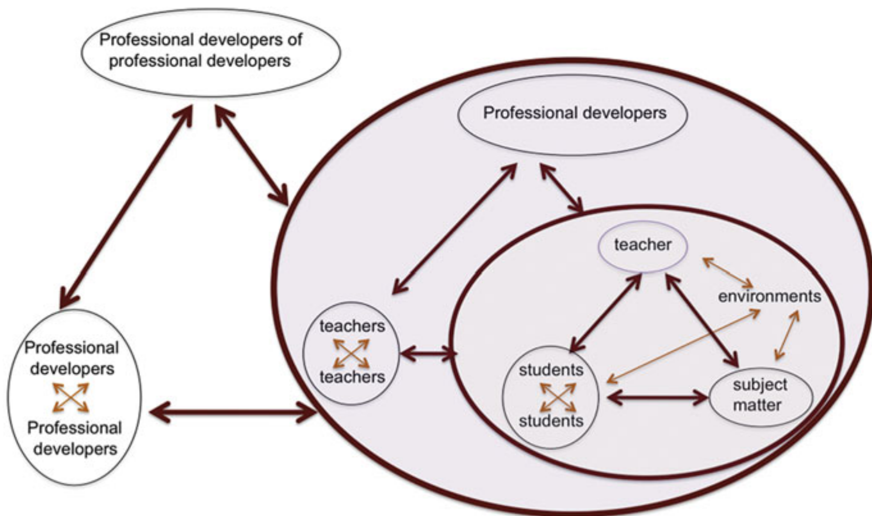

Fig. 3 Professional developer learning triangle

[14]Deborah Ball introduced this graphic into the design and curriculum work of MTEI in 1996.

developers and together "getting smarter" about how to help teachers learn to teach their students to become active learners of "X." This process also assumes a teacher, the professional developer of professional developers.

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Professional Development: *Vini, Vidi, Vici*? Short-Term Jewish Educators Trips to Israel as Professional-Development Programs

Shelley Kedar

Introduction: Foundations and Definitions

In 47 BCE, Julius Caesar claimed an overwhelming Roman victory in the battle of Zela and sent the famous, simple yet powerful, message back to the Senate in Rome: "Veni, Vidi, Vici" (Latin*: I came, I saw, I conquered*). Using this quote as the heading of a chapter about Jewish educators' trips to Israel is a calculated risk, as the relationship between Israel and the Jewish people is often described in confrontational language, ranging from Rabbi Joesph Soloveitchik's (1971) "six knocks" on the doors of world Jewry to an "alternative" paradigm for Israel engagement termed "hugging and wrestling" (Gringras, 2005). Assuming that "Veni" and "vidi" are possible however difficult to attain: that is to say, whereas we do know that an educational trip to Israel has a profound impact on young adult participants (e.g., Kelner, 2004; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002; Saxe, Sasson, & Hecht, 2006) "vici" is as yet unclear—how can it have a personal as well as professional effect on Jewish educators?

I will hereafter relate to the term "professional development" as the work-related learning opportunities for practicing teachers, aimed at nurturing knowledge, skills, and commitments required for professional practice (Feiman-Nemser, 2006). Based on literature, I assume that any educational system requires a professional-development plan for the teachers who work in its domain, and even more so in Jewish education as teachers are characterized by weakness of backgrounds and general lack of preparation for the field (Zaiman-Dorph & Holtz, 2000).

A long-standing debate exists between two competing concepts defining the purpose of a professional-development program: on the one hand, is the focus on providing educators with tools and methods, and on the other hand, engaging them in an ongoing learning process, one that fosters an investigative stance toward the teaching and learning of a particular content (Stodolsky, Zaiman Dorph, & Feinman- Nemser, 2006). This relationship was described by Corchan-Smith and Lytle (1999) as a metaphoric pendulum swinging between "teaching better" and

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"knowing more." The authors (ibid.) offer three conceptions of teachers' learning stemming from this "swinging" relationship between the two:

(1) On the one hand is "Knowledge *for* practice:" the more teachers know the better they teach, therefore knowledge is to be directly applied in the classroom.
(2) On the other hand is "Knowledge *of* practice:" teachers have personal knowledge and are partners and leaders in the knowledge construction process, thus knowledge acquisition is a broad social-political process.
(3) Swinging between the two is "Knowledge *in* practice:" teachers knowledge is grounded in the teaching act itself and reflecting upon it. This third type of relationship echoes theories by Dewey (1938) and Schon (1987).

Zaiman-Dorph and Holtz (2000) offer a slightly different look at "good professional development." They define it as a program connected to *knowledge of the content* that is being taught; has a clear and focused *audience* in mind; has a *coherent plan* that is sustained over time; and gives teachers opportunities *to reflect, analyze, and work* on their practice. Stodolsky et al. (2006) add another dimension to the above definition and propose that "new style" professional development enables teachers *first hand experience* as well as *collaborative learning*, which they, in turn, may enact in their classrooms.

Tachlit: The Purpose of Jewish Professional Development

> R' Tarfon and the elders were gathered in the upper chamber of Nit'zah's house in Lod. This question was asked in their presence: Is talmud (i.e. learning) greater or is ma'aseh (i.e. action) greater? R' Tarfon replied and said, 'Ma'aseh is greater.' R' Akiva replied and said, 'Talmud is greater.' Everyone replied and said, 'Talmud is greater, because talmud leads to ma'aseh . . .' (Kiddushin 40b)

From this Talmudic discussion, we learn about the inseparability of learning from action in the Jewish world of study. Following the discussion of the relationship between the two in the former section, I wish to propose a purpose for *Jewish* professional development that demands inseparability of learning from action: *Tachlit*. Nowadays, *Tachlit* or *Tachlis* is a colloquial way of saying "in practical terms" as the origin of the word in Hebrew derives from the root "tool" or "instrument."[1] I propose that, the *Tachlit* of a Jewish professional-development program includes "tools" or "instruments" such as: knowledge, ability, and skills to perform the educators' task, emphasizing the means to achieve the aims of the educational work (Nisan, 1997). As the word *Tachlit* also interprets as "meaning,"[2] another inseparable component includes a focus on the teacher as a person standing at the heart of the educational work—in the sense that "you cannot teach anything well until you make meaning of it for yourself" (Grant, 2008). This idea is often associated with

[1] The word in Hebrew stems from the root which is literally a tool.

[2] The word will is the translation of "meaning" in a phrase like "the meaning of life."

Parker Palmer (1998) who argued that the human heart is the source of good teaching, and therefore, good teaching is not just about "tools" but rather comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher. Therefore, the other side of the *Tachlit*, purpose of Jewish professional development, is the identity of the teacher, seen as an adult traveling the life-long identity journey (Schuster, 2003).

Hence, I propose that the purpose of a meaningful Jewish professional-development program is the synergy between two often competing concepts: *means*—the tools or instruments needed to perform the act of teaching, and *meaning*—developing and crystallizing the educational identity (Nisan, 1997) of the Jewish educator, an identity constituted through the commitment to an educational endeavor, guided by knowledge-based conceptions of education and of the good and the worthy.

Israel Experience as Jewish Professional Development

As a phenomenon, educational trips to Israel (that will hereafter be referred to as "Israel experiences") are an example of the longest running, well-documented, and researched example of educational religious tourism—focusing mainly on young adult participants (To name a few: Chazan & Koraznsky, 1997; Cohen, 2000; Cohen, 2006b; Saxe, Sasson, & Hecht, 2006). Indeed, research indicates that it is one of the most powerful educational tools available for affecting identity and continuity among young Jews (Chazan, 1999). However, only a small body of research has accumulated on teachers' Israel experiences and an even smaller number of studies have specifically researched Israel experiences as professional-development programs (e.g., Reisman, 1993; Grant, Kelman, & Regev, 2001; Pomson & Grant, 2004).

A recent survey of Israel engagement in North American community day schools found that 77% of the respondents, who were mostly heads of school and heads of Jewish studies, participated in a professional-development program related to Israel, and 60% of them in a program that included a trip to Israel (Kopelowitz, 2005). The same survey mentioned that almost 92% of educators expressed interest in participating in professional-development programs in Israel (Kopelowitz, 2005). This interest has already translated into policies, for example, NACIE (North American Coalition for Israel Engagement, a project initiated by the Jewish Agency for Israel—now called Makom) has defined among its objectives for day and congregational schools: "(to) send (more) educators to Israel" (Katz, 2004). While a successful Israel program may very well reinforce Jewish identity, a question is raised whether the length time spent on the Israel trip program allows effective professional development (Stodolsky, Zaiman Dorph, & Feinman-Nemser, 2006). As an Israel experience program is in no way a long-term undertaking[3], it may

[3] This span of time relates to the time spent *in* Israel. Although some programs are an integral part of long-term professional-development processes, including pre- and post-programming in the country of origin, I wish to focus on the program in Israel and its potential to be a holistic unit.

even cause an adverse affect: "We came, we saw, we can't remember a thing!"[4] (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002, p. 3). Considering this framework of Israel experience programs, can they be more than elaborate one-time seminars?

Since Israel experience stands at the crossroads of three fields: religion, tourism, and education that have been melded into one concept in the post-modern age, namely educational religious tourism (Cohen, 2006), re-focusing on each field, separately, may enhance our understanding on how to create an Israel experience that is a Jewish professional-development program.

Education—The "Eyes" of the Program

Israel education in Jewish communities around the world, presents an ongoing challenge for Jewish educators (Grant, 2008). It seems only natural, that the subject matter of a program in Israel will be *Israel education*, through a multifaceted approach (Chamo, Sabar Ben Yohushua, & Shimoni, 2009). This may assist in enhancing the teachers' ability to perform Israel education ("means") as well as strengthen their personal connection and understanding of Israel ("meaning"). Furthermore, the "new paradigm" formulated in recent literature (e.g., Zaiman-Dorph & Holtz, 2000) that outlines the "central tasks" for the practice of professional development, may be adapted and serve as the guiding "eyes" of the program in Israel:

1. *Intellect*: deepening and extending teachers' Israel knowledge.
2. *Instrument*: extending and refining teachers' repertoires so that they can perform relevant, connecting Israel education for students.
3. *Inspiration*: strengthening the attitudes and skills of teachers toward study and improving their own teaching of Israel.
4. *Influence*: increasing leadership development so that teachers can influence (as leaders) the life of the school with specific regard to Israel.
5. *Identity*: nurturing the teacher's personal connection and commitment to Israel.

Considering *all* the five "eyes" in creating the educational content of the Israel experience program paves the way toward fulfilling the purpose of professional development.

Tourism: From Trip to Experience

Much energy is directed at getting more people to *visit* Israel on organized *trips*. Intuitively, the framing of the program as an "Israel trip" impedes its ability to become a professional-development program. Use of the term *experience*, rather than "trip" or "visit" is not merely semantic, but signifies the belief that the participating educators are not travelers on a one off tourist vacation, and thus entails

[4] Printed on a T-shirt.

the possibility that the program becomes an important educational event (Chazan & Koraznsky, 1997).

Dewey (1938) offered a theory of education based on experience, grounded on two abstract principles: (i) continuity—all experiences are carried forward and influence future experiences and (ii) interaction—present experiences arise out of the relationship between the situation and the individual's stored past. Building on Dewey, I suggest the Israel experience program be structured as a continuous process, beginning prior to the arrival in Israel and ending after the return from Israel. Moreover, this process must build on the participating educators *existing* values, knowledge, and skills, as many times Israel education, similarly to Jewish education, is conversed from a deficit point of view (Chamo, 2008).

Religion: Community as Structure and Content

Assuming that reality is a web of communal relationships and that we understand reality when we are "in community" with it (Palmer, 1998) helps facilitate the understanding that teacher learning is improved when it takes place within a professional-learning community (Feiman-Nemser, 2006). This community is what Palmer (1998) calls "Community of Truth:" a rich and complex network of relationships in which we speak and listen, make claims on others, and make ourselves accountable. It is also a safe environment for adults to explore the meaning of their religious faith (Schuster & Grant, 2005), what Berger and Luckman (1966) defines as "plausibility structure" allowing individuals to engage in conversation with significant others in matters of religion. Put together, these two concepts can be Jewishly articulated in the term "*Sacred Community*" of Jewish educators.

Whereas in somewhat technical terms, any Israel experience entails building a supportive community as a core structure (Klein-Katz, 1998), creating a sacred community is not just "means," but also "meaning"—an end of its own. It is created and maintained by spiritual rituals like: texts study, prayer, and the gathered life of the community itself' (i.e., actually functioning in a community) that should be incorporated, possibly daily, into the program (Palmer, 1983).

To sum up, I suggest that an Israel experience program be constructed through the "eyes" of Israel education professional development, be considered and thus formulated as an *educational experience* and inspire as well as be implemented through the formation of a *sacred community* of Jewish educators.

Encounter Between Person and Place: Introducing Four Conceptual-Practical Models

Many Israel experience programs are built around the idea that it is the tangible contact with Israel as a physical place (landscape, archeological remains, settlements, and people) that produces a feeling of attachment to Jewish identity (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002). The actual act of walking the land, for example, nature hiking, is

considered a way of strengthening *ahavat ha'aretz* (one's love for the land) through the development of *yediat ha'aretz* (an experiential knowledge of the land) (Katriel, 1995).

The importance of the relationship between the person and the place visited lacks research (Poria, Reichel, & Biran, 2006). However, it is proposed that this relationship is what defines the meaning of the visiting experience, through a continuum that has, at the one end, the person's socio-psychological motives for visiting a place and, at the other end, cultural-educational ones. A recent study on the significance of tourists' experiences of a heritage site, conducted by an Israeli research team at the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam (Poria, Reichel, & Biran, 2006), identified three categories or approaches to the person–place relationship: (1) willingness to feel connected to the history presented; (2) willingness to learn; and (3) motivations not linked with the historic attributes of the place whereby an element of social ''obligation'' is apparent: visiting because you feel you "should."

When Jews visit Israel, their approaches spread across a continuum of recreational, educational, cultural, and religious motives (Klein-Katz, 1998) corresponding with Poria's et al. (2006) categories. Moreover, as mentioned before, the relationship between the Jewish visitor and the place (Israel) is also very much influenced by the visitor's personal factors, such as the individual's Jewish biography, past experiences, and education (Cohen, 2003; Horowitz, 2003), and these in turn have a profound impact on the encounter with Israel. The different relationships between the person, the Jew, and the place, Israel, were articulated in an unpublished theory on Israel experience created and experimented by MELITZ: an independent non-profit informal Jewish–Zionist education agency established in 1973, centered in Jerusalem. MELITZ introduced to its staff an educational conception called "Site as Text,"[5] stemming from the idea that the Jewish visit to Israel is an educational process, during which Jewish identity and their belonging to the Jewish people is explored. According to this perception, Israel was defined as an educational resource, encountered by four model persons, each representing a different relationship between person and place:

1. *The Observer* who is visiting the site as an estranged outsider. He has the advantage of being able to be critical, supposedly "objective," without emotional involvement or commitment. However, his disadvantage is in the lack of value-based meaning of the visit.
2. *The Landlord* visits the site from a position of ownership and belonging. In this case the visit is an ideological standpoint, a political declaration of control. This is the other side of the observer approach: the site is related to emotionally and thus referring to it in critical and analytical terms is virtually impossible.

[5]The heading of the conception as well as its articulation were only used internally, in staff training—however they have had a substantial influence on many informal educators who have "carried" this conception with them to other Jewish educational venues.

3. *The Pilgrim* arrives at the site with respect, sacredness, and glorification. Expecting a transformative, highly emotional, “once in a lifetime” experience.
4. *The Person Looking for Meaning*: a title borrowed from Victor Frankl’s 1946 book, this person visits the site as if he is visiting himself. During the visit a dialogue is created and the site turns from a neutral location to an arena for meaning making.

These encounters are constructed along four assumptions:

(1) The sites chosen in Israel are relevant to Jewish life and to core questions occupying Jews today.
(2) Each site has a historical and cultural depth, and gives rise to different layers of meaning.
(3) The encounter with the site engages the person, enabling him or her to find him/herself and relate to his or her circles of belonging.
(4) Site encounters are performed though active experience, whereby the person is required to engage in dialogue and interact with the site.

I will hereafter discuss each model, suggesting ways in which each one could implement the purpose and practice of Jewish professional development. These following is not based on analysis of existing programs, but are rather offered as theoretical outlines, based on examples from my own professional experience.

The Power of Sights: Observer-Oriented Professional Development

וַיַּעַמְדוּ מֵרָחֹק (שמות כ':י"ד) They stayed at a distance (Exodus, 20:14)

. . . after a missile hit a hillside in Haifa . . .“They[6] seemed detached from it, in a way” . . . The Sidkins did not send Sam to Israel for a dose of Zionist indoctrination, but because they subscribe to a widespread view in the Jewish community that, as part of a small and rapidly assimilating ethnic minority in the UK, Jewishness can be reinforced by sending your children to the one place where Jews are everywhere . . .“I’m not heavily into politics. I watch the news but I don’t have very strong views. You’d have to talk to my husband, but he isn’t here at the moment.” (Grant, 2006). However critical one can be of this position, viewing Israel from a distance even while touring it is indeed prevalent among Israel trips and Jewish visitors (Cohen, 2003). And so, in order to make these a professional-development program, they should be educationally constructed and implemented through the five “eyes” as follows:

[6]The youth group touring Israel.

1. *Intellect*: the experience needs to encourage “considering anew the opportunities, pitfalls, and responsibilities of meeting Israel as a foundational space and place of the Jewish experience” (Copeland, 2008, p. 8). The program should therefore confront educators with contemporary, mind-provoking acquaintance with Israel allowing discourse without alienation, which builds on their past knowledge. For example, meeting people and organizations representing the creativity and complexity of Jewish life in Israeli context such as—secular rabbis; Jewish environmentalists; Rabbis for Human Rights.
2. *Instrument*: The Talmudic method of *shakla ve’ taria*, negotiating truths and ideas, engaging in debate-based learning is a unique tool that can be demonstrated on site in Israel as well as implemented in the classroom back home. It may involve: programming daily *chevrutah* (collaborative, small groups) study on core texts articulating conflict and connection of the Jewish people in the land of Israel, like the Carmel Mountain representing the dilemma between prophets and kings in Biblical times and its articulation in modern day Israel, that is, religion and state.
3. *Inspiration*: “Knowing what we do not know” is crucial in educators’ development and is very important for relevant Israel education (Copeland, 2008; Gringras, 2005) therefore the program should provoke educators’ apparent knowledge of Israel with contemporary Israeli realities. For example, visiting an urban Kibbutz, an emerging concept—where the ideals of communal socialist life are implemented through education and not agriculture.
4. *Influence*: Educators should be the sources of their own learning (Knowles, 1980) and thus the program should encourage and cater for educators to initiate and facilitate on-site discussion with their peers, so they may be inspired to do so at their own educational settings. This can be implemented despite the educators presumed lack of familiarity with a specific site, through preparing *divrei torah* short-text studies relating to the site and Jewish historical context, for example, a text from the book of Exodus in the desert, a text from Prophets in the Valley of Elah.
5. *Identity*: notwithstanding the biblical quote heading this section is: “they stayed at a distance,” Israel as the physical *place* can become part of the observing educator’s identity by placing a programmatic emphasis on the afore-mentioned nature walks and hikes as a way of strengthening *ahavat ha’aretz* (one’s love for the land) through the development of *yediat ha’aretz* (an experiential knowledge of the land) (Katriel, 1995).

Israel as a Jewish Homeland: Landlord-Oriented Professional Development

לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה (בראשית, י"ג:י"ז; בראשית כ"ח :י"ג ; בראשית ל"ה:י"ב ; שמות ל"ג, א')

“I am giving it to you” (Genesis 13:17; Genesis 28:13; Genesis 35:12; Exodus 33:1)

The foundation of the State of Israel, in 1948 re-established “in *Eretz-Israel* the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew” (from the *Declaration of Independence*). For some, the idea of Israel as the promised homeland for the Jews was not abandoned (Chazan & Koraznsky, 1997) and it

resonates through the new millennium: in a recent paper Copeland (2008) reinforces Israel as being both the holy land and the *homeland* of the visiting Jew.

Considering the visiting "Landlords" yields two different Jewish audiences: one comprises Israeli born educators who have chosen to live outside Israel and bring with them a complex relationship with the state of Israel as Israeli emigrants are often viewed as violators of the Zionist ideology, or even a threat to the survival of the Jewish state (Sabar, 2002). Indeed, when visiting Israel, Israeli born educators express feelings of ownership: "this is mine" (Sabar, 2002) and these feelings have been known to affect their experience (Pomson & Grant, 2004). Another audience comprises Jews *expecting* to encounter their Jewish homeland: Cohen (2006) describes a clear connection between religious self-definition across Jewish denominations, that is, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, and the level of viewing Israel as a homeland—appearing at a higher level among orthodox and conservative Jews. The program should therefore include:

1. *Intellect*: extend educators' knowledge of the historical roots of the Jewish people in the land of Israel with a contemporary perspective, and in this respect the tension between "vision" and "reality." For example, programming visits to biblically mentioned sites that have revived and evolved Jewishly in modern day Israel like Gezer, mentioned in the Bible as the site of battles headed by Joshua and David against the Canaanite kings, today the site of a Progressive Jewish Kibbutz struggling for the recognition of its female Reform rabbi by the State of Israel.
2. *Instrument*: Holm et al. (2003) claim that a group's religion is inseparably linked to a particular environment or homeland via ceremonies. Therefore, creatively engaging teachers' with renewed Jewish ceremonies in Israel should be an instrumental focus. For example, exploring the Kibbutz approach to "Land" festivals in the *Shitim* Institute for Jewish holidays, attending a *Tikkun Leil Shavuot* led by a "secular" Jewish institution such as Alma—home for Hebrew culture in Tel Aviv.
3. *Inspiration*: I suggest that educators from a Landlord point of view connect and learn how to express their relationship with Israel as love based; this intuitive emotion held by the two possible educator populations should not be ignored. However, as in a personal relationship, idealized love can never survive the actual responsibilities of a living relationship (Copeland, 2008). The program should therefore enable educators to strengthen their attachment to the land itself and its symbolic homeland meaning while farming this attachment in a realistic framework. For example, visiting the Shalom Center in Tel Aviv, the former site of the first Hebrew high school, Herzliyah—while examining the vision of Ahad Ha'Am for Israel as a cultural–spiritual center versus the reality pressed by Herzl of a vibrant, normal state like all states.[7]
4. *Influence*: Palmer (1983) established that the act of knowing is an act of love. This approach is particularly relevant for empowering educators to evoke love for Israel and strengthen Jewish peoplehood. Considering you cannot educate

[7] This experience may be even more powerful when attention is drawn to the face that the building itself stands on the crossroads between the Ahad Ha'Am and Herzl streets.

someone to love a land and that love is not contagious (Oz, 1983), I suggest that a focus should be placed on experimenting with how to transfer this love into the classroom, as an art (Fromm, 1956). This may happen through allowing room for personal choice during the program, and creating a flexible itinerary based on the participants own emphases.

5. *Identity*: dissonance may occur through the identity discussion undertaken by the educators who feels a sense of ownership of Israel, especially when experiences contradict their expectations. For example, I personally found a group of educators quite shocked to discover that Israeli Arabs living in Tel Aviv-Jaffa consider themselves Palestinians, although they are officially citizens of the State of Israel. This echoed through the program evoking emotions from anger and disappointment to despair. As one participant told me, "It's true I chose to live outside Israel and I haven't been here for a long time. But I cannot remember Arabs saying such things! It took me by complete surprise and shock! I don't know what to do next!" Indeed, reality is a paradox of apparent opposites, and educators must learn to embrace those opposites as one (Palmer, 1998). Although not prevented, I suggest these paradoxes can be "embraced" during reflection and processing sessions, imbedded in the program itinerary.

The Pilgrimage: Pilgrim-Oriented Professional Development

שָׁלֹשׁ רְגָלִים, תָּחֹג לִי בַּשָּׁנָה (שמות כ"ג:י"ד)

Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me (Exodus 23:14)

Generally speaking, religion has long been a motive for embarking on journeys and non-economic travel and moreover, spiritually motivated travel has become popular in recent decades alongside the growth of tourism in the modern era (Cohen, 2003). Current day "pilgrimages" are usually journeys to a place that a person considers embodies a valued ideal (Poria et al., 2006): in this sense, pilgrimage is extended beyond religious travel to include travel to places which include nationalistic values and ideals, disaster sites (like Ground Zero), war memorials, and cemeteries for example Mount Herzl National Cemetery, places related to literary writers (like the Agnon House in Jerusalem), music stars, genealogy, and places one visits because of a personal sense of "obligation" to the area or its narrative (e.g., Massada).

The pilgrimage to Israel may be framed as a peak experience that may only happen once in a persons' life, a journey from the "periphery" (the Jewish Diaspora) to the "center" (Cohen, 2006). The pilgrims' decision to come to Israel is based on it being the place to strengthen spiritual or religious identity (Cohen, 2003; Grant, 2000) and as such, the program is structured along a duality of geography and spirituality (Cohen, Ifergan, & Cohen, 2002). An example of constructed pilgrimage that is seemingly different yet similar is the educational program in Poland for Israeli youth (Feldman, 2005), constructed around well-defined "sacred" places, sites sanctified by Jewish suffering and death, leaving modern Poland irrelevant.

Similarly, "pilgrims" see the experience in Israel primarily as an opportunity to learn about Judaism, not necessarily about the country itself or its residents and therefore have less interest in socializing and encountering Israelis and Israeli culture (Cohen, 2003) and may even be disinterested in understanding today's Israel. "Pilgrim"-educators may visit sites with the interest to have what is they perceive as an "authentic experience" of their romantic, idyllic image of the land of Israel: a Biblical Land, a desert with camels and patriarchs. Therefore, the professional-development Israel experience from a pilgrim perspective may look like this:

1. *Intellect*: Pilgrimage depends on liturgy, ritual, and the "protocols" specific to a site (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002), therefore I suggest engaging educators, prior to their arrival, in creating resource booklets to accompany the experience, used on a daily, hourly, basis on sites as a *midrash*—an interpretive complementary text—to the "core" text which is the site itself. For example, booklets prepared for Jerusalem's Old City could include: the story of the Binding of Isaac (the Biblical location of Temple Mount); the texts describing the building of the Temples; an Israeli poem about the Western Wall;[8] and perhaps a time line and a map of the Old City including the Quarters, the gates, etc. There should be various booklets depending on the group's themes for the visit.
2. *Instrument*: As in fact, much that the pilgrims have come to see sites that cannot be seen and must be visualized and imagined (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002) this situation is similar to a classroom outside Israel, for example, the Western Wall, this is just a small part of the remaining wall of the Temple Mount and imagining the Temple that once stood there is necessary. Therefore, educators should experiment with methods that bridge this gap between reality and history, like: booklets, actual guiding, models, simulations, recreations, reenactments, and other such theatrical techniques (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2002) so they may take them back with them to their classrooms.
3. *Inspiration:* The skills and attitudes to be nurtured in a pilgrim-oriented experience should stem from andragogy, a concept associated with Malcolm Knowles (1980). In the context of Israel education, this means creating opportunities for *self-directed learning* for educators during the Israel experience program, allowing educators an initial exploration and understanding of a site, before providing them with "final answers." Again, in the case of the Western Wall, perhaps beginning with a quiet, individual experience of the site, and only later farming it in text and discussion.
4. *Influence:* Following the former, pilgrim educators can effect the Israel education at their schools by treating their students as "people" (Brooks & Brooks, 1999) empowering them to ask their own questions, reach their own answers, and take responsibility for their own leaning. This means educators invite their

[8]For example, the 1967 poem "The Paratroopers Cry" by Haim Hefer describing Israeli paratroopers liberating the Western Wall during the Six-Day War.

students to become “pilgrims away from the pilgrim site” by creating opportunities for them to explore and emotionally connect, building on their perhaps existing knowledge or their ability to find information.

5. *Identity*: The Biblical pilgrimage was planned long before it occurred, sometimes even a few years, in collaboration by a group based on family or community. The professional-development Israel experience program should incite and facilitate this process: sharing or even transferring the responsibility for the learning by explicitly engaging educators in the planning process from the creation of the program. This means that the organizer takes a “step back,” not an easy task, and trusts the program design with the educators who may or may not have been to Israel. Involvement in the specific details of the journey would stem from and enhance the educators’ personal commitment to the experience as a pilgrimage.

The Odyssey: Meaning-Oriented Professional Development

לֶךְ-לְךָ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ, אֶל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר אַרְאֶךָּ. (בראשית י"ב:א')

Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you (Genesis 12:1).

The conception of Odyssey, a journey of transformation and return to the original place of departure, contrasts dramatically with the journeys expressed in the narratives of the Jewish people (Haberman, 2006). This approach emphasizes the place as a tool (albeit a meaningful one) inciting personal identity exploration and the transformation. Above is the famous quote describing God’s commandment to Avram, expected to embark on a journey to an unknown land—the land of Israel—never to return to his geographical homeland again. However, it is this type of journey transforms Avram’s identity. Although probably hoping to return to their geographical homeland, the “Odysseyan” educators are embarking on a journey of self-change (Cohen, 2006), a conscious activity whereby they hope to be transformed in a meaningful way. This is an “inward voyage” (Noy, 2003) from the familiar to the unknown.

Identity exploration and meaning making is very much dependent on the perception of the journey as an authentic experience (Chambers, 2008) and therefore, “Odyssian” educators do not consider themselves tourists, visitors, or strangers to Israel (although locals may consider them as such); they wish to integrate with Israeli culture, and hope to avoid staged “tourist” attractions (ibid.).

The “meaning – full” Israel experience professional-development program may look like this:

1. *Intellect*: The program’s content is arranged thematically, exploring circles of identity and key components of Jewish identification such as: collective memory, religious practice, Hebrew language, Jewish values, Jewish texts, and Israel (Chamo, 2008). Insomuch that learning may occur “off the beaten track,” the

itinerary choices stem from the meaning of the site as opposed to any other consideration. For example, when wishing to explore the meaning of sacredness, *Kedushah*, the program focuses on Haifa as a holy city for unique sects (Bahai, Ahmediyyah, Carmelite order, etc.), although Haifa is not frequently visited as part of tourist programs in Israel and would usually not be included in short-term experiences for logistical reasons.

2. *Instrument*: The main instrument used during the program should be *Mifgashim*—intentional, constructed, lengthy encounters (Cohen, 2000) with Israeli peers who share the search for Jewish meaning. Educators should be taught to structure and facilitate *Mifgashim* by personally participating in them. The educational framework of these encounters should be explicitly articulated and their meaning explored through discussion groups, from a reciprocal approach, on relatively "neutral" ground (ibid.). For example, a residential week away from where the Israelis reside, meeting Jewish educators, comparing and sharing best practices in terms of Jewish studies meeting as equals, ready both to teach and to learn (ibid.).
3. *Inspiration*: engaging educators in *beit midrash* before, during, and after the program means that educators will engage daily, in a traditional learning structure adapted to the purposes of professional development explicit in the selection of texts and the language of instruction (Feiman-Nemser, 2006). It will serve as an "odyssey" within an "odyssey" and become the connecting line between the home country, the journey and the return. An overall thematic concept, such as Jewish peoplehood: the knowledgeable identification and connection to the Jewish people (Chamo, Sabar Ben Yohushua, & Shimoni, 2009) can be studied and debated prior to leaving, can serve as the connecting theme while during Israel experience, and carry through the return as a spectrum for reflection on the personal meaning of belonging to the Jewish collective.
4. *Influence*: *beit midrash* described above will allow for the creation of a platform for networking and collaboration between educational peers from Israel and abroad, starting before and continuing beyond the Israel experience. This means a broadening of the before mentioned "sacred community" concept to include educators from both sides, practicing what Parker Palmer (1993) would define as "hospitality:" receiving each other with openness and care and placing the search for meaning at the heart of the communal practice.
5. *Identity*: Nisan (1997) claims that educators should commit themselves to a comprehensive conception of aims and values with respect to their educational work. I suggest the value placed at the heart of the Israel experience be a journey to Jewish peoplehood, thus it becomes not merely a personal Odyssey but rather a visionary commitment to the Jewish people and the land of Israel. Therefore, the program should encourage and allow participants' personal involvement as partners in the process; room to express their values and abilities; and a process imbuing them with a sense of responsibility for the future (Nisan, 1997).

Not Exactly a Fifth Model: The *Madrich*—Leading Educator

מַדְרִיכְךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ תֵּלֵךְ (ישעיה, מ"ח:י"ז)

Leads you along the paths you should follow (Isaiah 48:17)

The four models described above lack an important connecting link: that of the mediator between the person and the place—namely, the educator leading the experience. These educators often provide the "lenses" for the experience by taking an active role in planning and executing the program. Cohen et al. (2002) describe their dual role: on the one hand, they are pathfinders, providing access to an unknown territory. And, on the other hand, they are mentors, providing geographical and spiritual guidance. The authors (ibid.) also suggest a third type, "the model:" positioned in symmetry with the participants, as they share the search for identity and connection. In this latter sense the extents of their knowledge is not as important in so much as their ability to facilitate learning, create a space within the group for questioning and generate meaning.

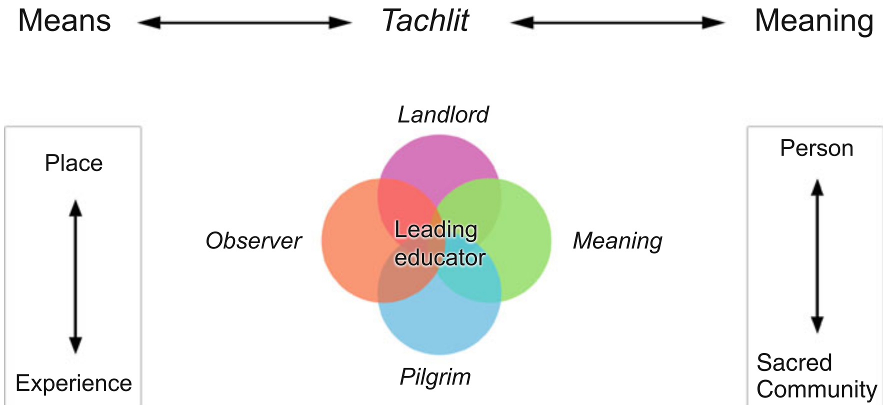
I find the process facilitated by "the model" (ibid.) educator on an Israel experience is what Borowitz (1992) described as *Tzimtzum*: using Jewish mystical terminology, he promotes a notion of contemporary Jewish leadership based upon the understanding that learners increasingly demand to be treated as persons (similar to the andragogical approach described before). Borowitz offers a three-stage process carried out by this leading educator: (1) "Contraction"—withholding presence and power so that the followers may have a space to "be," helping them create their *own* knowledge, an ability to facilitate a process as first among equals; (2) "Breaking"—an inevitable consequence brought about by disappointment and frustration from what seems to be irrelevant or immature conversation within the group, completed by forgiveness, modeled by the leader and enabled through the creation of a sacred community of educators; (3) "Amendment"—a third and final stage that builds on its predecessors, empowering the group to work out of their own initiative and assume full responsibility for their own learning. This third stage is the stage Borowitz calls "person making."

This educational-leadership process is relevant and applicable in all four conceptual models. The leading educator's task on an Israel experience professional-development program is therefore to initiate a professional and personal process, created through the interaction between person and place, by limiting themselves and inviting group responsibility—thus being *models* of this process (Meyer, 2003).

Next Steps: A Framework for Programming and Further Research

While each of the four conceptual models can serve as a basis for an Israel experience professional-development program, they are somewhat compromised if applied as exclusive models. Research has already established that there are many

different and even conflicting personal assumptions with regard to an Israel experience (Marom, 2003): since at any moment, adult educators can be shifting from a vacation mode of curiosity-seeker to that of a religious pilgrim, internalizing instrumental knowledge or be seeking meaning for their existence (Klein-Katz, 1998). Therefore, to end this chapter I would like to suggest one integrative dynamic framework:



This suggested framework has a dynamic structure, moving from side to side and from top to bottom, thus creating a matrix:

- On top is the *Tachlit*—the dual purpose of means and meaning—as the overall, organizing frame. The *Tachlit* provides the primary *horizontal synergy* between "means" (on the left) and "meaning" (on the right). Both "means" and "meaning" sides simultaneously nourish and are being nurtured by each other.
- The relationship between "Place" and "Person," which was discussed in length through the four conceptual models, are placed on either side on the *Tachlit*: "Place" under "means" and "Person" under "meaning." The core foundations of an educational tourist religious program, namely "Experience" and "Sacred Community," which were discussed earlier in this chapter, are presented on either "Means" or "Meaning" sides, respectively,
- The positioning of Place and Experience on the Means side and Person and Sacred Community on the Meaning side of the framework create a *vertical dynamism*—movement from top to bottom and vice versa. Thus, on the Means side (left) is the conceptual dialectic between Place and Experience, and on the Meaning side (right) the conceptual dialectic between Person and Sacred Community.

Therefore, the horizontal synergy of *Tachlit* and the two sided vertical dynamism create a complex system of interactions, where the four conceptual models become perceptible, presented as separate yet overlapping fields, with the conceptual "leading educator" shared by all four:

(1) Landlord is predominantly positioned in the interaction between Place and Person
(2) Pilgrim is predominantly positioned in the interaction between Experience and Sacred Community
(3) Observer is predominantly positioned in the interaction between Place and Experience
(4) Meaning is predominantly positioned in the interaction between Person and Sacred Community

Because of its complexity, this framework provides a versatile and multi-dimensional field for programming, thus when one wishes to plan an Israel experience professional-development program, one can find a variety of ways to cater for the different and sometimes conflicting goals—without loosing sight of the purpose *Tachlit* and the core elements (Place, Person, Experience, Sacred Community).

Being theoretical, this framework is yet to be put to the test. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the entire field of Israel experience as professional development is lacking and more solid, empirical research on the implementation and effects of these programs is greatly needed. First and foremost, I recommend further research focuses on using the integrative-dynamic framework as an *evaluative* tool of current Israel experience programs in general, and for professional-development programs in particular. The framework should assist in creating a shared language and criteria for critical conversation about these programs, which is currently quite absent.

Moreover, further research should look into:

- The people: what are the characteristics and origins of each of the four conceptual perceptions toward the Israel experience professional-development program: Who are the observers? Pilgrims? Landlords? Odyssians? How or can an understanding of these four separate yet overlapping personas contribute toward an understanding of contemporary Jewry's relationship with Israel?
- The place: what are the essential sites and experiences suitable for creating each conceptual program?
- The experience: how is this framework effective in helping educators acquire the attitudes, skills, and knowledge they need for Israel education at their own classrooms?
- Sacred community: what would be effective methods for preparation, reflection, and processing and follow up to the program?
- Leading educator: who is the leading educator and how can they be trained and evaluated?

These five questions open a window into each element, helping in creating a broader understanding of this framework—as a basis for the initial question posed above.

Vici?

This chapter began with a question: how can the short-term experience in Israel serve as a professional-development program? This question entailed exploring a seldom-researched topic, while relying on a large volume of adjacent international research and conceptualization and years of personal–professional experience in the field of Israel experience professional-development program. The integrative framework presented at the end of the chapter provides a substantial basis for programming. Without compromising articulation of an explicit, unifying overall purpose, yet allowing much flexibility and adaptability to the various profiles of the educators, organizational needs, and goals. Notwithstanding, this framework needs to be put to the test: application in the field and research must be the next steps in order to validate it.

Indeed, the heading of this chapter is: "Veni, vidi, vici." However, the first two parts of this statement, "I came" and "I saw" were not at all addressed, and this is not an indication of their insignificance. On the contrary, bluntly put: there are not enough educators who have been offered the opportunity or perhaps wish to partake in Israel experience professional-development programs. Therefore, there is also a clear need to research *how* to get educators to Israel. This needs to be a comprehensive effort covering issues like community and school policies, budget allocations, as well as the educators' perceptions and motivations.

In conclusion, what has been achieved here? I draw from a famous Talmudic discussion, describing an argument between rabbis, whereas toward the end of the argument Rabbi Eliezer calls out: *"If the law is as I say then let it be proved by Heaven"* and indeed a voice from heaven came and asserted that Rabbi Eliezer was right. However, Rabbi Yehoshua stood up and said (quoting Deuteronomy 30:12) "*It is not in Heaven*" and a later sage explained further (quoting Exodus 23:2): "*it is for the people to decide*" (*Babylonian Talmud, Bava Metzia: 59*). I will take Rabbi Yehoshua's stance and say that an Israel experience professional-development program is not "in the heaven"—it is not an unreachable goal, a distant idea or a theoretical concept. And as such, *Vici* can be achieved.

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Rabbis as Educators: Their Professional Training and Identity Formation

Lisa D. Grant and Michal Muszkat-Barkan

Introduction

By definition, a rabbi is a teacher. Yet, few rabbis actually pursue extensive formal studies in education as part of, or in concert with their rabbinical schooling. Though this remains the case for the majority of rabbis trained in Reform and Conservative seminaries both in the United States and Israel, many rabbis today choose to serve in educational roles instead of or in addition to their pulpit responsibilities. Orthodox rabbis have long served in senior educational positions in Orthodox day schools, although there does not seem to be any consistent standard for their educational training. In the liberal movements, there appears to be a growing trend to combine formal educational training with rabbinical studies. These dual-degree graduates find positions in day schools, community settings, and congregations as classroom teachers, directors of Jewish studies, principals, heads of school, school rabbis, and sometimes a combination of several roles. In Israel the situation is somewhat different since there are still relatively few Reform and Conservative congregations that can afford to pay for a full-time rabbi. Thus, many graduates of Reform and Conservative Rabbinical programs in Israel look to Jewish education as a means of realizing their rabbinic calling. They serve as educators in several settings including public schools, pre-schools, the army, and in congregations. Indeed, in both the United States and Israel, the field is still so new, it appears that new job titles and responsibilities are crafted at times based on the skill set and interests of particular individuals and the needs and vision of the institution in which they serve.

How do these rabbi-educators define their roles? What distinguishes them from educators who serve in similar kinds of positions? Are there skills, capabilities, and perspectives that rabbi-educators possess which are different from individuals with advanced training in Jewish studies and senior positions in Jewish education? How do rabbi-educators describe their professional identity? Do they see themselves as rabbis who serve in educational settings, as educators who happen also to be rabbis, or is their identity as a rabbi-educator somehow unique and integrated? While there

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is an abundance of literature on teacher development and a much smaller base about the professional preparation of rabbis, there is virtually no research that has explored the question of what this combined role entails. This study offers a first step in developing the field of inquiry about the identities and roles of rabbi-educators. Our focus is on how rabbi-educators themselves describe and define their professional identity and roles. We examine their self-reports through two principle lenses—Mordechai Nisan's work (2009) on the self-construction of educational identity, and a theoretical framework for clergy education developed by a team of researchers from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching who undertook a comprehensive study of the pedagogical practices of faculty who train rabbis, ministers, and priests in North American seminaries and schools of theology (2006). As we learn more about the qualities and contributions of rabbi-educators to Jewish educational settings, we can better reflect on what specialized training is required to support and develop individuals who choose this path?

Our interest in these questions emerges out of our experiences as two professors of Jewish education who teach education courses to rabbinical students in the United States and Israel. We are interested in the findings both from a theoretical and practical perspective. In other words, we want to explore what factors shape professional identity, so that teachers like us who are involved in the process of preparing rabbi-educators can better understand their specific academic and professional needs. We are also interested in exploring cross-cultural similarities and differences in professional-development needs in the US and Israel.

The research is based on a qualitative study of a small pool of American and Israeli rabbi-educators who are currently serving in congregations or as a rabbi in a Jewish day school.

The following questions shape our preliminary investigation:

1. What factors do rabbi-educators perceive as central in reflecting their professional identity?
2. What do rabbi-educators perceive as their central goals?
3. What skills, knowledge, and orientations to Jewish learning and Jewish living do rabbi-educators perceive that they bring to their work in educational settings?
4. What aspects of their training as rabbis and educators do they see as most valuable to their dual role?

Throughout the analysis, we also explore what are the common denominators and what distinguishes the perspectives of their roles for American and Israeli rabbi-educators.

Research Methodology

During the 2006–2007 academic year, we sent out a brief survey to individuals working as rabbi-educators in Reform, Conservative, or community day schools, and Reform and Conservative congregations both in the United States and in Israel.

Respondents were given the option of giving their name and voluntarily agreeing to participate in a follow-up telephone interview. The Americans were invited to participate based on their job function. The Israelis were drawn from a group who participated in Jewish education professional-development seminars during the 2006–2007 academic year. It was important to us that participants in this study all saw themselves as rabbi-educators. We also chose individuals who we thought would still have fairly clear memories of what aspects of their professional preparation most helped them in their rabbi-educator role. Some were still students in the final stages of their training; others had been in the field for 6 years or less.

In addition to descriptive questions such as education background, current job title, and key responsibilities, we asked respondents to comment on the challenges and rewards of their position, and how their rabbinical training and education training (if any) shapes their performance. We also asked them about their current professional-development needs.

We received responses from 18 American rabbi-educators and 16 Israelis rabbis and rabbinical students working in a variety of Jewish educational settings. From this pool of 34 respondents, we conducted in-depth follow-up telephone interviews during the spring of 2007 with ten American and nine Israel rabbi-educators. Each interview took between 30 and 60 minutes. It is clear that we have neither the numbers of respondents nor the depth of data to draw a comprehensive portrait of the individuals who choose this career path, their perceptions of their role, and its requirements. Rather, we see this research as a means of opening the field of investigation into these questions of what distinguishes a rabbi-educator in terms of professional identity and practice?

Table 1 presents a general breakdown of the respondents by school where they studied and whether they have formal training in education. All the rabbis who study at Hebrew Union College take courses in Jewish education as part of their rabbinic training. Almost all of the Americans who also completed a masters in Jewish education did so concurrent with their rabbinical studies. The six Israelis who indicated

Table 1 Summary of research participants

	United States	Israel
Reform ordination[a]—dual-degree rabbinics and education	8	5
Reform ordination—no education degree	2	6
Conservative ordination[b]—dual-degree rabbinics and education	6	2
Conservative ordination no education degree	1	3
Other ordination[c]	1	

[a]Four of the HUC graduates studied at the Los Angeles campus and the Rhea Hirsch School of Jewish education; four studied at HUC's New York campus and the New York School of Jewish education; two were ordained at HUC New York and did not have a degree in education.
[b]The Americans studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York and the Israeli rabbi-educators studied at Machon Schechter, the sister institution to JTS in Israel.
[c]This individual received private ordination and has masters degrees in Jewish studies, elementary education, and special education.

Table 2 Jewish educational setting

	United States
Day school rabbi	9
Congregational rabbi with substantial education responsibilities	2
Congregational educator	7

Table 3 Jewish educational setting

	Israel[a]
Rabbi in public schools	15
Community rabbi	6
Adult educator	6
Army educator	3
Pre-school rabbi	3

[a]These numbers represent 16 individuals who have multiple part-time jobs as rabbi-educators in various settings.

they have a formal degree in education, studied general education at an academic institution outside of their seminary training.

Table 2 provides the breakdown of American respondents by type of position they were in at the time of contact for this study. Half work in day schools where they have a range of titles such as "Rabbi-in-Residence," "School Rabbi," and "Director of Judaic Programming." Two respondents are congregational rabbis with substantial responsibilities in education. For example, one of the study participants described one of her central roles in the congregation as "the rabbi of the religious school community." The other seven serve as directors of Jewish education in congregations. Here too, titles vary greatly including "Director of Lifelong Learning," "Director of Religious Education," and "Director of Youth and Family Education."

Israeli rabbi-educators have somewhat different roles than their American counterparts as shown in Table 3. They are also much more likely to work in multiple part-time positions in different settings. For example, we see that 15 people work in public schools. Although the setting is a so-called "secular" school, their role is somewhat similar to a school rabbi in an American-Jewish day school. They may be responsible for creating ceremonies, teaching teachers, and developing a *beit midrash* for students and/or parents. Several rabbi-educators also serve as educational consultants in the Israeli army to help build and strengthen soldiers' Jewish identity. Rabbi-educators who work in Reform and Conservative congregations may or may not be the pulpit rabbi. As there are no formal congregational schools in Israel, their education work tends to be more informal, creating study groups for *b'nai mitzvah* students, parents, and adults. These rabbi-educators also might be involved with the congregation's pre-school, and the public schools in the area. Position held does not seem to correlate in any way to denomination of the rabbi-educator.

Theoretical Framing

One of the challenges of undertaking this research is the absence of a literature in which to ground our analysis. As we have noted, there is almost nothing that has been written about this combined role of rabbi-educator.[1] Our search revealed three papers that address some aspect of this field of study. The first two are written by school rabbis and focus on explaining this role (Koren, 1993 and Gottfried, 2000). The third article is written by a professor of Jewish education who is also a rabbi and concerns the preparation of rabbis as teachers (Schein, 1988).

Koren describes the role of rabbis in religious (Orthodox) Israeli schools as an extra-curricular function. His research shows that the position is not clearly defined. The rabbis' main responsibilities appear to involve serving as a resource for Jewish knowledge and working with the faculty, students, and parents in informal settings. The rabbi is expected to help solve educational and personal challenges as they relate to tensions between secular and sacred studies and the surrounding Israeli society.

Gottfried makes similar observations about the school rabbi's role in Solomon Schechter schools in America. Her paper is more of a personal reflection on an individual's role in a Conservative Jewish day school. Here, the author describes her primary function as serving as a religious role model to faculty, students, and parents (Gottfried, 2000, p. 47). She understands her role to be multi-faceted, helping to create a religious environment for the entire school community, serving as a resource for religious knowledge and guidance through formal teaching, counseling, consulting, and informal encounters.

Koren identifies several key roles and skills that school rabbis need in their practice. He notes that rabbi-educators need to serve as facilitators of group process and as teachers to faculty and students. They must organize informal educational experiences and ceremonies for parents and students. And, they also must have the sensitivity and ability to advise and support parents in the school community.

Schein's paper focuses on the task of preparing rabbis to be teachers, what he describes as the "art of translation" (p. 15). He provides an educational framework for how rabbinical students can develop better skills to make Jewish sources relevant and accessible to American-Jews with a wide range of backgrounds, motivations, and needs.

These papers just begin to open the discussion about what characterizes the professional identity of rabbi-educators. They suggest that rabbi-educators see themselves as active teachers and spiritual guides in the school community. Their teaching often takes place in informal settings and through counseling and pastoral work rather than as part of the formal curriculum. The findings suggest that certain pedagogies are central to this role, among them facilitating, guiding, and the ability to "translate" Jewish sources to contemporary contexts.

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[1]For this study, we focused on the literature most directly pertaining to rabbi-educator training. Literature from related fields such as guidance counseling, life coaching, and pastoral care may yield some fruitful comparisons as the research develops.

While helpful, these three papers alone do not provide a strong enough theoretical base upon which to build a more comprehensive analysis of what characterizes the identity and role of a rabbi-educator. Since the literature about rabbi-educators is so thin, we decided to examine how the literature on professional identity formation of educators and the training of rabbis can shed light on our questions and findings. Two sources were particularly helpful in framing our analysis. First is Mordechai Nisan's monograph entitled "'Educational Identity' as a Major Factor in Educational Leadership" (2009). Our second source comes from a comprehensive study of clergy education in America (Foster, Dahill, Goleman, & Tolentino, 2005).

Nisan's philosophy of educational-leadership development provides an initial lens through which we can explore how rabbi-educators describe their professional identity. According to Nisan, professional self-identity is constructed based on several different factors. Frequently, a significant part of adult identity is defined by one's professional life. Adults seek meaning and self-actualization through their work. While educational leaders define themselves first and foremost as educators, they distinguish themselves as educational *leaders* by going through a process of deliberation in deciding which factors are more significant in defining the qualities and priorities of their leadership.

Nisan identifies key characteristics of educational-leadership identity as including an educational vision, goals, beliefs about education that derive from personal experience, and an understanding of the reality in which educators work. Once individuals become aware of their own vision and goals they need to become more reflective about the reasons for choosing them. Educational leaders who have the opportunity to discuss their goals, enhance their abilities to choose and implement educational strategies to actualize their vision. Ideally, part of any process of professional education should include work to help individuals form their professional vision and provide a laboratory for them to strengthen the bridge between goals and means.

We turned to Foster et al. (2005) as a framework for understanding the key factors that characterize clergy education. We wanted to see which of these factors were most salient from the perspective of the rabbi-educators in our study. We also were curious to see if the rabbi-educators identified any other aspects of their training that fell outside of the Foster et al. framework.

According to this extensive study of the training of rabbis, priests, and ministers, there are four core pedagogies that characterize the nature of clergy education and shape their professional practice. These include pedagogies of (1) interpretation; (2) formation; (3) contextualization; and (4) performance.

Pedagogies of interpretation focus on developing critical thinking and reflection skills in reading and analyzing texts. The emphasis is not only on understanding the text in its own context but also on helping learners to see that the text has something relevant and significant to say about the contemporary human condition.

Pedagogies of formation are designed to cultivate interdependence between the learners' spiritual and professional development. They seek to cultivate a sense of authenticity and integrity by aligning religious identity with religious leadership and

practice. The authors describe this approach as one that is best reflected in elevating the presence of God and holiness in all aspects of life.

Pedagogies of contextualization are closely related to pedagogies of interpretation, but here the emphasis is reversed. These pedagogies focus on strengthening religious tradition as something relevant and meaningful to contemporary life. They stress the ideas that knowledge is constructed and that context shapes educational goals, processes, and experiences. They also emphasize the importance of helping learners become self-reflective about their own biases and assumptions through their encounters with the "other."

Pedagogies of performance are rooted in the assumption that the role of clergy is extremely public and therefore imbued with high expectations from the audiences who they are intended to serve. As the authors note: "Performance is a way of thinking and being revealed in the act of doing, carrying out, or putting into effect" (p. 158). These pedagogies focus on developing the ability to interpret and perform "scripts" that can engage and motivate the audience to further action as individuals or collectively.

The research through which these pedagogies are derived is based solely on clergy education. We recognize that rabbi-educators go through the same process of professional training as their rabbinic colleagues. Many, but not all, also receive additional professional preparation as educators. We were interested in understanding whether and how these four pedagogies that are so central to clergy development are manifest in the professional identity construction and role definition of those working as rabbi-educators as well.

Summary of Findings

As noted, our findings are based on two sets of data: (1) 34 written survey responses from 18 American and 16 Israeli rabbi-educators; and (2) follow-up telephone interviews with 19 of this original 34. Only four of the total pool are men. The appendix provides a profile of the interviewees, their name, country, year and school of ordination, and current position(s).

Components of Professional Identity

The rabbi-educators in our study tend to define their identity in one of three ways. Some see themselves predominantly as rabbis serving in an educational role or setting. A handful sees themselves predominantly as educators who happen to be rabbis. Many describe their role as fused with both aspects being essential to their professional identity. Role or setting did not seem to have a direct impact on self-ascription for those who described their identity as fused. For instance, Patty who has more pulpit responsibilities than many of our other respondents, seemed to give her educator role more priority. She said, "I've been an educator forever. It has always been part of my identity. In fact, this was a huge draw for me in rabbinical

school. I see everything I do as education." Similarly, Eyal, another congregational rabbi who also works in a school said, "As a congregational rabbi, I do a lot of education. Even when I accompany a family going through a process of mourning, it's education." Likewise, Anat who also serves as both a pulpit and school rabbi, said, "I see myself as an educator in a broad sense. When I teach in a bar mitzvah class as well as when I conduct a committee meeting . . . For me, education is always related to faith. An educational action is a faith action."

Most of the respondents who serve as congregational educators see their roles as fused. For instance, Julia who is director of Lifelong Learning at a congregation, said, "I see the roles as really integrated. I wanted to be a rabbi and also wanted to be able to look at my rabbinate through the lenses, the way educators are trained to think. They've always been integrated." Shoshana, a newly appointed congregational educator, made a similar observation: "I am not sure I could do my job if I was not a rabbi and an educator. My training in both fields has already been of specific use in the short time I have been here . . .Who I am as a person is an educator . . . but, I also can't imagine being an educator without being a rabbi."

Others of our respondents also saw their roles as fused, but more in an ideal sense than in terms of their day-to-day reality. Leah, a congregational school principal, said, "I'd like more integration in my job. I didn't go to rabbinical school so I would learn how to order chicken. I wish I had fewer administrative responsibilities and more time to work with adults and parents." Neil, who has a similar position, said, "I've been saying I have two jobs. I'm the educator and I'm the rabbi. I'd like to connect them more. The people you see often cross both worlds. How do you build on that relationship to help the families and further the congregation's mission? I'm thinking a lot about that."

In contrast to those who described a fused role are a few who noted one or the other aspect as more predominant. Melissa and Leah, both congregational educators, seemed to think that any skilled educator should be able to do most of what they do, including leading services and writing divrei Torah. As Melissa noted: "The only time I feel like a rabbi is when I do life cycle events for friends and family." Similarly, Ilana, who doesn't see herself serving as a congregational rabbi, said, "Education is going to be the heart of my rabbinical practice."

On the other hand, Alice who has worked in a day school for 7 years, described herself more as a rabbi than an educator. She said she chose to work in a school mainly because she wanted to balance her time between work and family. She remarked, "My sense of mission as a rabbi always had to do with children and families. That could have been played out in the pulpit as well."

Perceptions of Preparation

Respondents also reflected on how the various aspects of their professional preparation contribute to their professional identity. Many of the American rabbi-educators we interviewed said they felt they were a better rabbi because of the education training they received. They describe their educational training as providing them with

the practical tools and organizational expertise for working in the field, skills they did not acquire through their rabbinical school curriculum. For example, Julia, a graduate of the Rhea Hirsch School of Education at HUC in Los Angeles, remarked, "What I learned during that education year helped me bring all the rabbi stuff together. In the education program, you get a perspective on the field and Jewish world that you don't get in rabbinical school." Leslie, another Rhea Hirsch graduate now working in a day school, said, "If I was just the rabbi, I feel I wouldn't know the inner workings. I can see a bigger picture. I get a more holistic perspective of the school." Another JTS graduate working in a day school who responded to the initial questionnaire wrote: "I'm very thankful that I took the time to complete an education degree before rabbinical school. The rabbinical program was so academic in nature. It doesn't teach you how to connect with people. It helps you figure it out through internships."

Many respondents also highlighted particular education courses that they felt were essential to their professional success. Courses in organizational dynamics, leadership, supervision, and reflective practice were those most frequently mentioned. Whereas most of their American colleagues pursued a formal degree in Jewish education while in rabbinical school, the Israelis who train at HUC in Jerusalem take only two courses in education during their tenure, and those who train at Schechter take almost none[2]. Most of the Israeli respondents indicated they would prefer to get more formal training in education during rabbinic school. The Israeli rabbi-educators (trained at HUC) mentioned as helpful the course that exposed them to visions and practice in Jewish education and leadership. Some also mentioned the importance of deliberating with colleagues about their educational goals and their opportunity to visit and practice teaching in an Israeli high school. As Amit noted, "It was important that we had a safe space in rabbinical school to discuss Jewish education without the pressure of day to day practice."

Machon Shechter graduates mentioned almost no formal training in education during rabbinical school but a general spiritual and leadership preparation that helped them as rabbis. Thus, Hila said, "Each rabbi is first of all an educator but, I didn't get any educational tools in my training at Machon Shechter." Indeed, most of the Israeli respondents felt that they would have benefited from more practical tools during their rabbinic-educational training.

At the same time that many rabbi-educators said that their education training made them better rabbis. American and Israelis alike expressed the sentiment that they can do more as educators because of their rabbinic training. Several noted the fact that the title rabbi commands more respect. For instance, Melanie, a congregational school educator said, "The title gives me *kavod* [respect]. People tend to respond differently. I wish it were different .... Lots of people pushed me to the rabbinate, but no one ever said 'have you ever thought about education instead of or in addition to the rabbinate'?" Many also observed that rabbis bring more of a

[2]Recently, rabbinical students at Machon Schechter have begun taking classes in education. At the time when the interviewees in our study were in school, this was not the case.

spiritual perspective and orientation to education than do many of their education colleagues. For example, Julia described supervision of her staff as a spiritual practice. Several respondents spoke about how as rabbis, they can see and respond to the "whole person" in ways they feel many educators are not as prepared to do. This is reflected in Alice's observation: "I'm more interested in the children's personal development right now than their intellectual development." Shoshanna, elaborated even further: "People want to come to you for mentoring, spiritual needs, help with celebration and coping with sorrow. People don't tend to look at their educator in that light . . . When a parent comes to me with a child with special needs, the fact that I can approach that relationship as a rabbi and not only be thinking about the child's educational needs, really makes a difference."

Just as many respondents named specific education courses that they saw as essential to their role, so too did they itemize what they felt was most valuable about their rabbinical school training. Virtually every American rabbi-educator listed pastoral care and counseling, and text skills. Neil, a congregational educator described how he links these two skills together: "My pastoral care skills are really important in listening to parents and students as they describe the challenges they have. I do a lot of listening, and where appropriate, I do a lot of linking of Jewish tradition to the responses I hear, trying to demonstrate some of the wisdom of our tradition and how it can help people today." Israeli respondents mentioned a strong Jewish studies background as the main contribution of their rabbinate training. For some of them it was what they needed and for others it was not enough. Eran, a school rabbi said, "In rabbinical school I got a lot of Jewish knowledge, but the title of rabbi does not transform you into an educator."

Vision and Goals of Rabbi-Educators

As mentioned above, Nisan (2009) identifies vision, goals, and beliefs that derive from personal–professional experience as key components of professional identity. At times, the visions that rabbi-educators articulate are specific to the particular context or setting in which they work, such as with *b'nai mitzvah* students or school faculty. At other times, their vision relates more to their general view of the human life journey and its relation to the Jewish world. We identified three core themes that the rabbi-educators in our pool touched upon as they articulated their visions: (1) a desire to connect the Jewish world to everyday life experience; (2) to guide spiritual growth; and (3) among the Israelis, to promote a pluralistic agenda in Israeli society.

Align the Jewish World with Everyday Life

Most of our respondents see their role in helping people create meaningful connections to Jewish life as a central aspect of their rabbinate that they can uniquely contribute to their educational settings. This aspiration was expressed by rabbi-educators working in a wide range of settings. Esther, an American day school rabbi said, "This job is a chance to educate young families and children and staff as to what it means to think and learn Jewishly." Sarah, who works in Israeli public

schools and the Israeli army, said, "My job is to link Jewish content with Jewish living and belief." Likewise, Shoshanna, a congregational educator said she sees her job as creating "opportunities for living Jewish culture, and transmitting the necessary skills to be able to do so." And Eyal, who works in a congregation and several different schools in Israel, said, "I would like to help students, teachers, and adults to see everything through the prism of the tradition, Jewish culture, religion and faith."

This theme relates to what Schein (1988) calls "the art of translation" or what Foster et al. (2005) name as "pedagogy of contextualization." Yet, our respondents did not narrow their role to translating only text (Schein, 1988), but saw their mission more broadly in terms of translating the Jewish culture. They stress the role they play in reshaping Jewish knowledge in order to make it relevant to the educational contexts in which they work. They describe themselves as Jewish role models who work to bring the best of the Jewish culture to their learners in order to create stronger commitments to and engagement in Jewish life.

It is not altogether surprising that the rabbi-educators in our study emphasized this pedagogy as a professional goal, since they are enmeshed in the multiple contexts of students, teachers, families, school culture, and ideologies on a daily basis. It may also be that the rabbi-educators' responses in this regard are not all that different from what we might hear from congregational rabbis whose work is also focused on helping people find and make meaning through Jewish texts and tradition.[3]

Spiritual Guidance

Many of both the American and Israeli respondents in our research describe their role as spiritual guides and role models in educational settings, as something that distinguishes them from educators who do not have rabbinic training. They note their training in counseling and pastoral care, as well as their ability to work with people more holistically as key features that set them apart. Some spoke directly about their role as spiritual guides. For instance, Hava, who teaches in a TALI school and the IDF, said, "I try to bring out the spiritual aspects of Judaism, to be a *moreh derech*." One of the American day school rabbi-educators responding to the written questionnaire wrote, "I want to increase the sense of spirituality and *esprit de corps* among the staff so everyone feels more invested in the Jewish mission of the school." Mark, another day school rabbi-educator extended this to a broader audience when he described how he was asked to write his own job description: "I wrote that I would be the spiritual guide for the Solomon Schechter school family – students, faculty, parents, staff, and the wider community."

Other respondents focused more on their potential as rabbi-educators to influence and shape lives. For example, Anat, a congregational rabbi in Israel who also works in schools, remarked, "I love to see people who believe in our ability

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[3]See Muszkat-Barkan M. "To Mend Myself, To Mend the World: The Choice to Study for the Reform Rabbinate in Israel" (in press).

to change who they are. When I see the changes occur within the group (congregants, students); when I see people apply what we learned to their own lives I feel successful."

Julia, whose responsibilities include supervising faculty noted how she saw her job as supporting both their professional and personal development: "Ultimately, I'm hoping they will grow, primarily in their professional practice, but also as Jews."

This theme fits within a pedagogy of "interpretation" (Foster et al., 2005) which is manifested as an internal guide that leads to pedagogic choices such as discussing values, searching for meaning, and creating affective educational/spiritual experiences that sometimes compete with or supersede cognitive emphasis or gaining knowledge. In comparison to Koren (1993) and Gottfried (2000) they do not emphasize their rabbi-educator role as a source for Jewish knowledge as much as it serves as a source for guidance about Jewish life and personal change.

Pluralism

One of the most significant distinguishing features of the Israeli respondents in our study is their emphasis on pluralism as an important value in their professional identity. Most articulated a pluralistic vision, specifically noting values such as creativity within the Jewish world, relevance as a vehicle for identification with Jewish culture, and the legitimacy of different perspectives as a part of Jewish learning and Jewish living. [4]. They also see the dichotomy between the orthodox and secular perspective in Israeli society as a gap that constrains the engagement of many Israelis with the Jewish world.[5]

This tendency grows out of the cultural and ideological environment in which these rabbi-educators chose to study and the movement in which they choose to serve. Both the Conservative and Reform institutions in Israel mention pluralism as one of the main characteristics of their mission and agenda. Expressions like "the multifaceted Jewish culture," "pluralistic Jewish education," and more, attest to the centrality of a pluralistic standpoint in these movements.[6] Thus, we can understand the context for our Israeli respondents' pluralistic agenda. They use the pedagogy of contextualization in order to emphasize the many ways that can be used in understanding, interpreting, and living Jewish culture in contemporary Israeli life.

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[4]Both the TALI system and HUC-educational programs in Israel have the term "Pluralism" in their missions and title programs.

[5]This is one of the main "calling" motivations for studying at rabbinic school for Israelis. See Muszkat-Barkan M. "To Mend Myself, To Mend the World: The Choice to Study for the Reform Rabbinate in Israel" (in press).

[6]For example, see: http://www.masorti.org/: "The Masorti movement is a *pluralistic*, religious movement in Israel, affiliated with Conservative Judaism;" http://rac.org/advocacy/irac/ "IRAC was founded in 1987 with the goals of advancing *pluralism* in Israeli society and of protecting and defending the human rights of all Israeli citizens;" http://www.tali.org.il/english/index.asp "TALI is a nation wide network of over 120 Israeli state schools that are committed to providing a *pluralistic* Jewish education for Israeli's non observant majority."

The Israeli rabbi-educators wish to promote a positive Jewish-values agenda in contrast to the often polarized perceptions most Israelis hold toward Jewish tradition: Eran, a school rabbi said he is struggling to "actualize Jewish experience for teachers and students based on values of humanism, pluralism and equality." Amit described how she hopes "to create a fit between the pluralistic Reform Jewish culture and Israeli experience ... I want to help people internalize a pluralistic perspective which would allow them to become creative within the Jewish world."

Ilana articulated the feeling that as a liberal rabbi she has to model a pluralistic perspective: "With my Reform agenda I come to the process of teaching and learning with more responsibility to make room for the entire range of voices. My voice is only one of them."

The absence of this agenda among our American respondents can be explained by the pluralistic reality of American and especially Jewish-American society. Pluralism is already a core value in American society that shapes how Americans understand their choices in life, including whether and how they engage in religious practice. This creates a different set of challenges for American rabbi-educators. For Israelis, the emphasis appears to be more on changing society through effecting change in particular educational settings. The personal challenges are understood as a part of the national challenges. The Americans lack this sense of collective agenda; rather they seem to see their work more in terms of motivating and supporting individuals within their communities in building a relationship to Judaism and Jewish life.

Pedagogies Shaping Identity

Our initial research suggests that two of the four pedagogies identified by the Carnegie Foundation study on clergy education predominate as key factors in shaping the self-perception of rabbi-educators' professional identity. These are what Foster et al. (2005) label pedagogies of formation and contextualization. Participants in our study focused on these two aspects of their work to a much greater extent than they did on the other two pedagogies—interpretation and performance. These latter two pedagogies appear somewhat more focused on skill development, while both formation and contextualization appear to be concerned with integration. In the former case, pedagogies of formation focus on integrating personal and professional elements of self, while pedagogies of contextualization concentrate on learning how to make religious texts, traditions, and beliefs relevant and meaningful in contemporary life.

Pedagogies of Formation

The Carnegie Foundation researchers describe pedagogies of formation as "the dispositions, habits, knowledge, and skills that cohere in professional identity and practice, commitments and integrity" (Foster et al., 2005, p. 100). These pedagogies aim to integrate the processes of spiritual and professional development,

bringing together personal belief with professional practice. Three inter-related strategies contribute to formation: (1) awakening students to the presence of God; (2) imbuing their work and life with holiness; and (3) practicing religious leadership (pp. 103–104).

While they did not use this exact language, many of the rabbi-educators in our study stressed the importance of integrating religious knowledge with character development. They spoke about their roles as spiritual leaders and their ability to serve as spiritual role models in ways above and beyond what they believed many educators without rabbinic training could do. As we have already noted, a great number used the term "spiritual guide" to describe their work with students, teachers, and parents.[7] For example, this perception is clearly reflected in the written comments of one of the American day school rabbi-educators.

> Being a rabbi I believe I am *kli kodesh*, a spiritual exemplar, and everything I do I do with that hat on. Even though I play an administrative role at the school, I am always a rabbi. Every time I speak, whether publicly or with people privately I think about what I am saying, whether the content or the tone. If I upset someone it isn't me the individual who is upsetting them it is me the rabbi upsetting them and the impact can be devastating.

Remarks made by Hava, an educational counselor in the IDF, and Eran who works with students and teachers in Israeli public schools, also reflected on the integration of their role as teacher and spiritual role model:

> I work with army officers and like to use educational opportunities to raise human questions such as my place in the wilderness, loneliness, and the meaning of life. As a rabbi, I give myself permission to delve into the spiritual aspects of life. It's not the learning but the spirituality. I started with halacha but have moved to a deeper engagement with spirituality. (Hava)
>
> A rabbi-educator doesn't just talk about Judaism like an anthropologist or scholar. It's something internal. I try not to talk about Judaism but to live Judaism with the students and their parents. There's a difference between teaching about Judaism and teaching how to be a Jew. (Eran)

While we might read these remarks as imbued with a sense of the holiness of their mission, few actually used this explicit language. Indeed only a handful of our interviewees spoke either directly or indirectly about God. In one instance, Leah, a congregational school rabbi-educator reflected on her role as a religious leader. She said, "Being a rabbi gives the position more gravity. It says that religious school is important and that rabbis aren't 'beyond' the most holy of tasks of helping to educate our children and their families."

In another case, Alice, a day school rabbi-educator, described her work helping teachers prepare for a second grade tefilah ceremony: "I talk with teachers about their questions about God. We write tefilot together. Not that there aren't teachers who can't do that, but many can't." Likewise, when speaking about prayer, Hila,

[7] Interestingly the term "spiritual guide" was not found in interviews with teachers or teachers' mentors. Teachers who are not rabbis seem to distance themselves from the use of the term spirituality. See, for example, the Chapter "Ideological Encounters . . ." by Muszkat-Barkan (2011).

who works in a TALI school in Israel, said, "A rabbi has a special energy. I believe this energy reaches the kids and they can experience tefilah with their soul and not only with their minds." Echoing within these statements is the question of whether the actual educational work of rabbis is different from that of educators who are not rabbis. Further research needs to be undertaken in order to answer this more fully. It does appear that the rabbi-educators feel comfortable and confident to tackle questions of spirituality and belief while many educators who are not rabbis seem to be less confident in doing so.

Pedagogies of Contextualization

In the broadest sense, pedagogies of contextualization refer to "the task of making explicit the socially situated nature of all knowledge and practice" (Foster et al., 2005, p. 132). This pedagogy focuses on learning how to present religious tradition as something relevant and meaningful to contemporary life.

Our respondents frequently noted the importance of helping people negotiate with and make meaning from Judaism. Indeed, some described their role as a mediator between Jewish texts and tradition and people's lives. Neil, a congregational educator, put it like this:

> I do a lot of listening to parents and students as they describe the challenges they have. Where appropriate, I do a lot of linking of Jewish tradition to the responses I hear, trying to demonstrate some of the wisdom of our tradition and how it can help people today.

Similarly, Sarah, who works in several Israeli educational settings, said, "I want to connect content to living and also belief. I believe that Jewish tradition has important things to teach us in actual contexts." In like fashion, Amit, a congregational rabbi who also works in schools, said, "It's important for me to connect what people know and do but don't see as something Jewish to Jewish life and to create a bridge between Jewish identity and global identity. That's my Zionism."

Esther, who works in an American Reform day school reflected on her role in trying to find the appropriate level of observance in her particular context of a Reform Jewish day school:

> Being a Rav Beit Sefer in a Reform day school is not so clear. Families aren't really sure what they are looking for and what it means to lead a Jewish life. While there may be debate and alternatives explored about how to learn tefilah in an Orthodox or Conservative school, they aren't debating whether kids should learn tefilah at all.

Pedagogies of Interpretation and Performance

The survey and interview data yielded fewer references to tasks and skills needed that relate to pedagogies of interpretation and performance than those related to pedagogies of formation and contextualization. In delineating pedagogies of interpretation, the Carnegie Foundation researchers stress the importance of developing

critical thinking and critical reflection skills in reading and analyzing texts. While virtually all of the participants in our study highlighted the importance of the text study skills they developed through their rabbinic training, almost no one described how they put these skills into practice. Thus, we have no evidence to show whether or how these skills of interpretation are brought to bear in their day-to-day work. We wonder how the rigorous preparation rabbis receive in textual analysis might contribute to their roles as rabbi-educators in ways different from educators without rabbinic training. However, at this stage, we can only pose the question for further investigation.

Several of our respondents explicitly noted the benefit of the critical thinking and reflection skills they developed through their formal training. However, these skills were more typically associated with their education courses than they were with their rabbinic training. They also focused more on the applied benefits of critical reflection in action rather than the intellectual process of textual analysis. For example, Melanie, a congregational educator, said, “The cornerstone of my educational training was all about how to be a reflective practitioner. In the rabbinic program there was a weak attempt to build in reflection but it was more haphazard.” Julia described how her education work helped her organize and synthesize her rabbinical school program: “What I learned in my education program really helped me bring all of the rabbinical school stuff together. It really made a difference tying a lot of loose pieces together.” Ilana remembered: “In our education course we learned to ask the ‘why’ questions that are so important in planning every educational activity.”

Pedagogies of performance involve those aspects of training that prepare clergy to be effective public leaders. Indeed, there are performative qualities in virtually everything clergy do, including classroom teaching, preaching, liturgical leadership, counseling, and even running meetings. The Carnegie Foundation research team focuses on how seminary educators cultivate professional proficiency through pedagogies that emphasize these performative aspects of the work.

The rabbi-educators in our study touched upon some of these aspects of performance, mostly frequently mentioning teaching and counseling as core skills needed to perform effectively in their roles. They also described some of the challenges they perceive in adequately performing in their roles. Some of those without formal education training acknowledged an absence of good teaching skills. For instance, two of the Israeli respondents said they would have liked to learn more practical tools for teaching during their professional training. Sarah said, “I wish we learned more about how to develop a personal teaching style.” Several of the American rabbi-educators also noted some missing pieces in terms of their educational practice. Knowledge about learners with special needs, classroom management, and administrative skills such as budgeting and grant writing were among the most frequently mentioned gaps they perceived in their training. An Israeli rabbi-educator also mentioned the lack of background regarding dealing with families and family education.

Missing from the Framework

The Carnegie Foundation study does not focus on educational training per se as a core aspect of clergy education. Our research suggests that some of the qualities reflected in each of the four pedagogies may be enhanced and enriched through course work in education, perhaps most explicitly with regard to pedagogies of contextualization and performance which are the most directly related to teaching and helping people to make meaning out of religious tradition. In addition, our interview data revealed two areas of professional practice that are not addressed in the framework identified by Foster et al. These have to do with organizational management and curriculum development. Our respondents who had formal training in education referenced these skills which were outside of their rabbinical school curriculum as essential to their vision, self-understanding, and daily practice. Many also noted that they would like further training in these areas to enhance their education practice.

Discussion

What can we conclude from these findings? From the rabbi-educators' comments and the way they described their practice, we learned about their "lived ideology" (Billig, Cordal, Edwards, Gane, & Middleton, 1988) which is a central component of their professional identity as leaders (Nisan, 2009). While they share a great deal in common with educators who do not have rabbinic training, they clearly perceive themselves as having skills and dispositions distinctly formed as a product of their combined rabbinic and education preparation. Our study reveals that the professional identity of these rabbi-educators is shaped around three distinct goals. These include (1) their educational mission to align the Jewish world with personal life; (2) their desire to serve as a spiritual mentor or guide for their various constituents; and (3) for the Israelis, a broader mission of promoting a pluralistic agenda in Israeli society. Whether or not these goals are shared by educators who are not rabbis remains an open question worthy of further study. For this group, perhaps it is not the individual goals that distinguish these rabbi-educators but their interrelationship. Indeed, it may be that the first goal is something that they share with other educators; the second goal is something they share with other rabbis; and the third goal is something that they share with others working to create a more pluralistic society in Israel. But, our findings suggest that it is not just the educational setting for their work that defines their role. This is most evident by those respondents who referred to a synergy between the two roles when they said in effect "I'm a better rabbi because of my education training, and I'm a better educator because I'm a rabbi." They emphasized the importance of the educational-training components during rabbinical school as shaping their professional identity and their abilities to perform their dual role as rabbi-educators. And at the same time they emphasized

how their rabbinical training helped them to develop deep content knowledge and a sense of holistic responsibility for the various constituencies they serve.

Further Directions

We began this preliminary exploration of the evolving role of rabbi-educators with the awareness that the research might raise as many questions as it answers. It seems crucial to continue to work to better understand how seminaries that train rabbi-educators can address the professional development needs of the many students who are now choosing this dual path, both in Israel and North America. As we conclude this phase of our inquiry, we pose several additional questions to frame the next level of study.

1. Perhaps most significantly, this study does not resolve the question of whether rabbi-educator is a profession distinct from rabbi or educator. The participants in our study clearly see themselves as a different group. This is most noticeable in how they define their purposes around issues of spirituality, belief, and religious practice. This question needs further investigation with a larger pool of participants. It will also be interesting to explore how the goals and self-perceptions of rabbi-educators are shaped by their roles. In other words, how does professional identity change over time? What impact does the specific job requirements have on shaping this identity?
2. As noted, in contrast to the Carnegie Foundation study, our research findings did not reveal significant emphasis on the performative aspects of the rabbi-educator role. It very well may be that we did not ask the right questions of our respondents. A future study might want to focus more specifically on this area of professional practice to determine what specific skills and capabilities are developed through educational training that enhance the job performance of rabbi-educators?
3. We also wonder how do the colleagues and people served by rabbi-educators in their work environments perceive their contributions? Are they perceived as differently in their beliefs and practices from educators who are not rabbis as they think they are? How do rabbi-educators differ in the performance of their roles from rabbis who are not educators and educators who are not rabbis? How do these perceptions compare to the self-perceptions of the rabbi-educators themselves?

Thus far, our findings suggest that rabbis who serve as educators recognize that the dual components of educational and rabbinical preparation are essential to the success of their work. To varying degrees, they perceive a synergy between the educational and rabbinic perspectives of their professional identity. This combination is reflected in the professional goals shared among our American and Israeli rabbi-educators, with the notable exception of the Israeli emphasis on the promotion of a pluralistic agenda. Further study that explores the questions we outline above will help us better understand the contributions of this dual role and how those who serve in this position develop over time.

Appendix Profile of Interviewees

Name[a]	Country	Year of ordination	School	Current position
Sara	Israel	2007	HUC Jerusalem	Social justice coordinator—public school; Teacher in IDF Training Program; Jewish studies curriculum writer; Beit midrash facilitator—public school
Hava	Israel	2005	Machon Schechter	TALI[b] (public) school rabbi; Educational counselor for Jewish identity in IDF
Hila	Israel	2006	Machon Schechter	TALI (public) school rabbi
Alice	US	1999	HUC—NY	Director of Judaic programming—day school
Amit	Israel	2005	HUC Jerusalem	Congregational rabbi—works with pre-school and other educational activities in the congregation and community
Anat	Israel	2005	HUC Jerusalem	Congregational rabbi—works with public schools in the area and other educational activities in the congregation and community
Eran	Israel	2004	HUC Jerusalem	Rav Beit Sefer—public schools; Facilitator of teacher batei midrash
Esther	US	2000	Other	School rabbi and Jewish studies curriculum coordinator—day school
Eyal	Israel	2003	Machon Schechter	Congregational rabbi—works as a rabbi of a TALI school and other educational activities in the congregation and community
Ilana	Israel	2008	HUC Jerusalem	Bat Mitzva program in public schools; Facilitator of teacher and adults batei midrash, Jewish studies curriculum writer
Julia	US	2003	HUC—LA	Director of lifelong learning—congregation
Leah	US	2005	JTS	Education director—congregation
Leslie	US	2000	HUC—LA	School rabbi and principal of Jewish studies—day school
Mark	US	2007	JTS	Rav Beit Sefer—day school
Melanie	US	2002	HUC—LA	Director of religious school, youth, and camping—congregation
Miriam	Israel	2004	HUC Jerusalem	Public school and congregational pre-school rabbi
Neil	US	2005	HUC—NY	Director of Jewish Learning—congregation
Patty	US	2004	JTS	Associate rabbi, spiritual leader of the religious school—congregation
Shoshana	US	2006	HUC—NY	Director youth and family education—congregation

[a] All names are pseudonyms.
[b] TALI schools are part of the public school system in Israel. They are secular schools that have decided to enrich their curriculum and school community with Jewish studies and experiences.

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The Reform movement in Israel http://rac.org/advocacy/irac/

Special Education: "And You Shall Do That Which Is Right and Good . . ." Jewish Special Education in North America: From Exclusion to Inclusion

Rona Milch Novick and Jeffrey Glanz

Introduction

> And you shall do that which is right and good . . .
>
> (*Devarim*, 6:18)

Jewish education, like its secular counterpart, has increasingly sought to address the needs of students with learning, behavior, emotional, social, and physical challenges. From the earliest secular programs that largely segregated students with homogeneous disabilities such as the Perkins School for the Blind and Gallaudet School for the Deaf (Winzer, 1993), and those that were designed to offer "asylum" for children seen as too disabled and uneducable (Paul, French, & Cranston-Gingras, 2001), special education has expanded exponentially. Initial efforts led to massive specialization and differentiation (Sailor & Roger, 2005). Confronted with less than positive outcomes in specialized programs, and ethical mandates to revise exclusionary policies, American reforms moved to decrease the number of students in segregated special education placements. This not uniquely American process is echoed in the 1994 UNESCO Salamanca statement urging the international community to "endorse the approach of inclusive schooling" (p. x). Across the globe, developed countries such as Ireland (Shevlin, Kenny, & Loxley, 2008) and Italy (Begeny & Martens, 2007) and those recently obtaining independence like Ukraine (Raver & Kolchenko, 2007) or emerging into industrialization like China (Ellsworth & Zhang, 2007) have moved toward inclusion. Israel passed its Special Education Law in 1988 giving priority to integration of special needs students into regular classrooms (Schanin & Reiter, 2007). Jewish special education, most often a private endeavor, has moved slowly toward inclusive practice, confronting unique challenges and ethical imperatives.

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Historical Factors: Early Models and Their Influences

Teach them diligently to your children

(*Devarim*, 6:7)

Winzer's (1993) noteworthy history documents the horrendous treatment of the "deformed," "feebleminded," "insane," "socially maladjusted," "stupid," "incapables," "unteachable," and "handicapped" prior to the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, exclusion was commonplace, although the beginnings of "charity" toward, if not education of, the disabled emerged. She cites the pioneering work of Diderot for the blind, Ferrus for the mentally retarded, and Tuke for the deaf, among prominent others, whose work formed the basis for caring and educating "handicapped" students. In America, the spirit of the Revolution fueled the view that all individuals could and should contribute to the emerging democratic society. This supported the move toward increased schooling for individuals with special needs. Unlike prior paternalistic models, early special education in the United States was geared toward vocational training, preparing all to become "productive" citizens rather than a drain on the new country (Osgood, 2008).

The history of Jewish special education appears to have been more influenced by secular culture and history than by Jewish understandings of disability and difference. In her introduction to the 2006 Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE) series on *Noteworthy Practices in Jewish Day School Education*, Miller-Jacobs highlights multiple Jewish perspectives that shape attitudes regarding diverse students. The precept that all individuals, disabled or not, are made in G-d's image is underscored by the blessing one says when seeing an individual who is disabled. Thanking G-d for creating diversity (*Baruch ata Hashem ... mishaneh et habriyot, Blessed are you our G-d who diversifies living creatures; Mishneh Torah*, Hilchot B'rachot) reminds us that every child, no matter how different, is a creation of G-d. Also relevant is the principle that Jews are responsible for each other (*kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh*; Babylonian Talmud). Being responsible for the well-being of fellow Jews includes assuring their access to Jewish communal institutions. Miller-Jacobs quotes Kushner's editorial comment in *Etz Hayim* on *Mishpatim* arguing, "the decency of a society is measured by how it cares for its least powerful members" (PEJE, 2006, p. 4).

Astor (1985) contrasts the Jewish view of disability with other cultures whose notions embody a sense of creation "failures" (i.e., Sumerian myth regarding inept gods molding disabled individuals from clay). The Old Testament offers the examples of Isaac who was blind for much of his life, Jacob who dealt with lameness, and Moses, the great teacher/leader of the Jewish nation, who was speech-impaired. When Moses argues that his disability renders him unfit he is reminded: "who gives man speech ... who makes him dumb, deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now go, and I will be with you as you speak and instruct you what to say" (*Shemot* 4:11–12). Disability is not to be viewed as an immutable limitation.

Kaminetsky (1977) underscores the "responsibility to integrate the handicapped with the Jewish education effort" (p. 105) and its connection to Torah law. There is a requirement to educate all Jews, including those who have the potential to reach adult legal status. Fulfilling the precept ". . . so that he may live by your side as your brother" (*Vayikra*, 25:36) requires including those who will not reach adult legal status, but for whom education can promote their integration in society.

Talmudic sources provide further support. Schloss (2008) cites the discussion in the Babylonian tractate of *Sanhedrin* quoting Rav Yehuda who says in the name of Rav

> whoever withholds the teaching of the law from the mouth of a student, i.e. whoever neglects to teach Torah to a student, is as if he robs [the student] of his ancestral heritage. For it is stated: The Torah that Moses commanded us is the heritage of the congregation of Jacob. This means: It is a heritage to all of Israel since the six days of creation. (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Sanhedrin*, 91b)

Schloss further cites Rabbi Shmuel Halevi Edels in the *Maharsha* stating that each and every child, regardless of academic prowess, is entitled to a Jewish education.

Despite these perspectives on inclusion, Jewish education paid little attention to special needs until recently. The Jewish Education Service of North America publication *So That All May Study Torah: Communal Provision of Jewish Education for Students With Special Needs* commented, "in the rhetoric of inclusion and outreach which typifies the continuity deliberations (i.e. how to best maintain the Jewish population) and which extends to so many other subpopulations (the intermarried, the non-traditional family, the elderly, teens, college students, etc.) the sub-populations of physically, emotionally and mentally challenged individuals and their families are rarely mentioned or considered and, therefore, plans are rarely made for meeting their needs" (Isaacs & Levine, 1995, p. 6).

Special Education in the Modern Age

> We are all brought forth for one purpose, every scion that comes to birth in Israel is to be Israel's son or Israel's daughter; for this one purpose you are to bring up your child, for this ultimate purpose it was given to you. You commit treason, treason against what is most holy, if you neglect this.
>
> (Samson Raphael Hirsch, 1962, p. 407)

Until the late 1950s, the US federal government largely left the business of education to the states. The cold war need for scientists engaged the federal government in pumping funds into elementary- and secondary-level science education. Federal involvement initially expanded to special needs issues by providing support to colleges training teachers of the mentally retarded and in 1963, broadened to support preparation of a variety of special education teachers. In 1967, PL89-313 allowed federal funds to be delivered to state schools for the "handicapped."

Through the 1960s and 1970s, advocates pushed for increased funding for students with disabilities, enforceable entitlements, and perhaps most importantly a single entity to coordinate national efforts for special needs children. In 1975, Congress passed Public Law 94–142 (Education of All Handicapped Children Act). More recent legal mandates (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 1997, 2004) require states to develop and implement policies that assure a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for all children (Wiebe Berry, 2006). PL 94–142 and later reauthorization of IDEA also guaranteed parents due process regarding their children's educational needs. Despite federal mandates, advocates have consistently been required to appeal to state law makers and mount litigation to ensure that children receive the services they require and to which they are entitled (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996).

Statutes and litigation decisions have created legal precedents for students to receive publicly mandated and funded services regardless of where they are schooled. This has allowed Jewish schools to petition districts to supply limited special educational services including speech, occupational therapy, learning support, counseling, and other services. Ideally, these services would be offered by culturally sensitive district-funded practitioners at convenient and appropriate times in Jewish schools. In reality, districts frequently require that Jewish special needs students come to their sites during school hours.

Segregated special education classes in Jewish schools are reportedly "close to a century old" (Schloss, 2001, p. 2). Considering possible reasons for limited inclusion of diverse students in Jewish education, Kaminetsky (1977) discusses the prestige of accomplished learning and the association of scholarship with piety. He suggests that "slow learners" attending some Jewish programs found the material challenging and withdrew, or parents, concerned that children would be subject to ridicule, kept them from Jewish programs. Kaminetsky alludes to a survey of Jewish educators that revealed an overwhelming majority in favor of Jewish education for special needs populations; however, less than half felt that such children should be educated with the general population. The Coordinating Committee on Religious Education for the Handicapped, founded in the mid-1960s, offered advocacy, information, and training to increase the access of the disabled to Jewish education (Schloss, 2008). A recent PEJE review (2006) confirms that parents had to fight to have their special needs children attend Jewish schools until recently.

Largely in response to parents' efforts, there has been a substantial increase in the number of Jewish schools including special needs students (PEJE, 2006). Schloss (2008) echoes the critical role of parent advocacy, especially when combined with professional efforts. The AVI CHAI foundation census of US Jewish day schools in the 2003–2004 school year reviewed enrollment in denominationally affiliated schools, and an additional 100 schools located through government and Jewish community records (Schick, 2005). Of the 759 schools included, 43 were special education schools, serving a total of 1,780 students. The report noted 331 additional special education students in non-special education schools, although it is unclear how inclusive such settings were. Schick states:

> It is difficult to track special education students in Jewish schools, the majority of whom are now in institutions with a special education mission. Other such students are in separate programs that have been established in regular day schools. In line with an expanding societal and governmental commitment to special education, there has been significant growth in this sector. Almost certainly, the census undercounts the number of special education students enrolled in day schools under Jewish sponsorship. (p. 8)

The expansion of Jewish education to include special needs students has occurred across communities and continents. Glaubman and Lifshitz (2001), describing changes in Israeli education, explain that until recently, both the *Haredi Talmud-Torah* and *Beit Yaakov* systems were virtually closed to special needs pupils. Changing attitudes to the disabled within ultra-orthodox culture, and Rabbinic attention and support to families with special needs children has prompted significant changes, including a Ministry of Education supervisor assigned to work with the *Haredi* population, and a special education track in the *Beit Yaakov* teachers' college.

Special Education and the Move to Inclusion: Trends in Public and Jewish Schools

> If a teacher has taught a subject and the pupils failed to understand it, he must not be angry with them nor get excited, but should review the lesson with them many times until they finally grasp it.
>
> (Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, 4:4–5.)

Inclusion is more than a service delivery model, it is a belief system (Stainback & Stainback, 2000) and a process of facilitating an educational environment that provides access to high-quality education for all (Lambert et al., 2003). In inclusive settings, removal of children with special needs occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the general classroom cannot be achieved even with supplementary support (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 33, U.S.C., 1400, 1997; Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000; Viachou, 2004; Young, 2000).

Movement toward inclusion has been slow and resistance formidable (see, e.g., Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994). Despite clear increases in the identification of students with disabilities since 1970, the percentage placed in inclusive classrooms remains “minimal” (p. 22). Momentum for inclusion is growing, however (see, e.g., Shepherd & Brody Hasazi, 2007). Support from local, state, national, and international professional organizations has fueled interest and advocacy. Court cases have challenged schools that segregate students with disabilities. Lay groups, parent advocates, and educators have begun to “push” for inclusion on a human rights basis (see, e.g., International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap, 1994, June).

In the United States, the number of students with special needs, approximately 15% of the total public school population, is over 5 million. For Jewish day schools this would translate into approximately 38,000 students who may need special services. Assuming socio-cultural factors reduce incidence in the Jewish community,

it is still likely that students with special needs sit in every Jewish classroom in America. Addressing the needs of these students, who, for the most part, are learning disabled but may also have visual/auditory/physical/emotional disabilities, has become a major issue for both research and practice.

In 2006, PEJE collated information on special education programs as a resource for schools and parents. Not meant as an exhaustive survey, 22 programs were described, drawn from interviews with school professionals that attended a 2005 conference of the Consortium of Special Educators in Jewish Central Agencies and additional schools known through work with PEJE. Nine served elementary through high school, with the remaining programs geared to particular grades. Only one was disability-specific (emotional/behavioral disturbance), others served students with diverse difficulties. Although 12 programs identified themselves as providing inclusion, review of program descriptions revealed only 2 employing full inclusion. For others, inclusion was one model of service delivery, along with self-contained programs, pull-out and push-in support, and the use of shadows or aides.

Reviewing comments of the program directors, three critical issues emerge: (i) successful inclusion requires time and effort, with significant attention to teacher buy-in and training. (ii) directors almost unanimously cited the critical role of top-level administration. (iii) finally, financial support was a major issue, often necessitating significant advocacy, sophistication regarding funding, and scholarship programs. Not all programs provided cost information, but those that did ranged from a few thousand dollars to $18,000 above regular day-school tuition. Such programs may be inclusive in the children they educate, but will remain exclusive to wealthy families, unless alternate financial supports are developed.

Currently, Jewish schools deal with the placement of children with disabilities in a variety of ways. Some schools do not address the issue. Many adopt a mainstreaming approach in which a child leaves general education classes to receive special services such as resource room, speech therapy, etc. In some schools, these students are initially segregated from the mainstream, and later placed in general education classrooms for specific subjects. Many students are excluded entirely for academic subjects, and placed for social reasons into general classes for art, music, or physical education.

Despite limited inclusive options for Jewish students, many agencies that support Jewish education are embracing the need for increased inclusion. The Jewish Education Service of North America (2009) includes in the mission of its Consortium of Special Educators in Central Agencies for Jewish Education "dissemination of information on program models and development, specialized curriculum and technology, *inclusion*, professional development and support, advocacy and legislation, and community relations and awareness" (emphasis added). RAVSAK: The Jewish Community Day School Network (2009), on its website, identifies itself as "the international center for the advancement and support of pluralistic Jewish day school education. We promote academic excellence, *maximal inclusion*, Jewish diversity and religious purposefulness . . ." (emphasis added). It is unclear whether the referred to inclusion is intended across students with disabilities, or from varied Jewish backgrounds. PARDES, the coordinating agency for

Reform schools lists among its goals the "development of the full potential of the personal-intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and creative-blending of the best of our Jewish and American heritage" (PARDES, 2009).

When the spirit of inclusion takes root in Jewish agencies and communities, greater inclusive practices in Jewish special education become possible. As the program director of the Amit Community School in Atlanta, GA wrote, "When those outside of the Jewish community look at our success and ask how we have accomplished so much, it is an easy answer. We are fortunate to live in a community that understands the key principles of creating an environment in which families can truly feel part of Klal Yisrael. Our community values diversity, believes in a sense of belonging, and strives to offer community support" (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 2).

Ethical Issues

> Just as you are required to teach your own children, so are you responsible to educate all children.
>
> (Rabbi Judah the Pious)

Inclusive practice requires moral commitment. Zweiter's (2006) incisive critique challenges Jewish educators to critically examine their own practices on many levels. Zweiter questions grouping students homogeneously stating, ". . . it is far from clear that bright children learn less when they are with a mixed group of students than when they are with other bright children" (p. 15). Most of our classrooms are homogeneously grouped because, according to Oakes (1985), traditional conceptions of learning remain with us even though they no longer make sense. Zweiter cautions against such educational "inertia" which can stifle creative solutions and change.

Advocacy for inclusion is also grounded in a broader critique of classroom life (Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993). Kohn (1999) describes our schools and classrooms as joyless. Levine (2004) charges, "instructional practices and curricular choices fail to provide educational opportunities for diverse learners" (p. 8) and asks, why children have to "wait until adulthood to experience success?" (p. 10). According to Shapiro (2006) "school is a place that conveys, and endlessly reinforces the idea that people are necessarily and inevitably to be ranked in ability and worth, and that those who are deemed of most worth are recognized and celebrated . . ." (p. 40). For a discussion of the strong ethical argument for inclusion, the reader is referred to Glanz (2008).

Why Inclusion and What Stands in the Way

> A student should not be embarrassed if a fellow student has understood something after the first or second time and he has not grasped it even after several attempts.
>
> (*Shulkhan Arukh, Yoreh De'ah*, 246:11)

Along with moral and Jewish arguments, research findings should inspire Jewish educators to move toward inclusion. In a review of the literature, Salend and Garrick (1999) found "increases in academic achievement, increased peer acceptance and richer friendship networks, higher self-esteem, avoidance of stigma attached to pull-out programs, and possible lifetime benefits" (as cited in Wiebe Berry, 2006, p. 490). Vaughn, Elbaum, Schumm, and Hughes (1998) have cited positive social outcomes for students with and without disabilities (also, see Hunt & Goetz, 1997; Staub & Peck, 1994–1995). Studies indicate that inclusive classrooms do not contribute to academic decline of non-disabled students (Peltier, 1997; Power-deFur & Orelove, 2003; Sharpe & York, 1994). Research also indicates that acceptance of inclusive practices is based on the amount of administrative support, resources, and training teachers receive (Ainscow, Howes, Farrell, & Frankham, 2003; Bishop & Jones, 2002). Effective inclusion also "depends on classroom climate factors as well as effective instructional strategies" (Erwin & Guintini, 2000; Myklebust, 2006; Wiebe Berry, 2006, p. 520).

To better understand the delayed move to inclusionary practices in Jewish schools, issues that support or compromise inclusion are discussed below.

Attitudes/Efficacy

Developing confidence about teaching "special learners" is important for both general and special education teachers, especially in considering more inclusive models (Jung, 2007). A survey of regular and special education teachers indicated a lack of confidence in their instructional skills and in the support staff provided to address special students' needs (Center & Ward, 1987).

Teachers' beliefs about struggling students may translate into different expectations and instruction for those students, as well as negatively impact their sense of responsibility for teaching them (Scharlach, 2008). In her qualitative case study, Scharlach found teachers with high efficacy had high expectations for students, and the opposite was also true. Four out of the five teachers studied felt that it was the responsibility of someone other than the classroom teacher to address difficulties of struggling readers.

Jung (2007), reviewing the impact of training on attitudes and efficacy of 68 education students, suggests, "training might need to be extended to help raise the confidence level of pre-service teachers" (p. 110) with guided field experiences more effective in creating positive attitudes than a course in inclusion. Jung further questions how teachers who graduate with inclusionary practices and attitudes will be supported once in the "real world?"

Critical for Jewish schools are the attitudes of their teachers. An exploration of Israeli ultra-orthodox Jewish teachers' attitudes (Glaubman & Lifshitz, 2001) revealed interactions between gender and level of disability with male teachers more positive toward inclusion of mildly disabled and female teachers more positive toward inclusion of severely disabled, students. The ultra-orthodox teachers defined disability differently than other professionals, grouping mild visual

and auditory impairments with blindness and deafness, and learning disabilities with mild retardation. These definitions impacted willingness to include such students. Further research across denominations would be important in assessing and developing Jewish teacher attitudes that support inclusion.

Teacher Training, Supervision, and Administrative Support

Research on successful inclusion implementation indicates that administrative support is crucial (Newmann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989; Rieck, 2000). Many teachers are not properly trained to teach differentially, and are not committed to an inclusive philosophy (Sapon-Shevin, 2007). Teacher training and professional development post-graduation are required (Bowe, 2005). McLaughlin and Warren (1994), studying special education administrators, found “many of the increased costs . . . are seen as one-time start-up costs and not necessarily costs that will continue . . . as a core of staff within school buildings gain confidence and experience” (p. 16).

Supports essential for successful inclusion are summarized in Table 1, many of which represent challenges for Jewish schools. There are fewer teacher-training programs and not all Jewish schools employ trained teachers, with informal education programs and supplementary schools least likely to have such personnel. Professional development funds are limited, and resources difficult to access. Jewish teachers participating in publicly funded training may find the content minimally relevant to Jewish subjects.

Table 1 Summary of factors identified as critical for successful inclusion

Common planning	Inclusive practice requires shared planning time for participants (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Bahr, 1999)
Teacher training	Initial training is inadequate unless continually supported (Meijer, 2001)
Resources	Support personnel, technologies, and all necessary resources must be provided (Boyd, 1992; Hord, 1991)
Continuous assessment	School leaders must take the time and effort to assess staff and student progress (Boyd, 1992; Hord, 1991)
Consultation	Coaching, consulting, and continued development further the objectives established by administrators and participants (Boyd, 1992; Hord, 1991)

Cost

In 1999, US public schools spent, on average, $6,556 annually to educate a student without disabilities, and $12,639 to educate a student in special education, with significant variability based on the disability (Chambers, Parish, & Harr, 2002). Some critics view inclusion as cost cutting, aimed at decreasing specialized

teachers and centralizing services (McLaughlin & Warren, 1994), yet most inclusion programs involve considerable special education personnel and support costs. Advocates for special education, and for enhanced services for all students, suggest that funds spent to educate at-risk students will save money in the decreased costs of psycho-social and educational support in the future. Hummel-Rossi and Ashdown (2002) caution that links between educational funds and specific student outcomes have been difficult to establish, and the methodologies somewhat controversial. The authors further argue against exclusive focus on student achievement, when satisfaction, self-esteem, or good citizenship, though difficult to measure, may be just as important. Cost-benefit analyses typically compare taxpayer costs of education with predicted taxpayer costs of educational failure. There is an assumed increase in public revenue when education produces members of society who will, themselves, pay taxes. The costs of failure for Jewish education are significant. Research on Jewish continuity (American Jewish Committee, 1997) and at-risk adolescents (Pelcovitz, 2004) underscores the centrality of Jewish education for Jewish individual and community development.

Other Factors

Feiler and Gibson (1999) highlight four concerns that warrant attention. First, precise definitions and a consensus about practice are necessary. Second, research on long-term social and academic benefits or dangers of inclusion is necessary (Armstrong, 2004). Third, having an inclusive classroom does not mean exclusion does not occur (Wiebe Berry, 2006). If teachers' espoused beliefs or theories do not match their actions (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004), inclusion will not work, as demonstrated when one author observed a collaboratively taught class. At the lesson's end, one teacher announced, "Okay, time for language arts. Those in special-ed move to the back of the room." A final caution is that inclusion best practices may exist in individual classrooms, but not be reinforced by the larger school culture (also see, Lindsay, 2003; Wedell, 2005).

There is no question that problems remain in proper inclusion implementation. As Wolfe and Hall (2003) suggest, however, "let's end the debate about *whether* to include students with severe disabilities in the general education classroom. Let's focus on *how* and *when* and *where*" (p. 56; italics in original).

Models of Service for Special Needs Students

Pull-Out Programs/Resource Room Settings

Early conceptualizations of reading difficulties resulting from specific learning disabilities led to the creation of "resource rooms" where disabled students could receive specialized reading instruction (Bentum & Aaron, 2003). Unfortunately, their efficacy has not been extensively researched. A meta-analysis of 11 studies

comparing mainstream to special education (including resource room) found no advantage to separating poor readers (Wang & Baker, 1985). Bentum and Aaron, caution that resource room placement actually results in decreased achievement in some cases. In their longitudinal study, students showed no significant reading improvement and a decline in spelling and IQ, which was positively correlated with the length of time in resource room, suggesting that they provide impoverished learning environments.

Wiener and Tardiff (2004) studied 117 Canadian children in grades 4–8, comparing pairs of support paradigms; in-class vs. resource room, or self-contained class vs. inclusion. Evaluating social and emotional functioning in both pairs, students in the more inclusive environment fared better. Rea, McLaughlan, and Walter-Thomas (2002) compared US eighth graders in inclusive vs. pull-out programs and found significant academic advances for students in inclusive settings. The only published study of resource rooms in US Jewish schools, completed over a decade ago, found that parents, administrators, students, and teachers voiced some general positive comments and some concerns (Luchow, 1992). Given the relatively weak and/or negative findings summarized above, pull-out models are less than compelling, particularly in the face of ethical imperatives for inclusive practice.

Collaborative Team Teaching

Collaborative team teaching occurs when multiple teachers teach together in the same classroom in order to promote the learning and emotional development of students. Commonly, the team has one general education- and one special education-certified teacher. Teachers benefit from collaboration, and from assistance with planning, implementing, and evaluating lessons (Fishbaugh, 1997). Students benefit from lower teacher–student ratios and improved quality of lessons.

Team teachers share responsibility for developing, delivering, and monitoring instruction and progress of students. Arrangements vary, from teachers assuming responsibility for particular curriculum areas, to both teaching the same material to smaller groups. Alternatively, the classroom teacher may teach the lesson to the class with the supplementary teacher adapting and developing material for those students who require support (Ripley, 1997).

Research indicates that effective collaborative team teaching requires that teachers be given time to learn how to team-teach, be able to plan cooperatively, and buy-in to the team-teaching process. When teachers set weekly co-planning time as a priority, they are able to make adjustments, evaluate students, and address strategies that best service the needs of their students (Walther-Thomas, Bryant, & Land, 1996). Volonino and Zigmond (2007) conclude that co-teaching, a common occurrence in full inclusion placements, "is complicated by the theory-practice divide . . . and is not often implemented as proposed." In an investigation of team teaching in a Jewish school, Fishman (2002) found that without adequate training and support, this model can do more harm than good.

Consultant Teaching/Push-In Programs

Consultant teaching may be similar to team teaching, or it may provide the general education teacher with the opportunity to consult with a special education colleague. Whereas team teaching focuses on supporting all students in a classroom, the push-in or consultant model generally focuses on supporting individual students within the classroom. When collaborative/consultant teachers co-plan and regularly discuss particular students, the likelihood of student achievement rises dramatically, and improvement in student behavior is also evidenced (Krueger, 1994 as cited in Gerber, 1995).

Consultant teacher models may evolve from more traditional pull-out programs, recognizing that the support of a special education consultant can benefit greater numbers of students when available in mainstream classrooms. Scheindlin (2009), describing such a move at the Sinai Akiba Academy explains, “the specialist goes into classrooms knowing who her primary target population is, but she is there to support other students as well.”

Paraprofessionals

Many special education programs employ paraprofessional staff. In their review, Giangreco and Doyle (2007) lament that teacher assistant utilization appears driven more by politics, local practice, and advocacy, than by careful, compelling research. Since most aides have little or no training (Riggs & Mueller, 2001), orientation or supervision (French, 2001), and struggle with unclear role delineation (Riggs & Mueller, 2001) it is not surprising that research has yet to support aides as integral to improved student outcomes.

When first deployed over three decades ago, such aides served largely management/housekeeping roles; supervising playgrounds and hallways, preparing materials and taking attendance (Giangreco & Doyle, 2007). Increasingly, aides are serving students’ instructional needs, coinciding with greater numbers of special needs students in general education and with budget constraints limiting additional teachers in the classroom. Unfortunately, there is little research to inform educators’ decision-making regarding the responsibilities of aides.

Jewish schools often operate beyond the realm of certification requirements creating challenges around paraprofessional use. If classroom teachers of record are not credentialed, how might they support the professional development of an aide? Additionally, Jewish schools need aides who can support students across general and Jewish studies. In the general population, the majority of aides are women who live in the communities where they work (Riggs & Mueller, 2001), a finding both relevant and disconcerting for Jewish schools, especially in small, tight-knit communities. The insular nature of many communities suggests that classroom aides in Jewish schools are likely to be neighbors, synagogue members, or friends of some or all students. Families may feel uncomfortable with students’ limitations

becoming "public knowledge" and delicate issues of confidentiality and dual roles require careful consideration.

Community Consortia

Economic realities and the desire to develop the best services possible even for low-incidence difficulties have led the public sector to develop consortia. The New York Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) was founded in 1948 and allowed school districts to combine purchase power and share the costs of services and programs. "School districts . . . choose to purchase a BOCES service rather than providing it on their own when they believe that the cost and quality warrant it" (Board of Cooperative Educational Services, 2009).

Jewish communities have begun to recognize that they can do more together than apart. Examples of such collaborations are offered below.

Etta Israel Center—Rather than construct one school, or create supports in a single environment, the Etta Israel Center developed a cadre of professionals to support inclusion of Jewish students throughout the Los Angeles area.

> Of the 10,000 students enrolled in Jewish Day Schools throughout Los Angeles County, 20% have learning differences or developmental disabilities that affect their ability to learn . . . Because each child with special needs is different, the Etta Israel Center provides Jewish families with a range of educational services. (Etta Israel Center, 2008)

*Gateways: Access to Jewish Education (*2009*)*—This Greater-Boston organization enables students to access Jewish education in the setting their parents choose by working on-site with students and teachers. The goal is for students to succeed academically, socially, and spiritually and become participants in the Jewish community.

CAHAL—Communities Acting to Heighten Awareness and Learning—This regional Long Island/Queens partnership serves students in 11 yeshivas. CAHAL reasoned that while virtually all local schools had learning disabled children, most did not have "enough students on the same grade level to open a class, nor the funding to provide related support services or professional guidance"(CAHAL, 2005). CAHAL operates with joint decision-making, involving principals and lay leaders from each school, and aims to decrease isolation and move students toward full integration.

Selected Research Issues

As special education research begins to explore increasingly complex issues, research on North American Jewish special education remains in its infancy. Jewish educators therefore borrow from their non-Jewish counterparts, extrapolating from studies of considerably different students in clearly different settings. We offer a brief review of four areas with implications for Jewish education; curriculum-based measures, language learning, family involvement, and technology.

There has been considerable research of curriculum-based measurement (CBM) as a means for both identifying students with special needs and developing and monitoring interventions to advance their learning. CBM, contrary to its name, does not relate to the curriculum, but the "generic representations" (Alonzo, Ketterlin-Geller, & Tindal, 2007) or underlying skills that allow success. Widely used in reading and math, CBM's have been documented as effective, and can help educators better understand students' learning needs, and the impact of their teaching (Alonzo et al., 2007).

Increasing awareness of the clear differences in Hebrew language learning has spurred development of curriculum-based measurement tools for Hebrew (Goldberg, Weinberger, Goodman, & Ross, 2010; Institute for University-School Partnership, 2009). Significant effort would be required to develop CBM's for other Jewish subjects. Without CBM's, or other standardized assessment tools, Jewish schools will continue to rely on widely variable, subjective measures (teacher developed tests) to identify students who require support.

The impact of learning disabilities on reading, writing, and spoken language has been studied extensively (Hallahan, Lloyd, Kauffman, Weiss, & Martinez, 2005). There has also been considerable attention to the increased likelihood for English language learners to require special education (Harry, 2007). Mastery of Hebrew facilitates entry into the world of Jewish learning and living. Since Hebrew is the language of prayer in many Jewish schools, students who struggle with Hebrew may feel spiritually disconnected (Goldberg, 2005). There are Jewish emigrant students for whom Hebrew represents not a second, but a third, or fourth language. Research exploring Hebrew language challenges, the role of accommodation in curriculum, and remediation tools and strategies is critical in supporting inclusion of all Jewish students.

Another focus of research is the involvement of families with schools. That family engagement in children's learning supports better academic outcomes is well documented (Epstein, 1987; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). It is what families do *at home* with their children that has the greatest impact on learning (Schargel & Smink, 2001). To benefit their students, including those with special needs, Jewish schools must consider what support and education families need to be role models, teachers, and educational catalysts for their children.

An intriguing finding has been the role that advocacy for special needs students plays in supporting the adjustment and well-being of their parents (Leyser, 1994). Parents of children in Jewish settings could benefit from parent-advocacy training programs similar to those in the public sector, especially since laws and entitlements for students in non-public schools can be challenging to understand and enforce.

Education technology researchers have explored how computer simulations might improve problem solving and whether word processors might improve writing (Woodward & Ferretti, 2007). Assistive technologies that allow students greater access to instructional materials have also been studied, with new devices developed regularly. Technology relevant to Jewish students includes computerized text learning packages that concretize difficult, abstract Judaic concepts, as well as support and/or remediate lagging literacy skills. Schloss (2001) cites the challenges of a rapid proliferation of Judaic software and the limited number of Jewish educators

with the knowledge and skill to best utilize these advances. Significant research is necessary to determine both the best use of these new technologies, and the training required for teachers to employ them to include diverse learners.

Future Directions

Our review of Jewish special education has been at once exhilarating and disappointing. Despite the dearth of research, our work has provided two distinct satisfactions. First, Jewish educators realize the communal, educational, and moral imperative to create learning environments of high quality for all students. Inclusionary practices, in particular, are gaining serious attention (e.g., Glanz, 2008). Second, the lack of research provides an array of exciting, relevant, and rewarding opportunities for serious scholarly investigation. Some avenues of inquiry with Jewish special needs students include the following:

- Teaching spirituality
- The impact of inclusion on general education students
- Differentiated instruction in a variety of Jewish subjects across grade levels
- Teaching Jewish texts
- Supplemental/complementary and informal education
- Impact of longer school days
- Teacher preparation and professional development to support inclusion
- Effective measures of student progress
- Family involvement

Conclusions

While writing this chapter, the first author discovered a video on inclusion for her graduate Jewish special education class. In "*If you believe in me, I'll believe in me*" (Youtube, 2009), the parent of a Down's syndrome child explains, "It was very important to us that she be a member of the community, the same way our older children were." The principal of the family's private school remarks, "we already had five children from the family in our school, and I remember . . . saying to the teachers there is no way we can say no to that baby." In a tearful voice the mother continues, "I received a card from the principal that said when our daughter becomes kindergarten age, we're going to be ready for her" and St. Anne's, a participating school in the Washington, DC consortium providing for special needs students in Catholic schools, was ready. The principal concludes, "I think it's a matter of just realizing that once you say I'm going to do it, God's graces are with you, and people start jumping on with you." It is the authors' hope that Jewish schools will resist the temptation to remain as they are, serving some, but unable to address the needs of all. For our communities and our children to grow, we need every parent of every Jewish child to be greeted by schools that open their doors and say "we are ready."

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Teacher Education: Ensuring a Cadre of Well-Qualified Educational Personnel for Jewish Schools

Leora Isaacs, Kate O'Brien, and Shira Rosenblatt

Introduction

There is strong consensus among researchers of teaching and learning that while a variety of dynamics influence the successful education of children, the effectiveness of teachers is the single most important educational determinant (Education Commission of the States [ECS], 2003). Since the mid-1980s, a growing number of education reformers, policymakers, and researchers have argued that many shortcomings in the US elementary and secondary education system are the result of inadequate working conditions, resources, and support provided to teachers. Many of these reformers contend that professionalization of teachers will result in higher commitment, which will positively affect teachers' performance and ultimately lead to improvements in student learning (ECS, 2003). Whether or not the field accepts this proposition, a broad review of extant research about public, private, and Jewish education reveals that a deep understanding of the motivations, personal and professional needs, and career trajectories of teachers enhances our ability to identify levers for change in the critical areas of recruiting, retaining, and developing well-qualified teachers to meet the current and emergent needs of the Jewish community. At the same time, teachers exist within the context of a complex environment that influences their teaching, learning, motivations, and decisions. Historical developments and trends, in addition to an array of elements of the Jewish and broader zeitgeist, cannot be ignored. Efforts to ensure that the field of Jewish education has a cadre of well-qualified educational personnel for Jewish schools therefore must be part of a systemic vision of Jewish education. What the field learns about the factors that affect recruiting, retaining, and developing teachers, and the policies derived from that learning, must be understood with an eye toward improving learning and outcomes for students.

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An Evolution in North American Jewish Education

Jewish texts emphasize the pivotal role of the teacher in cultivating knowledgeable, passionate, and dedicated Jewishly identified individuals.[1] Frequently, Jewish education in America has followed trends in secular society; families choose different venues for their (and their children's) education and institutions often modify their programs to respond to these demographic and cultural changes. For example, in response to increasing secularization, Germanization, and the influence of Protestant Christian Sunday schools in mid-nineteenth century America, enrollment shifted from religious day schools to Sunday schools. In the early twentieth century, Jewish schools relied heavily on teachers from eastern Europe and, later, from Israel (Dushkin, 1980). Among the Jewish day and complementary[2] school teachers who responded to the *Educators in Jewish Schools Study* (EJSS) *Educator Survey*, more than 85% were raised in the United States (EJSS, 2008). In the mid-twentieth century, the blossoming of congregational religious schools accompanied the expansion and suburbanization of synagogues (Zeldin, 1983). Another aspect of the evolution of Jewish schooling was a change in the students who patronized these schools (Dushkin, 1980) from immigrant families and children to native-born American children. Similarly, a decline in anti-Semitism and restrictions that previously consigned Jews to "their own kind" in educational, professional, and social settings allowed them to circulate more widely, resulting in greater assimilation into North American secular society. No longer was the home the locus of Jewish learning and observance for many Jews affiliated with "liberal" denominations. Increasingly, these families relied on their synagogues for their children's pre-*b'nai mitzvah* education. In 1990, the Commission on Jewish Education in North America, among others, called the dilemma of increased assimilation and a less Jewishly identified and Jewishly interested population a "crisis," declaring: "The responsibility for developing Jewish identity and instilling a commitment to Judaism for this population now rests primarily with education" (Commission on Jewish Education in North America, 1990).

Currently, the education of Jewish children in some type of "Jewish schooling" is the norm in North America. According to the 2000–01 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS), more than 70% of all Jewish children receive some form of Jewish

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[1] Well-known among the multitude of sources is this Talmudic dictum: "Rabbi Yehudah the Prince sent Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yossi and Rabbi Ami to tour the towns of Eretz Israel to establish there teachers and sages. They came to one place and found there neither teachers, nor sages. Thus, they spoke unto them: 'Bring us the guardians of the city.' They went and brought the policemen of the city. The rabbis asked: 'Are these the guardians of the city? Nay, these are the destroyers of the city.' They asked: 'Who then are the guardians of the city?' The rabbis answered: 'The teachers and sages'." (*Yerushalmi, Chagiga, Ch. 1, 7*).

[2] "Complementary schools" refers to congregational, supplemental, religious, Hebrew schools, and other *part-time* Jewish education for students in grades K–12 of any denomination and those who are unaffiliated. The data collected and reviewed for this chapter deal most frequently and specifically with "congregational schools." As such, this appellation is used for the sake of consistency.

education (NJPS, 2002) in approximately 800 Jewish day schools and 2,000 congregational schools run by congregations and other Jewish communal organizations in North America (EJSS, 2008). Not only do Jewish children today receive more full-time Jewish schooling compared to their parents' generation (29% versus 12%), but also fewer children today receive no Jewish education (NJPS, 2002). Alongside these developments is the marked growth of intensive all-day Jewish schooling (approximately 200,000 students in grades K–12 in schools representing different streams of Judaism and diverse ideological bents). Similarly, we have witnessed advances in congregational Jewish education. The field also has seen significant growth and expansion in Jewish early childhood education and in supplementary Jewish education for high school students (Wertheimer, 2007). The continuing trend toward "reinventing" and "revitalizing" synagogues has had an impact on Jewish educational opportunities at all levels[3] and has broadened the reach of Jewish education to families and adults. Many communities are developing an effective culture of experiential Jewish education (e.g., camps, service learning, youth movements, and Israel programs) to support and extend the learning that occurs in school settings. Following decades of decline, serious adult learning, including the growth of Jewish studies in universities, is on the upswing.

Throughout the research, two factors continually surfaced as catalysts for substantive change in Jewish education content, pedagogy, and resources that significantly improve educational environments. First is a widespread lack of satisfaction among key stakeholders within Jewish academic institutions, central agencies for Jewish education, emergent educational organizations, and individual schools (Sales & Koren, 2007). Second is the increased involvement of foundations and philanthropists who support Jewish education with their intellectual and financial resources and who serve as engines for positive change. As the Jewish community has begun to heed the call to enhance and improve Jewish education in the last few decades, these developments—and the emergence of serious evaluation and empirical research in the field—are transforming the "crisis" into an opportunity.

Still, challenges abound. Professional and lay leaders, consumers, and researchers point to multiple concerns: the continuing "pediatric" focus of Jewish education, a significant drop-out rate post-*b'nai mitzvah*, structural issues in formal Jewish schooling, and external contextual factors. The rampant change that characterized the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has forced Jewish education to adapt to revolutionary technologies, changing definitions of community, and new norms of communication (Woocher, 2006). Especially among young adult Jews, identities are fluid, cultures are intermingled, and religious/Jewish studies are simply one choice among many attractive pursuits. The Jewish community's expectations are also in flux, driven by a culture that provides unfettered access to resources

[3]National programs, such as Synagogue 2000 and its successor Synagogue 3000, STAR (Synagogues: Transformation and Renewal), The Experiment in Congregational Education (ECE), and local initiatives (e.g., Hartford's La'Atid: Synagogues for the twenty-first century), are a few notable examples of programs designed to re-imagine and re-invigorate synagogue life.

and a world of "mass customization" that grants consumers the ability to get what they want, when and where they want it. Jewish institutions (e.g., federations) and entrenched causes (e.g., Israel) are often met with ambivalence. They cannot expect the community loyalty they once enjoyed and must continually prove their worth in response to funders' increasing expectations for accountability. These rapid developments give new urgency to issues relevant to Jewish teachers: who they are; how they are trained, recruited, and retained; and the potential for systemic and ongoing professional development to ensure there is a cadre of high-quality Jewish teachers to provide excellent learning for students.

Teacher Shortage

Although no systematic empirical data exist about the number of teachers or teaching positions in Jewish schools in North America, some researchers estimate that there are 66,000 teaching positions (28,000 in congregational schools; 22,000 in Jewish day schools; and 16,000 in Jewish early childhood programs) (Goodman, Schaap, & Ackerman, 2002). The American Jewish community chronically declares a critical shortage of Jewish educational personnel. Data from recent research echo the perception that there is currently a shortage of "fully qualified" or "high-quality" teachers in Jewish day and congregational schools in North America, which will have a negative impact on Jewish students and their learning. Anecdotal and empirical evidence shows that Jewish day and congregational school administrators find it difficult to fill open positions with *fully qualified* teachers (e.g., EJSS, 2008). Research indicates that if current trends continue (e.g., an aging teacher population, younger teachers' uncertainty about staying in the field, and certain inhospitable workplace conditions), the Jewish community will continue to face a critical teacher shortage. This shortage is a matter of both the quality and quantity (absolute number) of teachers. A 2005 report emphasized, as have others, "It is not just about ensuring an adequate number of teachers ... but having teachers in the profession who are as accomplished as possible" (ECS, 2005).

The field of Jewish education is starting to recognize the need to constantly monitor and adapt teacher training and support to respond to changes in Jewish education and learners. Without accurate and up-to-date data about Jewish teachers and their professional lives and working conditions, the field cannot effectively conceive successful recruitment and retention policies. Worse, it may misdiagnose the problem and waste precious resources on approaches that are fruitless or even detrimental to Jewish education and to students. Isa Aron notes, "teachers alone cannot make the difference. ... Good research is needed to understand the nature and dimensions of the shortage, assess the realities, and develop research-informed solutions" (Aron, 1992). To ensure a cadre of well-qualified educational personnel for Jewish schools, the field must understand who the teachers are, how they are trained, the mechanisms by which they are recruited, the factors that influence retention, and how to keep them inspired and fulfilled.

A Profile of Jewish Teachers

In an effort to address the paucity of empirical data about teachers in Jewish schools, the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA) undertook an important first step toward creating a research-based portrait of teachers in Jewish day and congregational schools in North America. The *Educators in Jewish Schools Study* (EJSS, 2008) is a large-scale national study that collected descriptive information about Jewish teachers, administrators, and specialty personnel in Jewish day and congregational schools.[4] The findings not only painted a vivid snapshot of the teachers in the field today, but also provided data to inform key stakeholders about the factors that motivate Jewish day and congregational school teachers to enter and to remain in their schools and in the field of Jewish education. Without this information, decision-makers lack a sufficiently complete context in which to consider Jewish education policy and plan educational change.

Who Are the Teachers?

Demographic data about Jewish teachers presented in the EJSS report corroborate other research in regional Jewish communities (Frank, Margolis, & Weisner, 1992; Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Goodman, & Tammivaara, 1998; Goodman & Schaap, 2007) and in general education. Across Jewish school classrooms in the United States, teachers are predominantly female (75–80%), white (94%), and married (more than 70%). Of EJSS respondents, 43% were 50 years or older (EJSS, 2008). This rapid "graying" of Jewish teachers mirrors the national demographic trend in education[5] and points to the need to replenish the number of teachers in the field in significant ways over the next two decades.[6]

Recent research presents an overall profile of teachers in Jewish schools who are highly motivated, have considerable experience in the fields of general and/or Jewish education, and who have participated in formal and/or informal Jewish education. They tend to be highly "degreed," particularly in general studies, but lack teaching certification. Studies also show that there is great variation in the Jewish educational backgrounds of these teachers. While approximately 90% of both day and congregational school teachers who responded to the EJSS *Educator Survey* reported that they participated in formal and experiential Jewish education as youth

[4]These data include key demographics, details about current positions, teachers' motivations, professional development, factors influencing retention, and more.

[5]"The proportion of K–12 teachers who are 50 years of age and older has risen from 24% in 1996 to 42% in 2005" (National Center for Education Information, Washington, DC. *Profile of Teachers in the U.S., 2005*). "Over the past two decades, the median age of primary and secondary [public] school teachers [in the US] increased from 36 to 43 [years old]" (AmeriStat, August, 2002).

[6]"A historic turnover is taking place in the teaching profession. While student enrollments are rising rapidly, more than a million veteran teachers are nearing retirement. . . . Overall, we will need more than two million new teachers in the next decade" (National Education Association (NEA), 2003).

and/or adult learners (EJSS, 2008), further research is needed about the settings, duration, and content of those experiences. A study of Jewish teachers in Atlanta, Baltimore, and Milwaukee found that one-third of those Jewish teachers ended their own Jewish education after *bar/bat mitzvah* (Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Goodman, & Tammivaara, 1998). In congregational school settings, where teachers tend to be part-time, many do not have formal Jewish education backgrounds (EJSS, 2008).

In a study of teachers in six communities (Kelner, Rabkin, Saxe, & Sheingold, 2004), researchers discovered that while all of the teachers teaching Judaic content in their local day schools were Jewish, 32% of general studies teachers and 11% of educational administrators (20% of day school staff overall) were not Jewish. Similarly, increasing numbers of teachers who are not Jewish are being employed in Jewish early childhood education settings to meet the growing needs of the field.[7] These realities may have significant implications for the ability of Jewish schools to transmit Jewish values, content, culture, and identity to their students.

Why Do They Teach?

Studies in both Jewish and general education frequently demonstrate that teachers choose their profession and their jobs out of a sense of mission and passion for connecting with students and playing an influential role in their lives. However, findings among EJSS respondents demonstrated that more than half of Jewish day and congregational school teachers did not plan their careers in Jewish education (EJSS, 2008). Rather, they were motivated by their own Jewish educational experiences (e.g., Jewish camp, schooling, or experiential education) or were “tapped” by people they trust (usually a Jewish communal or educational professional) who encouraged them to enter the field (EJSS, 2008). These findings suggest that mobilizing influential individuals and/or mentors in a more purposeful way could be beneficial in attracting and recruiting promising Jewish teachers. When asked about their motivations to work in their particular schools (and by extrapolation in the Jewish educational field), EJSS respondents most frequently said they want to make a real impact on students, work individually with students, and get to know students well. Other intrinsic motivators varied according to the teaching venue: 76% of day school teachers are motivated to teach in their settings out of a desire to work with students who are self-motivated to learn. Contributing to the Jewish community is a prime motivator for 88% of congregational school teachers (EJSS, 2008).

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[7] According to 2006 figures from the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), “30% [of teachers] in the JCC [Jewish Community Center] preschools, 10–25% in Reform schools, and 12–20% in Conservative schools [are not Jewish]. The percentage is highest in the western United States, where almost 40% of preschool teachers are not Jewish.” (“Growing Number of Non-Jews Teach the Aleph-Bet at Preschool.” Sue Fishkoff (2006). Retrieved from http://www.InterfaithFamily.com on April 7, 2009.)

Where Do They Work?

Gamoran and his colleagues discovered that while there appears to be "considerable stability in the field of Jewish teaching," teachers in the communities they studied were likely to move from position to position during their careers (Gamoran, Goldring, Robinson, Goodman, & Tammivaara, 1998). The majority of teachers who responded to the EJSS *Educator Survey* had teaching experience in Jewish education settings other than their current positions (EJSS, 2008).[8] A sizeable percentage of EJSS respondents in Jewish day and congregational schools were "new" to their schools, working in their current positions for two or fewer years. On the other end of the spectrum, 22% of congregational school teachers and 34% of day schools teachers worked in their current schools for more than 10 years. Not only do a sizeable percentage of teachers in Jewish schools work in multiple schools during their careers, but many also hold multiple teaching posts simultaneously. EJSS found this is more likely among congregational school teachers than among their day school colleagues. While Jewish day school teachers work substantially more hours overall at their schools than congregational school teachers, as one might expect, the majority of teachers in the EJSS study (2008) and in the community study by Gamoran et al., (1998) professed they had a "career" in Jewish education.

Pre-service Training

Isa Aron defined a professional Jewish teacher as one "who has a degree or credential in Jewish education, and who thinks of teaching as his or her career" (Aron, 2004). Relatively few Jewish teachers who responded to the EJSS study had pre-service academic preparation in Judaic studies or education; a minority had formal training in Judaic studies for the content area in which they taught. Data collected by Kelner et al. (2004) indicate a similar lack of formal preparation among administrators and teachers. Commonly, informal Jewish teachers lack pre-service training entirely (Commission on Jewish Education in North America, 1990). EJSS demonstrated that the large majority of teachers in the study were highly educated in secular studies, but nearly half of responding day school teachers and two-thirds of congregational school teachers did not hold valid teaching credentials. A growing body of research shows that investment in "teacher knowledge" is among the most productive ways to increase student learning; creating rigorous standards for teachers is one way to accomplish this. In the world of general education, formal pre-service training (usually in a college or university setting and including in-class student teaching) is a prerequisite for sitting for intensive, state-mandated teacher certification exams, which are in turn required for employment in public and many

[8] A study of Jewish teachers in Greater Boston reflects this national trend: 70% of those Jewish teachers had been in their current jobs for four or fewer years; 53% had been teaching in some Jewish setting for five or fewer years, and 50% or more had been in their current jobs for three or fewer years (Frank, Margolis, & Weisner, 1992).

independent schools. Unlike public school, the field of Jewish education currently lacks national or state-mandated requirements or a standard measure against which it can evaluate the basic competence of teachers in Jewish schools (Teacher Support Network, 2007).[9]

One lingering question is whether it is possible, in light of the perceived crisis in Jewish education personnel, to raise standards and still have enough teachers. Sharon Feiman-Nemser (1992) reframes the issue with two questions: “What do teachers need to know in order to teach?” and “How do teachers learn the practice of teaching?” She offers four basic propositions in response to these questions. First, teachers are learners who should be challenged to reevaluate their assumptions about teaching and subject matter. Second, Jewish teachers require a “conceptual understanding of Judaica and lots of chances to observe/experience exemplary teaching” in addition to academic courses. Third, on-the-job experience should be enhanced by reflective practice, support from administrators and colleagues, and regular ongoing learning. Fourth, research about Jewish education and Jewish teachers should inform their practice. In 2007, Feiman-Nemser revisited the essential question, “What do teachers need to learn?” and added that novice teachers need to know “How to think . . . know . . . feel . . . and act like a teacher.” This process demands intellectual inquiry about education and pedagogy; knowledge of subject matter and key educational/learning processes; interpersonal, spiritual, and/or psychological work; and “a repertoire of skills, routines, strategies, and the capacity to think on your feet in the context of changing circumstances” (Feiman-Nemser, 2007). Because education neither starts nor stops with the teacher, and because many uncontrollable environmental and contextual factors affect teachers, the goal of pre-service training (and ongoing professional development) is improving the quality of *teaching*, not only the quality of the *teacher* (Kennedy, 2006).

Recruitment

Recruiting well-qualified Jewish teachers is situated within the broader context of recruiting and retaining a professional workforce for the Jewish communal sector. Kelner’s review of existing research on the subject (Kelner, Rabkin, Saxe, & Sheingold, 2004) analyzed professional recruitment in private, non-profit, and Jewish sectors. The researchers revealed that leaders of diverse Jewish communal institutions struggle to recruit and retain all levels of professionals. They posited an array of factors that may impact the recruitment of Jewish professionals (including

[9] A teaching credential is the license conferred by a state to teachers who have completed certain state-mandated requirements for teaching certification and have passed state-mandated teaching examinations. The National Board of License for Teachers and Principals in Jewish Schools in North America (NBL) attempts to establish standards and criteria for the certification of professional teachers in the Jewish community (day schools, congregational schools, early childhood programs, and family education). Although this certification process is designed to recognize qualified teachers and encourage teachers to acquire professional training, it is not mandated within Jewish schools. As of this writing, the future operations of the NBL are uncertain.

teachers), such as organizations' perception that the labor pool lacks "dual-skills of Jewish and professional competencies" and the increasing desirability of graduate training. They acknowledged that gender bias, especially persistent barriers for women in leadership, is widespread and detrimental to recruitment and retention. Further, they asserted that organizations fail to create sustainable and inspiring workplaces and systems, thereby curtailing career advancement and limiting professional mobility. Because most of the solutions proffered in this area do not focus on underlying structural and cultural challenges, the researchers advocate for systemic thinking and detailed assessment of the needs of different stakeholders. They encourage the Jewish community to declare its intent to accurately diagnose issues and prescribe contextually appropriate solutions.

Alongside these factors is the reality that many well-qualified candidates do not choose jobs in Jewish education. According to some leaders in the field, formal Jewish education is not perceived as a career track that offers rewards for "advancement, good work, merit, inventiveness, and all the things that in another profession would move you up the ladder" (JESNA, 2004). Supporting this view, Gamoran et al. (1998) found that while becoming a Jewish teacher is relatively easy (i.e., the barriers are low, especially for part-time teaching positions), the scarcity of full-time positions with substantial salary and benefits makes recruitment to the field more difficult. Some suggest that addressing the issue of recruitment is inextricably linked to raising the visibility and status of Jewish teachers in our communities. Others advise raising salaries and increasing benefits. Still others, such as Ben-Avie and Kress (2007), take an ecological-developmental approach that emphasizes the importance of the interconnected nature, function, and relationships of people and systems within a school culture.

Financial incentives often top the list of proposed solutions to the challenge of recruiting highly qualified teachers. The rationale is that if the salaries (and thereby the status) of teachers are increased sufficiently, more professionals will be attracted to the field. Other voices in Jewish and general education approach financial incentives cautiously, since few rigorous studies of teacher salaries and their impact on recruitment and retention exist and extant data do not provide clear direction. For example, a study of the Massachusetts signing bonus concluded, "Increasingly, research suggests that the challenge of attracting and retaining new teachers depends on making sure the schools are places where teachers can achieve the intrinsic rewards that a career in teaching offers. Short of that, no financial inducements will suffice" (Liu, Moore, & Peske, 2004).

Schools can prepare more effectively for the complex process of teacher recruitment (Stronge & Hindman, 2003). Researchers recommend obtaining accurate assessments of the current status of the teaching profession and the labor market for teachers (ECS, 2005) to develop strategies that will incline qualified candidates toward the field of education. The challenge of attracting and recruiting the most qualified candidates who are most likely to succeed is complicated by the fact that administrators of day and congregational schools express very different criteria for hiring teachers in their respective settings. Isa Aron (2004) advocates a systemic approach that identifies and categorizes different types of teachers within

a "differentiated staffing pyramid." Different constellations of skills are required within each level of the pyramid (e.g., classroom teachers, administrators, trainers/mentors, Judaic studies specialists, and a senior educator/principal). Therefore, recruitment efforts should target appropriately qualified candidates for distinctly different functions.

Reimer and Finkel have offered several strategies for successful teacher recruitment (JESNA, 2004). These include facilitating adults' mid-career transitions into Jewish education. They suggested that potential recruits, who often are inspired by new Jewish learning and leadership positions, need a "bridge person" to encourage and facilitate the transition from their previous work. In the case of congregational schools, recruiters should consider a range of sources for professional and avocational teachers, including local college-age and graduate students; unemployed, "underemployed," or retired adults; congregants; full-time and part-time Jewish day school and public school teachers; and Israelis. Other strategies to attract promising candidates include continuous promotion of the field; placing recruiters where young Jews congregate; scoping out good candidates and enticing them into the field (e.g., camp counselors and *shlichim*: Israelis who come to work as camp counselors or teachers in the US); and hiring strong pre-service teachers whose steep learning curves could be addressed through professional development. They also emphasized that Jewish education leaders and schools should take advantage of technology for training teachers locally to meet the needs of local Jewish schools. Other researchers (e.g., Goodman, Schaap, & Ackerman, 2002) point to the value of formal programs that help college students explore a career in Jewish education, such as JESNA's Lainer Interns for Jewish Education[10] and the CAJE Schusterman College Program.[11]

Recruitment, of course, is only one aspect of ensuring a cadre of well-qualified educational personnel for Jewish schools. Once these teachers are in Jewish day or congregational school classrooms, the field must understand how to keep them and encourage them to pursue their careers in the field.

Retention

Multiple national studies in general education broadcast statistics about the "staggering" teacher turnover and attrition rate in US schools, which many (including the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future) have determined is much higher than in other professions requiring comparable education and skills (Sparks, 2002). While some degree of teacher turnover is inevitable and even healthy for teachers and schools, consistently low retention of teachers (let alone "high-quality"

[10] See http://www.jesna.org/our-work/israel-lainer-interns/about-the-program for more information.

[11] The Schusterman College Program was a week-long experience as part of the larger CAJE conference, including pre-conference and Shabbat. As of spring, 2009, CAJE ceased operation; information about the future of the Schusterman College Program is unavailable at this time.

teachers) carries tremendous financial, human resource, and educational costs that may have a negative impact on educational outcomes. A 2000 study by the US Department of Education indicated that 40–50% of teachers leave within their first 7 years of teaching and two-thirds of those leave within their first 4 years (McCreight, 2000). Generally, this attrition declines markedly after 4–5 years in the classroom, then increases again after 25–30 years in the profession, when teachers are nearing retirement (ECS, 2005). A review of recent research in Jewish education (Kelner, Rabkin, Saxe, & Sheingold, 2004) revealed that teacher turnover in the first 3 years in Jewish day schools is approximately 12%. The rate more than doubles (27%) for congregational school teachers, many of whom work part-time in their primary school setting.

Darling-Hammond's research in general education (2003) revealed that the top four factors that influenced attrition and teacher retention were salary, working conditions, adequate teacher pre-service preparation, and mentoring support (especially early in a teacher's career). EJSS (2008) showed that in addition to these, the most important retention-related factors common to responding Jewish day and congregational school teachers were work/home balance, how the school responds to students who are not thriving, and recognition and/or validation from school administrators. Salary also was rated among the most prevalent factors (particularly for day school teachers) and was most important to those for whom it is the main source of household income. Overall, however, it was not ranked substantially higher than other important factors. In addition to salary, benefits are a key component of teachers' compensation packages. Among the Jewish day and congregational school teachers responding to the EJSS *Educator Survey*, between 66 and 70% of teachers who work more than 31 hours a week received health insurance, retirement benefits, and paid time off for professional development. Between 33 and 50% said they received life insurance, dental insurance, and/or partial/full tuition for their children.[12] Among teachers in general education settings, there is strong evidence that compensation plays a key, yet complex role in recruitment and retention. For example, while increasing compensation tends to increase rates of teacher retention, the impact of salary as a factor varies by gender, level of experience, and job satisfaction (ECS, 2005). One should keep in mind that for most teachers, "compensation" extends far beyond salary to include intrinsic and intangible compensation.

Several factors distinguish a teacher who is "likely to leave" from one who is "likely to stay." Common sense and research both demonstrate that the more satisfied a teacher is with her/his career and workplace conditions, the more likely s/he is to remain (Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2007). More than 80% of teachers who participated in the EJSS study expressed overall job satisfaction and 70% believed they had a good career "compared with people

[12] See Shoshanna Sofaer and Lynne Page Snyder (2004). *Addressing Uninsurance Among Jewish Educators: Background Analysis and Options.* Unpublished paper. Executive summary available at http://www.ou.org/index.php/ylc/article/2411. See also the press release issued by RAVSAK: The Jewish Community Day School Network. Retrieved on January 7, 2008, from http://www.ou.org/pdf/ylc/1831_001.pdf.

of their same age and gender." More than 75% reported that given everything they know now, they would choose their job again (EJSS, 2008). A study of Jewish teachers in the Greater Boston area similarly revealed that 70% were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs (Frank, Margolis, & Weisner, 1992). These Boston teachers said their sense of job satisfaction could increase with support and help in teaching (especially from the principal), increased salary, the ability to reach more students in class, students who were more interested in Judaism, and greater respect from students.

Characteristics common to teachers who are "likely to stay" include, but are not limited to: passion, commitment, curiosity, determination, resilience, flexibility, commitment to intellectual stimulation, and deep care about their students and work (Williams, 2003). Teachers' need to feel capable and effective is a critical determinant in their decision to remain in a position (or in the field). Teachers with long tenures commonly cite several reasons for staying in teaching: love (for students, intellectual work, and subject matter), a feeling of hope/possibility, a drive toward democratic practice and social justice, and a perceived ability to shape the future. Teachers "likely to stay" believe that their jobs fill a strong personal need for creativity, provide meaningful relationships, and show them that they are making a difference in students' lives. Other environmental factors that influence teachers' decisions to stay in a school include a balance of connectedness and autonomy with colleagues and administration, the ability to be decision-makers, and/or opportunities to contribute substantively to school policy and change (Sparks, 2002).

Similarly, teachers who say they are "likely to leave" their schools and/or the field of Jewish education share commonalities, especially regarding work environment. The study of Jewish teachers in the Greater Boston area revealed that teachers "likely to leave" experience job dissatisfaction related to troublesome students, inadequate pay for their time and energy, and the need to discipline students. They characterized a "bad day" in teaching as one in which they were tired or in a bad mood, they felt they didn't teach anything, the students were bored, and/or the class was out of control (Frank, Margolis, & Weisner, 1992). Many studies of retention and attrition in public schools have found that teachers who are "likely to leave" were not adequately trained for their work as teachers, lacked resources, had high populations of low-achieving students, and/or had students with disruptive behavioral issues. In addition, these teachers often felt unsupported by administration, did not perceive a career ladder open to them, did not have access to ongoing learning or coaching, and/or perceived that they could not sustain their households on a teacher's salary (Guarino & Santibanez, 2006).

Based on this and other evidence, schools are likely to retain their high-quality teachers if they prepare and nurture them effectively, get to know their teachers well and understand "the difference that makes the difference" for them, improve the working environment, provide compelling intrinsic and extrinsic incentives, and ensure strong school leadership (National Education Association, 2003). Some schools are taking immediate steps to reform their recruitment processes to improve their chances of identifying and hiring well-qualified teachers who will succeed in

teaching and improve student learning.[13] When schools seek teachers whose preparation, personalities, and values mesh with those of the school, they increase the potential for long-term relationships with those teachers. In addition, there is evidence that schools benefit from understanding and responding to what teachers are seeking from a teaching position, such as a school that makes good teaching possible; order and stability; opportunities to work with colleagues and develop their skills; a reasonable workload; and accessible, respectful, supportive leadership (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Reimer and Finkel advocate "the big three" approaches to Jewish teacher retention: ongoing excellent professional development (especially mentoring), intellectually exciting experiences, and networking (JESNA, 2004). They also stress the importance of creative lay and professional institutional leadership, and collaboration among schools, Jewish communal organizations, students, and parents.

Professional Development

Professional development is a key to promoting the induction, intellectual and professional growth, and tenure of teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). It also is the critical link between improving the quality of teaching and improving student learning in Jewish schools. Many studies across Jewish and general education show that teachers value, seek, and/or are engaged in ongoing professional development. Nearly all of the teachers profiled in EJSS said they had participated in some professional development in the previous 12 months, including workshops, university courses, and distance learning (EJSS, 2008). Across the studies explored for this chapter, professional development emerged as *the* essential tool to increase teacher satisfaction, contribute to the retention of new teachers, enhance the work and investment of veteran teachers, and improve teaching and student learning.[14] This research also found that addressing the professional development needs of teachers, particularly in their first one to five years in the field, can improve both the rate of teacher retention and the quality of the teaching profession.

A review of available research makes clear that the educational processes and products that become normative in general education settings (e.g., public schools) often have an impact on operations in other school settings (e.g., Jewish day and

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[13]See Barbara Sargent (2003). "Finding Good Teachers – And Keeping Them" *Educational Leadership.* (ASCD). (60)8. Sargent highlights a NJ district's success using a rigorous selection process and providing new teachers with structured and nurturing (professional and emotional) support, and shows the degree to which working conditions are a significant factor in retention.

[14]See, for example, New Jersey State Department of Education (2001). *Standards for Required Professional Development for Teachers: A New Vision.* "The New Jersey Professional Teaching Standards Board believes that teachers must be dedicated to a continuous plan of professional development that begins with their pre-service activities, that continues with their induction into the profession, and that extends through the life of their professional career in education through on-going and sustained professional development endeavors."

congregational schools). In the context of professional development, it is reasonable to believe that the growth and success of well-developed teacher professional development programs in general education settings will influence the creation and implementation of effective professional development programs in Jewish educational settings. Still, the US school system has much to learn from its international colleagues. For example, a recent study (Wei, Andree, & Darling-Hammond, 2009) found that in contrast to US schools, professional development in other countries is embedded in a teacher's regular job responsibilities. The authors cite a number of compelling statistics from a 2004 report of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). For example, "more than 85% of schools in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland provide time for professional development in their teachers' workday or week." In many European and Asian countries, about "half of a teacher's working time" is devoted to collaborative planning, observing classrooms, preparing lessons and assessments, and working directly with families and students outside the classroom. Another striking difference in policy is that in the majority of school systems in Asia, Australia, and Europe, formal professional development and induction programs for new teachers are mandatory.

These and similar data indicate that rather than isolating professional development as an "event," it should be part of the school's overall plan and "rooted in a systems approach that focuses on identifying and managing a wide range of factors that impact student outcomes" (Weissman, 2007). In some cases, educational systems or school structures make it difficult for teachers to take advantage of learning opportunities. Researchers have found that fewer than half of the general education teachers received "release time" for professional development and nearly 25% were not given any support time or credit for professional development (Sparks & Hirsch, 1999). Similarly, EJSS study respondents revealed that even in cases in which their school administrators perceive a strong need for (or require) professional development, most teachers pay their own expenses for professional development activities, whether or not they received paid time to attend (EJSS, 2008).

Professional development for Jewish teachers also is complicated by the reality that Jewish schools tend to be more "resource poor" than public schools. Additionally, the nature of Jewish education involves different social-emotional and spiritual priorities than general education. Since the goals and standards for Jewish education remain in large part undefined, and since there is little extant research about professional development in Jewish schools, aligning professional development theory and practice is not yet possible. Weissman emphasizes the importance of training teachers to function as "action researchers" to fill this gap (Weissman, 2007).

A significant disconnect exists between teacher professional development as it is currently provided and where it must be situated if schools are to achieve their desired outcomes. Both researchers and practitioners indicate that there is not yet enough staff development and what exists is not up to par. Teachers seeking professional development are most likely to find "one shot" workshops

(many of which assume homogeneous needs among teachers) or courses lacking well-planned agendas. As a result, teachers are taking part in a hodgepodge of unrelated courses. Just as teachers prepare engaging, intellectually challenging lessons for their students, so professional development should help teachers actively synthesize concrete aspects of teaching (behaviors, attitudes, skills, and knowledge), their desire to find meaning in their work, and critical self-reflective practice (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009).

Effective professional development for teachers integrates goals and contents in a way that is results-driven and embedded in a teacher's job (Sparks, 2002). It provides meaningful cognitive, social, and emotional engagement with ideas, fellow teachers, and a variety of materials (Intrator & Kunzman, 2006). Professional development likely to be successful also is sustained (i.e., rigorous, cumulative, and long-term) and relationship-focused (i.e., it prepares teachers to succeed in all aspects of their work). Finally, effective professional development uses evaluation and research data and applies techniques and perspectives of critical inquiry. Although the field of professional development is just gathering steam in the realm of Jewish education, several noteworthy programs already exist.[15] On a broad level, many central agencies and bureaus of Jewish education provide in-service training and resources for Jewish schools and for Jewish teachers, especially for avocational teachers in congregational schools.

One frequently studied and widely advocated avenue of professional development is "mentoring." More than a "buddy system," mentoring brings together a novice teacher and a senior educator in a collaborative relationship defined by specific expectations, roles, and responsibilities. Darling-Hammond's research has shown that teachers who experience strong teacher preparation combined with ongoing professional development are more "likely to stay" and that well-designed mentoring programs "raise retention rates for new teachers by improving their attitudes, feelings of efficacy, and instructional skills" (Darling-Hammond, 2003). The growing popularity of formal mentoring programs has generated a corresponding need to identify and develop good mentors. Many schools intuitively target their veteran teachers for these mentoring roles. Studies indicate that serving as a mentor provides a new lease on life for many veteran teachers; many say mentoring and/or coaching other teachers creates an incentive for them to remain in teaching as they learn from and share with their colleagues (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Increasingly, these mentors receive some type of training to enable them to fulfill their roles effectively. According to recent research, several countries (including Israel, Switzerland, France, Norway, and England) require formal training for mentor teachers (Wei, Andree, & Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Another increasingly popular form of professional development is the community of practice (CoP). CoPs allow teachers who have a shared practice to work

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[15]Examples of intensive professional development programs for formal and informal Jewish educators that JESNA has formally evaluated over time include: Nurturing Excellence in Synagogue Schools (NESS), Mandel Teacher Teachers Institute (MTEI), Leadership Institute for Principals, Machon L'Morim: B'reshit, TeKiaH, and Shofar.

together to improve that practice by creating and sharing knowledge and insight through a diverse range of social interactions, research projects, and presentations. New technologies are expanding the possibilities for professional development through formal distance learning, independent study, ad hoc online relationships in groups and networks, and learning with wikis and blogs (Ferriter, 2009). In addition, Jewish educators have access to expanded resources through online centers, such as JESNA's Sosland Online Resource Center, e-chinuch, Mofet Institute's Teacher Education Resource Center, and the Lookstein Institute for Jewish Education.[16]

Our knowledge about professional development points to the essential need to conceive, develop, and sustain a well-planned continuum of learning opportunities for Jewish teachers at all stages of their careers, with particular emphasis on the formative years. It also encourages teacher-administrator collaboration to establish connections between knowledge and practice to improve teacher performance and student outcomes. Collegial relationships with peers, senior teachers, and administrators who are supportive and able to offer constructive criticism will be indispensible to this project. At its most grand, what the field now knows about professional development for teachers—and the potentially enormous impact well-qualified teachers and high-quality teaching can have on student learning—demands a transformation in our commonplaces about teaching and learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2007).

Approaching Solutions and Policy in Jewish Education

The link between excellence in teaching and excellence in student outcomes demands a systemic approach to Jewish education that attends to multiple tasks at once. This is a "field in motion;" it cannot wait for a complete set of standards before beginning to focus on teaching excellence. The challenge is meeting current needs and anticipating the emergent needs of an evolving community of learners and forms of Jewish education. Policy-makers must understand the dynamics of this active system and plan strategically to prepare and sustain teachers and educational leaders in new and creative ways. While the field can expect short- and intermediate-term gains, significant progress toward true excellence will take time.

While the field of Jewish education as a body has a limited ability to influence change directly on the level of individual schools and learners, levers for change that directly impact excellence in teaching are more immediately within our reach. These include: investment in Jewish teachers, teacher preparation and professional development, school cultures that foster respect and learning, research and evaluation, and resources supporting excellence.

[16]JESNA's Sosland Online Resource Center (http://www.jesna.org/sosland/home), e-chinuch (http://www.chinuch.org), Mofet Institute's Teacher Education Resource Center (http://mofetjtec.macam.ac.il/Pages/default.aspx), and the Lookstein Institute for Jewish Education (http://www.lookstein.org).

Investment in Jewish teachers includes, but is not limited to, financial support to improve salaries. Other important areas for immediate and long-term investments include: pre-professional training, supervision and mentoring, adequate preparation time, peer-to-peer collaboration, ongoing professional development, and developing a school culture of learning that attracts and retains excellent teachers. While Jewish day and congregational school teachers have unique concerns, both require holistic policies that reflect commitment to improving teacher quality and student outcomes today and planning for these teachers' futures. These widespread investments may increase the likelihood that qualified candidates will enter the field, that recruiters will be able to attract the best and brightest, and that teachers will stay in the field of Jewish education.

High-level teacher preparation is essential to nurturing a generation of highly qualified Jewish teachers who will raise the caliber of teaching and learning in Jewish schools. Because most extant teacher training programs produce teachers and administrators for Jewish day schools and higher education settings, there is a need to enhance and/or create robust pre-professional programs to prepare a greater number of high-quality congregational school, early childhood, and informal Jewish educators. The field of Jewish education must engage in a discussion about what this pre-professional training ought to look like, what kind of investment is required, and how the field will measure its progress toward its desired outcomes. The field also must diversify avenues through which potentially excellent teachers can enter the field, secure attractive compensation packages, and develop multiple career ladders for their advancement. While induction, mentoring, and professional development are essential components of the learning mosaic, they ultimately must promote retention in a climate where up to one-third of teachers leave the profession or their schools in their first few years.

Professional development for all teachers must be relevant, ongoing, rigorous, sustained, and technologically adaptable. Extant studies report that while most Jewish teachers possess high levels of general education, they tend to be deficient in one or more key knowledge areas: Jewish content, pedagogic skills, and/or pedagogic content knowledge. Research demonstrates it can take upward of 5–10 years before a teacher masters the art and science of teaching (e.g., Huberman, 1989). This reality makes clear that lifelong educational and Jewish learning is paramount for current and potential teachers who might not otherwise find success in the field (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). According to Sparks and Hirsch (1999), ideally 10% of a school's budget and 25% of a teacher's time should be devoted to teacher learning. Despite this and other research on excellence in professional development, too many schools still rely on isolated events without a well-conceived plan for long-term professional growth. Alternatives to ad hoc events include mentoring, which leverages master teachers and creates individualized learning programs for teachers and mentors. With training and support, veteran/more-skilled teachers can become master teachers, mentors, and team leaders. Research shows the positive and meaningful impact of these relationships on teaching and learning. Other activities that foster learning include, but are not limited to: distance learning, CoPs, and other real and virtual tools that link resources. Professional development also must anticipate

that the changing relationship between teaching and technology in Jewish and general education might well demand a different kind of teacher and a different type of teacher training that puts teachers on the cutting edge of advances in technology, pedagogy, and learning. The Jewish educational world must catch up with technological advances that can unite local and national resources and integrate them into teacher induction, mentoring, and professional development.

A school culture, or "professional learning community," that fosters respect and learning encourages and sustains teachers and students. According to Ben-Avie and Kress (2007), a professional learning community refers to "the effectiveness and efficiency with which teachers collaborate on teams, as well as create a culture in which they learn together and from one another." Ben-Avie and Kress demonstrate that a professional learning community can encourage and support knowledge-sharing among faculty, between faculty and students/families within and beyond the institution's walls, and among institutions. Creating a professional learning community means valuing educational experimentation, autonomy in teacher decision-making, clear policies and structures, and measurable performance outcomes. In keeping with this idea, the field cannot discount a student's home as an essential locus of teaching and learning. Fostering a school culture of respect and learning must include family education to create lasting improvement in student outcomes.

Research and evaluation require a systematic program of collecting, analyzing, and reporting qualitative and quantitative data that will help the field make wise decisions about developing benchmarks, assessing student and teacher performance, and investing in the key leverage points highlighted in this chapter.[17] A learning community is dedicated to wrestling with complex results and translating them into digestible and meaningful training for teachers. Teachers must have the tools and training to become "action researchers" to help conduct the evaluation and research that will lead to necessary resources to ensure success. To maximize the impact of meaningful research and evaluation, the field must advocate for and set aside resources for codifying these innovative ideas, developing curricula, and creating lending libraries for teachers to share resources.

Resources supporting excellence are indispensible if the field is serious about focusing on key leverage points through which it can begin to make change. Reimer and Finkel (JESNA, 2004) note that success is contingent upon the commitment and vision of institutions, substantial construction and efficient use of infrastructure/funding, successful and adaptable lab communities and pilot projects, creative use of resources, and plowing the fruits of investment back into the field. Feiman-Nemser (2007) adds to these a concerted effort to educate lay/professional leaders about the critical relationship between high-quality teaching and high-quality professional development, support for multiple pathways into Jewish teaching, and

[17] This may be accomplished by focusing on specific areas of content (e.g., the Jewish Theological Seminary's Tanakh Project), stages in program development, different venues within Jewish education, and program scale (local and/or national).

alignment of career-long teacher development with what the field knows about good teaching and optimal learning.

Next Steps

The Jewish community will not awaken tomorrow to find thousands of well-qualified Jewish teachers waiting to be scooped up like manna from heaven. Therefore, it must begin today to increase the proficiency of the current cadre of teachers in our schools in educational theory and methods, subject matter, pedagogy, and the "art and science" of becoming excellent classroom teachers. This chapter points the way toward ensuring a cadre of well-qualified educational personnel for Jewish schools by recruiting, retaining, and developing excellent teachers to meet the current and emergent needs of the Jewish community. In order to take some of the next steps, the field needs additional research. Possible rubrics and examples of questions to be explored include, but are not limited to:

1. *What does the field need to know about recruitment, retention, and development?*

   a. In what venues, and at what times, are potential Jewish teachers most open to the influence of individuals who may lead them to a career in Jewish education?
   b. Which types of Jewish educational experiences are most likely to tap into teachers' intrinsic motivations to channel their skills and passions into Jewish education?
   c. What steps can the field take to increase the likelihood that teachers feel they have satisfying careers in specific settings?
   d. What is the impact of teacher recognition on Jewish teachers? What types of recognition, if any, are most effective for which teachers?
   e. What are the differential effects of financial incentives for different cohorts of teachers (novice versus veteran teachers, etc.)?

2. *What does the field need to know about teachers, how students learn, and what it takes to help students learn certain things?*

   a. What do beginning Jewish teachers need to know, learn, and do in order to be successful in their early placements?
   b. What are the key things students should learn over time in different settings? What do teachers need to know, feel, or do to facilitate/encourage the students to meet the articulated outcomes?
   c. What is the relationship between specific teacher knowledge and behaviors and student outcomes? How can the field best assess this? Which gaps in knowledge or behavior are most "learnable" through pre-service training or professional development?

   d. What are the requisite skills and knowledge that teachers need to develop non-cognitive outcomes in students in Jewish schools? What are the best ways to prepare and support teachers to develop and use these skills?

3. *What does the field need to know about what works—and how it can be refined/applied in Jewish contexts?*
   a. How relevant/comparable are findings from recent general literature about teacher induction, development, developmental stages, etc. to various Jewish educational settings?
   b. How might these practices be adapted to the reality of a diverse Jewish schooling environment?
4. *What are the indicators for success?*
   a. What are the criteria for "Jewish teacher excellence" in different settings?
   b. How would we measure these criteria?
   c. How might we use the learnings from external assessments as tools for self-reflective practice among educators in Jewish school settings?
   d. How would the field measure excellent performance?
   e. How could the field connect student outcomes with teachers' activities/performance?
   f. What are our indicators of success for teachers? For students? In different settings?

The research explored in this chapter brings the field of Jewish education closer to understanding the Jewish teachers in the field today and provides data that will inform key stakeholders about the factors that influence teachers to enter and to remain in (or to leave) the field of Jewish education in Jewish day and congregational schools. While providing an empirical basis for advocacy and strategic planning for change to improve quality teaching and improve student outcomes, it also raises fresh questions to stimulate critical discussions about responsible policy and decision-making. The resulting local, national, and institutional conversations will educate the field of Jewish education and related stakeholders toward a cultural shift of respect and advocacy on behalf of Jewish teachers in their communities to benefit learners, teachers, Jewish schools, and all Jewish communities in North America.

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Ultra-Orthodox/Haredi Education

Yoel Finkelman

Haredi Judaism in Context

Modernity brought enormous freedoms and opportunities to Western Jewry. For the most part, modern Jews happily integrated themselves into the cultures of the countries in which they lived. And, for the most part, Jews saw these developments as positive, cherishing their newfound freedoms. In the process, the nature of Jewish religious identities changed dramatically. Some Jews abandoned their Jewish commitments, and others modified them into new Jewish movements, ideologies, and identities that matched their intellectual proclivities and social aspirations.

Beginning in Hungary in the middle of the nineteenth century, and then spreading to Eastern Europe and later throughout the globe, a small minority of Jews focused less on the opportunities and more on the spiritual and religious dangers that they associated with increased freedoms. They became worried, with more than a little justification, that modernity would lead to neglect or alteration of what they took to be the immutable word of God. Torah, they claimed, was self-sufficient, and becoming "like the gentiles" would do incurable harm to Jews who adopted such a strategy. Instead, Jews should isolate themselves from others and maintain allegiance purely to the traditions of the past. These Jews became known as Haredim, or Ultra-Orthodox.

Haredi Judaism presents itself as self-contained and as the simple continuation of what Judaism had always been and always should be. *Hadash asur min haTorah* (novelty is prohibited by the Torah) became a kind of rallying cry, a slogan penned by a founding leader of Haredi Judaism, Rabbi Moshe Sofer (1762–1839): continue to study Torah, to keep *mitzvot*, to dress as one's predecessors dressed, and to maintain allegiance exclusively to Torah—just as, it is claimed, Jews have always done—rather than to the new-fangled modernistic values that have tempted some away from God's truth (for a basic introduction to Haredi Judaism, see Friedman & Heilman, 1991).

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Historians have questioned this Haredi self-understanding of a seamless continuation of the tradition from the past. Instead, historians argue that much of Haredi Judaism's reactions to modernity have, ironically, made it quite modern (Silber, 1992). Still, Haredi Judaism has continued, in different times and places and in slightly different forms, to define itself through sharp contrast with the cultures that surround it. It is, broadly speaking, rejectionist, isolationist, and counter-cultural. Haredi Jews attempt to create an enclave culture, one in which Jews can surround themselves in Orthodox Jewish culture and values, and where they can be protected from the dangerous and destructive values of the outside world (Sivan, 1995).

Obviously, the attempt to create and maintain an enclave culture under the relatively open conditions of modernity requires a network of social and educational institutions to construct and reinforce collective values (Rosenak, 1993). Schools—along with families, synagogues, mutual aid organizations, and the like—do much of the work in Haredi attempts to construct individual and collective identities. Indeed, one of the dramatic changes that Haredi society has undergone over the centuries is the increased emphasis on formal education for all members of society. If, in the Jewish past, higher formal education was a privilege of a minority of men, in Haredi society every member of society, both male and female, acquires higher formal education in order to provide children and young adults with the knowledge and acculturation that they need to be protected from the lures of non-Haredi culture.

This chapter attempts to familiarize the reader with basic issues in Haredi formal education, focusing on educational institutions for members of the Haredi community. I cannot deal with several central issues here, as important as they may be: informal education, parenting (Finkelman, 2007 and Finkelman, 2009), teacher training, special education (Glaubman & Lifshitz, 2001), and institutions designed for outreach to non-Haredim (Caplan, 2001; Danzger, 1989; Safer, 2003). Furthermore, I will limit the discussion by focusing on the two largest and most influential Haredi communities, those of Israel and North America, and pay scant attention to smaller Haredi communities in Europe and South America. In addition, I will mention Sephardic Haredim (those deriving from Jewish communities originating in Muslim countries) only in passing (Ravitzky, 2006 and Caplan, 2003, pp. 264–269).

I will begin with a description of the centrality of Torah education within a Haredi context and then move to an explanation of some key dividing lines that separate different subgroups of Haredim from one another. Then, I will trace the educational experiences of Haredi males and females through their separate educational institutions from childhood through adulthood, examining the institutions of study, the function of those institutions, the religious education that they provide, and the access that they give students to general education and vocational training.

The Centrality of Torah Study in Haredi Education

Haredi Jewish education differs from that of other segments of the Jewish community, and it is impossible to understand the Haredi community and its educational system without reference to that difference. To put it simply, Torah education is

more central in the cultural economy of Haredi communities than it is in that of other Jewish communities.

To begin with, the Haredi birthrate is higher than that of the general population. Children, therefore, are ubiquitous in the community, and institutions for their education take up a particularly central place. But the birthrate is only one aspect of the centrality of education in Haredi communities. While the discourse of Jewish education in non-Haredi communities (pardon the generalization) often focuses on education as a means of intellectual and spiritual enrichment, as a way of encouraging Jewish continuity, and as a method of enabling participation in Jewish practice, for the Haredi community, education, at least for men, is valued as an end in and of itself and is taken to be a lifelong endeavor.

For Mitnagdic streams (more on this group below) in Haredi theology, Torah study is the be-all-and-end-all of Jewish experience, the very purpose of creation. But even in non-Mitnagdic communities, male Torah study is absolutely central, and Torah education does not end with a degree, job qualification, or certificate of completion. Even if a student receives rabbinic ordination, this is not a sign to stop formal education. Furthermore, decades-long immersion in Haredi educational institutions also reinforces the community's isolationism by surrounding young people and adults for as long as possible in institutions in which Haredi values and culture hold sway. And, by not providing extensive general education or vocational training for men, these institutions limit their social and economic independence, thereby making individuals dependent on the communal infrastructure.

Hence, Haredi men in Israel are expected to continue their studies into their 30s and 40s, and even in North America men commonly study full time at least until their mid-20s, either without or in addition to some vocational training. Some men continue full-time study for their entire lives. In Israel and parts of North America this has resulted in a historically unprecedented expansion of what the sociologist Menachem Friedman has called the "society of learners": a Haredi community in which full-time Torah study is the primary vocation of adult men (Friedman, 1991, pp. 80–87). North American Haredi men are more likely than their counterparts in Israel to take part in the workforce, but even in that context, full-time Torah study well into adulthood is a norm to strive for. If, for pre-modern traditional Jewish society, Torah study at an adult level was the inheritance of a small minority of the male intellectual, spiritual, and often economic elite, in today's Haredi community it is a mass phenomenon (much as adult formal education has become a norm throughout the developed West).

As a result, there are quantitatively more institutions of Torah study in Haredi neighborhoods than in other Jewish neighborhoods,[1] and Torah scholarship is a central linchpin in defining leadership, social status, and rank within the communal hierarchy. Indeed, one of the central planks in Haredi ideology is that of *da'at Torah*, a doctrine according to which great rabbis and Torah scholars have exclusive

[1] Furthermore, because Haredi society is divided into numerous groups and subgroups, each subgroup often maintains separate educational institutions for its own population (Friedman, 1991, p. 155, but see p. 159; Schiffer, 1998, pp. 12–15).

authority over virtually all aspects of individual and communal life (Brown, 2005; Kaplan, 1992). In short, Torah education is more central within Haredi communities than in other Jewish communities.

Some Basic Dividing Lines

Despite an oft-heard stereotype, Haredi Judaism is not monolithic. It is divided by a crisscrossing network of separations between groups and subgroups. It is not possible in this context to trace the nuances of every distinction between different subgroups. But three must occupy us. First, the distinction between Hasidim and Mitnagdim; second, the distinction between Israel and North America; and third, the distinction between men and women.

Hasidim and Mitnagdim

The Hasidic movement developed in the eighteenth century, founded by Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov (1698–1760) and his students, and it quickly became influential throughout Eastern Europe. In its early years, before the Haredi community had taken firm shape, the movement tended to downplay Torah scholarship as a marker of religious success. Instead, it emphasized certain kinds of mystical experiences for the elite, and an emotional attachment to God as well as service through daily activities of life for the masses (Lamm, 1999). The rabbinic elite, the Mitnagdim, opposed the Hasidic movement, because they continued to see Torah study as the central pillar of religious success and were upset both by Hasidic devaluation of scholarship and by hints of antinomianism in theology and practice. While the Hasidic rabbis and their institutions appealed to the masses, even to ignorant laborers, the Mitnagdim established yeshivas, elite institutions for long-term Torah study, in order to raise the next generation of (exclusively male) *talmidei hakhamim* (Torah scholars) (Nadler, 1999).

Educationally, Hasidim invested less in traditional Torah scholarship than did their Mitnagdic peers. Yet, Hasidism adopted a fear and rejection of secular education and science, which translated into bitter opposition to the Haskalah, the modern Jewish Enlightenment movement that called for educational reform and increased openness to general culture (the animosity was mutual). Instead, the Hasidic movement tried to preserve a simple-faith attitude among followers. The cerebral Mitnagdic movement was, for the most part, more open to general education, but Mitnagdim worked to keep their followers segregated in yeshivas for many years.

Gradually, from the late nineteenth century and particularly in the years after the Holocaust, the two communities grew closer together, discovering that what they have in common, particularly the fear of non-Haredi society and culture, is more important than what they have disagreed about in the past. Hasidim, over the years, have come to put more emphasis on the study of Torah, and have even developed networks of yeshivas (Stampfer, 1998, and Breuer, 2003, pp. 55–57). At the same

time, Mitnagdic Haredi Judaism has expanded from a small elite minority into a mass culture, a "society of learners" (Friedman, 1991), thereby finding more room for laypeople (or, put differently, converting the plurality of the community's men into members of the elite).

North America and Israel

On the whole, the North American Haredi community is a great deal more acculturated than its counterpart in Israel. American Haredim, particularly among the Mitnagdim, are more likely than their Israeli counterparts to have a high school, college, and even graduate school education. Many work in non-Haredi workplaces; they may follow sports or popular music; and they are more likely to read "secular" books (Caplan, 2006). Israeli Haredim, while also integrated to a certain degree into contemporary Israeli culture (Caplan & Sivan, 2003), tend toward greater isolationism. They acquire very little general education, and remain more confined to their own enclave communities.

The nature of Israel as a Jewish State pushes Israeli Haredim in more isolationist directions. The general culture and government in North America are gentile, while those in Israel are Jewish, and constructed by secular Jews at that. Hence, American Haredim can more easily view the surrounding culture as neutral, while contemporary Israeli Haredim will view the surrounding culture as heretical Judiasm, making it more threatening. Furthermore, the relationship with the Israeli government and its funding, in conjunction with the thorny issue of military service, constructs a more isolated Israeli Haredi experience. In Israel, yeshiva students earn a postponement and often exemption from otherwise mandatory military service, and Haredi culture views military service as the high-road to abandonment of a Haredi life (though small numbers of Haredim do join the army—see Hakak, 2003; Stadler, 2009). This pushes young adult Haredim into yeshiva, and limits their options to leave.

Limited government funding of Haredi education in North America, compared with the larger Israeli government funding of Haredi education, helps construct the educational differences between the two Haredi communities. With the passing of Israel's mandatory education law in 1949 and the national education law of 1953, the State established the *Hinukh 'Atzmai* (Independent Education) stream, in which Haredi schools receive State funds, but remain largely independent in terms of curriculum and educational programming (Schiffer, 1998; Sebba & Schiffer, 1998, 28–33).[2] Hence, Haredi schools had reliable and consistent official funding, which allowed them to grow rapidly (Friedman, 1991, 56).[3] Furthermore, the

[2]Some groups, particularly the more radically isolationist *Edah Haredit*, do not accept government funding for their schools, but they are a small minority even on the Israeli Haredi scene.

[3]As of 2007, Haredi education in Israel included 27.0% of the student body in elementary schools and 20.5% of high school age students, meaning approximately 161,000 elementary school students and 57,000 high school age students. See the information

government also provides stipends for advanced study in yeshivas, in addition to child allowances and other social-welfare payments. Hence, while the Haredi sector remains one of the most impoverished segments of Israeli society, Haredi society can still afford to encourage all males to study Torah full time well into adulthood because of access to funding provided by other segments of society (Berman, 2000; Gottlieb, 2007; Schiffer, 1998).

In contrast, the US government provides very little support for private schools, which almost all Haredi children attend, and Haredi society does not gain government funding beyond the welfare state's provisions for the poor.[4] Some Haredi elementary and high schools in North America are organized under the loose umbrella of the Torah U'Mesorah organization, which provides a small measure of centralization and oversight, but the organization provides little or no funding (Kramer, 1984). Hence, the burden of tuition payment falls on the shoulders of parents, which pressures them to enter the workplace and earn a living.[5] Further, there is no threat of military service in North America. Hence, leaving yeshiva for the workplace and acquiring the general education that allows for such a thing are more accepted among North American Haredim than among Israeli ones.

Even with these generalizations about the more open American community and the more isolationist Israeli one, it can be more helpful to think about all Haredi communities as existing on a continuum between more isolationist and less isolationist. Some communities, in both North America and Israel, speak Yiddish primarily, dress in ways that are less influenced by contemporary fashion, are less open to general education, and more thoroughly oppose any emergence, even temporary, from the boundaries of the enclave (Schneller, 1980). Other communities speak the vernacular, dress in ways that are more influenced by contemporary fashion, are more open to general education, and are more willing to allow or encourage temporary leaving of the enclave, at least for a good reason. While Israeli Haredim tend, on the whole, toward greater isolationism, this is not a hard and fast rule, with both Israeli and American Haredim appearing at every and any spot on the continuum between isolation and acculturation, ranging from Jerusalem's *Edah Haredit* at the most isolationist, to yeshivas like Baltimore's Ner Yisrael on the less isolationist side.

Men and Women

Certainly, the single most important distinction for understanding Haredi life in general, and education in particular, involves gender. According to the Haredi cultural

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from Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, available at http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton.html?num_tab=st08_12&CYear=2008 and http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton.html?num_tab=st08_10&CYear=2008.

[4] Marvin Schick (2005) puts the number of students in Haredi schools in the United States at just over 100,000.

[5] Certain Canadian Provinces do provide government funding for parochial schools.

ideal, there are essentialist differences between men and women, which are reflected in radically different social and communal roles (El-Or, 1994). Ideally, men should become pious Torah scholars. In contrast, a woman should be characterized by her *tzniut*, modesty in both dress and demeanor, and her normative cultural role centers on domesticity and child rearing. Men should participate in, and control, the community's religious public sphere of worship, politics, and decision making; women should find fulfillment in the privacy of their roles as mothers and wives (though they are often expected to leave their homes to work in order to support their husbands' study). Further, Haredim allow little mingling of the sexes and disallow public representation of sexuality, in conscious opposition to the eroticization of much of contemporary general popular culture. Much of the responsibility for public modesty lies with women, who are expected to dress in clothing that covers the body and does not invite the "male gaze." Under these circumstances, communal worship and almost all public events are gender separate.

As we shall see below, different social and religious roles for males and females require different kinds of education and different kinds of schools. Haredi schools are segregated by gender from the youngest ages, and the separate male and female educational institutions provide dramatically different experiences and curricula, which launch members of the different genders "into entirely different orbits" from their earliest childhood (Bilu, 2003, p. 173).

In particular, Torah study ranks at the top of the Haredi axiological hierarchy, and women are exempt from much of that study. Indeed, they are prohibited from studying the Talmud, the most important text of Haredi study. Hence, while men are encouraged and expected to study Torah and Talmud full time from a young age until early adulthood, and part time for their entire lives, women are expected to end their formal education in their early 20s at the latest, and their schooling provides a truncated religious curriculum (El-Or, 1994; Shaffir, 2004). Furthermore, despite the emphasis on female domesticity, women often work outside the home in order to help support their families and their husbands' full-time Torah study. Hence, young women are encouraged to gain the vocational training and/or college education they will need to do so effectively, even in sub-communities where such training is frowned upon for Haredi men (Caplan, 2003; Friedman, 1995).

The Educational Pathways of a Haredi Jew

Haredi education, like all education, does more than just impart information. It is central in the work of cultural transmission, in socializing young people into the ways and norms of a particular community. Haredi Jews, both male and female, learn a great deal more in their schools than Bible, Jewish law, Talmud, or Jewish history. They learn also a complete worldview: what makes for valuable and important information; what one can do with valuable information; and how to use that in ways that the Haredi community considers worthwhile (Krakowski, 2008a). Schools teach Haredim how to behave in acceptable ways, how to navigate the

community and the outside world, and what roles they should play as either Haredi males or females. Formal and informal educational institutions help construct their pupils' identities.

In the coming sections, I will trace the separate educational experiences of males and females as they enter the school system until they emerge decades later. I will focus particularly on the structures of the various school systems, their roles in constructing identity, and the kinds of general education that they make available.

Male Education

The Yeshiva

The cornerstone of Haredi male education is the yeshiva (Breuer, 2003; Helmreich, 1982; Stampfer, 2005).[6] It is worth dwelling on this institution for adults even before discussing elementary and secondary education, largely because the yeshiva's uniqueness exemplifies the value of men's Torah education from a Haredi perspective. The ideal Haredi male is the *talmid hakham*, the pious scholar, whose lack of physical prowess derives from a dedication to and expertise in the "sea of the Talmud" and in Jewish law, which in turn engenders a soft-spoken personal piety. While Haredim can be attracted to other more aggressive images of masculinity, such as athletic or military (Stadler, 2009), the yeshiva remains the institution that does the most to inculcate the mastery of the Talmud and the personal piety that is seen as the hegemonic male norm (on Haredi masculinity, see Aran, 2003).

Generally, the yeshiva day is divided into three units, or *sedarim*, one each in the morning (approximately 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.), afternoon (approximately 3:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.), and evening (approximately 8:00 p.m.–the end of the student's energies, but sometimes as late as midnight or beyond). For the most part, the students focus on Talmud for at least most of each of these three periods, though they might schedule some time for the study of Jewish law, Bible, *mussar* (religious ethics and self-development), or other disciplines of Torah study. In Hasidic institutions, students may dedicate significant time to studying the ideological and theological works of the particular Hasidic community. Advanced students, particularly those who are preparing for rabbinic certification, might dedicate a great deal of time and energy to systematic study of Jewish law, but students could not ignore Talmud entirely in their daily schedules.

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[6]In the academic year 2006/2007 there were 44,395 young men registered in yeshivas in Israel, and 67,313 in kollels, according to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics (see http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/shnaton/templ_shnaton.html?num_tab=st08_10&CYear=2008). Numbers for North America are much more difficult to come by, though yeshiva students certainly number in the tens of thousands. For now out-of-date numbers, see Helmreich (1982, pp. 48–49).

Most of this study occurs not in the classroom, but in the *beit midrash*, the study hall. A *beit midrash* is typically a large, book-lined room in which tens if not hundreds of teens and adults study in pairs, or *havrutot* (sing. *havruta*). Each *havruta* prepares a passage in the Talmud with its traditional commentaries, often spending hours if not days on a single page of the Talmud. The less-advanced students attend a class, or *shiur*, each day, often occupying about one hour of each *seder*, in which a teacher will review, expand on, and deepen the material they were to have covered on their own. As students become more advanced, *shiur* attendance will diminish, and they will be freer to simply study on their own (On yeshivot as educational institutions, though without particular reference to Haredi Judaism, see Halbertal and Hartman-Halbertal, 1998).

Generally, after a few years in yeshiva a student will be considered of marriageable age. Upon finding a suitable spouse, the young man will begin his studies in *kollel*, a yeshiva for married men. While largely identical to yeshivas in terms of pedagogic style and curriculum, a *kollel* student receives a stipend to help support his family, and he is more likely to study for rabbinical ordination in order to enable him to work as a teacher or religious functionary in the future.

Success as a yeshiva student helps the student climb the ladder of the Haredi social and cultural hierarchy and reach the status of the *talmid hakham*. An *illuy* (young and diligently studious genius) earns the respect of his peers and community, is more likely to find a prestigious teaching job in a yeshiva, and makes for a more desirable spouse and son-in-law, thus giving the young man better opportunities to marry into a respected and/or well-to-do family.

In North America, many advanced yeshivot allow if not encourage their students, after a year or two, to gain some kind of general education and/or vocational training. Students may attend undergraduate or graduate degree programs, more often than not in a field of study such as accounting that can translate directly into a job and income and which does not require in-depth study of the humanities or social sciences, fields that are deemed problematic from an ideological or theological perspective. Many yeshivas maintain arrangements with local universities or institutions of higher learning in which students attend night school and receive at least some college credit for their yeshiva studies.

For Haredi communities where college attendance remains completely taboo—a phenomenon that dominates the Haredi scene in Israel—the community may supply alternative vocational programs to provide training in computer programming, web design, or similar professions that would allow a young Haredi man to make a living without too much exposure to general education. Such programs exist in the United States (Heilman, 2006, Chapter 5) and are developing in Israel as well (Hakak, 2004; Lupo, 2003).

The Path to Yeshiva

While the research has not systematically examined early-childhood education for Haredi males (but see Heilman, 1992, Chapter 12), by way of generalization it is

fair to say that kindergartens for Haredi boys are similar in structure to those of the general population, only they are same sex and impart knowledge related to Biblical stories, religious holidays, Jewish law and custom, and Haredi worldview. Actual text study can begin for boys as early as 3 years of age, often before the children can themselves read (Bilu, 2003). Further, Yoram Bilu has pointed to various rituals associated with male early childhood education—the child's first day in school and his first haircut, for example—which help to socialize Haredi Jewry's youngest boys into proper images of Haredi masculinity, particularly regarding the central role that text study is to play in their lives (Bilu, 2000; Bilu, 2003).

Elementary schools teach young Haredi students basic material in Bible, Jewish law, and other areas of religious study. In early years, the curriculum focuses more on Bible and ritual practice, but beginning generally in the fourth of fifth grades, male students begin to study Mishnah and later Talmud as well. Gradually, over the course of the coming years, Talmud will take up more and more of the schedule to the point that by the end of *yeshiva ketanah*/high school, it dominates the curriculum.

In the more isolationist groups, elementary age children attend a *heder* or *talmud Torah* type of school, dedicated almost exclusively to sacred studies, sometimes teaching only the most basic arithmetic and vernacular literacy. Among the less isolationist groups, elementary schools are modeled after a conventional elementary school, only with a dual curriculum. More often than not, a separate teacher, often a male *rebbe*, teaches sacred studies, usually in the morning, on the theory that students will concentrate better on the more important religious studies early in the day. In the afternoon, students will learn general studies, perhaps with a female or even non-observant teacher (Krakowski, 2008b). The curriculum downplays general education, often including only what is absolutely necessary to meet government requirements and/or provide students with enough background to function in the workaday world (Shaffir, 2004). The general education "is conceptually isolated and restricted in content, [and its] purpose is limited to the acquisition of basic skills necessary to function in daily life," rather than being seen as inherently valuable (Krakowski, 2008a, p. 18, though in some cases, general education can also be drafted into support of the group's religious worldview, Schweber, 2008).

For communities with less focus on general education, students advance from elementary *heder* to a *yeshiva ketanah*. This institution, often including a dormitory, introduces pre-teens and teens into the learning environment of a *beit midrash*, with less focus on formal classes, grades, and homework, and more focus on the study of Talmud in a *hevruta* format during *seder* in the *beit midrash*. In schools with more focus on general education, Haredi junior-high and high schools look much like a regular school in terms of structure and framework, with students attending departmentalized classes in various topics, again with sacred studies often in the morning and general education in the afternoon. Even here, however, as students advance they are likely to spend more time studying Talmud, and more of their time preparing for their Talmud lectures in a *beit midrash*. Whether they attend *yeshiva ketanah* or Haredi high schools, by the time young Haredi men reach their late teens, they enter the most highly valued educational institution, the yeshiva.

Female Education

One opinion in the Talmud (BT, Sotah, 21b) prohibits the teaching of Torah to females, which is part of the reason that, over the centuries, Jewish women generally received little or no formal education (Zolty, 1993). Today, however, the Haredi community most certainly does provide formal Torah education to its female members. However, if Haredi male education focuses on achieving intellectual independence in Talmud, and if the boy's educational path is designed to lead him to the yeshiva and its *beit midrash*, such is decidedly not the case for the education of Haredi females.

Formal religious education for Haredi women traces its roots to the growth of the Beth Jacob school system, originally founded by an anonymous young Cracow seamstress, Sara Schneirer, shortly after World War I. As East European Jewish society became less observant, and as the community could be less counted on to acculturate girls and women into observance, formal schooling became necessary for Orthodox females, despite the breach with tradition. While not all of East European Haredi Judaism backed Beth Jacob, and not all Haredi schools for girls associate with the movement (Granot, 2007–2008), Beth Jacob was the institution which popularized formal schooling for Orthodox girls, spreading from Schneirer's own one-woman school to a movement of some 35,000 European students at the outbreak of World War II (Weissman, 1995; Zolty, 1993). Gradually, the movement spread to Israel and the United States (Bechhofer, 2004; Weissman, 1993). While there is no official Beth Jacob organization with any kind of office or membership, a great many of today's schools associate themselves with the informal movement, and are associated with that movement by constituents and outsiders.

Beth Jacob and other Haredi girls' schools do not educate students to become *talmidot hakhamim*, female parallels of the male pious scholar. Instead, these schools are designed to provide girls and women with the basic religious literacy necessary to function and thrive in Haredi society, inculcate in them an attachment to certain kinds of spiritual experiences, and acculturate young women into the roles that they are assigned in the Haredi hierarchy. In a paradox that Tamar El-Or refers to as "educated and ignorant," Haredi women learn about the religious practices they are expected to do and about their roles in the family and community, but remain ignorant about the theory and larger textual tradition that construct their roles. Haredi women should take interest in formal study primarily to the extent that it enables them to fulfill their domestic tasks and earn a living to support their families and their husbands' Torah study (El-Or, 1994). From the youngest ages, Haredi girls are trained in domesticity and in Haredi notions of modesty (Yafeh, 2007; Yafeh, 2009; Zalcberg, 2009), and are prevented from achieving expertise in the fields of traditional Torah scholarship that would inevitably cast them into public roles that are deemed inappropriate (but, see El-Or, 2009, on female Haredi leadership).

In the absence of an image of female scholarship, and with Talmud study entirely unacceptable, Haredi female educational institutions, from kindergarten and onward, are structured much more like conventional schools than like the yeshivas and *batei midrash*. In this "school-like model," students attend compartmentalized

classes on particular topics, do homework, take tests, receive formal report cards, and graduate on to higher classes. This pattern continues from elementary school, through high school, and on to post-high school seminaries. These school-like institutions are less likely than a *beit midrash* to encourage intellectual independence and expertise in primary sources, since the learning is mediated more thoroughly by the teacher. Furthermore, the curriculum focuses more on Bible, practical law, religious ideology, and the development of a pious personality, rather than the Talmud that dominates the boys' and men's curricula (though there remains significant variation and dispute among Haredi schools from different subgroups regarding how much Torah women should study and why, Granot, 2007–2008).

Upon completion of high school, many young Haredi women attend seminary, a post-high school program, sometimes with a full-time program of Torah study and character building, and sometimes with a teacher-training or vocational element as well. In any case, Haredi young women are expected, whether during or after seminary, to learn a trade or vocation so that they can provide financial support for their eventual husbands and families, ideally without undue exposure to the dangers of the outside culture (El-Or, 1994; Friedman, 1995; Shaffir, 2004). Indeed, according to official Haredi doctrine, particularly in Israel, the woman earns an equal share of her husband's credit for his Torah study if she provides for him and the family on a material and emotional level (Caplan, 2003).

Hence, teaching in religious schools, whether in the Haredi or the non-Haredi sector, is often considered an ideal job for a young Haredi woman, especially in Israel, and much Haredi vocational training for women focuses on preparing them to be teachers. Not only does this leave the young woman within a religious context during work hours, but the academic schedule allows a mother to be home with her (ideally large) family during mother and children's shared school vacations. In Israel and the more isolationist communities in North America, where college education is prohibited or frowned upon even for women, alternatives might include secretarial work, web design, bookkeeping, a small business run out of the home (cosmeticians, wig sales), or other jobs that do not require higher education (though degree-granting programs have recently opened for Haredi women in Israel in fields such as social work and other helping professions). In America, where college and even graduate school is acceptable or even desirable for some Haredi women, other options such as accounting or helping professions like speech pathology or occupational therapy are viewed by some as good educational options, particularly if workplaces allow for the flexible hours that are helpful for mothers.

Current Challenges

In the aftermath of World War II, few could have imagined the dramatic growth of the Haredi sector that took place over the second half of the twentieth century. At the time, Haredi Jewry (like much of Orthodoxy) was weak and defensive, perceived by many to be grasping at its last breaths before an inevitable demise in the face of the forces of modernization and history. Today, few would speak in such terms, with

Orthodoxy in general and Haredi Jewry in particular, thriving in the context of an outside culture perceived to be threatening (Caplan, 2008; Friedman, 2006). But challenges in general, and educational challenges in particular, remain.

Every educational system struggles to transmit information, knowledge, literacy, mastery of subject matter, and values, as well as those character traits that are part of the overt and hidden curriculum of a school. In this sense, Haredi education is no exception. Furthermore, these pedagogic matters are tied up with the perennial educational problems of discipline and classroom order. However, while the particular texts and values differ between Haredi and non-Haredi contexts, Haredi and non-Haredi schools share these classroom-centered pedagogic and disciplinary problems. Two other challenges to Haredi education are currently receiving the most public attention, both in internal Haredi discourse and outside of it: finances and drop-out.

The Haredi community, particularly in Israel, suffers from crippling poverty. The "society of learners"—in which a particularly high percentage of adult males study full time and in which men are barred or discouraged from college education or vocational training—leaves Haredi families without adequate sources of income. In addition, large Haredi families add expenses. In Israel, government subsidies moderate at least some of the poverty and help pay for schooling, but the greater rejection of general education and the ways in which men are confined to yeshiva by threat of military service make financial problems more severe (Berman, 2000; Gottlieb, 2007). North American Haredim often have more general education, vocational skills, and earning power, but the high cost of unsubsidized private education takes an enormous toll on families' budgets.

In Israel, Haredi parties have been hard at work lobbying for greater subsidies for families and educational projects. In America, the Haredi lobbyists advocate government spending for parochial schools, whether in the form of subsidizing general education or various vouchers and tax credits (to date, this lobbying has not met with much success, and it often irritates the mainstream American Jewish establishment that advocates strict church–state separation, Heilman, 2002, pp. 323–324). However, another more direct educational solution involves increasing earning power by opening Haredi-run and regulated vocational training institutions for both men and women (Heilman, 2006, Chapter 5; Hakak, 2004; Lupo, 2003). At the margins of Israeli Haredi society, some even advocate limited military service for some Haredi men to give them greater access to the job market (Hakak, 2003). The successes of these endeavors, particularly given the economic challenges currently facing the worldwide economy, can only be measured with hindsight that is not yet available.

The second challenge that currently occupies Haredi educational discourse is the problem of defection, youth who leave a Haredi life. Inevitably, a community that places such emphasis on boundary maintenance and isolation, yet lives as a minority within the larger and attractive culture, is going to find some of its members opting to leave and join the general culture, particularly in the context of a free democracy in which religious belief and practice are essentially voluntary. Indeed, the problem of defection has been one of Orthodoxy's central fears from its inception during the

early parts of the nineteenth century. Obviously, successful educational experiences help maintain the allegiance of youth.

The problem of defection has several aspects, the first of which gets more attention from academic researchers and the second of which receives more attention in internal Haredi discourse. The first is what is referred to as *hazarah bashe'elah*, those who abandon their Haredi identities and lifestyles, adopting instead a secular or other non-Haredi identity (Barzilai, 2004). The second, referred to in English as Kids-at-Risk and in Hebrew slang as *shabab* (Arabic for "youth"), involves youth who, despite often maintaining some connection to Haredi society, leave their educational institutions and get involved in delinquency, substance abuse, sexual promiscuity, and petty crime. Some eventually return to the straight and narrow of Haredi culture, while others eventually leave Haredi Judaism entirely. In any case, this has led to significant calls in the Haredi community on both sides of the ocean for increased attention to each student and his or her individuality. Further, concern over these issues has led to the creation of schools and educational programs designed to prevent drop-out or to encourage those who have already dropped out (Danziger, undated; Metropolitan Coordinating Council, 2003).

Conclusion: Is Communication Possible?

Recent years have witnessed a renaissance of academic interest in the Haredi community, particularly in Israel (Caplan & Sivan, 2003; Caplan & Stadler, 2009). Yet, scholars have not focused particular attention on Haredi education (but see Krakowski, 2008a, 2008b). In part this is because much educational research stems from a desire to improve practice. However, the Haredi community is at best ambivalent, if not actively hostile, to the academy and its intellectual methods (Caplan, 2003, 253–260). Hence, the Haredi community as a whole and its educational institutions in particular are not likely to produce a body of methodologically grounded reflective educational research. Research on Haredi education comes from outsiders.

Internal Haredi reflection on religious and educational practice takes a very different form from what university-trained academics find useful, and it is more likely to be couched in the language of traditional religion, ideology, and halakhah, rather than the language of the social sciences or philosophy of education. This colors what the academic community knows and does not know about Haredi education. Scholars tend to focus on topics currently on the agenda of the academic community: the history of institutions such as yeshivas or Beth Jacob schools, construction of gender identity, Haredi relations to the Israeli army and to the workplace, and (at least in Israel) how government budgets are spent in the Haredi sector. But the academic community knows little of the kinds of things that might be most useful for Haredi educators: effective and ineffective pedagogic methods, best practices, level of Haredi schoolchildren's knowledge of the curriculum, effective teacher training, etc.

This lack of communication stems from the vastly different worldviews and vocabularies of Haredi educators and their counterparts outside the Haredi

community. By identifying Torah study as the very meaning of existence and by spending so much cultural capital on boundary maintenance and isolation, Haredi society deliberately sets itself apart from others, even from well-meaning and serious Jewish educators and scholars. Non-Haredi educators and scholars, even those most sympathetic to Haredi Judaism, often treat the Haredi community as an anthropological or historical case study. Critical distance means approaching Haredi Judaism and its education as an Other that needs to be "translated" in order to be understood. Could the Haredi community gain some self-understanding by appreciating what the scholarly community has learned? Could it gain some educational wisdom by applying social–scientific research tools to its own institutions? Could the non-Haredi Jewish world gain something by a less-distanced appreciation of Haredi dedication to Torah study and to a passionate and encompassing Jewish life? Perhaps, but at the moment I suspect that the cultural gaps between Haredi educators and the academic community are too large for widespread cooperation.

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Section Four: Geographical

Introduction

This final section of the International Handbook reveals the extent to which Jewish education emerges at an intersection between the global and the local. The 12 chapters in this section, written by practitioners of Jewish education, Jewish educational researchers, and scholars from cognate fields of Jewish studies, provide an opportunity to explore ultimate questions in the social scientific study of Jewry regarding the influence of factors in the local environment and of transnational Jewish cultural patterns on the norms, modalities, and goals of Jewish education. Such questions, familiar to historians, sociologists, and anthropologists of Jewry, are rarely taken up by researchers and practitioners of Jewish education because of the isolated character of their work, within their subfields, and within the national contexts in which they labor. The Handbook—and particularly this section—makes it possible to ask such questions; indeed, we hope that the following chapters may inspire a new commitment to the cross-cultural study of Jewish education.

While other sections of the Handbook gravitate mostly around the State of Israel and the US, the contributors to this section provide an opportunity to appreciate nuances in communities that lie outside the orbit of these two magnetic poles. What emerges is a sense of the varieties of Jewish education; how the push and pull of localized forces—community demographics, history (and particularly the twin upheavals of the Shoah and communism), the relationships between church and state, and those between Jews and the popular majority—have birthed diverse narratives of Jewish education.

As will be seen, the opportunities and modalities for Jewish education in the Netherlands, Eastern Europe, and parts of Latin America have been both constrained and enlivened by the small number of potential clients in these places, especially when compared with what is possible or not possible in larger Diaspora communities or in the State of Israel. By the same token, the goals of Jewish education look different in communities decimated by the Shoah and/or by communism, compared with those such as Canada and Australia built in large part by Holocaust survivors, or those like the UK and the US that have experienced relatively uninterrupted institutional development over more than 100 years. No less importantly, the place of

parochial Jewish education in public life, and of Jews as a religious/ethnic minority, has also produced some of the sharpest differences between the supply of and demand for Jewish education, as seen, for example, in the differences in how Jewish day school education is incorporated and conceived in France, Russia, and the UK.

Yet, for all of the differences brought in to view in this section, these chapters provide evidence, first, of certain phenomena that challenge most if not all Jewish communities whatever their circumstances, and, second, of a general tendency to pursue certain common educational solutions to these challenges. Thus, in all Diaspora Jewish communities, there are doubts about the sustainability of systems for intensive Jewish education because of a declining demographic base outside the ultra-orthodox sector, and because of doubts about the capacity of these systems to graduate future generations of knowledgeable educational leaders. These concerns have led almost everywhere to a concentration of investment in what Wertheimer calls in his chapter, "the most immersive forms of Jewish education": all-day Jewish schools, summer camps, and Israel trips; these being the few educational experiences that are viewed as having a better than even chance of sustaining Jewish identification and cultural creativity. In turn, this narrowing tendency has intensified global concerns about the financial burdens placed on the broader Jewish community by increased dependence on such programs. As the two chapters concerned with Jewish education in Israel show, even in the Jewish state, this same cycle of concerns plays out, only with larger sums of money at stake.

If, at the start of the twenty-first century, all-day Jewish schooling constitutes in many communities the educational medium of choice for providing intensive Jewish education to young people, a number of chapters demonstrate that this state of affairs has come about as a result of sharply different processes in different places. Compare, for example, two chapters that carefully analyze the rise of day school education. David Mendelsson, in his chapter on Jewish education in the UK, makes evident that acceptance of Jewish day schools by British parents since World War II occurred most directly in response to cultural and demographic changes in English society and to changes in government educational policy that democratized state schools. The turn to day schools, such that today more than 50% of Jewish children ages 5–18 attend such schools, was not, what he calls, "internally driven," it was an "unintended side effect" brought about in large part because of parental flight from state schools.

The title of Forgasz and Munz's chapter on Australia, "The Jewel in the Crown of Jewish Education," indicates how different was the view of Jewish day schools in that country. Although these schools have maintained their appeal over the course of more than half a century by making the best use of government assistance for independent schools and by offering a quality private school education, their founding was galvanized and then sustained by waves of Jewish immigrants first from post-war Europe and then more latterly from South Africa who have displayed "a strong desire to replicate the intensity of the Jewish life" they experienced in the places from which they came. These internal drivers explain some of the highest rates of day school enrollment in the world.

It is fascinating to compare these two chapters with the sections of Bouganim's chapter on France that are also concerned with day school education. In all three contexts, the government is deeply implicated in the certification and supervision of Jewish school programs, and provides substantial support for Jewish schools. But the cultural context in France—where there is such a contested relationship between religion and the state—has until recent times strongly deterred the widespread development of parochial Jewish schooling in that country. These conflicted commitments produced one of the most fascinating (but poorly studied) paradoxes of Jewish education over the last 100 years whereby the Paris-based Alliance Israelite Universelle—a quintessentially French organization—supported the largest Jewish school system in the world for more than half a century before it was prepared to support even a single school in France.

The peculiarities of the French context provide a pristine setting for observing how the development of Jewish education is so much colored by local context. In France, where the regular school year is just 140 days long, and is broken up by frequent vacation periods, there is vivid evidence of how Jewish education abhors a vacuum. Informal Jewish education, and especially Jewish Scouting, has filled the available time creating an unusually vital environment that has been ahead of its time both in its commitment to environmentalism and in creating a shared space for the religious and secular. It is hard to find a parallel to this organization anywhere else in the world.

It is geographic *singularities* such as this that make the final section of the Handbook such stimulating material. Repeatedly, readers will find themselves wondering what might be inferred or applied from a particular instance to other, radically different, settings. Take, for example, Lerner-Spectre's chapter on Paideia, the European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden. The author details the development of a program that responds to a phenomenon she coins "dis-assimilation," a pattern in which "young adults who, before the fall of communism, were unaware of their Jewish heritage but who, in confronting this disclosure, choose to identify themselves as Jews." She asks the reader to consider that the kind of education offered by Paedeia, one that is distinctly literary and intellectual, can have implications for contemporary Jewish adult education outside of Europe.

Similar questions about applicability are provoked by Bar-Shalom and Ascher-Shai in their chapter on innovations in secular schooling in Israel. The cases they present from schools in Israel derive from the collision of Jewish and non-Jewish immigrants with the religiously polarized Israeli school system. These collisions may be a unique outcome of the attempted absorption of such diverse minorities into the only public Jewish school system in the world, but, as in the best instances of case study, these particular cases provoke more general questions. They invite one to wonder about the potential forms and content of secular Jewish education, and its capacity to engage Diaspora communities that seek to make intensive Jewish education attractive and meaningful to liberal and secular Jews.

In parallel fashion, Gross's chapter on State Religious Education in Israel reconstructs the competing ideologies, political, and educational worldviews that have shaped this substantial system. She leaves the reader in no doubt as to the

sociological significance of these schools as both shapers and markers of the developing Jewish state. Though a unique Israeli phenomenon, the dilemmas and debates she interprets concerning educational goals, the relationships between Jewish and general studies, the profile of educational leadership, and the considerations in student selection, echo strongly the more localized balance of forces and beliefs that shape modern Orthodox Jewish education in any number of communities around the world.

Goldstein and Ganiel, in their chapter on Latin America, similarly argue for the application of conceptual models across diverse environments. In fact, in pioneering fashion given how little research there has been on Jewish education in Latin America, they highlight how different Jewish education looks in the largest communities of the region, in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. And yet, they advance a set of models—pragmatic change, spiritual renewal, and insularity—that can be observed as common responses to the forces of democratization and globalization across the continent. Further, they argue strongly that these models can help make sense of developments in Jewish education elsewhere.

By contrast, Michael Brown, with an historian's sensitivity to the particular, demonstrates how, in Toronto and Montreal, the vigor and stability of Jewish education derives from special features in the Canadian context: Canada's bi-national structure; public attitudes to religion and state; the Jewish community's relatively recent arrival; and a level of antisemitism higher than in the neighboring US. These factors have produced institutional diversity, high levels of participant enrollment, innovative research and strong central education bureaus. Ironically, while it will be difficult, as Brown implies, to reproduce such outcomes elsewhere (especially south of the Canadian border), he indicates that in recent years these distinctive strengths have been eroded by forces that are more global in nature.

These global forces are detailed by Wertheimer in his chapter on the US. It seems, in fact, that the US is ground zero for many of the corrosive trends which Brown identifies. Wertheimer points to heightened consumerism on the part of families, rising rates of intermarriage, and severe time constraints limiting the availability of children and their families. These trends have led to a decline in the numbers of children receiving a Jewish education and to a shift toward providing immersive educational forms to a shrinking minority of consumers. In turn, these developments have driven a wave of experimentation funded in large part by private foundations. Employing a broad canvas, Wertheimer shows how these trends account for efforts such as Birthright Israel, the remaking of Hillel, the encouragement of day school education, the expansion of Jewish residential camping, and the training of educational leadership.

A mark of the globalization of Jewish educational patterns is best appreciated by comparing these American trends with what has emerged over the last 20 years in the Former Soviet Union. Of course, the social and historical backdrop in Russia and parts of Eastern Europe could not be more different, and as Markus and Farbman show in their chapter, there are some especially challenging problems that derive from the Communist past, most obviously the absence of the synagogue as a support for Jewish community, and also a residual difficulty in collecting reliable data

about the community. And yet despite these differences, some of the educational foci for community investment in the FSU today bear an uncanny similarity to those in America. These include a focus on supporting all-day Jewish schools, Birthright programs, leadership training initiatives, and Hillel activities. Reading across chapters, it seems that one explanation for these commonalities is the dependence on common funders and providers, but this is just one of many hypotheses that would benefit from further research.

If and how communities might be created anew is the central thread that connects the chapter on the FSU with chapters about smaller Jewish communities in Europe and about the Netherlands. In Eastern Europe, as Steve Israel indicates, the residential camp—a total Jewish environment for children, young adults, and for families—seems to have been more successful than any other educational intervention. Such camps have served as incubators for resuscitating communities that have lost much of their memory and most of the organs of healthy Jewish life. The dilemma, as Israel writes, is whether there is a reasonable balance between the resources invested and the benefits involved. He asks, if so much has to be rebuilt and for so few people, might there be better uses for what are always limited financial resources?

As van het Hoofd shows, the Jewish community in the Netherlands took a different path after emerging from the decimation of the Shoah. Before the war, or at least until an influx of refugees from Germany in 1938, the Dutch Jewish community, one of the most acculturated and well-integrated Jewish communities in Europe, largely turned its back on the availability of state aid for denominational schools, an opportunity seized by both Catholics and Protestants. After the war, a handful of schools were opened to serve a ravaged community. And yet, more than 50 years later, enrollment levels continue to be minimal, barely different from what they were before 1938. Certainly, they do not stand comparison with the situation in Belgium, a country in which Jews were no less traumatized by the Holocaust, but where today 90% of Jewish children attend day schools. It seems that in the Netherlands the Jewish community's commitment to integration runs very deep no matter what traumas it has endured.

This conclusion confirms a deep current that runs through all of the chapters in this section. While Jewish education is an international enterprise and this section of the Handbook provides strong confirmation that it is, in the final analysis it is a local endeavor. Both its form and content are indelibly shaped by where it is located. To be properly understood, those localities must be encountered in all of their rich detail, as in the chapters to come.

Helena Miller
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American-Jewish Education in an Age of Choice and Pluralism

Jack Wertheimer

With its multi-billion dollar budget, thousands of schools and informal-educational settings, and expanding scope, stretching from early childhood to adult education, the sprawling field of Jewish education in the United States defies easy generalization. At times, it has been the object of severe criticism for real or imagined failings; and at other times it has been lauded for great accomplishments, sometimes earned, other times not. Built over a long period of time by dedicated cadres of champions, both professional educators and lay leaders, the field today is the product both of experiments conducted by past generations and of recent initiatives to address emerging needs. The one constant has been the voluntaristic ethos of American society, which encourages the formation of different kinds of associations, even as it favors none. Unlike the situation in some other countries where government funding is made available for particular types of programs, complete separation of church and state in the United States has meant that Jewish-educational programs depend entirely upon the creativity and sustained support of Jews.

Given these circumstances, the field has confronted a set of perennial challenges as follows:

- Adapting to continually shifting demographic and social realities
- Responding to parental and communal expectations
- Rebalancing the mix of vehicles delivering a Jewish education
- Setting goals and devising proper educational content
- Working with limited financial resources
- Recruiting and retaining personnel

These concerns continue to animate discussions in the field during the present era, no less than they did in the past. To highlight what is new, I will compare contemporary concerns to the issues of 50 years ago. In so doing, my purpose is not to lament the loss of a golden age, for in truth, Jewish-educational programs in that period

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were often shallow or misguided. Rather such a comparison will set into bold relief just how much the field has changed, even as similar challenges have persisted.

New Demographic and Social Realities

The postwar era, like today, was a time of massive transformation, with two primary social dynamics driving change: one was the Jewish baby boom, which for Jews began in the early 1940s and took off after the war; the second was an exodus from the cities to newly built sub-divisions on the suburban frontier. In short order, a vast army of Jewish families, many of whom had little experience with synagogue life and only a minimal Jewish education engaged in the great civic activity of the time: like their fellow Americans, Jews joined a house of worship in record numbers, but unlike others, they did so primarily in order to enroll their children in religious schooling.

As a consequence, the setting for Jewish education shifted irrevocably from communal institutions to congregations, and the latter were inundated with seemingly inexorable waves of families entrusting them to serve as the primary Jewish educators of the baby-boom generation.[1] According to one informed estimate, roughly 600,000 young people were enrolled in formal-educational programs by the early 1960s, with the overwhelming majority in congregational schools (American Association for Jewish Education, 1976, p. 12). This, in turn, created great demand for teaching and other personnel to deliver a Jewish education, the construction of classroom space, new curricula and textbooks, expanded synagogue budgets, input from denominational education offices, and, in some communities, school and teacher certification.

A half-century later, the scene looks quite different in important ways. Despite the fact that the total Jewish population has remained stable (or according to some has even increased), enrollments in formal Jewish education by school-age children have declined significantly, hovering somewhere around 460,000 students by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century.[2] While some forms of Jewish education continue to expand, the challenge in most communities is to cope with contraction, rather than massive growth, as was the case 50 years ago.

Moreover, as Jews today are settling at an ever greater remove from centers of population, a great many schools are enrolling small student bodies. Nearly 40% of day schools enroll 100 or fewer students; supplementary schools tend to be even smaller, with 60% enrolling fewer than 100 children.[3] In short, today's geographic mobility is bringing a diffusion of student populations in contrast to the shift to

[1]The great Jewish suburban migration was studied contemporaneously by Sklare & Greenblum, 1967. For two more recent views, see Prell, 2007, and Wertheimer, 2005b.

[2]The latest census has enumerated some 228,000 students between preschool and grade 12 in day schools (Schick, 2009, p. 5). And a census of supplementary schools estimated an enrollment of some 230,000 students from grades 1 to 12 (Wertheimer, 2008, p. 9).

[3]Day-school figures are based on Schick, 2005, p. 21. Supplementary school figures are from Wertheimer, 2008, p. 14. Forty percent of supplementary schools enroll 50 or fewer students.

suburbia which represented geographic mobility by a large body of Jews moving together to the same areas. The delivery of a good Jewish education to such a far-flung student population poses a new challenge to educators.

How is the field responding to these demographic shifts? To date, little systematic thought has been given to the overall enrollment decline. Rather than tackle the larger issue, smaller stop-gap solutions are in place: in some localities, day schools are merging or dropping their allegiance to a single denominational identity in favor of a communal orientation; some synagogues are also merging their supplementary schools in response to lower enrollments, at times joining with other synagogues of the same denominational orientation, and at times with ones of a different religious movement. Some institutions are also offering inducements to lure parents. Several national and local foundations are underwriting tuition reduction programs to help families stay in the system and induce others to enroll their children.[4] Some effort is now underway by Jewish residential camps to offer scholarship funds in order to draw thus far unengaged families.

We only are beginning to see responses to the heightened population diffusion in the form of more talk about harnessing the Internet for online or video instruction. A program funded by the AVI CHAI Foundation offers the services of Jerusalem-based teachers to nine separate day schools in the United States, with the latter providing a teacher to be present during the video-cast instruction.[5] A very different model has been founded by the Institute for Southern Jewish Life to address small supplementary school programs far from large centers of Jewish life. Here distances are bridged through the use of a common curriculum devised for small schools in southern towns and cities and experiments with traveling "education fellows" who advise local teachers, a model that could be copied in other regions.[6] It remains to be seen whether other such efforts will address the widely scattered population of students through the creation of consortia, circuit-riding educators, regional-education centers, and retreat programs bringing learners together from distant places.

Parental and Communal Expectations

Shifting expectations have accompanied the new social patterns. In line with so much else in American life, Jewish education is increasingly seen as a commodity and families have assumed the role of consumers. This means, in the first instance, that they sift carefully through the options available and demand choices. Where once it was natural for parents to enroll all of their children in the nearest

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[4]The Samis foundation has played this role in Seattle. For a summary of some early programs, including that of AVI CHAI, see JESNA, 1999. More recently, David Magerman offered such tuition assistance to day schools in Philadelphia (Schwartzman, 2009).

[5]On the remote learning, see http://www.avi-chai.org/bin/en5caf.html?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=Zone&enZone=JLPC. For a description of the experience with one school in Charleston, see Lookstein 2009, p. 5.

[6]The educational work of the Institute is outlined at its website, http://www.isjl.org/education/index.html

congregational school of their denominational preference, it has now become far more common for parents to select a different educational vehicle for each of their children. It is not unusual for parents to enroll one child in a supplementary school, another in a day school, and hire a private tutor for a third child, all in the service of finding just the right fit for each child. The same may hold true for the informal-educational experiences parents select, with a residential summer camp experience chosen for some children and Israel experiences or youth movement activities for others.[7]

To add to the complexity, educational choices for children also are increasingly entangled with the needs of parents. When deciding on a day school for their children, parents are likely to consider not only the values and orientation of a particular school to which they want to expose their children, but also whether the school will meet the parents' own needs. Increasingly, day schools and supplementary schools have been pressed to attend to the Jewish educational and communal needs of parents both because they want to enlist parents as partners in the enterprise of educating their children and also because parents are looking to the school for their own continuing Jewish education. Parents also expect to find a worthwhile peer group within the school's parent body (Pomson, 2007, pp. 101–142; Pomson & Schnoor, 2008).

Even as schools must contend with these new parental expectations, they are also held accountable for the outcome of their programs in relation to the Jewish identities of the children they educate. In this sense they have become victims of rising communal expectations. Beginning already in the 1980s, a movement to strengthen Jewish education began to sweep American-Jewish life, which only accelerated in response to heightened worries over long-term "Jewish continuity" generated by the 1990 National Jewish Population Study, with its dramatic evidence of spiraling intermarriage rates. Suddenly, Jewish education, which had long been treated by communal leaders as a stepchild (most obviously by the general skittishness of federations of Jewish philanthropy when it came to investing in formal Jewish education) was pushed front and center, with attendant claims for its efficacy in reversing assimilatory trends. And indeed, much evidence has suggested strong correlations between intensive and diverse Jewish educational experiences for young people and their eventual later adult commitments to Jewish life. But as more money has been channeled to certain types of educational programs, they have also faced higher standards of accountability: What do graduates of a program actually learn and experience? How do educational experiences translate into adult commitment? And most urgently, if more money has been channeled to Jewish education, can we document the impact of that investment?[8]

Expectations of a different sort have risen as a result of the inclusion of intermarried families in programs of Jewish education. With the dramatic upward spike

[7] This is central to the thesis of several essays included in Wertheimer, 2007b.

[8] Foundations have been the most likely to pose these questions publicly, but, more generally, funders of all kinds have linked their giving to successful outcomes.

of intermarriage rates, proponents of outreach have demanded of Jewish institutions that they invest in educational programs for intermarried parents that completely integrate children whose parents are intermarried. This demographic shift alone confronts educators with dramatically new circumstances because they cannot expect all children to come from a home that unambiguously transmits a single religious identity and because non-Jewish parents now become participants in the educational process, and they may come with a distinctive understanding of what religious education ought to impart. As one study has put it,

> The contrast in outlook of Jewish-born parents and those not born Jewish [is] often quite dramatic, perhaps best understood as an emphasis upon a Judaism of family and festivals as compared to a Judaism of faith and feelings. (Wertheimer, 2005a, p. 22)

The operative assumption has been that Jewish education and other experiences will engage this population in Jewish life and win over the children. But these great hopes also come with a price in the form of heightened expectations of success, even though no experiment of such a magnitude has ever been tried in the past and there is no way to know whether Jewish education can accomplish what outreach proponents demand (Olitzky & Golin, 2008, pp. 94–96). Put in quantitative terms, a recent study of educational programs under the auspices of the Reform movement found that nearly half the children (49%) have one parent who had not been raised as a Jew—i.e., had either converted from another religion or are not Jewish (Katzew, 2008, p. 1). This novel challenge, moreover, has been addressed thus far with barely any special training provided to educators, no new curricula geared to this specific population and no additional financial resources.

Responding to Great Expectations

All of these shifts have pushed and pulled Jewish educational institutions in new directions. The consumerist orientation of parents coupled with declining numbers of children, for example, has required all kinds of educational programs to compete, perhaps more intensively than ever before. Educators of necessity have become marketers of their products, pitching the benefits of what they offer as compared to other educational products. Advocacy, thus, has risen in importance. To help them, a number of new national umbrella organizations have appeared on the scene since the mid-1990s, mainly established by groups of concerned funders, and all designed to make the case for a particular form of Jewish education and to offer guidance to educators seeking to improve their marketing work. Among the new organizations are one for day schools, the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE); supplementary schools, the Partnership for Effective Learning and Innovative Education (PELIE); the Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC); and the Jewish Early Childhood Education Initiative (JECEI). In addition to their advocacy role, these organizations also recruit funders and champions for their particular fields and offer services to programs in their domains.

Still another response to the new consumerism has been a vast expansion in the number of educational providers. To be sure, some of this also stems from the voluntaristic American model, which tends to encourage the spawning of ever more institutions, the heightened emphasis on attending to the diversity within the American-Jewish population and the ever-wider dispersal of Jewish populations to remote areas. As a result, the number of day schools and supplementary schools continues to rise, even though the total number of students receiving a formal Jewish education has continued to decline. New players have arrived on the scene, such as Chabad, which now runs 73 day schools (Schick, 2009), mainly for non-Orthodox Jews, and over 350 supplementary schools (Wertheimer, 2008, p. 4). Independent operators of schools[9] and private tutors have also multiplied.[10] Efforts are underway to build more residential summer camps, encourage the growth of youth programs, and to multiply the number of Israel programs. To be sure, the goal is to expose ever larger numbers of young people to Jewish educational experiences, but at the same time the insistence on options and in some cases on finding programs just right for each child are also fueling this proliferation of educational ventures.

To accommodate more demanding families, these programs are also tailoring their offerings. The most blatant example of this tendency has been evident in the field of supplementary Jewish education. Because so many schools under Conservative auspices, which had once regarded 6 hours per week of instruction as mandatory, cut back on instructional time, the educational office of the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism ratified a set of six acceptable substitute options of shorter duration, explaining that with the increase in distance between where families live and their synagogues, the high incidence in which both parents work outside the home, and the growing population of single parents, it is unrealistic to expect children to make their way to schools three times a week.[11] Supplementary schools, moreover, are also creating multiple tracks to accommodate the time constraints and interests of children. In some settings, formal education has been replaced by a mix of Shabbat programming offering religious worship and other experiences with family education programs. Other schools permit parents to choose the days that work best for them and their children. Some supplementary high school programs offer a wide range of class electives, and in some cases have eliminated requirements entirely.[12] All of these examples speak to the insistence on choices.

More generally, Jewish-educational programs of all kinds have become far more attuned to the diversity of their student bodies. Educators attend to gender

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[9]One of the most successful and innovative supplementary school programs, Kesher, is run independently at two sites in the Boston area.

[10]We have no way to estimate how many such independent programs and tutoring services exist. For a report on one such operation, see Sarah, 2004 and Spence, 2008.

[11]I have discussed these issues in Wertheimer, 2007a, p. 13.

[12]Examples of such schools are discussed in Wertheimer, 2009.

differences,[13] racial diversity, the sexual orientation of parents, and many other formerly ignored special interests and needs (Schwartzapfel, 2009; UAHC, 2000). To be sure, much of this is prompted by a new attunement of educational thinking in the wider American society to these types of differences, but they also stem from the insistence of parents that Jewish educational efforts attend to these considerations.

Communal Concerns About the Vitality of Jewish Life

High expectations have also come from another quarter—American-Jewish communal leadership. As concern has mounted over the past decades about the erosion of Jewish life through intermarriage, disengagement from organizations, and declining levels of participation in synagogues, Jewish leaders have fastened on ignorance of Jewish civilization as a key source of disengagement, and conversely have identified intensified Jewish education as the cure for these weaknesses. As already noted, this approach has served as a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it has attracted supporters and champions; on the other hand, it has challenged educational vehicles to justify new investments by demonstrating just how much impact they have had.

Not surprisingly, given these concerns, the forms of Jewish education that offered the greatest hope for increased vitality and a demonstrated track record of success tended to win wide public attention and significant new funding. The most successful on both scores were the most immersive educational programs as follows:

1. Day-school education embraces young people in school programs beginning before 9:00 a.m. in the morning and in some schools concluding with extracurricular activities that may last as late as 7:00 p.m. Students also spend time together with their peers and educators on occasional Shabbatonim, weekend retreats, and other forms of social gathering during non-school hours. All of this time makes it possible for day schools to expose students both to advanced levels of study and also to powerful socialization experiences. When it became apparent from survey research that day-school graduates tend to be more strongly engaged in Jewish life as adults than graduates of other educational programs (and not coincidentally tend to intermarry at far lower rates than other Jews),[14] Jewish leaders searching for ways to strengthen Jewish life increased their investment in day schools and worked to expand the number of students enrolled, particularly by trying to enlarge the non-Orthodox sectors of day schools. The two decades

[13]See, for example, the work of Shira Epstein on evaded issues in Jewish education, http://www.jtsa.edu/William_Davidson_Graduate_School_of_Jewish_Education/Addressing_Evaded_Issues_in_Jewish_Education.xml.

[14]Data from the 1990 National Jewish Populations Study already pointed in this direction. On the general impact of more Jewish education, see Lipset, 1994 who concluded: “The longer and more intensive the Jewish training, the more likely people are to be committed to and practice Judaism” (57). On the specific adult impact of day-school education, see Cohen, 2007, p. 43. Extensive supplementary school education also was found to have positive outcomes.

spanning the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first witnessed some growth in day schools and enrollments in the non-Orthodox sector. In the 1990s alone, according to an estimate by Marvin Schick, enrollment in non-Orthodox day schools grew by some 20% and a number of communal and Conservative high schools opened during those years, too (Schick, 2000, p. ii).

2. More recently, Jewish residential summer camps have attracted new support from funders. Living in camp settings 24 hours a day for anywhere from 3 to 7 weeks, young people can be exposed to intense Jewish living. In some camps, they experience regular prayer daily or at least on the Sabbath for the first time in their lives. They live according to the Jewish calendar, with Sabbath observed as a special day unlike all other days of the week. Those who are in camp on the Ninth of Av are exposed to a fast day that is widely ignored by most American Jews. Some Jewish camp settings also offer only kosher food, some forms of educational programming, the opportunity to learn Hebrew songs; they also involve young people in Jewish dance, art addressed to Jewish themes, and other forms of Jewish cultural expression (Sales & Saxe, 2004). This type of immersion in Jewish living was touted by educational leaders such as Mordecai Kaplan (Winter, 1966, p. 166), a long-time scholar-in-residence at Cejwin and other Jewish camps, as far back as the 1920s and then taken up by all the religious movements in the middle of the century. Camping is now more clearly on the communal agenda again because through its immersive environment it offers unparalleled opportunities to shape young Jews and convey to them how pleasurable and enriching Jewish living can be. The establishment of the Foundation for Jewish Camp in 1998 and its ability to attract new funding for residential camps reflects a renewed interest in this type of informal Jewish education.
3. By contrast, immersive programs of study in Israel reflect a more recent phenomenon. Prior to the Six-Day War, only very small numbers of such programs existed. Since then, there has been an explosion of yeshivas and seminaries, principally attracting Orthodox men and women, in their gap year between high school and college, if not for longer periods. Parallel programs have been established by the Conservative and Reform movements, by a few youth movements, and by enterprising Israeli institutions offering a range of options stressing ecology, service work, study, and intensive language instruction.[15] Israel Experience programs for high school students were popular, especially in federation circles in the 1990s, which dangled trips as a reward for participating in Jewish teen programs and schooling. The most popular form of Israel program today is the 10-day all-expenses-paid Birthright Israel trip, now undertaken by nearly 200,000 American Jews between the ages of 18 and 26. All of these programs are premised on the assumption that taking young Jews away from their normal

[15] A long listing of these programs may be found at the MASA website, http://www.masaisrael.com/Masa/English/

> environment, exposing them to aspects of Israel, infusing their trip with educational content, and allowing time for social interactions will serve as powerful experiences to strengthen the Jewish identity of participants.[16]

Day schools, residential camps, and Israel programs share two things in common: one is the way in which they each immerse participants in intensive educational settings, minimally for entire school days, or else for weeks at a time, round the clock. They also have been studied extensively for the purpose of gathering evidence as to their long-term impact. Given the concerns that have prompted funders to invest in Jewish education, it is hardly surprising that more research has gone into tracking these forms of Jewish education than any other types of programs. We should not take for granted that 50 years ago, of the three options, only residential camping attracted even the slightest attention.

Lifelong Jewish Learning

If a concern about building strong Jewish identities has prompted a new emphasis on immersive educational experiences, a mix of other factors accounts for the turn to expanding opportunities for learners of all ages. Options have multiplied in response to a number of pressures: the heightened emphasis on choice, parental insistence that programs meet individual needs, disappointment over the inability of formal education programs to reach the full spectrum of learners, and also the hunger of some adults for continuing Jewish education to make up for the weak education they received while growing up. Educational programs are now far more attuned to underserved segments of the Jewish population, such as preschoolers and their parents, teens, college students, and single adults. New initiatives now seek to strengthen Jewish educational vehicles directed at each of these sub-groups as follows:

- Early childhood is now recognized as a critical time for educators to reach young children and their parents; indeed, this age is often seen as a potential portal of entry into Jewish involvement not only for the children, but also for their entire families. Hence, the upgrading of training programs for teachers of this age group and the ferment in the field (Vogelstein, 2008, pp. 365–372). The great challenge confronting efforts to upgrade this form of Jewish education stems from the reality that early childhood work has traditionally come with little status, and Jewish programs have relied heavily on teachers who themselves have little Jewish or pedagogical training; a substantial number are not even Jewish.
- Youth programming is also getting a second look. During the middle decades of the twentieth century, Zionist and denominational youth movements attracted

[16] An extensive list of follow up research studies on Birthright participants may be found at the website of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University. See http://ir.brandeis.edu/handle/10192/22946/advanced-search. See also Saxe & Chazan, 2008.

an important share of highly committed teens. But by the close of the century, these youth movements had waned, attracting only small fractions of teens and making virtually no dent on Jewish public consciousness. Youth activities are now picking up through local efforts housed either in synagogues, as community-wide efforts[17] or through the non-ideological B'nai B'rith Youth Organization, a recipient of significant new foundation money.[18] These settings for informal Jewish education are seen as important vehicles for bringing young Jews together for social activities with some elements of informal Jewish education.

- Given the disproportionately high percentage of Jews who attend college, a range of groups have organized efforts to offer educational programming on campuses. Though not formally an arm of Jewish communities, many Jewish studies programs in fact serve to educate college students about aspects of Jewish life. The explosion of such programs is unprecedented and represents still another dramatic shift in the delivery of Jewish educational content since the middle decades of the twentieth century. Many hundreds of courses are now offered on Jewish languages—Hebrew, Yiddish, even Ladino—Jewish texts and their interpretations, and Jewish culture and its history that were unavailable except in the most limited form 50 years ago, but now are commonplace at hundreds of colleges and universities, including those under state or Christian auspices.[19] Additionally, interested students can now take classes and engage in informal education at campus Hillel buildings,[20] Chabad Houses,[21] and other sites on or near their campuses.
- With young adults more likely to delay marriage and family formation until well into their thirties, a vast population of Jewish singles with some discretionary time and a desire to socialize with other Jews is being served by a network of organizations and innovative initiatives, many including elements of educational programming. Conventional organizations such as federations, Jewish community relations groups such as the American Jewish Committee and the ADL, welfare groups such as the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and Israel centered groups such as AIPAC, all run programs for Jews of this age group and aggressively court them to participate in more advanced training programs where they are groomed to assume leadership roles. In addition, a panoply of initiatives has been launched by and for young adults by their peers, including

[17] On the various informal teen programs supported by the Combined Jewish Philanthropies in Boston, see http://bbyo.org/news/releases/bbyo_and_panim/

[18] "Philanthropists Pledge $3.5 Million to BBYO ..." http://bbyo.org/news/releases/bbyo_and_panim/

[19] A directory of endowed chairs in Jewish fields enumerates 250 such positions; they are augmented by considerably more non-endowed positions plus courses offered on aspects of Judaica by specialists in ancillary fields. For the directory, see http://www.ajsnet.org/chairs.php

[20] Hillel claims there are Jewish life offices on 500 US campuses. See http://www.hillel.org/about/default

[21] Chabad claims it fields over 150 on-site campus centers. http://www.chabad.org/centers/campus_cdo/jewish/Campus-Directory.htm

independent minyanim (worship communities), ecologically oriented groups, service programs, cultural gatherings, and groups either advocating on behalf of Israel or critical of its policies. These are augmented, in turn, by a broad array of affinity groups that attend to the needs of sub-populations, such as young adults of Russian or Israeli origin, seekers of Orthodox outreach programs, gays, and lesbians wishing to socialize with each other, outdoor enthusiasts, or others with a shared interest. All of these efforts include Jewish-educational programming either about contemporary Jewish culture or text learning (Wertheimer, forthcoming).
- As for middle aged and older adult populations, new national educational programs have proliferated, offering set curricula over a period of 2 years or other educational opportunities. The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School based at the Hebrew University and offered in communities around the United States[22] and the Meah curriculum devised at the Boston Hebrew College[23] have reached thousands of Jewish adults over the past decade. In addition, the Wexner Heritage Foundation has offered serious 2-year learning programs for future lay leaders at sites across the country. They are augmented by synagogues, Jewish Community Centers, Orthodox outreach programs, and many other providers actively offering Jewish-educational programming in person and online.[24]

All of these efforts are consistent with a slogan that has taken hold in the American-Jewish community in recent years, namely that Jews should think about Jewish education as a matter of "lifelong Jewish learning." Few of the programs I have mentioned are unique to the present age, but the sheer mass of options and the message of urging Jews to continue their Jewish education over their life course are reflections of the current mood. Despite the opportunities and the message, however, only a minority of American Jews can be described as lifelong Jewish learners, and most programs attract only a relatively small share of the potential market of Jews.

Curricula

Once students are enrolled, what should be the focus of the curriculum? This is a perennial challenge facing all educational institutions, and even more so Jewish ones, which must choose from a vast body of learning and many possible options. Curriculum providers can offer some guidance, but the key players are shifting. Whereas once the education departments of the religious movements played a central role in developing curricula, their influence has diminished of late. The Reform

[22]Information about the Melton courses can be found at http://www.fmams.org.il/1a_aboutus/9_leadership.htm

[23]The Meah program was launched at two Boston-area sites in 1994. It now claims over 2,500 alumni around the country. http://www.hebrewcollege.edu/meah

[24]For an analysis of the impact of these programs, see Grant and Schuster 2003 and Grant, Schuster, Woocher, & Cohen, 2004. See also Grant and Schuster in this handbook.

movement has invested more in developing new curriculum than any of its counterparts, producing the Chai curriculum for supplementary schools and a Hebrew complement called Mitkadem. A significant portion of schools under Reform auspices have adopted parts of this curriculum, as have some schools under other denominational auspices. Much of the slack in curriculum has been picked up either by individual schools that tailor curricula to the strengths of their teaching staff and by commercial educational publishers, such as Behrman House Books and Torah Aura Productions. Day-school curricula which tend to be more labor intensive because they cover more extensive material have been produced under grants for large foundations.[25]

Still, questions of focus and emphasis cannot be resolved entirely by curriculum providers. Individual schools tend to shape their own approaches to the vexing question of how to allocate limited time and what goals should be set for student learning. Schools of all sorts struggle with how much time to devote to Hebrew-language instruction, and which registers of Hebrew to stress—Biblical, liturgical, rabbinic, or modern Israeli Hebrew—let alone the question of spoken versus written Hebrew. They must also resolve how much time to allocate to teaching skills versus conceptual issues versus textual study versus action-oriented activities. Clearly, these are not air-tight categories, but they continue to vex educators in all kinds of settings, all the more so when students are available only for the most limited amount of time in supplementary programs and settings of informal education.[26]

Among the more challenging issues in curricular development today is the matter of Israel education. In the two decades after the Six-Day War, Jewish schools of all kinds invested considerable effort in teaching about contemporary Israel and enjoyed the benefit of an outpouring of textbooks and other resources;[27] today, by contrast, Israel education is widely understood as an unresolved set of dilemmas. Veteran teachers lament how much the ground has shifted from the heroic era when every Jewish child knew of Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, and Yitzhak Rabin; today by contrast, Israeli leaders are largely unfamiliar to students. Even more important, media coverage has presented at best a portrait of Israel in shades of gray, and educators are now flummoxed as to what to teach about Israel and from which perspective: Should students be exposed to an idealized portrait of the Jewish homeland or to a society that struggles with intractable issues, sometimes in an uplifting fashion, sometimes less so? Should Israel be viewed primarily through the prism of

[25] The AVI CHAI foundation, for example, has invested large sums in the Neta Hebrew curriculum for day schools and in a benchmarks project for Bible study in day schools. On the former, see http://www.avi-chai.org/bin/en5caf.html?enPage=BlankPage&enDisplay=view&enDispWhat=Zone&enZone=JLPC#48; on the latter, see http://www.jtsa.edu/William_Davidson_Graduate_School_of_Jewish_Education/Melton_Research_Center_for_Jewish_Education/Melton_Standards_and_Benchmarks.xml

[26] Some of these issues are explored in the section on Curriculum in Goodman, Flexner, and Bloomberg, 2008, pp. 269–362.

[27] For research on the state of Israel education, see Pollak, 1984–1985, Ackerman, 1996; Chazan, 2000; Krasner, 2003.

its conflicts with neighboring Arabs or through the prism of culture and religion? Should Israel education focus, as it had in the past, on the many ways Israel is similar to the United States or should it emphasize the radically different circumstances in which Israeli and American Jews live? Much new thinking is going into addressing these and other questions, but for the moment, Israel education is viewed as a problem to be solved, rather than as an automatically positive feature of Jewish educational institutions.[28]

Even more broadly, there is great confusion about the purpose of Jewish-educational programs—or at least much debate about the proper emphasis. Some educators aspire for their students to attain high levels of Jewish literacy through exposure to the classic texts of Judaism and the broad sweep of Jewish civilization.[29] Others regard socialization as the primary task of educational institutions, by connecting students with other Jews and enculturating them so that they feel anchored in a living Jewish community.[30] And still others go further and stress the importance of using Jewish educational experiences as a means of developing the affective side: let children feel good about being Jewish and enjoy participation in a set of Jewish activities; that will linger long after skills and information have been forgotten. These different approaches have enormous consequences for the way educational institutions allocate their limited time with students. Though the issues are not entirely new, the intensity of clashing views and the divergence of opinion today may be greater than in the past.

Resources of Personnel and Funding

At precisely the time when Jewish educational options proliferated and communal attention was riveted on education as a critical building block for strengthening Jewish life in the United States, it began to dawn on some educational leaders that shortages in qualified personnel might torpedo ambitious efforts to rebuild Jewish educational options. To be sure, the work of educators never carried high prestige in Jewish life: the *melamed* is remembered in Jewish literature as somewhat of a schlemiel who spends his time in the classroom because he could not find better work.

For much of the twentieth century, the field of Jewish education recruited immigrants to staff its schools, initially drawing on first generation Jews from Europe and

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[28]For some recent discussions of these issues, see *Jewish Educational Leadership* September 2008, http://virtualmelton.huji.ac.il/course/view.php?id=8 for a collection of papers devoted to this topic, and also Alick Isaacs' chapter in this handbook.

[29]This is the model adopted by most Jewish day schools in the Orthodox world with Haredi and Hasidic day schools more likely to emphasize textual proficiency above other considerations, while modern Orthodox and other day schools add some content on aspects of Jewish civilization—thought, literature, the arts, music, and history.

[30]Isa Aron has argued for enculturation as the primary goal, which requires a living community to engage in anchoring young people (Aron, nd).

then later from Israel. Women who served primarily as homemakers picked up the slack, particularly in supplementary education where their services were required for only a few hours per week. Shifts in social patterns have made it far harder in recent decades to recruit teachers.[31] As ever larger numbers of Jewish women have entered the labor force as full-time employees, but this source of teachers has dried up considerably. Moreover, as Jewish immigration has slowed to a crawl and those who have immigrated generally come with advanced degrees in other fields, still another pool of teaching personnel has evaporated. By the closing decade of the twentieth century, serious attention has been lavished on the entire question of teacher recruitment and retention, leading to several important studies designed to learn more about who are current teachers, where and how they are recruited and what are their perceptions of their work and their levels of job satisfaction.[32]

A slew of new programs have arisen over the past two decades to address the shortages of personnel and shape educational leaders. To begin with, new training programs have been established at several universities, and existing ones at the major religious seminaries have received new infusions of scholarship support in order to help them recruit students to teacher training programs. Other programs select teachers who show promise as future school heads; and still others work with camp heads, classroom teachers, and youth group leaders, among others.[33] All of these are in line with a major preoccupation in Jewish communal life that has no earlier parallel: deliberate and highly organized leadership training. Where once it was taken for granted that leaders would emerge as a matter of course, now dozens of programs recruit, train, and nurture future leaders in a deliberately self-conscious fashion.[34]

Limited Financial Resources

Finally, we come to the most pervasive and intractable of all challenges facing the field: the mismatch between needs and financial resources. Jewish-educational programs in the United States always have relied upon a mixture of communal support, philanthropic contributions, and tuition fees paid by families. As in the past, the funds available have not sufficed to cover budgets—the costs of infrastructure, curriculum development, new technologies, the training and on-going learning of educators, and, most important, salaries and benefits for educational personnel. What has changed in recent decades is the prominent role assumed by foundations as the decisive force propelling educational change. Several large foundations have spearheaded efforts such as Birthright Israel, the remaking of Hillel, the support and encouragement of day-school education, the expansion of Jewish residential

[31] Shevitz, 1988 has argued that teacher recruitment has been a perennial problem.

[32] This new interest is well captured in an excellent overview by Goodman and Schaap, 2008, pp. 199–211.Among the new studies, see especially Ben-Avie & Kress, 2006.

[33] For a good overview of these recent efforts, see Sales, Samuel, and Koren, 2006.

[34] This larger effort is analyzed in Kelner, Rabkin, Saxe, and Sheingold, 2005.

camping, and the training of educational personnel. In short, the current situation differs dramatically from earlier times because of the work of foundations and major philanthropists.

Despite these remarkable investments and creative new thinking by foundations, large financial problems remain, and, if anything, are growing. Spiraling costs of day-school education, which now can exceed over $30,000 per high school student and huge costs associated with summer camping are but two of the many examples of how the high cost of Jewish living has become prohibitive to the point where it is driving some families to abandon the most immersive forms of Jewish education in favor of less costly options.[35] Some foundations have begun to experiment with Hebrew charter schools as a means of bringing government money to bear on language instruction. No one believes that such schools can replace the rich Judaic content of day schools, but such is the desperation for new funding sources that the charter model is seen as an aspect of the mix, which will also include after-school religious instruction. Other philanthropists are playing a role in their own local communities by offering financial support to specific schools, camps, or programs, all with the intention of helping struggling families with the affordability challenges.

None of these issues is unique to the present moment, but some of the solutions are novel—free 10 days trips to Israel, vouchers to families who never enrolled their children in day school before, national loan programs to schools, extensive leadership training for potential school heads, and plans for vast day school endowment projects all reflect new thinking. Moreover, the fact that foundations are spearheading these efforts dramatizes the extent to which the locus of educational innovation has shifted to a new sector of the Jewish community and away from traditional centers of influence—bureaus of Jewish education, the religious movements and federations of Jewish philanthropy. The crisis of financing and the general anxiety over the quality of Jewish education has brought new players onto the scene who are assuming a central role in addressing some of the major challenges.

As we consider the shifting contours of the field of Jewish education in the United States in recent decades, we would do well to acknowledge the overarching new reality confronting the field. It is now evident to most observers that Jewish education is seen not only as facing a set of challenges in its own right, but writ large is also touted as *the* solution. No other sector of the Jewish community is promoted so ubiquitously as the silver bullet for reversing trends eroding Jewish life—not synagogues, not Jewish organizations, not service programs, not cultural enterprises. None of these is regarded as capable of stemming the tide of losses. Jewish education alone is on the lips of leaders as they offer up hope for renewal. This in itself reflects a remarkable turn-around for the former "stepchild" of the Jewish community. It also places a heavy, unprecedented, and perhaps unrealistic burden of responsibility on the ever-changing field of Jewish education.

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[35] On the high costs of Jewish living, see Bubis, 2008.

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Anglo-Jewish Education: Day Schools, State Funding and Religious Education in State Schools

David Mendelsson

Introduction

This chapter will explore three central issues in Jewish education in England since the end of the Second World War. These issues arose in the wake of social, cultural and demographic changes in post-War England generally, and, to a lesser degree, within the Jewish community. First, the chapter will trace the dramatic shifts in Anglo-Jewish attitudes to Jewish day school education. Next, it will examine how the state's convoluted approach to the funding of denominational education impacted Jewish education, particularly day schools. Finally, it will analyse the provision of Jewish religious education to pupils in non-denominational State schools. Each issue, though rooted in the Anglo-Jewish context, has parallels in other contexts worldwide, and understanding the factors that have shaped Jewish education in England – parental responses to societal transformations, state funding of religious schools, and religious education in State schools – may offer insights applicable elsewhere. The chapter focuses primarily on day school education, and, to a lesser extent, on another 'formal' framework for imparting Jewish learning, namely, supplementary education in Sunday or afternoon classes.[1] These institutions merit examination because they have undergone dramatic reciprocal changes that reflect a shift in Jewish identity and self-perception. This shift took place against the backdrop of a significant recontouring of England's social, cultural and demographic landscape, and the chapter focuses on the impact these *broader* changes have had on Jewish education. To provide a context for this analysis, I begin by outlining the structure of English schooling, both general and Jewish, during this period.

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[1] See Mendelsson, 2002, Chapter 5, for more on supplementary school Jewish education. While informal Jewish frameworks of various sorts have also had some educational impact on Anglo-Jewish youth, this internal pedagogic development, interesting though it is, does not fall within the purview of the present chapter.

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Structure of the Educational System

The Education Act, 1944 set out three stages in the education of English and Welsh children. Children between the ages of 5 and 11 were to attend primary schools. Attendance at secondary schools was compulsory until age 15, and optional from 15 to 18. First and second stage schools were funded mainly by the local education authority (LEA). The third stage was further education at colleges and universities.

Unlike the primary schools, non-denominational State secondary schools were selective, and a series of exams taken at age 11 – referred to as the 'Eleven plus' – determined a child's educational and often occupational and class destiny. Grammar school places were available to the approximately 20% who passed the Eleven plus; the other pupils were placed at Secondary Modern and Secondary Technical schools. In 1965, the Labour Government adopted a policy of abolishing the selective non-denominational Grammar schools and replacing them with large Comprehensive schools where the mixing of different populations and expansive, varied, curriculum would, it was hoped, create greater opportunity for all children. From 1965 to 1979, comprehensive education was a matter of considerable political manoeuvring, generating much uncertainty and acrimony (Simon, 1994).

In dramatic contrast to the American scene, the State school system encompasses both non-denominational and denominational schools, the latter run by Anglican, Roman Catholic or Jewish organisations.[2]

In addition to State schools, there are also privately-run schools, referred to as Independent schools, which include both boarding and day schools. Until the late 1960s, Independent schools, most of which had been established by religious foundations, often had tacit quotas for non-Christian pupils. The Jewish schools were similarly divided into State denominational and private fully-independent fee-paying day schools; there was also a Jewish private boarding school – Carmel College – modelled on Eton and Harrow, but providing an Orthodox Jewish education and ethos.

Independent schools often sought to secure 'voluntary aided' status, which enabled them to have the bulk of their costs borne by the state. This status was awarded only to schools meeting stringent criteria with respect to the premises, syllabus, teacher qualifications, and local demand for school places. Voluntary-aided status afforded parents the assurance that the schools in question met the LEA's academic and other standards.

The *Schools Standards and Framework Act*, 1998 re-categorised State schools. 'Community schools' are non-denominational and fully state-funded; Voluntary schools are owned or administered by an education trust, usually religious. There are two principal types of Voluntary schools: 'Voluntary Controlled' and 'Voluntary Aided'. With regard to the former, the LEA controls the school, employs the

[2]Since 1993, aided status has been extended to nine Muslim, Greek Orthodox, Hindu and Sikh schools.

staff, and sets the admissions policy. The charitable foundation makes no monetary contribution to maintaining the school. The teaching of Religious Education is predominantly non-confessional and multi-faith, but the school ethos and worship are confessional (Cush, 2003). By contrast, at ‘Voluntary Aided’ schools the charitable foundation is responsible for the building and its upkeep, with government grants available to defray these sums. It employs the staff and sets the admissions policy, but the LEA pays salaries and other costs. Some schools, formerly called ‘Direct Grant’ schools, receive funding directly from the state, rather than the LEA. Abolished in 1976 and reintroduced in 1988, they are now known as ‘Grant Maintained’ schools.

Today, the 33 larger Jewish day schools in Britain, attended by the majority of Jewish day school pupils, are voluntary-aided. In addition, there are numerous small Independent day schools, most of which serve the fervently-Orthodox (*Charedi*) population. Until recently, the latter generally eschewed government funding, fearing loss of autonomy over admissions policy, curriculum and teaching staff. But rising costs have led the fervently Orthodox to seek state funding to help maintain their schools. Since the girls’ schools devote more time to general studies, their chances of securing state financial aid are greater than those of the boys’ schools. There are no Voluntary Controlled or Direct Grant schools in the Jewish sector.

Parental Receptiveness to Jewish Day School Education

Over the past 35 years, preferences of Jewish parents vis-à-vis their children’s education have undergone a sea change. In 1944, of those receiving Jewish education, only 1 in 16 attended a Jewish day school, whereas the corresponding figure for 1987 is 1 in 2. This dramatic increase in Jewish day school attendance was accompanied by a decline in attendance at part-time frameworks such as afternoon Hebrew classes. To accommodate the growth in demand for Jewish nursery and day school places, the number of such institutions rose steadily, from 23 in 1954 to 57 in 1975, 70 in 1989 and 135 in 1999. This growth is particularly salient in light of the decline in the overall number of Jewish children in England, which dropped by 25% from the 1950s to 2002 (Valins, Kosmin, & Goldberg, 2002).

Part of the explanation for the increased attendance at day schools is demographic: the robust growth in the fervently-Orthodox communities. In the 1950s such growth had seemed improbable, but outreach and fecundity have enabled the fervently-Orthodox community to increase from 2.6% of Anglo-Jewry in 1970 to 10% at the end of the millennium (Alderman, 1992; Valins et al., 2002). Future trends can be projected from the statistic that of all synagogue marriages in 2006, almost 26% were fervently Orthodox (Graham & Vulkan, 2007). As the fervently Orthodox community does not, for the most part, send its children to non-*Charedi* Jewish schools, let alone State schools, the *Charedi* schools have experienced enormous expansion since the founding of the Yesodey Hatorah schools in 1942 with just six pupils: by the year 2000, there were over 10,000 pupils in fervently-Orthodox schools in England (Valins et al., 2002).

In the non-*Charedi* sector, however, the shift in parental attitudes has been remarkable. To understand this development, let us first examine the situation prior to the rise of the day schools.

Post-War Parental Attitudes to Schooling

Overall, Jewish day school attendance had been in decline since well before the Second World War (Steinberg, 1989). The general opinion was that the purpose for which the day schools had been established – to protect children from proselytisers, provide them with basic Judaic and general knowledge, and above all, 'Anglicize' them – had been achieved. Now native born and culturally integrated, the majority of Anglo-Jewry took the primary goal of schooling to be academic achievement and upward mobility (Alderman, 1992; Miller, 2001). Motivated to extricate itself from working-class neighbourhoods, the community viewed a good education at a selective Grammar school as the best entryway to business and the professions, and the key to socialisation into the middle class. Jewish children were, indeed, quite successful at winning Grammar school places (Gould, 1984; Krausz, 1969).

Believing that the middle class, to which it aspired, disapproved of denominational schooling, the Jewish community took the stance that ethnic identity in general, and religion in particular, should be confined to the home and synagogue. Since most of the non-Jewish middle-class children who received religious education acquired it at Sunday school, it was this model of part-time classes unconnected to 'real' school that the Jewish community adopted, whether the sponsoring organisation was the London Board of Jewish Religious Education (LBJRE), representing centrist Orthodoxy, or the growing Reform and Liberal movements.

Until the 1970s, most Anglo-Jewish children received their Jewish education in supplementary classes on Sundays or after school. These classes, attended mainly by children aged 8 to 13, sought to instil the ability to read Hebrew and follow the synagogue service, familiarity with festivals, and a basic knowledge of Jewish history, Bible stories and religious rituals. They were better attended on Sunday mornings than during the week. Complaints about the teachers, pedagogy and curriculum abounded (Mendelsson, 2002).

Both the embrace of non-denominational schools, and the willingness to relegate religious education to a few hours of instruction weekly, reflect the fact that British Jews, though culturally integrated into mainstream society, nonetheless felt uncertain as to their status in England. Antisemitism, encouraged by Mosley's Fascists, resurfaced in the 1940s, and was exacerbated by violence in Palestine directed at the British Mandatory authorities. Opinion polls revealed considerable antipathy to Jews. The Jewish community responded apologetically, calling on its members to blend in, on the assumption that that if they became more 'like' non-Jews, the antagonism would disappear (Kushner, 1989).

Jewish Day School Constituencies

As noted, the overall trend prior to the late 1960s was decreased day school attendance. Nevertheless, during the 1950s and early 1960s, Jewish day school education

was preferred by three small sectors of Anglo-Jewry. One was the strictly-Orthodox community led by Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld, whose Jewish Secondary Schools Movement was the largest of the Jewish day school providers. This sector upheld Samson Raphael Hirsch's programme of *Torah im Derekh Eretz*, with its commitment to Jewish studies alongside secular knowledge. It saw Jewish schooling as conducive to robust Jewish life with limited social but full professional integration into society at large. Like the rest of Anglo-Jewry, this sector, and the schools it sponsored, endorsed English middle-class values: financial security, upward social mobility, industriousness (Schonfeld, 1943, 1958).

Not surprisingly, the second group that rejected the prevailing preference for State schools was the *Charedi* sector. At first the Yesodey Hatorah schools were alone in the field, but in 1959 the Lubavitch movement started its own schools. Thereafter, various other Hassidic and Lithuanian groups opened schools. The fervently Orthodox had little interest in integrating into either British society or the middle class. Immersed in punctiliously applying Torah law to every aspect of life, they accepted an exiguous existence. The chief parental educational goals were Torah scholarship and strict levels of religious observance.

The third group that sent its children to day schools was drawn from working-class London Jews who preferred to send their children to the schools that had been established by the Anglo-Jewish 'Cousinhood' and later came under the aegis of the LBJRE. Most such parents did so because, though themselves working class, they were leery of their children's social interaction with schoolmates who might not aspire to a Grammar school education. After 1953, when the Zionist movement entered the field of day school education, it too harnessed Anglo-Jewry's reservations about the English working class, and later, ambivalence towards New Commonwealth (West-Indian and Indo-Pakistani) immigrants (Bermant, 1970). As a result, the Zionist Federation schools, several of which were situated in working-class districts, were often oversubscribed.

The Shift to Day School Education

By the mid-1960s, the bulk of Anglo-Jewry was successfully integrated into the British middle class. Yet as the decade came to a close, the demand for Jewish day school education had begun to rise, while attendance at supplementary schools was falling (Table 1 below).[3] Many have sought to account for this transition by invoking

Table 1 National trends in full- and part-time Jewish education for children between 5 and 17

	1962/ 1963	%	1967/ 1968	%	1975/ 1976	%	1986/ 1987	%	1992	%	1999	%
part-time	21,075	36	24,843	42	17,346	32	11,957	25	9,900	22	8,810	20
full-time	8,854	15	9,015	15	10,908	20	12,085	25	12,700	28	20,700	47

Source: Jewish Educational Development Trust, 1992, p. 7, and Board of Deputies, 2000.

[3]As noted, the shrinking percentage of children attending supplementary schools also reflects the growth of the fervently-Orthodox population within British Jewry.

an Anglo-Jewish religious and spiritual revival associated with the Six Day War and the campaign for Soviet Jewry (Bermant, 1990; Braude, 1981). But the importance of these factors has been exaggerated. In fact, it was the 1965 decision of the Labour Government to end selective education by dismantling the Grammar schools that led to withdrawal of Jewish children from the non-denominational state system (Valins et al., 2002). For the affluent, private education was the preferred alternative: the Independent schools continued to be perceived as the best means of ensuring academic achievement. By the early 1980s, Jews comprised 40% of the enrolment at several Independent schools in London and Hertfordshire. For those parents who were unable or unwilling to pay for private education, however, Jewish voluntary-aided schools became a means of circumventing the comprehensive system (Mendelsson, 2009).

Heightening the sense that Independent schools produced academic excellence, and thus contributing to the withdrawal of Jewish children from non-denominational State schools, was the assumption that the growing number of ethnic minority children in State schools had led to a decline in academic standards. Jewish schools were now achieving much improved academic results (Black, 1998). Moreover, they were perceived, albeit naively, as impervious to the turbulence associated with the permissive society. Parents believed that in sending their children to Jewish schools, they were shielding them from the dangers of political radicalism, promiscuity and drugs, which could impede their academic success and derail their future.

Another factor contributing to the newfound acceptance of Jewish day schools was Britain's gradual transformation from a basically monolithic to a multicultural, multi-faith society. New Commonwealth immigrants had arrived in Britain in growing numbers in the 1950s and 1960s, but multiculturalism was adopted as both a general policy and an educational objective only in the late 1970s. Initial expressions of cultural diversity involved acceptance of diversity in dress and cuisine, but soon spread to more substantive exposure to ethnicities, e.g., broadcasts of non-Christian prayer services, ethnic radio programmes such as Radio London's 'You Don't Have to Be Jewish', and events like the distinctively Caribbean Notting Hill Carnival. This openness to 'otherness' encouraged many Jews to be more self-affirming of their Jewish identity, though the embrace of ethnicity remained a matter of debate within Anglo-Jewry.

Attitudes to Jewish day school education reflected this debate: those who confined their Judaism to the private realm tended to oppose day school education, those comfortable with expressing their Jewish identity in public tended to support it. Despite the growing legitimacy of public expression of ethnic identity, most of the community, and certainly, its representative agencies, preferred its traditional profile as a religious denomination rather than a self-avowed ethnic group (Mendelsson, 2002).

Yet the search for community in an increasingly individualistic society impelled some Jews to re-examine their links to Judaism and the Jewish people. Despite the community's formal self-presentation as a religious group, and its discomfort with the 'ethnic minority' rubric, the term now accurately reflected its character. Except among the Orthodox, ritual observance was becoming less uniform, and Jewish

identity was increasingly conceived in terms of belonging to a cultural or ethnic group rather than religious belief. A survey of United Synagogue members showed that about 90% 'strongly agreed' with the statements 'an unbreakable bond unites Jews all over the world' and 'it is important that Jews survive as a people' (Kalms, 1991). Rejection of the 'ethnic' label was thus a tactical consideration motivated by apprehension about being associated with minorities perceived as less acculturated. Despite integration into the political, cultural, social and economic realms of British life, Anglo-Jewry continued to harbour fears regarding its acceptance.

To summarise, different segments of the community had different objectives as to their children's education. For the *Charedi* sector, the primary considerations were a curriculum featuring intensive Torah studies, and organisation of the school in conformity with desiderata set by the rabbinical authorities, e.g., gender separation. For those affiliated with centrist Orthodox and Progressive (Liberal and Reform) congregations, and the unaffiliated, the dominant consideration was academic excellence (Valins et al., 2002). In the immediate post-War years, Independent schools were beyond the means of most British Jews, who had working or lower-middle-class incomes, hence State primary schools, and at the secondary level, Grammar schools, were seen as the best choice. Two decades later, changes to the educational system, particularly the phasing out of Grammar, and later, Direct Grant schools, impelled parents to seek alternatives. Due to upward economic mobility, Independent schools were now within the reach of some. But Jewish voluntary-aided schools attracted growing numbers of parents. As with all state-supported schools, the pupils' academic success was monitored and publicised by government agencies, endearing these schools to Jewish parents (Valins et al., 2002). Moreover, the legitimacy conferred on denominational schooling by Britain's embrace of multiculturalism allowed those who sent their children to Jewish day schools to see doing so as entirely compatible with being fully 'English' (Alderman, 1999).

Legislation on Denominational Schools

While the 1944 Education Act was still in committee, senior civil servants had suggested ending state funding for denominational schools. To avoid conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities, it was decided to offer two funding options for denominational schools. 'Controlled status' gave the denomination funding for, and autonomy over, religious instruction, in return for surrendering jurisdiction over the school to the LEA. 'Voluntary aided status' let the denominational authority retain partial autonomy over curriculum and administration in return for funding half the building and maintenance costs of each school. The former option was chosen by the Anglican Church, the latter by the Catholics and Jews. In 1959, the government raised its subsidy of voluntary-aided schools from 50 to 75%, and in 1967 and 1975, raised the building and maintenance grants to 80 and 85%, respectively. In 2001, it was decided to cover 90% of total costs (Parker-Jenkins, Hartas, & Irving, 2005).

Superficial analysis of the government's denominational schools policy might suggest growing sympathy for this type of education. In fact, however, budgetary

restrictions and later, political opposition, limited expansion of the state-aided sector. According to the 1944 Education Act, the denominational authorities had to prove that within the locale of a proposed school there was not only parental demand but also an overall need for additional school places. During the 1950s, the post-War baby boom ensured that there was little difficulty in proving the requisite shortfall in school places. Yet whereas the Catholics were committed to denominational schools, the Jews evinced only slight interest in this option (Steinberg, 1989), as explained above. By the time Jewish attitudes changed in the late 1960s, state funding was more difficult to procure because declining birth rates had reduced the overall need for school places. After 1973, the inflationary spiral caused by the Arab oil embargo led to severe cuts in government expenditure on education. To establish additional schools, therefore, the community had no recourse but to fund the building projects on its own, in the hope that subsequently, applications for the coveted 'voluntary aided' status would be granted.[4]

Political considerations also limited the expansion of state-aided denominational schools. Beginning in the late 1970s, multiculturalism was a hot-button issue on the national and local political agendas. In this debate, the Labour party was perceived as more sensitive to the needs of ethnic minorities. In those London councils it controlled, it adopted a policy of affirmative action. But Labour disapproved of separate ethnic and religious schools, contending that such schools tended to foster religious, racial and cultural divisiveness. It preferred multicultural schools where ethnic and religious diversity would be encouraged, e.g., by classes on world religions and the celebration of diverse religious festivals. In keeping with this policy, Labour rejected applications for voluntary-aided status by *Charedi* and Muslim schools, justifying this rejection by citing the schools' failure to meet national and local criteria.

The Conservatives, in power from 1979 to 1997, shared Labour's fears that ethnic minorities were requesting public funds to further separatism. However, they viewed the existing *denominational* voluntary-aided schools – Anglican, Roman Catholic and Jewish – as upholding moral teachings that were broadly in line with Tory thinking. Moreover, they often contrasted perceived failings of the comprehensive schools, about which the Conservative party remained sceptical, to the acknowledged academic achievements of the denominational schools. Committed to parental choice, the Conservatives had to support denominational schooling. When the Muslim Parents' Association in Bradford demanded state-aided status for its schools, the Conservatives were in a quandary. They could not deny to one religious group what they had granted to others.

Meanwhile, in non-denominational State schools, incidents of racism and insensitivity to ethnic minority children were mounting. South Asian parents, for instance, claimed that their languages and cultures were not sufficiently respected in non-denominational schools. Muslim parents demanded schools whose behavioural standards were more in keeping with their religious outlook. Having pledged to

[4]Chief Rabbi Jakobovits' Jewish Educational Development Trust raised substantial funds for Jewish day school education for precisely this purpose; see Mendelsson, 2002, Chapter 6.

honour parental choice and diversity, the New Labour party had no choice but to reverse its stance and support denominational schools. Under this new policy, the Islamia School in the London Borough of Brent secured state-aided status, the Al-Furqan School in Birmingham followed suit, and shortly thereafter three additional Muslim schools became state-aided (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2005). They were joined by two Sikh, one Greek Orthodox and one Seventh Day Adventist School. State-aided status had now become available to so-called ‘visible’ religious minorities and to peripheral denominations.

In this changed climate, the Jewish community was able to secure state-aided status for more schools. Between 1992 and 1999, 12 new Jewish schools were added to the list of state-aided institutions (Valins & Kosmin, 2003).[5] Among these were two schools sponsored by the Progressive movement, which had traditionally evinced hostility to the very idea of Jewish day schools. So entrenched was this hostility that Rabbi Dow Marmur critiqued it during his keynote address at a Reform Synagogues conference in 1972, proposing that the movement adopt a policy of founding its own day schools (Marmur, 1972). Since 2004, several *Charedi* schools have also attained aided status.[6]

Not long after this expansion of the denominational schools (popularly known as ‘faith’ schools), race-related riots broke out in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in July 2001; tensions were rekindled following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States. In the wake of these disturbances, faith schools were reproached for allegedly fostering separatism rather than interaction between religious and ethnic groups. From the perspective of the minority leaders, however, day schools constituted the front line in the struggle against assimilation and communal disintegration. The controversy over the right of denominations to state funding for their schools continued to ignite popular passions as fears of isolationism and fundamentalism challenged the cohesion of the multicultural society. A MORI opinion poll found that 27% of interviewees opposed expansion of faith schools; this number increased to 43% when the same question was asked vis-à-vis Muslim, Sikh and Greek Orthodox schools (Times Educational Supplement (TES), 2001b).

Labour continued to support faith schools, introducing a White Paper, *Schools Achieving Success*, that defended proposals for more faith schools not only on the basis of the parental right to choose, but also because faith schools under state supervision were preferable to private institutions not subject to national curriculum, testing and performance standards. Attempting to placate critics, the government proposed integrating children of other faiths or no faith into denominational schools (Jackson, 2004, pp. 41–42; TES, 2001a).

The religious authorities were divided over the proposals. The Archbishop of Canterbury supported the idea that a percentage of places in voluntary-aided schools

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[5]By contrast, in the preceding decade only two Jewish schools had been awarded this status.

[6]They include the Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School and Lubavitch Girls Primary School, both in London, the Beis Yaakov High School in Salford and the Manchester Mesivta School. In girls' schools, the ratio of general to religious studies is higher than in the parallel boys' schools.

be reserved for children of other faiths and no faith; the Roman Catholics, Muslims and Jews opposed it. Chief Rabbi Sacks argued that it was not the inclusivity of the student makeup that would nurture tolerance in faith schools, but rather the content of the syllabus, which he recommended be the subject of a national assessment (TES, 2001c). In response to a *Times Educational Supplement* editorial warning that 'establishing more Muslim schools in areas where the racial cauldron is still bubbling would be potentially disastrous', Ibrahim Hewitt, head teacher at the Al Aqsa primary school in Markfield, Leicestershire, remarked: 'the racial cauldron is bubbling because young people have a shortage of faith in their education, and not the reverse' (TES, 2001d). To the relief of the Catholic, Muslim and Jewish authorities, the plan to integrate children of other faiths or of no faith was dropped.

Governmental support, or more precisely, the Jewish community's acceptance of state funding for its schools, has created a dilemma. Community demographers predict that within the next decade, as the size of the mainstream community declines, Jewish schools may have difficulty filling school places. By law, voluntary-aided schools are obliged to fill surplus places, if necessary, with children of other religions. While some remain confident that the number of parents seeking Jewish day school education will continue to grow, others disagree, and predict that, given the schools' academic success, LEAs will not agree to reduce the intake, but will fill open places with non-Jewish pupils. The situation is not without precedent: Jewish voluntary-aided schools in the small and shrinking provincial communities of Birmingham and Liverpool have for many years enrolled non-Jewish children. At the King David Grammar School in Liverpool, over 50% of the student body has for some time been non-Jewish.

This puts the schools in a difficult position. On the one hand, they are committed to educating a minority-faith constituency in the tenets of its religion, on the other, they are responsible for the academic success and integration of a sizeable non-Jewish minority. The King David school was the subject of a government report. The inspectors were impressed:

> The school is a model of a multi-cultural institution. An environment is provided where pupils from more than two cultures work and live in harmony. The warm relationships are remarkable and pupils from all cultures and backgrounds co-exist happily. The school can be very proud that its pupils show mutual respect for one another and for each other's way of life. (UK Department of Education and Science, 1986)

Nevertheless, the integration of children of other faiths or no faith demands much planning and pedagogic resources. Hence the community preference is to avoid being mandated to 'top up' enrolment with children of other faiths (Commission on Jewish Schools, 2008).

Another challenge has recently (re)emerged for faith schools: the charge that many are not educating their pupils towards an understanding of other faiths and ethnicities. Critics of denominational schooling have called for exchange visits between different schools and the introduction of education for multiculturalism. Aware of this challenge, the Jewish community initiated a study of its schools' attitudes to multicultural education. The three schools found to be most energetic in this sphere

were affiliated with the Progressive movement, whereas those found to be indifferent or hostile to such education were centrist Orthodox. The report acknowledged the burden imposed by the dual mandate of teaching the full national curriculum alongside comprehensive and not just token Jewish studies (Short, 2002). The issue of multicultural education will clearly remain a challenge, especially if ethnic/racial tensions intensify.

Religious Education in Non-denominational State Schools

Under the terms of the 1944 Education Act, all schools were required to begin the day with a collective act of worship, and all children were to receive religious instruction on a regular basis. The nature of the religious education was to be determined by a conference of representatives of the Church of England; other religious denominations deemed appropriate by the LEA; the LEA; and the teachers' association. Although the Act did not specify which religion or religions were to be taught, it was understood that the instruction would be generically Christian. Perusal of the various Agreed Syllabuses confirms that they indeed sought to inculcate Christian teachings, and schools were taken to be 'Christian communities preparing children for Christian living in the wider society' (Parsons, 1994). Similarly, the collective worship was broadly Christian in nature.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, pupils were complaining that the religious education being imparted was dry and irrelevant. In response, religious education specialists suggested re-orienting the aims, methods and content of the classes to make them child-centred and directly relevant to the pupils' lives. Instead of discussing abstract religious concepts or Church and biblical history, a thematic approach informed by developments in the social and behavioural sciences was proposed. In 1966, the West Riding Education Authority presented the first of a new set of Agreed Syllabuses, which in its form and content acknowledged the child's psychological development. A section entitled 'Underlying Principles' mandated that the material must relate to life as experienced, and prompted teachers to address spiritual voids and encourage shared faith encounters. Other LEAs followed suit, and many began incorporating units on world religions and even non-religious philosophies. Yet despite placing the child at the centre of the curriculum, and the putative commitment to openness, the new approach to religious education basically remained Christian in orientation, seeking to foster a Christian outlook.

Two crucial changes in British society during the late 1960s and the 1970s gave rise to a different conception of religious education. The first was the growth of secularism, attested to by declining church attendance and ritual practice (Cook & Stevenson, 1996). The second, discussed above, was the rise of the multi-ethnic multi-faith society. The mainline Christian groups no longer dominated religious life, having been joined by an array of other denominations, especially Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism, and smaller sects such as the Mormons. In areas where the population was highly diverse, the presentation of religion in purely Christian terms clearly conflicted with the assumptions of the 1944 Education Act.

There was increasing demand, both by the minorities themselves and by others, that the religious education syllabus be changed to reflect this diversity, in the hope that this would facilitate greater understanding and tolerance of the non-Christian communities. The task of the teacher, it was now argued, was 'to portray a variety of religious positions and religious beliefs sympathetically, displaying an imaginative grasp of their significance, content and claims while not advocating one religious tradition rather than another' (Parsons, 1994). Religious education fast came to be conceived as an academic discipline much like any other school subject, and the cultivation of Christianity was replaced by a commitment to multiculturalism and religious pluralism (Wright, 1993).

How did Anglo-Jewry respond to the changing nature of religious education in State schools? Under the 1944 Education Act, parents were permitted to withdraw their children from religious education classes to receive instruction in their own denomination. Secondary schools were to provide facilities for this activity if the transfer of the children to a venue outside the school premises was impractical. By the early 1950s, the LBJRE had taken advantage of this clause and established 'withdrawal classes' for over 3,000 children in some 25 schools. By 1975, however, these classes had declined in number dramatically, with only eight centres, attended by some 680 pupils, remaining operative (Ziderman, 1989). The LBJRE attributed this decline to the new religious education syllabus, since its neutral, multi-faith approach challenged the legitimacy of withdrawing children from classes that no longer inculcated Christian beliefs (Biennial Report of LBJRE, 1977). Obviously, though, much of the decline resulted from the fact that many parents were no longer enrolling their children in non-denominational State schools, preferring, as discussed above, either Independent schools or voluntary-aided Jewish day schools.

Some were pleased by the new approach. A number of Jewish teachers at non-denominational State schools spoke out in favour of the change, asserting that the new religious education succeeded in being positive about all faiths and conducive to empathy and tolerance. Two Jewish religious education teachers at a secondary school in multiracial Bedford declared: 'We would be horrified if our Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh children withdrew from Religious Education. We welcome and enjoy their contribution to the subject. We hope that all of them will gain some insight into each other's beliefs and be strengthened in their own' (Canter and Walker to Jewish Chronicle, 1980). Parents who had formerly been reluctant to single their children out by having them withdraw from religious education classes were more comfortable with the non-dogmatic, values-free approach to religious education. And some members of the Jewish educational establishment viewed the new approach favourably. Clive Lawton, chairperson of the Board of Deputies' Youth and Education Committee and former principal of the Liverpool Jewish high school, predicted that it would engender in some Jewish children a more positive attitude to their Judaism because it was 'validated in a non-Jewish environment'. Moreover, the academic–objective, as opposed to confessional–doctrinal, nature of the syllabus, meant that instead of being 'preached at', these children would be taught their tradition in a 'more palatable way' (Lawton & Sless, 1982).

Other educators felt differently. Some preferred the traditional approach to religious education, arguing that the withdrawal classes had been an opportunity to provide an affirmative, values-orientated Jewish education to children who would otherwise receive no Jewish education at all (Ingram and Manasseh to Jewish Chronicle, 1982). Fred Worms, a lay leader of the community's education effort and a governor of the North London Collegiate School for Girls, an Independent school, expressed satisfaction when the new principal of that school announced a more Christian focus to the religious education lessons. This enabled him to organise parallel classes, similarly committed to inculcating religious principles, for Jewish children (Worms, 1996). Indeed, the LBJRE sought to open new withdrawal-type classes in Independent schools with high Jewish enrolment, suggesting that it was cognisant of the growth in the number of Jewish pupils attending these schools, and aware that many were continuing to teach old-style religious education as a means of imparting Christianity.

The *Education Reform Act, 1988*, stimulated spirited discussion of religious education in State schools. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, then principal of Jews' College, addressed the subject on BBC Radio's 'Thought for the Day'; his remarks were soon invoked by Chief Rabbi Jakobovits during a debate in the House of Lords. Rabbi Sacks critiqued the world faiths syllabus as superficial, as a 'touch of Christianity, a dash of Judaism, a slice of Islam', arguing that this approach failed to recognise that 'only one faith resonates with personal meaning: the faith of our community [whatever faith it be], our culture, our family, our past' (Sacks, 1988). He preferred a return to the policy whereby each denomination was permitted to teach its own religious doctrines. Sacks recalled his childhood experience at a local school, where the religious education had been Christian: 'The effect of this schooling on our Jewish identity was curious. It made us, of course, acutely aware that we were different. But because those around us were taking their religion seriously, it made us consider Judaism seriously too.' Chief Rabbi Jakobovits concurred with this opinion, and attacked the neutral–pluralistic approach to religious education. He proposed that instead of employing religiously indifferent teachers, religiously committed educators be hired to teach pupils of their own faiths. 'Effective religious instruction can no more be administered by and to persons of a different faith than can a blood transfusion be safely given without first ensuring blood-group compatibility. Indiscriminate mixing of blood can prove dangerous and so can the mixing of faiths in education' (Sacks, 1988).

The Education Reform Act established a national curriculum that set out attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements for basic subjects. Such specifications for religious education, however, were not included. Rather, syllabuses agreed on by a Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) were to be reviewed by the LEAs (Rose, 1988). The SACREs were to have the same four constituent groups as the Agreed Syllabus conferences set out in the 1944 Education Act, namely, representatives of the Church of England; other religious denominations deemed appropriate by the LEA; the LEA; and the teachers' association. The Act stated that religious education should 'reflect the fact that religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account

of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'.

Within a few years, however, even this comparative approach to religious education, and the much weakened primacy accorded to Christian input vis-à-vis curriculum, was deemed insufficiently pluralistic, and subjected to further modification. In 1994, the Department of Education's School Curriculum and Assessment Authority published two model syllabuses that reflected the authority's views on how religious education was to be interpreted under the 1988 Act. The two models were very similar and essentially covered the teachings of the six predominant religions in Great Britain: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. It has been claimed that the syllabuses represent 'a significant step forward in acknowledging the multi-faith nature of British society', and are of considerable pedagogic merit, allowing students to learn from religion in addition to learning about religion (Hobson & Edwards, 1999). But they have also elicited criticism. The study of religions separately, critics have argued, is overly descriptive and unimaginative, and fails to challenge the students as would a comparative approach. It has also been faulted for not inviting students to reflect on their own understanding of spirituality, and for ignoring secular–humanist perspectives. In any event, the syllabuses clearly seek to minimise the number of children withdrawn from religious education classes. At the annual meeting of the SACREs in 2001, it was claimed that the nature of the agreed syllabuses has had the effect of reducing the number of withdrawals to an 'extremely small number' (Qualification and Curriculum Authority, 2001).

In response to these changes in the teaching of religious education in state-maintained schools, the relevant Anglo-Jewish bodies have redirected their efforts. Rather than providing withdrawal facilities for Jewish children, they now focus on ensuring that the study materials on Judaism will adequately convey the spirit and teachings of Judaism.[7] The Board of Deputies of British Jews has assumed responsibility for this effort, providing resources and educational materials. It has encouraged members of the Jewish community to take an active part in their local SACREs, to ensure that Jews are well represented.[8] When contrasted with the activities of the LBJRE in the 1950s and 1960s, such efforts highlight the changed role of communal agencies in the wake of multi-faith education in non-denominational State schools. The community realised it could no longer provide a forum – withdrawal classes – for nurturing Jewish identity in Jewish pupils in the non-denominational State schools, as it had in the past. It would instead need to ensure that instruction about Judaism supplied to the entire student body as part of the general curriculum did justice to the community, its faith and its values.

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[7] Neil Levitan, Coordinator, Jewish Activities in Mainstream Schools (JAMS) for the United Jewish Israel Appeal (UK), pointed out in a personal communication (February 2009) that in some schools, Jewish agencies also provide informal activities for Jewish pupils in non-classroom settings.

[8] Hannah Ashleigh, Education Projects Manager, Board of Deputies of British Jews, articulated this approach in correspondence (March 2009).

Conclusions

One conclusion to be drawn from this study is that neither the communal agenda, the objectives set by the state authorities, nor the wider social, cultural, political and economic context determined the prevailing mode of Jewish education in post-Second World War England. Rather, it was the parental agenda that determined what form the delivery of most Jewish education would take. From the end of the war until the mid-1960s, neither generous governmental subsidies for day school education, nor the poor quality and general unpopularity of supplementary Jewish education, sufficed to persuade many Anglo-Jewish parents to send their children to day schools. Exceptions to this general rule included the *Charedi* community, the strictly-Orthodox community led by Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld, and some working-class inner-city parents who were unhappy with the educational level of their local State schools. The provision of separate instruction in Judaism within the framework of non-denominational State schools, we also saw, made very little difference with respect to parental educational choices.

What determined parental choice of an educational framework was not, then, the Jewish institutional–communal agenda, which endorsed maximal Jewish education for its own sake, nor the governmental agenda, which sought to create a non-tiered educational system to equalise opportunity for all, but rather, the Jewish *parental* agenda. Initially, parents sought to ensure their children's integration into British society and the middle class, and later, when this was taken for granted, into the professional classes. Also important was ensuring that their children's affiliation with the Jewish community was maintained. When comprehensive education was introduced, they did not accept it, but sought ways to preserve selective high-level secular education, even if that meant embracing denominational education, or paying for Independent schools. The unintended side effect was that, for the many parents who chose Jewish day schools, this entailed giving their children a better quality Jewish education – the very outcome sought by the communal leadership, but previously ignored by parents. The Jewish parental agenda persisted despite changes in the funding and organisation of the broader educational system. Though the state system endeavoured to provide a modicum of religious education, the same parents who were satisfied by minimal Jewish education in the pre-comprehensive era, nonetheless – when they feared their goal of facilitating high academic achievement for their children was in jeopardy – abandoned state education and shifted towards denominational education with a fairly substantial religious studies component. They were not driven by the rabbinical–communal agenda of imparting Jewish education to preserve religious observance and communal continuity, but by their own agenda of maximising quality secular education.

Another conclusion to be drawn from our survey of the main parameters of Jewish schooling in England is that overall, the profile of community–state relations in the field of education has been positive. The Jewish community, like other major denominations, has – to a degree unparalleled in other Diaspora Jewish communities – benefited from considerable state largesse in day school funding. Although funding is contingent upon meeting stringent national and local

educational standards, once these standards have been met the schools have flourished, producing impressive academic results as well as imparting meaningful Jewish experiences and an acceptable to high-level Jewish education.

Third, due to the constraints imposed by the acceptance of state aid in the provision of denominational education, Anglo-Jewish education must be attuned to educational imperatives adopted by the state. In the wake of multiculturalism and the embrace of diversity, the past 20 years have seen substantial changes in the delivery of religious education in non-denominational State schools, as well as in the demands made of voluntary-aided denominational schools. The community will continue to straddle the twin mandates of adhering to national and local educational directives, and providing affordable Jewish education. For *Charedi* Jews, the walls between their community and society at large remain particularly high in the realm of education. Nevertheless, due to the community's rapid expansion, the growing strain on its financial resources has in some cases led the ultra-Orthodox to seek state support for their schools. *Charedi* leaders remain ambivalent about state support, as it comes with strings attached that some perceive as undermining communal mores.

At the same time, the Jewish schools will have to be vigilant in ensuring that they continue to fulfil a third and equally or perhaps more important mandate: satisfying the educational aspirations of Anglo-Jewish parents for their children. In the final analysis, we have seen, apart from the strictly- and fervently-Orthodox sectors, the chief concern of Anglo-Jewish parents has generally not been the Jewish education imparted to their children. Most parents have been willing to be flexible as to the quality and quantity of Jewish knowledge acquired by their children, but consistently seek the highest quality secular education accessible to them.[9] Synthesising the foregoing, we can predict that should demographic developments and government funding policies impel widespread opening of places at Jewish day schools to children of other faiths – a scenario that could create parental apprehension, warranted or not, as to the schools' ability to sustain a high academic level – the popularity of day schools may yet wane.

The debates over faith schools and the religious education curriculum in non-denominational schools illustrate that Britain remains uncertain as to the extent to which multiculturalism should be mandated. Some contend that faith schools support disadvantaged populations, solidify their pupils' identity, and encourage a mosaic of British identity. Others view them as divisive and conducive to insularity and bigotry. Common schools, these critics claim, would strengthen inter-group solidarity and the overall social fibre. But both Britain's major political parties, the Conservatives and New Labour, have expressed commitment to parental choice in education. They are committed to educational diversity and recognise a historic debt to faith schools. It thus seems unlikely there will be a challenge to the continued existence of these schools in the immediate future. On the other hand, calls

[9] At least one study has found that very recently, some parents have begun to take the quality of their children's Jewish education more seriously, see Miller, 2007.

to reform these schools vis-à-vis the imparting of multicultural values, admission of children of other faiths or no faith, and interaction with other schools, may result in legislation that challenges their present autonomy.

Despite the significant increase in the study of Anglo-Jewish education during the last 30 years, much room remains for further research. Given the enormous expansion of Jewish day school education and the fact that by now, many of the graduates of these schools have reached adulthood, it is to be regretted that so little empirical research has been undertaken to assess the impact of this framework on individuals and the community. Although much philanthropic and communal funding has been channelled to day school education, surprisingly little effort has been made to measure its efficacy vis-à-vis transmission of Jewish knowledge and values. Another area yet to receive in-depth examination is that of day school curricula, syllabuses and textbooks. Study of these tools would allow researchers to uncover and deconstruct the underlying ideological and educational commitments of the various organisations that establish Jewish day schools. A comparative study of the teaching of subjects such as Bible, Talmud, and Israel across different schools would provide much insight into the respective organisations' philosophical and socio-cultural assumptions. A further lacuna in Anglo-Jewish educational research is informal education, which has yet to be adequately studied. It is likely that this is to some extent due to the inherent nature of the youth group environment, in which the experiential dimension is key, and the importance of measuring and documenting educational impact is not emphasised. Some scholarly attention has been paid to the Zionist youth movements, but given the strong impact of this mode of education, as attested to by its graduates' subsequent life choices, far more research remains to be done. In conclusion, Jewish education in England is a fertile area for further research, not only in and of itself, but also due to its historic influence on the former Commonwealth communities.

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Australia: The Jewel in the Crown of Jewish Education

Paul Forgasz and Miriam Munz

Setting the Context

Jews were present in Australia from the very beginning of European settlement in 1788, when a fleet of ships arrived bearing a contingent of British convicts, of whom at least eight were Jewish. (Rutland, 1997). The history of the first four decades of Australian Jewish life is, in fact, not the history of a community but one of individual Jewish convicts. It was only with the arrival of the first free Jewish settlers during the late 1820s that we see the beginnings of organised Jewish communal life, regarding which Rutland (1997) observes, "The close ties the early Jewish settlers had with leading Anglo-Jewish families imprinted the English pattern of Jewish practice on Australian Jewry and this influence was to remain strong throughout the nineteenth century" (p. 49). But she also notes that during this period "Australian Jewry continued to be plagued by the problems of low levels of religious observance, poor standards of Jewish education, and the pressures of integration into the general community" (p. 75). In fact, by the 1920s things had deteriorated to a point where, according to Rubinstein (1986), "the near disappearance of the Anglo-Saxon Jewish community by assimilation seemed almost inevitable within a few generations" (pp. 61–62).

However, the arrival on Australian shores of thousands of European refugees and Holocaust survivors after World War II radically transformed the face of Jewish community life in Australia, both demographically and in terms of a prevailing Jewish mind-set and value system. These migrants also played a key role in cementing within the Australian Jewish community a strong and lasting sense of commitment to Israel and Zionism. Not surprisingly, Rubinstein (1986) writes that "by 1950 Australian Jewry was very different from what it had been 15 years before" (p. 70). Indeed, the legacy of this dramatic post-war development is reflected today

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in a remarkable array of organisations and facilities which cater to the religious, cultural, welfare and varied leisure needs of Australian Jews. However, for Rubinstein (1986, 1991), the most significant change that came over the Jewish community in Australia was the emergence of a Jewish day school system which he regards as "entirely novel and entirely the product of the post-World War II period" (1986, p. 71). In fact, he goes so far as to suggest that Australia's Jewish day school system is "the 'jewel in the crown' of post war Jewish experience" (1991, p. 211). Moreover, he argues, it is this "which gives Australian Jewry its special international distinction, and which is, possibly more than any other factor, responsible for the evolution of the type of community that has arisen here since 1945" (p. 211). He also views the success of the day school movement as "unique among any ethnic minority in Australia" (p. 240). In view of this, we have chosen to focus our discussion on the Jewish day school movement in Australia.

Historical Evolution of Australian Jewish Day Schools[1]

Australian Jewish day schools operate today within the larger framework of a well-developed private school system which includes independent schools associated with various religious affiliations or particular educational philosophies as well as a separate Catholic parish school system. In fact, private schooling existed from the earliest days of European settlement in Australia, when education was provided by state-supported denominational schools. However, by mid nineteenth century, state-administered non-denominational public schools had been established, as well as a separate denominational school board which administered government funds to church schools and a tiny number of Jewish schools. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, each of the colonial (state) governments expanded their systems of public schooling and between 1872 and 1895 passed the "free, compulsory and secular" Education Acts which made primary (elementary) education a state responsibility and stopped most financial assistance to church schools. Nevertheless, a residual system of private schooling continued, composed mainly of Catholic parish schools and Protestant grammar schools. In the decades that followed the federation of the individual colonies in 1901, Church leaders campaigned for the restoration of state aid and, as Angus (2003) notes, "by the 1950s there was bipartisan political support for the resumption of some form of government support" (p. 113); furthermore, "since the 1970s state funding of private schools has been a fact of Australian life" (p. 112). This had the effect of energising the private sector and encouraged a remarkable growth of private schools, including a diverse and robust Jewish day school system.

The first day schools in Sydney and Melbourne were established during the latter half of the nineteenth century in response to expressions of concern about the

[1]The brief historical overview which follows is based on a number of more extensive accounts of the development of Jewish education in Australia. In particular, see Rubinstein (1991); Rutland (1997, 2000); Conyer (1998).

lack of adequate Jewish educational facilities. However, by the end of the century they had closed their doors, plagued as they were by a lack of community support and the withdrawal of government aid. Almost 50 years later, Abraham Rabinovitch founded the North Bondi Jewish Day School in 1942, which was then established as Moriah College in 1953. Rabinovitch remained its president until his death in 1964, exercising autocratic control over a school which operated along narrow Orthodox lines. Consequently it attracted the support of only a very small number of mainly refugee immigrant families. Conyer (1998) observes that because the Board of Deputies, the representative body of Jews in New South Wales, "was not a party to the school, the school was never considered nor regarded as a project of the community for the community" (p. 333). It was not until the 1970s that the Jewish day school movement in Sydney showed any real signs of expansion. In fact, the development of a highly successful day school movement occurred first within the Melbourne Jewish community which witnessed the growth of a number of day schools during the 1950s and beyond. Australian Jewish day school education is thus aptly described by Solomon (1973) as a "post war phenomenon" (p. 169).

Mount Scopus College was Melbourne's first post-war Jewish day school. A birth child of the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies (VJBD), the representative body of Victorian Jewry, it opened its doors in 1949. What is particularly fascinating about the school as a case study in the development of Jewish day school education is that it was created by the community for the community. Of particular interest are various issues which dominated debates at VJBD meetings and in the community at large regarding the creation of a community-based day school:

- The desirability of segregating Jewish children from the wider society.
- Would the creation of such a school foster anti-Semitism?
- The question of whether religious instruction should be compulsory. Although it was eventually decided that it should be, there was debate about what form of religious instruction would be acceptable to all. Following many discussions and formal debates, the wording agreed upon in the school's 1947 constitution was that "Jewish religious instruction shall be based on traditional lines but shall be taught in a modern way" (cited in Patkin, 1972, p. 126). Although potentially this was open to manifold interpretations, from its inception the school adopted a stance which Rubinstein (1991) describes as "'soft' but observant Orthodoxy" (p. 222).
- Given that the VJBD contained vigorous and vocal Yiddish speakers, there was considerable debate over whether Yiddish should be made compulsory alongside Hebrew and religious instruction. Although the decision was negative, it was agreed that provision would be made for its teaching for those who desired it.

Mount Scopus emerged as one of the great success stories of Jewish education not only in Australia, but throughout the Diaspora. Referring to a report that was presented to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry Annual Conference in 1958, Rutland (1997) outlines the reasons identified by its author as accounting for the school's initial success. First, the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 led to a

strengthening of Jewish identity among Jews throughout the Diaspora. In addition, the stream of Eastern European Holocaust survivors who migrated to Melbourne during the 1950s brought with them a strong desire to replicate the intensity of Jewish life that had characterised pre-war Poland. It was also suggested that a reason for the school's success was

> the fact that by clever but dignified propaganda of Jewish education, it has became gradually fashionable and "the proper thing to do", as were "endeavours to make Jewish teaching more attractive by furnishing brighter classrooms, employing enthusiastic teachers, and introducing modern and appealing curricula". (cited in Rutland, 1997, p. 349)

Beginning with an enrolment of 120 in 1949, school numbers rose dramatically in the following years, reaching a peak of more than 2,600 by the mid-1980s. An important reason for the school's continuing appeal was, and still is, the achievement of consistently high scholastic standards, especially at year 12: a factor which also accounts for strong levels of parental support across most Australian Jewish day schools.

Although Mount Scopus was set up as a school for the community, a succession of ideologically diverse day schools began to spring up in Melbourne in the wake of its establishment, clearly indicating that various sectors of the community did not feel that their needs were being adequately met. During the 1950s, Chabad established Yeshiva and Beth Rivka, a day school for boys and girls respectively, and the Adass Israel School was set up by the predominantly Hungarian ultra-Orthodox community. In 1962 the Mizrachi organisation established Yavneh College as a religious Zionist day school. The 1960s also saw the Bialik kindergarten and supplementary Hebrew language school emerge as a secular Zionist day school but in which teaching about the Jewish religion was included. According to Israel Kipen, one of the school's founders, what set it apart was that "in many other Jewish schools, Jewish culture is considered a part of the Jewish religion while at Bialik the Jewish religion is considered a part of the overall Jewish culture" (Rubinstein, 1991, p. 226). Perhaps alluding to the ideological debates which surrounded the establishment of Mount Scopus, Kipen also claimed that Bialik was not founded "in a haze as was the case when Scopus started" (Rutland, 2000, p. 81). The 1970s saw the Progressive (Reform) Jewish community coming into its own when it established The King David School. As Conyer (1998, p. 332) notes, however, it "was met with strong resistance by the community at large, headed by the Orthodox mainstream leadership". Even the local Jewish press adopted "a policy of virtually boycotting any positive reporting of the school" (p. 332). Finally, during the mid-1970s the Yiddishist/Bundist community established the Sholem Aleichem School as a Yiddish kindergarten and primary school, building on the foundation of two part-time Yiddish schools. Thus, a particularly remarkable aspect of Melbourne's day schools is that they represent the full ideological spectrum of the Jewish world, from ultra-Orthodox to secular Yiddishist. This reflects the ideological divisions which exist within the Melbourne Jewish community itself, a product in large measure of the diversity that characterised Jewish life in interwar Poland.

The success enjoyed by the day school movement in Melbourne was much slower in coming to Sydney. Mention has already been made of the internal problems that plagued Sydney's first post-war Jewish day school. Unlike Mount Scopus College, it failed to attract broad-based communal support. Nor did the establishment during the 1960s of Masada College on Sydney's North Shore and of the Yeshiva primary school do much to boost total enrolments in Sydney's day school system. In considering the evolution of Sydney's day school movement, account must be taken of the demographic makeup of Sydney Jewry. Whereas Jewish life in Melbourne was dramatically transformed by a significant post-war influx of Eastern European Jewish migrants, Sydney's Jewish immigrant community consisted of what Rutland (2000) describes as "the more assimilated and culturally sophisticated remnants of Western and Central Europe" (p. 78). Conyer (1998) thus suggests that Sydney's "history of immigration meant that a primarily Anglo-Australian culture dominated the community. The competition between competing ideologies, a characteristic of Melbourne, was never a primary motivating force for the community. Furthermore, this highly Anglicised community preferred to be less conspicuous and therefore were (*sic*) more hesitant about the creation of a distinctive day school" (p. 332).[2]

However, during the late 1960s, Sydney's day school movement underwent a dramatic transformation. Abraham Rabinowitch, who had maintained an autocratic stranglehold over Moriah College for more than two decades, passed away in 1964. Under the leadership of a new principal the school went from strength to strength, with enrolment numbers growing to a point where Moriah eventually overtook Mount Scopus as the largest Jewish day school in Australia. In fact, the latter has experienced a progressive decline in enrolments since the late 1980s. During the 1970s and 1980s Sydney's Yeshiva primary school was expanded to include both a boys' and a girls' secondary (high) school. In 1981 Mount Sinai College opened as a modern Orthodox primary school in Sydney's south-eastern suburbs. Following the lead of Melbourne's King David School, The Emanuel School was established in 1983 as Sydney's first Progressive Jewish day school. Furthermore, this whole period witnessed a remarkable increase in the overall rate of day school enrolments.

According to Rutland (1997, 2000) there are a number of factors that account for this success. There was a visible strengthening of Jewish identity in the wake of the 1967 and 1973 Arab/Israeli Wars. This was also a period during which the government adopted multiculturalism as official government policy and as Rutland (2000) notes, this "made the idea of separate ethnic and religious schools more acceptable" (p. 83). The increase in Jewish day school enrolments was also part of a developing and continuing trend within the wider community, characterised by a growing loss of confidence in government schools and a corresponding increase in private-school enrolments. At the same time, the expansion of Jewish schools was aided

[2]Solomon (1978) argues that from the outset the Melbourne Jewish community was more conscious of its Jewish minority identity. Thus, with the removal of state aid from denominational schools in the late nineteenth century, the Sydney Jewish community closed its day school but the one in Melbourne continued for a further 25 years.

by the provision since the early 1960s of generous levels of government funding to private schools. As had been the case in Melbourne, new waves of Jewish immigration – to some extent from the Soviet Union, but more so from South Africa – also had a considerable impact on the growth of Sydney Jewish day schools, especially Masada College. The South Africans were particularly strong supporters of these schools because, as Rutland (1997) points out, they

> brought with them a strong belief in the day school movement, a belief which is largely a product of their homogenous Lithuanian background. . .In addition, the very nature of South African society tends to encourage groups to be introverted, while the fear of intermarriage is also a strong motivating factor. (pp. 371–372).

Mention must also be made of developments in the smaller centres of Jewish population. In Perth, Carmel College was established in 1959 but suffered initially from a lack of community support which was driven by issues relating to segregation and the school's educational standards. However, this resistance was overcome because of a concerted effort to employ quality teachers and because people were also influenced by the success of the day school movement in Melbourne. A wave of South African migration to Perth impacted very positively on the growth of Carmel, presently regarded as one of the leading academic schools in Perth. Nevertheless, one particularly contentious issue which hangs over the school is the policy of not accepting children of mothers who have converted to Judaism through the Progressive movement. Beyond Perth, Jewish primary day schools have been established in what might be regarded as the more marginal centres of Australian Jewish life – Adelaide, Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

Today there are 21 Jewish day schools throughout Australia, 12 of them operating from K-12 and serving an estimated total Jewish population of 107,000. About 60% of Jewish children in Australia receive a full-time Jewish education; approximately 70% of the total Jewish preschool age population is enrolled in Jewish preschools.[3] Through a roof body structure, the Australian Council for Jewish Schools, the day schools have developed a well-coordinated and highly effective approach to negotiating the intricate complexities of government funding of private schools. The principals have also formed their own association, the role of which is to provide a forum for cooperation between the schools regarding matters of common concern.

While Australia's Jewish day school movement may well lay claim to being "the 'jewel in the crown' of post war Jewish experience" (p. 211), the success of Jewish education in Australia extends beyond the day school movement.[4] A significant

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[3]See Rubinstein (1991) and Rutland (2000) for a more detailed analysis of enrolment patterns and statistics, though these are now dated.

[4]Moreover, Rutland (2000) suggests that Jewish day school education has not been an unqualified success story. She refers to two studies regarding the effectiveness of "mainstream Jewish day schools" that were undertaken during the 1980s and "reached fairly negative conclusions" (p. 95). Rutland also argues that apart from the *haredi* schools, the others succeed more in terms of fostering Jewish association, commitment to Israel and knowledge about the Holocaust, but fare less well in the transmission of knowledge about Judaism and Hebrew language. She also claims that

number of children who do not receive a full-time Jewish education participate in a creative mix of both formal and informal programmes of supplementary Jewish education under the auspices of local boards of Jewish education. In Melbourne, the United Jewish Education Board (UJEB) provides after-school and Sunday classes for students at non-Jewish schools. It also provides Jewish religious education classes in 40 Victorian primary state schools for half an hour per week. The equivalent organisation in Sydney is the Board of Jewish Education (BJE).[5] The difference between the two organisations is that both the BJE and the NSW Board of Progressive Jewish Education are funded by the Jewish Communal Appeal (JCA): whereas UJEB operates on a far smaller budget funded by donors whose loyalty is mainly directed to the day schools their own children and grandchildren attend. The BJE has also managed to develop a professional staff, act as a resource centre for the Jewish day schools and supply distance education to rural and regional areas in New South Wales.

Beyond the classroom, informal Jewish education of Australian youth is served by a diverse network of mainly Zionist youth movements which also maintain a presence in a number of the day schools.[6]

Challenges Confronting Jewish Day Schools

In 2009 Jewish education in Australia stands at critical crossroads in view of the many and varied challenges which confront it. In some cases, these challenges mirror those facing other Jewish communities throughout the world. In others, the challenges are particular to religious and ethnic schools in largely secular Australia.

Sustaining Jewish Day School Enrolments

Affordability

Every discussion with significant stakeholders in the Jewish school system concludes that affordability is and will be the greatest challenge to Jewish education in Australia. As Nechama Bendet, chairperson of the Victorian Council of Jewish Schools, points out, school costs increase annually at twice the rate of the consumer price index.[7] Jewish schools must maintain buildings, pay for security and

"many students complete 13 years of Jewish schooling feeling disillusioned and negative about their experiences" (p. 96).

[5] In addition to UJEB and BJE classes, the Progressive movement and individual Chabad Centres offer after-school and Sunday classes.

[6] See Rubinstein (1991) and Rutland (1997, 2000) for descriptions of other aspects of Jewish education in Australia. Forgasz and Jones Pellach (2006) discuss the phenomenal success in Australia of the Florence Melton adult Jewish education programme.

[7] Interviewed 10 November 2008

ensure that they are at the cutting edge of educational initiatives, both Jewish and general, since they compete with top academic private schools. In fact, it is the recognised academic excellence, the variety of subjects, the committed teachers and the sophisticated facilities which play a significant role in attracting parental support for Jewish schools. Additionally, Jewish schools have to bear the cost of paying for a dual curriculum and a longer than usual Australian school day.

In 2009, parents pay between 22,000AUD and 25,000AUD (17,000USD – 19,500USD) in fees for a year-12 student. Given that this comes out of after-tax income, even successful professionals earning a 250,000AUD (195,000USD) pre-tax income will struggle to pay fees for their three or four children and maintain the lifestyle they have come to expect. The current economic downturn, combined with the large mortgages people take to live in Jewish centres of population, means that applications for fee assistance are being made by people who, 5 years ago, would not have needed to ask for help. In fact, all Jewish school fees include an element of subsidisation, with the money allocated to needier families built into fee schedules. Thus parents, already struggling to pay, carry the burden of others' fee remissions. The concern is that the middle band of families, those falling between the wealthy and those who qualify for support, will be pushed out of the system. In fact, the UJEB manager, Yossi Aron,[8] believes there is evidence of families in Melbourne opting out of Jewish day school education. In 2007, 927 students accessed religious education classes in government primary schools. In 2008, 1,010 were enrolled and for 2009 figures show a further increase. Many of these students will never enter a Jewish day school.[9]

While there is widespread agreement that one of the priorities of communal funding should be to make Jewish education more affordable, there are differing views regarding how this should be done. Johnny Baker (2006), a past president of Mount Scopus College argues for an amalgamation of Melbourne's four coeducational Jewish secondary schools which, he believes, would save on infrastructure and staffing. He also argues that the sale of some of these schools' real estate holdings would realise sufficient money for a communal fund, the size of which could encourage philanthropists to donate additional money towards fee assistance. However, Jeffrey Mahemoff,[10] a past president of Bialik College, argues that upon closer examination costs don't diminish significantly when schools are merged to create a mega-school. He also predicts that there is a risk that parents, denied their preferred ideological choice of Jewish school, would send their children to a non-Jewish private or government school. Mahemoff's proposal is that philanthropists

[8] Interviewed 18 November 2008

[9] Transfers from the day schools often occur at grades 2 and 3 when a family's second child may begin school and parents decide that paying the fees is beyond their means. There is a tendency for quite a number of parents to send their children to very good government primary schools, using the money they save during these years to send their children to Jewish secondary schools. For many years the trend was to favour Jewish primary day school education, but social reasons have played an important role in influencing parents to give priority to Jewish secondary schooling.

[10] Interviewed 25 November 2008

with significant wealth should create a substantial endowment, say 250 million AUD, the interest from which would cover the shortfall in the fees collected every year by Jewish schools. But this also requires strategic and centralised communal planning, an area in which Melbourne lags far behind Sydney.

In Sydney, where the JCA has initiated moves to coordinate resources between schools so that funding is not spent on purchasing commodities that can be shared, the schools are transparent in their budgeting so that existing projects are not duplicated. The JCA also designates funds to schools to subsidise students whose families cannot afford fees and additional costs. It is interesting that in 2003–2004 there was a move to amalgamate Mount Sinai College, a modern Orthodox primary school, with the Emanuel School, a Progressive K-12 school. However, the amalgamation did not go ahead because the Mount Sinai leadership wanted Emanuel to adopt all of Mount Sinai's Orthodox norms rather than the community-inclusive norms it had adopted. Many Mount Sinai families also maintained that Emanuel was not "Jewish enough" and demonstrated a strong sense of historic loyalty to their school's ongoing existence in its own right. Indeed, much of the encouragement for the merger came from the JCA which saw this as an opportunity to rationalise resources when student numbers in both schools had been falling.

Demographics

Any number of the first and second post-World War II generations made sacrifices to support their children through a Jewish school. Current and future generations did not arrive in Australia having suffered for their Jewish identity. They did not have to succeed in spite of adversity as did their grandparents and great-grandparents, and as a post-Holocaust generation, they may not have the same understanding about the importance of Judaism. Consequently, their motivation, commitment and passion for Jewish education cannot be assumed as a given. Indeed, a potential threat to the maintenance of strong enrolments are parents who can afford to pay for private schooling but choose to send their children to a non-Jewish private school. For those for whom Jewish education might mean sacrificing a luxury holiday or a larger home, if they have to choose between a good government school and a great Jewish day school, then good could become good enough. Added to all this is the fact that beyond the ultra-Orthodox community, young people marry later and have fewer children. This, combined with a growing intermarriage rate, will impact on Jewish school enrolments.

Growing Jewish School Leaders, Training Jewish School Teachers

Today, day school principals cite Jewish studies teacher recruitment as their most serious and perennial issue. This is not a new phenomenon. The first generation of Jewish studies teachers in Jewish day schools was largely educated in Europe prior

to World War II. Although Jewishly well educated, they were hardly able to deal with a post-Holocaust Australian school reality. The second generation included a large number of *shlichim*, "emissary" teachers from Israel employed on temporary contracts of 3–4 years' duration. However, they often found it difficult to bridge the cultural divide between the Israeli and Australian realities, and were generally not effective in the Australian classroom. Currently, the Jewish knowledge of many homegrown teachers is quite poor. Yet others, perhaps educated in a seminary or Yeshiva, do not possess the pedagogical tools for transmitting their knowledge.

Leibler Yavneh College is the only school in Melbourne that continues to employ *shlichim* teachers as a matter of course. Currently there are seven *shlichim* employed at different levels throughout the school. They inject a strong connection to the land of Israel as well as fill the very real need for Jewish studies and Hebrew teachers. But since the *shlichim* are only contracted to work for 3 years, there is a problem with continuity, apart from longstanding issues of adaptation to Australian school mores and culture.

There is no simple formula for producing good Jewish studies teachers. The Jewish community, in general, does not regard education as a prestigious career and sees no status attached to being a teacher. For many, the lack of status is reflected in relatively low teacher salaries, especially when compared to other professions. The irony is that many Jewish studies teachers struggle to send their children to Jewish schools based on the salaries they earn. At the same time there is no defined career structure or pathway for Jewish studies educators.

In Sydney, a structured programme for training Jewish studies teachers has been in place since 1990 at the University of Sydney, and in Melbourne a similar arrangement was put in place in 1996 at Monash University. Both programmes were integrated into the framework of the education programmes offered by the respective universities. Graduates with a major in Jewish studies or Hebrew could complete a teaching qualification with method training in those subject areas. In fact, many of those graduating from these two programmes have been employed by Jewish day schools. However, the overall impact of these programmes has been relatively limited owing to the very small number of students who have expressed an interest in pursuing a career in Jewish education. In an attempt to address the teacher shortage, the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University is planning to introduce a "Judaic Scholars Teaching Fellowship" for high-calibre students who have completed an undergraduate program in Jewish studies. Successful candidates will undertake a 2-year programme of study combining a Graduate Diploma in Education with a Masters in Judaic Studies.

Roy Steinman, Principal of Leibler Yavneh College, moved from Sydney's Moriah College to his current position in Melbourne 2 years ago. Prior to his move he created a scheme through which promising young people, preferably university graduates, were offered generous bursaries to study in Israel for 4 or 5 years. There they would pursue rabbinical studies or some equivalent form of advanced traditional Jewish learning, and also complete a programme at a recognised quality teacher training institute. Upon returning to Sydney, they would be bonded to the

school for 5 years. There are now three such educators at Moriah College. Steinman admits that this is an expensive model, but it is “an investment in the future”.[11]

In addition to the problem of recruiting Jewish studies teachers, the Australian community also suffers from a shortage of quality Jewish educational leaders. Recent appointees to various school principals’ positions have mostly come from overseas. Some school boards have compromised and decided to appoint non-Jewish Principals. However, since it is the school head who acts as a role model and sets the tone of the school, this raises questions about the potentially mixed messages which might be communicated to students. Succession planning for principals, heads of schools, Jewish studies directors and curriculum planners is unstructured and haphazard because of the dearth of suitable candidates. In the smaller communities, beyond the large Jewish population centres of Melbourne and Sydney, all of these issues are greatly magnified. The Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University is currently planning for the introduction of a Masters-level programme in Jewish educational leadership in an attempt to address this situation.

Challenges in Developing the Curriculum

Each day school is responsible for devising its own Jewish studies curriculum in accordance with its particular ideological orientation, a situation that shapes the amount of time devoted to Hebrew language and Jewish studies, and the role of *tefillah* (prayer) and ritual observance.[12] Heads of Jewish studies decide on the direction and content of the curriculum, sometimes in consultation with their principals, though in more strictly Orthodox schools the rabbis of the community are also involved. However, preoccupied as they are with the running of their departments, heads of Jewish studies do not have the time to focus their energies on curriculum development, nor do they necessarily possess the requisite skills to do so. Consequently, over time a number of schools have sought the assistance of curriculum specialists from the Hebrew University’s Melton Centre for Jewish Education or the Lookstein Centre at Bar Ilan University. Mount Scopus College and Moriah College also employed their own in-house curriculum writer for an extended period. Importantly, all these initiatives have also included the provision of related professional development for Jewish studies staff. Such developments have resulted in dramatic improvements to the overall quality of the Jewish studies curriculum and its delivery in individual schools.

With the exception of particular ultra-Orthodox schools, Modern Hebrew is taught as a modern language of communication. For many years Hebrew language education was plagued by an absence of textbooks which provided a coherent and sequential programme of learning. Many teachers also lacked the necessary skills to teach Hebrew as a second language. As a result, over the past decade or so, schools

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[11] Interviewed 17 November 2008

[12] According to Rutland (2000) most schools devote between a quarter to a third of the school day to Jewish studies. A number also allocate additional time for *tefillah*.

have invested considerable energy and resources in their quest to improve the quality of Hebrew language instruction and many have introduced the Tal Am/Tal Sela and NETA programs which appear to have succeeded in addressing the perennial problems that have plagued the teaching of Hebrew. In the case of both programmes, teachers have received intensive and regular professional development so that they fully understand the underlying principles and methodology of the respective programmes. The results of both programmes appear to be encouraging, but perhaps more importantly, they illustrate that cooperative curriculum development can meet the needs of schools of widely different ideologies.

During the late 1980s Mount Scopus College developed a bilingual programme for year 7 and 8 students with a high level of aptitude and interest in Hebrew language. For most of the subjects they undertake, the language of instruction is Hebrew. These students then continue to study Hebrew language in an accelerated track through to year 12. Bialik College also offers a bilingual programme in year 3. When the programme at Bialik began 3 years ago, 20 students chose to participate; today 50 out of 65 students in the level participate.

Zionism represents an ideological centrepiece of most day schools in Australia, this being reflected in a wide range of both formal and informal programmes and activities. Nevertheless, Israel Studies, as a formal part of the curriculum, has been piecemeal and fragmented for many years. However, a recent initiative by the Hebrew University's Melton Centre for Jewish Education and the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) has seen the development of a project which focuses on the educational challenges and dilemmas of creating models for meaningful student engagement with Israel. Its purpose was to help Jewish secondary schools in Australia create new approaches to teaching about contemporary Israel and this occurred within a curriculum development framework that enabled each school to be guided by its own educational goals. Consequently, various schools across the ideological spectrum now incorporate Israel Studies in a variety of ways into their Jewish studies curricula.

However, it is beyond the classroom where schools have experienced the greatest success with Israel and Zionist education. Of particular note are the Zionist seminars which are run in a camp setting by Israeli *madrichim* (youth leaders) as a joint venture of the Youth and Hechalutz department and the ZFA. Apart from the ultra-Orthodox sector, all schools, including the supplementary systems, participate by sending students to the camps and hosting post-camp activities. Mount Scopus College and Leibler Yavneh College also bring four *Sherut Leumi* girls from Israel each year to reinforce the Israel connection in their schools. The girls assist with informal activities, Hebrew conversation, extra study groups, camps and social activities. Bialik College sources three or four post-army personnel through Masorti Olami – the conservative movement in Israel. They, too, work at a myriad of projects and their impact is enormous. Leibler Yavneh College also benefits from a group of *Hesder Yeshivah* students who study in the *Mizrachi Kollel* for a year.

A number of schools offer students the opportunity to participate in an Israel-experience programme towards the end of year 10. In Sydney, Moriah and Masada Colleges offer the 4-week Israel Study Tour organised by the Torah Department

of the World Zionist Organisation. Melbourne's Mount Scopus College has offered three programmes – one of 13 weeks, one of 8 weeks and one of 6 weeks, with more than 50% of year-10 students having travelled to Israel on one of these options. Due to the 2008 downturn in the economy, the current trip is planned for 5 weeks, though sponsorship and donations make it possible for every student who wishes to travel to Israel to do so. Bialik College also offers a year-10 Israel experience with two programmes from which students can choose. However, the offer of travelling on March of the Living to Poland and then to Israel during the first semester of year 11 has impacted on the numbers travelling to Israel in year 10. Within the supplementary system, UJEB and the BJE raise funds to assist enthusiastic students who wish to participate in an Israel-experience programme. In the more orthodox schools individual students can spend time in an Israeli school; but since a year or even two in Israel, is almost a post-year-12 rite of passage, it is not surprising that these schools cannot sustain a group programme at year-10 level.

Given the demographic makeup of Australian Jewry, with its large percentage of *Shoah* survivors, the agenda and character of Jewish life in Australia was for many years largely defined by a post-Holocaust migrant community. Nevertheless, the Holocaust was "taught sporadically and unsystematically through the 1960s and 1970s" (Berman, 2001, p. 79); though beginning with Moriah College during the mid-1970s, schools began progressively to develop units of study about the Holocaust. Thus, as Berman (2001) notes, "by the mid to late 1980s, formal, compulsory study of the Holocaust had become a permanent core topic in the Jewish Studies curricula of most high schools with senior grades" (p. 86). Added to this were the annual emotion-filled *Yom Hashoa* ceremonies conducted by the schools. It is therefore not surprising that for many students, a large number of whom were children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, the *Shoah*, together with Israel, served as the linchpin of their Jewish identity. Yet, Fagenblat, Landua & Wolski (2006) question the wisdom of educational and communal institutions relying "heavily on this darkest of chapters in human history" (p. 11). While understanding that there "are, of course, good and justifiable reasons for this," they also wonder "about the long term consequences of an identity so firmly rooted in pain and suffering . . . By excessively dwelling on the trauma of our identity, we may perhaps unwittingly be narrowing the horizons of our Jewishness in the present" (pp. 11–12). Consequently, as a new generation of Australian Jews is redefining the experience of what it means to be Jewish in Australia, schools will need to confront the challenge of developing an educational agenda that will best prepare students for the development of a twenty-first century Australian Jewish identity.

Researching Jewish Education in Australia

Although Jewish education in Australia has flourished, relatively little research has been carried out. Much of the research undertaken is historical in its focus. In 1972 Solomon completed a doctoral thesis focusing on the development of Jewish education in Australia from 1788 until 1920. Both Rubinstein (1991) and Rutland (1997)

included detailed discussions of the development of Jewish education in their general histories of the Australian Jewish community. Conyer (1998) examined the impact of social phenomena in the broader Australian community on the historical evolution of Australian Jewish education. Useful surveys incorporating both historical and contemporary aspects of Jewish education have been produced by Rutland (2000, 2008). More specific histories of individual schools and their communities appear in Patkin (1972), Kipen (1989), Aron (1995), Ruth (1997), Tofler (2000), Grinblat (2003) and Rutland (2003).

There have also been a number of more sociologically oriented studies of Jewish education in Australia. Amongst the earliest were studies which appeared in Medding's (1973) volume dealing with various aspects of Jews in Australian society. Drawing on a 1967 Jewish community survey, Solomon (1973) analysed attitudes to Jewish education. Goldlust (1973) analysed the impact of Jewish education on Australian Jewish adolescents. Later studies, examining the relationship between Jewish schooling and Jewish identification, but limited to specific schools and communities, were carried out by Chazan (1980) and Simai (1985), though Rutland (2000) notes that they "reached fairly negative conclusions about the effectiveness of mainstream Jewish day schools" (p. 95).[13] On the other hand, two major demographic surveys, Goldlust (1993) in Melbourne and Eckstein (1999) in Sydney demonstrated high levels of communal support for Jewish day school education.[14] Adopting a more specifically school-based focus, Cohen (1992) studied the role of policy and administration in the context of a Jewish community school in Melbourne. Bryfman (2001) has examined the effectiveness of Israel education for Jewish secondary school students in New South Wales.

In referring to the fairly negative conclusions which were reached during the 1980s by both Chazan and Simai regarding the effectiveness of mainstream Jewish day schools, Rutland (2000) notes that "these findings were embarrassing for the community leadership, and since 1985 there have been no academic studies of the effectiveness of Jewish education in Australia" (p. 95). However, given the scale, scope and vibrancy of Jewish education in Australia, there is an important need for rigorous, systematic and current research regarding this issue. Moreover, such research can provide important indicators for educational change and future school improvement. Indeed, the soon-to-be released results of the recent nationwide Jewish community survey conducted by Markus (2009) will be able to serve as a useful starting point for such research, as it will include data about changing attitudes to Jewish education based on survey participants' personal experiences as well as parents' expectations and preferences.

A need also exists to evaluate the effectiveness of particular educational programmes and curricular initiatives which have been adopted by various schools. For example, schools in Australia have invested heavily in the Tal Am/Tal Sela and

[13] A cautionary note is offered by Rubinstein (1991, Vol. 2) regarding the interpretation of such results. He argues that "if education at a Jewish day school were not ultimately valued by graduates, this would surely result in reluctance to send these graduates' own children to a Jewish school" (p. 244). His view is that the facts do not support this.

[14] See Rutland (2000) for a more detailed analysis.

NETA Hebrew language programmes. However, no research seems to have been undertaken with a view to determining the impact of these programmes on the development of Hebrew language skills by students. Much the same can be said of other Jewish studies curriculum initiatives which have been developed within schools or in partnership with other agencies such as the Melton Centre for Jewish Education, as well as programs in which a substantial investment has been made by schools, such as year-10 Israel-experience trips and various informal Jewish education programmes. Also called for is an evaluation of the impact of established university Jewish studies teacher-training programmes.

A small number of Australian studies have examined the way in which ideology manifests itself in the life of Jewish day schools. These include Bullivant (1978), who carried out an ethnographic study of life in a Chabad boys' day school; Klarberg (1983), whose research focused on the impact of ideology on the teaching of Hebrew in Jewish day schools; and Munz (2008), who undertook a comparative study of Jewish, Greek and Islamic schools. Given that Jewish schools in Australia span the full ideological spectrum, from ultra-Orthodox to secular Yiddishist, the opportunity exists to undertake a number of case studies concerning the impact of ideology on educational practices both within individual schools, and also on a comparative basis. In this connection, it would also be of interest to investigate how teacher beliefs and knowledge, as well as personal ideology, impact on the delivery of the Jewish studies curriculum within individual schools.

In view of the earlier discussion of the challenges confronting Jewish day schools, research should also be undertaken into the professional identity of Jewish studies teachers and the related question of how to enhance the status of Jewish education as a profession.

We began this chapter by describing the historical evolution of Jewish day school education in Australia and how it became the "jewel in the crown" of the Australian Jewish community. Today, however, Jewish education in Australia stands at critical crossroads, confronted as it is by various challenges, some of which mirror those facing other Jewish communities throughout the world, and others that are particular to the local situation. How the leadership of the various Jewish schools in Australia responds to these challenges, aided among other things by rigorous and effective research, will determine how far Jewish education will continue to occupy its special and privileged status within the framework of the wider Australian Jewish community.

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Canada: Jewish Education in Canada

Michael Brown

Had this chapter been written a few months earlier, it might have begun with the assertion that Canadian Jewry is unequalled in its dedication to Jewish education. To corroborate the assertion, the author would have pointed to an almost unparalleled variety of day and supplementary schools in the largest communities, a substantial financial commitment, which, while insufficient to meet all the needs, still compares favorably to that of most other communities, a high percentage of children receiving some kind of Jewish education, although not the highest in the world, a high percentage of children enrolled in day schools, especially compared with communities in the United States, a record of innovation and research, world-renowned professional educators, two unique university-based programs of Jewish teacher education, and significant, highly professional coordinating agencies in the larger communities.

Recent developments, most especially in Toronto, the home of Canada's largest Jewish community by far, call that self-satisfaction into question. To be sure the achievements, especially of the post-World-War II years, are impressive and, for the most part, remain in place. In April 2009, however, UJA/Federation of Greater Toronto precipitously and without explanation closed its central educational agency, the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (the Mercaz, formerly the Board of Jewish Education), headed by Dr. Seymour Epstein, one of the leading figures of the Jewish educational establishment in North America and beyond. The closing came without consultation with the lay board of the Centre, without prior notice to the schools serviced by the Mercaz, and despite a record of superior service and research. The closing came, moreover, less than two years after the restructuring of the agency in response to the recommendations of a high-level task force convened by UJA/Federation itself.

The precursor of the Mercaz, the Bureau of Jewish Education (later renamed the Board of Jewish Education) had been established in 1949 following a study by Dr. Uriah Z. Engelman, the director of the Department of Research, Publications and Information of the American Association for Jewish Education and the author of *Hebrew Education in America: Problems and Solutions*. From its inception,

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the Mercaz and its predecessors served as "the community's central planning and coordinating educational agency and claimed credit for raising the educational standards of [its] affiliated schools" (Kurtz & Epstein, 2008). Educators, school volunteers, and communal professionals have attested to the high quality of Mercaz services (see Worth, 2003, for example), although its guidance was seen by some as the usurpation of the autonomy of constituent schools. Assurances by David Koschitzky, then chairman of the board of UJA/Federation of Greater Toronto, that the closure was not related to budget constraints (Koschitzky, 2009, and many other sources), made it all the more threatening to parents, children, and educators, wondering what further cuts to community support for education lay ahead. In the late summer of 2009, an interim caretaker was appointed to ensure that some of the ongoing activities of the Mercaz would continue and seemed to suggest that the Centre might be reconstituted in some form. That the caretaker had little experience beyond running a supplementary school, however, was cause for further disquiet, although Ted Sokolsky, the CEO and president of UJA/Federation, continued to boast of the organization's financial commitment to Toronto's Jewish schools (Csillag, 2009b). And in December, the Federation vice-president for strategic communications, claimed that, "'Virtually' all Mercaz services [remained] intact" and would continue in the future, although some might be contracted out (quoted in Kraft, 2009b).

But this is getting ahead of the story. The purpose of this chapter is to define the challenges for Jewish education in Canada and its successes, especially those specific to the Canadian context historically and at present. As well, there are comments about research that has taken place and that may be undertaken in the future.

The Context and the Challenges

From the British conquest of French Canada in 1759, the country was *de facto* a binational, bicultural, bilingual, bireligious polity; from 1867, when the quasi-constitutional British North America Act came into force, the country's duality was official. Some Canadians, most of them in Quebec or Lower Canada, were Francophone, French by culture, Roman Catholic by religion, and descended from colonists who had come from France. Others were English speaking, British by culture, and Protestant by religion (except for Catholics of Irish origin). Most members of the latter group could trace their ancestry to the British Isles.

The educational implications of the duality were considerable, especially with regard to religion. In Quebec, "public" schools were Francophone and Catholic; there was a parallel system of "separate" schools, which were Anglophone and Protestant. In Ontario or Lower Canada, the "public" schools were Protestant, and the parallel "separate" school system was Catholic. In both Ontario systems, instruction was in English. Elsewhere in the country, variations of these arrangements came into being. Perhaps the most complex school system was in the least populous province, Newfoundland, which joined the Canadian federation only in 1949. There until the 1990s, education was offered by four separate, faith-based systems:

Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, and Interdenominational (Anglican, Salvation Army, and United Church). Jews, along with others who were not Christian, had no official place in the mix in most of the country.

In Ontario and elsewhere, the Protestant schools became *de facto* public schools, and the role of the Protestant churches diminished over the years. In Montreal, until the 1960s home to Canada's largest Jewish community, Jewish children were more or less reluctantly admitted to the Protestant schools. But acceptance in both Ontario and Quebec, and elsewhere was often grudging and not by right. According to a report in the London *Jewish Chronicle* (7 February 1862), Jewish parents in Victoria, British Columbia withdrew their children from the public schools in 1862, when teachers who belonged to the Church of England, tried "to seduce them from the religion of their fathers." (quoted in Leonoff, 2008, p. 135) In Toronto until well after World War II, efforts were made to concentrate Jewish children in certain schools; Jews were not hired as teachers except in schools where most pupils were Jewish; and education had definite Christian overtones.

In Montreal, the situation was even more convoluted. An 1870 law gave Quebec Jews the right to choose either Protestant or Catholic schools for their children, and they were to pay their taxes accordingly. Until 1886, almost all Jewish children attended Protestant schools. In that year, a dispute between the Protestant School Board of Montreal and the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation resulted in the synagogue establishing its own Jewish school under the aegis of the Catholic Board. Friction mounted, as the Protestant Board complained that most Jewish children were enrolled in their schools, while Jewish tax money was being paid to the Catholic Board. No account was taken of Jewish renters, whose rent helped to pay their landlords' taxes. In 1890, the Jewish community opened a second school specifically for immigrant Jewish children, the Baron de Hirsch School, under the auspices of the Protestant Board. This further heightened the tension.

Eventually a compromise was reached: the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation closed its school, and Jewish children and tax money returned to the Protestant system. But it was an uneasy and demeaning compromise. Jews could not stand for election to the Protestant Board, nor could they even vote in school board elections. In 1903, the Protestant School Board of Montreal refused to grant a high school scholarship to a Jewish boy, Jacob Pinsler, whose grades would have earned him such a scholarship had he been Protestant. A lawsuit was brought on Pinsler's behalf, but it was not successful. The ultimate result was a new Quebec school act, which declared Jews to be "Protestants for school purposes." This act accorded Jews some rights, although at the cost of their identity. They remained barred from school board office and from voting in school board elections. Although by 1914 Jews constituted almost half the "Protestant" children in Montreal, they remained largely without rights in the schools. Only in the 1950s, did Montreal Jews gain the right to vote in Protestant School Board elections and to serve on the Board.[1]

[1]For a somewhat fuller account of these events, see Brown (1999) and Tulchinsky (1998, pp. 63–86), and the sources cited in both.

Jews' difficulties with the educational system in Canada's two largest cities were emblematic of their anomalous position in the country. On the one hand, they fared rather well in Canada, as elsewhere in the English-speaking world. On the other hand, Canada's duality allowed them no secure space, even in theory. It is also the case that anti-Semitism has always been stronger in Canada than in the United States, and in some respects than in the mother country (Cohn, 1979; News in brief, 2009, and other sources). One result has been that Zionism, Jewish nationalism, has been consistently and almost universally popular among Canadian Jews, since its inception in the late nineteenth century (Brown, 1982, 1984). Another result has been strong support for separate Jewish schools outside the "public" system, especially in the post-World-War II years.

With the exception of the two short-lived Montreal schools mentioned above, however, and the Yiddish-language I.L. Peretz Folks Shule (first called, the Jewish Radical School) in Winnipeg, the establishment of day schools only began in the 1940s, when Jews had achieved a measure of economic prosperity and could support their own schools. In 1941, the Jewish People's School in Montreal (JPPS, the Jewish People's and Peretz Schools, as it was called after it merged with the I.L. Peretz School) became a day school, almost three decades after its founding as a supplementary school[2]; the next year, the Associated Hebrew Schools and Eitz Chaim School in Toronto, which had offered after-school programs for many years, opened day schools; in 1944, an English-language day school, the Talmud Torah, opened in Winnipeg; and in 1948, the Vancouver Talmud Torah became an all-day school (Leonoff, 2008, pp. 143–144). It should be noted that not everyone in the Jewish community welcomed separate Jewish schools. Some, especially among the acculturated element of the community, believed that Jews should endeavor to make their way in the public schools no matter how unwelcome they were.[3]

The impetus for developing a vibrant, cohesive Jewish community in Canada was, to a considerable degree, then, negative before World War II: the inability of Jews to fit into the social and political structure of Canada. After the war, however, and in no small part because of embarrassment over Canada's failure to open its doors to Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe,[4] a marked shift occurred in Canadians' attitudes to immigrants who were not of British or French origin. Over time, the country moved away from its traditional binational structure and toward a more multicultural understanding of itself. The new paradigm was the mosaic, in which each tile was distinct, but all together formed a coherent whole.

Immigrants once considered "non-preferred," a peculiar Canadian euphemism for "undesirable," were increasingly welcomed. By 1971, multiculturalism had become official, enacted into law. Now all groups were encouraged to retain their

[2]On the early years of the Jewish People's and Peretz Schools, see Butovsky and Garfinkle (2004).

[3]On the early history of Canadian Jewish schools, see, among other sources, Tulchinsky (1993), especially pp. 138–139, pp. 257–263, p. 273.

[4]The classic work on this subject is Abella & Troper (1982).

heritage, learn the language of their ancestors, and promote their old cultures and religions in their new country. To be sure, the official languages of Canada remained English and French and newcomers were expected to learn at least one of those languages. But government support was now available for the teaching of "heritage languages," for ethnic cultural events such as book fairs and arts festivals, for the establishment of university chairs of ethnic studies (a Canadian-Jewish Studies chair shared by York University in Toronto and Concordia University in Montreal, for example), and other activities. One impetus for change was the desire of politicians to blunt the demands for French Canadian autonomy. The influence of the American Black Power movement was another, and the desire for a different, less racist, more tolerant Canada was yet another. The Constitution of 1982, Canada's first formal constitution, enshrined in the country's fundamental law the notion of a multicultural, ethnically and religiously diverse Canada.

Now playing the ethnic card was the Canadian thing to do. And this provided positive reinforcement to Jews (and others) who sought to preserve their collective identity through a vibrant, distinct community with its own cultural institutions, among them, Jewish schools and educational camps. Once such schools had been seen as an alternative to "public" schools that were hostile to Jews. Now they were "the Canadian way." Morton Weinfeld (2001, pp. 227–228) points out, however, that no Canadian religious or ethnic group other than the Roman Catholics has the kind of extensive network of formal and informal educational institutions that Jews have developed, although Muslims and Evangelical Christians are catching up. In Canada, unlike the United States, the growth in day-school enrollment is not seen as related to a deterioration of public education (compare, Himmelfarb, 1991).

In 2009, there were Jewish day schools in Toronto, Montreal, and Winnipeg, as well as in Vancouver on the west coast, in Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta, and in London, Hamilton, Ottawa, and Kitchener, Ontario. In all provinces except Ontario, where the majority of the Canadian-Jewish population lives, Jewish schools receive some sort of government support. Here it may be noted that Canada's traditional understanding of the country as binational and bireligious worked in Jews' favor. Unlike the United States, Canadians have not seen the state as necessarily barred from supporting religious institutions, especially schools. Together with Christian and Muslim groups, the Jewish community in Ontario has vigorously lobbied the provincial government for support for their "separate" schools. An appeal to the United Nations Human Rights Commission resulted in a ruling that the province was discriminating against minorities in funding only Catholic schools. A law suit brought by the Ontario Jewish Association for Equity in Education and the Alliance of Christian Schools against the province, however, was ultimately unsuccessful in the Supreme Court of Canada. The Court ruled that the province was indeed guilty of discriminatory behavior, but that its policies were based on a constitutional provision and therefore permissible (Weinfeld, 2001, p. 229, and other sources). A 2001 decision by the Ontario provincial government, then controlled by the Conservative Party, to offer tax credits for educational expenses was reversed retroactively when the Liberal Party came to power two years later (see Braustein, 2001, and many other sources). In fact, support for faith-based schools was a major factor in the

defeat of the Conservative incumbents, and it remains unpopular. Opponents of funding faith-based schools often invoke anti-Jewish stereotypes (exclusiveness and clannishness, for example), although they make their peace with funding Catholic education, a constitutional privilege, as noted earlier. Many suspect the motives of opponents of faith-based education who often advocate strongly for equity in all areas of Canadian life, but balk at funding Jewish (and other) schools. At this writing, Jewish community efforts are focused on securing aid for children with disabilities (Walfish, 2009).

According to some studies, about three times more children proportionately have been enrolled in day schools in Canada than in the United States in the last three decades. On the other hand, in South Africa, the UK, Australia, and Argentina, the percentage of Jewish children in day schools is much higher than in Canada. Within Canada, moreover, the proportion of children getting any Jewish education at all varies widely from 57% in Montreal and 48% in Toronto to 31% in Ottawa and Vancouver, and 28% in Calgary (Levine & Epstein, 2005). In 1999–2000, Toronto day schools had 10,031 pupils, almost two-thirds of all children receiving a Jewish education there, and in 2008, about the same number (The levelling off of growth reflects the lack of population increase, the high cost, and the recession that began in 2008.) In 1999–2000, Montreal schools had 8,455 pupils, over 94% of all children receiving a Jewish education in that city (Bronfman Jewish Education Centre & Association of Jewish Day Schools, 2000, 5,45).[5] There, because of the provincial subvention to Jewish and other ethnic and religious schools, the cost of tuition is considerably less than in Toronto. But even in some Montreal schools, close to half the children receive tuition subsidies from the community. In 1999–2000, UJA Federation in Toronto provided over $7 million in tuition subsidies while Federation CJA in Montreal provided $1.75 million (Bronfman Jewish Education Centre & Association of Jewish Day Schools, 2000, p. 45). As in the United States, most Canadian day schools are under Orthodox auspices, although many of those schools cater to families that are not Orthodox in their observance, which sometimes results in problems both for the school and for the parent body.[6] In both Montreal and Toronto and elsewhere across the country, many children were enrolled in supplementary schools and informal youth programs, as well as educational summer camps.

In addition to the success of day schools, the establishment in Canadian public universities of two programs for the training of teachers for Jewish schools should be seen as directly related to the Canadian multicultural context. By the 1970s, it had become clear to the Jewish community that its rapidly growing schools were not being staffed by appropriately qualified teachers. In response to the perceived need,

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[5]Dubb (1983) claims that in the early 1980s, some 92% of Winnipeg children getting a Jewish education were enrolled in day schools, although some of those were surely enrolled in the special programs established within a few Winnipeg public schools. On more recent developments in Toronto, see Kraft (2009a) and Feldman (2009).

[6]An older article which discusses the dissonance is Grysman (1989). Grysman was then vice-principal of the Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate, Winnipeg, and he writes from his own experience.

programs were established at McGill University in Montreal and York University in Toronto for the training of a cadre of Canadian teachers who would serve not only as instructors but as role models for their pupils. Both programs were established with financial assistance from the local Jewish communities, which realized that community continuity and effective identity reinforcement were not likely to occur if teachers did not have accepted credentials and if most were of immigrant background. Although a few programs with similar goals have subsequently opened in the United States, they tend to be offered in private universities, because of American sensibilities about church-state relations.[7]

If some of the challenges facing Jewish education in Canada have to do with the particularities of the Canadian context, others relate to societal shifts that are worldwide. One of these is the alienation of increasing numbers of Jews from Judaism, Jewish life, and Jewish institutions, including schools. The distancing is especially marked among new immigrants, particularly those from the former Soviet Union and Israel, and those living an alternative life style, such as intermarrieds and gays and lesbians. But the alienation is surely also a reflection of the general weakening of faith in the Western world; (perhaps it would be more accurate to speak of the polarization of Western society regarding faith, with the emergence of a militant hard core among Christians, Muslims, and Jews, and an increasingly apathetic and larger periphery). Developments among Conservative Jews are illustrative. Synagogue membership has declined in Canada as well as in the United States. Enrollment in Toronto Conservative supplementary schools has declined radically, by 42% from 1992 to 2000. To some extent the decline is a result of children having switched to day schools, but researchers are convinced that the root causes are competition with more enjoyable leisure activities, parents who prefer their children to devote time to secular studies, the bother of commuting, and the lack of commitment of teachers and parents.[8] One way in which many parents in Canada and the United States have chosen to augment their children's Jewish education is by sending them to Jewish educational summer camps and to youth organizations in the winter. In Canada, camps under the auspices of the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox movements, as well as others sponsored by the Labour Zionists and Young Judaea have proved increasingly popular. One of the oldest camps is the Hebrew-speaking Camp Masad located in the Laurentian Mountains not far from Montreal.

These developments are in many ways common to all North-American Jews, and seem to indicate a movement in Canada toward American patterns of Jewish life. Increasingly in the last decade Canadian society has been moving away from

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[7]On the goals of the two programs, see Brown (1977) and Epstein (1977). These presentations were part of a panel discussion at the Congress plenary earlier that year. Another panel participant was Sidney Midanik, Q.C., former chair of the Toronto Board of Education and the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, who was instrumental in establishing the York University program for Jewish teacher training. On the York program, see Pomson, Brown, and Eisen (2000). On the development of university level Jewish Studies in Canada, see Menkis (1998).

[8]Much has been written on this subject. Some sources with particular relevance to this study are Schoenfeld & Pomson (2000), *Pan Echuti* (2004) and Pomson & Schnoor (2008).

the mosaic, multicultural paradigm toward that of an open society, where, as in the United States (in theory, at least), individuals are free to find their place in society without reference to a "community," or at least not an ethnic or religious community. For many Canadians now, ethnicity and religion are aspects of one's heritage, but not of an identity that needs to be nurtured. One sign of the change is the growing difficulty that Jewish organizations have in attracting volunteers; another is falling synagogue membership; and yet another is declining overall enrollment in Jewish schools. Thus day-school enrollment has grown (the hard core of believers or communally committed), while supplementary school enrollment has dropped (presumably, the uncommitted periphery, although the high cost of day-school education is surely a deterrent, even to committed parents).[9]

An educational challenge not at all related to the Canadian context, but one very creatively met in Canada, especially in Toronto, is the education of children with disabilities. Although Jewish schools for children with special needs were established in a few American communities somewhat earlier, the Ezra-Kadima supplementary school, founded in 1961 at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in Toronto by Rabbi Joseph Kelman, is regarded as a pioneer institution in the field, certainly in Canada (Csillag, 2009a; www.beby.org/index.html). Ezra-Kadima was the first supplementary school in Toronto to offer special classes for the learning challenged. The school spawned the Reena Foundation, which maintains group homes and counselling services for the Jewish learning challenged, and for a time, ran a summer camp. In 1971, She'arim (later the Abraham Shore She'arim Day School), a day school for special-needs Jewish children, was established by Rabbi Kelman and his associates. That school sought to send on to mainstream schools as many of its pupils as possible. In 2008, She'arim closed, largely because of high costs and deficits and alleged pedagogical deficiencies. Other Jewish schools agreed to mount special-needs classes, although there are doubts about the viability of that arrangement (Ben Dat, 2009; Csillag, 2009b). Another Toronto school for children with special needs is Zareinu, "a Jewish Day School and Treatment Centre, which provides special education and individualized therapies to children with a wide range of physical and developmental challenges" (www.zareinu.org/aboutus.html).

Other educational initiatives in Toronto and Montreal that respond to contemporary needs that are not uniquely Canadian are programs for women. Separate schools for *haredi* girls have existed for some time in both cities. In Toronto, there is a school for girls whose families do not have a television in their homes, another for girls from families with television sets, and others with different requirements and restrictions. More interesting are programs for adult Jewish women, such as the Mekorot Institute of Torah Study for Women in Toronto, which strives "to make a full range of Jewish texts available [in]...an [Orthodox] atmosphere of spiritual and intellectual growth" (www.mekorot.org). Toronto is also home to private initiatives in Jewish education for women, most especially the seminars led by Dr. Rachel Turkienicz and Dr. Shoshana Zolty. An initiative for men is Torah MiTzion, a

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[9]This author has explored the issue with regard to women's participation in Jewish life (Brown, 2005).

resident program for young Israeli yeshiva scholars who study and teach in Montreal and Toronto.

Also worthy of mention is a Toronto initiative for liberal Jewish learning, which appeals to younger Jews many of whom are otherwise unaffiliated with the Jewish community. Kolel, the Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning, was founded in 1991 by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, the first woman rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple, the city's largest and oldest Reform congregation, as an outreach project of the Reform Movement in Toronto. Kolel "encourages students to experience, learn, and understand traditional Jewish thought and practices and apply them in our modern world" (www.jewishtorontoonline.act/home.do). For a time, Kolel occupied its own building; then it was located in the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, and now it offers mostly online courses and programs.

Research and Development

Research projects related to Jewish education in Canada are more numerous than might be assumed, because much of what is written about Jewish education in the United States also deals with Canada. Here, however, only works written in Canada or dealing specifically with the Canadian context will be mentioned. At the outset it should be said, that one of the reasons for concern about the closing of the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education in Toronto (Mercaz) is that both the Mercaz and the Bronfman Jewish Education Centre (BJEC), the central education planning agency in Montreal, have sparked or sponsored a number of valuable research projects, which have enabled educators to engage in long-term planning and have led to curricular innovation and development. While some of these studies consisted largely of market research, like the study of Israeli educational needs in Toronto, even market research can reveal a great deal about the community.

One of the most significant research and development projects ever undertaken in Canada is the Tal Am programs for teaching Hebrew (Tal Sela) and other subjects. Developed in Montreal by Tova Shimon with the help of her husband, Shlomo Shimon, the long-time former head of the BJEC, these pathbreaking programs have attracted the support of Multiculturalism Canada, a federal agency, of the American Avi Chai Foundation, and of other individuals and foundations in Canada and the United States. Now a cottage industry in Montreal, the Tal Am programs were being used in 413 schools on six continents in 2009 (Lazarus, 2008).

Perhaps the most significant "pure" research project in Canadian-Jewish education undertaken to date is the study of the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School in Toronto by Alex Pomson and Randal F. Schnoor (2008). *Back to School: Jewish Day School in the Lives of Adult Jews* examines the role of a day school in Toronto whose parent body consists largely of people outside the mainstream of the Toronto Jewish community and mostly lacking other kinds of affiliation with the community. The book shows how the school serves as a surrogate synagogue and educates parents as well as their children. It should prove to be a catalyst for further research on non-standard ports of entry to Jewish life in the twenty-first century. One can hope that the researchers will return in 10 years to examine the long-term effects

of the school on both parents and children. The researchers are hoping to expand the scope of their study by looking at CHAT, the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, the largest Toronto Jewish high school, a non-denominational school with two locations and a number of learning tracks.

Another book-length study of Jewish education in Toronto is the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Harvey A. Raben (1992) "History of the Board of Jewish Education of Toronto, 1949–1975: A Study of Autonomy and Control". That work is of particular relevance in light of recent developments related to the Toronto Mercaz, but also for Montreal, where there have been shifts in personnel and program at the BJEC, which in 2009 was headed by someone who was not a professional educator.

In his position as holder of the Koschitzky Chair in Jewish Education at York University, Alex Pomson was particularly active in educational research relating to Canada but usually with application to other places, as well. One of these projects pioneers the use of teacher narratives – most of them from Toronto schools – as a way of investigating the successes and failures of Jewish education. An initial publication resulting from that study is "Interrogating the Rhetoric of Jewish Teacher Professionalization by Drawing on Jewish Teacher Narratives" (Pomson, 1999). Pomson's (2004) article "Jewish Day School Growth in Toronto: Freeing Policy and Research from the Constraints of Conventional Sociological Wisdom," shows that the reasons usually given for day-school growth in the United States (dissatisfaction with public education, rising ability to pay, concern for continuity, and others) may not be operative in Toronto and perhaps not elsewhere either. Most growth, he found when examining enrollment figures, has occurred because the schools have been able to retain their pupils longer, not because they have been attracting new pupils.

With Stuart Schoenfeld of York University, another active researcher on topics related to Canadian-Jewish education, Pomson wrote the "United Synagogue Task Force on Congregational Schools Consultants' Report" in 2001, which reflects some of the apathy encountered by Jewish educators in the changing world of the twenty-first century (Schoenfeld & Pomson, 2000). Another study of Schoenfeld's is his (1999) "Jewish Education and Jewish Continuity in the United States and Canada: A Political Culture Perspective."

Esther Geva of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto studies issues related to language acquisition and second language learning. Much of her work focuses on Hebrew language. Some of her research has been done in Toronto Jewish schools, although its applicability to those schools is uncertain.

As noted above, considerable research has been initiated over the years by the Bronfman Jewish Education Centre in Montreal and the Toronto Board of Jewish Education (later, the Mercaz), something that individual schools are unable to do. "Focus on Jewish Day Schools," a report by the Bronfman Center and the Association of Jewish Day Schools (2000) to the executive of Montreal's Federation CJA is an invaluable compendium of education data. Charles Shahar has completed a number of research projects, among them, "The Jewish High School Experience: Its Implications for the Evolution of Jewish Identity in Young Adults" (Shahar, 1998). He shows the effects of high school Jewish education on the behavior of

young adults. “A Proposal for Meeting the Needs of School Age Jewish Children with Learning, Cognitive and Behavioural Difficulties” by Karin Gazith (no date) with the assistance of Tina Roth and Miriam Home is another project commissioned by the Bronfman Centre.

Research on Jewish education in Toronto began with the initial study by Uriah Engelman that resulted in the establishment of the Bureau of Jewish Education. Recent initiatives in addition to those already mentioned are those of Randal Schnoor, the co-author of *Back to School*, who did a study for the Board of parents’ reasons for choosing day-school education for their children (Schnoor, 2004). In 2007, he examined the availability of special-needs resources in Jewish day schools (Schnoor, 2007). “A Characterization of Perceptions and Needs of the Israeli Community in Toronto: A Qualitative Study” by the “Pan Echuti” Research Institute (2004), was commissioned by the Board and provides valuable information not only on educational issues but on the attitudes and expectations of immigrants to Canada from Israel, in general. Another study commissioned by the Board, Shay Aba’s (2001) Estimating the Demand for CHAT [Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto] Using an Econometric Model”, seems less useful.

We return, then, to our starting point, the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education in Toronto (Mercaz), which is now closed and perhaps under reconstruction. With regard to research, there is cause for concern, as there is with regard to planning, coordination, and oversight for a school population about the size of that of a small city. As noted at the outset, steps are being taken to reconstitute some sort of central coordinating agency. But the process promises to be a long one, and there is little indication at this writing what its functions will be and to what extent it will be subordinate to professionals and volunteers whose main concern is not education. From the initial pronouncements, moreover, it appears that research will not be one of the future mandates of such an agency (Shaviv, 2009; UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, 2009).

The achievements of Canadian Jews in the field of Jewish education are many and significant. Most of them are related directly to the larger Canadian context, but most also provide insight into educational issues beyond the borders of Canada. But significant as those achievements are, the future is neither clear nor secure. Historian Jonathan Sarna has pointed out the extent to which cutbacks during the Great Depression of the 1930s inflicted permanent damage to the Jewish education system of the United States (Sarna, 2009, pp. 5–6). Vigilance will be needed to protect and enhance Jewish education in Canada.

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Europe: Education of Adult Jewish Leaders in a Pan-European Perspective

Barbara Lerner Spectre

What has been termed "the renewal of Jewish culture in Europe" is a mixed and nuanced phenomenon. Although much of adult Jewish education in Europe retains the forms and substance of similar efforts throughout the Diaspora and in Israel, Jewish education in Europe for adults is to a great extent a reflection of the specificity of this Jewish renewal and is worthy of examination. Beyond descriptively profiling these developments, this chapter claims that what is currently taking place in Jewish education has importance not only for Jewish life in Europe, but also has far-reaching implications for education in the rest of the Jewish world.

A profile of contemporary Europe and Jewish life therein must commence with the caveat that the concept "Europe" is a construct, a geographical notion that, given the variety of cultures, languages, and histories, encompasses a great number of divergent realities. Together with all that, however, the emergence of the European Union has done much to give substance to the notion of a unified entity. Sweeping developments, including the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the formation of a single European market, and the opening of borders of previously intact nation-states, have affected all citizens of Europe, and Jews among them. The trajectory of transformation that has been embarked upon, if successful, will lead to a pluralistic Europe composed of a mosaic of cultures that both maintain their own identities and yet participate in the common agora. Jewish life is part of that transformation. Jonathan Webber points out, "in today's new Europe the Jews have the opportunity, as do all other European citizens, to participate in the future political and economic reconstruction of the continent – and the question for them is to determine what their own social and political philosophy might be in these new circumstances."[1]

Jeremy Cohen emphasizes that the new context of the breakdown of nation-state identities towards multiethnic mosaics entails great challenges for contemporary

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[1] Jonathan Webber, Jewish Identities in the New Europe, Jonathan Webber ed., The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, London, 1994, p. 10

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patterns of European Jewish identity: "While nineteenth and twentieth century Jews understood (rightly or otherwise) that the price of admission into the 'established' societies and cultures of Europe amounted to at least a partial repression of their Jewish identity, today's multiculturalism has rendered calls for conformity unfashionable, impractical, and politically incorrect..... Once again, the Jews of Europe must exert themselves to determine precisely where they stand within the larger non-Jewish world around them."[2]

Cohen further underscores the complexity: European Jews must now chisel out their identities "not only in relation to an ever more amorphous and nondescript European majority, but also alongside many other increasingly outspoken ethnic and religious minorities...."[3]

This amorphous and fluid state has given rise to a variety of contemporary European Jewish identity patterns. This chapter presents a case study with the purpose of illustrating some of these emerging patterns in the context of a "new Europe." I claim that there are components of Jewish identity and education in this new Europe that could be of critical interest not only in a parochial sense, but also to the Jewish educational community throughout the world. One of the factors that render it of such interest is that it encompasses a phenomenon that has transpired in Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of communism: a recurring narrative of recovered identities. The stories are rampant, and the pattern reiterates itself: in Central Europe a grandparent reveals that he or she is Jewish, a fact that has sometimes been unknown even to the rest of the nuclear family for all of the grandparent's life. His or her Jewish identity had understandably been repressed as a result of the trauma of the Holocaust and further suppressed during the Communist regime (in Eastern Europe the stories vary somewhat: often there was an awareness of Jewish identity because it was stamped into the personal papers, but the term "Jewish" was vacuous, and often onerous). A significant number of the generation of grandchildren who undergo this moment of disclosure regarding their Jewish ancestry subsequently have chosen to identify as Jews.[4]

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[2]Jonathan Cohen, Rethinking European Jewish History, Jeremy Cohen & Moshe Rosman, eds., The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, London, 2009, p. 5

[3]Ibid, p. 4

[4]I am unaware of any comprehensive studies that have been conducted with regard to the statistical numbers involved in this phenomenon. Obviously absolute numbers might well be moot since, by definition, those who do not acknowledge their identity might never reveal themselves to the researcher. A number that might be of interest to future researchers is one that was related to me orally by Professor Michael Berenbaum, the Holocaust scholar, who estimates that perhaps 20,000 Jewish babies were born in Poland between 1942–1945 and who were secretively given to Central European families. What percentage of these babies, now the age of grandparents, were told of their origins, or how many of those who were told subsequently revealed their identities to a member of their families is unknown. What is apparent is the significant number of grandchildren who choose to identify as Jews, as reflected in large numbers of applicants to Paideia from Central Europe with this reiterative narrative.

The phenomenon of recovered identities,[5] although acknowledged as occurring in other locations, warrants specific reflection in Europe. Perhaps, even a new term should be suggested, since its implications for Jewish life and Jewish education are manifold; the term I would suggest is "dis-assimilation," for the persons involved are those who have truly reversed the processes of assimilation. A number of defining factors in Europe indicate this reversal: first and foremost there apparently is no currency of social profit for these reclaimants, in that they know full well what non-Jews feel about Jews[6] (as opposed to the forces of assimilation that act as a pressure for shedding the burden of being different). Second, there is no social coercion, since previously no one had known them as Jewish, thus nullifying, in these cases, the claim of Jean-Paul Sartre that it is the non-Jew who makes a person a Jew.[7] Third, the people who make this decision have no childhood memories of being Jewish, and no childhood Jewish education.

It might appear that the last factor, the lack of any childhood Jewish education, establishes a deficit that is almost insurmountable. However, I would like to make the rather radical claim that, in my experience, this very point provides an educational opportunity that is both intriguing and tantalizing in its implications for Jewish education: given the lack of a childish rendition, Jewish life and thought can be presented on a high intellectual level for people who have chosen to identify themselves as Jews. It can be truly "adult" – not just because the participants are adult, but because the educator need not yield to childhood impressions, of which there are none in their cases. And, further – the education is not unidirectional, from the Jewish educator to the educational recipient, for these "dis-assimilators" can function as informants regarding what they see as giving substance and grounding to their choice. The educator can become truly educated in what these dis-assimilators find so compelling that they choose to identify as Jews.

My observations are based upon the educational experience of the past 8 years of founding and directing Paideia, the European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden. Paideia is the only pan-European institute of Jewish studies with a 1-year program dedicated solely to Jewish studies. It was formulated specifically with these "dis-assimilators" in mind, although persons that fit this profile are not the only participants. It brings 25 post-graduate fellows, average age 29, to Stockholm for a full year of academic study based upon intensive encounter with Jewish text. The majority of these fellows come from Central and Eastern Europe, although the spread is

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[5] As anecdotally recorded in Barbara Kessler's "Suddenly Jewish: Jews raised as Gentiles Discover their Jewish Roots," (Brandeis University Press, Waltham, Mass. 2000).

[6] This is under the presumption, well circulated in Jewish spheres, that the general population in central Europe is anti-Semitic.

[7] They negate what Sartre claims is the essence of Jewish identity: "It is neither their past, their religion, nor their soil that unites the sons of Israel. If they have a common bond, if all of them deserve the name of Jew, it is because they have in common the situation of a Jew, that is, they live in a community which takes them for Jews." Jean Paul Sartre, Anti-Semite and Jew (Schocken, 1965), p. 67

wide – by the end of 2010 the institute will have graduated 200 fellows from 32 European countries. The curriculum is built upon 14 semester-equivalent courses (taught in 2-week concentrated blocs, in addition to 2-year courses in Talmud and hermeneutics) with the objective of granting literacy in Jewish sources and empowering Jewish activism.

Many of the claims of this chapter are based upon the experience of directing this institute, now in its ninth year. Although the actual number of graduates is 200, nevertheless interviewing and processing applicants has involved well over 1,000 persons.

The mandate that the institute declared to the Swedish government when it was founded,[8] was that it would serve as an educational instrument for the reclaiming of Jewish culture and life in Europe. With that presumptuous objective in mind, the questions regarding the target audience, framework, and most importantly, the curriculum were manifold and daunting.

The image of the "dis-assimilator," as related above, stood at the center of the conception of the institute, and this imagined entity became the target audience. What could not have been anticipated was how well based in reality this phenomenon was. The plethora of stories that surfaced through interviewing Paideia applicants affirmed the assumption that dis-assimilation was indeed a phenomenon taking place all over Europe, but most particularly in Central Europe. Some applicants related events of Jewish discovery that were almost completely tangential: one related how her mother went to a dentist's office, where the assistant asked whether she was aware that a Jewish community center was opening in their city. Her mother was astounded that the assistant had assumed that she was Jewish, and upon denying that that was the case, asked why the assistant had made that conjecture. The assistant replied that the mother's last name was Jewish. Only upon returning home, and by reconstructing the gaps in her father-in-law's life did that assumption become plausible. Indeed the family, out of curiosity, went to the newly formed community, resulting in their affiliation and ultimately conversion to Judaism. Other stories were more psychologically complex: a Hungarian high school student, in the heat of a competitive ball game, shouted out at one of the players on the opposing team: "Dirty Jew!" He was subsequently chastised by his coach, and when the parents heard of the incident they too chastised him, concluding with the fact that not only was it improper to call someone a "Dirty Jew," but that indeed the boy himself was Jewish.

These are only a sampling of the stories revealed during the interview process. As a group, these applicants to an institute dedicated to renewing European

[8] A major founding grant was given by the Swedish government to establish the institute in 2000, and it became operative in September 2001. The grant was the consequence of a commission of inquiry that the Swedish government established to investigate its role in the Holocaust, and which determined that although there was no legal culpability, nevertheless there was a sense of moral responsibility that resulted in three major steps: the convening of the Stockholm Forum in February 2000, the establishment of "Levande Historia" for education toward tolerance, and a grant toward the founding of Paideia.

Jewish culture challenge traditional affiliation patterns. Many of them, such as those described above, are Jews solely by the definition of the Law of Return of the State of Israel, the law that allows that citizenship is the right not only of a person born of Jewish mother or who has converted to Judaism – the traditional halachic (Jewish law) definition – but that the rights of citizenship are also vested in a child and a grandchild of a Jew, the spouse of a Jew, the spouse of a child of a Jew and the spouse of a grandchild of a Jew. Many of these European dis-assimilators do not formally convert because of the stringency of the conversion process that is administered solely by Orthodox religious authorities who would require them as converts to declare their intent to become fully observant Jews by orthodox standards. Regardless of the issues of "Who is a Jew" – which will not occupy the attention of this chapter – these dis-assimilators might represent an emerging new identity profile. As a group they are well-educated, often speaking multiple languages and knowledgeable of the literatures of those languages. They are anxious to engage as adults in serious Jewish education, are creative in cultural spheres, and frequently play key roles in Jewish life in areas where the remnant of the Jewish community was decimated by the Holocaust and the Soviet repression of identities. This then would be the core of the target audience: people such as those enumerated above, who choose to reclaim their Jewish identity. They often identify themselves as "cultural Jews." What they mean by that notion of "cultural Jew," and what can satisfy their educational quest is part of the subject of the following portrayal.

The decision regarding the curriculum at Paideia was critical and perplexing: what could serve as the basis for the rather bombastic vision that had been formulated for the Swedish government – to create an institute that would act as an instrument in the regeneration of European Jewish culture? It would appear that this mandate would necessitate a determination of one of the most controversial issues in the Jewish world: a definition of Judaism. What lies at the heart of Jewish civilization? To employ traditional categories – is it the Jewish people ("Am Yisrael"), Jewish practice and Halachah ("Torat Yisrael"), Jewish nationhood ("Eretz Yisrael")? A determination in any of these directions would obviously eliminate participation on the part of some sectors of European Jewry.

The question, once alternatively formulated, became more promising: What could give the participants the tools by which they themselves would be enabled to regenerate Jewish culture and make their own determinations regarding the nature of Jewish civilization? What could possibly empower them such that they themselves could become entrepreneurs of Jewish culture, and thus ultimately make their own verdicts concerning the definition of Jewish life? Is there any common and uniting aspect of Jewish life that could serve as the base curriculum that would not eliminate any of the possible future directions that the participants themselves might possibly make?

Inspiration was drawn from Moshe Halbertal[9] in his book *People of the Book*: "Rather than searching for the essence of Judaism in shared beliefs and practices

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[9]Professor Moshe Halbertal serves as the Chairman of the Academic Committee of *Paideia.*

that remain constant though they take superficially diverse forms, I have chosen to focus on the shared commitment to certain texts and their role in shaping many aspects of Jewish life and endowing the tradition with coherence."[10] Based upon Halbertal's claim that one of the major uniting features of Jewish life has been text and a text-centered community, it was determined that the first basic element of the curriculum would be literacy of the texts and sources that have been at the center of Jewish life. Thus the program of study was laid out in a way in which a participant would significantly encounter the major works of the Jewish bookshelf (800 class hours). This also determined the minimal length of the program, since anything less than 1 year could not adequately address this central feature of the course of study. (Since the program was formulated with post-graduate activists in mind, it was also determined that the program – in that it is not degree granting – could not be much longer than a year.)

The response of the first year participants (2001–2002) to this feature of the curriculum was awaited with bated breath. I often found myself standing in the corridor outside the lecture room, out of sight, listening and trying to judge the reactions of that first cohort of fellows who had come for the 1-year course. Their reaction to text as curriculum was epitomized by one participant, Sorana, a fellow from Romania, who one day burst into my office exclaiming, "I feel like I have found my native language!"

Subsequent years have shown that Sorana's words regarding language were neither casual nor trivial, for within the European context the link between culture, language, and literature is inextricable. For example, many students in university major in "Philology," meaning the literature and language of their culture. In acquiring a culture, it is well understood that one must become fluent in the literary sources of the culture. Thus, the choice of text and literature as curriculum resonates well with the European understanding of what it is to gain competence and a sense of authenticity in a culture.

The equivalency between language, culture, and literature also served as a rationale for naming the new institute "Paideia." As Elias Bickerman claimed in his seminal work of Hellenistic culture, the concept of Paideia, which was brought from Greece to the Ancient Middle East by Alexander and his conquering army, was a revolutionary one, for it meant that one could acquire a culture through the study of its texts (in the Greek case, this meant mastering Homer). Previously this possibility had been unknown in the ancient world – one was born into one's identity. According to Bickerman, in the second century B.C.E. this model of Paideia was appropriated by Ben Sira who influenced the formation of the first academies of adult Jewish learning – the "Beit Midrash." Until then, learning was an activity only for priests and jurists, who needed learning in order to perform rituals and judge disputes, and for children – "v'shinantem l'vanecha."[11] Since the contemporary

[10]Moshe Halbertal, *People of the Book, Canon, Meaning, and Authority* (Harvard U. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1997), p. 1

[11]Elias Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age,* (Harvard University Press, 1990) pp. 166–174.

institute would be based upon a serious encounter with text (the equivalent of 14 semester courses) as a way of espousing Jewish culture, it was envisioned that through this literature one could also appropriate Jewish identity.

The second feature of the curriculum would be to empower the legitimacy of the interpretation of sources and texts.[12] These two elements, text-centeredness and interpretation, became the signature of the curriculum, whose objective was to create, in a contemporary European context, a *text-centered interpretive community*. The weight of establishing this second feature, interpretation, was to fall upon two elements. First, to employ the traditional methodology of text study, *chevruta*, whereby a text was to be explored and discussed in study-pairs prior to the lecture of the faculty-member, allowing for an empowerment of the interpretation of the student-pairs. Second, there was an attempt to infuse the curriculum with the interpretive urge by encouraging the participation of artists and creative personae.

Using chevruta methodology to ignite the interpretive mode among European participants was both more difficult than the textual curriculum element, and more surprising. It was difficult because in Paideia's experience, the learning climates in many Eastern European societies mandate against student expressiveness. The fellows from these societies often initially objected to the chevruta methodology, claiming that they were educated in more "formal" study traditions, and they deemed it unscientific to attempt to interpret a text until one had reached a level of competency in the subject. Thus, chevruta sessions at the beginning of the year were often greeted with silence, bordering on disdain by these participants.

Yet chevruta methodology during the study year became remarkably creative and vibrant, for in the context of a pan-European institute, with participants from so many different cultures (thus far participants have come from 32 European countries, and in any given year there are 12–15 languages spoken), sitting with a chevruta partner was often an act of radical discrepancy. And therein lay the surprise. As the year progressed what was uncovered was that, given the equivalency described above between culture, language, and literature, the "difference" from one's study partner was transposed into a plethora of literary references from a variety of languages. The outcome was that the more one differed from one's chevruta partner, the richer the text became. The chevruta experience was transformed into a paradigmatic example of the positive value of difference. An interesting dynamic was thus established: the text became the commonality between the group members, and yet richness of the text was a function of the differences within the group. The process became a strong experience of group cohesion through difference.

Thus chevruta became a signature of the studies at Paideia. As for the use of the arts to revitalize the interpretive process,[13] this was done on a variety of levels:

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[12] Halbertal, "Jewish culture evolved through the interpretation of the canon." Ibid, p. 7

[13] Kreitzer among others has written on the use of the arts to inject the student into the hermeneutical flow. See L.J. Kreitzer, *The Old Testament in Fiction and Film: On Reversing the Hermeneutical Flow*, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, 1994.

the invitation to a number of faculty who were also artists who could invigorate sessions with a wide array of interpretation; the exposure to creative efforts in a format called "Month of the Arts" in which artists from all over Europe and Israel were invited to perform; the inclusion of an arts track to attract artists as fellows.

The importance of the arts in the curriculum took on additional importance because of the educational challenge brought about through the creation of the European Union: the breakdown of monolithic, homogeneous nation-states into heterogeneous societies on the premise that a plurality of cultures can contribute to the common good. The arts took on additional importance at Paideia because many of the participants were engaged in various forms of cultural activities as a way of communicating both the distinctiveness of Jewish culture and also its ability to be in conversation with other cultures: fully a third of the graduates of Paideia to date work within cultural and artistic spheres.

Among the Paideia participants (200 graduates from 32 countries), establishing a text-centered interpretive curriculum has received a resounding ratification. Testimony upon testimony is recorded at Paideia that validate the desire and need for the study of text on a high intellectual level, as in academic studies in universities, but, unlike universities, the desire is that the textual studies not be detached from the living entity of Judaism.

What appeals to the adult, mature minds of these "dis-assimilators" is of course of great import for the entire Jewish world, and Paideia is an indication of an educational endeavor designed to address their needs. However, much further investigation and experimentation is needed with regard to the educational challenges facing the emerging European Jewish community. This chapter can designate but a few of the more critical educational issues in the section that follows.

Issue I: Cultural Identity

An overwhelming majority of participants in Paideia's 1-year program, when asked to classify how they identify themselves as Jews would respond "cultural." On the one hand this classification of identity holds great educational potential because of the readiness that it produces for a curriculum rich in literature, as indicated above. On the other hand, the notion of cultural identity, at least as understood within the American context, is often a synonym for "secular," and is suspect of not having sustainability, lacking the tools for being transmitted from one generation to another, such as ritual practices. However, within the context of European societies, many of which are strongly secular – Professor Lars Dencik terms, for example, the population in Denmark as being "secular Lutherans"[14] – the notion of a cultural rather than a religious identity is acceptable and perhaps even normative.

[14]Lars Dencik"The Paradox of Secularism in Denmark: From Emancipation to Ethnocentrism" in *Secularism and Secularity: Contemporary International Perspectives*, Barry A. Kosmin & Ariela Keysor, eds. Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society, December 2007, p. 131.

The question of the durability of this identity – especially given the possibility of literature as the transmitting agent – is tantalizing, and is one of the issues worthy of research as this new European Jewish identity takes shape and form. In theory there is nothing to prevent literary-cultural identity patterns from flourishing in other centers of Jewish life, although, as noted above, the European conditions form a particularly nourishing climate for their growth.

Issue II: The "Jewishness" of Jewish Studies in Europe

In 1999, Diana Pinto, a leading Jewish intellectual, wrote an article entitled "The Third Pillar"[15] wherein she defined what she termed "The Jewish Space."

> One of the results of the European sea change and above all, of the Holocaust's "coming home" to Europe's historical consciousness has been a major interest for Jewish themes in the non-Jewish world. This interest has grown exponentially in recent years. The result has been a plethora of publications on Jewish themes, novels and films written by non-Jews with Jewish characters in them (the most notable being of course, Roberto Benigni's La vita è bella), memoirs and histories, Jewish traditions ranging from the Torah to cuisine, Jewish jokes, Jewish museums, memorials, exhibits. Every corner of Europe is busy exhibiting the slightest Jewish traces in its past, whether they go back to more than two millennia as in Italy or to a "mere" two centuries as in Sweden. This interest in Jewish "things" which has no historical precedent in European history constitutes the greatest challenge of all for a European Jewish identity. First of all for a banal objective reason. There are not enough Jews across the continent to fill by themselves this growing Jewish space. Unlike Israel which is its own vast Jewish- Jewish space or America in which the Jewish space is filled by the Jews themselves in what can be called a sociological and cultural triumph, Jews in Europe are only one part of the Jewish space. Inside Jewish study programs at the universities, inside museums, in the realm of publishing as well as in every other Jewish manifestation (except for religion) non-Jews will constitute the majority of the "users" and even implementers of this space. Rather than perceiving this reality as an impoverishment, Jews should consider this structural condition as a major positive challenge, indeed as a challenge unique to Europe. For it is only here that Jews must confront historically charged "others," whose ancestors were very much present, if not always responsible, during the Holocaust and before that during the centuries of European anti-Semitism.
>
> Yet if Jews now live in Europe in a voluntary manner it means that they share a series of complex affinities with these "others" and it is this link which must be deepened and turned into a creative dialogue.... [16]

Nowhere is this "Jewish Space" more evident than in the Departments of Jewish Studies throughout Europe, where the majority of faculty is preponderantly non-Jewish.[17] It is not surprising, therefore, that Jewish studies in Europe are for the most

[15] Diana Pinto "The Third Pillar? Toward an European Jewish Identity Text of a Lecture given at the Central European University, Budapest, Jewish Studies Public Lecture Series, March 1999

[16] Diana Pinto "The Third Pillar? Toward an European Jewish Identity Text of a Lecture given at the Central European University, Budapest, Jewish Studies Public Lecture Series, March 1999

[17] See Liliane Weissberg, "Jewish Studies or Gentile Studies? A Discipline in Search of its Subject" in *The New German Jewry and the European Context: The Return of the European Jewish Diaspora*, Y. Michal Bodemann, ed., MacMillan, U.K., 2008, pp. 101–110: "Jewish Studies has

part cut off from Jewish life itself. Questions yet to be addressed and researched, are whether programs such as Paideia can help to connect non-Jewish faculty (a number of non-Jewish academicians are accepted as fellows to Paideia) to areas and activities that can help inform not only Jewish studies, but also Jewish communities and Jewish life; what will be the nature of Jewish life in which non-Jewish participants play a significant role?; and what will be the definition of "who is a Jew" when non-Jews, who might not convert because of being avowedly secular, nevertheless make significant contributions to Jewish life? The definitions not only of "who is a Jew" but also of "what is Jewish" are yet to be determined within Europe. These are challenges that Jewish education must begin to address.

Issue III: Relationship with Israel

The attitudes toward Israel among European Jews are complex: on the one hand, undoubtedly, the existence of the State alters inexorably the dark recesses of memory of Europe as a place without exit; many if not most have family in Israel; the proximity makes travel to Israel entirely feasible and comfortable. On the other hand, European Jews in some countries are called upon to defend Israel in politically hostile situations. In a Pew Global Attitudes survey published in 2006, it was shown that far more Europeans sympathized with the Palestinians than with Israel.[18] Undoubtedly the New European Jews are living and functioning in political and social climates that are much more nuanced and much more compromised than Jews in other Diaspora communities.

The operative educational question becomes how, and on what basis, should ties be forged between Israel and emerging Jewish life in Europe? The issue needs to be dealt with delicately; certainly the Zionist and post-Zionist polemic is one that can produce a polarity that the new European Jewish entity can little afford.[19]

At the time of the creation of Paideia it was determined to forge strong academic and intellectual ties by inviting Israeli faculty to teach the intensive textual courses, a policy that has continued until the present day. The rationale behind this policy was that the relationship with Israeli scholars in the field of Jewish textual studies would forge an academic, intellectual, and non-political bond between the emerging European leadership and the Jewish state. Israel as such is not part of the curriculum. The message has been implicit that the presence of Israel-based scholars would forge a bond and make participants feel connected to Israel. Altogether, education for, in, and about Israel is a nuanced challenge, and research into the policies governing various educational institutions in this area awaits further attention.

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completed a shift from a field that should be able to give the answers as to *who one is* – thus defining a person's Jewish identity via historical reflection – to a study of *subject matter*, p. 103

[18]To Israel with Hate and Guilt" *The Economist,* August 17, 2006

[19]See for example, Shlomo Sharan (ed.), Israel & the Post-Zionists: A Nation at Risk, Sussex Academic Press, 2003

Issue IV: The Nature of Communities

Because of the tragically depleted numbers as a result of the Holocaust, many Jewish communities throughout Europe appear not to have the critical mass required for the viable functioning of a local community. Forged out of this necessity, or perhaps seizing the opportunity of enhanced methods of communication, there nevertheless seem to be emerging what could be called episodic, or event-driven communities, such as cultural festivals and the proliferation of *Limmud*, the open study festival that originated in the UK and has now spread throughout Europe. There are presently Limmud yearly events in the Baltics, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Turkey, and the former Yugoslavia. These are certainly phenomena that deserve attention, and perhaps the European experience in this area will yet bear fruit for other episodic, non-denominational frameworks throughout the Jewish world.

Issue V: The European Union and Jewish Culture

Despite all the regional discrepancies in Europe, the formation of the European Union has established a united sociological agenda: to transform homogeneous nation-states into heterogeneous multicultural societies where diversity is celebrated and it is possible to harbor multiple identities. In the twentieth century it was the characteristic of Jews as bearers of hyphenated identities that stigmatized them with the suspicion of disloyalty (e.g., German-Jew, Italian-Jew). Ironically it is presently just this characteristic, the ability to live with divided loyalties that puts the Jew in a unique position, now assuming the role of the paradigm for European societies rather than the pariah. As Zygmunt Bauman has written, "Unlike in the modern era, with its ambitions of homogeneity, differences are no longer seen as temporary nuisances bound to get rid of tomorrow; variety and plurality of forms of life are here to stay, and the human essence seems to consist in the universally shared ability to establish and protect what Paul Ricoeur called *l'ipseite* – the identity distinct from other identities."[20]

On the level of identity patterns, the European agenda would call upon its citizens to form what could be termed "hyphenated-identities," and it is just this agenda that has struck a responsive chord in the population that has applied to Paideia. Simultaneous with the desire to be Europeans as Jews, reflected in the great success of Jewish cultural events, is the increasing aspiration to be Jews as Europeans. Not only Paideia, but pan-European frameworks such as the European Union of Jewish Students have gained strength, and increasingly European rather than Israeli or American personnel are being sought for professional positions.

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[20]Zygmunt Bauman, "Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern" in Modernity, Culture and 'the Jew', Bryan Cheyette & Laura Marcus, eds., Stanford U. Press, Stanford, CA, p. 155, 1998.

In sum, Jewish education in Europe must respond to the challenges presented by new societal opportunities for Jews, to literate and cultured young adults who are choosing to recover Jewish life, to new patterns of identity, and to complex relationships with Israel. Certain paths seem particularly promising, among them the use of Jewish text understood as literature as the basis of a European cultural identity. However the yet undetermined future of Jewish culture in Europe awaits substantive educational nourishment, for which proper research would be an invaluable tool.

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Europe: Something from (Almost) Nothing – The Challenges of Education in European Communities – A Personal Perspective

Steve Israel

Introducing Myself and My Issues

I have been involved in informal Diaspora Jewish education in Israel for some 25 years. I do a lot of Jewish identity development and Jewish leadership training in the widest sense drawing especially on my subject areas of Jewish history, Jewish culture and literature and Israel studies. The majority of my work has been done with participants from the west – English speakers – youth movement *madrichim* (counsellors), students and teachers.

However, over the last 3 years, I have spent much time abroad in Europe and have had Jewish experiences that have opened up my eyes as an educator. These experiences have broadened my perspective on Jewish education and the wider Jewish world in a number of ways. It is these ideas and perspectives that I wish to offer through this essay to an audience of wider Jewish educators. Since these perspectives have been gained by my immersion in a number of specific projects I will spend some time now in describing the projects and my involvement in them and filter the issues that I wish to raise through the contexts of the projects in which I have been involved.

The Contexts

My involvement has taken me to many countries but I want to focus on the three main projects in which I have been involved on an ongoing basis: the international Jewish camp in Hungary, the community in Sofia, Bulgaria and (a little further away – and at least partly in Europe) the community in Istanbul, Turkey.

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A. The Szarvas International Jewish Camp in Hungary

General Context: Almost 20 years ago, at the beginning of the 1990s, three bodies – the Joint Distribution Committee, the Lauder Foundation and the Jewish Agency – combined to initiate an international Jewish camp in Szarvas, a small town in south-eastern Hungary. With time the Agency dropped away and the arrangement today is that the Lauder Foundation is in charge of the site and the infrastructure while the camp itself is the sole responsibility of the JDC. The initiative behind the camp resulted from the assessment that for the tens of thousands of young Jews in East and East Central Europe, their identity as Jews could best be developed within the context of an intensive Jewish camping experience. The virtues of an immersion experience in a camp environment had been recognized decades earlier and this was part of a wider set of initiatives in the Jewish world that sought to exploit the new freedom of ex-Communist Europe to try and develop Jews and Jewish communities.

In the summer of 2008, the camp celebrated its 18th year. Each year, in recent years, up to 2,000 youngsters come to the camp for an intensive experience in four 2-week sessions. The major communities that send participants are the host community Hungary and Russia: other European communities that regularly send participants are all of the former Yugoslavian states, some of the former Soviet Union states (such as Lithuania, the Baltic states and Belorussia), Rumania, Poland, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. In addition, other further-flung states also send groups – Turkey, India, the US and Israel. Each year, the camp takes a specific Jewish subject as its major theme and arranges many different activities, in small groups, country groups and on an international camp level on these themes. In recent years the themes have included "The Jewish bookshelf", "Jewish continuity" and "Living a Jewish life". I mention these details because it is important to point out that the themes are ambitious and place the camp firmly in the company of those other Jewish camps around the world which attempt to create a serious (but fun) educational environment in which it is hoped that a Jewish education can be partly obtained and a Jewish identity strengthened.

Specific Challenges: In recent years the camp has had to adjust to two major developments. One of these was initiated consciously and the other is a new situation to which the camp has been forced to react. Both of these developments are in my eyes, positive.

1. In the early years of the camp, the central staffing was done almost exclusively by a team of Israeli educators who would arrive at the camp at the beginning of the summer with the programme largely prepared and would run the camp with the help of some local educators especially at the level of the group *madrichim*. This was a logical strategy. The communities had very few Jewish educators who had either enough knowledge or experience to provide the basis of an educational staff. A few years ago, the policy was changed. It was realized that an entire generation of participants had grown up in the camp and had progressed from *chanichim* (younger participants) to *madrichim* and were ready to assume

increasing responsibility for the running of the staff. Thus began a gradual process of decreasing the influence of the Israeli educators in the central staff of the camp. The leadership and the educational direction of the camp were passed exclusively to the younger generation of local educators. Collectively, it was decided that the day-to-day work of the camp would be the responsibility of a group of some two to three dozen unit heads and coordinators who would work with teams of the younger *madrichim* to run the camp. This is the situation now. The younger *madrichim* come from each of the communities that send participants. The unit heads and coordinators are drawn from many, but not all, of the countries. They include Israelis as a sub-group of the unit head staff but not as the dominant group.

2. When the Szarvas camp started there were very few other Jewish camping or indeed educational opportunities in many of the communities. In the intervening years, many communities have started their own camps. There is now for example a Jewish community camp in Lithuania, Bulgaria, Rumania and Poland to name but four communities, as well as a whole network of camps in Russia, some of which are run by different community organisations while others are run by outside organisations such as the *Sochnut* (the Jewish Agency), the Reform movement or Chabad. This of course is a positive development in and of itself but it means that Szarvas has to compete with a whole series of camps that it inspired to a large extent and for which it served as model. There are many participants who are happy to go to their own community camps and then come on to the international camp at Szarvas but that cannot be taken for granted. In addition, the camping phenomenon has developed in Central and Eastern Europe as part of the development of commercial leisure activities. Language camps or sports camps among others have developed strongly and provide competition for the minds and pockets of potential participants and their parents. This means that Szarvas has to be able to compete in a rapidly expanding market. It also has to redefine its raison d'etre in order to explain – to itself and to others – why potential participants should choose to come all the way to Hungary in order to attend "another Jewish camp".

These two new factors formed the background to my involvement in the camp. The challenge was to help the team evolve into a high functioning, more Jewishly literate group of educational professionals (for the time that they are in the camp) and to assist the camp's central team in going forward into their new era.

B. The Sofia Jewish Community in Bulgaria

General Context: The demographics in all of the Jewish communities in former Communist countries are very complex and it is extremely difficult to be specific in regard to the numbers of Jewish population in any country. In all of these countries, many hid their Judaism during Nazi or communist times due to societal and political pressures and there was little to no community life. The Bulgarian community

is one of the small communities. There are some 2,000–3,000 Jews (not necessarily according to *halacha* – the Jewish legal tradition – but according to subjective criteria) who are potentially active in the community. The vast majority are in Sofia, the capital city, while there are a few other smaller communities in the provinces. There are a couple of small Zionist youth movements and one Jewish school, all of which have started since the end of communism. Much of the educational activity in the community has been organised with the help, or at the initiative of the JDC. which has been a major factor in community development throughout the ex-Communist world of central and eastern Europe over the last two decades. They have done extraordinary work in turning a small community into quite a vibrant community, with youth and student activities, seminars and a community camp and more recently, adult educational activities. Among other things they have created a small group of students or ex-students (salaried) which coordinates and organises the educational activities of the communities.

Specific Challenges: Here the community is facing a major problem which has necessitated the increasing professionalisation of its own educational staff. This is especially important because in the last few years the initial feeling of animated enthusiasm which characterised so many of the activities in the ex-Communist communities in the early 1990s has given way to a more blasé feeling on the part of many of the potential consumers of community activities. Since there is little novelty value in community activities, the standard has to be higher. Once again, the expansion of leisure activities in the general society, while a positive development in general, has led to a new series of challenges for those involved in Jewish education. The young generation has most of the same activities/technological opportunities that characterise western youth. Jewish education has to compete with this throughout the world: the same is true for countries like Bulgaria. In addition the level of Jewish knowledge among the majority of the community staff is fairly low.

My task here has been to try and help the community workers professionalise their work and to increase the Jewish knowledge of the workers and of the *madrichim* in the community.

C. The Istanbul Jewish Community in Turkey

General Context: The Turkish community is, in many ways, a community very different from the others. It is bigger than that of Bulgaria and smaller than that of Hungary. In non-Western terms it would count as a medium-sized community. Official numbers are inflated but the current internal assessment talks of some 17,000 Jews (we can talk for the most part of *halachic* Jews). This is a community that has experienced a continuous history of many generations, but it has undergone considerable attrition due either to *Aliyah*, emigration or assimilation. The major problem of the community is of course the fact that it sits in a predominantly Moslem – and increasingly Islamic – society and has already received its share of murderous terrorist acts. They are intensely aware of the security threat and entrance to the community facilities (including synagogues) is extremely difficult to

outsiders without prior arrangement or personal escort. This feeling of threat became particularly noticeable during the Gaza operation of 2008–2009.

Specific Challenges: In addition to the direct security problems, the community experiences many other challenges which are not dissimilar to the problems that face many western communities. There is assimilation among the young, both (perhaps unexpectedly) in terms of the number of mixed marriages with members of the majority Moslem community and in the general sense of apathy and self-distancing from the community. The community is largely westernised and the general taking on of a ubiquitous western identity is common among the young. In addition, there seems to be a problem of Jewish education and Jewish knowledge inside the community. There are a number of educational institutional frameworks but the number of Jews with a good Jewish education (whatever that means) is comparatively small. One ray of light is provided by the youth movements and clubs for youth, students and young adults. Some of these do very good work and have created some potentially powerful young leaders in the community. However, as is the case in many other countries, there is a strong discontinuity between the youth organisations and the adult community: youth leaders typically rise to the top of their own organisations but then disappear from the community radar, certainly in terms of any leadership roles, before some of them reappear within the community as young parents many years later. The community leadership, which is composed almost completely of unpaid volunteers, does a lot of good work, but is seen by the younger generation as largely inaccessible.

I was asked to help create a young leadership framework which would start closing the gap and provide a smoother transition between the involved young people in the community and the older leadership.

Reflections on Issues

My involvement in these frameworks over the past few years has caused me to develop a number of perspectives that I now try to articulate. I focus on six issues. Each of them provides questions and challenges for the Jewish educator. Two of them, the last two brought here, provide real dilemmas.

1. The Fear Factor: A Perspective

It is almost impossible for those of us in the West to understand the amount of fear that can sometimes underlie Jewish identity and the extent of the anxiety that can accompany emergent identity into a recognisably Jewish framework. In the early years of post-Communism, this was extremely common in the Eastern European arena. In the context, it is not only easy to comprehend but in some ways it is hard to understand how this could possibly be different. One of my first encounters with the phenomenon was a conversation that I had with a Hungarian Jewish woman who I met years ago in a leadership seminar in Israel. I re-encountered her years later when

I was on a visit to Hungary to examine and start learning about the community in the context of a Jewish Agency project, several years before my proper entry into the world that I have described. I wrote down my impressions of the conversation not long after my return and I reproduce them here.

Conversation at the Community House

I met her at the community building, Beit Balint. It is a very pleasant building, brimming with activities most days of the week and almost every evening. I met her on a Sunday morning. We had both come to the local Jewish history group. I actually got there late. Most of the people had already gone but I was told that there had been some 30 or so people there. Most of them would have been old but there were some younger people as well. She was middle-aged, a social worker, and I understand that she was a good one. She'd got a number of prizes from the Budapest Social Services Department for her work in different frameworks. But it clearly wasn't enough. She seemed very upset when we talked. They had just found her out. She didn't know how they knew. She herself had been very careful to hide the fact. But a few weeks before we talked, she had felt that some of her colleagues were giving her strange looks. Some stopped greeting her. It was then that she knew that they knew. She knew now that it was only a matter of time before they stripped her of some of her privileges. She knew that they wouldn't tell her why. Or at least, they wouldn't give her the real reason. They would say that she was inefficient. Or they would say that they were reorganising the department. They would never tell her the real reason. That they had found her out. That they knew. That she was Jewish.

This was an educated woman, who had "come out" as a Jew several years before to the extent that she had come to Israel for Jewish leadership training. And here she was, quaking with fear and frustration. It is a reality which none of us who come from stabler Jewish backgrounds can fully comprehend. For some people in these countries, even those who have made the decision to accept their Judaism, the emergence into the Jewish world can be a very frightening thing, something which, rightly or wrongly, in their perception, can cost them a lot. This is perhaps more true of the older generation and less true of the younger one. But this is something which educators must try and understand although we tend to come from a school which believes that "of course" Jews should celebrate their Judaism and their identity as Jews. We are against the phenomenon of what might be called modern *Marrano* Judaism, in which people know that they are Jewish but hesitate or refuse to acknowledge it publicly. Yet such a perspective ill equips us to understand the complex inner world of the Jews of Eastern and East Central Europe.

Judaism has brought one problem after another to the Jews of these lands. The twentieth century saw blow upon blow descend on the heads of Jewish families who have unquestionably paid an enormous price for being Jewish. Nazism, Communism and other forms of anti-Semitism have been their almost constant companions for the majority of the last century. And it continues in one form or another even in the free democratic states (at least in theory) which have replaced the fallen Communist regimes. Emerging as a Jew can demand a price from the individual. In such a

situation, it is hardly surprising that so many would-be Jews would ask these questions: What is in it for me (or my children) if we identify as Jews? What do I stand to gain or to lose by my identification with Jewish life and community? This is a question one encounters less among the younger generation and perhaps one encounters it today to a lesser extent even among the older generation. They have already made their choice. Some have chosen to identify but many have not. The assumption is that there are far more unidentified and totally uninvolved Jews in these communities than there are those who have positively identified and who have chosen to involve themselves in some kind of activity within the (very loose) framework of the community. This explains the constant attempts at outreach activities. To a large extent outreach in this context means something very different from what it means in the West. In the West it tends to mean reaching out to the Jew who is not positively identified and resists involvement in the community. In these lands it tends to mean reaching out to those who have never accepted that they are Jewish and, in many cases, to those who have never confessed to or informed their families.

We have to understand that we are dealing with people with "broken" identities who are not part of the organic Jewish chain with which most of us identify. This is a challenge for us. This whole phenomenon is made more serious and becomes a greater educational challenge when some additional factors are added to the picture.

2. The Lack of Jewish Family Life: A Perspective

In the West and in stable communities where some kind of Jewish communal continuity has been the norm for generations, it has – at least until recently – been taken as normative that the family is the primary framework in which an individual learns and experiences Judaism and Jewish life on the initial level. After that, an effective Jewish experience in day school or supplementary school, camp or youth framework can enhance that experience, cause, as it were, the spark to burn more strongly and in many cases allow individuals to pass the level of knowledge, experience and identity that they have received from their parents. Sometimes, that might be funnelled back into the original family framework, enhancing the experience of the whole family. Whatever the specifics, it seems that as a generalisation it is true to a large extent that the primary model is still that of the family providing the initial spark and experience for Jewish identity.

However, the situation in the post-Communist communities is very different. Here, in the vast majority of cases, there is no Jewish home life to speak of. The community does not enhance the experience at home. It has to replace that experience, or rather to create the Jewish experience anew. The first time I understood this was during the same early Hungarian trip that I mentioned earlier. It happened on a Friday night when I went to a service in a back room at the great Dohany synagogue in Budapest. This was my subsequent account.

A Meeting at the Synagogue

This is a very strange scene. There are well over 100 people here, young and old. There are even a few young children brought by their parents. They sit in an upstairs

room in the synagogue building, around tables with modest food and drink, listening to the speaker. The truth is that this synagogue is housed in a part of the building that belongs to the small rabbinical seminary, now called the Jewish university. Just a few minutes ago I was looking for a seat in the small cozy synagogue, and singing loudly with all the others as the old chazan led the prayers. What an enthusiastic Lecha Dodi Everyone sang along with the organ and the chazan. Tremendous spirit. And then I was invited to the Oneg Shabbat. I expected that people would stay for a few minutes and then go home for Friday night dinner. But they have been here for an hour already. The woman sitting next to me explains that most of the people don't have a Shabbat meal. Many are married to non-Jews and many have not quite mastered the art of making Shabbat for themselves yet. The whole thing is so new to them. The speaker talks on. Everyone listens. That doesn't surprise. The issue is the resurgence of anti-Semitism. It is once again on everybody's mind. People discuss what to do about it. More and more public figures are coming out with remarks against the Jews. People are frightened. But at least here, in this upstairs room, with the memory of the service not yet faded, they can discuss freely. They are among their own.

The community has become for many a vehicle for the Jewish life that many individuals simply don't have at home. It doesn't augment: it replaces. Just last year, this was brought home to me again in a conversation that I had with my Bulgarian team of student educational activists. I met them soon after Pesach and they were exhausted! When I asked why, they explained that they had been going around the different frameworks of the community doing *seder* after *seder* (the major ritual celebration of Pesach). They were tired out. In the course of the conversation I asked them whether at least their own family *seder* had given them a break or whether they had had to run those as well. They looked at me without comprehension and then it dawned on me. Not one of them had had a home *seder*. Such things didn't exist for them. The community *sedarim*, which they ran, were "their own" *seder*. They explained that almost no one ever has a home *seder*. The community provides their experience. Even for these activists, so far ahead of the rest of the members of the community that they themselves lead all the others, the community functioned as the exclusive vehicle for their Jewish experience.

Let me give an additional example from Bulgaria, one that surprised and to a certain extent shocked me. The decision of the local education team that runs a community summer camp at a place called Kovechevtsi to which some 150 youngsters go each year, was this year, 2009, both interesting and challenging. They decided that the theme of the camp this year would be the *chagim* (holidays) and their values. It is in my opinion an impressive choice because they not only wanted to educate about the details of the *chagim* (clearly necessary) but also to go one step past that and link each *chag* with a particular value so that in the course of the camp they would not only have passed through some 10 or so different *chagim* (including *Shabbat*) but also would have explored a whole series of educational and personal values with their *chanichim*. As always, in order to prepare the *madrichim* with the necessary tools to create activities for the *chanichim*, a series of *madrichim* seminars were organised and it was decided that at the first content seminar, I would

present three of the *chagim* in order to start the preparation process off. The three "*chagim*" that were chosen were *Shabbat*, *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*. As far as *Shabbat* and *Yom Kippur* are concerned, there were no major surprises. All of the *madrichim* had some knowledge of the main aspects of the days and while all of them gained more detail and more perspective, this was grafted on to their existing knowledge. However, the session on *Rosh HaShanah* was a real eye opener. In response to the question regarding what they had done the previous year on *Rosh HaShanah*, three or four (out of just under 30 who were present) said that they had gone to *Beit Knesset* (synagogue) and another three or four mentioned the fact that they had had a family meal. In terms of the themes or motifs of the *chag*, very few knew more than the fact that there was a connection with apples and honey. When it was pointed out to them that *Rosh HaShanah* was one of the biggest and most important of the *chagim* throughout the Jewish world, they were totally amazed. For them, the big *chagim* were (in addition to Yom Kippur which has somehow proved more resilient than *Rosh HaShanah*) are *Pesach*, *Chanukah* and perhaps, *Purim*. The common denominator to all of these is that there are communal parties and celebrations. But *Rosh HaShanah*, apart from a tasting of honey and apples in the school or in the youth groups at the community, had simply got lost. Once again, to a large extent, for the majority of the Jews in the community, whatever does not filter down within a community framework simply doesn't exist. For many Jews in the West, *Rosh HaShanah* is one of the few times they attend synagogue. For these Jews, however, attending synagogue isn't part of their Jewish experience, and so if the community doesn't mark the holiday in some way, they simply will not experience it.

The challenge for educators is clear. We need a model of education which is not based on the family as a first step but rather tries to involve the families further down the line. This has started to occur in a number of different locations as family camps and seminars have been organised. Often these are organised as summer experiences at different resorts with the educational activities available for all those who want them. The Bulgarian experience is instructive in this regard. For some years, the community has organised a resort event for families in the period before the *Yamim Noraim* (*Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*). Gradually the number of participants has gone up and the demand for more intensive education at the family events has increased. Last year some 600 people participated – in a community reckoned to be only 2,000–3,000 in number. This year as a direct result of the demand, a winter seminar is being organised for the first time. There is an additional interesting side to these activities. Many of the educators at these camps are young people whose parents attend the event as participants and see their children teaching Jewish subjects or leading Jewish activities.[1]

[1] It should be noted that these generalisations are clearly not true for the small orthodox (meaning, on the whole, Haredi) communities which exist next to many of the larger community structures, but with very little real interaction.

3. The Weakness of the Communities: A Perspective

A short time prior to writing this chapter I received a rather different lesson. I was sitting with the rest of the small central staff of the Szarvas camp, here in Jerusalem and we were planning the schedule of this year's summer camp which is on the subject of Jewish community. The idea was to start by talking about the idea of community and the need for community, to walk the campers through some historical Jewish communities and the challenges and dilemmas that the inhabitants of those communities had to confront and then to move on to their own communities and examine their challenges and dilemmas. I was spouting away enthusiastically on this structure when one of the members of the team brought me up short: "But the kids don't know what their community is. They might know that they go to this youth club or to that activity but they don't identify it as a "community activity". The others agreed. They told me that even many of the *madrichim* won't be able to talk of their community other than in terms of their youth framework. In the end we started to think of using the *madrichim* from those countries which do have a strong concept of a Jewish community (USA, Turkey, India etc.) as a resource. The specifics aren't important but the general lesson is, I think. The communities are so weak in many places that they don't fully affect the consciousness even of many of those who participate in community activities!

It reminded me of an exercise that was run a few years back at one of the Szarvas unit head seminars. The participants, young activists in their early twenties from many different countries, were participating in a programme on the idea of the four children of Pesach and we asked them to create their own artistic version of the four children in terms of their own community. One mixed country group created a splendid and extremely informative poster in which educators, accompanied by children ("*Chacham*" – the wise child), or children unaccompanied by educators ("*Tam*" – the innocent or simple child – and "*Sh'aino yodea lishol*" – the child that doesn't know how to ask) featured prominently and clearly. But it was difficult to figure out who they had chosen for their "*Rasha*" – the so-called wicked child. They had a rather unpleasant looking gentleman behind a large desk with a dollar sign over his head. When they presented it, it was a revelation (at least for me – not interestingly enough, for most of the others present). He represented the community leaders, interested in money, managing the community property, most of which had been reclaimed after the fall of Communism. To the activists there it was clear: the community leaders were the personification of the *Rasha*!

Was that fair? I have no idea. I have met several community leaders and have no opinion of them as a group. I hope that the representation was unfair and that these individuals do indeed work in their own way for the good of the communities. But the important thing here is the negative picture that existed in the minds of these very motivated community activists.

Such is the confused situation of many of the communities today. Communities that are the principal vehicle for effective education and identity development are seen in such ignorant, ambivalent or even negative terms by so many of those who come into contact with them. This is a challenge for many of us who work in Jewish

education. We have to completely unlearn those conceptions of community that we have gleaned from our own reality and begin to rebuild our understanding anew from the bottom up.

4. Community Life: Who's in and Who's Out: A Perspective

One major challenge for educators working in this field is the Eastern European version of the perennial question of "Who is a Jew". One of the important things to understand about potential Jewish identity development in the area is the fact that for the vast majority of the possible "clients" religious identity is not a major option. There are, of course, exceptions to this generalisation (there is, for example, an Orthodox *Yeshiva* (academy of higher Torah studies) in Berlin which caters almost exclusively to students from all over Central and Eastern Europe who are looking for a religious and textual education) but on the whole, religion as a worldview is not a likely selling point for identity development to young people in the ex-Communist world. Perhaps it is the influence of the fiercely enforced secularisation of the Communist regimes which took its toll and perhaps it is the force of the secular modernisation which has steamrolled over religious sensibilities in so many parts of the world as a whole, but culture, history or tradition are buzzwords more likely to enthuse young people than religion. In my experience, religious educators can have impact if their approach is sufficiently broad and inclusive but even their influence is likelier to be felt in broad cultural terms rather than "narrower" religious ones.

One additional reason for this might well be the perceived narrowness of many of the orthodox rabbis in charge of the religious life of the communities. From dozens of conversations over the years I can say fairly conclusively that for large numbers of young people in Central and East Central Europe, rabbis are seen as an alienating force rather than a force for "*kiruv levavot*" – drawing people nearer to religion. This, incidentally, unquestionably has an influence on the popularity of the Chabad framework, whose rabbis are often seen as the acceptable face of religion, although, once again, in Central and East Central Europe, even Chabad is often seen as an unattractive – and divisive – force by many members of the indigenous community.

Now, in this context, a comparison with the West is likely to prove instructive. Throughout the West, in almost every community we find a wide range of "rabbinic possibilities" for those seeking personal or spiritual guidance. There exists a virtual potpourri of options with someone to fit every taste and to sanction many possibilities of Jewish life and behaviour. In Central and East Central Europe that is simply not the case. Not only are the more liberal forms of Judaism weak or nonexistent, but in many places, the individual rabbis represent a particularly narrow and rather unattractive (to many) kind of orthodoxy which is not calculated to attract those whose worldview is cultural-atheistic rather than spiritual-religious.

However, in the areas which we discuss here, there is an additional problem. Among those who are drawn to an examination of Jewish life by cultural or personal curiosity, there are very large numbers who are the products of mixed marriages. The reality of life under the Communist regimes was that Jewish identity played such a

marginal role that for many there was no barrier to intermarriage. Many perhaps welcomed the chance to leave the "accursed" Jewish heritage, at least on a subconscious level, since as I have suggested, it was seen by many as something which brought only trouble. In any case, the fact is that tens or hundreds of thousands married out and among those who have been prepared to examine coming back to Jewish life, there are very large numbers indeed who are the products of mixed marriages. Of these, there seem to be at least as many for whom the Jewish parent is the father as the mother. The former, are not Jewish from a *halachic p*oint of view. The tendency of many of the orthodox rabbis working in these communities is to view such products of mixed marriages as "beyond the pale" and to discourage them from participation in synagogue and community life unless perhaps, they are prepared to interest themselves in the possibilities of *halachic* conversion.[2] But the fact is that in order to be sufficiently interested to discuss conversion, they have to be drawn into the community. An a priori demand for interest in conversion runs contrary to all educational logic yet that is exactly the reality with which many young people find themselves confronted.

This presents a major potential challenge for Jewish educators. The pluralistic educator finds herself or himself in a rather strange position, encouraging the involvement in the community of many young people who feel alienated from the official community and unacceptable to the rabbinic leaders of the communities, the official arbiters of Jewish identity. Thus the educational message often contradicts the larger community message.

The group of Bulgarian *madrichim* who were mentioned in the last section provide a case in point. About 80% of the *madrichim* who are involved as educators in the Bulgarian community camp – educating the children of the community in Jewish customs and values – are themselves the products of mixed marriages, with only chance dictating whether the mother or the father is the Jewish partner. This is an additional reason why the home is unlikely to provide a strong and stable building brick in the identity of many young people. Where most of the families are mixed, it is difficult to expect that Jewish rituals will be a regular feature of family life.

I suggested above that the message of the educator might well contradict the official community message as represented by the community rabbis. But it might be suggested that the problem goes deeper. In some cases, educators might well find themselves involved in "special pleading" for a wider Judaism than the participants might have had the chance to experience within their own community framework. In the West educators often find their role in enhancing the work of rabbis in one way or other; here it seems that educators are called on almost to undo the work of the rabbis and to provide an acceptable face of Judaism.

[2]It is worth pointing out that Chabad rabbis who are active in many of these communities tend to take a different approach, inviting non-Halachic Jews into an engagement with Jewish life and only subsequently bringing up discussion of conversion. Unquestionably, this is part of the appeal of Chabad rabbis for many non-Halachic Jews in these communities.

5. The Aliyah Issue: A Dilemma

One of the biggest problems for Diaspora educators of a Zionist persuasion comes in relation to the whole attitude to be taken towards the issue of *Aliyah*.

My focus in this section is Turkey. As I have explained, my work in Turkey is to try to encourage young Jewish leaders or potential leaders to think of a long-term goal of working within the adult community. The Turkish community is large enough to have the potential for a long-term future. It has some excellent youth and young adults and a strong tradition of voluntarism within the community. But, as far as I can see, that future is not assured. The potential has to be actualised and the best resources of the community have to be mustered in order for the community to have bright prospects in the future, not taking into account the possibilities for increasing difficulties with the surrounding Islamic community.

It has often been suggested that no leader is irreplaceable and I have long accepted that as a general truism. However, recently, I have begun to question it as several of the top young people that I have met in the Young Leadership courses, have started to talk of Aliyah. I find myself extremely conflicted over the issue. I have no question that on the personal level, which is the one that they talk on, they could find more personal Jewish fulfilment living in Israel. It is not so simple to live as a Jew in Turkey. Many things have to be done in secret. Everything has to be done at a low profile. It is the only country I have ever been in where I have been told categorically by my hosts that I must on no account walk the streets with a *kippah* on my head on Shabbat. To do so is to invite potential violence.

But at what point do you weigh the community needs against individual needs? Just as I know that these particular individuals will be likely to be able to live a much richer Jewish life in Israel, I also know fully that the community will suffer. This is the best of Jewish youth. I am not convinced that they are replaceable. The community is not so big that it can afford for all of its best, brightest and most Jewishly committed to leave it even for a more fulfilling personal Jewish life, in Israel.

This is a very different situation from the situation in the big Western Diaspora communities. There, the numbers are so large that one can be fairly confident that potential replacements for potential *Olim* (immigrants) will eventually be found. There might not be a bottomless pool but even in the worst cases it would seem that we are talking ponds, not puddles.

This is a problem of the small communities. Successful Jewish education suggests to many of the most seriously committed and idealistic among the younger generation that their own prospects in their own Jewish community are severely limited. The conclusion that many of them draw is that they need to relocate to a larger and more promising community where they have the scope for the sort of life that their education has suggested to them that it is worthwhile leading. Israel is a logical choice for many.

I applaud their idealism and their determination and I can only be pleased and proud as an Israeli that they wish to come. But at the same time I am painfully aware

of the price that their own community will pay for the loss of its young leadership, precisely that leadership which is needed in order to help steer the community towards a better future. Very often these young people are better educated in things Jewish than their own community leaders. They have had, in many cases, chances that the present generation of adult community leaders have not had. And they want to leave. Rarely have I felt myself so torn over a Jewish issue. In this case, I have absolutely no idea what the right educational response is.

6. Investment in Jewish Community: When Do You Cut Your Losses? A Whole Set of Dilemmas

This brings me to the last of these six issues. As someone who has been brought in to help develop the educational potential of Diaspora communities, one of the questions that hits me in the face continually is the ultimate value of the work that I and other educators are doing. To put the question at its bluntest, how long can each community continue to last? I am not convinced as I once was by the concept of "*Shlilat HaGalut*" – the classic Zionist notion of "the negation of the Diaspora": I want to believe that the Diaspora communities have value. I want to believe that they can continue to sustain themselves, at least with a little help from their more powerful friends in the West and in Israel. I do whatever I can in my small way to shore up the communities to help them improve their educational standards and their Jewish knowledge and understanding. But when all things are considered soberly, do they all have a future? Should they be encouraged to stay or should the Jewish world cut its losses? These are real dilemmas with important practical implications.

Sometimes, the answer is simple. A couple of years ago I found myself in Macedonia, part of former Yugoslavia. Macedonia as a state has an overall population of just over two million. Before World War II there were over 10,000 Jews living there, almost all in the two largest cities of Skopje and Bitola. Most were destroyed in the Holocaust and many of the survivors made *Aliyah* to Israel in the early years of the state. Today there are about 200 Jews there, almost all of whom live in Skopje. Some of the most promising young Jews have moved away to other cities or to Israel. It seems clear that there is no future for the community. The only option for those who are interested in a long-term Jewish future is indeed to move out. It is regrettable to talk in these terms of an area with a Jewish history of at least 1,600 years but it would, it seems, be foolish to talk otherwise.

But what about Bulgaria? It is very small but showing great signs of life. As mentioned earlier there is an annual meeting of up to 600 Jews in a family gathering before *Rosh HaShanah* and a winter seminar for adults and families. There is an annual summer camp with a Jewish theme and a serious emphasis on learning. There are youth and student groups and a new community centre. All these are the results of substantial external investment especially by the JDC. It seems unlikely that the community will be able to continue for long without some kind of external help but that help has been instrumental in helping develop the internal resources of the

community. Is the case of Bulgaria like the case of Macedonia? In the short run, the answer is clearly no. But what of the long-term prospects?

To take an example from another part of the Jewish world with which I have been involved, India is another similar small community. There are about 5,000 Jews in India out of a total population of some 1,150,000,000. Once again with the help of agencies like the JDC and Ort, the community lives a vibrant Jewish life for a small community. There are many activities in the community centre of the main community in Mumbai. But can one honestly suggest that there is any long-term future for the community? However, if one abandons that hope and refuses to work for such a future, one gives the kiss of death to one of the most colourful and fascinating communities in the whole Jewish mosaic. Already parts of the community have all but vanished. The 1,000-year-old Cochini community has disappeared to all intents and purposes (its remnants surviving in different places, mostly in Israel), and much effort has been put into the surviving community based predominantly in Mumbai. Is the investment in vain? At what point does one give up on a community and tell them that its future lies elsewhere?

And what about Turkey with its approximately 17,000 Jews and a magnificent history especially in the years of the Ottoman Empire when communities such as Istanbul, Izmir and Bursa were bywords for Jewish life? I have already sketched out my own dilemma with regard to the *Aliyah* question there. But the question is, of course, a larger one. What is the responsibility of the Jewish world to a community that is suffering both from internal attrition and external pressure? What should be the message of educators? Are we wrong when we try to encourage a new generation of local leaders? Should we instead try and influence them to understand the potential hopelessness of their situation and encourage them to move elsewhere? Should we encourage the Zionist inclinations of the youth and try and fan them into a stronger flame?

And Hungary? Here is a community with a much larger potential – some speak of over a hundred thousand Jews – although it seems clear in a realistic assessment that the sober numbers are at best about 20,000 or so. What should the policy be in regards to such a community? What should the policy be of an educator like myself, invited into the community from the outside? Should I try and spread clandestine Zionist messages in the hope that some get the message?

The questions, in my mind, are clear. Up to what point does one continue to invest in a Jewish community from an educational and community building point of view? At what point does one say that it is time to cut one's losses and to encourage the locals to "head for the hills"? Yes, the questions are fairly simple and easily defined. It is the answers which I think are much more problematic.

Closing Time

From one point of view this is a personal essay. It comes out of my own personal experiences. But the "I" is used here as a vehicle to discuss wider issues. My importance in this process is only to give voice to the sort of thoughts that any experienced Jewish educator would encounter if he/she were in my position.

In my various working travels in western communities (not so very many), I have rarely discovered totally new things. Most of what I saw tended to confirm – although certainly to deepen – the things that I had already learned from my work in Israel with groups from the West. Not so this latest phase of my work in Europe and Turkey. I have found myself constantly stretched and tested: new insights and understandings of the Jewish world have been constantly before my eyes. I hope that I have managed to convey a sense of my new perspectives and questions in this chapter. It is not really about me. It is really about us all.

Former Soviet Union: Jewish Education

Olga Markus and Michael Farbman

Introduction

Reviewing Jewish education in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) is a challenging task. This is partly because it has to be viewed in the larger context of social, political, historical, cultural, and even economic conditions in which Jews found themselves in the countries of the FSU.

The FSU is not a country, but this is a common way to collectively describe this vast region that stretches across 11 time zones and contains 15 different countries.[1] Jews of these lands have different origins and cultural backgrounds, yet share nearly a century of common history – one where religious expression of Judaism was not an option. It is through the prism of these shared experiences that we intend to approach the task at hand.

Any attempt to analyze and evaluate an endeavor requires criteria of success. It is tempting to use the familiar, established ways of evaluation in the professional world of Jewish education. To an extent, we must rely on the knowledge and experience of Jewish education around the world, as this is our professional common ground, but we believe that we have to evaluate Jewish education in the FSU somewhat differently.

A major goal of Jewish education worldwide is the creation and nurturing of positive Jewish identity and commitment. While difficult to measure, there are ways to assess our success as educators, such as counting former students who remain committed Jews, belong to synagogues, practice Judaism at home, and eventually send their children to Jewish schools. Such research is continuously conducted in the West and serves as a basis for ongoing evaluation and open discussion of Jewish education. In the FSU, no comprehensive research into outcomes of Jewish

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[1]Former republics of the USSR: Russia, Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. Twelve former Soviet Republics (with exception of three Baltic States) form a Commonwealth of Independent States, known as CIS. Both terms (FSU and CIS) are often used interchangeably.

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education is available. Even if we had quantitative research, it most likely would be confusing. Declining numbers of students at Jewish schools[2] do not necessarily indicate failing schools – they may reflect Jewish migration, from smaller communities to capital cities within the FSU and emigration to Israel and elsewhere. On the other hand, stable or even growing numbers of students may raise a question about the proportion of Jewish students at various institutions.[3] Whatever numbers we look at, they would be telling us only part of the story, potentially invalidating any serious research.

Last but not least, we are dealing with a brand new field of Jewish education, emerging out of the "desert." As Zvi Gitelman puts it, we are talking about those "who started little over a decade ago, with no financial or educational resources of their own. . ." (Gitelman, 2007, p. 391).

To sum up, one should look at the question in all its complexity, using standard means of evaluation where applicable, while acknowledging the uniqueness and limitations of the data available.

This chapter will focus both on the challenges currently facing Jewish education in the FSU, through the prism of its history and current situation, and on ways in which these challenges are being addressed.

History of Jewish Education in the FSU

Jewish Religious Schools, as well as Hebrew schools, were outlawed at the end of the Russian Civil War (1918–1920[4]) and replaced with a network of Soviet Jewish schools where Soviet morale and principles of internationalism were taught in Yiddish. Most students and teachers were Jewish; Yiddish was the language of instruction; Hebrew was not taught; and Judaism as a religion was referred to only for critique. According to Gitelman, in 1931 there were about 1,100 Soviet Yiddish schools enrolling 130,000 students. "Nearly half the Jewish children in Belorussia and Ukraine, in the former Pale of Settlement, who attended school at all were enrolled in Yiddish schools" (Gitelman, 2007, p. 377). This reflected the early Soviet doctrine of National Rights, allowing education for all people in their native languages. These schools were never designed to maintain or deepen their students' Jewish identity. They were nothing but Soviet Schools in Yiddish, which was recognized as the official language of the Jewish people, allowing instruction in schools, publication of written materials, Yiddish theatre, and so on. A brief period of Jewish

[2] Such numbers are, in fact, available, albeit limited.

[3] This statement is in no way designed to raise the question of the Jewish status (who is a Jew), but simply to point out an area of tension arising out of the requirement for State-sponsored schools to admit non-Jewish students.

[4] According to Encyclopedia Britannica. Other sources provide a variety of dates for the Russian Civil War, ranging from 1917 to 1923.

renewal under Communism ended by 1939–1940[5] when the last Jewish schools and synagogues were shut down. A few "token" synagogues were kept open in the Soviet Union as a showcase of tolerance, but no educational activity was allowed there, especially aimed at the young – it was considered a form of indoctrination. A radical change of policy toward Jews that began in the late 1930s and continued after World War II (1939–1945) meant that no Jewish schools were re-opened after the war. Soviet Yiddish schools were established and funded by the state as part of a nationwide attempt to provide basic education to wide masses (*Likbez*).[6] Once the state lost its interest in maintaining such schools, they were doomed. Jewish schooling also limited integration into Soviet society. Russian-language schools guaranteed better chances of secondary and higher education. Although national language-based education remained available to most ethnic groups in the Soviet Union, official anti-Semitic policies of post-war USSR ended Jewish schools once and for all.[7]

After decades of oppression, resurgence of Jewish life followed *perestroika* (late 1980s) and with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 proliferation of Jewish schools and institutions began in the early 1990s, with Sunday schools and summer/winter camps leading the way. The first Jewish day school in Riga and a Jewish preschool in Vilnius opened in 1989, heralding a new era in Jewish education. The collapse of the Iron Curtain opened the doors to *aliya* (immigration to Israel) and other emigration from the Soviet Union, and the opportunity for Jewish communities from the West to openly support Jewish activities, including education, in the Soviet Union. With Western support, the enthusiasm of "Russian" Jews resulted in an explosion of Jewish activity throughout the country. In 1990 day schools opened in Tallinn and Leningrad and by the beginning of 1991 there were over 20 Jewish schools in the Soviet Union. The 1993/1994 census of Jewish Schools in the FSU published by Hebrew University of Jerusalem (DellaPergola, Bassan, Rebhun, & Sagi, 1997) provides a snapshot of rapid development. It does not reflect quality or content of the education provided, but creates a comprehensive quantitative profile of Jewish schools in the FSU. The census covered 218 schools in the FSU at the time, including 58 (27%) day schools and 169 (73%) supplementary schools[8] with

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[5] William Korey (1972, p. 83) states that "as late as 1940. . . there were some 85,000–90,000 Jewish children studying in schools where Yiddish was the language of instruction. This constituted 20% of the Jewish student population."

[6] *Likbez*, from a Russian abbreviation for *likvidatsiya bezgramotnosti*, was a campaign of eradication of illiteracy in Soviet Russia in the 1920s and 1930s. The campaign was generally successful. In 1917, only 40% of all adults in Russia were literate. According to the 1939 Soviet Census, literate people were 89.7%.

[7] Levenberg (1972, p. 39) had thus described the situation: "It is the official policy of the USSR to provide children with instruction in the native language, but not a single school in the Soviet Union teaches Hebrew, Yiddish, or any other Jewish dialect, whereas the R.S.F.S.R alone has forty-five different languages of instruction and a total of fifty-nine languages is used in the schools of USSR. Jewish history and literature are also not taught in Russian or any other language."

[8] A 1995 report of the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) has somewhat conflicting numbers, with 41 day schools and 190 Sunday/supplementary schools reported. Number of students is similar in

17,809 students and 2,041 teachers. "The most impressive finding in our census of the Former Soviet Union's Jewish education system is its very existence... Considering the fact that scarcely a half-decade earlier formal religious activity was forbidden and the few Jewish schools that existed were underground, the achievement is indeed extraordinary. Furthermore, our data comparing 1993/1994 with the same schools in the previous school year suggest a remarkable growth of 45% in just 1 year" (DellaPergola et al., 1997, p. 26). Note the ideological orientation of these schools: 85% non-Orthodox (i.e., Reform, secular, and communal) and 15% Orthodox (Charedi and mainstream).

From the 1990s, Institutions of Higher Jewish Learning were opened throughout the FSU. The first Jewish University opened in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad) in 1989, receiving State recognition in 1992. As of 1997, it operates as St. Petersburg Judaic Institute with a 2003/2004 enrollment of 120 students. December 2010 numbers reported on official website is 97 students (http://www.pijs.ru/). In 1991 a Jewish University opened in Moscow (called the Simon Dubnov Advanced School for Humanities since 2003). Similar programs appeared in several major cities of the FSU, including Kiev (1993, International Solomon University) and Minsk. The Israel Open University (OU) was introduced in the FSU in 1993. Since 2001, it has operated with support from the Jewish Agency. In 2006–2007, OU had over 6,000 enrolled students, 16 courses available in Russian, and the option of a BA in Jewish studies.

In addition to formal educational settings, many educational outreach institutions entered the Jewish scene in the FSU. Their goal was to initiate educational, cultural, and religious programs necessary for the resurgence of Jewish life. The Steinsaltz Institute published a number of Jewish texts and resources, including a partial Russian translation of the Talmud, and created professional development opportunities for Jewish educators. Project Kesher brought together women throughout the FSU for Jewish study, personal growth, and support. These are but two examples of numerous programs that have provided Jewish education in the FSU since the early 1990s to this day.

From the early 1990s, Jewish camps and retreats provide informal education, perhaps most effective in creating a positive Jewish identity among young Jews. Most organizations operating in the FSU run their own summer and winter camp programs, with the Jewish Agency a traditional leader in the field. Chabad Lubavitch, World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), and lately Masorti all report successful nationwide camp programs for different age groups.

One can identify three pillars of educational activities in 1990s FSU: (1) religious education and upbringing (to instill religious ideology, traditional way of life, and values), (2) secular education (stressing cultural Jewish identity and serving

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both documents. This once again shows the difficulty in conducting such research, as different data available often shows conflicting findings.

particular groups within the wider Jewish community[9]), and (3) Zionist education (promoting *aliya* and aimed to ease integration into Israeli society).

An explosion of Jewish communal, cultural, and educational programs in the 1990s was understandable. Gitelman points out a number of reasons why Jewish schools were among the first institutions to be constructed successfully. Education has always been the highest priority for Soviet Jews.[10] Other Soviet nationalities had access to ethnic education (including languages) within the context of general education in national republics – something denied to the majority of Jews. Pent-up desire to explore Judaism and their Jewish identity by former Soviet Jews, deprived for decades of such an opportunity, also clearly played a role. Last but not least, both financial and curricular support from external agencies provided the necessary resources and staff to enable and facilitate incredible growth.

Alexander Lvov (1999) notes that by 1994, after 4 years of rapid development, growth of Jewish educational programming stabilized and entered the stage of qualitative changes. "This is usually referred to as the end of the era of enthusiasts and beginning of an era of professionals." Rokhlin (2004) suggests that Jewish educational development be divided into 1989–1995 forming the foundation; 1995–1998 professionalization; 1998 onward systematization of Jewish education.

Review of Current Educational Structures

Let us look at the current educational scene in the FSU and its major participants.[11] One of the oldest and biggest networks of Jewish day schools is operated by the *Chabad-Lubavitch* movement, sponsored by the Ohr Avner Foundation. According to data from the Federation of Jewish Communities,[12] the FJC currently oversees and operates 72 day schools in 65 cities across the FSU with an enrollment of over 11,000 students. These are essentially religious day schools, offering general secular education as well as Jewish history, traditions, and language instruction. In most cities, the school is strongly connected to the local Chabad community and synagogue, providing context for the education. Most students do not come from religious families, but the quality of general education, the Jewish national component, and significant benefits (such as daily hot meals, transportation to and from school, after-school activities and camps) attract large numbers of students. Despite the best efforts of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, graduates of these schools often do not feed into adult membership of Chabad congregations.

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[9]This category includes, in addition to secular Jewish day and supplementary schools, Yiddish classes, secular early childhood education (including special needs programs), lectures, etc.

[10]Jews had the highest level of general education among Soviet Nationalities. According to the 1959 census, Jews who had higher education outnumbered the general population 5 to 1, with similar ratio reflected in 1970 at 4 to 1 (cf. Altshuler, 1987, pp. 108, 111).

[11]This chapter does not claim to list all educational agencies operating in the FSU. Rather, it provides a brief general overview of the field. A few individual examples of educational projects and agencies mentioned in this section help describe a particular approach, challenge, or success.

[12]See www.fjc.ru for detailed information on Chabad-sponsored activities in the FSU.

Heftziba is the partnership between local governments in the FSU, local Jewish communities, Jewish Agency for Israel, World ORT[13] (joined in 1993), and the Israeli Ministry of Education to provide formal Jewish education in Jewish schools in the FSU. This educational network started in 1992 when the first 5 schools opened (in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kishinev, and Riga). In 1992–1996, 10 more schools joined this network. Today the network includes 43 Jewish day schools and 114 Sunday schools with total enrollment of approximately 16,000 students.[14] In this partnership, the Jewish Agency sees a golden opportunity to place Israel at the center of Jewish education throughout the FSU. It bolsters Heftziba by providing teachers and specialists on the ground, professional development training to local teachers, and educational programs and resources on various aspects of Jewish- and Israel-related subjects. ORT contributes their unique expertise in computer technologies and their dedication to promoting the use of modern technologies in twenty-first century education, an ORT specialty in Israel and throughout the world. ORT's state-of-the-art computers and classroom equipment make Heftziba schools highly competitive in the current FSU school system.

In addition to its involvement in the Heftziba project, the *Jewish Agency* remains a key provider of formal and, especially, informal Jewish education in the FSU. The network of summer and winter camps for children and young adults as well as students has ensured the clear lead of the Jewish Agency in this area for almost two decades. In the early 1990s, the Jewish Agency responded to the urgent need of mass *aliya*[15] by providing, in addition to crucial advice and information on actual immigration, crash courses in modern Hebrew through its wide net of *ulpanim* (Hebrew language classes). In time, a number of programs promoting *aliya* to Israel were created. Some of the most successful programs offered an opportunity for high schools students to continue their studies in Israel, with parents following in a few years. By the early 2000s, *aliya* from most FSU communities had fallen dramatically. In an unexpected move, the Jewish Agency decided to use its professional staff and expertise to support development of local Jewish communities in the FSU. Although it all but abandoned its goal of encouraging *aliya* of all FSU Jews to Israel, through its popular educational and cultural programs, the Jewish Agency continues to help build and maintain strong Jewish identity among local Jews, while ensuring that Israel remains a crucial element of that identity.

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[13] ORT was founded in Tsarist Russia in 1880. The name "ORT" was coined from the acronym of the Russian words *Obshestvo Remeslenogo zemledelcheskogo Truda*, meaning The Society for Trades and Agricultural Labor.

[14] So reported on JAFI website, February 2009. A November 2008 report of JAFI talks of 44 day schools and nearly 10,000 students enrolled.

[15] According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (December 2007) in 1990–1999 some 821,763 people from FSU made *aliya*. Tolts (2003) gives the following numbers: "between 1989 and 2002, more than 1,500,000 ex-Soviet Jews and their relatives emigrated to countries outside the FSU."

Since 1994, *Hillel*, a student-oriented organization supported by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation in partnership with Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life and with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has been offering its programs and services to thousands of students and young people in the FSU. Hillel now operates 27 centers in seven former Soviet Republics, providing approximately 10,000 young adults a year with an opportunity to learn, explore, and celebrate their Jewish heritage. In December 2006, Hillel partnered with the Jewish Agency, allowing both organizations to significantly expand their programs by combining their resources and expertise.

Although the economics of operating Jewish educational and cultural programs in the FSU mean that it is much easier for large networks to maintain their institutions, there are a few historically independent projects in the FSU. One notable example is the *Adayin Lo* center in St. Petersburg, which serves local Jewish community needs with financial support from both local funds and foreign agencies. Adayin Lo includes a chain of Jewish secular preschools, a Sunday school, educational programs for tots and teenagers, a youth club, summer and winter camps, and a preschool for physically challenged children. In 2003 Adayin Lo added a Jewish day school to its array of programs, although this project may end up being too costly and ambitious for this small, independently minded organization relying on a lot of volunteer work.

The *Novaya Evreiskaya shkola* (New Jewish school) is an informal professional organization (pedagogical club) of educators, teachers, and students. It started in 1999 in St. Petersburg and aimed at encouraging educational creativity and initiatives among those involved in Jewish education. For a number of years *Novaya Evreiskaya shkola* published a monthly educational magazine, organized teacher-training seminars, published teaching resources, collected the best and most recent creative projects and materials produced by local educators throughout the FSU, and maintained a website for educators. It appears that, due to financial and organizational challenges, *Novaya Evreiskaya Shkola* ceased to exist around 2007. A variety of their materials are still available on a number of Internet websites, but no new materials have been published recently.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) has been a major participant in reviving the Jewish community in the FSU. Although its main priority has been providing welfare to thousands of Jews in desperate need, it has also supported key educational initiatives including cross-communal teacher-training seminars, Hillel, libraries, and publishing quality educational materials in Russian. "To strengthen the capabilities of Jewish educators in the FSU, JDC established *Sefer*, the Moscow Center for University Teaching of Jewish Education. Since 1994, *Sefer* has opened its doors to Jewish educators seeking to upgrade their skills in a university setting. *Sefer* provides information on continuing education opportunities and seminars to some 2,000 academics, and its own annual conference is typically attended by over 500 educators from the FSU and abroad."[16]

[16] Cf. JDC Annual Report 2007, p. 46.

To the best of our knowledge, the JDC has never operated Sunday schools and similar projects directly, focusing instead on supporting local initiatives. This situation may be changing with the recent development of a network of JDC-sponsored JCCs.

The *Reform* Movement entered the FSU scene in 1989 with the establishment of its first congregation in Moscow, *Hineni*. The priority was creating Reform congregations throughout the FSU. By 1993, dozens of new congregations were formed, many operating Sunday religious schools. The Institute for Modern Jewish Studies (*Machon*) opened in 1993 to train much-needed Jewish professionals and since 1995 *Machon* graduates serve congregations throughout the FSU.

A first FSU Netzer youth summer camp was organized by the WUPJ (World Union for Progressive Judaism) in July 1993. Every year since, Netzer summer and winter camps take place in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and most recently, Latvia. In 2007, nearly 1,300 individuals participated in WUPJ summer camps from all over the FSU.

A more detailed description of Reform Movement educational activities in the FSU, its challenges and strategies, is provided later in this chapter.

The *Conservative* movement did not establish any synagogues in the FSU in the 1990s, focusing instead on Jewish educational activities. The Masorti, or Conservative, movement supports School No. 41 in Chernovsty, Ukraine. In the last few years, Masorti has increased its activity in the FSU. In addition to the Chernovtsy school, it now runs a number of Sunday schools (seven according to Masorti Olami Monthly Report of October 2002) and student groups, the Armon Educational and Cultural Center in Kiev, a Ramah summer camp and family camp, teacher-training seminars, and family educational programs. Movement leaders estimate that about 1,000 Ukrainian Jews take part in these activities. The Chernovtsy school has 308 students from first to eleventh grade (2007 data).

Research and its Challenges

Research on Jewish Education in the FSU is limited. In 1997, the *Journal of Jewish Education* published a census of Jewish schools in the FSU for 1993/1994 school year, conducted by Hebrew University of Jerusalem (DellaPergola et al., 1997), with a comprehensive quantitative profile of Jewish schools in the FSU. Gitelman's works offer the most extensive research to date. His 2007 article "Do Jewish schools make a difference in the Former Soviet Union?" provides a broad picture of Jewish education in the FSU, with quantitative and qualitative data as well as serious analyses of the current situation and challenges. The St. Petersburg Judaic Institute published a number of books and articles on the subject in 1996–1998, as well as a *Reference Book of Jewish Educational Establishments* (ed. Elyashevich, 2001) in CIS and Baltic States in 2001. *Novaya Evreiskaya Shkola* (New Jewish School), a professional pedagogical club and a regularly published journal by the same name, published a number of research articles on the subject since its inception in 1999.

Similar to the research published by the Judaic Institute, these studies add an important dimension as they are conducted by professionals working in the field, on the ground.

Virtually all researchers lament the lack of coherent statistics, with information verifiable and updated regularly – a clear necessity for any such research. Rokhlin (2004) puts it bluntly: “The main problem here is that there is no single database on Jewish schools (at least in open access), containing the information which is totally reliable and would be updated with the required frequency. A number of Jewish organizations are attempting, with some degree of success, to create such a database; however, because of the lack of coordination of their efforts and limited resources, all available research databases have varying degrees of error.” A typical example of this “degree of error” is the reference book published by the Judaic Institute in 2001, which systematically lists Jewish schools and other educational establishments throughout the FSU, provides statistics, etc. This highly respected work draws criticism from Aryeh Rotman (*Novaya Evreiskaya Shkola*, 2002) who points out that a number of schools “missing” in this updated roster have simply changed their contact details or failed to respond to requests for updated information. In other schools, a significant change in enrollment numbers resulted from use of a different calculation, most likely by the school authorities who supplied the information. Thus, the 2000 reference book listed 140 students enrolled in school #2 in Birobidjan and in 2001 the number jumped to 840! Rather than a dramatic increase in numbers, the new figure reflects all the students of the state school reported, not just those in the Jewish department of the school.

The issue is simple. Collecting data in person is highly problematic, if not impossible, although information gathered through such research is helpful and appropriate. When Gitelman quotes certain teachers and their reports made to him directly, his conclusions and statistics are worthy of attention. Once we start basing our research on information provided by other sources and agencies, we are prone to confusion as much of the information will provide conflicting numbers. Without first-hand knowledge of each and every school and preschool, the misleading information cannot be sifted from the real statistics.

Markus conducted an audit of educational activities for the Reform Movement in the FSU in 2005 to obtain practical information for formulating future educational strategy, rather than for academic research. Even working within the same Movement and not dealing with various agencies and sensitivity around denominational differences, this process was incredibly challenging. Conducting research across eight time zones, expensive and unreliable telephone communications, often unavailable email capability, especially in smaller towns, oft-changing leadership, not to mention contact information that is routinely out-of-date – this is just the tip of an iceberg. In supplementary schools, most people involved work very part time and fail to respond to pleas for updated information. This is not a singular experience – the above-mentioned reference book gives “failure to respond” as a legitimate reason for lack of data. *Novaya Evreiskaya Shkola* cites one data collection project where of 140 requests sent to schools, only 38 responded.

In researching available data for this chapter, we found a number of resources unavailable, despite our best efforts. To our regret, we have discovered that *Novaya Evreiskaya Shkola* has ceased to exist in its former capacity and attempts to contact former staff members were unsuccessful.

Having discussed the challenges of conducting research in this field, let us now concentrate on what *is* available. To analyze a complex educational schooling system, we must establish classification criteria. The criteria used in research currently available are the following:

(1) Affiliation, belonging to (under the auspices of) a religious denomination or organization. A network of schools under the auspices of Chabad-Lubavitch will all have similarities, but will be significantly different from those operated by the Jewish Agency and ORT.
(2) Ideological orientation. This criterion is closely connected to affiliation, but does not overlap entirely. It helps to divide all existing schools into religious, secular, and possibly community schools. Religious schools can further be divided into Orthodox, Chabad (and other Chassidic), Reform, and Conservative.[17]
(3) Type of school, from the point of view of organization of the educational process. Jewish day schools, Sunday schools, and preschools/kindergartens would be in different categories according to this criterion.
(4) Geographical location. In the 1993/1994 census conducted by Hebrew University, three geographical regions were identified in classifying schools: Russia, other European republics, and Asian republics. Rokhlin suggests a different geographical classification. He begins with a Central group including Russia and Ukraine. This group has a high percentage of Jewish population, wide networks of Jewish schools, high number of qualified educators, a highly developed market of Jewish educational services, and, as a result, competition. Rokhlin's second group is Periphery, both geographically and in terms of development of educational system. This group, including Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, and Uzbekistan, differs significantly in size from the Central group with far fewer schools, even though they are in close proximity. This results in closer ties between the schools in the region, less competition, and more monopolization of educational services. The majority of schools in this group are in capital cities with far less coverage of provincial towns. Rokhlin's third group includes countries such as Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, where it is difficult to talk about any kind of network, as the numbers of schools in these areas are no more than one or two per country.

[17] 1993/1994 census (Hebrew University) provides a slightly different division of schools according to ideological orientation: non-Orthodox 85% (Reform, secular, and communal) and Orthodox 15% (Charedi and mainstream).

(5) Funding. Some schools are fully funded by sponsoring Jewish organizations or groups (e.g., Reform supplementary schools). Other schools are funded by the State with additional funding and resources, educational and other, provided by the sponsoring Jewish organizations (the majority of Heftzibah and ORT-sponsored schools).

Gitelman also suggests four types of comprehensive schools with a Jewish component. "There are public schools 'with a national component' (e.g. Ukrainian, Jewish, Armenian) which receive 15–20% of their budgets from the state, allocated to general studies teachers' salaries and maintenance; semi-private schools sponsored by the state, though Jewish organizations take responsibility for renovated premises in the school that serve Jewish instruction; 'schools within schools' wherein a part of the premises are set aside for Jewish instruction; and private Jewish schools, almost all religious" (Gitelman, 2007, p. 381).[18]

(6) An additional criterion featured in different research is the age of the institution in question.

Rokhlin (2004) rightly suggests that all of the above classifications are valid but limited. An educational system as complex as the one that currently exists in the FSU requires a different classification system to allow for evaluation of the actual educational process and not just external factors. He suggests grouping the schools in the following manner: (1) curriculum structure, (2) content of the Jewish subjects taught, and (3) organization of methodological work. These criteria provide a more practical approach, allowing the researcher to concentrate on what happens in schools in terms of the actual educational process. Thus, the curriculum structure will classify schools according to the number of academic hours in each grade on each subject and will clearly identify precisely what is being taught in the so-called "Jewish component." Currently, different Jewish schools (or their sponsors) make their own choices with regard to what subjects are being taught as part of the Jewish studies courses (e.g., Hebrew, Jewish traditions, Jewish texts, geography of Israel, history of modern Israel, Jewish history, etc. – a wide range indeed). This is in clear contrast to the way the general educational component is structured and taught; there is a state-approved curriculum for all day schools that must be followed strictly.

Analyzing the content of Jewish subjects taught would mean classifying schools based on curriculum structure by subject, textbooks, and materials used. The last category would reflect educator creativity, interaction with educational agencies, and teachers' professionalism and relationship with school administration. All these criteria are used in some of the research currently available.

[18] Gitelman (2007) also points out that this classification only includes schools in Russia and Ukraine. "The three Baltic states have distanced themselves from the rest of the FSU, but the educational profiles are similar."

Challenges: Today and Tomorrow

As mentioned earlier, Jewish education has entered a new phase of development – a stage of qualitative changes and professionalization. The significant growth and development of Jewish schools in the FSU is a reality, but Jewish educational institutions continue to face many challenges. One challenge is the fact that most Jewish families do not choose Jewish schools for their children. Hannah Rotman claims that "Jewish schools here have not become schools for the Jewish masses. This is one of the biggest issues that Jewish schools are facing" (Krichevsky, 2005). There are a number of reasons for this. In many places, especially smaller towns, Jewish schools attract disadvantaged families by offering more than just education. Virtually, none of the Jewish schools charge tuition. Many provide free meals, transportation, and even dormitory accommodation and summer and winter camps. It is an important mission, especially since the local Jewish community often has no means to support these families in other settings. Nevertheless, educators point out that "failure to attract Jews from across the economic spectrum represents a challenge for the future of Jewish education in their region" (ibid). In many cities, Jewish schools find it hard to compete academically with the best local schools. Jewish parents prefer to enroll their children in schools with the best educational reputations which Jewish schools often lack. This issue has been partly addressed by increasing teachers' salaries; Jewish day schools try to pay their teachers better than the state schools. In 2002, e.g., the Avi Chai foundation made an effort to improve the general studies program in FSU day schools they support by providing 20 schools in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Dniepropetrovsk with salary stipends for teachers of math, physics, English, computers, and other general subjects.

They also funded new laboratory equipment and materials for marketing and recruitment efforts.[19] There is a clear and understandable shortage of highly professional teachers of Jewish subjects. This should not be a surprise; this new field has not been around long enough to generate a pool of professionals.[20]

Improving and strengthening general education will undoubtedly attract more students to Jewish day schools. On the other hand, these improvements are often at the expense of Jewish subjects. The hours dedicated to the "Jewish component" varies greatly depending on the type of school. According to Gitelman, Orach Chaim school for boys in Kiev devotes 37 h a week to Jewish subjects; in the parallel school for girls it is 19.5 h a week. "The Chabad school in the same city. . .divides 11.5 h a week of Judaica among prayers, Hebrew, history (1 h) and 'tradition'. Examining a third curriculum in Kiev, we see the ORT school offering 8 h a week of Hebrew, history and tradition. The Dubnov school in Riga devotes only 4 h a week to a combination of Hebrew, history and tradition. . . The Jerusalem school in St. Petersburg teaches Israeli music, Hebrew, history and tradition, all in 6 h a week"

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[19]Cf. www.avi-chai.org

[20]Many of those who became involved in Jewish life in the 1990s made *aliya* to Israel or immigrated elsewhere, depleting the potential numbers.

(Gitelman, 2007, p. 388). Sunday schools try to keep up by supplementing Jewish subjects with English, computers, and other attractive activities.

Another challenge is the shortage of Jewish educational materials, especially textbooks of appropriate quality written in Russian. Age-appropriate books that acknowledge the diversity of the modern Jewish world are extremely rare. The situation is more optimistic when it comes to Hebrew textbooks; developed in Israel, there are a few curricula used in the FSU, most of acceptable quality. The lack of published materials forces many teachers to be creative and develop new lesson plans, programs, and sometimes entire curricula. *Novaya Evreiskaya Shkola* was dedicated to finding best-practice materials from all over the FSU and publishing them in the journal, in books, and on their website for other teachers to use.

Rotman and Rokhlin (2002), and other educators working in the FSU point to another challenge facing Jewish education in the FSU today – lack of clear goals. As Rynkovskaya (2000) puts it, "Despite numerous discussions, there is still no clarity in defining the goals of Jewish upbringing and education in post-Soviet Diaspora." Educators and analysts are trying to define these goals in discussions, articles, and at professional seminars and roundtables.

One thing is undeniable – there is a clear need for Jewish education in the FSU. This need is manifest in dedicated teachers and lay leaders, students, and parents; in enthusiastic professional Jewish educators and volunteers who invest their efforts in creating and maintaining Jewish educational institutions despite the lack of funds, materials, and even textbooks. There is little doubt about the reality and urgency of the educational needs of FSU Jews. Nonetheless, discussions of what the goals are (or ought to be) have not yet produced a clear result or a shared common goal.

Limited financial resources are an obvious challenge to Jewish education in the FSU. Unfortunately, despite efforts to create a self-sustaining Jewish community, an overwhelming majority of communal structures, programs, and educational institutions rely heavily, if not solely, on funding from international Jewish organizations. This challenge is not new and not likely to disappear any time soon. The inability of the FSU Jews to sustain their own communal structures was alleviated by Western agencies who undertook the support of their brothers and sisters in their quest for Jewish renewal. As a result, an unimaginable level of sophistication in Jewish communal life has been achieved in less than 20 years, something all of us can take pride in and acknowledge with excitement. The unfortunate byproduct of this reality is a mentality that has been developed among local Jews. Initially, foreign aid was needed because of a terrible economic situation and a complete inability locally to sponsor activities by direct involvement of Jewish individuals. This has turned into a total dependence on 100%-funded programs, including educational services. The challenge is thus twofold: lack of funds, a global and universal problem of the Jewish world, paired with a "receiver" mentality. For a few years now this issue has been raised, with attempts by JDC and the Jewish Agency, among others, to introduce tuition and other fees that are not just symbolic, creating a culture and an expectation that individual Jews can and should take responsibility, including

financial responsibility, for their own community. In educational settings, the idea of "fees for services" is even more challenging.[21]

The most important challenge of all is the fact that most Jewish educational programs exist in a void. Regardless of ideological positions of schools and institutions, an almost universal lack of context in which acquired knowledge can be applied is the hardest challenge of all. Jewish education received at school needs a framework beyond school walls – traditions kept at home, religious observances and cultural experiences, parental knowledge, and communal affiliation. These are but a few elements that can enhance the impact of Jewish education received at school. Unfortunately, for the overwhelming majority of Jewish families in the FSU, there is very little context to give meaning and relevance to Jewish knowledge. Most Jews do not belong to any organized Jewish community, religious or secular. Children are exposed to Jewish rites and practices at school, but almost never have family or communal experience of them. The result, for most students, is Judaism that exists at school or camp, but not at home, never becoming a way of life and remaining "yet another subject." Gitelman quotes the results of a fascinating survey of students and their parents in six Moscow Jewish day schools in the late 1990s. General subjects, such as math and foreign languages, get an 80 and 95% rating of importance from students and even higher numbers, 85 and 97%, from parents. By contrast, Jewish subjects get between 24 and 67%, with the latter relating to Hebrew language that parents hope will have practical importance.[22]

In the early 1990s, many newly opened Sunday schools were attended by children and their parents together as all generations looked for basic Jewish knowledge they had been denied for so long. It was an exciting time of great enthusiasm and Jewish educational experience shared by all family members. This is no longer the case; most Sunday schools have become institutions mainly for children. Most Jewish educational institutions today struggle to involve parents and make Judaism a family experience.

Religious schools, day and supplementary, have more potential to deal with this issue. The very existence of the religious community provides those who participate with opportunities to practice Judaism; the life of a religious congregation offers a variety of such experiences. It is important to note that most Jewish religious expressions in the FSU are Orthodox: "the religious Judaism that most people see is a strain of orthodoxy that dictates practices through clear answers and authoritative texts and teachers who assert that they represent the most authentic form of Judaism" (Grant, 2008, p. 98).

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[21] St. Petersburg's Adayin Lo offers an interesting example of addressing this very issue. A few years ago it began the process of introducing subsidized tuition fees that reflect the actual cost of their preschool services. Individual families are offered a stipend if they cannot afford to send their child to preschool. This way, the bulk of financial grants goes to supporting families, as opposed to sponsoring the institution itself and its programs. The hope is that this will help create a culture of financial support of Jewish education by the parents.

[22] For full results of this survey see Gitelman (2007).

The challenging question of Jewish status acquires a new dimension in the FSU. The Soviet official system of ethnic classification (referred to as "nationality" in Russian) was established according to patrilineality – if one's father was Russian/Belarusian/Ukrainian or Jewish, that is what the state considered one to be also. This was reflected on passports and the state strictly controlled that part of one's identity. The new freedom for FSU Jews to emigrate to Israel, as well as to create a local community, brought with it a new challenge: hundreds of thousands of people who considered themselves Jewish all their lives, who suffered oppression as a result of their identity, were now told that in fact they were not Jewish at all![23] This created a backlash toward Judaism as a religion among many former Soviet Jews, both those remaining in the FSU and especially those who made *aliya* to Israel.

Today, there is a major difference in approach between orthodox and non-orthodox (including secular) Jewish groups. Orthodox and Chassidic communities continue to operate within the *halakhic* framework (at least officially). All non-orthodox groups operate under the guidelines of the Israeli Law of Return, welcoming all who have at least one Jewish grandparent into all their programs and activities.[24] This allows most organizations to avoid the painful question of who is a Jew, although it occasionally creates difficult situations when students at Jewish day schools (or Hillel programs), for instance, have no Jewish identity whatsoever as the only Jewish grandparent passed away long before their birth. At the same time, the long-suppressed Jewish identity of many families, coupled with rates of intermarriage up to 80%, means that erring on the side of inclusivity helps reach Jews with very marginal Jewish heritage and identity who would otherwise be lost to the Jewish people.

One way of addressing some of the challenges discussed above is to conduct continuous research in the future. Collecting reliable data on a regular basis across different educational agencies should be a priority. It is definitely time to set up clear goals for Jewish Education in the FSU. In addition, it is probably time to begin asking questions about effectiveness of Jewish education in the FSU. Such professional discussion requires a set of "tools," i.e., criteria of success. Should it be "involvement in various forms of Jewish expression" (Grant, 2008), affiliation, celebration of Jewish life cycle rituals, *aliya*, Jewish education for younger siblings and future children, or even choosing a career as a Jewish professional by former and current students? These are questions for future discussion and research in the field.

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[23]Halakhah, traditional Jewish religious Law, establishes Jewish status through matrilineality, a direct opposite of the Soviet national policy.

[24]The Reform Movement even officiates at Bar and Bat Mitzvah for children with one Jewish grandparent, considering this ceremony as a symbolic "first step" toward conversion, which can only be legally performed in Russia after the age of 16. At the same time, the marriages performed under the auspices of the Reform Movement in the FSU require both parties to be *halakhically* Jewish, either by birth or through conversion. Patrilineal Jews with strong Jewish identity are offered an "Affirmation of Jewish Status" program.

A Case Study of Reform Jewish Educational Initiative

The Reform Movement and its educational activities in the FSU have undergone major development since the establishment of the first progressive congregation "Hineni" in Moscow in 1989. Sue Fishkoff (2000) quotes the results of a 1998 survey of Russian Jews revealing "that 22% said they felt 'closest' to Reform Judaism, compared to 6.5% who said they preferred Orthodoxy or Hasidism. Given the small number of Reform congregations that existed at the time, this finding was stunning."

At first, the Reform Movement saw establishing and maintaining congregational structures as the main goal in the FSU. In 2004, Reform leadership announced education as its "number one priority." Let us take a closer look at some of the educational challenges the WUPJ faces in the FSU (both systemic and Reform Movement-specific) and ways in which they are being addressed.

In February 2005, at the request of the WUPJ, Markus conducted research on all the educational programs in the progressive congregations in the FSU. The aims of this research were to gather maximum information about educational projects, including curriculum, teachers, and educational materials; and to identify needs and challenges.

In 2005, there were 13 preschools (or kindergartens, as they are commonly called in the FSU) associated with the Reform Movement: 4 in Belarus, 3 in Russia, and 6 in Ukraine. In most of the kindergartens, in addition to general knowledge, the following subjects were taught: Hebrew, Jewish history, Jewish festivals and Shabbat (including celebrations), weekly Torah portions, traditions, English, music, arts and crafts, and dance. Most teaching personnel had teacher's qualification and/or were qualified in the subjects taught and also regularly participated in seminars for Jewish educators conducted by the JDC, Centre for Jewish Education (Kiev), or Association of the Progressive Congregations (Ukraine).

In Belarus, parents of children in Reform kindergartens were members of the local progressive communities and there was a lot of integration with congregational life. In Kiev, after graduating from kindergarten, many children enrolled in Sunday schools.

Twelve Sunday schools participated in the research: 3 in Russia, 3 in Belarus, and 6 in Ukraine. Most schools taught the following subjects: tradition, history, Torah, Hebrew, computer, Israeli dance, English, arts and crafts, music, and drama. Curriculum variations often depended on the resources available and the talents of individual teachers. Most schools operated independently and used resources from a wide range of sources including JDC, the Jewish Agency, self-created, and even Chabad. The most essential needs that were identified by most respondents are:

- teacher training for educators working in progressive kindergartens and schools;
- unified curriculum and teaching materials on Jewish subjects that would reflect the Reform Movement's ideology and values;
- educational resources, especially maps, videos, games, books, and other materials.

The research also reflected adult education, *B'nei Mitzvah* training, conversion classes, and Netzer, the WUPJ youth movement. Statistical data varied according to country, size and age of the congregation, presence of a rabbi or *Machon* graduate, etc. Challenges and needs, on the other hand, were strikingly identical.

Lack of professional Jewish educators has always been one of the major challenges in the FSU. While the general situation improved, with Jewish universities and teacher-training programs providing qualified graduates in the field of Jewish education in the FSU, this did not solve the specific challenge the Reform Movement was facing: having educators who are passionate Reform Jews and well versed in Progressive Judaism's history, ideology, and values. This challenge was first addressed in 1993 when the Institute for Jewish Studies, *Machon*, was organized in Moscow. Initially a 2-year intensive study program, *Machon*, trains professionals who serve Reform congregations throughout the FSU, with five of its graduates becoming rabbis so far and a number of others still in training at the Leo Baeck and Abraham Geiger rabbinical colleges. There are currently 10 students in their first year of this program in Moscow. The program includes a year of study in Israel as part of the now 3-year curriculum. Graduates of *Machon* serve their communities' needs, which often include running preschools and supplementary schools and teaching both children and adults.

A next step was the creation of the FSU Educational leadership team, charged with providing a vision for future development of educational programs and projects and with coordinating all educational activities in the FSU. Teacher-training seminars became regular beginning in May 2005. These twice-yearly conferences offer local educators an opportunity to learn, raise their professional level, and share best practices. Most importantly, these conferences help equip professional Jewish educators with knowledge and skills to teach the fundamentals of Progressive Judaism.

One of the challenges mentioned earlier was the lack of a clear goal for Jewish education. This absence was addressed by the Reform Movement in November 2006, with support and guidance from professional colleagues in Israel and the US, when the FSU educational team produced a mission statement to guide all the educational activities of the Reform Movement in the FSU.[25] It reads:

> *The Jewish Educational mission* of our movement is to design and deliver educational experiences that help individuals and families consciously choose a religious way of life and develop a world view shaped by Progressive Jewish values that both enrich their own lives and support and develop a strong Progressive Jewish community.

The local educators dedicated a conference to discussing this mission statement and worked out strategies needed to make this dream a reality. Based on the urgent need for a unified, Reform values-infused curriculum that was so clearly identified by the 2005 research, a number of curricula have been written and published by the Reform Movement in Russian, including an integrated preschool curriculum for ages 3–7

[25] This conference was first of many organized by the WUPJ with support from the Hebrew Union College and the Schusterman Foundation and led by Rabbi Alona Lisitsa and Dr. Lisa Grant.

(*Jewish Me and World Around Me*), a comprehensive 5-year curriculum for Sunday schools (*Torah Shelanu, Torah Sheli*, ages 7–12), a B'nei Mitzvah handbook, and a series of booklets on Jewish festivals. A Russian translation of the Plaut modern Torah commentary became an invaluable resource for congregational workers and educators. At the time of writing it is available online, with printed edition planned in the near future.

Limited financial resources and ongoing evaluation of its activities have prompted the World Union recently to shift its emphasis from having large numbers of smaller congregations to supporting fewer congregations in the capital cities and larger Jewish centers of the FSU. According to the 2008 annual report of the WUPJ, it currently operates 43 congregations with over 20 supplementary schools and 11 preschools in the FSU.

One of the major challenges for all educational institutions discussed earlier in this chapter is the void, the lack of context in which the Jewish knowledge acquired can be used by children. There is little doubt that this challenge also applies to the Reform schools and preschools in the FSU. Having said that, we feel there is a lot of potential in Reform educational projects which exist within the context of a congregational structure. A Hebrew lesson comes to life when a child with his/her parents comes to a Shabbat service at the synagogue. A Purim spiel prepared by a preschool group and performed at the congregational celebration after the *Megillah* reading is not merely an annual performance or educational exercise, but implementation of acquired knowledge and skills. A lesson on equality in Reform Judaism is illuminated at any Shabbat or congregational event when a child sees women wearing *tallitot* and carrying the Scroll. To be sure, Reform Judaism is not the only religious tradition using this potential. There is little doubt that involving students and their families in congregational life is still a major challenge for many Reform communities in the FSU. One thing is certain – this is an exciting challenge that can be met.

Jewish Education for FSU Jews Outside the FSU?

One of the reverberating questions in the globalized Jewish world of today is: How do we ensure the Jewish commitment among "Russian" Jews living not only in the FSU, but also in Israel, the United States, Germany, or Australia? The cultural and spiritual identity of "Russian" Jews often prevents them from actively engaging with the indigenous Jewish community. "Russian" Jews, by and large, do not feel the need to belong to an organized Jewish community, as least not in the way their Western counterparts do through formal synagogue memberships. In the United States, e.g., despite the active engagement of local Jewish communities in resettling Russian Jewish immigrants in the 1970s and 1980s, an almost insignificant percentage of those helped to settle have expressed the desire to join a congregation, belong, and participate. This is surely a challenge, as "Russian" Jews also yearn to foster a positive Jewish identity in their children but do not seem to "fit in" at American synagogues. This presents the Jewish world and Jewish education with

a new challenge. Jewish schools for Russian Jewish children are operating in the United States and a number of German Jewish communities struggle with an overwhelming influx of new immigrants (up to 90% in some communities) and their needs. The Jewish Agency for Israel is beginning to turn to the West, offering the expertise it has amassed over the last two decades operating in the FSU. A major fund has been established by Russian-based Jewish businessmen with a mission to “develop Jewish identity among the former Soviet Jews” living in immigrant communities.

There are many challenges that this new initiative will face. Unlike the FSU-based activities, this may be a short-lived effort as the generation of immigrants with clear cultural and educational preferences may see their children and grandchildren feel more at home in the West. For now, however, it appears that well over a million people in Israel, Germany, the United States, and Australia may need similar educational approaches as those used in the FSU. The challenge is making sure that in adapting to their new home, these transplanted Jews find a way to connect to the Western Jewish community and culture in a meaningful way so that their children will not be lost to the Jewish people.

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France: Jewish Education in France

Ami Bouganim

Translated by **Daniel Roseman**

Over the course of several centuries, France has been the stage for the collision between secularism and religion. In 1905, the separation of State and Church exacerbated rather than curbed the tensions between the political and religious factions. Secularism asserted itself with even more determination than in the past as the framework of the republican civil religion. Alain, the most eloquent spokesman for the 'secular religion' which later would be designated by the term 'secularism', fought the network of private schools sponsored by the Church, employing clerics and dispensing education in a religious atmosphere and according to religious norms. He was to claim, against his adversaries, 'The Republic is a philosophy before it is a regime: it is a Church, a secular Church whose dogma is free thought and whose priest is the primary school teacher' (Alain, 1986). This well-known and current quote expresses a position which largely dominated the circles of those French intellectuals who portrayed themselves as politicians of education (often in disdain for the term 'educationalist', which they considered too amateurish).

For decades, private schools did not benefit from state support, and were the responsibility of the Churches or – for the few Jewish schools which existed before the Second World War – the Consistoire [Board of Deputies of French Jews]. The authorities nevertheless ensured that they arranged two free days a week to permit those parents who wanted it to dispense a religious education – catechism for Catholics, Talmud Torah for Jews – in parishes or synagogues. After the Second World War, the debate over private schools resumed, until the adoption on 31 December 1959 of the Debré Law, which redefined relations between the State and the private educational organisations. This law, still in force today, did not so much recognise private education itself, as the plurality of school establishments. It principally recommended two types of contract between the State and private establishments that wished to benefit from its support: the 'simple contract', authorising a certain liberty in developing programmes and leaving recruitment and training of

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teaching personnel to the school leadership; and the ‘contract of association’, calling for strict respect of academic programmes as in state schools, in exchange for which teachers were given the status of public employees, recruited, trained, monitored and graded by governmental academic services. The contract of association guaranteed greater backing from the State as well as not-negligible support from regional and local authorities. It was therefore not by chance that private schools balanced, and still do balance, that status. They would like to get both the pedagogical freedom vouched by the first type of contract and the material backing of the second type.

Nevertheless, the choice of a private education is not so much religious as consumerist. It is expected to give greater social protection and better educational results rather than providing specific teaching, with the exception, that is, of a strictly limited number of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and, recently, Muslim establishments. Equally, it represents an appeal against the educational menu which limits parents’ choice of state school. Often, parents make do with a private school by way of protest against the nearest state school, because of the perceived violence which is rife there, the threatening disintegration, or even a far too visible integration. The choice of Jewish school does not run counter to this general rule. It takes into account all sorts of considerations, most important of which centre around the dual concerns of extracting children from cohabitation with their non-Jewish comrades, and avoiding the violence which is endemic in certain schools in the zones known as ‘unstable schooling’. It also derives from a concern to perpetuate a quasi-ghettoised way of life, in order to preserve a distinctive identity in an assimilated society. With the exception of the few rabbinical establishments which do not fulfil the required conditions to be under contract or do not wish to be, and a small number of establishments which settle for simple contracts so as not to have teachers imposed on them by the local education authority, the majority of primary and secondary Jewish establishments are under the contract of association, or are on the way to obtaining it for all their classes. The contract of association is only granted to a private school after a 5-year probationary period, except for transferral of a school or the creation of annexes. This delay of 5 years can be reduced to 1 year for the creation of organisations in new urban districts consisting of more than 300 homes. Going under contract is a progressive process, class by class.

Schools under contract therefore promise to deliver the same teaching as in the public system, to prepare their students for the same exams and to respect the same scholastic rhythms, even the same calendars. Today, it is estimated that two million pupils are educated in private establishments, making up 17% of the total number of pupils, 13% in primary education and 21% in secondary. For their part, Jewish schools educate nearly 25% of Jewish children, whose total is estimated at around 200,000. Community authorities are happy to publicise their waiting lists for the more sought-after Jewish schools. The majority of Jewish parents, therefore, continue to send their children to state schools or non-Jewish private schools, in many cases Catholic, where Jewish pupils are excused from catechism classes or are invited to participate in Jewish classes.

Recently, the wearing of the Muslim headscarf within state schools and challenges to the content of certain lessons, such as the Shoah (Holocaust), have restarted the debate on secularism. Islamist protests have reawakened old anticlerical passions: schools were not about to authorise Crescent, scarf and Koran after having excluded Cross, cassock and breviary. On the one hand, those who held on to secularism as the civil religion of the Republic rallied together to fight all forms of sectarianism, eliminate all religious claims and plead for the promotion of a civic morality with a civic – if not positivist – inspiration. They would only agree to celebrate pragmatism, tolerance, humanism and the universalism of secularism, as well as science. They resumed the rallying cries of the grand secularists of the beginning of the century, such as 'Religions divide, science unifies' or 'The war among us is not in the trenches, it is in the schools'. On the other hand, proponents recommended secularism as a political principle for structuring the public space, without undermining the plurality of religious sensibilities, voices and liturgies. In this new phase, the debate did not centre so much on the separation of State and Church – which had been achieved in the meantime – as on the place of religion in the public space, and it was more concerned with Islam, a political religion, than with Catholicism, which had long since renounced its vague political desires. The debate was all the more passionate in that it went beyond the strict category of the separation of politics and religion and impinged on the question of French nationality which, until the Muslim demands, had been principally inspired by Christianity.

With Islam, the theological-political question was posed differently. No longer were the religious institutions under attack, as much as religion in general; this was not so much a political problem as a problem of and for society. On 15 March 2004, a law was passed forbidding 'wearing of signs or clothes by which pupils ostensibly manifest a religious importance' in public establishments. It was thought that the problem posed by the wearing of the Muslim headscarf in public establishments, if not in the civil service, had been solved; in fact, it only initiated a long legal-political debate since this law appeared to be incompatible with contemporary international texts such as the European Convention on Human Rights which stipulated the 'freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief'.

Republican Jewishness

In his quote, Alain shows himself to be the heir of Adolphe Isaac Moïse Crémieux, Minister of Justice in the Provisional Government of 1848, founder and first president of the Alliance Israélite Universelle [Universal Jewish Alliance], who declared, 'Priest in the church, teacher in the school'. Crémieux was one of the first Jews to take his emancipation so seriously that he embarked on a brilliant career as a lawyer while campaigning against the 'More Judaico' oath that obliged Jews to swear with a hand placed on the Bible, while other lawyers and litigants were allowed simply to declare with raised hand 'I swear'. The president of the Nimes court asked him so frequently if he would swear his lawyer's oath with the More Judaico that he

exclaimed, 'Am I in a synagogue? No, I am in a courtroom! Am I in Jerusalem, in Palestine? No, I am in Nimes, in France. Am I only Jewish? No, I am a French citizen as well: thus, I will take the oath of a Jewish French citizen' (Amson, 1988). This was in 1817. Ten years later, he was still denouncing the More Judaico oath. The 1815 Charter, although proclaiming Catholicism the state religion, affirmed the equality of citizens before the law, as well as freedom of religion. But the More Judaico oath contradicted these principles. Crémieux naturally presented himself as the lawyer for the whole of his co-religionists: 'I do not want to repudiate my faith, I see men growing up, amongst these Jews who have been crushed for so long, who will not spoil France which has adopted them!' At the end of the day, after many twists and turns, the More Judaico oath was abolished by a decision of the Court of Cassation [Supreme Court] on 5 March 1846. It had permitted Crémieux to become the most eloquent advocate of what was called the civil assimilation of French Jewry.

In the meantime, the Charter of 1830 had replaced the one of 1815. Catholicism was now simply the religion of the majority of French people. A law of 8 February 1831 had even put the state in charge of salaries for Jewish ministers, an eloquent recognition of the civil rights of Jews, even more so because the law was passed with a large majority. Unlike a number of Jews, among the most prestigious, who left Judaism in order to hasten their social advancement, Crémieux was no more in favour of mixed marriages than conversion. In a letter to a colleague, he presented the dilemma which preceded his marital choice in these terms: 'Obliged to choose between the daughters of Jerusalem, I had to follow education and integrity rather than money.' It was nevertheless an inter-community marriage, since a Portuguese man – Crémieux was of Portuguese ancestry – agreed to marry a German woman.

In 1830, Crémieux left Nimes for Paris, where he was to lead a brilliant career as a lawyer, politician and representative of the Jews. In 1840, he alienated the French authorities by taking up the cause of the Jews of Damascus who were accused of the ritual murder of a priest, the Superior of a Capuchin monastery, doctor and French protégé. In 1843, Crémieux was elected president of the Consistoire of French Jews. He was one of the architects of the new religious regime, officially recognised by the law of 25 May 1844, the charter of the Jewish religion which prevailed until the separation of Church and State. However, a year later, in July 1845, he had to renounce his position as the leading Jewish figure in France. His wife had secretly converted to Christianity. In addition, she had baptised her children without their father knowing. But the leading Jews of the capital still wanted him as their representative. They put him forward as President of the Paris Consistoire. Crémieux dithered before giving up. Half a century after the Revolution, emancipation may have liberated Jews, but it had also de-Judaised them.

The year 1860 was a favourable year for the birth of new institutions, such as the Red Cross, the Workers' International and the Alliance Israélite Universelle. On 17 May, 17 people met at the home of Charles Netter. Adolphe Crémieux was absent from the meeting, but was represented by Narcisse Leven. The participants shared one preoccupation: to help their co-religionists who were experiencing persecution throughout the rest of the world, in particular in Eastern Europe. They felt

themselves elected to protect them, regenerate them and obtain for them the same political rights that they themselves enjoyed in France. Their Judaism was often just Hebrew remnants, ancestral memories and vague liturgical practices. Half a century after their emancipation, the best of French Jewry was making do with the faith that the revolution had attempted to substitute for traditional religions, which recommended their convergence in the universal love of God for humanity: they did not so much see themselves as philanthropists as professed, in one way or another, but as a prophetically inspired 'theophilanthropy' which cherished a messianic vocation (Salvador, 1860).

A six-member committee was put in charge of founding an association and working out its rules. The poet Eugène Manuel wrote a text. A long preamble, reconstructing the slow progression of the idea of a universal task, concluded with a manifesto which became known as the Appeal of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, and which made up one of the most eloquent pieces of 'Israelitism'. The founders of the Alliance were following in the footsteps of the Sanhedrin convened by Napoleon in 1807 to regularise the status of the Jews. Half a century later they took up its broad themes again: patriotism and love of France; scrupulous respect for the civil code; moral regeneration; apprenticeship and exercise of a trade. The Universal Jewish Alliance gave itself the mission

1. To work everywhere for the emancipation and the moral progress of Jews;
2. To lend effective support to those who are suffering because of their Jewish identity;
3. To encourage all publications helping to bring about these ends.

Starting in the summer of 1860, under the impetus of Crémieux, the Alliance engaged in its first political action in favour of the Maronite Christians being persecuted in Lebanon by the Turks. Relations were established with other organisations and contacts made with governments of countries with large Jewish communities. The AIU carried out the first demographic surveys, dwelling on legislation regulating Jews' sociopolitical status. Acting as a representative of world Jewry, the AIU denounced in the press the anti-Semitic attacks which were rife more or less everywhere. Just 4 years after its founding, Crémieux declared in front of the Alliance's general assembly.

Will we one day see all peoples forming a single people, all religions unifying in a single religion? Let this beautiful prophecy be accomplished, and when that dazzling day dawns with a pure and immense light, one of our descendants will cry 'When our elders founded the Alliance Israélite Universelle, they took the first steps towards the goal we have achieved' (Amson, 1988).

In 1860, the war between Morocco and Spain pushed the Jews of Rif, where cholera was rife, into Gibraltar. Mr Picciotto, of the British Board of Deputies, was moved by their plight. One year previously, while on a mission in Morocco, he had noted their material and moral misery. In 1861, he despaired of the European powers, which were content to address 'general remonstrances to the central government'. The town of Tetouan, in the north of Morocco, had a community totalling around 6,000 members at the time, originally from Spain and Portugal from where their ancestors had been expelled during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Impressed by Picciotto, the AIU called on the French vice-consul in the town to do everything in his power to enforce the report's conclusions: 'To encourage and help the internal reform of our co-religionists by means of public education'. Thus the AIU created its first school, which took care to combine general education with religious instruction. It was inaugurated on 23 December 1862, despite the misgivings of the rabbis, who feared ancient traditions would be watered down. The school could only accommodate a third of applicants, making up 100 pupils.

The scholastic work of the AIU was to follow without hang-ups in French colonial policy, for which Jews were among the first and most ardent proponents. The AIU intended, to quote Crémieux again, to regenerate 'hearts bastardised by contempt and humiliation'. It did not wish to provide instruction as much as education. It bet on progress and enlightenment, in which it detected quasi-messianic signs. It cultivated virtue, without mentioning this far too political word. What is more, from the beginning the AIU admitted non-Jews on the benches of its schools, almost a quarter of its pupils. Its headmasters were supposed, as was said in the protocols of the meetings of the central committee, to have 'the stoicism of Moses and the patience of Hillel to galvanise the cadavers given to them by way of pupils'.

In 1866, Crémieux visited Palestine. On his return, the central committee passed a resolution declaring it 'useful to remedy the misery of the Jews of Palestine through agriculture, and to promote the creation of schools in Jerusalem and other towns'. Charles Netter went to the region in turn. He was more resolute than the rest of his companions. It was necessary to maintain political pressure, as in Russia and Romania, emphasise educational action, as in Morocco and Iran. Jews were nevertheless on the point of great migratory movement. France could not receive them all; nor could the United States. But they had never stopped praying for a return to Palestine. They had to be able to believe in this possibility: to rip it out of the register of religious dreams, to inscribe it in reality. Netter wanted nothing less than to make Palestine a haven – an asylum – for the persecuted Jewish masses who would find their regeneration in and through working on the land. This was well before anyone had heard of Zionist visionary Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) and the State of Israel.

On 14 April 1869, Netter set off for Constantinople. In his pocket he had a letter of recommendation from Crémieux to the Grand Vizier Ali Pasha, a letter from another prominent figure to the minister of public works, David Pasha, as well as a series of letters for key personalities in the Ottoman government. In addition, he had a large sum of money available, granted partly by Salomon Goldschmidt, vice-president of the AIU, and raised partly through subscription. He wanted to create 'a Jewish establishment', whose 'good deeds would be spread over all the Porte's subjects, without religious distinction'. Thus he obtained a free grant of land destined to form an agricultural school to the south-east of Jaffa – today's city of Holon – as well as exemption from the rights of tenant farmers during the initial years, customs rules on the import of material necessary for the functioning of the school and duties on the export of its produce. He also ensured the personal patronage of the Sultan. In 1872, Netter proposed to call his school Mikveh Israel. Quickly, it became known as 'a messianic school' and in his report to his colleagues in Paris, he dared to write.

> Triumphant, dominating, the new Jew ardent and firm, the new type of man which Palestine has engendered: pupils, workers, working, singing of the creative effort, saluting its resurrection. Mikveh Israel: bare hills, plains covered with pestilential marshes, a feverous nest of mosquitoes, a sacrificed land, a land destined to be covered by the dunes of the sea, which has already won in the west and the south: Jewish hands have taken it and regenerated it. Mikveh Israel, that enchanting corner of which every wealthy country will be proud. Marvellous oasis of our wealthy country.

In parallel, in 1867, in the premises of an apprentice school for the children of Eastern European immigrants sponsored by the Levens, located in Rue des Singes in the Marais area of Paris, an organisation was created to train schoolmasters for the Alliance. From the beginning, the Ecole Normale Israélite Orientale (ENIO) presented itself as a school for missionaries. It received pupils from different communities, communicated to them the love for France and its culture, gave them a teacher training and sent them out to open new classes. By 1880, ENIO was recognised as being of public utility and after having moved several times, in 1889 it installed itself at 59 Rue d'Auteuil in the 16th arrondissement, on a historic site bought thanks to the generosity of Baroness de Hirsch. This school was, until its move in 1962 to Rue Michel-Ange and its conversion into a top secondary school, then turned into a school for youngsters with educational difficulties, the crucible of the Alliance's pedagogy, and a pool of talent for its teachers. Emmanuel Lévinas was the prestigious headmaster for several decades. From its reopening in 1946, after the Second World War, it again aimed to 'create... a centre of Western Jewish spirituality which, once again, would be able to bring something new to the Judaism of the East' (Lévinas, 1946).

The AIU was never to abandon its philanthropic – not to say colonialist – vision of the Eastern Judaism which was the concern of the majority of its efforts. Its key figures, its directors and its leaders had not ceased, to quote their initial appeal, 'to moralise those who are corrupted and not to condemn them, to light up those who are corrupted and not to neglect them, to lift up those who are beaten down and not to be content with pitying them...' It went as far as recommending the teachers to extract children from the deleterious influences of their natural milieu: 'The child must be able to leave the cramped, narrow-minded and sometimes miserable environment in which it finds itself, and gain an exact and durable understanding of the universe, nature, secular culture and civilisation...' (Chouraqui, 1960) France's colonialism in North Africa was paved with good intentions: so was the educational philanthropism of the Alliance. France had not come to terms with the fall of its empire: neither had the Alliance.

On 2 September 1870, Louis Bonaparte, taken prisoner by the Prussians, surrendered his sword to their king. On 4 September, a National Defence Government was created. On 19 September, the Prussians laid siege to Paris. On 29 September, a decree organised the companies of the National Guard; another, on 2 November, ordered a mass uprising of all men aged between 18 and 40. On 12 November, a decree resolved that Crémieux, 'member of the National Defence Government, Minister of Justice, is delegated to represent the government and exercise its powers'. He immediately left for Tours where he combined the portfolios of Justice,

Interior and War, taking with him Narcisse Leven as head of his personal staff. Crémieux wanted to raise new troops to stop the Prussians. The generals and admirals declared the war lost: he was not of that opinion. At that point, Gambetta arrived in Tours in a dirigible where he was welcomed by Crémieux. Gambetta was Minister of the Interior, and took back the ministry of War. Crémieux remained at Justice with Leven as secretary-general. On 24 October 1870, the Crémieux Decree proclaimed, within the framework of the reorganisation of the government of Algeria, the collective and obligatory naturalisation of the Jews of that country.

On 26 February 1871, the Peace of Versailles was signed. The National Defence Government dissolved itself, declaring its mission completed. On 10 February 1880, Crémieux, president of the AIU since 1863 with a short interruption in 1867, died, just 10 days after his wife. Parliament decided to give him a state funeral. Leven noted that a century before, Jews had been buried at night, in the rain, without procession, so as not to provoke turmoil or scandal. Crémieux was one of those men, small in size, who was pushed by luck, audacity and a sense of opportunity into the forefront of public life. He knew of no one better than himself, and did not admire anyone more than himself. He had three passions: his wife, the Greeks and his cedar forest in the Dauphiné region, where he spent his holidays nourishing himself with the happiness of being the owner of 'millions of leaves'. That said, he put such good humour into his vanity that no one held it against him. He was an actor playing to the gallery of the palace, the assembly, the world. He did not practise Judaism any more than Christianity. He did not practise anything. The religion of France was at the heart of the mission which he gave to the AIU. In a talk in 1876 he cried.

> France, France, what beautiful examples she has given to civilisation and progress since the immortal days of 1789; if we want to see ourselves achieving, from day to day, among the civilised nations, this solemn principle of civic and political equality, extending to our Jewish brothers, objects of such cruel persecution over the centuries, we will say to ourselves with a legitimate pride: it is with the sun of our France that this divine flame was lit, whose rays light up the entire world.

His successors at the head of the institution continued to portray themselves as champions of the Judeo-French symbiosis. They had themselves achieved it in and through their integration into the French nation, which they considered the gentlest and the most moral in the world. These Jews who did not want a squalid Polish-style Judaism or a curved German one found their homeland in humanity. Still, the AIU was to attract anti-Semitic attacks: 'You could not dream of a more powerful instrument of domination', declared Drumont, 'and no wonder that it rules the world' (Drumont, 1986). The outburst of hate was to culminate in the Dreyfus Affair and, more than half a century later, the Vichy laws on Jewish status and the deportation of the most vulnerable among Jews. At the start of the 1950s, following the creation of the State of Israel, the network of the Alliance included nearly 50,000 pupils in the communities where it was present, as was currently said till these last years, 'from Khorramshahr in Iran to Mogador in Morocco'.

The New Jewish Community in France

We cannot understand the French Jewish community in the first decades of the twenty-first century without taking into consideration four important changes:

1. The betrayal of the Vichy government and the deportation of tens of thousands of Jews. Overnight, Pétain put an end to two-and- a-half centuries of emancipation, patriotism and devotion. At first, native-born Jews, unable to believe that they could be betrayed in this way, played the collaboration card with the Vichy government. The Dreyfus Affair, despite a bitter disenchantment, had had a 'happy ending': the Jewish officer's exoneration had discredited the anti-Semitic party. In contrast, the laws governing the status of Jews turned the Jewish universe upside-down. They would no longer delude themselves about the ever-possible resurgence of anti-Semitism or its murderous character.
2. The creation of the State of Israel disrupted the vision of the active participation of Jews in civil society. Jews would no longer just constitute a 'communion' as much as a community, or even a nationality.
3. The mass influx of North African Jews steeped in French colonialism increased the original dissonance between secularists and the religious. This has found one of its more entertaining expressions in the latent war between the secular leaders of the Consistoires and the rabbis working in the field.
4. The demographic evolution of France which, having long been a Christian land tolerating – or not tolerating – a Jewish minority in its midst, is in the course of becoming a multidenominational country where Jews constitute one of the smallest non-Christian communities after Muslims, Buddhists or even animists.

It is impossible not to be intrigued by the complexity of French Jewishness. The institutions are still Liberal Ashkenazi – despite the demographic decline amongst historical Israélites to a great extent due to mixed marriages – and declare themselves secular and sign up for republican legitimacy. Most of the rabbis are Orthodox Sephardi, with the exception of a handful of liberal and conservative ones. The members of communities, mostly Sephardi, are more traditionalist – in the North African vein – than Orthodox. The synagogue service is more and more Sephardi: the pomp itself remains Ashkenazi. In the institutional community (by which I mean those Jews affiliated with one of the community institutions), politics, as much focused on Israel as on the community, prevails over religion, and inter-institutional politics and small intra-community manoeuvres are more interesting than the rather desultory politico-religious arguments of a Shmuel Trigano or the rather tattered politico-cultural arguments of a Pierre Birnbaum. In the synagogues, it is not religious principles that are debated as much as the prerogatives of the great institutions and the principal community actors.

In recent decades, Jewish studies in France have experienced an unprecedented boom. A vast debate is taking place about Judaism, and it is mobilising rabbis, researchers, psychotherapists, writers, philosophers and intellectuals; listeners are left admiring the eloquence of one side and the grandiloquence of the other.

However, they retain nothing essential or new about Judaism, and it has almost no impact on real-life Judaism. The ignorance on the part of Israelis and Americans of the big names of this Judaism, such as André Néher, Léon Ashkénazi and Emmanuel Lévinas, is perhaps related to their intellectual deficiencies. Nonetheless, the fact remains that these authors are characterised neither by their Pascalian conciseness nor their Cartesian precision. Even Lévinas, from whom one could have legitimately expected a greater phenomenological rigour, willingly gives way to bombast in exhorting to who knows what quasi-Pravoslavian service of 'the other'. Their disciples take philosophical postures which visibly give thinking a stiff neck and no one really wants to take the trouble with these rather minor authors when they could take pleasure with more vigorous thinkers like Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig or Leo Strauss. The French school of Jewish thought – if there is one – has not managed, except for André Néher, Léon Ashkenazi and Emmanuel Lévinas, to conquer minds, in France or elsewhere.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Jewish community consisted of four principal groups: native-born Jews whose parents or who themselves had escaped from the discriminatory laws of Vichy by emigrating to other countries, joining the Free French forces of General de Gaulle in London or by fighting alongside the Resistance; first- or second-generation Ashkenazis from Eastern Europe who had survived the Shoah; Jews from North Africa, whether from Algeria where they had French nationality, from Tunisia or Morocco who had chosen France rather than Israel as the land to immigrate into for linguistic or career reasons more than existential choice; and finally the nebula of Jews married to non-Jews or descended from mixed marriages from whence no one had ever tried to learn what became of them. The first group persisted, despite the betrayal of Vichy, in getting back to the civil virtues of the Republic; the second wanted to laboriously reconstruct a decimated way of life; the third were torn between their Jewishness and what Lévinas called at the time 'the sirens of assimilation' (Lévinas, 1963). They were and remained traditionalists, willingly compromising with religious law without challenging for the moment the authority of the orthodox rabbis.

The Choices of Jewish Education

In the post-war period, three choices were available for parents who wished to give their children an institutional Jewish education. These were principally aimed at (a) teaching the Hebrew alphabet to allow children to read the prayers; (b) a religious education to prepare children for their Bar Mitzvah; and (c) an involvement in the Jewish community to preserve them from mixed marriages, the anxiety of every traditionalist community. Parents could choose between three possibilities: (1) youth activities, from Jewish youth movements – classic, communitarian or Zionist – to holiday camps. These activities emphasised community or Zionist civics over Hebrew literacy or religious education. They formed veritable schools of commitment, which would find expression in engagement within the city as well as the Jewish community. Some leaders, in the community movements as much

as in the Zionist ones, even considered it their duty to make this commitment a reality by achieving their emigration to Israel. (2) The Talmud Torahs – equivalent to Supplementary Schools in the United States – welcomed their pupils on Thursday (later Wednesday) and Sunday for 6 hours a week, providing the rudiments of Hebrew literacy and religious education. In general, pupils attended up to the age of Bar Mitzvah, or, later, Bat Mitzvah. (3) Lastly, there were Jewish schools, which promised to answer all of the parents' requirements. But during the 1960s, Republican spirit, encouraged by multiculturalism and multicommunitarism, which was spurred on by the waves of non-Christian immigration, continued to prompt members of the Jewish community to place their children in public establishments, and, for the most observant, to obtain all sorts of exemptions for religious constraints and commandments. There were merely a small handful of schools, including the two organisations set up at the start of the century, Lucien de Hirsch (primary) founded in 1901, which had brought together the small schools from the La Villette quarter, and the Maimonides high school, conceived in 1935 to take over from the 'little seminary' attached to the Rabbinical Seminary, kindle rabbinic vocations and link a top-level teaching in Jewish subjects with a quality secondary education. In addition, there were the establishments created straight after the war, above all the Akiva School in Strasbourg (1948) and the Yavneh School in Paris. These four institutions subscribed – and still subscribe – fairly closely to the style of Orthodoxy clarified by R. Samson Raphael Hirsch, German master of modern neo-Orthodoxy (1808–1888), whose famous '*Torah im Derech Eretz*' advocated allying Torah study with the acquisition of the knowledge required to practice a profession. Outside of these four neo-Orthodox schools, which were beginning to accept a growing number of traditionalist children of North African origin, France had a certain number of establishments categorised, for the most part, as ultra-Orthodox, such as the Yeshiva of Aix-les-Bains.

In the 1960s, community institutions were too tied up by Republican spirit to tackle the expansion of Jewish schools. The principal institution with an educational vocation, the AIU, was in decline. In Israel, it had offloaded its schools; in Morocco, it was progressively closing its network; everywhere else, it was putting the key under the doormat. Its visionaries and founders had still forbidden themselves from creating Jewish schools in France – by Republican spirit as much as from concern for secularism. They could only allow themselves to accept prospective teachers destined for the communities of the Mediterranean basin – except Algeria, of course – to train them for their tasks and their missions. In France itself, the AIU had neither schools to offer to its pupils coming from Morocco and Tunisia, nor posts to offer to its teachers. For the rest, ENIO had had to convert itself whether it liked it or not. Although it continued to recruit its pupils principally from the AIU's schools in Morocco, Lebanon and Iran, it no longer provided them with teacher training. It solely prepared them for the Baccalaureate [A-levels], nevertheless permitting sixth-formers who possessed a solid Hebrew and Jewish education to teach in the Paris region's supplementary religion schools on Thursday and Sunday mornings. Often they rivalled the community rabbis in Talmudic knowledge and in the adolescent enthusiasm which they brought to their teaching. For at least two decades,

the supplementary religion schools of the Consistoire of Paris were enlivened by pupils and former pupils from ENIO. Since then, the religion schools have suffered from a chronic shortage of teachers. The rabbis are too engrossed in their priestly activities and do not always have the educational savoir-faire required to supervise children forced to give up their day off for studies which were often more repetitive than interesting. Religion schools often seem like an improvised Jewish catechism, rather than a complementary school with a curriculum. In addition, the impressive expansion of Jewish day schools has deprived the supplementary religion schools of the most Jewishly committed pupils, if not the most motivated, and those who still participate in the lessons receive the image of a community that is more anaemic than exciting. What's more, it is widely admitted that in the absence of competent teachers, religion school lessons risk putting off more than they appeal.

The Expansion of Jewish Schools

The AIU's complete carelessness had the merit of encouraging all sorts of initiatives. Initially, no longer responding to the continually growing demand, the handful of existing schools allowed itself to start selecting by level. Next, schools started growing without much planning through several networks. The ORT network, with fairly secular schools that readily included non-Jewish pupils was now putting students through the Baccalaureate after having long prepared them for the Brevet professional [GCSE]. The Otzar HaTorah network, imported from Morocco, robustly supported by American donors, joined together Orthodox schools with mainly traditionalist North African pupils. The fundamentalist Chabad network, imported from the United States, whose population, without necessarily being Lubavitch, was more Orthodox. Finally, a swarm of mainly Orthodox schools, born from the ashes of an educational network which went bankrupt in the 1980s. The AIU itself came out of its stagnation just before the year 2000 with the renovation of the school premises of Pavillons sous Bois, which was initially established without the consent or support of the AIU headquarters, the construction of the Georges Leven high school in the 12th arrondissement and the restoration of the former ENIO premises in the 16th arrondissement. One of the most beautiful odysseys of Jewish education, which had started more than a century earlier, had for a moment threatened to disintegrate in the grating of the wooden planks of its desks, the rags of its wainscoting and the rustling of its records, veritable mines of information on the communities of the Mediterranean basin, now open to researchers from all over the world.

That said, the networks are of only relative importance, since the law recognises only heads of establishments as representatives. Still, the heads are appointed by administration councils – basically figureheads – whose members are often nominated by the network leadership. Most contracted Jewish schools are within a circle of influence ranging from ultra-Orthodoxy (especially Chabad) to traditionalism (the Alliance). Throughout this circle of influence, despite the ban on admissions segregation, schools demand the parents' marriage certificate to prove the Jewishness of the mother and turn away children from mixed marriages, not to

mention non-Jews; throughout, a certain separation of sexes is practised, in lessons on Jewish subjects if not between classes or even between schools; throughout, religious services remain, at least in the morning; throughout, boys are obliged to wear skull caps, within the school walls if not in the street, in Jewish lessons if not in the playground; throughout, *kashrut* is observed according to Orthodox, if not ultra-Orthodox, principles; throughout, it is the Hebrew calendar which drives the school calendar; throughout, parents pay fees meant to cover the teaching of Jewish subjects – designated as holy subjects – and general functioning expenses (administration, supervision, canteen, transport, etc.), with the granting of bursaries going as far as free places for the poorest. Only a few schools, such as the primary Ganenou school (founded in 1980), which calls itself a Jewish secular school, and the brand new Adath Shalom school, sponsored by the conservative movement, are outside this circle of influence. A small handful of schools – from *chedarim* to *yeshivot* – has chosen not to seek a contract.

The volume of the timetable for general subjects in schools under contract is such that it leaves little place for Jewish studies – 4–12 h a week. Jewish schools teach Bible, Mishnah, Talmud, and in the least Orthodox schools Jewish history, Hebrew being included in general teaching. Teachers of general subjects, often non-Jewish, benefit from a higher status than their colleagues in the so-called sacred subjects. They generally hold a CAPES (Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second Degré) or the Agrégation – the highest teaching qualification available from the State – and are monitored and graded by inspectors of the national ministry of education. Above all, they enjoy a solid guarantee of employment, unlike their colleagues in Jewish subjects who, frequently, are only employed part-time and for fixed periods. This imbalance in the volume of hours and the status of the teachers contributes largely to the dissonance between general and Jewish subjects, so much so that marks in the latter are not taken into consideration in the decision which determines whether pupils have to repeat a year, or in vocational guidance. Even more seriously, while the general subjects are meticulously planned by the ministry of education and described in very high-quality textbooks produced by the best publishing houses, the teaching of Jewish subjects is random, often left to the choice of the teacher, and suffers from a serious shortage of textbooks.

Jewish Education During Free Time

In recent decades, although France has only 140 school days a year, compared to 210 in Japan and 200 in Italy and Denmark, the school calendar has been restructured so as to impose economic considerations linked to the leisure industry, as well as pseudo-psychological considerations, onto the rhythms of education. Every 2 months or so, pupils benefit from 1 or 2 weeks of school holiday, not to mention the 2 months of summer holiday. These holiday periods allow those parents of children in state schools who wish to pass on the rudiments of Jewish life to place them in Jewish holiday or leisure centres. These stays are offered by non-profit associations who have the triple merit of being independent, of cherishing

an educational vocation and of being self-financing, dependent neither on government grants or community ones. They have the advantage of aiming at children and teenagers whose parents are not affiliated to community institutions or who are from mixed marriages. The atmosphere is resolutely Jewish, made up of Hebrew songs, prayers and rituals and activities which, underneath their charm, present a Jewish style. These associations allow their members and participants to extend their network of friends – their Jewish social capital.

Paradoxically, the rearrangement of the school calendar – the four or five breaks in the course of the year – has hastened the ruin of the classic youth movements, forcing them at best to restrict their activities to the holiday periods. With the notable exception of the Eclaireuses et Eclaireurs Israélites de France [Jewish Boy and Girl Scouts of France] who have managed as best as they can to retain their members on the basis of regular activities culminating in a camp, the rest of the youth movements are now just pale vestiges of the old community movements – advocating self-fulfilment through community engagement – or the *Chalutzic* (pioneering) Movements – advocating self-fulfilment through Zionist engagement.

Founded in 1923, the Jewish Boy Scouts of France (EIF, later EEIF to include girls) quickly grew in the Jewish community. From the beginning, this scouting movement was keen to accept children and young people of different views and different backgrounds, from the most 'assimilated' to the most 'Judaised', secular and religious, liberal and orthodox. In less than 10 years, under the impetus of extraordinary characters like the poet Edmond Fleg (1874–1963) and the industrious builder of the movement Robert Gamzon (1905–1961), it established itself, with 3,000 members out of a population of 200,000 Jews, as the holding tank for a kind of educational creativity combining scouting – environmentalism before its time – with an intense Jewish experience. Gamzon pushed educational audacity as far as advocating a doctrine of Jewish scouting behind his extraordinary and premonitory notion of *Tivliut* – the word, which does not exist in Hebrew, suggests restoring responsibility, nourished by the sense of the sacred, the duty of mutual responsibility and ecological concern for the Earth or even the universe. His 'common minimum' is to this day the French Jewish community's most original and interesting educational creation. Forged in the 1920s and 1930s, this notion was almost a technical principle. It suggested – and still suggests today – creating conditions favourable to cohabitation between religious and secular, or even a Jewish Parhessia, within a meeting place or a campground if not in the public space. In its guidelines, the 'common minimum' advocates respect of the dietary laws of *kashrut*, public observance of Shabbat and a whole series of customs from table rituals (wearing a head covering, blessings before and after meals) to participation in the morning religious service, complete or abridged, with or without separation of the sexes depending on the circumstances and the leaders. No one demands adherence to a creed; people demand respect for a minimum of rules and as much politeness as needed to permit a private and public 'communion'. However technical it appears, the common minimum nevertheless represents an attempt to avoid doctrinal debates, elude the most passionate religious questions, and de-dramatise the cleavages and tensions between the movements and currents within Judaism. The common minimum

is a political-religious device binding both secular people – under an obligation to respect its rules – and religious people – under the obligation to settle for them. In the end, it convinced the majority of the community, and yet today it is de rigueur in those community facilities which toy with a pluralistic vocation, from political institutions to educational organisations. It even governs the ambiance and behaviour in schools, which we can call ‘para-Orthodox’, in order to better restore the general balance between neo-Orthodoxy and an often imprecise and indecisive traditionalism, where parents, frequently secular, are not of the same allegiance as the teaching staff or the leadership.

The EIF was among the first to save itself from the earthly lure of Petain’s government, to hide children under the covers of French scouting, and to rally resistance to form the main core of what has been called the Jewish Résistance. After the war, its leadership were among the main builders of the community. They opened and ran children’s houses where they welcomed children of those who had been sent to concentration camps, and created the leadership school of Orsay (1946–1969), crucible of a Franco-North African Jewish thought which centred around key intellectual figures, the most prestigious of whom were Jacob Gordin (Dvisnk, 1896 – Lisbon, 1947), Léon Ashkenazi, known as Manitou (Oran, 1922 – Jerusalem, 1996), and a training site for community leaders.

With the notable exception of the Paris Community Centre, which has just given itself its own private Institute for Advanced Studies, the community centres imported by the Joint Committee in the 1950s and 1960s in the context of the restructuring of the Jewish community have not exercised the same influence as in the United States.

The Jewish Educational Debate

The poverty of the debate over Jewish education in France shares that of the general education debate in France. Despite the excesses of violence in certain secondary schools in the housing estates and inner cities and the measures taken to try to reduce them, state schools have not succeeded in taking up the challenge of social egalitarianism in a hierarchical society dominated by market competition and competing for jobs. The glorification of merit has its coronation in the generalised practice of selection by competition at every level: in moving from one class to another; educational counselling; access to the most sought-after universities, as well as the most coveted posts in the civil service. This meritocratic regime, favours what Bourdieu calls a ‘symbolic capital’ transmitted more by the socioeconomic milieu than acquired at school. Jewish students, like the rest of their compatriots, are subjected to the same pressures which do not leave them free time to attend to complementary (in this case Jewish) studies. The importance of finding a job sweeps away all other considerations. There are almost no literary tracks, not to mention art tracks, in any of the Jewish high schools across France.

Education in France is caught up in the spiral of competition and examination, devoting itself to courses leading to the most sought-after jobs, in this case

engineering, commerce and communication. Despite their intellectual aura, the so-called humanist courses are in marked decline. And yet all Jewish education reprises the classical ideal of evaluating the works of the past, carried by an automatic – not to say instinctive – and mobilising – not to say vital – membership in tradition. This membership can only be transmitted from one generation to the next in so far as it is clothed in absolute authority, i.e. divine, and passed as immutable. But nowadays this transmission is undergoing a crisis, and no fundamentalist regression or post-modernist re-enchantment is able to resolve it. Individuals no longer bathe in tradition as they situate themselves in relation to it. Membership requires a choice, whether or not it is well-argued, and all sorts of religious, moral, social and emotional/cognitive considerations enter in higgledy-piggledy: 'Traditions whose essence imply the unconscious reproduction of the transmitted past', declares Gadamer, 'must have become problematic so that explicit knowledge can form the hermeneutic task of appropriating tradition' (Gadamer, 1976). The classical ideal, for an irreparably modern era, demands a more apologetic teaching method – more pragmatic for all that – than that required for science teaching. Making students rediscover the sense of the works of the past and cultivating the taste for them really demands a pedagogy of acquisition: 'In the modern world,' declares Arendt, 'the problem of education cannot flout authority or tradition, and must nevertheless be exercised in a world which is neither structured by authority nor retained by tradition' (Arendt, 1972). On one hand, it is impossible to conceive of Jewish education totally outside of tradition; on the other, the authority of that tradition is compromised by even a small amount of critical spirit. Yet from year to year, acquisition of the traditions required to find one's way in the world as a Jew is becoming more and more delicate and arduous, since no real teaching method exists for that acquisition, whether in France or elsewhere.

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Israel: State Religious Education in Israel

Zehavit Gross

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyze state-religious education (SRE) in Israel. First, a chronological diachronic historical description of SRE will be given. Next, a socio-historical synchronic analysis of the SRE will be presented in relation to the development of the religious-Zionist movement as well as an analysis of SRE policy and organizational structure. Finally, the major dilemmas and main achievements of the SRE will be described.

Background: The Religious-Zionist Movement and the SRE

Until the establishment of the State of Israel, Jewish political life was organized within the framework of four streams: the General, Labor, Mizrahi (religious-Zionist), and Agudat Israel. The first two were secular, the third was modern orthodox, and the fourth was ultra-orthodox.

In 1897, Theodore Herzl established the Zionist Movement, which was secular in nature and whose aim was to strive to achieve a national-political solution for the Jewish people within the framework of a Jewish state. Initially, the religious community ignored this endeavor, as it was against their religious belief that the Jewish state be built by human beings and not by God. Since Herzl believed that there was need for consensus among all the parts of the Jewish people, he tried to convince the religious faction to join the Zionist Movement.

In 1902, when Rabbi Yitzchak Yaacov Reines, one of the leading rabbinical figures of the time, saw that the Zionist Movement planned to deal with the nature of education in the Jewish country, he took a courageous step and decided to establish a religious-Zionist party (Mizrahi, an acronym for *Merkaz Ruchani* [religious center]) within the Zionist Movement. He believed it was important for the religious community to have influence on the cultural and educational issues of the state. As

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a result, in 1905, the Zionist Movement reached agreement that the new state would have two educational systems: one religious and one secular.

There were two fundamental approaches within the religious-Zionist movement that would have an impact on religious education. Rabbi Reines perceived the religious-Zionist movement as a political movement whose goal was to solve the national problems of the Jewish people who had no homeland. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of pre-state Israel), in contrast, perceived the Zionist Movement as the beginning of the Jewish messianic redemption. Whereas Rabbi Reines differentiated between the messianic redemption and political Zionism, and saw integration within the secular Zionistic Movement as a pragmatic need with no religious meaning, Rabbi Kook saw integration into the Zionist Movement as a means to bringing about the redemption. Rabbi Kook's approach became dominant within the school curriculum especially after 1967, as will be described below, and has had a strong impact upon the SRE curriculum to this day.

The four existing streams (General, Labor, Mizrahi, and Agudat Israel) had different ideological convictions (left – socialist, right – liberal), pedagogical approaches (the Labor stream favored Dewey's progressive approach whereas the General stream adopted the traditional European educational approach to learning and instruction), and separate administrative organizations that supplied services (such as employment and absorption).

With the establishment of the state, and its adoption of a melting pot ideology, David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, decided to cancel and unify the streams. In 1953, all the educational frameworks were nationalized and institutionalized under the umbrella of the state, and all were committed to the state's educational law. However, state-religious education (SRE) was granted cultural autonomy; it could teach a unique curriculum, yet remain under the auspices of the state. The 1953 State Education Law defined SRE institutions as religious according to their way of life, curriculum, teachers, and inspectors. SRE was granted full autonomy to construct its curriculum according to its religious conviction, making SRE schools "faith-based" or parochial schools, as such institutions are more commonly known in other national settings.

Lamm (1990) posits that the Israeli educational system provides three types of education: (i) apolitical (neutral education – "*klali*" schools), with most schools being in this category, as they are not supposed to be involved in politics or discuss any specific ideology; (ii) ideological, and (iii) political. (Lamm uses the term political to indicate a system that perceives socialization as a rational product of choosing ideology as opposed to socialization that imposes a specific ideology upon its students. In his mind, this is the true meaning of state education (*mamlachti*), which exposes its students to the different options available to them and asks them, after socialization and deliberation, to choose.) According to Lamm, ideological education (which includes secular kibbutz education and SRE) is obliged to enhance a specific ideology through the curriculum, school climate, and the ideological orientation of the teachers who are perceived as agents of this ideology. The aim of such education is to socialize its students to this specific ideology.

In 1998, the State Education Law was rewritten. The new law redefined SRE as educating "in the spirit of religious Zionism." This ideological amendment had far-reaching implications for the structure of SRE schools and their educational vision. The amendment was needed in order to specify the unique essence of the SRE. The national-orthodox circles (*Hardal*) in the state tried to impose national-orthodox education and it was important for SRE leadership to indicate by law that state-religious education is modern (implied by the word Zionist) orthodox education so that the contents, structure, and staff be modern Zionist rather than orthodox.

In order to understand SRE, there is a need to understand the convictions of religious Zionism and its socio-historical background. Religious Zionism is a national religious movement obligated to a combination of traditionalism and modernity. It preserves Jewish law yet is open to modernity; it utilizes new opportunities in terms of technology and conceptualization, while maintaining a religious way of life. SRE policy is not organized as a systematic philosophy and it has no mandatory practical application (Goldschmidt, 1984). Its principles were forged and developed in accordance with changing circumstances and practical needs. Other Jewish-religious schools are orthodox and are officially obliged to enhance and perpetuate traditional rather than modern values. SRE encourages its graduates to serve in the army (boys) and national service (girls), whereas in the orthodox system, this is unacceptable as boys are expected to study in a yeshiva (in higher religious studies) and girls are expected to get married.

The theoretical and practical principles behind SRE are based on a combination of the values of the traditional, religious yeshiva education and its general focus on teaching religious studies only, together with modern Jewish education as it developed primarily in Germany under the influence of the Jewish *Haskalah* [Enlightenment] movement (Feiner, 2002; Schweid, 2002) and the *Torah im Derech Eretz* movement of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (Ayalon & Yogev, 1998; Breuer, 1996; Kleinberger, 1969), which combined religious commitment to religious practice and study of the religious literature with an integration within secular life. This ideology of *Tora im Derech Eretz* was interpreted in SRE to undergird the integration of religious and secular studies.

The SRE system is based on three main tenets (Kiel, 1977) which are as follows:

1. *Religious education* – A traditional, Jewish-religious education that includes teaching belief in God, the performance of *mitzvoth*, "commandments," the advanced study of sacred texts, such as Bible, Mishna, Jewish law, Gemara, and writings of the rabbis and Jewish thinkers who have shaped the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people for generations.
2. *Modern education* – Teaching the basic skills students need to function as citizens and to conduct constructive lives as required of all members of a modern society in general and a secular, democratic state in particular. Therefore, the SRE system has created a mandatory curriculum that incorporates secular contents and subject matter (math, physics, English, etc.) that will enable its pupils to pass the national matriculation examinations and allow them, upon completion

of their education, to either continue with their studies or find a job by which they can support themselves and contribute to the society.

3. *Nationalist education* – Education with a Zionist quality in order to preserve the unity of all sectors of the Jewish people (both secular and religious, as well as Jews living in the Diaspora), to intensify students' feeling of identification with and contribution toward the Land of Israel (which is perceived as a territory with religious significance), and to reinforce their sense of loyalty and belonging to the State of Israel and its laws (whose establishment is seen as the first step of the Jewish redemption). SRE promotes the founding of settlements throughout the entire country and encourages contributing to the homeland through army service in elite military units. Furthermore, the SRE system requires identification with the state on national holidays, such as Independence Day and Jerusalem Day (in contrast with the ultra-orthodox sectors who do not celebrate these special holidays).

The Socio-historic Background of Religious-Zionist Education

The history of religious-Zionist education can be periodized by way of analogy to the theoretical approach of Livesly and Mackenzie (1983) in psychotherapy (Gross, 2003b). Adapting their approach to a social context, a social system might be defined through the roles and patterns of interaction that exist within it. In these terms, four primary roles are required: (a) the social role – feeling responsible for the unity of the group; (b) the task-oriented role – feeling responsible for focusing and achieving the group's goals; (c) the scapegoat – being responsible for all of the society's ills, in order to distract the society from its real problems; and (d) the oppositional role – opposing society and what is taking place by emphasizing individuality and thus defining society's boundaries. This role-based method of classification will serve as a basis for describing the stages of development of the religious-Zionist sector. Periodization of religious-Zionist education includes four main historical periods, which parallel the four roles described above.

1902–1967 (the social role): From the founding of the Mizrahi Movement (the religious party in the Zionist Movement) in 1902 and until the Six-Day war, religious society and religious education assumed the social role. During this entire period, religious schools accepted all the pupils of parents who desired religious education for their children, based on an acknowledged policy of "religious education for all." This policy, from as early as the 1940s, prompted parents from economically stable religious families and generally of western European origin to establish private, alternative religious high schools for their sons, which were influenced by the western European religious-education system, so as to provide them with a superior religious education (Bar-Lev, 1977). These schools (for boys only), which were private, selective, and charged relatively high fees, were known as "yeshiva high schools." Later on, parallel institutions were also established for girls, called "Ulpanas" (Katz, 1999). And thus, through the yeshiva and Ulpana framework, a correlation was introduced between a desire for religious excellence,

a high socio-economic level, and sectarianism. This process was the start of the religious-Zionist elite.

1967–1981 (the task-oriented role): Beginning in 1967, a significant change took place in Israeli society in general and in the status of religious society in particular. Rather than remaining on the sidelines, the religious-Zionist public was now perceived as pioneers and leaders. Religious-Zionists took upon themselves the role of preserving the charismatic dimension (Weber, 1979) of the ideological aspect of society, in order to defend Israeli society against the inevitable processes of institutionalization and routinization that threatened to erode the Zionist efforts and rock its foundations. The curriculum and teaching practices were imbued with nationalist motifs, for example, encouraging students to settle on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as the highest priority of school socialization. To settle in those areas was considered a sign of religiousness (Gross, 2003a).

1982–1996 (the scapegoat role): One of the greatest crises endured by the religious-Zionist movement was the withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula in 1982 and the return to Egypt of Jewish settlements in the Yamit region. The sights and sounds of the evacuation of Sinai and Yamit left a void, and even introduced into the Israeli public discourse new, militant behavior and speech patterns that had been previously unknown. Beginning with this period, the public legitimacy given to the religious-Zionist sector began to erode, because of its anti-government demonstrations and policies. Following the evacuation of the Sinai region, a drive toward legal and illegal settlements (including SRE students who, in some institutions, were encouraged by their teachers to actively participate, in the name of legitimate democratic protest) began flourishing on the West Bank, and a series of militant protest activities were initiated against the peace process and against the government, which turned the religious-Zionist public into a scapegoat. As a result, the religious-Zionist sector was accused of jeopardizing the country's economy and its security.

1997–The present (the role of the other): In March 1997, a circular was distributed by the religious administration, which presents the official position of the state-religious education authority. This circular aimed officially to shake off the role of the scapegoat, by referring to the contribution of graduates from the SRE system to Israeli society. It also demanded that intervention programs be developed to prevent fundamentalist and extremist phenomena in the SRE system's schools. Since this time, circulars coming from the religious administration have dealt with questions of the boundaries of religious Zionism and of the relationship between the religious-Zionist society and the sovereignty of the state, democracy, and the status of the country's laws. Furthermore, clarifications were undertaken regarding the character and nature of the link between Judaism and democracy, and the question of which came first.

Curriculum

In his analysis of the basic principles of curriculum, Tyler (1949) asserts that curriculum planning must take into account the society's cultural characteristics, the learners' needs, and the character of the subject matter. Curriculum development is,

therefore, an ideological rather than a pedagogical decision. According to Tyler, the values of society determine what will be taught in the school: which subjects and which periods will be taught, which written material will be included and which will be excluded.

As an integral part of the state-educational system, SRE schools are obliged to teach the official state curriculum in terms of general studies; the schools have the same inspectorate and their students take the official state matriculation examinations (*Bagrut*). However, the SRE is granted pedagogical autonomy regarding the religious curriculum and has a separate religious inspectorate for history, civic education, literature, and all religious studies. Because there may be a conflict between the contents of general studies and religious-Zionist values, in general studies, a special curriculum adapted to the needs of SRE was devised (e.g., relating to the theory of evolution or maps of the state of Israel and its biblical and actual borders) (Schwartzwald, 1990, pp. 23–25).

Jewish studies are considered necessary cultural capital in religious society (Yogev, 1998, p. 60). The prestige of different bodies of subject matters is connected to the ideological value given to them by society. The prestige of religious studies (which in the secular schools are categorized as part of humanities studies, and thus less prestigious than science and math) is higher, for example, than in the secular sector, and more hours are dedicated to these subjects. This is a fundamental difference between the religious and secular systems. It causes what Yogev calls "curricular inequality" (p. 55) and is the result of the autonomy that SRE is granted by the state. The SRE director is not under the authority of the Minister of Education and thus can function according to the particularistic needs of religious-Zionist society where she/he can adapt the general studies curriculum according to the religious needs of her/his religious community, provided she/he acts within the spirit of the state education law. State-religious schools are not monolithic; they include different types that place a different emphasis on the three components mentioned above: religious, modern, and nationalist education. In practice, there are different ways of balancing these three components. There are schools in the SRE system that mainly emphasize religious studies (*Talmudei Torah*). In some of these schools, secular matriculation exams are optional. The ideal graduate of this type of school and the ideal teacher for boys is the scholar (*Talmid Hacham*); for girls, the ideal teacher is a woman who enables her husband to become a scholar. There are other schools that emphasize the national component (especially in the settlements on the West Bank). In these schools, the curriculum mainly emphasizes the connection to biblical Israel and the fact that the national components, such as active protest against the evacuation of the land of Israel, army service for boys, and national service for girls, are necessary for the future survival of the Jewish people. The ideal graduate of this school and the ideal teacher are people who settle the biblical parts of the country (the West Bank, East Jerusalem, etc.) and whose entire being is channeled toward the implementation of their interpretation of the national aspiration of Judaism.

However, there are also schools (especially in the large cities like Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem) that emphasize a modern educational orientation. In these schools, the ideal graduate and teacher is someone who is integrated into the Israeli economy, in industry or science, and who has broad knowledge and skills in general

studies alongside their religious devotion. Most of the schools in the SRE integrate those three components (the religious, the modern, and the national) with one or two components dominating, depending on the school population.

The ideal graduate of the SRE school system is one who's every activity in the private and public spheres is shaped and informed by intensive Jewish study. This is then translated into behavior and lifestyle in accordance with Jewish law, while becoming integrated into the modern way of life and applying the general secular knowledge acquired during schooling (Dagan, 1999). This integration between tradition and modernity becomes even more challenging and complicated in the context of the civic responsibility required of SRE graduates, who are taught to view the founding of the state of Israel as the beginning of the Jewish redemption, and thus their religious and civic obligations are intertwined and sometimes conflicting. If the state is perceived as the beginning of the redemption, then army service is considered a religious obligation and not only a civic obligation. When a religious soldier has to perform a special army operation on the Sabbath, for example, he can disobey the religious law in order to fulfill his army obligation.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of SRE, led by an executive committee and the head of the system, reflects its unique religious identity and educational priorities. The executive committee represents the spiritual leadership of the system. Its role is "to define, articulate, defend and evaluate the agenda for the school system which is based on principles established by the modern orthodox religious Zionist community that the schools are there to serve" (McGettrick, 2005, p. 106). This includes ideals, values, and attitudes deriving from religious Zionism. The head of the SRE system is the highest authority regarding all pedagogical religious issues. He leads a board consisting of seven members, two deputies (one for pedagogical aspects and one for administrative aspects), and national inspectors for the different levels (kindergarten, elementary, junior high, and high schools). There are inspectors for religious and general studies and there are seven regional inspectors throughout the country. These inspectors represent an advisory framework on all practical and strategic decisions. The school inspectors (who are rabbis) and the inspector of religious studies are considered the senior leadership in the system.

SRE is committed to a modern orthodox religious ideology that is interpreted through a pedagogical philosophy that strives to combine religious life with an occupation that is suitable to the secular modern world. This demands an adaptive mechanism and "negotiation" between secular and religious studies within the curriculum. Two basic approaches can be found in SRE which are represented by two distinct leadership orientations: conservative and liberal. Conservatives emphasize the superiority of religious studies and view secular studies as a "necessary evil," which needs to be taught for instrumental reasons. They have a selective approach toward the secular components of the curriculum and wish to include only those subjects that do not contradict religious values. The liberal approach holds that even if they contradict certain religious values all secular studies should be

included in the curriculum (including, for example, the theory of evolution, secular ideas against God that appear in works of literature, or critical analysis of the scriptures). This group believes that including such studies proves the superiority of religious thinking over the secular and shows that it is open enough to contain it (Schremer, 1985; Yogev, 1998). From this perspective, confronting "challenging" content, while adopting and adapting it, strengthens the reliability and validity of the religious corpus. The pedagogical autonomy granted to SRE has enabled this process of curriculum adaptation.

Ultimately, the SRE leadership adopted a "golden way" that integrated religious studies into secular studies in a conservative manner so that SRE graduates would be able to fully integrate professionally into civic society in Israel.[1] However, in the matter of appointing supervisors of curriculum, since religious studies are considered more important than secular studies, the inspectors of religious studies who are nominated are usually strictly religious (in terms of Jewish practice) yet consider themselves to be modern (in terms of worldviews and attitudes and the inclination to adapt to modernity). These personalities are viewed by the entire religious-Zionist society and by religious political circles to be a meaningful reference group and are positioned at the summit of the hierarchal leadership.

State education allocates a special budget for the unique demands of SRE. This pays for additional hours for religious studies, employing rabbis who are spiritual leaders in each school, infrastructure (e.g., synagogues in the schools) and separation between boys and girls in school. Moreover, there are special requests for unique religious outreach and informal education programs.

The Accomplishments of the State-Religious Education System

The accomplishments of the religious-Zionist education system can be found in four main spheres as follows:

1. *In the social sphere* – SRE graduates have integrated into key roles in all spheres of endeavor in Israel, while publicly maintaining and preserving their religious way of life. SRE graduates can be found in all walks of life and the state's modern activities: economics, industry, science, technology, security, law. Similarly, SRE has become one of Israel's official and important institutions for absorbing new immigrants. Because of its "open to everyone" policies, SRE has absorbed many new immigrants over the years, most of whom came from deprived socio-economic backgrounds. The absorption and nurturing in the schools of Jewish immigrants from Muslim countries during the 1950s, and

[1] Interestingly, in the time of the Mishna and the Talmud, the same dilemmas arose: rabbis considered the question of whether studying Greek knowledge and culture was permissible. Initially, this was rejected; then it was agreed that only the elites could study Greek, and later, it was allowed for the sake of bread winning (Lieberman, 1984).

Jewish immigrants from Ethiopia and the FSU in the 1980s and 1990s and their successful integration into Israeli society should be studied and imitated.

2. *In the scholastic field* – State-religious education can be proud of the high percentage (66%) of its graduates eligible for matriculation. The success on matriculation exams can be seen in general subjects (math, English, etc.) as well as in Judaic Studies. State-religious education is particularly noteworthy for its high success rate among those pupils designated as disadvantaged from schools considered to be failures. In 1995, the then director of the state-religious education division, Mr. Mati Dagan, made a courageous decision to cancel all vocational study tracks (which did not train pupils for the regular official matriculation exams) in the comprehensive religious schools and to convert all the SRE schools into academic schools that would train pupils to receive a full matriculation certificate. As a result, the scholastic and educational status of the high schools in the periphery has improved, and the success rates on matriculation examinations among this weaker population are continually improving.
3. *In the religious sphere* – Most of the SRE graduates (some 70%) remain religious to varying degrees of observance after they complete the school socialization process (Leslau & Rich, 1999) even when they encounter the secular world for the first time in the army or national service. Moreover, the yeshiva high schools and academic yeshivas established to house graduates of the SRE schools have provided a basis for the revival of religious and Jewish centers in Israel following the destruction and devastation during the Holocaust of the centers of Jewish-religious life in Europe (Gross, 2003b). Jewish-religious revival in Israel, as part of a secular, liberal, democratic state, has constituted a new pattern of religiosity which integrates aspects of modernity and sovereignty; this approach is a new, religious creation that demands further study and research.
4. *In the feminist-educational sphere* – SRE has constructed a modern educational system that socializes women and fully integrates them in the civic public sphere. This is little short of a revolution. The exposure of religious women to knowledge that was once accessible only to men, and the openness that enables women to function equally in the realm of modernity and in the corpus of religious canonical literature, has turned SRE into one of the major socialization agents of the feminist revolution within religious society in particular and in secular Israeli society in general.

The Major Dilemmas of the State-Religious Education System

State-religious education in Israel is currently tackling five major dilemmas (Gross, 2003a):

1. *The status of secular studies in the religious-education system* – One of the innovations initiated by the SRE system since its establishment has been the introduction of secular studies as a legitimate component of the official religious-education system and as an integral part of its ideology and educational

orientation. As explained above, this orientation was inspired by the educational approach of the *Torah im Derech Eretz* movement founded by Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch in the nineteenth century. The main objective of this approach has been to enable complete integration of SRE graduates into any field of endeavor in society. Indeed, the SRE schools ponder such issues as what is the proper quantity of secular studies relative to Judaic studies, when these subjects should be studied (in the morning, when the children are more awake, or in the afternoon), and what are the resources that should be allocated to each one of the spheres (Ayalon & Yogev, 1998). This dilemma relates to the contradictory aspirations of the SRE system to be open to the modern world, on the one hand, and to shut itself up within the world of religion and halacha (Jewish law), on the other. Furthermore, this question is connected to the problem of how to cope with the values and lifestyles of the Western world and its culture while carefully trying to maintain a full religious way of life (Dagan, 1999).

2. *The educational ideal* – A different dilemma has involved asking whether the religious-education system should develop the image of an ideal graduate with a clear and unequivocal perspective (Schremer, 1985) whose religious properties are based on an Ashkenazic-European point of view or whether it is possible to develop several alternative, and equally legitimate, religious-educational ideals? Should the educational ideal continue to be the traditional "*talmid chacham*" (religious scholar), or perhaps the modern "pioneer" or the Jewish-religious engineer, pilot, or scientist (see also Rosenak, 1996)? This question is closely related to the matter of whether the educational ideal proposed by SRE prepares its graduates to leave the hothouse environment of the school and successfully enter military and civilian life. Can SRE pupils and graduates realistically live with the monumental educational ideal presented to them in school, or in reality are they actually working against this educational ideal (Gross, 2002)?
3. *Religious selectivity versus education for all* – One of the dilemmas facing the SRE system is whether it should be open to everyone, or whether it should be religiously selective (Gross, 2003a). As stated above, the consumers of SRE are religiously pluralistic and represent a broad range of religious behavior, from those who are very careful to observe all the commandments prescribed by halacha, to those who are satisfied with a partial or even symbolic observance of Jewish law but who want their children to be part of a religious framework. Therefore, there is the question of how the SRE system can maintain its uniqueness as a coherent religious setting, on the one hand, while, on the other hand, remaining loyal to its state-mandated objectives and obligations, which support equality and integration. On a practical level, one can ask whether SRE can continue to function in the long term in the anomalous social reality where in some parts of the country the economically weakest sectors constitute a majority of the students in the system even though many of them do not come from a religious background (Adler, 2002).
4. *Attitude toward the state and its institutions* – A critical question for the SRE today is how the system should regard the State of Israel, its secular-democratic regime, and the laws founded on secular legitimacy. This dilemma is complex

because the *Torah* and halacha (Jewish law), according to which religious Jews act, deal with how people should behave in their private or communal lives, but not their political lives (Adler, 2002; Dagan, 1999). The halachic literature does not discuss issues concerning foreign relations, economics, or running a country with a secular, democratic Jewish regime because historically the Jewish people lived under foreign rule and their civilian experience had no significance in the religious-Jewish context throughout its long history. Only with the establishment of Jewish sovereignty in the land of Israel has full participation in political life meant accepting shared responsibility and granting legitimacy to public decisions that are secular in nature, even when they may contradict Jewish law. For example, the state celebrates Independence Day in a month that is considered, according to Jewish tradition, a period of mourning due to the death of 12,000 of Rabbi Akiva's disciples. In this period, Jews are required to observe customs of semi-mourning (no marriages take place, no listening to lively music, no dancing). So how can one celebrate a national-civic independence day, which is secular in nature, which contradicts explicit Jewish law? Religious Zionism perceived the establishment of the state as the beginning of redemption; to denote and celebrate it, Jewish law was "renewed," making this a day of celebration including distinct Jewish thanksgiving prayers. This constitutes a major controversy between the orthodox and religious-Zionist movements. Under these circumstances, the SRE has come to perceive the State of Israel, Zionism, and Jewish nationality as phases in the development of the redemption, and "the religious education system has been charged with the task of demonstrating that it is possible to live as a Jew in a democratic country" (Adler, 2002). All the same, the practical partnership with the secular elements in Israel constitutes a serious theological and ideological problem (see also Silberman-Keller, 2000). For example, in 2005, the disengagement plan to evacuate the Gaza Strip was accepted by law by the Israeli government. However, SRE students and graduates actively resisted this decision. This militant resistance was perceived as religious theological resistance rather than simple civic disobedience (see Gross, 2006a).

5. *Organizational structure* – A last question that flows from those reviewed above asks whether the SRE system should remain under secular state-organizational sponsorship, or establish a separate educational-organizational framework with a religious character. In practice, despite the State Education Law (1953), the secular education system does not always take the special needs of the SRE into consideration (for example, the need for additional job slots because of gender separation for religious reasons in SRE schools). The desire of the state education system for equality and uniformity (in resource allocation, for example) is sometimes carried out by hurting minority groups. It should be noted that the decision to remain under state sponsorship was, and always has been, ideological rather than organizational-procedural, because of the religious significance with which the religious-education system relates to the principle of state sovereignty. In practical terms, all of these dilemmas are related to the central question that has occupied religious-Zionism from the moment of its inception to this very

day, that is, the question of the Jewish nature and character of the State of Israel; or to put it differently, to what extent must the State of Israel possess particularistic Jewish characteristics (as a Jewish state) or a universal civilian character (as a state of all its citizens)? Solutions to this dilemma have a direct impact on the policies and activities of the SRE system.

This last question is also connected with the method by which the religious person and establishment copes with the phenomenon of secularization. According to SRE ideology, since the *Haskalah* (Jewish Enlightenment) period of the eighteenth century, the foremost enemy of the Jewish people has been secularization. The appearance of modern Zionism is to a large extent connected to this phenomenon (Gross, 2003a), because this process denotes the liberation of humanity from the generalized perception of the sovereignty of God and emphasizes individuals' responsibility for their own actions. Secular Zionism presumes the liberation of the Jew from the idea of national redemption by God, to a reality of national redemption wrought by humans and under their full responsibility (Don-Yehiya, 1998).

The innovation of the religious-Zionist approach, in contrast with the ultra-orthodox approach, was that it accommodated secularization (Sagi, 2000; Schwartz, 1999, 2002) and perceived it as a "necessary evil" and a temporary reality that was a precondition for fulfilling and realizing the complete Jewish redemption. In discussing these matters, Liebman (1982) proposed four main approaches to modernity: assimilation, isolation, compartmentalization, and expansion. He claimed that religious-Zionism adopted the strategy of expansion, and the practical interpretation of this was to sanctify the entire process of modernization and secularization which are, as previously stated, a necessary precondition, according to this approach, to the full Jewish redemption. In this way, the entire secular aspect of political sovereignty and the state's institutions were given religious significance and validity. Furthermore, these dilemmas reflect the ideological status of the religious-Zionist movement which, from its inception, has straddled two dichotomous worlds within Jewish society: the secular-Zionist leadership that rejected both Jewish tradition and religion as part of the process of creating a new national Zionist identity; and the traditional, orthodox, and ultra-orthodox world, which perceived the Zionist Movement and the creation of a Jewish national identity as heresy. The unique position of the religious-Zionist movement has been from its establishment until today the source of both its strength and its weakness; it hoped to become an integral part of both worlds (the secular and ultra-orthodox), while simultaneously not being part of either one of them (Gross, 2003b). Understanding the basis for this dialectic is important for understanding the dilemmas and difficulties in which the state-religious education system functions.

Last Thoughts and Next Steps

Despite the increasing secularization of Israeli society, on the one hand, and the isolationist tendencies of religious extremism, on the other, the SRE system has succeeded in maintaining a stable number of pupils and has conducted an extensive

system of institutions, from preschools to teacher training institutes, comprising approximately 20% of all the pupils in the Israeli state education system. These numbers are noteworthy, particularly in consideration of the fact that the process of joining the SRE system is not inevitable by virtue of the Compulsory Education Law; rather it is part of a conscious decision and an informed choice made voluntarily by parents and pupils in favor of a religious-Zionist education as their preferred education system. The success of this education system, despite all of the difficulties, apparently derives from the careful preservation of several fundamental religious principles as well as tremendous flexibility and openness to the changing needs of the modern and pluralistic world in which we live.

When parents send their children to orthodox schools, they know what to expect in terms of curriculum, dress code, etc. However, in modern orthodox schools, there is a constant debate about the ethos of the school, something that is undefined and open to discussion. Modern orthodox schools all over the world (which are generally religious-Zionist) are frequently considered problematic, in terms of the way they define themselves to their target populations. In Brussels, Paris and Geneva, Toronto and Montreal, Melbourne and Sydney, and in the USA, both ultra-orthodox and secular schools are very clear in terms of their school ethos. Whereas ultra-orthodox schools have a definite vision of what they would like to be, which is described in absolute language, secular schools know what they would *not* like to be. However, discussions concerning the modern orthodox school ethos are currently conducted in vague and obscure language which usually juggles an attempt to enjoy the advantages and disadvantages of both secular and orthodox life.

Future research on SRE should concentrate on the foundations of the SRE ethos and its attitude to modernity. In modern orthodox schools, questions of ethos are a major source of controversy between parents, board members, stakeholders, and policy makers (see Gross, 2006). The above-mentioned dilemmas should be at the core of this research, then, and might inform five main questions. A first question for investigation is, what is the status of secular studies in the religious-education system? This question is connected to considering whether secular studies are a legitimate or illegitimate component of the official SRE system, and an integral part of its ideology and educational orientation. Another fundamental question concerns the educational ideal of SRE; this should involve a major survey of whether the religious-education system should develop the image of an ideal graduate with a clear and unequivocal perspective whose religious properties are based on an Ashkenazic-European point of view or whether it is possible to develop several alternative, and equally legitimate, religious-educational ideals. For example, should the educational ideal continue to be the traditional "*talmid chacham*" (religious scholar), or perhaps the modern "pioneer," or perhaps the Jewish-religious engineer, pilot, or scientist? Another important question that threatens the coherence of SRE is whether it should be open to everyone, or whether it should be religiously selective. A no less critical question for the SRE today is how the system should regard the State of Israel, its secular-democratic regime, and the laws founded on secular legitimacy. A last question for investigation, which is directly connected to school ethos, is whether the SRE system should remain under secular state-organizational

sponsorship, or should establish a separate educational/organizational framework with a religious character.

These questions should be investigated both theoretically and empirically using qualitative and quantitative research methods. The empirical investigation should be conducted among students, teachers, parents, principals, stakeholders, and policy makers. The answers to these questions will make it possible to open up future discussions concerning the SRE ethos and its raison d'être. Such research, and discussion of the main dilemmas, questions, and challenges of SRE raised in this chapter, can perhaps be utilized as the basis for further comparative research in other Jewish educational sites that face the constant challenge of accommodation between traditional convictions and modern aspirations and options.

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Israel: Innovations in Secular Schooling in Israel

Yehuda Bar Shalom and Tamar Ascher Shai

Israeli society is still a society in formation. Within the Jewish majority, most children in the classroom are either immigrants or the children of immigrants. Public education has always been perceived, as in many other countries, as a means for creating a unified myth and ethos. However, almost immediately following the birth of the State of Israel, in the 1950s, political pressures enabled the creation of separate public school systems: the Jewish secular, the Jewish – national Orthodox, and the Arab schools. The ultra-Orthodox communities opted to create their own independent and semi-private tracks, and some private schools decided to go their own separate ways, and continue to do so until this day.

Despite a sharp decline in numbers over the past 20 years, the secular public schools were and still are the largest section in Israeli society. The percentage of Jewish students attending secular schools moved from 74% in 1980 down to 54% in 2008.[1] If we add the Arab students into the equation, then we assume that in the near future Jewish-secular education will be in the minority. Over the past 50 years secular education has faced many challenges that resulted, among other things, in the creation of innovations and alternatives within the school system. Educators and parents, dissatisfied with the philosophies, educational outcomes, and school culture in general, have chosen to create options within the school system that offer a solution for some or most of the challenges that schools face in Israel's societal context.

One reason for changes in the school system is the growing awareness of educators of the multicultural society that has developed in Israel. Ethnic, religious, and class diversity in Israel is not surprising, given the country's character as an immigrant state. This phenomenon appears also in many other Western societies and many researchers and educators over the past two decades have strongly recommended promoting a positive approach to multiculturalism as well as the

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[1] Information derived from Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics on September 9, 2009, from: http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/cw_usr_view_SHTML?ID=668

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nurturing of tolerance in teacher training programs (Banks & Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1990; Sleeter & Grant, 1988; Wurzel, 1988). In Israel, researchers have examined educational issues in their cultural context, suggesting possible directions for the creation of deeper cultural understanding and intercultural bridging (Saber & Gur, 2001; Gottlieb, 2000; Bar Shalom, 2006). Many educators and thinkers who support the empowerment of excluded and disadvantaged sectors of society support an approach that empowers students by their endorsement of the students in recognizing their own narratives and that of their communities, and raising serious questions regarding the unjust distribution of resources, power, and dignity in society (Diab, 2002; Yona & Zalmenson Levy, 2004; Zalmenson Levy, 2004).

The lack of serious attention given in the past to questions of identity, and the disrespectful attitude toward the founding myths of excluded communities, has caused great frustration for members of such communities (Shabbtai, 2001). Suleiman (2004) discusses the twofold marginalization, civil and national, experienced by Palestinian citizens of Israel. Karnieli (2004) looks at the next generations of the Mizrahi immigrants of the 1950s, and offers a convincing illustration of how the educational failure of their schools inadvertently caused the creation of a culture of discrimination, ultimately preventing their chances of social and economical integration. The mass immigration from the former Soviet Union also led to extensive misunderstandings in the cultural sphere, due to the contrast between the attitudes of the immigrants and those of native Israelis regarding values, proper government, democracy, and pluralism (see Gommel, 2006). Another factor that has encouraged the creation of innovative schools is the emerging ethos of choice. Many Western thinkers have defined “choice” and “innovation” as synonymous, often borrowing from economic theory (Flaherty, 1995; Friedman, 1962, 2007; Perelman, 1993). An example of how this has worked in the United States would be the charter school movement. The positive attitude toward charter schools stems largely from the idea that greater choice will encourage innovation (Lubienski, 2003). Flaherty claims that this thought was exactly what led the legislators to approve the charter system (Flaherty, 1995). But to simplify matters, we will argue that the schools that are presented here are innovative because they basically present something new (Good & Braden, 2000). They offer options that plainly did not exist before in Israeli schooling (Bar Shalom, 2006).

In this chapter, we will show how individual schools strive to create a model for the restoration and healing of Israeli society, each within its special cultural context. The Kedma School focuses on empowering the marginalized Mizrahi student group, the Bialik School restores respect for and gives social legitimacy to migrant workers and other excluded groups, the Mofet School answers to the needs of Soviet immigrant students, the Keshet School seeks to repair the secular/religious rift in Israel, and Neve Shalom aims at bridging between Jewish and Arab identities. In this chapter, we will show how different communities have decided to approach the challenges they meet in innovative and creative ways. As we will see, these

innovations are creating change in the structures and meaning of Jewish secular education in Israel.[2]

Hegemonic Culture Versus Excluded and Marginalized Groups: The Case of Mizrahi Education

The dominant Ashkenazi Zionist group, in its initial phase of State and nation building, saw the public secular education system as a means to create and generate the "new Jew:" secular, modern, optimistic, and rational (Bar Shalom, 2006). The approximately one million immigrants to Israel from Asian, African, and mostly Arab countries were perceived by the establishment as a primitive lump, labeled as "Mizrahi;" and the hope was that the Mizrahi would eventually blend in with the dominant culture. Until the 1970s the Mizrahi population was separated geographically and they studied in their own communities, often in low-quality schools (Swirsky, 1995). To modify this segregation policy, a middle school system was created. The thought behind creating the middle schools was that this way children from different backgrounds and cultures would blend and mix, thus giving a fair chance for all to succeed in the system (Bar Shalom, 2006). It seems that while some Mizrahi children profited from the experience of integration, there were many who performed poorly, possibly because of the fact that they simply did not find their own culture reflected in the school (Bairey Ben-Ishay, 1998; Bar Shalom, 2006; Shalom Chetrit, 2004).

The Kedma School

The ideology of Mizrahi resistance, found in academia and in the arts, also made its way eventually into the primary and secondary school system (Dahan & Levy, 2000). The Kedma School in Jerusalem was founded in 1994 by a group of teachers and parents who felt that the educational system was not giving their communities a fair chance to succeed. The first of the changes they inspired was in the curriculum. Clara, the principal comments:

> We don't follow the classic division into literature, language and expression. We have developed our own draft reader—we chose the texts and the children like them a lot. We divided each class into three groups. The children learn in small groups of eight students. The students really enjoy these classes.

This is an interdisciplinary learning model that enables students to search for their own personal voice through a dynamic encounter with the text. Some of the texts are of Western origin, while others address issues relating to Mizrahi and Arab culture.

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[2]The main data (besides the literature review) presented in this chapter have been generated from observations and interviews with principals, teachers, parents, and students at the Bialik, Kedma, Keshet, Neve Shalom, and Mofet Schools, between the years 2000 and 2008.

Furthermore the school sets out to promote their students' exploration of their identity and the formation of their personality, while encouraging them to ask critical questions, such as "in our society, who has the power and why? Is power distributed equally? What can be done about this?" Still, the aim of the school is not to create a separate, segregated, and possibly antagonistic Mizrahi identity; rather, it attempts to create a multicultural identity in which students feel comfortable with both their indigenous identity and with that of the hegemony's group. After all, Mizrahi intellectuals themselves admit that they gained their power, position, and social status by understanding and operating well within Western academia (Bar Shalom, 2006).

Ariela Barey Ben Ishai, one of the advisors of the Kedma School, comments:

> Yesterday we had an argument . . . how to make the students "multilingual," in the sense that they can consciously and freely move from "high" language to "low" language according to context, without feeling either inferior or patronizing.[3] When they learn a richer and more intellectual language, they look for ways to keep their own identity and hold on to the language of the neighborhood as part of their identity. Some people gave Dr. Meir Buzaglo [of the Hebrew University] as an example of someone they admire. When he lectures on philosophy in the university, he uses the language of the neighborhood – he does not disguise himself or change his style. Others were disturbed by precisely this approach, and disliked the fact that when he lectures, he speaks like a "bro from the hood." Someone commented, "I don't like that pose." Rafi (One of the teachers) said: "I'm an existentialist; I don't want to compromise and lower my language. In the neighborhood I speak like people do in the neighborhood. I'm multicultural."

On a visit to the school, one of us (Bar Shalom) wrote in his field notes:

> I observe Rafi's lesson. At first, some of the students find it difficult to relate to the subject of the lesson. Slowly, however, they are attracted by his skillful and interesting presentation of "Plato's Dinner." The students find similarities between the dinner and their own world. One girl seems worried. Rafi explains to me later that Plato's thoughts on love have an effect on her due to her own doubts about her relationship with her current boyfriend. Several students respond to Rafi's challenge and bring concrete examples from their own lives.

After class, I questioned Rafi about the role and presence of Eastern/Arab philosophy in a school such as Kedma, which aims to foster Mizrahi consciousness. In his words:

> I don't have to teach Eastern/Arab philosophy just because I am Mizrahi, although this year I have included some attention to the philosophy of Abarbanel. I think that Plato and Socrates are universal rather than Western or Eastern. I'm not going to stop liking Plato just because I'm Mizrahi.

The staff members at Kedma, understanding that many of their students come from homes devastated by economic conditions, created a tutoring system in which each student has the opportunity to discuss problems in their studies and in life

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[3] Delpin (1995) proposes that children should be taught to speak according to the appropriate cultural context in each given situation. For example, "public language" may be practiced through roleplaying, drama, simulated newscasts, etc. In this way, the students learn that different languages are appropriate for different situations (Delpin, p. 53).

in general with one of the school's educators (Ayalon, 2007). The teachers take a psychosocial approach, and they have come to recognize that in order for the children to achieve success cognitively, they must create a "holding" environment, in which the affective domain is taken into consideration (Ayalon, 2007; Bar Shalom, 2007).

Again, from our field notes:

> Rafi (teacher) discusses the difficulties faced by some of the students whom he supervises. The role of the "supervisor" in Kedma is holistic, combining aspects of the teacher, parent, psychologist and friend. He tells me about H., a student who was sometimes disruptive during the lesson I observed, but who also contributed some valuable comments to the discussion: "H. tells me that when he gets bored, he goes out to steal motorcycle helmets. He comes from a very problematic background. I listen to him, and then try to work together with him to identify the disadvantages of the choices he makes. Recently I have begun to see some changes in him."

The strategy of combining cultural recognition and affective responsiveness has been proven to promote higher-academic achievement (Bar Shalom, 2006; Capps, 2003). Students belonging to marginalized groups in Israel are notorious for not doing well in the matriculation exams. At Kedma, however, the success rate of the students is above the national average in Israel (55%). Also, the school strives to be in contact with its graduates, some of whom sit on the school's management board. The school also offers discounted courses to prepare its graduates for the college- and university-level matriculation exams.

The Kedma School has drawn a lot of attention from among intellectuals, academics, and educators. Its emphasis on cultural representation follows Taylor's (1994) idea regarding the need of minorities for recognition. Many Israeli educators have used examples from the Kedma School that have been published in various sources (Ayalon, 2007; Bairey Ben-Ishay, 1998; Bar Shalom & Krumer Navo, 2007; Bar Shalom, 2006) in order to try to create a more multicultural classroom in which each child may feel represented. The following section will give an example of a multicultural school that integrates children from around the world.

A Pluralistic Multicultural Approach

The relative ease with which people can move from one country to another in search of better living conditions, adventure, work, or professional training means that many people now experience cross-cultural encounters. Cross-cultural contact does not automatically lead to greater understanding of the other. Different sides need to become acquainted with one another from a place of equality. In situations of cross-cultural encounters between a hegemonic culture and a traditional culture, institutions tend to reinforce the mechanisms of inequality between different groups. Moreover, members of dominant groups tend, sometimes unconsciously, to believe that the values of the hegemonic culture are the best and the most effective for the entire population. In the case of Israel, dissatisfaction over the lack of integration in the education system may be due in part to the sense that ultimately only one

group has been represented in the country's hegemonic educational ideology, and in an attempt to create a balance, this has led to the founding of schools such as the Kedma School.

Another response seen increasingly in the Israeli secular-education system, and that also stands in contrast to the classical mainstream model of education, is for schools to declare themselves as multicultural. The schools strive to create a positive cross-cultural encounter while empowering each cultural group. This response is seen in the example of the Bialik School in Tel Aviv.

The Bialik School

The Bialik School was founded in 1934 as a classical Zionist educational primary school. It was named after the famous Israeli author Chaim Nachman Bialik, soon after his death. The school is situated in the center of Tel Aviv (Lewinski Street), an area that houses the old central bus station. The area is filled with abandoned and dilapidated buildings, smog and decay, and which like many other poor urban areas in the Western world, houses hordes of migrant workers. Israel had almost no migrant workers in the first 40 years of its existence, but the first intifada, with Palestinian workers no longer on the market, brought a shortage of cheap labor. This shortage caused an influx of migrant workers from Asia, Africa, and South America. This is how Bialik became a school for the children of migrant laborers. Amira Yahalom, the ex-principal, who served in that capacity between 1992 and 2003, reports that the increase in migrant workers started in the early 1990s and that by 1997 the migrant workers became a majority at the school, with many of the children having experienced the crisis of migration, either themselves or through their parents[4]. This of course created the need for serious changes in the teaching and the curriculum of the school. For some of the teachers, the process of change was personal and painful. Not a single teacher was dismissed, manifesting the belief that every educator can learn to teach and work differently. As a result, the school took on the view that change must come from within.

Individuals and human societies generally function best in conditions of stability. The only stable factor at the Bialik School is the willingness of the staff to cope with a world that is uncertain, different, and constantly changing. The curriculum at Bialik was adapted to meet the needs of a population that is different from that toward which the standard curriculum was oriented.

The Bialik School has succeeded in pooling resources, in particular those of the neighborhood community center. In return the community center enjoyed the filling of its empty and lifeless spaces, becoming more active and meaningful for its community. With all the children from the Bialik School continuing their day at the community center, inadvertently they had created what was later to become

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[4] Supplementary interview, with Amira Yahalom, April 8, 2009.

an official "long school day." The school is regarded as part of the broader communal system, and places the child at its center, acknowledging that the students are affected both directly and indirectly by the social processes occurring around them. Disadvantaged populations are sometimes unable to help their children, not because of a lack of resources in the community, but because they lack the knowledge regarding how best to take advantage of these resources. The Bialik School has quite successfully found ways for bridging this knowledge gap, the problem being mainly caused by the population's fear of exposure to the establishment (Bar Shalom, 2006). By signing all children up for subsidized activities in the community center, Yahalom proved to the parents that their fears were unfounded in this case.

As Yahalom explains,

> When someone gets stuck on an iceberg, they have to take the decision to act. An iceberg can be a problem, but it can also become an opportunity. The same is true of diversity. This kind of multiculturalism and poverty can be a basis for progress or it can turn into a quagmire. Our success is that Israel's "fig leaf" has been turned into an advantage. The State of Israel cannot allow its "fig leaf" to be anything other than presentable.

Many of the questions addressed by the school relate to issues of socialization. The public education system in Israel strives – with varying levels of success – to "educate" citizens to identify with the State and with the Zionist ideal, to support the idea of democracy and to become acquainted with the canonical texts of the Jewish people (Shenhav, 2006). The Bible is viewed as the book that binds the Jewish people to its heritage – not necessarily a book related to faith, but one that raises the questions, themes, and dilemmas that characterize an emerging society.

At the Bialik School, the study of canonical texts such as the Bible has undergone a revolution. The reason for this is not a sudden passion for postmodernist insights among the teachers, but rather a reaction to the intuitive realization that the "regular" pattern of Bible studies is inappropriate for a school that includes so many traditions, some of which are mutually contradictory.[5] The teachers find themselves in a situation in which they cannot function as agents of socialization who seek to replicate "good Jewish citizens," and accordingly they use their knowledge of other cultures to transform Bible studies into the comparative study of cultural myths. From agents of socialization they have now become cultural mediators (Bar Shalom, 2006; Resnik, 2006). Such an approach would create difficulties among those whose views tend toward more particularistic and iconographic identities and attitudes (see Shilhav, 2006).

However, at Bialik the teachers examine the school subjects from a more interdisciplinary perspective than is usual in Israeli schools. The teachers realize that they are teaching "great stories." The multiplicity of cultures represented in the school leads them to develop a relativistic approach to culture in general, and to Israeli Jewish culture in particular.

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[5] Interview with Yahalom and teachers.

A Multicultural Learning Environment

The children at the Bialik School enjoy a certain cultural advantage. An ethnocentric approach might have made these children ashamed of their own culture and heritage and would likely have forced them to adopt the dominant culture. The only alternative for children in such a situation is to cling to their original culture, and antagonistically reject the hegemonic culture. As mentioned before, in its formative decades the State of Israel attempted to create "new Israelis" who acted and behaved in keeping with the secular Zionist ethos of socialist European Jews. In recent years, Israeli society in general and the educational world in particular have seen an awakening of groups that feel that their voice went unnoticed in this socialization process.

At the Bialik School, the demographic change in the student population and the ideological change among the teachers determined the multicultural ethos and the special quality of contacts between teachers and students. It goes without saying that these students cannot and will not undergo a process of socialization to Zionism or "Israeliness," since a national Israeli conscience divorced from Judaism has not yet emerged. Accordingly, each student is proud of his or her own heritage. The teachers respect each heritage, and are grateful to the students for giving them the opportunity to learn about other cultures. No single culture is perceived at the school as better than any other.

The Bialik School serves as a model for multicultural education in Israel (Bar Shalom, 2006; Resnik, 2006). As more immigrants become part of Israeli society, this model is likely to become more widespread.[6]

Incorporating Jews from the Former Soviet Union

The mass immigration of Soviet Jewry to Israel has influenced Israeli society on many levels. This particular population, in contrast to the Mizrahi immigration back in the 1950s, came to Israel with a strong sense of agency. Soviet Jews arrived with a feeling that they had much to contribute to Israeli society in the fields of politics, culture, the arts, and education. They can be seen as an autonomous community that does not consider itself inferior (Shamai & Ilatov, 2005). The Shevach Mofet School in Tel Aviv evolved in the early 1990s from a discredited low-level school, catering to mostly Mizrahi students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, into what became the flagship of adaptation to the cultural and educational needs of immigrants from the FSU. This evolution succeeded when the school opened its doors to two educational entrepreneurs, Dr. Ina Levinov and Yaakov Mazguenov (Resnik, 2006). Mazguenov was especially interested in recreating what he had experienced as an educator in Russia, a school environment that emphasizes excellence in the sciences (Marom & Miller, 2008). Today, parents who immigrated

[6]The Kadoori School, for example, which is similar to the Bialik School, started as a classical Zionist institution, and seems now to follow a quite similar ideology (Gaphney & Hameiri, 2008).

from the FSU are willing to make tremendous efforts in order to send their children to this particular school.

The Shevach Mofet School in Tel Aviv succeeds at teaching classes with a majority of children of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, taking into account the parents' expectations of what schooling "should be." The school greatly emphasizes the sciences, as well as general academic achievements.

From an interview with the principal, Dov Orbach:

> I don't say that I can totally identify with the parents, but they do see the act of sending their children to Mofet as one that protects their children from all the maladies of Israeli education that they feel exist in the regular system. But they make tremendous efforts, they send their children from far away, places like Kfar Sabah, so that they will study in what they perceive to be a decent science program.

In other words, Mofet does not represent a segregated approach to the newcomers; instead it can be seen as a protest against the failure of the public school system to meet the needs of this particular immigrant population (Epstein & Kheimets, 2000).

The teaching style is a blend of the more formal "old school" approach brought by people like Mazguenov from the FSU, and the more liberal approach of veteran Israeli educators who see themselves as agents of "Israelisation." The dialogue between veterans, and newcomers, with all its ambiguity, enriches both sides and creates a new blend of education that suits the needs of this large-immigrant population very well (Marom & Miller, 2008).

With regard to the formation of a Jewish identity, the school succeeds at assisting in the negotiation between the immigrant identity and the needs of the teenage immigrants to fit in with their Israeli peer group. The veteran teachers try to maintain a non-judgmental approach, very different from the paternalistic approach typical to the teachers who operated in the Israeli school system of the 1950s.[7]

S.A., a veteran Israeli who teaches Bible comments:

> Teaching Bible studies is a tricky issue. Some of them find it a waste of time, since they are more interested in what the parents push them towards: academic success in studies. Still, I make every effort possible to make it fun and meaningful to their lives, to show them that the moral dilemmas of the Bible are relevant to their lives today. Some are concerned about the whole Judaic studies aspect because they are dealing with issues around the validation of their own Jewish identity.

In another interview, this same teacher commented that she indeed sees herself as an agent for socialization toward the larger Israeli identity. She tries to instill, through Bible studies, a sense of belonging and love for the country, and she tries to convince children who ask for her opinion, that they should indeed let themselves be drafted into the IDF.

Dov Orbach, the current school principal, is very much worried about the issue of the salience of Israeli identity among the students. He believes that while the school has to work toward academic excellence, it also needs to instill a strong sense of belonging. Otherwise, Orbach believes that the many temptations of the

[7] Interview with a veteran Israeli teacher and Soviet immigrant teacher, June 2007.

global world and economy, which could lead the average student to travel abroad for a few years to work as a high tech engineer, could possibly leave the student rootless and homeless. He sees it as the school's responsibility to make an effort to socialize students in a way that even if they do leave the country, they will still remember that Israel is where their roots are.[8]

To magnify the effect that the school has as an agent of socialization to the greater Zionist Israel, the school encourages its students to participate in activities such as a trip to Jerusalem on "Jerusalem Day," where they visit combat landmarks from 1967 and the Western Wall. There is also a large investment in the commemoration of national holidays such as Yom Hashoah and Yom Hazikaron. According to the principal, ceremonies around Yom Hazikaron, the Memorial Day for fallen soldiers and victims of terror attacks, serve as an additional tool for bringing the students closer to their decision to serve in the IDF (Marom & Miller, 2008). This effort by the school can be seen as a balancing act against the trend in the larger FSU immigrant Community to maintain its unique separate identity, something which is relatively easy in a globalized world. In general, it seems that many FSU immigrants feel that they have a great deal to contribute to the Israeli society, which they have perceived as very provincial in many ways. It seems that the Shevach Mofet experience allows them to negotiate their safe entrance into the Israeli mainstream, while still preserving many of their educational values.

Bilingual Education in Israel: Religion – Politics – Symbols and the Challenge of "the Other"

An interesting trend in secular education in Israel is the emergence of bilingual educational models. The school of Neve Shalom/Wahat El Salam was initially founded in order to accommodate the needs of the children of this particular bi-national village. Later the school began incorporating into its student body children from the neighboring villages, Arabs and Jews alike. An attempt is being made to create some degree of balance and symmetry between religious and national subject matters, language, staff members, and the number of children from each group.

According to Boaz, the Jewish co-principal of the Neve Shalom School,

> We are involved in the search for and development of identity. People believe that when someone has a clear perception of his or her identity, they will be less threatened by the differing identities of others. The same applies to the case when people use words with national connotations, such as Arab or Jew or proud Palestinian. We don't avoid the word "Arab" here. A comment such as "the Arab children are on vacation today" does not raise any problems for us. It's part of life, just like saying "boys to the right, girls to the left." That's how we learn to deal with things. It's part of our identity, without any great trauma. Respect, acceptance and the place given to the national identity of each child and of the other enable the children to grow up confident and proud of their own identity.

[8] From an interview with the principal, Dov Orbach.

In Jewish society, the word "Arab" is a curse. Not here. At our school the children have to look for other, more effective curses.

> When the school was established, it was intended to meet the needs of the children from the village. We emphasize the three religions and the festivals of each national culture. We don't talk about it – we live it. It isn't a matter of "you should be nice to..." or "treat equally" – but a matter of living together. As someone who was born on a kibbutz, I am aware that when you speak about equality you raise expectations, and this can sometimes lead to disillusionment. It's a fascinating dilemma. But Neve Shalom is a place where we have really been trying to maintain equality for a long time.

The internal process of the individual and the group in Neve Shalom is based on the basic conditions of equality on all levels. This is an equal encounter within the confines of an unequal society. What happens in Neve Shalom is not a sanitized effort to be nice to one another. The school community allows its members to live with the conflict, with all its complexity. The participants are invited to experience mutual and parallel processes through which they gain a deeper understanding of both the other and of themselves.

The school makes an effort to socialize children toward mutual tolerance and provides a great exposure to the beliefs and customs of the "other." This raises many dilemmas, such as how to celebrate different and sometimes conflicting national holidays and religious festivities, as well as how to teach subject matter in two different languages. Conflict arises when the two national narratives, the Jewish and the Palestinian, contradict each other, and teachers and parents are faced with the challenge of finding ways to accommodate these differences (Bar Shalom, 2006).

Diana, the Palestinian co-principal of the Neve Shalom School, reports:

> Sometimes five or six of our children's friends visit their homes. When they come, they do not think "Now I'm going to an Arab home or a Jewish home." It is all so natural and automatic. Since the 1970s I have had to work so hard on myself in order to realize that the Jew is not an enemy, but rather a person who thinks and feels and believes in things – sometimes contrary to what I believe in, but I accept the complexities of my own people and of their people. Everyone has their own ideas and thoughts. If I accept myself, why shouldn't I accept them? Everyone in this country thinks that their side is OK, their thoughts and actions are legitimate, but that those of the other side are unacceptable.
>
> ... The children here live the Arab-Jewish conflict. How can you cope with this complexity in a way that turns it into an advantage? Take the vacations as an example. One Jewish girl postponed her birthday party because the Arabs were on their winter vacation, although her mother wanted to go ahead with the party. At another occasion one of the Arab girls said, 'Why don't we have the party in class after the Jews come back?" For the children, both sides are positive.

Diana and Boaz, the co-principals, often observe, document, and engage in reflection relating to the behavior of the children in the "peace laboratory" in which they live. Their stories are created in the community and in the school, and there is an evident connection between the two that is not devoid of problems. Through the children, it becomes apparent just how artificial and dissolvable the archeological strata of hatred and barriers are. The community and the school engage in socialization for peace and conflict resolution. They transform the "other" into a living,

real person. When the girl cancelled her birthday party, she emphasized the difference in attitudes. For her mother, "the Arabs" were an abstract, distant concept. The daughter, meanwhile, thought of friends who were so meaningful that it would be pointless to hold the event without them. Clearly, the school makes a very real contribution to interpersonal rapprochement, understanding, and acceptance.

In educational terms, this is an example of pre-figurative learning (Mead, 1974). The children cannot learn proper models for conflict-solving behavior from the adults. On the other hand, the adults learn through the children that there is a chance for a better future.

Teachers find this work very complex, and they often go through a process of self-discovery and the heightening of self-consciousness, as they face these matters. Another issue is the sense of the unequal status between the Hebrew and the Arabic languages. With Hebrew being the dominant language, the staff is required to create a balance which is very difficult to achieve within this context.[9]

Neve Shalom represents a radical shift from the classic Zionist approach of educational socialization to an approach based on the acceptance of the "other." While Bar-on (2005) claims that classical Zionism was based on the negation of the "other" (including the Arab), here we see the acknowledgment by the Jewish majority of the existence of a sizable minority. It seems that in many ways, the Neve Shalom School has influenced the newer Yad-be-Yad Schools (two in the North of Israel and one in Jerusalem), which also emphasize Hebrew/Arabic bilingual education, dialogue, and co-existence (see http://www.handinhandk12.org/).[10] These schools seem to face similar complexities and paradoxes (see Bekerman, 2003, 2005). Therefore, Neve Shalom/Wahat Al Salam and Yad-be-Yad schools can be seen as bridges between identities in a society characterized by a lack of social tolerance and cyclical trends of ethnocentrism.

The Keshet School

Serving a religious as well as a secular population, the Keshet (Hebrew for "rainbow") School incorporates into its student body both secular and religious students, striving to maintain an exact structural and numerical balance between children and staff members alike. Keshet puts forth an ideal of creating an environment in which secular and Orthodox children strengthen their own identity while co-existing respectfully and learning from one another (Weil & Roer-Strier, 2000).

The Keshet School was established in 1995 in Jerusalem with a mission to overcome, or at least soften, the chasm between secular and religious Jews in the State of Israel. Typically, Israeli children study in separate education systems and the two populations have differing opinions regarding the Jewish character of the State, the place of religion within a democratic government, and the question of "Who is a

[9] From an interview with the principals and with the teachers.

[10] Yad-be-Yad Schools have increased their student body from merely 50 in 1998 to almost 1,000 today (2009).

Jew?" In addition, differences emerge on broader political issues: the national religious stream is strongly identified with the establishment of Jewish settlements in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Many secular Israelis do not distinguish between the ultra-Orthodox and the national religious, viewing all religious Jews as an obstacle to the building of a progressive and enlightened society in Israel (Bar Shalom, 2006).

Ruti Lehavi, who conceived of and founded the Keshet School in 1995, often comments on how Israel made a mistake in the 1950s when it was decided to establish two separate educational tracks, State and State-religious. She decided to design a school that would "attract parents interested in a good education for their children," regardless of their religious or secular identity. It was important for her to define what constituted a "good" school; part of the school ethos was to be manifested in the possibility of reaching "a common definition that does not relate to our way of life, while nonetheless bringing our lifestyles to the school"[11] (Bar Shalom, 2006).

Similar to the approach at Neve Shalom, the assumption is that a properly mediated encounter may help children from both sides to develop their own identity, while respecting and understanding the identity of the other. While at Neve Shalom there is no real likelihood for students to change their national identity, in the Keshet School the "other" is a Jewish other, and at least in theory, every student could possibly abandon his or her identity in favor of that of the "other side." The school does not encourage this option, but the children enjoy freedom of thought and determination. Thus, the school attempts to engage in the clarification of differences while maintaining them.[12]

Despite the efforts made to reinforce the students' diverse identities, while accepting and understanding the other, the Keshet School nevertheless appears to create a more complex identity that internalizes behaviors that make their categorization as either "secular" or "religious" very difficult. In order to prevent confusion, the school is careful to remind both religious and secular students of their group affiliation. Students may visit the assembly or prayer service of one or the other group, but no more than once a week, reflecting the desire to avoid confusion and identity problems among the students.

It should be noted though that many of the religious parents at the school do not appear to be "regular Orthodox" Israelis and do not belong to the mainstream of the national religious movement. Many of these parents have a strong commitment to democratic values, hold a political outlook that is more left-wing than is usual among religious Jews, are open to the secular world and even identify with parts of it. These parents seek interaction with secular Jews as part of the socialization process of their children.

The daily school schedule is arranged in accordance with the consideration that the religious side must pursue its traditions, while the secular side creates alternative

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[11] Interview with Ruth Lehavi.

[12] Interview with Ruth Lehavi and senior teachers.

traditions and content. In practice, through the encounter with the religious side, the secular side creates what could almost be described as a new "religion" – a religion that focuses on the class assembly, in which each student must take part, speak his or her mind, and listen to others, feel part of the collective and seek spiritual content.[13] This brand of secularism favors poetry, dialogue, intellect, and a rich emotional language. It could be termed a "spiritual" brand of secularism. The participants are involved in a joint search for "meaning" as defined by Frankl (1963), and they develop tools for discourse, self-expression, and attentiveness. In real-world encounters between religious and secular Jews, the secular side feels exempt from the obligations incumbent on the religious. Contrary to this, the school does not leave room for a secularity based on exemptions. The religious students have to pray, and their secular peers have to attend the assembly. The morning ceremonies, followed by a half-hour discussion by the whole class, remind each student – frequently but informally – of their place as members of a community with a high level of cohesion, giving the students a sense of belonging that is rarely found to the same degree in most educational frameworks.

The ideological approach of the Keshet School may suggest the potential for the emergence of a new type of Judaism, one that is complex, pluralistic, and critical, and that could develop from a network of schools offering a tolerant encounter between both the secular and the religious.[14] Many parents and students clearly display readiness for such a process.

As more positive social conditions allow for the encounter between religious and secular Jews, the Keshet School with its unique ethos may provide a positive model for a society that could emerge in Israel. This could serve as an example for a future-educational approach fitting an era of peace which would include the clear separation of religion and State. It may be assumed that Israelis, once freed of the fundamental problems of survival, will be more inclined to devote serious thought to the complex task of creating new forms of Jewish identity.

What Does It All Mean?

At the start of this chapter we looked critically at the challenges faced by a country characterized by immigration, a force that has the capacity of bringing great change to society. The founding of the Shevach Mofet School, for example, presented

[13] Ethnographic observations of several encounters in grades 5, 6, and 7.

[14] Since Keshet was founded, many other schools have adopted a similar pluralistic approach. It is of no surprise then that the Knesset (the Israeli parliament) has recently approved a law that allows the creation of a whole new stream in the State's education system, the "Integrative Model," which (like Keshet and Reut in Jerusalem, the "pioneers") basically allows Orthodox children to study side by side with secular children. Knesset member Michael Melchior, who represents a great force behind this effort, reports that there were no less than 300 schools who wanted to join the new approach, but that only eight schools were allowed to be part of the program in its first year (2008), hoping to create a successful pilot.

an interesting case of how innovative educators and thinkers found an effective response to the varying needs of the wave of immigrants from the FSU.

Immigration issues are only one part of what the Israeli society and education system must deal with, and they are included in the broader realm of multicultural challenges that Israel has faced in the past and is still facing today. What has been identified as a growing need for religious, cultural, and social tolerance has found its expression in the schools that have been described in this chapter. In order to make room for more tolerance, more acceptance, and a more multicultural approach to society, it is essential to instigate serious changes in social and educational attitudes.

All the schools described in this chapter see themselves, tacitly or explicitly, as agents working to change the classic, monolithic, Zionist educational ethos. If classical Zionism was largely based on the negation of the other (Bar-On, 2005), the schools presented here usually invite the "other" in through the front door. At times, these schools strive to empower groups that were seen as "others," and make an honest effort at making room for them to connect to a salient identity which can operate well within their special contexts. This way we can appreciate Kedma's effort to support a significant Mizrahi identity, while striving for equal opportunity for its students; we see Mofet's effort to celebrate a mixed Russian–Israeli identity that allows them to excel academically and integrate successfully into Israeli society; and the Bialik School's effort to create an adaptive, multicultural identity that will allow children to operate well within their perhaps temporary status within Israeli society (Resnik, 2006). Neve Shalom and the Yad-be-Yad schools can be seen as attempting to re-examine the classic Zionist perception of the Arab other, and the Keshet School operates within the realm of the re-evaluation of the old dichotomies in Israeli society regarding religion and religious education.

The re-definition of identity seems to be the main focus of all the above schools. Postmodern identities are becoming more and more difficult to define. We witness a fluidity of identities in which they are re-designed by individuals using multiple cultural resources (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000). Recent research has shown that when Jews in Israel fill out questionnaires dealing with Jewish identity, when they are required to define themselves as secular, conservative, traditional, orthodox, etc., there is an ever increasing trend of people who prefer to label themselves as "other" (religious secular, secular believer, free Jew, etc.)[15]. It appears that more and more people are dissatisfied with the rigid identity constructs from the past, and accordingly, they search for or create institutions in which new identities can be explored and celebrated.

It is clear that these schools are associated to other institutions that operate within Israeli society who develop alternative identities. We can see a clear and logical connection between Keshet's mission and operation and that of organizations such as Elul that strives to have secular and religious adults engage in joint Jewish text study (see http://elul.org.il/e-babout.shtml). Elul is just one example of many other similar

[15] From Hagit Hacohen Wolf's presentation (2009).

institutions and organization. Neve Shalom and the bilingual schools can be seen as the schooling venue for the effort of other formal and informal organizations that deal with the Arab/Jewish divide. See, for example, the Re'ut Sadaka Arab/Jewish youth movement (http://www.bkluth.de/reut/MAIN.html) and the peace organization IPCRI (http://www.ipcri.org). Kedma's mission is in line with the Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow Coalition's effort to help Mizrahi and other excluded groups implement values of democracy, human rights, social justice, equality, and multiculturalism in Israel (see http://www.ha-keshet.org.il/english/english_index.html). The public recognition of the Bialik School's efforts in helping migrant children may very well have helped current organizations that try to help refugees from Darphour in Israel in 2009 (see http://www.plitim.co.il/). The Shevach Mofet School's effort to cater to the FSU students and parents can be seen as one of many efforts of this particular community to find ways to integrate and at the same time build countless institutions that may help them keep some of their distinctive identities (Gommel, 2006).

We can see that most of these schools operate within the context of immigration and/or needs of specific ethnic groups and individuals for self-representation and recognition. It seems that these schools could not have operated in the early days of the State, since, then, the ethos was one of socialization for classical Zionism (Bar-On, 2005). The above schools represent, as stated before, a softer kind of Zionism, one that acknowledges that different groups may have different ideas on culture, values, and ideologies. Still, we see that schools that are closer to mainstream Zionism, such as Keshet, seem to have much higher demand and we see an increase in the numbers of similar schools. Schools (like Kedma and Neve Shalom) that change the classical Zionist concept, or challenge it altogether, seem to be growing in numbers, but on a much smaller scale.

Some thinkers (for example, Ohana, 1998) are concerned that the emergence of schools and institutions that celebrate identities of difference endanger the Zionist ethos by creating cultural ghettos and tribes which broaden the gap between the different groups.[16] Others believe that classical Zionism with its education system, created severe injustice and misrecognition (see Shenhav, 2006).

We believe that the truth may be somewhere in the middle. Zionism seems to be alive and well, as a major uniting force for most of the Jewish majority. The schools described in this chapter deal not necessarily with the destruction of Zionist Jewish identity, but rather, they offer different colors and emphasis for each particular context. It is most important to note that all the schools have a critical approach and they have an interest in producing what Westheimer and Kahne (2004) frame as justice-oriented citizens. We can only wait for the future to show us whether these innovative schools will in fact have an actual influence as agents of change toward transforming Israeli society.

[16] See also interview with Eli Amir, in Bar Shalom (2007).

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Latin America – Jewish Education in Latin America: Challenges, Trends and Processes

Yossi Goldstein and Drori Ganiel

Translated by **Kaeren Fish**

The Current Challenges Facing Jewish Education

The concept of "challenge" is an equivocal one: on the one hand, it hints at problems, while, on the other hand, it points to crossroads and new opportunities. From this point of view, Jewish education in Latin America presents challenges that concern problematic issues, but at the same time raises possibilities for new and positive developments. Some of the challenges facing Jewish education in Latin America in the coming years may be defined as follows:

1. Maintaining growth – or at least stability – in the number of students enrolled in the formal education system, despite the merging of some schools, particularly in Argentina and Brazil, for mostly financial reasons.
2. Maintaining a vision of Jewish education that identifies with the State of Israel under governments which, in some cases, oppose Israel's policy towards the Palestinians.
3. Maintaining Zionist perceptions and values in a post-modern era where firm ideologies have no special meaning or influence, and in which Israel's old image as a pioneering, innovative society has given way to an image of a normal society that adopts an aggressive approach to its enemies, cares only for itself, and is out of touch with diaspora Jewry, or is too secular and materialistic, imitating the US.
4. A trend towards ultra-Orthodoxy and a growing number of students enrolled in ultra-Orthodox schools.
5. A waning of the hegemony of Zionist parties in communal life and in Jewish education, and a deepening integration and acculturation into national societies.
6. Changes in the nature and status of the classic Zionist youth movements, along with the increasing importance of Jewish sports clubs in informal education.

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Below we address some of these challenges, and we focus on the formal education system, since it represents a prominent and distinguishing feature of Jewish education on this continent and is the source for various studies conducted over the years.

Jewish education on this continent is an excellent example of the pendulum of communal life. In some countries, we see enormous achievements in the sphere of Hebrew language acquisition, in the development of "integral" – as they are officially called all over Latin America – day schools which succeed in combining Jewish and general studies, and in informal education systems – whether in the framework of sports and cultural clubs such as Macabi, and Hebraica or in the form of Zionist youth movements. Elsewhere, there are countries in which the Jewish education system is shrinking and showing clear signs of crisis.

Almost no research has been done on the informal education frameworks even though they represent a strong element in communal life: The Hebraica organizations (in Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela, for instance), Macabi (throughout the continent), sports centers (such as the Centro Deportivo Israelita in Mexico and the Estadio Israelita in Chile), attract tens of thousands of Latin American Jews and unquestionably represent the most popular organizations attracting Jewish youth and families. According to a demographic study conducted in 2005 by the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) among the Jews of Buenos Aires and environs, 61% of respondents were not members of any Jewish institution. Of the Jews who belong to Jewish organizations, 64% are members of community sports clubs (Jmelnizky & Erdei, 2005, pp. 45–50). In this context, there should also be mention of the organized – and ultimately field-leading – activity of the Zionist youth movements, such as HaBonim Dror, HaShomer HaTza'ir, HaNo'ar HaTzioni, and HeHalutz LaMerhav, which involve several thousand youth, especially from the lower socioeconomic strata, and also youngsters who are active in other educational frameworks such as community schools (Even-Shoshan, 1987; Bar-Gil, 2007). These movements serve as an energizing factor and as a source of communal leadership, while at the same time providing waves of *aliya* to Israel. It is difficult to estimate in numbers the scope of informal education activity at present since, as noted, there has been no orderly research in this area. Nevertheless, it is clear that this is still an important and vibrant phenomenon.

There are a total of 80 Jewish day schools in Latin America.[1] In the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires and its environs there are 28 day schools that combine secular studies, following the official state curriculum, with Jewish studies. Another five such schools are maintained in difficult conditions in the country's interior, in the cities of Córdoba, Rosario, Santa Fé, Tucumán, and Mendoza. These, however, are diminishing numbers. In the 1980s, about 22,000 students were enrolled in the Jewish school system in Argentina in some 50-day schools. By the mid-1990s

[1] This figure is not final or static, and does not include supplementary schools and informal educational frameworks. Some of these schools such the Einstein School in Quito, Ecuador, include a large majority of non-Jews, because of the small size of the Jewish community.

the number had dropped to about 15,000; today there are about 18,000. In the last decade, increases have occurred in the number of children at kindergartens and elementary schools run by ultra-Orthodox institutions, with a decline in enrollment at Zionist educational institutions.[2]

In Mexico City – with a Jewish population of over 38,000 – there are no less than 15 Jewish schools within the same relatively small geographical area (the northwestern part of the city), with perpetual institutional building and an interesting growth pattern that contrasts with the situation in other countries and communities. The number of students has risen by about 16% in recent years. Analysis of these figures by ethnic sector or ideological stream shows a growth of 55% in the Orthodox schools, where 30% of the overall number are concentrated. The two largest ethnic schools – Magen David (Aleppo) and Monte Sinai (Damascus) – include 33% of this total, while the two Ashkenazi schools, with only 11%, are in continual decline. In addition there are two small community schools in the cities of Monterrey and Guadalajara. In total, the Jewish school system in Mexico caters to some 10,000 students, representing about 90% of Jewish children of school age – a remarkable achievement that may have no parallel in any other country in the world.[3]

Brazil is a continent all on its own, with its own language and culture. This multiracial country hallows the present and is constantly looking to the future. The strong federal structure results in a significant separation between each of the states comprising Brazil, with three main geographical centers: Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Porto Alegre. There are 15 day schools, of which 8 are in Sao Paulo and 3 in Rio de Janeiro. Their combined enrollment is about 8,000, out of a Brazilian Jewish community numbering about 96,000.

The Jews of Brazil are concentrated mostly in the cities of Sao Paulo (about 47,000, with 4,000 students at Jewish schools) and Rio de Janeiro (28,000, with 3,500 students). There is also a smaller community (about 10,000) in Porto Alegre, in the south of the country, with a relatively large Jewish school numbering about 650 students.[4] Here, too, we see some interesting sociological trends such as a move to ultra-Orthodoxy (with growth in ultra-Orthodox schools and kindergartens), and trends towards integrating and combining different schools, especially among the secular or Zionist sector. A study by Marta Topel shows that the trend towards ultra-Orthodoxy in communal life is most prominent in Sao Paulo (Topel, 2005). In this city there is a developing trend of renewal in school education, reflected in the unification of the Renaissance and Bialik schools, and in the establishment of a large

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[2]Data based on publications by the Central Education Committee and a discussion with Batia Nemirovsky, director of the Central Education Committee in Argentina, in 2009, as well as on a report on “Project Mifné” (Y. Rubel, 2009). See Rubel’s analysis as coordinator of the project, pp. 5–7.

[3]Data based on research by Dr. Daniel Feinstein, rector of the Hebraica University in Mexico, and reports by the Education Committee in Mexico.

[4]Data based on a report by the Sao Paulo representative of the Jewish Agency Department of Education, and for the city of Sao Paulo – and based also on correspondence with the director of the Jewish Federation, Alberto Milkevitch.

new day school in 2008. In Rio, the Liessin and Eliezer Steinberg day schools are the largest; they continue the tradition of a cultural and pluralistic Judaism that encourages the preservation of Jewish identity along with integration into Brazilian society. From this perspective Brazil represents an interesting laboratory for evaluating changes in Jewish education in the era of globalization (Goldstein, 2008).

One of the important challenges at this time is the need to address the popular waves of anti-semitism sometimes disguised as anti-Zionism or opposition to the existence of the State of Israel. The severance of diplomatic ties with Israel by Venezuela and Bolivia, during the recent Gaza War (January 2009) was accompanied by demonstrations and graffiti that blurred the distinction between Israel and world Jewry (for example, equating the Star of David with a swastika) – a phenomenon that has become common even in countries with large Jewish populations, such as Argentina and Brazil. From a geo-political perspective, this challenge goes hand in hand with the amplified Iranian influence on revolutionary regimes in socialist countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, and Nicaragua. There are some 12,000 Jews living in Venezuela, and the capital city – Caracas – is home to the Herzl-Bialik school, located in the community center, which also houses a Hebraica club with informal educational activities. The great challenge here is to maintain the educational systems in the shadow of establishment anti-semitism[5] (which encourages a merging of hatred for Jews and anti-Zionism or hatred for the State of Israel), anti-semitic attacks in various forms (graffiti painted in front of community institutions, police searches for weapons in the major community center, or an attack on the Sephardic synagogue and desecration of religious items at the end of January 2009). Even if the external anti-semitic threat is not of decisive weight in terms of Jewish education, indirect damage has been caused by the severance of diplomatic ties with Israel and the banishment of Israeli educators. The practical outcome has been the removal of the "*shlichim*" teachers who worked at the Jewish school.

The global era and the move, during the 1990s, to a neo-liberal economy likewise contributed to instability in communal life. On the continental level, a major challenge was presented by the appearance of a previously unknown stratum of "newly poor", the impoverishment of broad strata that had until then belonged to the middle class, and increasing dependence on external bodies to fund membership fees in various frameworks, including Jewish education – which is private education for all intents and purposes (Kliksberg, 2002).

The classic Zionist model of Jewish education, which had been expressed both in the establishment of schools identified with various Zionist parties and in the existence of pioneer youth movements involving many thousands of children, has been severely undermined in recent decades. The Zionist model was based, inter alia, on a connection with the State of Israel and sometimes with a Zionist Israeli party, with the Jewish Agency, and with the Hebrew language. A country such as Brazil, which had been characterized by attempts at Hebraization in the schools and a massive

[5]Not necessarily directly initiated by the government, it may be seen as "xenophobic expressions made by extremists of the margins of the mass movement". See L. Roniger, 2009, p. 36.

Israeli cultural "conquest" during the 1950s, today no longer relies on "*shlichim*" educators, save for isolated exceptions, mostly in the Orthodox schools (national religious, such as the Bar-Ilan school in Rio). Argentina has ceased its dependence on "*shlichim*" altogether, the working assumption being that the necessary educational personnel are being trained locally. However, even at this level of training teachers and educational personnel, a grave crisis (mainly financial in character, and also due to generational changes in personnel) became apparent during the 1990s, leading to the closure of the Shazar College in Buenos Aries as well as pedagogic tracks at various high schools in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil.

This crisis in the training of educational personnel for Hebrew and Jewish studies instruction has led to renewed efforts in recent years, in light of a real shortage of staff for communal schools. Manifestations of this new trend include the establishment of the Hebraica University in Mexico City, towards the mid-1990s, and of the *Melamed* Institute for training community teachers in Argentina, in 2006. These initiatives not only expressed a strong desire to respond to local or regional needs, but also reflected the importance of the connection with the State of Israel and of the educational input represented by the academic patronage of an Israeli university. At the same time, the drawing power of the young, newly graduated teachers continues to be small, and there is no solution to the low status associated with teachers and educators involved in Jewish education. Moreover, Jewish studies at the academic level are not widespread in Latin America, other than in university centers in some cities, such as Santiago de Chile, Sao Paulo, and the "Ort" university in Montevideo. The failure and closure of the Bar-Ilan Jewish University in Buenos Aires, towards the end of the 1990s, is a further symptom of weakness with ramifications for Jewish education.

As noted, the decline of the major ideologies and the appearance of new spiritual responses have placed a question mark over the classical Zionist model of Jewish education and raised new alternatives. The classical model, which reached its peak in the 1960s, was based on Zionist education with emphasis on the Hebrew language, appreciation for the pioneering image of the young state as projected by Israel's first prime minister, Ben-Gurion, and Israel's role as a refuge for persecuted Jews, something that implicitly pointed to the Arab world's hatred, of the dangers of anti-semitism, and a sense of instability in various Latin American countries. In keeping with this model, Jewish education was based on general Jewish and Zionist values, although the goal of the schools was not at all to encourage *aliya*.

In the global era it is more difficult to maintain education towards values and to preserve the ideological anchor which, in the past, had characterized so many different schools throughout Latin America. The collapse of social networks, including community networks, and the abandonment of the schools to their fate, with each institution facing new challenges alone, has forced a reevaluation of the day school and its place in Jewish community life.

On the macro-social level, most Latin American countries have adopted more multi-cultural and pluralistic views towards minorities or special groups. In Brazil and Argentina, the public discourse is today more open towards the integration of

Jews as a special community with a particular identity – despite some important differences in the political regimes and the fact that the political leadership in these countries is not identified with a similar ideological world-view.

Throughout the twentieth century, Jewish day schools served as "cities of refuge" and as islands of belonging, minimizing assimilation into the surroundings and providing protection against anti-semitic attacks. The schools also served as a solid foundation for socializing towards national Jewish values or political values supporting Jewish identity, especially of the various Zionist streams, and also others such as the "Bund" – the Jewish Yiddish socialist party, and Jewish communists. In the era of globalization, this objective – of socializing towards Jewish values according to clear streams and ideologies – has been partly lost, and is now identified mainly with the Orthodox schools. As mentioned before, globalization processes brought ideological deterioration and much more emphasis on personal or career achievements, which for Jewish schools meant a reduction in Jewish and Hebrew studies and an increase in English and Computers studies. Moreover, this transformation of the Jewish-educational system required some adjustments to new realities, beyond the curricular structure of schools.

This process has led to three types of responses in Jewish education in Latin America, with competing models of Jewish education and community vision. These may be set forth as follows:

a. *Adaptation and adoption of a pragmatic approach*: Here, emphasis is placed on inculcating knowledge and tools for success in professional life – such as success in entrance examinations to prestigious universities, or guidance towards career tracks that promise high status and earnings. This has become a prominent approach, inspired by a market economy model that is open to international corporations and multi-national companies. As might be expected, this trend has led to a decrease in the number of hours devoted to Hebrew and Jewish studies. The clearest examples of these processes are seen in the two "Ort" schools in Buenos Aires, whose joint enrollment stands at more than 4,000 students, the vast majority of whom are Jewish. The "Ort" schools are an outstanding example of the trend towards adaptation since they are oriented mainly to careers in science and technology, and the number of hours set aside for Hebrew and Jewish studies is relatively low in relation to other Jewish high schools (5 weekly hours compared to 8–10). This trend is also reflected in a wave of school mergers, such as the unification of the Renaissance and Bialik schools in Sao Paulo, and the establishment of schools that adopt English as a first language alongside Spanish, including even instruction in Jewish studies –as is the case at the A. Fern School in Buenos Aires, and the *Atid* School in Mexico City. In Rio de Janeiro, Liessin and Eliezer Steinberg are the largest Jewish schools and they continue the tradition of cultural, pluralistic Judaism that encourages preservation of Jewish identity while integrating into Brazilian society – a trend which expresses well the ability of Jewish schools in Brazil to adapt to historical and sociological processes that are characteristic of Brazilian society.

b. *Spiritual renewal*: This trend began to spread over the Latin American continent in the 1960s. It proposed a new world-view of traditionalism that sits well with modernity and does not rule out involvement in the life of the countries in which Jews are living. An outstanding example is the Bet El community and school in Buenos Aires. We may also cite the various initiatives of the traditional-Conservative movement throughout the continent (Goldstein, 2009).

The era of globalization produced a spiritual crisis which in turn led to the appearance and expansion of the traditional-Conservative movement in Latin America – a wave which commenced with the arrival of Rabbi Marshall T. Meyer (a close disciple of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel) in Argentina in 1959 and the establishment of the Latin American Rabbinical Seminary in Buenos Aires in 1962. This model represented a synthesis between a Zionist and a humanist world-view orientated towards the surrounding society and social justice. The success of the traditional model, as manifested in the growing numbers of communities throughout Latin America led by rabbis who are graduates of this rabbinical seminary – communities which in many cases are established on the foundations of empty Orthodox synagogues or waning Jewish schools – has contributed to real change in Latin American Jewry which, until the 1970s, had been defined as culturally Zionist or secular. The success of this stream has also proved that it is possible to provide education with values, addressing the ramifications of globalization but not leading to the negation of modernity or to insularity.

The rallying cry of renewal spoke of nurturing Jewish moral commitment in an "amoral" world, or a world of pragmatic and egoistic values. It is therefore no wonder that the Bet El school and community define themselves as an "educational community of Jewish renewal, committed to the present and to social justice", maintaining a Zionist and Argentine synthesis inspired by Marshall Meyer's vision.[6]

Another example of the "renewal" response is the *Fundación Judaica* coalition of communities under the direction of Rabbi Sergio Bergman, which includes the Arlene Fern School. This organization defines itself as a "network that connects social organizations, institutions, and programs, on the basis of a view of Judaism as a religious and cultural civilization.[7] This network deliberately blurs the boundaries of identification with a stream: formally it belongs to Reform Judaism, but in practice it is based upon the leadership of progressive Conservative rabbis. The Arlene Fern school was founded in 1996 and defines itself as "an educational community based upon Jewish values", with the inculcation of "creative Judaism, perceived as a broad world-view that is directed towards integration in Argentine society and the integration of all children, including those with different abilities". This school promotes an innovative idea

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[6] See the website: www.betel.edu.ar

[7] See the website: www.fundacionjudaica.net

that was once perceived as blasphemy in Jewish education in Argentina: Hebrew language instruction is not mandatory but elective, and Jewish studies are taught in English.[8]

The Jewish schools in Brazil present themselves as being directed towards the future and change, founded upon the values of equality and justice, integration into Brazilian society, fighting religious and racial discrimination, and living in a democratic and pluralistic society. These messages transcend boundaries and streams, and are also emphasized by the Modern-Orthodox Bar-Ilan School in Rio de Janeiro, and by the Yavneh School in Sao Paulo. The cooperation among the various schools led, in 2006, to an attempt to market jointly the registration to community schools representing different streams. The joint view was unique to the city of Sao Paulo, with a common goal of deepening Jewish elements and drawing students to the community schools.[9]

The "renewal" model clearly projects a message of blurring the boundaries of the collective, of openness towards the surrounding society, of civil equality and human rights. In view of this perspective there is also openness among the liberal religious streams towards mixed-faith couples and the children of mixed marriages.

c. *Insularity and ultra-Orthodoxy*: One of the responses to the threat of globalization and the blurring of particular identity has been the growth of many educational institutions identified with ultra-Orthodox streams, such as Habad-Lubavitch. The growth of ultra-Orthodox schools throughout the continent represents a challenge both in the positive sense and in the sense of an existential problem or danger – depending on one's perspective – of seeking a strong and absolute spiritual anchor in an age of relativism and uncertainty. Examples of this phenomenon are the Chabad *Ohalei Hinukh* School in Buenos Aires and the *Keter Torah* School of the Halabi (Aleppo) *Magen David* community in Mexico City.

The ultra-Orthodox model takes the same direction of spiritual renewal, but its path is one of return to Jewish roots and absolute identity. This model is based on insularity and a return to deeply rooted Judaism in accordance with the self-definition of each stream, including observance of the commandments. In quantitative terms, this response has unquestionably been the success story of the past decade throughout the continent. Movements such as Chabad and Aish ha-Torah, and Sephardic rabbis identified in Israel and elsewhere in the world with the Shas party in Israel, have entered the vacuum created by the crisis of the Zionist model, and have attracted thousands of youth who had been identified with the secular Jewish public or as assimilated Jews, far removed from any Jewish framework. In Argentina there are varying estimates as to the scope of this trend. According to Yaakov Rubel's

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[8] See the website www.fundacionjudaica.net

[9] Río: www.liessin.com.br/. www.eliezermax.com.br/. www.tthbar-ilan.com.br/. See for Sao Paulo: www.renascenca.br/colegionovo/. www.peretz.com.br/. www.bialik.g12.br/. www.iavne.com.br/. For the joint effort of Jewish Schools in Sao Paulo in 2006–2007 see: www.escolasjudaicas.com.br

study, this model encompasses close to a third of the Jewish schools (Rubel, 2009). The education offered by this model is conservative, on the one hand, reflecting obligation to an accepted, closed world-view, in accordance with the halakhic interpretation of a certain rabbi or stream, but highly innovative, on the other. The innovation has been manifested in a warm emotional embrace and the inculcation of a genuine sense of community and solidarity. Many young people have viewed this model as a new and firm anchor that can stand up to the challenges of globalization.

The ultra-Orthodox model is perceived as a success not only on the quantitative level, but also because of its ability to raise resources and to develop extensive institutional infrastructure (including the purchase of community centers or schools that are empty or in financial bankruptcy). They also provide nurturing-determined spiritual leadership that conveys messages that are perceived as consistent and possessed of strong values-related, educational content. For example, on February 18, 2008 the directorates and leaders of the Orthodox schools in Buenos Aires announced the supremacy of the Orthodox model (ultra-Orthodox and national religious jointly) in relation to the secular model (broadly generalized) which, to their view, has come to the end of the road, reflecting ethical and moral emptiness.[10] The secret to the success of this model is its assurance of connection and cyclical continuity among variables such as the ability to combine institution building with determined and visionary leadership, in contrast to a system that appears mired in general crisis. The rallying of the Orthodox camp in the AMIA community elections in April 2008 brought about the victory of the joint front of the Orthodox parties and the appointment of Guillermo Borger, a member of this camp, as president of the community, commencing his term of office in June 2008.[11]

Case Study: Addressing the Challenges of Jewish Education in an Era of Change

For the purposes of understanding the way in which communities have addressed the various challenges, we shall present a case study: the establishment in 2001 of Bamah, the House of the Jewish Educator in Argentina.[12]

Jewish education in Argentina – and especially the school education system, headed by a powerful and influential Education Committee – served as a kind of communal cement up until the 1990s. During the 1990s the community suffered a number of crises, including the bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires in March 1992, the terror attack on the community center (AMIA) in July 1994,

[10] Itón Gadol, Agencia Judía de Noticias, "Las escuelas judías ortodoxas, cada vez con más alumnos en Argentina", 19 February 2008.

[11] Itón Gadol, Agencia Judía de Noticias, 21 April 2008, and 5 May 2008.

[12] This section was written mostly by Dr. Drori Ganiel, who was the representative of the Jewish Agency Department of Education in South America during the years 1999–2003; he initiated the establishment of Bamah and served as the institution's first director.

and the collapse of the large Jewish banks in 1998. All of these brought difficulties, and one of the results was a regression in Jewish education, manifested inter alia in the closure of the community's pedagogic center and central library, the closure of institutions training teachers for schools and kindergartens, and the disbanding of the Education Committee, with a significant decline in financial support for educational institutions, the expiration of small, outlying communities, and the closure of the Bar-Ilan Jewish university. Along with these challenges, there was a significant rise in the crime level, and an acute crisis in leadership.

In 2000, the Jewish Agency proposed, via its chief emissary for education on the Latin American continent, to establish Bamah (The House of the Jewish Educator) as an innovative and communal (not agency-related) center of education intended to serve all educators, of all streams and frameworks, based on the basic assumption that the figure of the educator is at the center of educational activity. The Jewish Agency believed that this place, with its holistic outlook, would be a genuine professional support and laboratory for an educational revival that would inspire the educational system – and thereby the community as a whole. The expected side effect of this process would be the restoration of the educational system in Argentina to its central status in Latin America.

The local community institutions, the presidency of AMIA, its Education Committee, and other senior members of the community, did not believe in the idea and chose, initially, to ignore the proposed initiative.

The founders of Bamah faced a number of dilemmas as follows:

1. Involvement vs. interference – or, in other words, colonization from the outside vs. empowerment of community forces.
2. In view of the lack of cooperation of the community establishment, would it be appropriate to build Bamah alone or with other bodies?
3. What was the proper relationship between support for school education and informal education?
4. Would the appropriate approach be to initiate or to wait and respond?

The decision, taken at the beginning of 2001, to establish Bamah turned out quite dramatically, a year later, to have been correct, since Bamah was already operating when the colossal economic crisis erupted in Argentina in December 2001.

Bamah was established (in the Y.L. Peretz Jewish School building, which had stood empty for several years, located in the heart of the old Jewish quarter *ONCE*) with Jewish Agency funding and the support of an academic advisory council including the best "Jewish minds" in Argentina. Initial projects housed in the building included a library and resource center, a center for educational programs in Israel, a center for ongoing training, and a school for informal education counselors. A short time afterwards, and as part of the overall plan, ten supplementary schools, called "Lomdim", were established in outlying towns for 7th–12th grade students. Within 2 or 3 years this number grew to 25 centers under the supervision and direction of Bamah. All of the Bamah personnel were local educators; only the director was a Jewish Agency representative who had established the institution.

When the major crisis of December 2001 hit, Bamah established an emergency team to deal with the education system, creating partnerships with the Keren

ha-Yesod, AMIA, the Jewish Agency, and the JDC (the "Joint"). This decision was taken in light of the immediate results of the crisis, such as the collapse of some schools and an accelerated exodus (dropout) of students, thousands of new poor who created a new and needy social stratum, dismissal of teachers, etc. The emergency team, which within a short time became an educational coalition for crisis, set itself a number of objectives from within the Bamah infrastructure:

1. Preventing dropouts and bringing dropouts back to the schools or to alternative frameworks.
2. Stabilization of schools, wherever possible.
3. Setting up the scaffolding for new and different educational leadership.

To deal professionally with this major challenge, Bamah appointed a strategic planning unit comprising lawyers, accountants, and educational planning personnel. A sum of $2.5 million was raised for the purposes of supporting the schools, providing discounted education vouchers for needy students, merging some schools, and closing others.

Soon after the crisis began, educational frameworks in the form of supplementary schools, called "Halomot", were established for elementary-school-age students, paralleling the "Lomdim" schools for high-school students. In order to exploit this process to build a better future, and in keeping with the vision, the Bamah organization was founded, and an educator and local rabbi placed at its head. Likewise, a Jewish Education Council was created as a supreme body, comprising all of the above elements, which took it upon itself to manage the education system in Argentina, with the participation of AMIA, the Joint, and the Jewish Agency.

The desired results of the establishment of Bamah have been achieved to a significant degree:

The dropout of students from the community schools has been halted, and nearly 2,000 new students have been absorbed into the system through the supplementary schools, along with hundreds of families who have returned to the circle of community life. This has halted severe assimilation in outlying towns and even in the capital. The education system has been stabilized and the schools have continued to function – now with much improved economic efficiency. The number of participants in youth movement activities has grown, and the first branch of Hillel, the international organization of Jewish students has opened (preceded by a preparatory study by Bamah).

Bamah has become a central point of knowledge and guidance for educators for all ages, from all sectors and areas, in formal and informal education, in all the surrounding countries. This entity, originally perceived as an externally imposed caprice, had within two or three years become a significant and essential body without which it would be difficult to imagine Jewish education in Argentina and in South America altogether.

The challenge remains to transfer overall responsibility for Bamah, its budgets, and its activities to a local community body, in an age of budget cuts in the institutions of the Jewish Agency and a crisis in world Jewish philanthropy.

There are diverse reasons for the success of the process of establishing Bamah, despite difficult circumstances in the life of Argentina in general and the Jewish community in particular.

1. The vacuum created in education highlighted the need for central educational services which had ceased.
2. Spreading news of a new and innovative institution that brought together all the educational services that had existed along with the addition of new service that had never existed in Latin America.
3. Obtaining the support of the Jewish Agency, and through it of world Jewry, for the Jewish community of Argentina and for its educational system.
4. Obtaining a budget (from the Jewish Agency to the New York Federation) for the establishment and operation of the center, with a pooling of existing resources.
5. A professional, community-wide, and objective approach by the leaders of the process towards school (formal) education, informal education, the state and religious institutions in the capital and in the outlying towns.
6. Establishment of a committee of senior Jewish (non-institutional) academics and thinkers and representatives of school principals, which accompanied the establishment and operation of Bamah.
7. The initiator and first director of Bamah was perceived by the community and its leaders as a professional who not only founded this project, but also, following the crisis of the presidential change and the strikes in the country, initiated the establishment of the emergency educational coalition, which was the basis for the educational coalition that operates to this day.

Successes in Jewish Education in Latin America: A Continental Perspective

An accepted yardstick for measuring the success of Jewish education throughout the world is the percentage of Jewish students who are enrolled in Jewish schools. According to data from the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, the level of participation by children and youth in day schools in Latin America is impressively high – especially relative to the Jewish world in general.[13] In Brazil, according to the Institute's annual report, the level is relatively high – 71% – although in practice, and according to reports by the community institutions and the representative of the Jewish Agency department of education, the actual level is lower. The discrepancy arises from the absence of systematic studies and access to nation-wide data for Brazil. In Argentina, the rate of enrollment in Jewish schools is between 50 and 55%. These figures should be reevaluated on the basis of empirical and demographic studies. Obviously, enrollment data alone give us no possibility for evaluating the

[13]The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Annual Assessment 2008, Executive Report No. 5, p. 17: http://www.jpppi.org.il/

quality of the Jewish studies and the sociological structure of these schools. One of the prominent distinguishing features of the system in Argentina is the weight of the Hebrew language in the curriculum. In Brazil the Hebrew influence is weaker, and is significantly lessened with the transition from elementary school to high school. However, in recent years and as part of the processes of adaptation to the era of globalization, Hebrew is losing its influence throughout the continent – as reflected in a reduction in the hours devoted to Hebrew instruction, and in an undermining of its status as a second language as a result of parents and students alike questioning the benefits of its acquisition. For example, up until the 1970s, Hebrew study in the supplementary schools in Argentina covered an entire block of time – i.e., 4 h daily, totaling 16 or 20 study hours per week. The transition to the day-school system and the crisis of globalization in the 1990s brought about not only the collapse of the supplementary schools (until the establishment of the new frameworks of Lomdim and Halomot, providing 4–6 h of study per week), but also a significant reduction of Hebrew language study, as in the Ort schools (overall, Jewish studies were reduced from 8 h per week in 1990 to a maximum of 5 h per week at present, for all Jewish studies combined, including Hebrew language). In Brazil, too – where in 1950 there was an attempt at "Hebraization" by bringing *shlichim* from Israel – there are now almost no *shlichim* teachers, and the place of Hebrew in the schools and in informal education is low to non-existent.

The schools symbolized the pinnacle of achievement on the level of continued communal life. The existence of networks that connect the community schools throughout the continent is a sign of the success of the formal education system. An example is the "Reshet I.L." (network for Israel) project, which connects some 30 schools around subjects related to the State of Israel, and trains school coordinators to spearhead innovative curricula revolving around Israel. A further example of success is the "Manhim" (guides or leading educators) project at Bamah in Buenos Aires which connects 28 principals, Jewish studies coordinators, school and kindergarten teachers who are leading new initiatives in educational institutions in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, and Chile. The project guarantees systematic training, led by the Jewish Agency and the Melton Center for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University. It includes intensive seminars, three distance-learning courses, and a 3-week seminar in Israel. In addition, each educator develops a personal school project, under the supervision of Israeli experts and local advisors.

Research

Scholars such as Raanan Rein of Tel Aviv and Jeffrey Lesser of Ivory University in the United States highlight the new multi-cultural reality in Latin America, and examine the Jewish reality through the eyes of Latin American society and culture, from a perspective of ethnic studies (Lesser & Rein, 2006; 2008; Rein, 2008). Other scholars prefer to examine the Jewish reality through Jewish community eyes, with a view from the inside, deliberating the continuation of Jewish existence.

In recent years, research on Jewish education in the southern region of the American continent has been relatively inactive, largely as a result of the absence of research institutes encouraging this direction of study, both in Israel and on the American continent in its entirety.[14] Two books by Haim Avni laid the foundations for the research of Jewish education in Argentina: "Argentine Jewry, its Social Status and Organizational Image" [Heb.] (1972), and "Emancipation and Jewish Education: The 100 years' Experience of Argentine Jewry, 1884–1984" [Heb.] (1985). While Avni's attention to the education system is relatively limited (ten pages), it presents an interesting socio-historical view. The central thesis of his analysis relates to processes of "division vs. unification". The main conclusion is that, up until the beginning of the 1970s, there was an organized system of Jewish education, with strong super-organizations highlighting its centralized structure.

Avni addresses, among other sources, the reviews of the Central Education Committee, and also takes into account various reports that were published at the time. Prominent among these is an analysis by Simha Sneh, published in 1968. In this study, Sneh defines the processes taking place within the "network of Jewish education in Argentina" such as its secular and Zionist foundations, its connection with the State of Israel, the growth of the Hebrew language at the expense of Yiddish, the importance of the generous subsidies awarded by AMIA, and more. Another important foundation is the existence of a stratum of "negotiators", or voluntary school leadership, rooted in the generation of immigrants from Europe but rejuvenated by the involvement of young activists. Sneh highlights the moral and material support of Argentine Jewry for the State of Israel during the Six-Day War, in the context of worldwide Jewish solidarity. To his view, this support was made possible in Argentina thanks to the centrality of the community schools (pp. 132–133). A further trend emphasized by Sneh, and explained at length in Avni's work from 1985, is the transition from supplementary schools to the integral schools, which took place from 1967 onwards.

Sneh views the transition to integral schools as a positive process, "The sole possible solution to the danger threatening Jewish education" – i.e., state day schools with their Catholic, conservative orientation (p. 138). At the same time, in his view there is also need for reform in teacher training, a genuine integration of general studies with Jewish studies, fair salaries for educators, and more serious recruitment of resources to ensure the integration of children from relatively less well-off families. The clear conclusion is a call for joint planning and centralized effort – a difficult test for the Central Education Committee.

In 1968, the Brazilian sociologist Henrique Ratner published his pioneering work on Brazilian Jewry, "Nos Caminhos da Diaspora", but it gave no attention to the educational dimension. Ratner's studies in the 1970s likewise did not address Jewish education as a research subject in its own right. David Schers published a pioneering

[14] In 2009, the "Liwerant Center for the Study of Latin America and its Jews" was established at the Hebrew University – an academic research center that adopts an inter-disciplinary approach to examine the reality of Latin American and Latin American Jewry.

work in 1980 on the Jewish education system in the city of Rio de Janeiro, under the auspices of the David Horowitz Institute for the Study of Developing Nations, which published various studies on Latin American Jewry during the 1970s. In Brazil, too, it is noticeable that there were no continuing studies in this area, such as Goldstein's study on Jewish education in Brazil from the establishment of the State of Israel up until 1957 – published in 1993 (Goldstein, 1993).

The Education Committees in Brazil and in Argentina did admittedly try to conduct quantitative studies of schools, but it is doubtful whether these made an impression on educational policy or on the organizational structure of the Jewish schools. An example is the study of the schools in Rio de Janeiro published in 1997. Another example is the report by the AMIA Committee for Strategic Planning in Buenos Aires, with the patronage of the Pincus Fund for Jewish Education, which was published in 1993 and led to a process of unification of Jewish schools in Buenos Aires (Goldstein, 2001).

Another study that contributed to a comparative sociological examination of Jewish education in Latin America was published in 1987 in a collection edited by Judith Laikin-Elkin and Gilbert Merkx, in which Daniel Levy reviews what he defines as the region's "unique success in maintaining group identity". Here, too, the study highlighted the centrality of the school and the importance of the central, secular stream – as in the studies by Sneh and by Avni. Levy focuses on two major issues within the school system:

1. The level of Jewish autonomy vis-à-vis political necessities created by hegemonic groups and the state.
2. Group identity vs. assimilation: how the community addresses the challenges of identity within the framework of political freedom; what are the processes of socialization of an observable minority subject to processes of upward social mobility?

If we try to translate these tensions into today's terms we might state that the former has dissipated and is almost non-existent; at any rate it does not represent an important issue on the communal agenda. Communities and Jewish education systems have adopted the language of multi-culturalism, heterogeneity, and pluralism. The latter tension does exist even today, but here too we are no longer speaking of a serious challenge in an age in which democracy is well established in most Latin American countries and where the rights of religious-ethnic groups to nurture self-awareness and a unique identity are widely recognized. This trend finds expression in the studies of Efraim Zadoff (1994, 2007).

The last significant study on Jewish education in the schools in Argentina was published in 1998 by Iaakov Rubel: "The Jewish Schools in Argentina (1985–1995)". Rubel's major thesis is that Jewish education in Argentina lacks strategic planning, it has insufficient quality oversight, and the distance between the personnel actively involved in education and those with political decision-making ability in education policy planning is very great (p. XV). His conclusion is that there is disparity between the level of reflection and the level of execution. Rubel rightly

points to the negative ramifications of the terror attack on the AMIA building with regards to continued research and systematic follow-up on formal Jewish education.

Ultimately, the Jewish schools are miniature communities, and the crisis of community is manifest in them, too. The Zionist model and the traditional model are today projecting weakness, both on the level of institution building and on the level of leadership, despite the growth of the traditional-Conservative model in the 1970s and 1980s. In an age of multiple identities and cultures, and Judaism's entry into the public sphere, it is no wonder that various streams are making themselves heard and are demanding not only legitimacy, but also a place of honor in communal life. The system of Jewish education in Argentina was bound, in the past, to a centralized, networked perception. This fact stands out prominently in the studies cited above (such as those of Avni and of Sneh). The most obvious identifying feature, since the 1990s, has been a shattering of this perception and the individual struggle for existence by each educational institution, with only weak ties connecting them to one another. The question of dividing vs. uniting, mentioned by Avni at the beginning of the 1970s, exists in no small measure today, too, but the pendulum is clearly swinging in the direction of division and disintegration. Specifically Brazil, with its federal structure, has been characterized by a splintered Jewish education system that sanctifies the independence of each school. Because of the uniquely multiethnic cultural context, too, it was easier for Brazilian Jewry to adopt the approach of communal building from the grass roots, without a strong centralizing force. This approach also explains the great openness on the part of the schools in Brazil towards the surrounding culture, and their self-representation as islands of pluralism and heterogeneity. In other words, the structure of Jewish education in Argentina today is approaching the model that has existed successfully for many years in Brazil, and represents most faithfully the influences of globalization on Jewish education.

Agenda for Future Research

Research on Jewish education in Latin America is still in its infancy, owing to the weakness of Jewish studies on this continent and the lack of resources for academic research, arising from a lack of awareness on the part of the community leadership about the importance of research.

Future research must therefore address not only the number of Jewish schools and students in the formal education system, but also qualitative phenomena such as curricula, teachers, and educators employed in the schools, new challenges – including the creation of networks or coalitions on the basis of common interests or values, innovative projects and their influence on the quality of instruction, ebbing of the influence of the Hebrew language and of the State of Israel on the community schools, etc. In our view, future research must also focus on case studies, and on qualitative studies dealing with internal institutional processes, such as Goldstein's study on the Bet El day school in Buenos Aires (2009).

An additional challenge is presented around the study of informal education, representing an important link in Jewish education on this continent. It is concentrated around major sports and cultural centers such as Macabi, Hebraica, and Ha-Koaj, and around youth organizations that develop alongside older movements such as the Zionist movement and the Pioneer youth movements, or around new movements such as the Noam–Marom organization affiliated with the Conservative movement. In this context it is important to study the influence of summer camps on the youth organizations and movements: these camps draw thousands of Jewish youth, a great many of whom (it is believed) do not attend Jewish schools.

Conclusion

Jewish education in Latin America is a dynamic phenomenon that has been shaped by a wide set of variables over recent decades. Of course, the situation in each country is unique, with factors at play in the largest Jewish communities – Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico – that are far from identical. Nevertheless, all communities (large and small) face shared challenges produced by processes of democratization and globalization that have swept the entire continent since the 1980s. The variables that shape Jewish education are structural, ideological, and even curricular. But more than anything else, they are linked to the political and economic instability with which all Latin American countries have had to wrestle and which have shaped the very existence of Jewish and communal life across the continent.

Jewish-educational research in Latin America has not until now reflected the complexity and diversity we have tried to highlight in this chapter. The lack of investment in research into communal life is most problematic. It is, for example, of critical importance that we study the impact of globalization on Jewish education in case studies that can explore these matters through the prism of particular communities. The Bamah case, we tried to show, is indicative of what can be learned from such cases in its demonstration of the problems and possibilities latent in the changed circumstances of Jewish communal life in Latin America. In conceptual terms, too, we have tried to indicate how the response of Jewish education to new realities can be better understood through the three models we presented of pragmatic change, spiritual renewal, and insularity. In this respect, Jewish education in Latin America is one piece of a larger global mosaic.

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Netherlands – Social Integration and Religious Identity

Henny van het Hoofd

Introduction

Amsterdam *Oud-Zuid* (Old South), built in the early twentieth century, is one of the prettiest quarters in town, close by the Vondelpark and main museums. Arriving from the south, the eye is caught by an impressive row of buildings along the Reijnier Vinkeleskade. A monastery, a chapel and a variety of schools indicate the self-awareness of the Catholic minority at that time. The Jewish community showed its presence in this new city extension with a hospital and a monumental synagogue. Inaugurated in 1928, the latter was meant to be ‘a sound and solid stronghold against thorough assimilation’ (Weekblad voor Israëlietische Huisgezinnen 11-5-1928). So it is surprising that no school was included in the synagogue property, and furthermore not a single Jewish school was built anywhere else in the neighbourhood.

This seems puzzling, especially as 1928 was a high point for Dutch Jewry. In Amsterdam alone, two new community synagogues were built. But a Jewish day school does not even seem to have been considered, even though the circumstances were ideal. After a long struggle by religious political parties, an Education Act was passed by the Dutch government in 1920, which guaranteed state subsidy for denominational schools. The Catholics made good use of this new law, and so did the Protestants. Then why did not the Jews do the same? This question will be the focus of this chapter. The answer is complex and sheds light on developments in Jewish education in the Netherlands whose influence can be felt even today. Because of the abundance of source material, the discussion in this chapter had to be limited to schools, and therefore, adult education and youth movements will not be discussed.

Thirty years before the inauguration of the new synagogue, the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Amsterdam, Dr. Josef Hirsch Dünner, sent out an urgent appeal. His circular letter caused great turmoil, and not only within the Jewish community. Several meetings of the city council were dedicated to it, and articles appeared in the

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national press. Jews and non-Jews alike were astonished by the words of the Chief Rabbi: ‘One more generation raised in this way and the Jewish spirit will have disappeared from our midst as well. May the Almighty avert such catastrophe! And this will come true only if we, from our side, shall use all our strength to establish, or at least to prepare the establishment, of Jewish day schools that will ensure our renewal’ (Gans, 1978, p. 380). Coming from the Chief Rabbi, a request for Jewish schools seems completely natural. So why did his 1898 appeal cause such commotion? The key to the answer can be found in the Dutch governmental policy towards the Jewish community.

Jewish Nation

Although small groups of Ashkenazi Jews lived in the country from the thirteenth century onwards, the real history of Dutch Jewry begins around 1,600. After Antwerp was conquered by the Spaniards in 1585, large groups of people fled to the newly founded Republic of the United Netherlands. Among the refugees were Jews who had managed to escape the Inquisition in Portugal and Spain.[1] Some 30 years later, they were joined by Ashkenazi Jews who had fled the pogroms in Germany and Poland. They mainly settled in Amsterdam, where the urban government was tolerant towards religious minorities, i.e. non-Protestants.

This policy was partly based upon conviction, as the 1579 charter of the Republic stated that ‘Each and every person will be allowed to practise his religion in freedom, and no-one will be liable to neither prosecution nor interrogation because of religion’ (Gans, 1978, p. 7). In addition, self-interest played a role. Many refugees were qualified craftsmen, introducing professions such as cartography and printing, or merchants bringing substantial capital in addition to an extended international network. These were assets most welcome in a city striving to become a world trade centre.

The Ashkenazi and Portuguese Jews were known to the authorities as the *Joodsche Natie* (Jewish Nation), a name indicating that they were perceived more as an ethnic group than as a religious community. Except for their religion, they had nothing in common. In Spain and Portugal, many Jews had belonged to the upper class or even nobility. They were well integrated into society, spoke the vernacular in addition to other languages and had a broad secular knowledge. Ashkenazi Jews were mainly poor and had separated themselves from the often hostile general society, focusing on their own religion and culture. The differences between the two communities were clearly noticeable in their educational systems. In the schools of the Ashkenazi community, the language of instruction was Yiddish. Education was based upon the traditional method, emphasising memorised study of the Talmud from an early age on. In essence, only religious studies were taught. The Portuguese

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[1] Despite the fact that Jews came from Portugal and Spain, the Sephardi Jewish Community in the Netherlands is known as the Portuguese Community since Holland was at war with Spain at the time of the immigration.

community had no such educational tradition to build on. Due to their background, knowledge of their religion had been very limited for generations.

They soon discovered that the Judaism they encountered was quite different from what they had assumed from loose traditions and close study of *Tanach* (Jewish Bible). For many this meant an enormous enrichment, motivating them to give their offspring the best Jewish education available. For others, the inconsistency between their own conceptions and reality led to an inner struggle, causing unrest within the community and giving the leaders an additional reason to set up a sound educational system (Gans, 1978, p. 92). Study of Tanach was emphasised, together with a thorough knowledge of the Hebrew language and grammar. Bible commentators such as Rashi were studied, as were the codices of Maimonides and other Jewish scholars. In addition, Hebrew poetry and several modern languages, the vernacular among them, were part of the curriculum. The schools of the Portuguese community and their comprehensive library were described by foreign visitors, such as Rabbi Shabtai Sheftel Hurwitz, who visited Amsterdam in 1649 while travelling from Frankfort to Poland. Among his many praises, he mentions that 'Rabbis and teachers are appointed and paid for by the community. In this way, they can give equal attention to each and every child, regardless whether its parents are rich or poor' (Gans, 1978, p. 107).

During the eighteenth century economic crises led to impoverishment. The recession weighed down heavily especially upon the Jewish community with its already large percentage of persons reduced to charity or even beggary, their poverty forcing them to have their children absorbed into employment from an early age on. Figures show that in Amsterdam by the end of the eighteenth century around 1,000 children out of a total Jewish population estimated at 30,000 went to school. This seems to prove that the large majority of poor children were indeed deprived of education (Michman, Beem, & Michman, 1992, p. 72).

Political Emancipation

The Enlightenment at the end of the eighteenth century and its ideas about the equality of mankind was a turning point in the history of Western Europe. Attitudes changed. Jews were no longer seen as a separate ethnic group, but as a religious community. The ideas of the Enlightenment were turned into official policy in France. When the Republic of the United Netherlands was occupied by the Napoleonic troops, citizenship was almost immediately granted to Jews with the Emancipation decree of 1796. This implied that Jews henceforth were ruled no longer by their own leaders, but by the state. As a result, the Jewish leaders lost their powerful position, as they could no longer turn to the local authorities to enforce their will upon recalcitrant members.

After the French left and national sovereignty was restored in 1813, an enlightened Jewish vanguard endeavoured to continue the new policy, while others sought to restore the old situation. The government of the now Kingdom of the Netherlands indeed returned leadership to the Jewish leaders as far as religious

matters were concerned, but all other issues were delegated to a Supreme Council for Israelite Affairs. Jewish representatives, appointed by the authorities, included both Ashkenazi and Portuguese members, some traditional but most enlightened. The Portuguese, who were considered role models for integration, were overrepresented. The main task of the Supreme Council was advising the government on matters relating to the Jewish community. As religion had become the only difference between Jewish and non-Jewish Dutch citizens, all national Jewish features had to be given up. It was up to the Supreme Council to decide what was national, and what should be considered religion, thus falling under the authority of the religious Jewish leaders. In addition, the Supreme Council was to control whether the regulations set by the authorities were indeed executed by the local Jewish communities (Wallet, 2007, p. 10).

It was not the Jewish community alone that was streamlined, but the whole of Dutch society, the aim being to turn the Kingdom of the Netherlands into a unity with a shared language and nationality. An important role was reserved for education, as schools were considered an ideal means to create a national Dutch identity. The national school system took shape in the 1806 Education Act. Two types of schools were authorised: state schools founded and subsidised by the authorities and private schools, established at personal initiative and financed by a trust or by means of tuition. Both schools were to teach children 'all social and Christian virtues' while religious education had to be acceptable to all denominations (Meijer, 2004, p. 34). Dogmatic religious education was not allowed, as this would cause segregation between children instead of the desired unity. All schools had to teach at least reading, writing and arithmetic in addition to the Dutch language (Meijer, 2004, p. 39).

For the Jewish community, at the time the only non-Christian denomination, an exception was made. Jewish private schools did receive state subsidy, on condition that the language of instruction was Dutch and that the same general curriculum was taught as at the state schools. Both the Ministry and the Supreme Council realised that the problems with Jewish schools would only grow worse if these conditions would have to be met from day one, so they opted for a transitional stage. The use of Yiddish as the language of instruction was tolerated until teachers had been trained and new school books had been written in the Dutch language (Wallet, 2007, p. 137). Between 1817 and 1860, a respectable number of 79 state subsidised books were published for use at Jewish schools (Coppenhagen, 1988, p. 55). More than half (45) deal with Hebrew language and grammar, 22 are dedicated to Judaism and the remaining 12 to Jewish history or the geography of the Holy Land. Judging by their titles, such as 'Israelite Religious and Ethical Schoolbook' or 'Foundations of the Religious and Moral Obligations of the Israelites', teaching moral and social virtues indeed had a central position in Jewish schools.

Social Emancipation

Until 1800, most Jews lived in the larger cities, the majority of them in Amsterdam. But in the first half of the nineteenth century, many families moved to the countryside. As a consequence, Jewish state schools were set up all over the

Netherlands. Not all Jewish children attended those schools. Especially in the larger cities, well to do families sent their offspring to private teachers. For example, young Abraham Carel Wertheim (1832–1897), who was to become member of the Provincial States as well as president of the Jewish community of Amsterdam, or Netje Asser (1807–1893), whose diaries give a fascinating view of the life of a young girl from the Jewish bourgeoisie. Netje learned Dutch, French, English and arithmetic, supplemented with piano lessons, dancing and embroidery (Groften, 2007, p. 1). The lives of Abraham and Netje were not very different from those of their non-Jewish peers. In their families, Jewish holidays were no longer celebrated. Even though both Netje and Abraham married Jewish spouses, it is not surprising that the assimilation rate was growing fast within their social circles. But it was not families like the Wertheims or the Assers Chief Rabbi Dünner was referring to.

Born in Poland, Josef Hirsch Dünner (1833–1911) studied in Germany where he obtained rabbinical ordination and a doctorate in Philosophy. Rabbi Dr. Dünner thus combined thorough Jewish scholarship with an academic background. In 1874 Dünner was appointed Chief Rabbi of Amsterdam with the strong support of Abraham Carel Wertheim. Due to his University degree, Dr. Dünner was acceptable to leaders like Wertheim, while the orthodox members saw in Rabbi Dünner's thorough Jewish scholarship a safeguard for the continuation of traditional Judaism (Rijxman, 1961, p. 228). Wertheim, who used to say that 'the Jewish community should be orthodox or not be at all' (Rijxman, 1961, p. 224) was representative of the Jewish community leaders of his time. Even though many had broken with the religious tradition themselves, they did not want Judaism to be lost to the community as a whole. In their vision, it was the poor who had to preserve the orthodox character of the community. As leaders, they could make these demands explicit, because half of the Jewish population depended on poor relief during the greatest part of the nineteenth century. Many Jewish charitable organisations expected not only gratitude and impeccable behaviour, but also a certain level of orthodoxy.

The constitutional separation of Church and State in 1848 meant the end of the Ministry of Religious Affairs – and of the Supreme Council. After a long period of discussion, the Council was transformed only in 1870 into two religious communities: the *NPIK* (Dutch Portuguese Israelite Community) for the Portuguese community and the *NIK* (Dutch Israelite Community) for Ashkenazi Jews. The 1857 Education Act permitted the establishment of private denominational schools teaching religious doctrine, but these did not qualify for subsidy in contrast to state schools. Under the new law, Jewish state schools were no longer possible. If Jewish state schools wanted to continue as Jewish schools, they would have to become private denominational schools and lose their subsidy. Within a few years, almost all Jewish day schools disappeared and were replaced by *Talmud Torah* schools where children could obtain religious education after regular school hours on a voluntary basis. Meanwhile, Protestants and Catholics continued their fight for what the Jewish community had just given up: state subsidised denominational schools. As seen in the introduction, this so-called 'School Struggle' would last another 60 years.

Jewish Denomination

Around 1900, the Jewish community had grown rapidly to 104,000. Many Jews were completely integrated into Dutch society, mainly due to the Liberal and Socialist political movements (Wallet, 2007, p. 9). Still, almost everyone belonged to a Jewish community. For most this was a way of expressing their connection to the Jewish people, and had little or nothing to do with religious feelings or traditional observance. At the time, Dutch society was characterised by strong compartmentalisation based upon ideology or denomination in all spheres of social life. The dividing lines between the groups, called 'pillars', were strong and resulted in Protestant, Catholic, Liberal and Socialist newspapers, shops, housing corporations, youth movements, sporting clubs and much more. Unlike the Protestants or Catholics, Jews did not have their own 'pillar', but were represented by either the Liberals or Socialists. Both political movements were against state subsidy for denominational schools, as opposed to the Protestant and Catholic parties. The topic frequently returned to the political agenda, leading to heated debates. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, when compulsory education was about to be introduced, the School Struggle was raging fiercely. The fact that the unofficial leader of Dutch Jewry seemed to take sides with the Protestant and Catholic 'pillars' fighting for state subsidised denominational education explains the fierce reactions of both Jews and non-Jews against the Chief Rabbi's appeal.

Rabbi Dünner expressed his concerns about the influence of socialist and other anti-religious teachers at state schools frequented by children of the Jewish proletariat. His appeal, endorsed by the Chief Rabbi of the Portuguese community resulted in a trust called *Kennis en Godsvrucht* (Knowledge and Piety). In 1905 one of the very last private schools was turned into a Jewish day school called Herman Elteschool after its founder and principal, which started with 85 pupils (Dodde, 2009, p. 145). In addition, a Jewish school for poor children was established in the basement of a synagogue.

At that time, most children obtained their Jewish education during after school hours in one of the Talmud Torah schools run by the local Jewish communities. In 1908 there were 106 such schools all over the country, supported by a yearly state subsidy of Fl. 11,300 distributed by the NIK (HPC, 1908–1909). Communities too small to afford a teacher could apply to a special fund for a subsidy to send children to the Talmud Torah classes of the nearby community. In 1908, 12 such communities were subsidised by the NIK, a number that would almost double to 22 in 1938 (HPC, 1938–1939).

Criticising Education

In 1893 the teachers union *Achawah* (brotherhood) was founded (NIW, 11-8-1893). In its monthly magazine, also called Achawah, educational topics were among those discussed. While in the first issues teachers outdid themselves by translating difficult

Hebrew words and inventing complicated grammatical questions, the attention soon focused on the teaching of Hebrew. One of the younger teachers dropped a bombshell: '... because of the old-fashioned, adult language of the outdated manual, it does not matter if the children are droning Dutch or Hebrew: they don't understand it anyhow. No wonder our pupils become bored. In order to stay in control in the classroom, a teacher is forced to take measures of punishment belonging to the former century' (Achawah November, 1894). While some teachers gave suggestions for improving the lessons, others admitted that 'the dry, dull and boring, half unconscious droning of blessings and prayers fosters aversion and indifference' (Achawah March, 1895).

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the number of children attending Talmud Torah classes dropped rapidly, especially in the larger cities. In their magazine, teachers discussed the reasons why. Some blamed the children: They skip school because they prefer piano lessons or other activities, or pretend to be too tired after their regular school day. Some teachers saw in the parents' apathy 'the final blow for our schools' (Achawah March, 1895). Others mentioned 'the lack of a national curriculum and modern schoolbooks' (Achawah March, 1899). But some, albeit few, blamed themselves: '... so often do we act contrary to the basic principles of psychology and pedagogy, while only rarely succeeding in really catching the attention of the children' (Achawah August, 1895).

The same remarks could be heard in other schools. Teachers, especially those in working class districts, started criticising the educational system. For example, Jan Ligthart condemned the 'sit-and-listen' schools and had his pupils cooperating in projects like churning butter, brick-making and school gardening. His ideas of self-motivation, group work and focus on the child's habitat were shared by many (Bakker, Noordman, & Rietveld-van Wingerden, 2006, p. 508). In the first decades of the twentieth century, education in the Netherlands was reformed according to modern pedagogical insights. But the schools run by the Jewish communities did not follow suit, even though modern educational ideas from time to time appear in the Achawah magazine: 'When your pupils enter a classroom where not a single picture or drawing can be found, where no bright flower or plant decorates the room, with rags for curtains, stovepipes brown with rust and desks lacking paint, can you blame them for immediately drawing an unfavourable conclusion when they compare it to the spacious, cosy classroom of their primary school?' (Achawah April, 1921). Clara Asscher-Pinkhof, an inspired and beloved educator, described in her biography the situation of Jewish education around 1920. 'The way teachers sinned against the soul of the children hurt my teacher's heart. The methods used are at least a 100 years old. It is the custom that the Chief Rabbi writes the curriculum, but often he has never been a teacher himself, and maybe he does not even know what a child is. No Rabbi ever had the idea of listening to the teachers using their ideas for improving Jewish education.' Her conclusion is shocking: 'The system for Jewish education has done everything to chase young people away from Judaism' (Asscher-Pinkhof, 1981, p. 58). Similar remarks blaming the lack of a national curriculum, outdated material and dilapidated classrooms were also made by other educators.

Jewish Day Schools

The 1920 Education Act, which granted equal state subsidy to denominational schools and neutral (non-denominational) schools, stimulated the establishment of two more Jewish primary schools in 1929 and 1934, and enabled the day school for poor children to move to a modern building in the eastern part of the city. Two Jewish secondary schools were founded in 1927 and 1928. At these schools, 3–5 h per week were available for Jewish lessons in addition to the programme of the non-denominational schools. Both secular and Jewish lessons were given by the same teacher as an integral part of the school curriculum. Relative to the Jewish population of the city which was estimated at 70,000 at the time, the schools had only a limited number of pupils. In 1928, the number of children enrolled in Jewish day schools was 254 for the Herman Elteschool and 79 for the two secondary schools (Michman et al., 1992, 136), while 1,950 children attended the after-school Talmud Torah classes (Weekblad, 2-3-1928).

The only other city where a Jewish day school was founded was The Hague, where the city council suggested constructing one large modern building to be shared by three neutral primary schools. One of them would have an adjusted schedule, enabling it to close down on Shabbat and Jewish holidays, while compulsory Jewish lessons would be included in the curriculum. This new type of school became known as the *Haagse Stelsel* (The Hague System) (van Creveld, 2003, p. 120). The school was supported by the local Jewish community and the Chief Rabbi immediately volunteered to be a teacher (Weekblad, 24-2-1928). Even though the 'Haagse Stelsel school' was successful, it was not introduced in other cities. In Amsterdam, the city council allowed neutral schools with over 50% of Jewish pupils to close on Shabbat and holidays, while the Jewish community obtained permission to use their facilities for Talmud Torah classes during after school hours. This was an improvement, not only because of the well-equipped modern classrooms, but also because many families had left the old Jewish quarter for the new neighbourhoods.

One of the frequently heard arguments at the time against Jewish day schools is that children who associated almost exclusively with other Jews would feel uncomfortable towards the gentile society in which they were supposed to live and work. The fact that in pre-war Amsterdam not one of the Jewish community leaders sent his children to a Jewish day school proves that this view was shared by many (Dahan, 1989, p. 9).

The spirit of the times is noticeable in a report of a meeting held in the Transvaalbuurt, a new quarter in the eastern part of Amsterdam. In 1928 over 12,500 Jews lived there and in the adjacent neighbourhoods, which were to a large extent built by socialist housing corporations. The meeting was organised as a protest against the establishment of a Jewish day school and was attended by both supporters and opponents, almost all of them Jewish. While the presentation by a neutral school teacher is described as 'very interesting and refreshing', the representative of the Jewish denominational school is depicted as tedious and boring. According to

the reporter, those in favour of a Jewish school are assimilators. 'Why do they need denominational schools? Because the *goyim* have them?' (Weekblad, 2-3-1928).

Between 1920 and 1940, several Jewish schoolbooks were published. While they look attractive and are in agreement with pedagogical ideas of the time, there is something peculiar about them. The idea behind the Hebrew primer 'A present for the Israelite Youth' is original. It teaches children to read Hebrew using Dutch words written in Hebrew script. When correctly read in Ashkenazi pronunciation, it turns out to be a Dutch children's story resembling those in a popular Dutch reader. The stories about children playing are nice enough, but there is nothing Jewish about them. Similarly, the Hebrew method Ha-Méliets has stories and exercises written in biblical Hebrew dealing with the daily life of Dutch children. Jewish themes can be found in it, but only rarely. One story, illustrated with a typically Dutch setting with a flag, tells about the birthday of 'the beloved Queen', which is not the first thing one expects in a Hebrew schoolbook.

The attractive Hebrew *leesplankje* (hornbook, a board showing pictures with words underneath) was designed after a very popular tool in general education. Not one of the 19 pictures shown has a Jewish theme. The 'book' on the picture opens from left to right and the word 'light' is not illustrated by *Shabbat* candles but by sconce which in the 1930s must already have been an old-fashioned object. Exactly the opposite was happening at Catholic schools, where children learned how to read 'in a Catholic spirit, with words and stories from a familiar environment' (Ghonem, 2007, p. 2). As no extensive research has been done so far in the field of Jewish curricula and schoolbooks, only some first superficial remarks can be made. Protestant and Catholic schools were put on the same footing with neutral schools after a long struggle, and they emphasised the differences between denominational and neutral education, while for the Jewish schools the neutral school was both their competitor and their role model. Both Catholic and Protestant 'pillars' had a longstanding tradition of developing material and the Catholics had a large group of religious educators at their disposal eager to teach and develop material for free.

But there might be another reason why official Jewish educational materials emphasised Dutch nationality to such a degree. The ideas of Zionism and the renewal of Hebrew as a spoken language were well known at the time. The Rabbinate, even though some of its members belonged to the *Mizrachi* (religious Zionist) movement, officially distanced itself from Zionism. It is very possible that this rabbinical point of view can be seen in the Hebrew pedagogic methods published around 1930, with their strong emphasis on Ashkenazi pronunciation and Dutch nationality. In contrast, the influence of Zionism was reflected in the Achawah magazine. 'Many youngsters want to learn and understand Hebrew, the means of communication between our tribesmen, the language of our holy books and scholars, and also of our brothers in Palestine. We teachers are the ones who master this language. Show your students that not only do you know five synonyms for "burning wrath", but that you can also tell them the Hebrew word for slate, desk and picture. Use these words to create child friendly exercises. Your lessons will become

interesting, yes, even Jewish' (Achawah January, 1929). The same edition of Achawah mentioned a school in Amsterdam South, which in contrast to all the other Talmud Torah classes, is growing rapidly and attracts children from all over the city. The reason why can be found in another source: 'The classes, meeting on Wednesday afternoons and Sunday mornings, were organised and financed by Zionist oriented families. The lessons were given by young teachers, all members of the religious Zionist *Zichron Jaäkow* movement. They imparted to us a warm love for Judaism and Zionism' (Boas, 2002, p. 63). Among the first principals of this school, that surely must have 'ensured Jewish renewal', was a grandson of Rabbi Dünner (Fuks, 2007, p. 66). Even though no Jewish day school was to be found in the whole neighbourhood, the children of Amsterdam South probably got the best Jewish education in town.

Another very successful way to reach out to Jewish children was the weekly *De Joodsche Jeugdkrant* (The Jewish Youth Magazine), founded by Rabbi Dr. De Hond in 1928. In addition to Torah, Prayers, Biblical History, Hebrew and Jewish knowledge, there are Jewish songs, riddles, stories and even serials. Several teachers were involved in this unique project. The correspondence between Rabbi De Hond and children from all over the Netherlands provides an insight into their lives and reveals much about Jewish life especially in smaller communities. A longing for more Jewish education is reflected in the magazine, as illustrated in a letter from Betsy from the town of Zierikzee in the remote province of Zeeland, whose greatest wish for *Chanukah* is 'a teacher to tell us all about Judaism' (De Joodsche Jeugdkrant, 31-12-1931).

In the 1930s, the number of children attending Jewish day schools rose due to the influx of refugees from Germany. In 1938, the four primary schools in Amsterdam together had 1,010 pupils, while another 236 attended the secondary schools (Dodde, 2009, p. 146). A total of 1,514 children attended the after-school *Talmud Torah* classes given in 13 locations all over the city (Michman et al., 1992, p. 153). But nevertheless, the large majority of Amsterdam children attended a neutral school for ideological reasons. Such schools offered the opportunity to be together with children of other religions and so were held to promote tolerance and respect (Van Wingerden, 2008, p. 186).

In May 1940, the Netherlands was attacked and occupied by Nazi Germany. By October 1941 over 14,000 pupils were evicted from their schools and forced to enrol in special schools for Jewish children with Jewish teachers. In 36 cities all over the country 111 such institutions were founded (Michman et al., 1992, p. 185). Amsterdam had 25 schools for Jewish children attended by 6,940 pupils (Stigter, 2005, p. 38). When the last of them closed down in September 1943, no Jewish children could be found anymore in the country, except for those in hiding. Out of a Jewish community estimated at 140,000 in 1940, over 110,000 Jews perished in the concentration camps, among them Betsy and more than 13,000 other children.[2] Their fate is described in a poem by the Jewish poet Ida Vos:

[2]Born in 1930 or later. Information provided by Herinneringscentrum Westerbork.

Geography
She had a bad mark
for Geography
that last day.
But knew a week later
exactly where Treblinka was.
For just one moment (Vos, 1983, p. 11).

Traumatic Restoration

Four months after liberation, just before *Rosh Hashanah* 1945, the monumental synagogue in Amsterdam Old South was used again for the first time. The Rabbi cited Ezra 3:12 ‘Many that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice.’ He expressed his deep sorrow ‘at the loss of so many well-known persons from this neighbourhood, whose places are now unoccupied, of the Rabbis and cantor who shall be sorely missed’ (NIW, 14-9-1945).

The end of Second World War found the Jewish community of the Netherlands in a dramatically changed situation. Only about 25,000 had survived the Nazi horrors, the majority by going into hiding or due to mixed marriages. In addition to the enormous human losses, the structure of the community had, of course, also been severely damaged. Most synagogues and Jewish institutions were in ruins or expropriated. Very few of the Rabbis, teachers and community leaders had survived. The almost impossible task of rebuilding the community rested on the shoulders of a small group of people, who all had undergone traumatic experiences and suffered heavy personal losses.

Young people were considered of extreme importance in the rebuilding of Jewish community life, and setting up a Jewish educational system therefore had priority. But according to the temporary board of the Jewish community of Amsterdam, it was to be different from pre-war focus: ‘Judaism without *Erets Jisrael* (the Land of Israel) is impossible. Therefore, Erets will be in the centre of Jewish education. The old fashioned religious classes as they used to be, a terror for many, taught with outdated methods will be altered completely. The emphasis will be on modern Hebrew, Jewish history and Jewish customs’ (NIW 26-10-1945). In 1947, the Jewish community organised classes run along these lines in three locations in the city, attended by 90 children between 6 and 14 years old (NIW, 28-11-1947). The ‘emphasis on modern Hebrew’ was striking. According to many, the future of the remnant of Dutch Jewry was no longer in the Netherlands but in the new Jewish state to be. This is illustrated by an advertisement in the Jewish press: ‘Learn Hebrew – the language of your future, the language of your children’ (NIW, 6-3-1947). The last sentence of the first post-war Hebrew primer is ‘When I grow up, I will to go to Erets Jisrael’.

In November 1946 the Herman Elte school, re-named Rosj Pina, opened its doors again. It started with 70 pupils, and by the end of the school year there were over 200. Five hours per week were available for Jewish studies, taught during the

regular school hours by the class teachers, while additional classes were provided after school hours (NIW, 11-7-1947). The secondary school called ‘Joodse HBS’ re-opened in December 1947 (NIW, 15-12-1950). Both schools were and are governed by *JBO* (Foundation for Jewish schools).

It was not easy to convince parents to send their children to the JBO schools. Many associated Judaism only with the tragedy that had befallen their families. The principal of the primary school alluded to these sentiments: ‘at a Jewish school, the Jewish child feels at home. We, who were not at home for several years, all know the difference between being at home and not being at home. During the occupation time children perforce lived an abnormal life, let us therefore bring them back into their element, which in the *galuth* (diaspora) is the Jewish day school. Thousands of children have been snatched away from us. Without children the continuation of the Jewish people is impossible. So let us see to it that our few remaining children will grow up to be self-aware Jews’ (NIW, 6-6-1947). During the 1950s, the unwillingness of well-to-do and intellectual families to enrol their children in a Jewish day school lessened. At their request, in 1958 the Joodse HBS was turned into a comprehensive school where all types of secondary education were given. The school was re-named ‘Maimonides’ (Dahan, 1989, p. 7).

Meanwhile, the NIK began the heavy task of re-organising Jewish education outside Amsterdam. Out of the 150 Jewish communities existing in 1940, the majority (90) no longer had an organised structure, while only 12 of the remaining communities were able to provide Jewish classes on their own. A Central Education Committee was founded, its slogan being ‘Jewish education for every Jewish child, wherever it may live’ (HCC, 29-11-1960). As early as 1946 a written course on Jewish life was published. ‘Dear boys and girls, today we will go for a walk to the synagogue. Children from larger towns may have been there before, while those of you living in villages probably have never seen one. So let me explain to you on the way...’ The author, David Hausdorff, is sensitive towards the children’s background. After ‘parents’ he adds ‘or the uncle and aunt taking care of you’. In the early 1950s, additional courses on Jewish History, Hebrew and Torah were published, while a national curriculum based upon weekly lessons of 1 h was completed in 1956. The focus of Jewish education was no longer religion only, but ‘raising children to love the Jewish people, the Jewish culture and Hakadosh Baruch Hu (God)’ [Leerplan (1956), p. 3].

By 1952, the Committee had four full-time and eight part-time ‘travelling teachers’ at their disposal, teaching 278 pupils living in 44 towns and villages (HPC, 1952–1953). Their teachers were ‘travelling’ indeed. In 1959 Levi Israëls from Amsterdam went on Sundays to Tilburg, on Mondays to Oss, on Tuesdays to Zutphen, on Wednesdays to Oss again while on Thursdays he could be found in Eindhoven. All together, he was teaching 12 h per week, while travelling time by public transport took up another 16 h (HPC, 1959).

Due to the limited number of children living in many locations all over the country, the system of centrally organised Jewish education grew inefficient and costly over the years (HPC, 1962), as confirmed in a report written in 1974 by Joop Sanders, the newly appointed secretary-general of the NIK. He advised undertaking

a re-organisation and suggested introducing audiovisual means such as slides, tape-recorders and videos to supplement the lessons (HPC, 1974).

His report pointed out something even more alarming. Except for one, all of the teachers were 65 years or older. One generation after the war, the Jewish community had reached a turning point. While in the first decades after the war the focus had been on individual surviving and basic reconstruction of the community, people were now beginning to understand the long-term consequences of the Shoa for the future of the Jewish community. Those who had run the Jewish organisations after 1945 were getting older, and there was no one to take their place because there were so few of the next generation, children having been so especially vulnerable during the war. A whole generation was missing, causing a lack of teachers, rabbis and community leaders (HPC, 1974). Several Jewish communities, especially those in remote districts became inactive.

A New Generation

Although hundreds of young people had immigrated to Israel (Blom, Fuks-Mansfeld, & Schöffer, 1995, p. 366), it became clear that not everyone would follow suit. Contrary to the expectations in the first post-war years, a Jewish community was going to remain in the Netherlands and the next generation was prepared to invest in its future. The eagerness of these young parents to pass on the Jewish tradition to their offspring led to several initiatives in Jewish education.

Already before the war there had been Reform Jewish communities in Amsterdam and The Hague, most of their members being refugees from Germany joined by a few Dutch families. A Reform synagogue was inaugurated in Amsterdam in 1937 (Brasz, 2006, p. 67), and 60 children attended the Talmud Torah classes there (Brasz, 2006, p. 69). During the Shoa, the *LJG* (Reform Jewish Community) had shared the same fate as all other Jews in the Netherlands, and after liberation the small community had to start again from scratch. The Jewish lessons attracted young Dutch families, and gradually the image of the LJG changed from that of a small group of German refugees to a community rooted in the Netherlands (Brasz, 2006, p. 122). In 1966, a newly built synagogue and a community centre were inaugurated in Amsterdam. Some of those joining the LJG had been members of the NIK, but many newcomers had been unaffiliated.

Further initiatives were taken in the Jewish Community, such as the establishment of three new Jewish day schools. In 1974 a new Jewish Kindergarten called 'the Cheider' began with five children at a private home in Amsterdam. The emphasis was on Jewish studies taught in Yiddish, making it the kind of school Dutch Jewry had not seen in 150 years. The school was founded by ultra-orthodox parents because 'Rosj Pina has become more of a gathering of Jewish children than a Jewish school' (NIW, 25-10-1974). The next year the Cheider began a primary school 'with a ridiculously low number of 4 children' (NIW, 28-2-1975). But even though it was illegal, housed in a squatted building and financed by donations, the school continued to grow and became officially recognised by the Ministry of Education. By

1993 the Cheider, then consisting of both a primary and a secondary school, moved into its own premises. Some of its pupils came from the JBO schools, but most were children of the large families of Rabbis and teachers from abroad appointed as religious leaders by NIK communities from the late 1980s onwards.

Another Jewish day school was established near Amsterdam in 1982 by the LJG, the main reason being the admittance policy of JBO. The Leo Baeck school welcomed children of ‘all parents wishing to educate their children in a Reform Jewish way’ (NIW, 27-8-1982). Due to a serious conflict among teachers the number of pupils decreased from 60 to 20, forcing the school to close down in 1990 (NIW, 16-11-1990). According to Rabbi David Lilienthal, ‘It was the largest frustration and disappointment in my life at that period. We had more than enough pupils, an excellent curriculum, the necessary money and educational materials, but it failed due to unexpected reasons’ (Brasz, 2006, p. 270).

A day school was established in Rotterdam, because ‘the lessons provided by the Jewish community are not bad, but too few. And Amsterdam is too far away’ (NIW, 9-10-1987). Beth Sefer Etgar opened its doors in 1988 with six pupils, aiming ‘to strengthen Jewish identity by teaching Jewish history and customs’ [NIK archive 31.55]. Due to the limited number of pupils (19) and ‘bad luck with teachers’ the school closed down in 1992 (NIW, 4-9-1992). Looking back, one of the founding parents commented: ‘the project fell apart because honestly said, we were enthusiastic but did not know enough about education. But at least we tried’ (van Trigt, 2007, p. 67).

In addition to the day schools, attended by a small minority, both NIK and LJG provided Talmud Torah classes all over the Netherlands. After the professional teachers had retired, these were mainly run by volunteers. Both organisations tried to train their teachers. The LJG even established a special Teacher Training Course in 1982. But most candidates were interested only in furthering their own Jewish knowledge and not in becoming teachers, a problem also encountered by the NIK. Those who did become teachers had to work without a curriculum, choosing their own teaching material which often was developed in Israel. Neither the language nor the contents were suitable for Diaspora children.

At the Jewish primary school Rosj Pina, the class teachers who could teach both secular and Jewish studies retired. After that, children got three different teachers: one for the secular curriculum, a second for Hebrew language and a third for Jewish studies. Especially in the case of Jewish studies teachers, attracting professional teachers who speak Dutch was and continues to be a key problem.

With respect to the education of children outside the framework of the day schools, changes came in 1989 when the NIK appointed a professional educator as its national director for Jewish Education.[3] She began her job by visiting the volunteer teachers to investigate their wishes. They knew exactly what they wanted: ‘Ready to use attractive worksheets in the Dutch language with activities on different levels. Something more challenging than a wrinkled old colouring plate’ (HPC,

[3] In fact the author of this chapter.

1989). By the next year, a series of worksheets on the Jewish holidays had been developed, while teachers were invited to a computer seminar, introducing Jewish software translated into Dutch (HPC, 1990). When the basic material was there, the time had come to develop a curriculum including all of the necessary teaching materials and software. As this type of curriculum was non-existent, it would have to be developed from scratch, turning it into a long-term and expensive project. But with a secretary-general highly involved in Jewish education and new media, and a president who was also the principal of the Maimonides school, the NIK ranked Jewish education as its top priority and gave the green light. The Jewish community of Amsterdam joined the effort and a supporting group was founded, consisting of board members, Rabbis and professional educators, all of them experienced teachers. Looking back, they had something else in common. All were born after 1945 – the new generation of leaders was taking up its position within the Jewish community.

The main aim of the curriculum was set as: ‘making a child feel at home in a Jewish setting’ (HPC, 1992). Activity booklets on the Jewish holidays and other topics were written for different levels, each introducing the topic from a new angle, while the Israeli books for spoken Hebrew were replaced by methods based upon Jewish keywords and basic texts from the liturgy and other Jewish sources. In 1997 the new curriculum was nationally introduced, used by 178 children (HPC, 1997), growing to 268 in 2003 (Dodde, 2009, p. 223) and to over 300 in 2009.

In 2000 translated versions of the NIK curriculum were introduced in Switzerland, and then in Finland (2001) and Germany (2006), enabling international cooperation in Jewish education. In 2004 the trilingual (Dutch, German and Finnish) website JELED.net went online. The site supports the curriculum with extra material and is a source of educational ideas and exchange for children, parents and teachers living in different European countries. Meanwhile, the LJG, nowadays called Unity for Progressive Judaism, began producing Dutch versions of children’s books on Jewish topics and has launched the educational website ‘Rimon’.

In 2007, in the still remote province of Zeeland the first child educated with the new NIK curriculum became a teacher herself. Sometimes, miracles do happen.

Cultural Minority

In the 1990s the focus in Jewish self-awareness shifted from the Shoa as the defining Jewish experience to a more general approach to Jewish culture, sparking several initiatives. A new attitude could be seen: ‘I will decide for myself whether I am Jewish or not’ (van Solinge & de Vries, 2001, p. 112). New communities were established, especially by those who could meet neither the NIK nor the LJG standards for admittance. These developments were made easier by large sums of money made available to the Jewish community by the government and banks as compensation for the financial losses during the Shoa.

In 2009, three Jewish day schools existed in Amsterdam: the two JBO schools Rosj Pina and Maimonides, and the Cheider, consisting of both a primary and a

secondary school. All schools have financial problems, mainly due to the limited number of pupils. They very much depend on governmental subsidy, with the comprehensive schools being exceptional in the general school system, because they do not meet the statutory minimum number of pupils.

In addition, Rosj Pina has an identity problem due to the fact that there are three very different groups of parents: first, secular Dutch Jewish parents who want their children to be with other Jewish children, but who are not very interested in either Jewish studies or Hebrew (50%); second, secular Israelis who want their children to learn Hebrew, but not religious subjects (40%); third, the remaining 10% are religious Jewish parents who want the school to stress religious subjects, even in Hebrew language classes. For these traditionally Dutch Jewish parents the Cheider is in many cases not an option because of its separation from the secular world and its emphasis on Eastern European Jewish traditions.

Contrary to the situation at Rosj Pina, Maimonides has always had a Jewish principal who himself has a modern orthodox lifestyle. This has created continuity in the school's approach to Jewish education and has prevented many of the identity problems faced by Rosj Pina. Both Maimonides and the Cheider now offer the possibility of official final examinations in both Modern and Biblical Hebrew, recognised as such by the Ministry of Education, as well as secular matriculation subjects.

In 2009, out of a Jewish population of Amsterdam and surroundings estimated at 25,000, around 770 pupils are enrolled in a Jewish day school (570 at JBO and 200 at the Cheider). Compared with 1938, the percentage of children attending a Jewish school has risen slightly, with the large majority still preferring a non-Jewish school. The reasons people give for not sending children to Jewish schools are the secularisation of Dutch society from the 1960s onwards, as well as the traumatic experiences during the Shoa. The difference with neighbouring Belgium is striking. In Belgium, secularisation is at a similar level, while the Jewish community experienced the same traumas. Nevertheless, almost 90% of the Jewish children in Antwerp, religious or not, attend Jewish day schools. It can be assumed that the former integration policy of the Dutch government and the Jewish community leaders still exerts its influence.

In the twenty-first century, Jews are no longer the only minority and their numbers are insignificant compared to the Muslims. Current government policy is to supervise Muslim schools closely in order to guard against anti-integration tendencies. This policy also affects Jewish schools.

Outside the framework of the day schools, the Talmud Torah classes, provided by NIK, LJG and others, are attended by a mere 200 children in Amsterdam and another 350 all over the country. Although this number is growing, in terms of percentage it is significantly lower than it was in 1938. This low attendance rate of Talmud Torah classes fits in with the fact that out of a total Jewish population estimated at 52,000, only 8,000 are affiliated with a Jewish community (5,000 with NIK and 3,000 with LJG). Reaching out to this large group of unaffiliated Jews will be the greatest challenge for Jewish organisations in the Netherlands in the coming decades. It will be necessary to join efforts across the board, both nationally and internationally, wherever cooperation is possible, building together a twenty-first century 'sound and solid stronghold against thorough assimilation'.

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Weekblad voor Israëlietische Huisgezinnen.

Author Index

A
Ackerman, W., 121, 129–130, 134, 717, 720, 940–942, 1098
Alderman, G., 32, 85, 1107–1108, 1111
Allport, G., 171
Alter, R., 381
Amkraut, B., 597–612
Amson, D., 1206–1207
Anderson, C., 611
Anderson, R., 339, 343–344, 347, 353
Arendt, H., 1218
Argyris, C., 843
Arnett, J. J., 835
Aron, I., 260–261, 325, 543, 651–652, 675, 691–711, 834, 836, 849–851, 855, 908, 914, 1044, 1047, 1049, 1099
Aron, J., 1138
Ashmore, R. D., 192, 194
Ashton, D., 126–127, 549
Asscher-Pinhkoff, C., 1277
Association for Jewish Studies, 132, 659, 660, 665
Astor, C., 1022
Avni, H., 1266–1268

B
Backenroth, O., 337, 355–370, 722, 929
Bailyn, B., 118, 121, 123
Ball, D. L., 920–922, 924, 926–927, 930, 962–964, 968, 975
Ball, D., 952, 977
Bar-Lev, M., 1222
Barton, K., 448, 457
Bateson, G., 50
Batson, D., 171
Bauman, Z., 53, 873, 1165
Bayit, S., 786, 788–789
Beck, P., 204, 515, 753
Bellah, R., 393–394
Ben-Avie, M., 599, 722, 749–764, 769, 775, 948, 960, 1049, 1058, 1100
Benderly, S., 84, 119–120, 124, 133, 379, 384, 940–942, 944, 946–947
Ben-Rafael, E., 195, 422
Benstein, J., 395–396
Berger, D., 566
Berger, J., 344
Berger, P., 272, 543
Berlin, I., 221, 273, 285–287, 297–298
Berryman, J., 302, 309
Bickerman, E., 1160
Bildner, E. S., 817–819, 822
Billig, M., 1017
Bloomberg, L. D., 2, 47, 66, 455
Blum-Kulka, S., 425, 427
Board of Jewish Education (Mercaz), 763, 1131, 1141, 1150–1151
Bolman, L. G., 252–253, 256, 718
Borrowman, M., 937, 944
Boyd, J., 865–867, 869–871
Bransford, J., 955
Brewer, M. B., 192, 194
Britzman, D., 25, 466
Bronfenbrenner, U., 901–902
Bronfman Jewish Education Centre, 1146, 1149–1150
Bronfman, C., 811–812, 814–816, 819
Brosh-Weitz, S., 420
Brown, L. M., 788, 790, 795, 797
Brown, S., 411
Buber, M., 219–220, 226–233, 240, 289, 295–296, 302, 305, 493, 498, 517
Bullivant, B., 271, 274, 1139

C
Cantle, T., 31
Caplan, K., 733, 1064, 1067, 1069, 1074–1076
Carson, R., 397

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Chamo, N., 984–985, 992–993
Charmé, S., 8, 163–198
Chazan, B., 8, 11–26, 131, 165, 169, 204, 233, 340, 441–442, 449, 452, 457, 479, 481, 526–527, 615, 674, 693, 713, 768–770, 772, 774–775, 806–807, 810–811, 814–817, 821, 871, 875, 929, 983, 985, 988, 1095, 1098, 1138
Chertok, F., 188, 190, 205, 503, 680, 715, 722, 825, 828
Chouraqui, A., 1209
Cochran-Smith, M., 798, 880, 883, 885, 889–890, 892–893, 918–919, 924
Cohen, D., 755
Cohen, E. H., 189, 499, 515, 519, 615–627, 716, 769
Cohen, E., 335–336, 415, 509
Cohen, G., 132, 447
Cohen, J., 8, 130, 220–224, 226–228, 230, 232, 249, 251, 260, 573, 879, 1155–1156
Cohen, S. M., 165, 170, 174, 185, 187–192, 195, 203–216, 479, 502–503, 542–543, 604, 670, 674–675, 680, 695, 698, 721, 769, 903–904, 906, 910, 912
Cohen, S., 8, 23, 47–49, 55, 95, 825–826, 831
Coles, R., 302, 314–315
Comer, J. P., 750, 755–756, 758–759, 764
Conyer, B., 10, 267–282, 720, 1126–1129, 1138
Cope, B., 1249
Cordal, S., 1017
Cowan, P., 467, 471
Crawford, K. A., 469, 472
Cremieux, A., 1205–1210
Crenshaw, J. L., 373
Csikszentmihalyi, M., 358, 774
Cytryn, J., 953

D
Dahill, L., 1006
Darling-Hammond, L., 953, 955, 959, 962, 965, 969, 975, 1051, 1054–1055
Dashefsky, A., 189–190, 203
Dawidowicz, L., 462, 464
DCSF, 29–30, 33, 37, 39
De Hond, M., 1280
Deal, T. E., 252, 718, 907
Deaux, K., 192–193
Deborah, D. M., 123, 521
Deitcher, H., 541–557, 720, 736
DellaPergola, S., 1185–1186, 1190
Dencik, L., 1162
Denton, M. L., 831, 836, 907
Derrida, J., 285, 291–292, 295
Dewey, J., 31, 72, 88, 238, 268, 271, 287, 290, 325, 331, 356–357, 368, 381, 398, 401, 451, 543, 755–756, 774, 846, 874–875, 918, 942, 945, 961, 964, 982, 985, 1220
DfES, 33–35
Don-Yehiya, E., 1230
Dorph, G. Z., 67, 381–382, 384, 555, 651, 655, 722, 925–926, 938, 959–978
Duman, J., 377–378
Dunner, J. H., 1271, 1275
Dushkin, A., 118–120, 716, 939, 946–947

E
Edwards, D., 1017
Eisner, E., 358
Elkind, D., 172
El-Or, T., 103, 1069, 1073–1074
Elyashevich, D., 1190
Emilia, R., 72, 756
Epstein, A. D., 1243
Epstein, J. N., 581
Epstein, S., 360, 385, 1142, 1146–1147
Erikson, E. H., 22, 104–105, 173, 550, 621

F
Feiman-Nemser, S., 410, 651, 655, 880, 882, 908, 924, 927, 937–956, 959, 963, 969, 981, 985, 993, 1048, 1053, 1056–1058
Felman, S., 465
Ferziger, A. S., 288, 732, 734–735
Feuerman, C., 277
Fishbane, M., 373, 385
Fishman, S. B., 165, 170, 185–187, 203–204, 518, 699, 775, 826, 831, 833, 904–907, 909–911
Fishman, S., 50, 775, 785
Fleishman, J., 806, 814, 822
Flexner, P. A., 2, 901, 1098
Flusser, D., 567
Foster, C. R., 852, 1006, 1011–1013, 1015, 1017
Foster, S. J., 469, 472
Foucault, M., 285, 290–292
Fowler, J., 301–304, 307, 738, 755
Fox, S., 2, 19, 132, 170, 219, 277, 319, 320, 324–325, 331, 356, 360, 379, 769, 809, 864, 917, 924
Fredriksen, P., 565, 567
Freeman, S., 368
Friedman, M., 1063, 1065, 1067, 1069, 1074–1075, 1236
Fullan, M., 256, 258, 260, 821, 845, 849

G
Gamoran, A., 694, 722, 762, 960, 965, 1045–1047, 1049
Gane, M., 1017
Garber, Z., 662
Gardner, H., 358–359, 364
Gardner, W., 194
Gartner, L., 117–118, 120–122, 691, 715
Gitelman, Z., 621, 1184, 1187, 1190–1191, 1193–1196
Gladwell, M., 768, 770
Glickman, C. D., 879, 882–883, 889, 891, 893
Goldberg, M. R., 365
Golden, J., 451
Goldman, R., 172–173, 301
Goldstein, S., 810, 883
Goldstein, Y., 723
Goodman, R. L., 2, 722, 749–764, 769, 775, 901, 1044–1047, 1050, 1098, 1100
Goodman, R., 694, 751
Gordin, J., 1217
Goren, A., 120, 122–123
Gottfried, L., 1005, 1012
Gramsci, A., 289, 392–393, 395
Grant, L. D., 1–4, 128, 159, 170, 203, 279, 485, 507, 535, 546, 549–550, 622–623, 651, 654, 669–687, 698, 904, 929, 982–985, 987, 989–990, 997, 1001–1019, 1196–1197, 1199
Gratz, R., 126
Greenberg, I., 19, 85, 219, 270, 272–273, 275, 662
Gringras, R., 337, 339–353, 485, 929, 981, 988
Grishaver, J., 381, 599
Gross, Z., 1219–1232
Grossman, P., 952, 967–968
Gurock, J., 123–127, 133
Guttmann, J., 220–225

H
Hacohen Wolf, H., 183–198, 1249
Halbertal, M., 375, 410, 1071, 1159–1160
Hall, G. S., 786
Hall, S., 167
Hartman, D., 272, 275, 277–278
Hausdorff, D., 1282
Hay, D., 302, 307–308
Hayman, P., 581
Hegel, G. W. F., 287
Heifetz, R., 253–254, 256
Heilman, S., 51, 131, 366, 710, 769, 929, 1063, 1071, 1075
Helmreich, W., 124, 131, 1070
Herman, S., 22, 170, 173, 193, 625
Heschel, A. J., 78, 219, 287, 396, 402, 566, 754, 956, 1259
Hochstein, A., 501–503
Holtz, B. W., 225, 336–337, 368, 373–385, 552, 555, 710, 718, 762, 926, 959, 965, 967, 981–982, 984
Holzer, E., 375, 407–415, 583–584, 595, 927
Horenczyk, G., 8, 183–198, 621
Horowitz, B., 95, 165, 168, 170, 172
Husserl, E., 295
Hyman Zelkowicz, T., 8, 163–198

I
Ilatov, Z., 1242
Inbar, O., 426
Inbari, A., 340–341, 343
Ingall, C., 91, 93
Isaacs, L., 248, 651, 655, 847, 853, 1041–1060

J
Jackson, R., 2, 564, 571, 573, 1113
Jacobs, H. H., 88, 93
Janowsky, O., 940, 946
Jensen, E., 313, 358
Jick, L., 661
Jones Pellach, P., 1131
Joselit, J. W., 128, 131
Jung, W. S., 717, 1028
Juzwik, M., 465
JWI (Jewish Women International), 789, 790

K
Kahane, R., 624
Kalantzis, M., 1249
Kaminetsky, E., 1023–1024
Kanarek, J., 337, 581–595
Kaplan, M., 119, 124, 133–134, 220, 240, 287, 349, 359, 429, 486, 517–518, 520–521, 691, 730, 753, 762, 794, 910, 939, 941–943, 945, 955, 1066, 1094
Katz, B. D., 671–672, 676, 685, 714, 909
Katzman, A., 324
Kaufman, D., 124, 133, 174, 586, 941–943
Kelman, A. Y., 206–207, 261, 479
Kelner, S., 47–49, 65, 131, 170, 178, 504, 508, 623, 674, 681, 769, 775, 785, 813, 825, 906, 910, 929, 981, 1046–1048, 1051, 1100
Kent, O., 407–415, 927–928
Kesher, 704–705, 709, 835, 1092, 1186
Kessler, R., 737
Keysar, A., 204, 546, 769, 775, 827, 831, 833
Kheimets, N. G., 1243
Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, B., 453

Klapper, M., 127–129, 135
Kleinfeld, J., 585, 590
Kliksberg, B., 1256
Knapp, M. S., 962–965, 975
Knowles, M. S., 872, 988, 991
Kochhar, C. A., 1025
Kohlberg, L., 143, 151–152, 304, 307
Kolel, 675, 1149
Kopelowitz, E., 487, 518–521, 607, 619, 718, 983
Korczak, J., 9, 143–144, 146–157, 159, 302, 308
Koschitzky, D., 1142, 1150
Kosmin, B. A., 204, 546, 552–553, 769, 775, 827, 831, 833, 1162
Krasner, J., 9, 117–135, 170, 379, 446, 449, 457, 938, 1098
Kreitzer, L. J., 1161
Kress, J., 47, 170, 172, 190–191, 581, 599, 651, 654, 694, 697, 948, 1049, 1058, 1100

L

Lamm, Z., 883–884, 890, 892–893, 895, 1220
Lampert, M., 919, 922, 925, 930, 968
Lave, J., 51, 57
Lawton, C., 1116
Lehman, M., 581–595
Leibowitz, N., 382
Leibowitz, Y., 568
Lesko, N., 787, 794
Leven, N., 1206, 1210
Levin, T., 426
Levinas, E., 8, 220–226, 286, 295–296, 566, 618–619, 1209, 1212
Levine, C., 599
Levisohn, J., 95, 938
Levi-Strauss, C., 54
Levstik, L., 448, 457
Levy, D., 1267
Leyser, Y., 1034
Lickona, T., 156
Liebman, Y., 1230
Lifton, R. J., 609
Linsky, M., 253–254, 256, 744
Lippman Kanfer Institute, 259, 854
Lord, B., 967
Lynn-Sachs, M., 696
Lyotard, J. -F., 285, 291–292
Lytle, S. L., 880, 883, 889–893, 918–919, 924–925, 981

M

MacCannell, D., 616, 621
MacIntyre, A., 298, 341
Maitles, H., 467, 471
Malkus, M., 9, 83–95, 411, 555, 718, 722
Marom, D., 2, 19, 170, 219, 277, 320, 324–326, 360, 717, 864, 995, 1242–1244
Martin, E. W., 1024
Martin, R., 1024
Ma'yan, 792–793, 799
Mcdermott, R., 53, 57, 59
McGettrick, B., 1225
McGill University, 1147
McLaughlin-Volpe, T., 192
McLennan, G., 268, 273
McTighe, J., 65, 75
Mead, M., 54, 1246
Mendelsson, D., 9, 1082, 1105–1121
Mendes Flohr, P., 83
Mendlowitz, S. F., 125–126
Meyer, M. A., 441, 446, 598, 661, 664, 752, 994
Mezirow, J., 868, 870–872
Midgley, M., 399
Milgrom, J., 346, 361, 368
Miller, H., 1–4, 8–10, 29–44, 85, 338, 361, 368, 564, 655, 716, 1085, 1108, 1120
Mintz, A., 133, 429, 940, 942, 946
Mintzberg, H., 248
Mittelberg, D., 131, 204, 335–336, 515–537, 619–620, 625, 769
Moore, D. D., 123, 127, 131, 521–522, 719
Mordecai, K., 110, 119, 133, 240, 349, 517–518, 691, 941, 1094
Morris, B., 484
Moving Traditions, 792–794, 796
Muszkat-Barkan, M., 654–655, 879–896, 1001–1018

N

Nemser, S. F., 19, 410, 651, 655, 880, 882, 908, 924, 927, 937–956, 963, 969, 981, 983, 985, 993, 1048, 1053, 1056–1058
Nicholls, J., 865–867, 869–870
Nietzsche, F., 285, 289–290
Nisan, M., 19, 328, 467, 879, 883–884, 896, 982–983, 993, 1002, 1006, 1010, 1017
NJPS, 249, 523, 680, 699, 805, 825, 908, 1042–1043
Nussbaum, M., 325, 348, 350, 582, 594
Nye, R., 302, 307–308

O

Oakeshott, M., 8, 286, 296–298, 331
Oeschlaeger, M., 393
Ofek, A., 76–77, 434
Orr, D., 390

Oser, F., 301, 304
Osgood, R. L., 1022
Osler, A., 37

P
Pajack, E., 883
Parker, M., 672, 909
Parker-Jenkins, M., 35, 44, 1111, 1113
Parsons, G., 1115–1116
Patkin, B., 1127, 1138
Patton, M. Q., 259
Pekarsky, D., 7, 19, 64, 277, 279, 319–332
Peters, R. S., 11, 18
Phillips, A., 365
Phillips, B. A., 825–827
Phillips, B., 479, 697, 710, 825, 828, 903–904, 908
Phinney, J. S., 173, 184, 193
Pilch, J., 122, 135, 939, 948
Piper, D., 868, 870–872
Plaskow, J., 99, 112, 168
Pollack, W. S., 785
Pomson, A., 1–4, 48, 86, 90, 94, 446, 450, 535, 555, 651–652, 713–724, 736, 901, 907, 909–910, 929, 938, 983, 989, 1090, 1147, 1149–1150
Porat, D., 443, 457
Prager, Y., 716, 721, 805, 814
Prell, R. -E., 47, 128, 131, 165, 170, 174, 719, 904–906, 908, 911, 1088

R
Raider-Roth, M., 411
Ratner, H., 1266
Raz-Krakotzkin, A., 484
Reimer, J., 16, 20, 121, 134, 260, 554, 652, 708, 710, 720, 769, 773–774, 778, 805–822, 849, 1050, 1053, 1058
Rein, R., 1265
Reisman, B., 615, 769, 773, 809–810, 983
Resnik, J., 1241–1242, 1249
Rinaldi, C., 72
Ritterband, P., 132–133, 657–659, 662, 667
Rodman, P., 431–433
Rokhlin, Z., 1187, 1191–1193, 1195
Rosenak, M., 7, 16, 19, 219, 233, 237–246, 278, 324, 336, 349, 355, 498, 510, 516, 552, 864
Rosenzweig, F., 220, 566, 683, 1212
Rosov, W., 847, 853, 969
Rotman, H., 1194–1195
Rubel, Y., 189, 1255
Rubin, N., 546, 555
Rubinstein, W. D., 1125–1128, 1130–1131, 1137–1138
Rushkoff, C., 605
Rutland, S., 270, 1125–1131, 1135, 1137–1138

S
Sacks, J. R., 270, 275–276, 298, 373, 562, 735, 1114, 1117
Sacks, K. B., 51
Sales, A. L., 65, 166, 170, 204, 249, 619–620, 769–770, 775–776, 778, 849, 869, 976, 1043, 1094, 1100
Salvador, J., 1207
Sampson, E. E., 53, 56
Sanders, J., 1282
Sarna, J., 48, 83–85, 117, 129–131, 133, 135, 165, 380, 454, 487, 543, 670, 715–716, 723, 807–808, 954, 1151
Sartre, K. P., 1157
Sasson, T., 204–205, 479, 503–504, 527, 619, 680, 953, 981, 983
Saxe, L., 65, 131, 166, 170, 204–205, 479, 499, 503, 526–527, 615, 619–620, 674, 680, 769–770, 775–776, 785, 811, 814–817, 825, 828, 829, 929, 981, 983, 1046, 1048, 1051, 1094–1095, 1100
Schaap, E., 66, 722, 749–763, 827–828, 1044–1045, 1050, 1100
Schachter, L., 76–77, 434
Schama, S., 394
Scharfstein, Z., 120
Schatzker, C., 462
Scheffler, I., 2, 12–19, 23, 25, 87, 219, 277, 295, 320–321, 328–329, 360, 864, 943
Schein, E., 94, 326, 703
Schein, J., 325, 546, 1011
Schick, M., 131, 692, 714, 716, 721, 730, 735, 743, 1024, 1068, 1088, 1092, 1094
Schiff, A. I., 125, 185–188, 429, 713
Schneirer, S., 102, 1073
Schnoor, R. F., 719–720, 901, 907, 1090, 1147, 1149, 1151
Schoenfeld, S., 187, 190, 545, 547–548, 550, 552, 693, 698, 1147, 1150
Schon, D., 257, 982
Schonfeld, S., 1109, 1119
Schuster, D. T., 170, 203, 669–687, 698, 904, 983, 985, 1097
Schwab, J. J., 925
Schwab, J., 18–19, 220, 325, 331, 375, 380–381
Schwartz, D., 1230
Schwartzwald, O., 1224

Schweber, S., 336, 461–476, 1072
Segal, A., 410, 442, 449
Senge, P., 326, 843–846, 849–850, 856–857
Shalom, Y. B., 620, 625–626, 1235–1250
Shamai, S., 268, 469, 1242
Sharon, F. -N., 19, 655, 937–956, 1048
Shenhav, Y., 1241, 1250
Shepherd, K., 1025
Shevitz, S., 69, 251, 257–258, 262–261, 270–271, 280, 651, 694, 696–697, 721, 843–858, 1100
Shire, M., 8, 32, 301–332
Shirky, C., 600–601, 603, 606, 780
Shkedi, A., 722, 879–880, 883–884, 895
Shohamy, E., 421, 424, 426, 428–429, 431
Short, G., 50, 58, 464, 467, 473, 564, 1115
Shulman, J., 583
Shulman, L. S., 375, 382, 582–584, 919, 961, 964, 967
Shulman, L., 506, 617, 952, 955
Silvera-Sasson, R., 680, 953
Silverman, J., 818–821
Simon, B., 1106
Sjostrom, L., 786, 796
Smith, C., 830–831, 833, 836
Smith, M. K., 33, 40, 507, 771–772, 867, 869, 871
Sneh, S., 1266–1268
Solomon, B., 17, 84–85, 302, 450, 555–556
Solomon, G., 1127, 1138
Soloveitchik, H., 124
Soloveitchik, J. B., 90, 125, 219–220, 226–229, 232, 287, 394, 566, 568
Soltis, J., 8, 11–15, 25
Sonntag, S., 348
Sparks, D., 962, 1050, 1052, 1054–1055, 1057
Spolsky, B., 424, 426
Starkey, H., 37
Steiner-Adair, C., 786, 796
Stern, M. H., 102, 124, 126, 130, 808
Stodolsky, S. S., 959–960, 966–967, 969, 972, 975, 981–983
Strauss, L., 110, 227–229

T
Tal Am, 68, 76, 1136, 1138, 1149
Tamir, E., 953
Tanchel, S., 384, 718, 925–926
Taymans, J. M., 1025
Tenenbaum, S., 660, 662
Terman, D. L., 1024
Timothy, D., 615, 622
Tolentino, B. W., 1006
Topel, M., 1255
Totten, S., 462–464
Tucker, J., 368
Turner, V., 541, 546
Tyler, R. W., 64–65, 1223–1224

U
Urry, J., 621

V
Valins, O., 50, 721, 1107, 1110–1111, 1113
Van Gennep, A., 541
Varenne, H., 59
Vos, I., 1280–1281
Vygotsky, L., 72

W
Walzer, M., 269, 271, 510
Wasserman, S., 583, 590, 592
Waxman, C., 732–736
Weber, M., 1223
Wechsler, H., 132, 134, 657–659, 662
Wei, R. C., 962, 1054–1055
Weinfeld, M., 1145
Wenger, E., 51, 54, 57
Wertheim, A. C., 1275
Wertheimer, J., 66, 80, 83, 125, 133, 135, 170, 190–191, 261, 356, 357, 556, 604, 692, 694, 710, 716, 721, 729, 738, 775, 825, 854, 856, 901, 904–905, 909, 933, 1043, 1082, 1084, 1087–1101
West, L. L., 1025
Westerhoff, J., 543, 695
Westley, F., 259
Wiggins, G., 65, 75
Wineburg, S., 442, 456–457, 473, 967
Winzer, M. A., 1021–1022
Witkin, R., 351
World Union of Jewish Studies, 665
Wyschograd, M., 394–395

Y
Yerushalmi, Y. H., 443–445, 447–448, 1042
York University, 126, 449, 758, 854, 1145, 1147, 1150
Yuval, I., 562

Z
Zadoff, E., 1267
Zakovitch, Y., 381, 885, 890
Zeichner, K. M., 798, 879, 883, 918–919, 923, 925
Zeldin, M., 84, 86, 91, 135, 555, 715, 717–718, 949–950, 1042
Zielenziger, R., 379–381, 384
Zimmerman, B., 259
Zunz, L., 657

Subject Index

A

Academic
  education programs, impact on, 797–798, 969, 972
  Hebrew, 424, 426, 428, 430, 435, 941, 943–944
  identity formation, 177, 184–185, 188–189, 442, 653
  North American, 657–667, 671, 813, 1043
  religion and ethnicity, 132–133, 149, 315, 376, 380–382, 445, 626, 709, 714–716, 794, 849–850, 1002–1004, 1009, 1074, 1114, 1116, 1119–1120, 1204, 1227, 1239
Academic Jewish Studies, 657–667
Adolescence, 127, 164, 169, 172–173, 191, 211, 216, 225, 306, 436, 453, 547, 786, 826–829, 835
Adolescents, 91, 129, 173, 184–185, 190, 205, 211, 224–225, 304, 312, 467–468, 502, 516, 547–548, 554–555, 654, 669, 709, 738, 785–799, 825–827, 829–830, 833–838, 1030, 1138, 1213
Adult education, 77, 79, 131, 170, 267, 319, 491, 499, 544, 573, 654, 672, 674, 676, 683, 685–686, 698, 862, 868, 871–872, 904, 908, 912, 929, 932, 1083, 1087, 1170, 1199, 1271
Adult Jewish
  educators, 679, 686
  identity, 24, 165, 170, 189–190, 203–216, 249
  learners, 671, 673–674
  learning marketplace, 679–687
  learning programs, 669–670, 674–679, 685, 687
Advocacy, 135, 151, 327–328, 396, 452, 491, 663, 715, 736, 741, 752, 762, 811, 1012, 1024–1027, 1032, 1034, 1060, 1091
Aesthetics, 220, 242, 348
Agudath Israel, 732, 734, 739
Alliance israelite universelle, 1083, 1205–1207
American Orthodoxy, 731–732, 735, 738, 741–742
Analytic philosophy of education, 11–26, 238–241
Anti-semitism, 134, 289, 292, 464, 468–469, 473, 475, 485, 543, 561, 633, 648–649, 657, 715, 902, 1042, 1127, 1144, 1163, 1172, 1174, 1211, 1256–1257
Anti-semitism and Anti-zionism, 1256
Anxiety, 37, 176, 224, 337, 547, 583, 585, 590, 592, 594–595, 738–739, 1101, 1171, 1212
Argumentation, 414, 461, 583, 585
Arts
  -based school, 355, 362–365, 367, 369–370
  in education, 356–358, 363
  -infused school, 355, 362–365
  integration, 362
  Midrash, 367–368
  skills, 364–365, 369
Assimilation, 41, 55, 58, 121, 123, 127, 157, 163, 429, 444, 481, 484–485, 696, 805, 818, 948, 1042, 1083, 1113, 1125, 1157–1158, 1170–1171, 1206, 1212, 1230, 1258, 1263, 1267, 1271, 1275, 1286
Attentive travel, 506–508
Authenticity, 60, 150, 158, 166–169, 177, 220, 227, 297, 485, 487, 505, 568, 616, 621, 1006, 1160
Autonomy, 69, 87, 93, 189, 240, 244, 269, 286–287, 290, 293–298, 573, 735, 838, 874, 886, 890, 1052, 1058, 1107, 1111, 1121, 1142, 1145, 1150, 1220, 1224, 1226, 1267

B
Baby Boomers and Jewish education, 658
Babylonian Talmud, 1, 109, 374, 507, 581, 583, 594, 997, 1022–1023
Bamah (The House for the Jewish Educator in Buenos Aires, Argentina), 1261–1264, 1269
Bar/bat mitzvah (bnei mitzvah), 203, 542, 545–554, 693–694, 707, 709, 825–828, 830, 833, 837, 839, 904, 906, 910–911, 913, 1046
Bava Metzia 33a, 582, 586, 591–594
Beauty, 109–111, 223, 309, 343, 345, 350, 355, 776, 834
Beit Midrash, 102–103, 107, 114, 374, 407–413, 529, 678, 706, 927, 949, 951, 993, 1004, 1019, 1071–1074, 1160
Beth Jacob, 948, 1073, 1076
Bialik School, 1236, 1240–1242, 1249–1250, 1255–1256, 1258
Bible, 19, 36, 49, 63, 99–100, 104, 106, 111, 128, 229–232, 243, 268, 288–291, 295, 309–310, 314, 319, 336–337, 356, 360–361, 365, 367–368, 370, 373–385, 390–392, 407, 419, 424, 441, 444, 446, 453, 480, 491, 493, 505, 545, 552, 556, 570, 658, 683, 850, 886, 925–926, 928, 930, 933, 940, 942–943, 946, 960–961, 967, 975, 989, 1069–1070, 1072, 1074, 1098, 1108, 1121, 1205, 1215, 1221, 1241, 1243, 1273
Birthright Israel, 22, 170, 205, 250, 256, 499, 503, 508, 526–527, 673, 770, 775, 805, 814–816, 1084, 1094, 1100
Body Image, 653, 788, 795–796, 798
British Columbia, 1143
Bulgarian Jewish community, 1169–1170, 1178
Bureaus of Jewish education (central agencies), 691, 693, 940, 942, 1055, 1101

C
Camping, 130–131, 208, 250, 306, 508, 770, 806, 817–819, 822, 912, 953, 1019, 1084, 1094–1095, 1101, 1168–1169
Canada, 267, 449, 457, 505, 659, 661, 691, 713, 845, 1081, 1084, 1141–1151
Case Studies, 30, 131, 260, 263, 279, 325, 551, 582, 584–585, 594–595, 626, 635, 652, 655, 710, 722, 781, 798, 886, 968, 1139, 1268–1269
Category formation, 270–271
Central Education committee, 1255, 1266, 1282
Central Europe, 129, 634, 657, 713, 1129, 1156–1158, 1163, 1168, 1172, 1177
Challenge, 29–44, 74, 79–80, 326–331, 425–427, 500–501, 590–591, 626–627, 666, 707, 713–724, 735–741, 776, 901–903, 960–961, 1074–1076, 1131, 1135, 1142–1149, 1167–1182, 1190, 1196–1198, 1244–1246, 1253–1269
Challenges and dilemmas in teaching and learning, 1136
Change
  cultural, 327, 394, 822, 1042
  educational, 175, 248, 258–260, 328, 834, 849, 920, 924, 1045, 1100, 1138
  systemic, 601, 794–798
Character education, 128, 379–381
Charedi (Haredi Jewish school), 30, 1107–1109, 1111–1113, 1119–1120, 1186
Chavrusa, 51
Chevruta, 352, 988, 1161
Child development associates (CDA) degree, 753, 763
Childhood, 203–216, 301–316, 749–764
Children, 307–314, 905–910
Choice, 791, 1087–1101, 1212–1214
Christianity, 34, 85, 107, 112, 147, 287, 302, 310, 563–576, 603, 643, 1116–1118, 1205–1206, 1210
Citizenship, 30–31, 33, 41, 83, 90, 113, 153, 287, 336, 442, 448, 450–452, 454–455, 462, 464, 469, 475, 521–522, 582, 644, 947, 1030, 1159, 1273
The Classical Jewish Text Model, 484, 490
The Classical Zionist model, 484–485, 490, 1257
Climate change, 389, 399
Coaching, 879, 881–882, 907, 963, 1005, 1029, 1052, 1055
Code, 49, 102, 215, 330, 343–346, 350, 565, 595, 602, 788, 1207, 1231
Collaborative team teaching, 1031
Collective identity, 183–187, 192, 194, 449, 523, 549, 768–769, 1145
Collective memory, 336, 445, 449, 471, 635–638, 640–641, 643–644, 992
“Committed core” of adult Jewish learners, 675–676
Communal funding, 663, 665, 1121, 1132
Communication, 254, 256, 309, 322, 365, 408, 410, 422, 428, 430, 433–434, 451–452, 466, 469, 497, 529, 551, 562, 597, 599–603, 610, 617, 624, 660, 694–695,

697, 757, 789, 791, 819, 914, 965, 973, 975, 1043, 1076–1077, 1118, 1135, 1142, 1165, 1191, 1218, 1279
Community
cohesion, 30–39, 41–43, 564
engagement, 29–44, 564, 1216
of learners, 254, 797, 851, 1056
Schools, 84, 131, 279, 451, 743, 948, 1027, 1106, 1138, 1192, 1254–1255, 1260, 1263, 1265–1266, 1268
The Comparative Model, 484, 489–490
Competition, 41, 119, 392, 522, 526, 606, 610, 695, 717, 732–744, 792, 817, 906, 1129, 1147, 1169, 1192, 1217
Complementary schooling, 1042, 1214
Complexity theory, 254, 256, 259
Congregational religious schools, 833, 1042
Congregational (supplementary) schools, 1088–1090
Conservative Judaism, 276, 671, 686, 702, 1012, 1092
Constructivism, 70–72, 756
Consultant teacher/push-in, 1032
Contextual orientation, 383–384, 926
Continuity, 47–51, 56, 58, 92, 100, 120, 196–197, 248, 261, 296, 319, 338, 403, 427, 429, 442, 444, 448, 457, 464, 486, 501–502, 515, 582, 604–605, 607, 669, 699–700, 735–741, 743–744, 754, 758, 806, 809–811, 818–819, 825, 830, 834, 838, 847, 893, 906, 947, 983, 985, 1023, 1030, 1065, 1090, 1119, 1134, 1147, 1150, 1168, 1171, 1173, 1261, 1286
Contract, 78, 135, 295, 517, 680, 971, 976, 994, 1088, 1134, 1142, 1203–1204, 1214–1215
Core concepts, 14, 91–92, 952
Cost, 15, 43, 69–70, 105, 331, 356, 551, 568, 589, 598, 661, 721, 741, 743, 760, 818, 905, 912, 922, 1026, 1029–1030, 1033, 1051, 1075, 1100–1101, 1106–1107, 1111, 1131–1133, 1143, 1146, 1148, 1172, 1189, 1196, 1282
Costs of Jewish Living, 1101
Costs of schooling, *see* Cost
Counter-enlightenment, 285, 287–289
Critical thinking, 9, 330, 337, 364, 369, 392, 411, 442, 453, 456, 470, 583, 585, 590, 592–594, 682, 718, 736, 1006, 1016
Critique, 16–18, 87, 104, 108, 110, 124, 175, 192, 224, 248, 270, 276, 278, 280, 285–288, 292–295, 297–298, 301, 305, 315, 320, 393, 402, 442, 447, 474, 483–486, 492–493, 521, 566–567, 572, 594–595, 753, 846, 851–852, 866, 884–885, 889, 891–892, 894, 919, 923–925, 1027, 1113, 1117, 1184
Cross-communal, 653, 862–865, 875, 1189
Cultural analysis, 48, 54–58
Cultural change, 327, 394, 822, 1042
Cultural competence, 343, 509
Cultural education, 9, 47–60, 144, 150, 394, 986, 1114–1115, 1242
Culture, 47–60, 93–94, 145, 175–176, 340–341, 641–642, 1165–1166, 1237
Curricula, 63–81, 83–95, 432–433, 472–475, 573–577, 788–791, 1097–1099
Curriculum
analysis, 571, 920
integration, 83–95, 275, 454, 556

D

Dance, 330–331, 346, 355–357, 359–361, 368, 856, 942, 1094, 1198
Day schools, 83–95, 355–370, 713–724, 729–744, 946–949, 1107–1111, 1126–1133, 1278–1281
DCSF, 29–30, 33, 37, 39
Definitions of education
descriptive, 13
programmatic, 13
stipulative, 13
DeLeT (Day School Leadership Through Teaching) Program, 948–951, 954–955
Democracy, 88, 144, 151, 268–269, 451, 464, 472, 498, 756, 869, 947, 1075, 1223, 1236, 1241, 1250, 1267
Democratic learning, 86, 451, 950
Demography, 38, 486, 500, 599, 610
Dialogue, 41, 50, 54, 56, 58–59, 71, 73, 76, 79, 144, 167, 230–233, 276, 295, 327, 395, 398, 402, 415, 427, 466, 503–504, 517–518, 522, 536–537, 568, 571, 592, 598, 635, 637–638, 643–644, 673, 787–789, 792, 795–799, 817, 820–822, 882, 886, 888–890, 914, 987, 1163, 1243, 1246, 1248
Dialogue between educators and philanthropists, 821–822
Diaspora, 419–438, 527, 534, 618–619, 633–649
Digital, 338, 423, 428, 597–612, 671, 676
Dis-assimilation, 1083, 1157–1158
Disciplines of knowledge, 88–89
Discourse, 275–277, 516–522, 951–952

Diversity, 2–3, 30–31, 33, 42, 44, 57, 86, 114, 189, 191, 197, 269–271, 273, 276–277, 291–292, 368, 391, 393, 470, 509, 520, 566, 573, 658, 661, 663, 666, 721, 732–744, 768, 785, 797, 863–865, 875, 906, 1022, 1026–1027, 1084, 1092–1093, 1110, 1112–1113, 1116, 1120, 1128, 1165, 1195, 1235, 1241, 1269
Diversity of student body, 720

E
Early childhood, 65–66, 68, 70–72, 306, 433, 653, 681, 749–764
Early childhood education, 2, 653, 681, 749–764, 1043, 1046, 1071–1072, 1187
Education, 11–26, 47–60, 65–66, 77–79, 87–89, 99–115, 117–135, 143–198, 203–205, 219–234, 237–246, 247–263, 267–282, 285–298, 319–332, 355–370, 389–403, 428–431, 443–448, 461–476, 479–495, 497–511, 525–528, 536, 541–557, 561–578, 616, 709, 749–764, 767–782, 787–788, 794–798, 805–822, 825–839, 846–851, 879–896, 903–911, 917–933, 944–945, 951–954, 959–978, 984, 1021–1035, 1041–1060, 1063–1077, 1087–1101, 1105–1121, 1125–1139, 1141–1151, 1155–1166, 1167–1201, 1203–1218, 1219–1232, 1237, 1244–1246, 1253–1269, 1276–1277
Educational challenges, 106, 114, 390, 541, 977, 1075, 1136, 1148, 1162, 1173, 1198
Educational choices, 190, 654, 833, 905–906, 1090, 1119
Educational decision making, 905
Educational leadership development, 679, 1006
Educational professionalism, 118–121, 938, 1041, 1170
Educational slogans, 13, 23
Education and Inspections Act 2006, 30, 33, 37, 564
Educators in Jewish Schools Study (EJSS), 1042–1047, 1051–1054
Elite religion, 548
Emancipation, 55, 164, 245, 287–289, 441, 444, 713, 1162, 1205–1207, 1211, 1266, 1273–1275
Empowerment, 550, 606, 787, 790, 797, 799, 830, 865–867, 873, 875, 1161, 1236, 1262
Emunah, 296, 305
Enclave culture, 1064
Enculturation (in contrast to instruction), 543, 696
Enculturation and instruction, 696
Engagement of families in Jewish life, 750, 760
Enlightenment, 83, 164, 245, 285–298, 377, 420, 441, 444, 566, 604, 616, 657, 713–714, 871, 1066, 1208, 1221, 1230, 1273
Enrollment
    day schools, 131, 721, 947, 1082, 1145, 1148
    supplementary schools, 1148
Environmental crisis, 389–392, 395
Ethics, 11, 18, 49, 78, 145, 168, 224, 226, 228, 270, 286, 295, 331, 484, 489, 498, 567, 791, 942, 1070
Ethnic identity, 124, 169, 173, 183–184, 192–193, 195, 427, 546, 646, 717, 1108, 1110
Ethnicity, 38, 43, 145, 158, 173, 184, 517, 609, 626, 1110, 1148
Ethos, 33–36, 51, 90, 143–144, 150–151, 153, 156–158, 225–226, 229, 279, 391, 485, 497, 866, 870, 940, 1087, 1106–1107, 1231, 1235–1236, 1242, 1247–1250
Evaluation, 9, 21, 35, 71, 80, 159, 164, 168, 175, 190, 248, 250, 259, 271, 297–298, 315, 322, 324–325, 329, 331, 408, 430, 437, 495, 502, 520, 527–528, 555, 565, 621, 777, 780, 848–849, 851, 853–855, 882, 922, 929–931, 969–970, 973, 975, 1043, 1055–1056, 1058, 1066, 1139, 1183–1184, 1193, 1200, 1249, 1257
Experiential learning, 509, 511, 651, 681, 773, 775, 807, 850
Experimentation, 173, 176, 178, 253, 262, 603, 700, 710–711, 845, 849, 943, 954, 1058, 1084, 1162

F
Facebook, 25, 681
Faith based school, 33–34, 44, 564, 1145–1146
Faith development, 177, 301–302, 304–305, 756
Faith schools, 30, 33, 35, 37–38, 40, 42–43, 1113–1114, 1120
Feminist theory, 102–105
First language, 393, 419–427, 435–437, 1258
Foreign language, 68, 77, 421–423, 425–429, 435, 1196

Former Soviet Union, 185, 423, 426, 432, 435, 665, 730, 1084, 1147, 1168, 1183–1201, 1236, 1242–1244
Foundation for Jewish Camp, 249, 788, 796, 817–820, 1091, 1094, 1189
Foundations, 443–448, 817–820, 981–982
Four frames, 253, 256
FSU, 1085, 1183–1191, 1193–1201, 1227, 1242–1244, 1249–1250
Functional vs. visionary congregations, 708
Funding, 9, 23, 29–30, 41–43, 66, 69, 80, 135, 190, 250, 499, 508, 659, 663, 664–665, 667, 676, 691, 698–699, 701, 736, 743–744, 808, 810–811, 819, 848, 853, 856, 933, 949, 974, 1024, 1026, 1033, 1058, 1067–1068, 1093–1094, 1099–1101, 1105–1121, 1130, 1132–1133, 1145–1146, 1193, 1195, 1262

G

Gateway to Jewish life, 847
Gender
  difference, 173–174, 585, 617
  issue, 653, 785–799
  separation, 733–734, 1111, 1229
Globalization, 419–420, 422, 425, 437–438, 597, 846, 1084, 1256, 1258–1261, 1265, 1268–1269
Glocal relationship, 520
Godly play, 309
Governance, 285, 759, 764, 907–908
Grammar of (congregational) schooling, 696–697
Grammar of congregations, 696
Grammar schools, 1106, 1108–1111, 1114, 1126

H

Haredi, 378, 408, 627, 652, 729–735, 737–741, 1025, 1063–1077, 1099, 1130, 1148, 1175
Hassidism, 350, 547, 608, 1109
Havruta
  learners, 409–414
  learning, 407–415
  practices, 412–413
Hebraization, 1256, 1265
Hebrew in Diaspora, 428–432
Hebrew for immigrants, 419, 421, 425–427, 437
Hebrew language study, 618, 661, 1265
Hebrew for minority groups, 419, 421
Hebrew for native speakers, 421
Hebrew Teachers Colleges, 655, 938–942, 944, 955
Hebrew University, Melton Centre for Jewish Education, 19, 431, 485, 491, 573, 933, 1135–1136, 1139
Hegemony, 51, 59–60, 290, 391–393, 420, 442, 562, 604, 1238, 1253
Hevruta, 78–79, 352, 890–891, 894–895, 927–928, 951, 970, 988, 1072, 1161
Historical inquiry, 446–448, 456
Historiography, 9, 117–135, 444, 446
History
  education, 336, 441–458
  Jewish, 22, 60, 105, 121, 129, 134–135, 166, 173, 222, 288, 292, 336, 356, 377–378, 390, 441–458, 484, 491, 516, 524, 562, 566, 576, 639–640, 647, 658, 660, 662, 675, 940, 942, 1069, 1108, 1156, 1172, 1180, 1185, 1187, 1193, 1198, 1215, 1274, 1281–1282, 1284
History of
  spoken Hebrew, 379, 420, 431, 438, 943, 1098, 1285
  written Hebrew, 420, 1098
Holocaust
  -based trips, 471
  education, 39, 41, 129, 336, 461–476
Human Authority, 585, 590–594
Humanization, 144, 149–152
Hungary, 469, 666, 1054, 1063, 1165, 1167–1170, 1172, 1181

I

Identification, 8, 22, 53–54, 123, 144, 156–159, 170, 173, 184–195, 197–198, 213, 238, 244, 253, 277, 303–304, 327–328, 429, 442, 445–450, 452, 456–457, 467–468, 473, 486, 505, 511, 516, 527, 550, 607–608, 620, 662, 667, 697, 722, 723, 729–731, 741–743, 755, 827, 861, 884–885, 887, 889, 891–894, 992–993, 1012, 1025, 1082, 1138, 1173, 1222, 1259
Identity
  national, 157, 159, 399, 484, 644–645, 1089, 1230, 1244, 1247
  religious, 29, 52, 157, 169, 302, 304, 568, 603, 607, 626, 736, 833, 990, 1006, 1091, 1162, 1177, 1225, 1271–1286
Ideological education, 1219–1232
Ideological orientation/Ideologies, 174, 470, 879–880, 883, 895, 1135, 1186, 1192, 1220

Ideology, 25, 60, 197, 206, 239–240, 250, 268–269, 271, 277, 289–290, 292–293, 392, 398, 425, 429, 444, 481–482, 490, 493–495, 502, 516, 520–521, 536, 562, 635–636, 654, 713, 735–738, 884–885, 887, 889–895, 906, 940, 989, 1017, 1065, 1074, 1076, 1139, 1186, 1198–1199, 1220–1221, 1225, 1227, 1230–1231, 1237, 1240, 1276
Impact on Jewish identity, 621
Implicit religion (religiosity), 144–149
Independent schools, 30, 361, 704, 1048, 1082, 1106, 1110–1111, 1116–1117, 1119, 1126
Indian Jewish community, 620, 1176, 1181
Influence, 4, 7–9, 13, 18–19, 43, 65, 94, 107, 123, 127, 133, 150, 164, 178, 184, 186–191, 193, 201, 203, 205, 209–210, 213, 215–216, 230, 251, 274, 276, 280, 287–288, 290, 294, 297, 325, 330–331, 342, 347, 352, 374–375, 380–382, 395, 398, 422, 437, 473, 532, 551, 562–563, 572, 576, 597–598, 657, 673, 707, 714, 738, 740, 759, 775, 806, 815–816, 827–828, 833–835, 837–838, 844, 855, 864, 895–896, 903, 905–906, 908, 911–913, 932, 984–986, 988–989, 991, 993, 1011, 1042, 1044, 1052, 1054, 1056, 1059–1060, 1101, 1121, 1145, 1169, 1219–1221, 1256, 1265, 1268, 1276, 1279
Informal
  education, 3, 16–17, 20, 22, 41, 120, 185, 190–191, 241, 280, 316, 319, 441, 466, 470
  Jewish education, 20, 65, 131, 145, 149, 191, 208, 211, 479, 608, 622, 652, 719, 767–774, 778, 785, 789, 805–822, 826–827, 850, 912, 1045, 1083, 1094, 1096, 1131, 1139, 1188
Infrastructures, 40, 322, 326, 390, 425, 525, 527, 750, 976, 1058, 1065, 1100, 1132, 1168, 1226, 1261, 1263
In-marriage, 206–211, 214–215
Innovations in Israeli Schools, 156, 424, 529–530, 533–534, 576, 597, 619, 1005, 1083, 1137, 1236, 1241, 1243
Inquiry, 12, 50, 54–55, 72–73, 89, 91, 113–114, 117, 123, 126–128, 220, 239, 241, 290, 316, 328–331, 336–337, 375, 381, 409, 441–442, 446–448, 451, 453, 456, 466, 471, 595, 687, 716, 723, 743, 757, 797–798, 850, 857, 894, 913, 918, 924, 966, 970, 974–975, 1002, 1018, 1035, 1048, 1055, 1158
Inspiration, 18, 63, 105, 111, 133, 341, 508, 511, 573, 637–638, 718, 815, 928, 984, 988–989, 991, 993, 1159, 1205
Institute for Informal Jewish Education, 812–814
Instrument, 23, 94, 125, 151, 171, 203–204, 216, 240, 295, 314, 345, 356, 391, 393–394, 421, 431, 485, 494, 528, 537, 555, 624, 645, 693, 713, 771, 776–777, 781, 816, 844, 875, 945, 982–984, 988–989, 991, 993, 995, 1147, 1158–1159, 1180, 1210, 1225
Integration, 9, 17, 30–32, 40–41, 47, 83–95, 121–122, 124, 129, 144–145, 156, 166, 189, 192, 195, 198, 228, 236–237, 275, 419, 427–428, 448, 454–455, 547–548, 551, 555–556, 652, 666, 672, 713–714, 717–719, 723, 762, 798, 1013–1014, 1021, 1023, 1109, 1111, 1113–1114, 1125, 1127–1128, 1137, 1139, 1185, 1187, 1198, 1204, 1210, 1220–1221
Intellect, 40, 51, 78, 83, 86, 101–102, 125, 132–133, 149, 151, 158, 168, 174–175, 186, 188, 221–222, 224, 227, 239, 258, 271, 280–281, 285–286, 289, 326, 328–331, 336–337, 346, 357, 361, 376, 379–380, 393, 396, 411, 442, 445–448, 455–456, 468, 519–521, 574, 593–595, 600, 606, 626, 660, 666, 673, 675, 679, 682–683, 716–717, 723, 735, 816, 834, 865, 874, 883, 920–921, 924, 937, 951–952, 955, 970, 984, 988–989, 991–992, 1010, 1016, 1027, 1043, 1052–1053, 1055, 1065, 1073–1074, 1148, 1157, 1162–1163, 1203, 1211, 1238–1239, 1248, 1282
Intelligence, 153, 254, 358–359, 821, 944–945
Interdependence, 33, 194, 274, 398–400, 411, 519, 536, 822, 1006
Interfaith families, 177, 551, 681, 825–839
Islam, 2, 34, 147, 287–288, 376, 561–563, 565, 569–571, 576–577, 1113, 1115, 1117–1118, 1139, 1170, 1179, 1205
Israel
  Education Design, 491–492
  Education Studies, 491
Israel engagement, 350, 484–486, 490, 498, 503, 505, 508–511, 981, 983
The Israel Engagement Model, 484–486, 490

Israelite, 34, 107, 231, 311, 373, 441, 622, 1083, 1205–1207, 1209, 1211, 1216, 1274–1275, 1279
Israel studies, 129, 491, 660, 665–666, 775, 1136, 1167
Israel trip, 24, 203, 207, 483, 491, 526, 655, 669, 672–673, 678, 698–699, 720, 769, 812, 817, 926, 929, 972–973, 983–984, 987, 1082, 1094
Italy, 72, 178, 666, 1021, 1163, 1215
Ivrit b'Ivrit, 379, 384, 737, 941

J

JELED, 1285
"The Jerusalem School", 19, 1194
Jesus, 107, 313, 465, 471, 509, 561, 566–569, 574–575, 608
Jewish
  Arab Encounter, 1245
  citizenship, 450–452, 454, 521–522
  culture, 47–48, 50, 57, 106, 117, 120, 130, 145, 176, 186, 188–189, 196, 324, 330, 340–342, 382, 395, 400, 402, 427, 433, 442, 485, 487, 489, 565, 608, 642, 665, 684, 695, 716–717, 808, 861, 884, 887, 889–890, 892, 906, 909, 945, 1011–1013, 1064, 1096–1097, 1128, 1155, 1158–1159, 1161–1162, 1165–1166, 1241, 1282, 1285
  environmental education, 337, 394–398, 400–403
  friendships, 8, 204–205, 209, 215–216, 818
Jewish day school
  community, 718, 951
  conservative, 717, 721, 736
  reform, 556, 717, 1015
Jewish history, 441–458, 468, 484, 491, 524, 535, 562, 566, 576, 618, 635, 639–640, 647, 658, 660, 662, 675, 736, 940, 942, 1069, 1172, 1180, 1187, 1198, 1215, 1274, 1281–1282
Jewish identity
  authenticity, 60, 166–169, 177
  complexity, 197, 473, 607
  components, 158, 183, 185–186
  developmental approaches, 1049
  dissonance and, 166–167, 176–178, 990
  educational cultures, 167, 174–176
  ethnicity and, 173, 1110
  Jewish survivalism, 22, 164–165
  levels, 164
  measurement, 56, 164, 197
  measuring, 164, 186
  pedagogical approaches, 174–175
  space, 183–198
  spirituality, 168–169
  tradition, 168–169
Jewish journey, 639–640, 649, 706, 761, 772, 868–869, 875, 910
Jewish life, 1–3, 7, 20, 23, 40, 48, 59, 63–64, 67, 70–71, 74–76, 79, 83–85, 108, 113–114, 145, 159, 163–166, 170, 174, 177, 188, 216, 240, 243–246, 249–250, 278–279, 286–287, 289–293, 298, 306, 319–322, 324, 326–327, 329–332, 335, 340, 342, 359, 378, 385, 395, 400, 429, 441–442, 447, 449, 451, 454, 475, 480, 482–486, 488–490, 495, 497–498, 501, 503, 505, 507–511, 516, 518, 530, 541–557, 576, 596–598, 602–605, 607, 610, 612, 633, 638, 669–670, 673–674, 676, 679, 684, 705–706, 717, 754, 759–762, 808, 826–827, 834, 847, 938, 1010, 1013, 1082, 1090, 1093–1096, 1099, 1147, 1155, 1157, 1159–1160, 1164, 1173–1175, 1178, 1194, 1197, 1215, 1280, 1282
Jewish literacy, 70, 78, 102, 163, 177, 536, 669–670, 673–676, 682, 716, 945–946, 950, 1099
Jewish Movements, 657, 1063
Jewish Peoplehood, 335–336, 449, 484, 486, 490, 515–537, 620, 635, 863, 989, 993
The Jewish Peoplehood Model, 484, 486, 490
Jewish philanthropists, 651, 658, 806, 811, 817–818, 821–822
Jewish setting, 74, 129, 178, 243, 466, 473, 505, 553, 686, 769, 780, 1034, 1047, 1285
Jewish social networks, 8, 187, 204–216, 669, 672
Jewish studies (higher education), 132–134, 653, 657, 666, 1057
Jewish summer camps, 22, 24, 170, 255, 485, 616, 618, 620, 622–623, 625, 769–770, 772, 776, 807, 810, 817–818, 822, 853, 909, 912
Jewish Texts, 1, 41, 49, 51, 67, 76, 90, 100–102, 105, 128, 164, 173, 230, 341, 365, 368, 407, 411, 413, 415, 430, 436, 488–490, 494, 567, 574, 582, 584, 603, 661, 682, 714–716, 718, 789, 791, 794, 797, 849, 891, 950–951, 1011, 1035, 1042, 1096, 1148, 1157, 1164, 1186, 1193, 1249

Jewish travel, 306, 335, 500, 507–508, 618–619, 625–626, 633–649, 769
Joint Distribution Committee, 1096, 1168, 1185, 1189, 1254
Judaism, 122–124, 163, 221, 223–227, 243–246, 395, 401–402, 517, 543, 565–566, 570, 582, 603–605, 619, 681, 698, 705, 719, 791–792, 887, 941, 948, 991, 1015, 1063–1064, 1071–1073, 1076–1077, 1117–1119, 1130, 1133, 1147, 1159, 1196–1197, 1200, 1209, 1259–1260, 1281–1282, 1285
Justice
  education, 144, 156
  social, 33, 167, 452, 509–510, 605, 706, 1019, 1052, 1250, 1259

K
Kedma School, 1236–1240
Keshet School, 1236, 1246–1248
Kipen, Israel, 1128

L
Landlord, 986, 988–990, 996, 1143
Language and literature, 505, 510, 658, 661, 940, 1160–1161
Leadership development and adult Jewish learning, 670, 684–685
Learning
  and development outcomes, 751
  organization, 651, 843–858
Liberal Judaism, 224
Liberal and radical feminism, 113
Literary criticism orientation, 383
Literature
  education, 84, 410, 442, 462, 465, 472
  jewish, 312–314, 336, 510, 595, 1099
Liturgy, 147, 309, 548, 704, 857, 942–943, 991, 1285
LJG (Reform Jewish Community, Netherlands), 1283–1286
Lost objects, 586–587, 591–592, 594

M
Maimonides Jewish comprehensive school, 457
Management, 35, 60, 759, 764, 866, 904, 945, 950, 955, 1016–1017, 1032, 1239
Market conditions, 744
Marketing perspective, 815, 817
Maturity, 222–224, 226, 309, 425, 502
Meaning
  jewish, 95, 165, 495, 503, 543, 807, 993
  personal, 169, 171, 280, 358, 368, 409, 542, 669, 673, 682, 836, 893, 947, 993, 1117
Media, 44, 357, 385, 420, 423, 427, 435, 472, 482, 491, 569, 598, 600, 602–603, 605, 671, 674, 676, 767, 770, 779–780, 787, 791, 921–922, 1098, 1285
Melton Bible Curriculum, 380–381
Mentoring, 69, 369, 654, 685, 739, 862, 879–896, 1010, 1051, 1053, 1055, 1057–1058
Midrash, 1, 102–103, 107, 114, 174, 280, 288, 291, 311–312, 346, 367–368, 374, 376–377, 385, 402, 407–415, 451, 488, 529, 595, 684, 706, 926–927, 951, 991, 993, 1004, 1019, 1071–1074, 1160
Mifgash/encounter, 526–527
Migrant workers, 1236, 1240
Mimetic vs. transformative education, 374, 961
Miracles, 78, 229–232, 438, 638, 946, 1285
Mitnagdim, 1066–1067
Modern Orthodox, 84, 87, 102, 106, 123–125, 287–288, 568, 608, 692, 730–741, 791, 953, 1084, 1129, 1133, 1219, 1225, 1231, 1260, 1286
Montreal, 811, 1084, 1143–1150, 1231
Moral education, 16, 144–145, 152–156, 241, 718
Moral inclination, 312
Motivation to learn, 551
Multicultural education, 394, 1114–1115, 1242
Multiculturalism, 57, 268, 427, 562, 564, 646, 716, 1110–1112, 1114, 1116, 1120, 1129, 1144, 1149, 1156, 1213, 1235, 1241, 1250
Multidimensional model, 195, 197
Multidisciplinary, 88, 337
Multiple Identity, 518, 609
Multiple intelligences, 358
Music, 39–40, 130, 186, 188, 257, 306, 310, 340–342, 346, 355–361, 363–367, 422, 454, 480, 491, 644, 684, 733, 755, 869, 942–943, 990, 1026, 1067, 1194, 1198, 1229
Muslim schools, 1112–1114, 1286

N
NAA, 779, 810–812
National Curriculum, 33, 37, 39, 301, 304, 468–469, 1113, 1115, 1117, 1277, 1282
Nationality, 517, 522–523, 527, 609, 615, 617, 621–622, 1197, 1205, 1211–1212, 1229, 1274, 1279

National Jewish Population Study, 207, 522, 670, 673, 675, 695, 699, 740, 947, 1090
National sovereignty, 286, 293, 297–298, 510, 1273
Network
  Jewish, 189, 203–216
  social, 8, 32, 186–188, 204–216, 261, 474, 518, 524, 551, 605, 607, 669, 672, 675, 681, 780, 867, 1257
Neve Shalom, 1236–1237, 1244–1247, 1249–1250
NIK (Dutch Israelite community), 1275–1276, 1282–1286
Normative philosophy of education, 238–240
Norms, 4, 17, 32, 95, 107, 127, 154, 166, 176, 228, 233, 238–239, 242, 269, 392, 394, 411, 414, 420–421, 434, 444, 543, 548, 552, 562, 573, 602–603, 720, 733, 739, 786, 812, 902, 906, 908, 913, 928, 965–967, 1043, 1069, 1081, 1133, 1203
North Africa, 286–287, 441, 469, 619, 1209, 1211–1214
NPIK (Dutch Portuguese Israelite Community), 1275

O
Observer, 122, 206, 319, 471, 529, 622, 735, 739–740, 869, 876, 929, 937, 946, 986–988, 996, 1101
Ontario, 845, 1142–1143, 1145, 1150
Organizational change, 718, 759
Organizational structure, 687, 1219, 1225–1226, 1229, 1267
Organized anarchies, 251, 256
Orientations
  ideological, 174, 470, 879–880, 883, 895, 1135, 1186, 1192, 1220
  mentoring, 887, 889–895
Orthodox Jewish education, 23, 1084, 1106
Orthodox Judaism, 85, 275–277, 288, 864
Orthodoxy, 102, 114, 123, 125, 286–289, 291, 296, 652, 731–739, 741–742, 744, 1074–1075, 1108, 1127, 1177, 1196, 1198, 1213–1214, 1217, 1253, 1255, 1260, 1275
Outcomes
  developmental, 751, 754, 761, 763
  educational, 183–187, 195, 332, 888, 1051, 1235
  identity, 8, 174, 203, 205–207, 215
  student, 70, 135, 655, 965, 975, 1030, 1032, 1054, 1056–1060

P
Paideia, 1083, 1156–1162, 1164–1165
Paraprofessionals, 673, 1032–1033
Parental expectations, 914, 1090
Parenting, 589, 606, 673, 681, 740–741, 904, 908, 1064
Parent school involvement, 908, 913, 1034
Parshanut, 381
Particularistic, 57, 268–269, 278, 304, 390, 563, 649, 659, 664, 1224, 1230, 1241
Patriarchal cultures, 101, 105, 107
Pedagogical content knowledge, 337, 883, 891, 895, 919–920, 928, 961, 964–965, 967, 972–974
Pedagogies
  of contextualization, 1007, 1011–1013, 1015, 1017
  of formation, 1006, 1013–1015
  of interpretation, 1006–1007, 1015–1016
  of performance, 1007, 1016
PEJE, 249, 852, 854, 1022, 1024, 1026, 1091
PELIE, 700–701, 705, 1091
Pendulum Theory, 981, 1254, 1268
Peoplehood, 166–167, 191, 220, 335–336, 484, 486–487, 490, 501, 515–537, 607, 634–647, 863, 989, 993
Personal autonomy, 269, 287, 298, 735
Personalism, 222–223
Personnel in Jewish Education, 1041–1060, 1088
Phenomenology of religion, 572, 575
Philanthropy, 20, 543, 551, 664, 670, 673, 776, 805–822, 853, 1090, 1101, 1207, 1263
Philosophy of Israel Education, 491
Pilgrim, 507, 987, 990–992, 995–996
Pilgrimage, 178, 470, 488, 507, 511, 615, 617–620, 622, 642, 776, 990–992
Place, 357–358, 399–400, 431–432, 543–544, 639, 965, 985–987
Planning, 92–93, 247–263, 551, 1029
Plato, 238, 294, 296, 328, 1238
Pluralism, 267–282, 562–563, 1012–1013, 1087–1101
Policy, 551, 976–977, 1056–1059
Posek, 890–891, 893–895
Post bar/bat mitzvah, 551, 707, 709, 825–828, 830, 833, 837, 839
Post-communist communities, 1173
Post-enlightenment, 286, 295–298, 657
Post-Zionism, 292, 463

Practice, 11–26, 29–44, 47–60, 63–81, 83–95, 99–115, 117–135, 143–159, 163–178, 183–198, 203–216, 219–234, 237–246, 247–263, 267–282, 285–298, 301–316, 319–332, 350–351, 483–492, 503, 520–521, 843–858, 968
Practitioner Enquiry, 654, 917–933
Praxis, 10, 18, 59, 247–263, 267, 279, 798–799
“Praxis” planning, 8, 257–263
Pre-kindergarten, 750–751, 763
Pre-service, 381, 436, 471, 474, 654, 880, 1028, 1047–1048, 1050–1051, 1053, 1059
Private Jewish foundations, 809
Private school, 42, 95, 125, 261, 716, 721, 754, 905, 1035, 1068, 1082, 1126, 1130, 1132–1133, 1193, 1203–1204, 1235, 1274, 1276
Professional development, 68–69, 777–779, 794–795, 880–885, 922–923, 959–978, 981–997, 1053–1056
Professional identity, 655, 1001–1003, 1005–1008, 1010, 1012–1013, 1017–1018, 1139
Professional learning community, 951, 985, 1058
Professional preparation, 930, 937, 944–945, 952, 955, 960, 1002–1003, 1007–1008
Progressive education, 84, 124, 129, 415, 756
Protestant schools, 1143
Psychoanalytic, 465–466
Public school, 84, 118, 121, 123–124, 188–189, 356, 358, 421, 450–451, 461, 471, 552–553, 563, 693–694, 696, 710, 715–717, 719, 721, 751, 758, 786, 830, 846, 886, 905–906, 913, 940, 944, 949, 1001, 1004, 1014, 1019, 1025, 1034, 1045, 1048, 1050, 1052–1054, 1126, 1142–1146, 1235, 1243

Q
Quality indicators, 752–753
Quebec, 1142–1143

R
Rabbi-educator, 655, 1001–1018
Rabbinic commentary, 111, 377, 380
Rational planning, 248, 251–253, 256–257
Rav-U-Moreh, 890–895
Readiness, 222, 226, 262, 410, 751, 895, 1162, 1248
Reciprocal relationship, 525
Recruit/Recruitment, 50, 132, 232, 247, 249, 254, 380, 501–502, 551, 617, 623, 625, 654–655, 707, 714, 720, 741, 751, 812, 814, 816, 849, 866, 937, 942, 949, 951–953, 1041, 1044, 1046, 1048–1052, 1057, 1059, 1087, 1091, 1099, 1100, 1133, 1135, 1194, 1203–1204, 1213, 1266
Reflection, 8, 19, 48, 55, 89, 111, 147, 156, 222–223, 228, 237, 242–244, 257, 260, 304, 308, 320, 367, 475, 504, 532–533, 585, 598, 601, 609, 634–635, 675, 738, 751, 756–757, 767, 774, 791–792, 795, 797–799, 835–836, 850, 854–855, 880, 896, 914, 921, 923–924, 926, 928, 930, 948, 955, 966, 990, 993, 996, 1005–1006, 1016, 1076, 1097, 1147, 1155, 1157, 1164, 1171–1181
Reflective practitioner, 257, 501, 505, 919, 923, 1016
Reform Judaism, 68–69, 74, 76, 276, 671, 673, 675, 697, 702, 717, 785, 788, 826, 827, 836, 854, 1198, 1200, 1259
Reggio Emilia, 72, 756
Relationships, 29, 31–33, 41, 59, 72, 86, 91, 93, 100, 105, 113–114, 144, 147, 151–152, 155–156, 174, 184, 193, 195, 206, 216, 243, 252, 259, 270, 276, 411, 414, 437, 463, 474, 505, 520–522, 524–525, 528–529, 532–533, 536–537, 591, 598, 608, 638, 663, 667, 722, 755, 757–759, 764, 786, 788–792, 794–795, 798–799, 806, 810, 829, 831, 833–837, 844, 866–867, 871, 881–882, 890, 894, 901–903, 906, 918, 963, 966, 985–986
Relativism, 272, 283, 329, 1260
Religious development, 301–302, 304, 315–316, 447, 550, 638
Religious education, 563–565, 571–573, 1105–1121, 1219–1232
Religious experience, 172, 223, 226, 228, 306, 603, 926
Religious selectivity, 1228
Religious Zionism, 288, 491, 736–737, 1121, 1223, 1225, 1229–1230
Republic, 666, 723, 1168, 1203, 1205, 1212, 1272–1273
Research, 80–81, 131, 183–198, 279–281, 323–326, 358–359, 369–370, 410–415, 437, 456–458, 503–504, 544–548, 687, 710–711, 721–724, 781–782, 799, 838–839, 875–876, 896, 994–996, 1002–1004, 1033–1035, 1149–1151, 1190–1193, 1265–1269
Resilient youth, 654, 838–839

Resource room, 741, 1026, 1030–1031
Responsibility, 33, 63, 67, 110, 115, 119, 135, 143, 175, 188, 224, 226, 253, 267–269, 296, 298, 306, 312, 359, 398–399, 412, 435, 463, 466, 469, 472, 491, 509–511, 520, 522, 543, 545, 548, 551, 561, 637, 643–644, 666, 669, 707, 719, 736–737, 751, 754, 785, 790, 830, 866, 875, 882, 889, 892, 906, 909, 921, 938, 950, 991–994, 1013, 1018, 1023, 1028, 1031, 1042, 1069, 1101, 1118, 1126, 1158, 1168–1169, 1181, 1193, 1195–1196, 1203, 1216, 1225, 1229–1230
Restructuring the religious school, 1217
Retention, 70, 358, 365, 654, 826–829, 948, 953, 1044–1045, 1049, 1050–1053, 1055, 1057, 1059, 1100
Revolution, 14, 50, 83, 100, 102, 132, 150, 192, 286, 296, 379, 381, 390, 510, 597–612, 691, 713, 723, 1022, 1043, 1160, 1206–1207, 1227, 1241, 1246
Rewrite ceremonies, 107, 552
At-Risk Youth, 787
Rituals, 57, 101, 106, 112, 125, 146, 149, 164, 167, 169, 174, 177, 186, 203, 206, 211, 215, 269, 304, 306–307, 312, 314, 400, 430, 471, 507–508, 541–557, 572, 611, 666, 679, 681–682, 735, 777, 786, 861, 902, 909–912, 991, 1072, 1110, 1115, 1135, 1162, 1174, 1206
The Romantic/Realist Model, 225, 484, 487, 490
Rosj Pinah Jewish primary school, 1284

S

Scheduling, 92–93, 254, 356, 454
Scheffler, Israel, 5, 8, 11–17, 19, 23, 25, 87, 170, 219, 277, 295, 320–321, 328–329, 360, 864, 943
Schein, Jeffrey, 671, 681, 683, 685–686, 703, 1005, 1011
School(s)
  choice, 716, 721, 751, 906
  culture, 74, 77, 89, 93–94, 280, 448, 537, 741, 880, 966, 1011, 1030, 1049, 1056–1058, 1235
School Twinning Partnership, 528–529, 531–532
Science and religion, 397–398
Second language, 76, 365, 392–394, 419, 421, 425–427, 434–435, 437, 1135, 1150, 1265
Secular, 1, 19, 29, 32, 43–44, 83–85, 90, 100, 102, 123, 125, 131, 164, 166–167, 206, 219, 273, 280, 286–287, 289, 291, 306, 340, 345, 356, 377–378, 391, 394, 397, 408, 445–446, 454–455, 480, 488, 491, 493, 500, 518, 564, 576, 607–608, 620, 623, 653, 657, 662, 698, 705, 717–718, 736, 738, 740, 758, 763, 818, 888, 893, 905, 908, 939, 943, 946–948, 988–989, 1004–1005, 1012, 1019, 1021–1022, 1042, 1066–1067, 1083, 1109, 1126, 1128, 1131, 1139, 1147, 1186–1187, 1192, 1197, 1209, 1211, 1214–1217, 1219–1222, 1224–1250, 1253–1255, 1259–1261, 1266–1267, 1272, 1278, 1284, 1286
Secularisation, 1177, 1286
Secularism, 563–564, 1115, 1162, 1203, 1205, 1213, 1248
Secularization, 422, 562–563, 1042, 1230
Secular studies, 43, 83–84, 102, 391, 714, 939, 1047, 1147, 1221, 1225–1228, 1231, 1247, 1254
Selection criteria for schools, 760
Self-directed learning, 872, 991
Self study, 556, 918–920, 922
Seminaries
  Hebrew Union College, 133, 664, 778, 835, 849, 948–949, 954, 1003
  Jewish Theological Seminary, 19, 65, 133, 379, 411, 556, 655, 778, 795, 798, 834–835, 928–929, 939–944, 975, 1003, 1058
  Yeshiva University, 102, 126, 133, 272, 734–735, 742, 788, 791, 809, 940, 1021
Separate-sex education, 787–788, 791
Sex Education, 787–788, 791
Sexuality, 9, 110, 653, 785, 787–789, 797–798, 863, 1069
Shabbat Community, 703–704, 707
Shared vision, 31–32, 528, 844, 849, 852, 952
Shevach Mofet School, 1242–1243, 1248, 1250
Shoah/Holocaust, 40, 463, 467–470, 473–475, 616–620, 625, 713, 1081, 1085, 1137, 1205, 1212, 1244
Shortage of teachers and educators, 709–710
Skepticism, 250, 286, 289, 291, 585, 594, 925, 937, 946
Social capital, 31–33, 40, 518, 520, 525, 536, 866–867, 1216
Social criticism, wonder, 289, 396, 402
Social innovation, 259

Social pedagogy, 152
Social psychology, 21, 192
Socrates, 328–329, 582, 594, 1238
Spiritual development, 301–307, 316, 573, 956
Spiritual guidance, 994, 1011–1012, 1177
Spirituality, 8, 168–169, 177, 186, 220–221, 223–225, 233–234, 301–302, 304–311, 315–316, 356, 360, 364, 367, 369–370, 408, 542, 549, 572, 608, 620, 680, 684, 719, 736–737, 861, 904, 990, 1011, 1014–1015, 1018, 1035, 1118, 1209
Spiritual Renewal, 314, 1084, 1259–1260, 1269
Spontaneity, 223, 225, 309
Sputnik, 88, 379
State Religious Education, 1083, 1219–1232
Student enrollments, 132, 1045
Successful schools, 835
Supervision, 362, 812, 852, 879, 881–882, 885, 941, 1009–1010, 1029, 1032, 1057, 1083, 1113, 1215, 1262, 1265
Supplementary schools
  congregational schools, 65–66, 69–70, 461, 468, 485, 544, 691–699, 701, 707–708, 772, 791, 846–847, 852, 929, 948, 960, 971, 983, 1004, 1042–1045, 1047–1050, 1054–1055, 1060, 1088, 1150
  Khayders, 119
  Sunday schools, 60, 120, 127, 189, 379, 696, 1042, 1185, 1188, 1190, 1192, 1195–1196, 1198, 1200
  Talmud Torahs, 119, 123–124, 655, 691, 694, 938–941, 1213
Supreme Council for Israelite affairs, 1274
Symbols, 252, 291, 296, 303–304, 392, 429, 546, 622, 642, 644, 1244–1246
Synagogue, 22, 34, 38–40, 74, 111–112, 124, 130, 164, 171, 186–187, 191, 196, 206, 208–214, 250–252, 254–256, 260–261, 269, 287, 306, 341, 429, 491, 532, 537, 542, 546–548, 550–553, 604, 607, 609, 611, 634, 639, 641–645, 647, 654, 669–671, 675–679, 681, 684, 686, 691, 693–696, 698–711, 719–720, 741, 790, 794–795, 799, 809, 826, 828, 832, 834, 836–837, 839, 847, 852, 856–857, 863–864, 905, 908, 911, 932, 962, 973, 975, 1032, 1042–1043, 1055, 1064, 1084, 1088–1089, 1092–1093, 1096–1097, 1101, 1107–1108, 1111, 1113, 1143, 1147–1150, 1170, 1173–1175, 1178, 1183, 1185, 1187, 1190, 1200, 1203, 1206, 1211, 1226, 1256, 1259, 1271, 1276, 1281–1283
Synagogue and/or religious school transformation, 74, 254, 710
Systematic change, 242, 685, 923
Systems thinking, 844, 852
Szarvas international Jewish camp, 1168–1169

T

Talmudic prohibition, 101
Talmud Torah, 22, 63, 84, 119, 121, 123–124, 208, 378, 655, 691, 694, 696, 708, 938–941, 954, 1025, 1072, 1144, 1203, 1213, 1275–1278, 1280, 1283–1284, 1286
Teacher
  education, 379, 383, 385, 412, 506, 584, 595, 794–798, 922, 927, 937–939, 941, 944–946, 948–949, 951–956, 960, 1041–1060
  efficacy, 1028–1029
  training, 19–20, 39, 103, 134, 435, 469, 475, 529, 652, 696, 700, 739–741, 879, 881, 896, 938–940, 943, 1029, 1044, 1057–1058, 1064, 1074, 1076, 1100, 1134, 1139, 1147, 1189–1190, 1198–1199, 1209, 1213, 1231, 1236, 1266, 1284
Teachers Institute, Jewish Theological Seminary, 133, 655, 939–944
Teachers' professional development, 879–880, 889, 891, 896
Teaching
  Hebrew, 76–77, 365–366, 424–427, 430–437, 707, 939, 946, 967, 1149
  Jewish history, 336, 442–443, 456, 576, 1284
  and learning, 1, 3, 9–10, 19, 79, 86–87, 335–649, 655, 772, 851, 855, 857, 883, 928, 949, 951, 953, 955, 961–964, 966–967, 969–971, 974–975, 981, 1013, 1041, 1056–1058
  team, 91–92, 363, 686, 1031–1032
Technical and adaptive challenges, 253
Technology, 3, 41, 50, 67, 70, 86–87, 227–228, 244, 251–252, 337, 378–379, 408, 422, 438, 474, 509, 526, 575, 597–612, 683, 740, 780, 843, 921–922, 928, 930, 1026, 1033–1034, 1050, 1058, 1221, 1226, 1258
Technology in adult Jewish education, 77–79, 684

Teenagers, 41, 76, 469, 551, 610, 635, 739–740, 825–839, 910, 926, 929, 1189, 1216
Textbooks, 67, 103, 120, 128–129, 346–347, 357, 379, 384, 442, 446, 450, 463, 472, 474, 476, 576–577, 662, 1088, 1098, 1121, 1135, 1193, 1195, 1215
Text-centered, 124–125, 1160–1162
Textual Authority, 585–590
Theme-based learning, 89–91
Theology, 112, 177, 220, 228, 271, 305, 309–310, 314–315, 444, 552, 675, 928, 930, 1002, 1065–1066
Theology of childhood, 310, 314–315
Theories of change, 845
Torah, 1, 22, 34, 65, 74–76, 85, 90, 100–102, 104–105, 108, 119, 121, 123–126, 133, 164, 208, 225, 245, 268, 272, 309, 311, 314, 324, 341, 352, 360, 368, 373–378, 395, 420, 428, 444, 454, 488, 497, 550, 565, 567, 570, 586–587, 589, 616, 655, 682–684, 691, 693–694, 696–699, 706, 708, 717, 735, 785, 791, 826, 834, 838, 862, 892, 938–943, 948, 950, 988, 1008, 1022–1023, 1025, 1063–1066, 1068–1070, 1072–1074, 1077, 1098, 1109, 1111, 1113, 1136, 1144, 1148, 1163, 1177, 1198, 1200, 1203, 1213, 1221, 1224, 1228–1229, 1260, 1275–1278, 1280, 1282–1284, 1286
Torah Im Derech Eretz, 1213, 1221, 1228
Torah U'mesorah, 67, 126, 544, 729, 731, 733, 739, 948, 1068
Toronto, 451, 457, 675, 721, 862, 1084, 1141–1151, 1231
Tourism, 177, 470, 497–498, 501–502, 504, 507, 615–616, 618, 620–621, 623–627, 634–635, 655, 983–984, 990
Tradition
  Hebraist, 713
  Islamic, 577
  Jewish, 1, 76, 103, 105, 107–108, 167–169, 175, 196, 220, 226, 230, 251, 278, 287, 337, 341, 344, 352, 377, 394–395, 402, 482, 489, 516, 566, 581–582, 584, 594–595, 601, 674, 777, 791, 829, 847, 855, 888, 1010, 1015, 1163, 1193, 1229–1230, 1283, 1286
  Mimetic, 374, 961
  Peshat, 381
  Rabbinic, 290, 311, 337, 381, 567, 595
  Schwab, 381, 383
  Socialist, 713
Training Educational Personnel, 501, 1101, 1257
Transformative learning, 509, 817, 850, 861–876, 962
Translation, 64, 67, 111, 115, 154, 220, 226–233, 321, 325, 344, 383, 422, 429, 487, 555, 587, 982, 1005, 1011, 1186, 1200
Transnational relationship, 525, 537
Travel, 22, 73, 170, 177, 306, 328, 335–336, 482, 497–511, 530, 615–627, 633–667, 673, 719, 769, 772, 811, 868, 924, 990, 1137, 1164, 1244
Tuition subsidies, 1146
Turkish jewish community, 1170, 1179

U

UK, 30, 32–43, 341, 347, 469, 633, 653, 665, 671, 862, 864–865, 876, 923, 987, 1081–1082, 1114, 1118, 1146, 1165
Ultra-Orthodoxy, 286–288, 291, 296, 1214, 1253, 1255, 1260
Underlying operating system, 761–762
Understanding by Design, 65, 68, 74–76, 80
Universalistic, 282, 305, 462, 474
Universities, 4, 12, 20, 70, 132–134, 391, 421, 430–431, 453, 470, 506, 509, 581, 653, 657–659, 661–662, 664–666, 685, 715, 769, 853, 937, 949, 953, 1043, 1071, 1096, 1100, 1106, 1134, 1146–1147, 1162–1163, 1199, 1217, 1258

V

Values, 18, 509–510, 573, 788–789, 791, 863–875, 967–968
Vancouver, 1144–1146
Virtue, 155, 216, 224–225, 242–243, 305, 313, 324, 434, 518, 536, 567, 684, 867, 1168, 1208, 1212, 1231, 1274
Vision, 3, 7–332, 526, 700, 777, 1010, 1053
Vision-Guided Jewish education, 7
Visual art, 343, 355–356, 359, 361, 364, 367, 602
Voluntary aided denominational schools, 1120
Volunteerism, 865–867
Vouchers, 1075, 1101, 1263

W

Well-qualified, 722, 1041–1060
Western world/perspectives/paradigm, 51, 57–58, 143, 569, 1147, 1228, 1240

Winnipeg, 1144–1146
Wissenschaft des Judentums, donors, 445, 657
World religions, 34, 572, 575, 1112, 1115

Y

Yeshiva, 102, 124–126, 133, 272, 407, 410–412, 421, 618, 733–735, 742, 788, 791, 809, 939–940, 947, 1033, 1066–1068, 1070–1073, 1075–1076, 1094, 1127–1129, 1134, 1149, 1177, 1213, 1221–1222, 1227
Yeshivas (and Bais Yaakov), 126
Yiddish, 120, 131, 378, 421, 423, 429, 645, 661, 1068, 1096, 1127–1128, 1144, 1184–1185, 1187, 1258, 1266, 1272, 1274, 1283
Youth, 129–131, 433, 491, 739, 790, 810–811, 831, 833, 1004, 1095–1096, 1116, 1136, 1279–1280

Z

Zechut banim, 311
Zionism, 122, 167, 255, 285–289, 292, 294, 349, 366, 377, 399, 441, 453, 463, 480, 482, 484–488, 490–494, 521, 622, 736–737, 808, 939, 942, 1015, 1125, 1136, 1144, 1220–1221, 1223, 1225, 1229–1230, 1242, 1246, 1249–1250, 1256, 1279–1280
Zionism/history of Israel, 487
Zionist movement, 377, 485, 492–493, 498, 1109, 1219–1223, 1229–1230, 1269, 1279
Zionist Youth Movements, 23, 185, 500, 1121, 1131, 1170, 1253–1254