

# C.A.L.L.



COMMUNES AT LARGE LETTER



International Communes Desk  
KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT

Nr. 16

Summer 2000

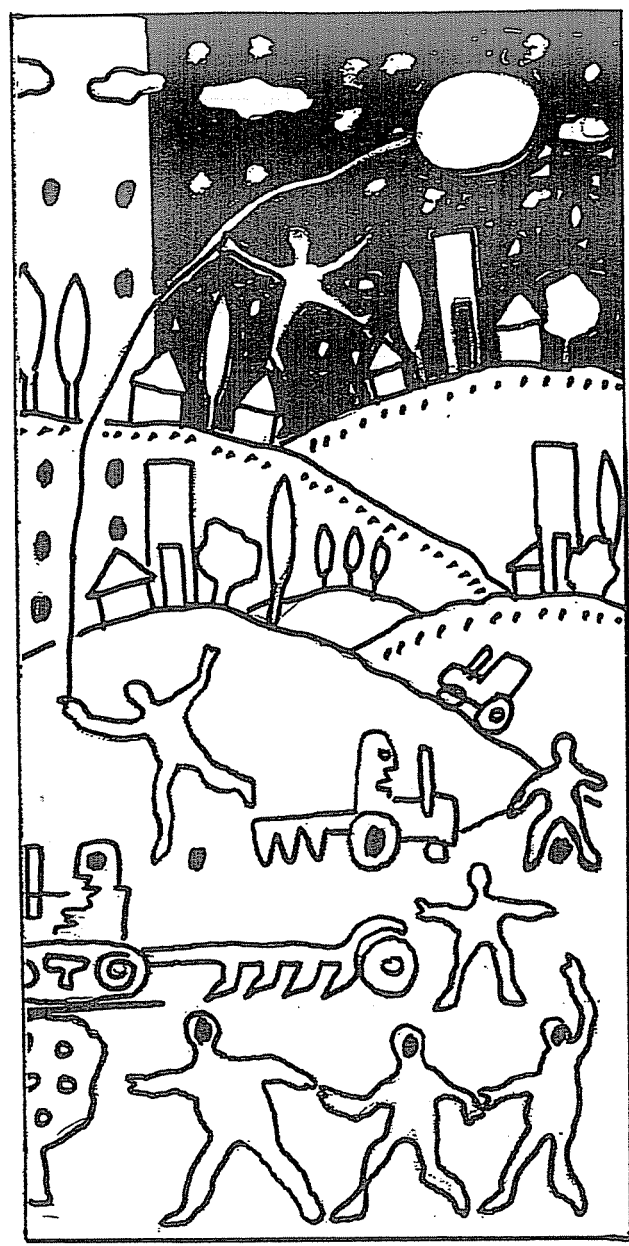


יד טבנקין

YAD TABENKIN



**CALL**  
endeavors to spread information  
and exchange experiences on  
Communes and Communities  
the world over - in order to create  
contact and affinity between all  
and help build a frame for  
**NETWORKING**



**Editors of CALL (Communes At Large Letter) ,**

**Bi-Annual magazine of the I.C.D. (International Communes Desk) :**

**Yoel Darom (Kibbutz Kfar Menachem)**

**Yoel Dorkam (Kibbutz Tzuba)**

**Sol Etzioni (Kibbutz Tzora)**

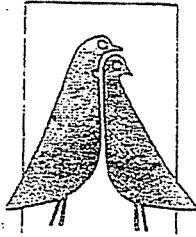
**Shlomo Shalmon (Kibbutz Gesher)**

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\* SUBSCRIPTION :  
\*\* \$15 one year (two issues)  
\*\* \$25 two years  
\*\*\*\*\*

**ADDRESS :**

**Sol Etzioni, I.C.D. Secretary, Yad Tabenkin, Ramat Efal, 52960 Israel**

LETTERS



Dear Sol, dear Yoel Darom,

Thank you for your letters! I live at TWIN OAKS and am on the executive c-mttee of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities.

Thank you for your news of the Kibbutz, in Israel, with a little politics thrown in for good measure.

You ask for my (our) opinion on CALL, so here it is: I really enjoy CALL. I enjoy searching through the journal and finding news clippings from my own community's newsletter and from others I'm familiar with, both in North America and abroad.

I like the "short and snappy" nature of the clippings: they provide an interesting snapshot, nothing too long and laborious, yet always informative. I like how CALL reminds us that we are part of a giant movement; it's not always easy to see the bigger picture of communal living.

And although it's perhaps "less professional" looking, I like the way the clippings are directly from the community newsletters themselves. This way you know you're getting it straight from the horses' mouth.

Also, thinking about the internet as the wave of the present, I wonder if ICD has a web presence [not yet - CALL editor]... The Twin Oaks Leaves is moving in that direction...

That's my two cents for now. It's nice to have a connection with you. In cooperation, Yours

Valerie@Twinoaks.org (USA)

Dear Sol !

Thanks for your interesting letter! I translated it and put it up on our information board. I'm also interested in our keeping in contact. Thanks, as well, for sending me CALL. This journal in which communities introduce themselves is very important. But we should also lead discussions on political issues..

My name is Uwe Kurzbein. I am 57 years old and an architect. During my studies and work I saw the social situation in Germany and became very critical of our government. My experience at the work side and the many discussions at the university were my motivation for living in community - for twenty years now! Because the different, anarchist life-style we created is the way we chose for ourselves. We bought an old castle in 1980 and that's where we started the "Lutter-Group". Our main principle is: No private ownership - and everyone gets what they need from the common "money pot".

After 18 years, I left - for various personal reasons - and started a new commune, the Olgashof, near Wismar at the Baltic sea, where I live now with some friends. Last year we worked hard on the topic "Men and Women", and the debate will probably go on for a long time!

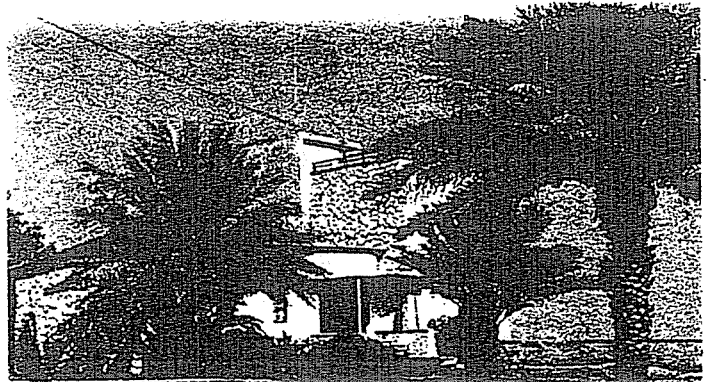
I am pleased with our communication. I wish you a good new year and peace with your neighbours

Yours -

Uwe Kurzbein, Architekt

23966 Olgashof

bei Dorf Mecklenburg, GERMANY



Dear Yoel Darom,

...I know that most Kibbutzim, including yours, are not what they once were. To witness this decline, after having put a lifetime into its creation, can, I imagine, easily lead to despair. But we all know that nothing lasts forever, and therefore decline is no evidence of failure.

I think Kibbutzim are among the most glorious and valuable creations of the last century. Although they may not last, their creation will be seen as a lasting success as a universal model of egalitarian, democratic, secular, communal, as well as Jewish-national life. I do not believe these values will disappear; the Kibbutz experience will remain relevant to humanity. But these processes are not straightforward and not predictable. Going through a period of backtracking, I hope it does not cause you to doubt the value of your contribution...

Yours - Eric Silver  
West Newton , U.S.A.

Dear Sol,

Nice to hear from you. To answer your question, I must say that I have been very pleased with the CALL publication. I have learned many things about other communities as well as about the Kibbutzim. Also several articles from our newsletter, Millennial Chronicles, have been gracefully received and published in CALL.

I think this type of work is so beneficial that we keep in contact and learn about each other. Communities may seem very different, but they have a common thread - building a better way of life.

We have known people from the Kibbutzim who have come and visited us here at Padanaram. In fact, Dr. Yakov Oved came a couple of years ago with Dr. Pitzer to visit Daniel Wright, my father, who is the founder of this community.  
Yours -

Rachel Summerton,  
<Padanaram@tima com



## What C O M M U N E Means

- To learn and do things that I never expected to learn in my life.
- Intensive work, manifold, alive and rich in controversy, taking up a lot of your time, being full of surprises.
- .Not to have to worry about what to do with the left-overs after a party.
- Development and sometimes also confusion - and much work and joy.
- Nobody ever believes that it's his/her turn to clear away the snow
- After having decided X, the outcome will invariably be Y. Who on earth could have invented such an arrangement?
- Anarchy for beginners.
- Every day anew - a beautiful day.
- An ever-present mirror.
- There's always food for the hungry.
- An attempt to live in a Zoo of rare animals and be gaped at by visitors.

From COMMUN -JA , Germany



# Communal Living on the Threshold of a New Millennium: Lessons and Perspectives

Seventh International Communal  
Studies Conference

June 25 - 27, 2001



ZEGG, Germany



The general theme of the ICSA 2001 Conference at ZEGG, Germany, is "Communal Living on the Threshold of a New Millennium: Lessons and Perspectives".

'Communal living' is used in the broadest sense to include communes, kibbutzim, intentional communities, cohousing groups, ecovillages, housing co-operatives, religious communities, etc. Some of these are in urban areas while others are in remote rural areas. Some groups are organised along religious/spiritual lines while others are more secular; some have more obviously political dimensions while others are very environmentally-oriented. 'Communal living' also includes the ideas which underpin these alternative and more social lifestyles, including the ideas and literature of utopianism.

e Tour

A tour is being planned for immediately after the conference. This tour will include different communities (ecovillages, urban and rural communes) and a Berlin sight-seeing tour. The post conference tour requires an additional fee. See enclosed flier.

ial

Following the ICSA 2001 Conference and Post Conference Tour, delegates are welcome to stay for the 4th International Community Meeting (ICM) at ZEGG. Since 1997 at this annual meeting, members of communal groups from around the globe gather at ZEGG to build up a network based on friendship and cooperation and to establish concrete projects (youth education and exchange e.g.). This will require an additional fee. Contact ZEGG for details.

inal

The three day conference will meet from the afternoon of Monday, June 25, 2001 until late evening on Wednesday, June 27. There will be keynote addresses by senior researchers in Communal Studies, and by experienced communards.

The conference will also include music and dance from communal groups, and there will be ample opportunity to explore ZEGG community and learn from its members - and to enjoy ourselves.

E-mail and internet access will be available for ICSA conference participants while at ZEGG.

The conference language will be English.

Bill Metcalf, Griffith University, Australia (chair)  
Graham Meltzer, Queensland University of Technology, Australia  
Helen Best, Queensland Board of Secondary School Studies, Australia  
Christa Falkenstein, ZEGG Community, Germany

## Address all correspondence

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Address all correspondence concerning abstracts and pr  
to: [www.metcalf.org](http://www.metcalf.org)

or to:

Dr Bill Metcalf  
AES, Griffith University  
Nathan, Q. 4111, Australia

The ICSA2001 Conference website is:

<http://www.icsa2001.org>

The ICSA website is:

<http://www.icsa.org>

# COMMUNES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

by Prof. YAACOV OVED

Excerpts from a lecture that was delivered at the 6th International Communal Studies Association conference, in Amsterdam, on July 9, 1998

We can state, without a shadow of a doubt, that the twentieth century was the richest of all for voluntary communes. In an overall review of the history of communes we can discern a number of characteristic lines:

1. From the first years of the present century, large communal movements, which developed over the years, have existed continuously. The first of these is the Israeli kibbutz movement which had its beginnings in the first decade of the century and which at present has a total population of 125,000 souls living in 270 settlements.
2. The second-largest communal group is the Hutterite movement, which is also the oldest communal order, and which was established in Central Europe in the sixteenth century. At the beginning of the twentieth century its communities in the United States had a population of approximately 2,000 souls, while today the number some 40,000 people living in 400 communes.
3. A smaller movement that has maintained its stability and growth is the Burderhof, which had its beginning in Germany in 1920 and which today has a population of 2,500 souls in eight settlements in the United States and Great Britain.
4. In the present century there has been an uninterrupted series of emergences of communes. Not a decade has gone by without the appearance of new communes. While in previous centuries, new communes were mostly isolated communities, and mainly in the United States, in the present century we have witnessed the extensive establishment of communes in numerous countries on different continents. These waves appeared against the background of significant historical events.

In the second decade of the century, for example, immediately after the Russian Revolution, thousands of communes appeared in the rural areas of that country.

In the mid-1920s the foundations were laid for the establishment of the kibbutz movements in what was then Palestine, and within a short time period these encompassed scores of settlements with thousands of members. Their founders were young, idealistic Jews whose motivation was to establish agricultural communes. They were inspired by the Zionist-socialist vision of a new society based upon social justice under the historic circumstances of the modern national Jewish revival, and the return of the Jews to their historical homeland.

In the 1930s two new waves arose. In 1936, with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, there was a social revolution in that country led by Anarchists and Socialists

After World War II, there was a wave of searching for communal life in various parts of the world. In the United States, the Fellowship of Intentional Communities was founded. In Japan the Yamagishi Kai communes appeared, while Europe saw the arrival of the Communities of Work and Mondragon in Spain. Towards the end of the 1950s thousands of communes also appeared in China. The scope was large but differed from everything that had occurred in the West, as these communes were non-voluntary and initiated by government policy. These collectives constitute a different chapter in the history of modern communes.

Undoubtedly the biggest and most significant wave in the history of twentieth-century communes began in the United States in the 1960s. Its influence rapidly crossed the frontiers of that country, spreading across European countries and Australia, marking the beginning of the globalization of modern communalism.

May 8, 2000

Dear Yaacov Oved,

I am pleased to inform you that you have been selected to receive the Communal Studies Association's Outstanding Scholar Award for 2000. We feel that your scholarly work over the years has made a major contribution to the field of communal studies, and it gives us great pleasure to give this award to you.

Let me congratulate you on your lifetime accomplishments in the field of communal studies.

Communal Studies Association

Lucy Jayne Kamau

Department of Anthropology

Northeastern Illinois University

5500 N St. Louis Ave.

Chicago, IL 60625

Kamau@delnet.com



The beginnings of this wave were in the American hippie movement. This generation (the "baby boomers") which had witnessed the civil rights struggle in the United States, later fought against the Vietnam War, was shocked by a wave of political assassinations, and rebelled against traditional politics and the politicians' materialistic and cynical approaches to governance.



Communal life itself has remained on the agenda of the modern world over the course of the last generation. The impression left by the communes of the 1960s has not been erased from the awareness of younger generations in America and throughout the world, and the following decades have seen the continued establishment of new, more stable communes that have sought ways of instituting an alternative way of life based on sound foundations. Moreover, from the 1970s onward, the communal phenomena has become much more variegated. The philosophical roots and spiritual sources have become much more complex, encompassing different and varied worlds; from the fundamentalist Christians, to the disciples of Oriental religions, anthroposophists, back-to-nature followers, ecologists, pacifists, anarchists, and many others.

Beyond the diversity of their spiritual sources, there are a number of attributes that characterize the communes of our time:

1. The majority of the communes of the 1990s are more realistic and economically well established. Their realism provides them with greater stability and opens up channels of communication with the outside society.
2. There is increasing interest in the communes for the fostering of interpersonal relations. Communication networks and federations have resulted.

3. The second half of the twentieth century has witnessed the emergence of urban communes of a scope and magnitude almost unknown to previous generations. The majority of these are small and enable intimacy in societal relations.

4. In the modern communes of the twentieth century there is a heightened awareness of the status of women in the community, even though only some of them have succeeded in suitably achieving it.

5. Ecological awareness characterizes the majority of modern communes. Many have established training centers for sustainable agriculture and technologies suitable for organic agriculture.

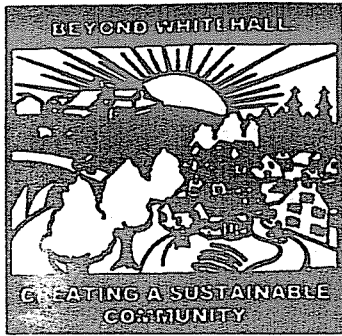
Also noteworthy is that over the last two decades we have seen signs of change in modern communes in the direction of a balance between collectivism and individualism, and a departure from integral communal structures. At the basis of these changes lies a broadening of individual freedom and the individual's responsibility for his life and livelihood.

This kind of trend is also currently evident in the oldest and biggest secular communal movement — the kibbutz movement. A bitter internal struggle is ongoing within the movement between the supporters of change (which started with the aim of achieving economic solvency and proceeded with the purpose of adapting kibbutz society to the outside world) and the supporters of full communal life, who are seeking ways of adopting the lessons of the new era to deepen and consolidate communal fundamentals.

In conclusion, I beg to add a personal note as both a historian of communes and a kibbutz member for the past fifty years. I have no doubt at all that the communal movement will cross the threshold of the twenty-first century. It will not do so along the main highway, but rather along a multitude of narrower paths. The communal movement will not be a uniform camp, but large and variegated, which will be comprised of numerous communal streams.

I hope that when the communal movement does cross the threshold into the twenty-first century, that the greater part of it will have adopted a way of life that will combine integral economic cooperation, collective responsibility and mutual aid, with freedom for personal aspirations and development of the individual.

If it passes thus into the next century communalism will bring with it not only a rich past but also a message for the future. For the commune has the potential of being a source of hope for the fulfillment of social relations of human brotherhood, interpersonal harmony and peace.



# Creating a Sustainable Community

## Community Service Conference Yellow Springs, Ohio, Fall 1999

**S**ister Paula Gonzalez, founder of EarthConnection in Cincinnati, a grassroots organization devoted to "living lightly on the Earth," gave the keynote address for the Community Service conference.

She is a biology professor turned hands-on ecologist, dedicated to working for a sustainable future for the world. Her keynote speech was an urgent invitation to the Yellow Springs community to join her in that work.

Because it is a closely knit, lively small town, "still human scale," Sister Gonzalez said, Yellow Springs has "a unique opportunity to become a sustainable community." She pre-

### Sister Paula Gonzalez: "Yellow Springs 2010"

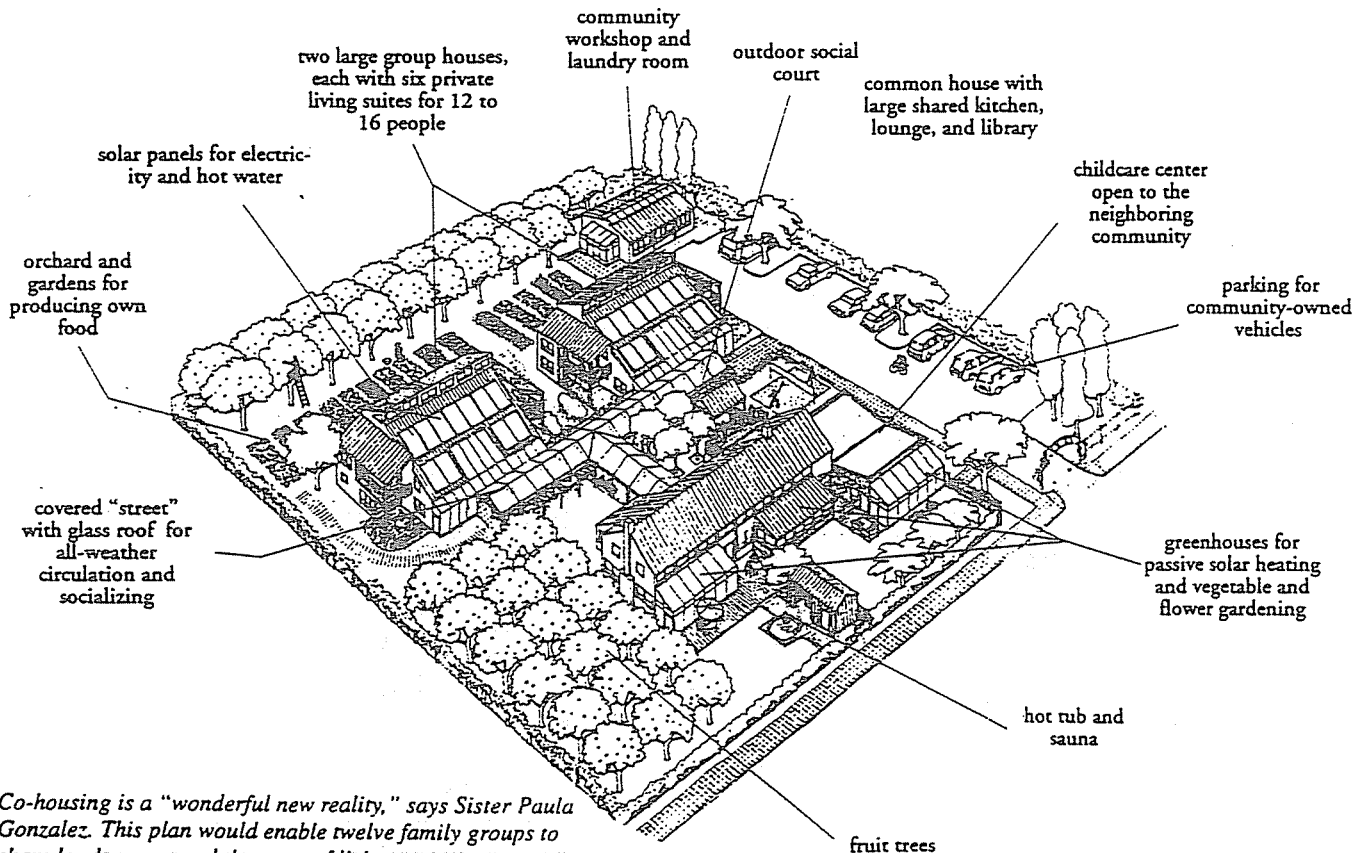
sented her vision of "Yellow Springs 2010," based on her study of the Community Service survey of local villagers' concerns about Yellow Springs' sustainability needs:

**Affordable housing.** The principles of "compact urban development" must guide development of Yellow Springs' housing, rather than the principles of "urban sprawl," Sister Gonzalez said. That means zoning to encourage high-density residential areas: new houses would be small, and would be built on

small lots; older houses would be modified to provide apartments or rooms for rent.

"Co-housing" is the most exciting possibility for affordable housing, Sister Gonzalez said. She called it "a wonderful new reality"—people creating shared living space, featuring common areas for get-togethers, for preparing and eating food together, doing laundry, gardening, recreation, children's play.

Far more affordable than single-family housing, co-housing is also far more environmentally sound, for it requires less land and fewer resources. It encourages vital neighborhoods, and it encourages community—people cooperatively sharing their lives, as neighbors and friends.



*Co-housing is a "wonderful new reality," says Sister Paula Gonzalez. This plan would enable twelve family groups to share land, space, and the costs of living—on one acre (from Rebuilding Community in America by Ken Norwood and Kathleen Smith).*

*Affordable living.* "We are economic slaves" to a self-destructive system of wildly out-of-control overconsumption, Sister Gonzalez said. To free ourselves, we must create viable answers to the question. "What do I need to be happy?" We must create a society that knows what is enough—now, Sister Gonzalez said, we live in a society whose dominant cultural message is, nothing is ever enough. "We must become citizens, not consumers," she said.

*Community interaction.* This, said Sister Gonzalez, is the most important dynamic of all in the creation of sustainable community. "Nothing will happen unless you have a very, very vigorous social and civic interaction in your community."

All interaction must be inclusive, she said, involving at meaningful levels the full spectrum of the community's diversity. Sister Gonzalez spoke of the deep affinity for community interaction possessed by American minorities: "In many Hispanic communities and Black communities, there is the feeling that you're rich just because you're together with each other." Our society as a whole, she said, must strive to value community in that strong and heartfelt way.

"It is critically important that the young and the old come together and work together," Sister Gonzalez said. "We must merge the experience and wisdom of the old with the energy of the young. We need each other desperately."

All the members of the community need each other, Sister Gonzalez said, to join in a shared adventure: "We need to re-imagine the future. This means the whole community getting together and re-visioning Yellow Springs. It means bringing people together in forums like this one," referring to the Community Service conference.

From:

**Communities, Journal**

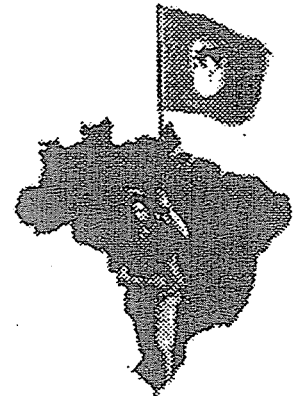
**Rt 1 Box 156**

**Rutledge MO 63563**

## Landless Workers Movement

### Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra

The Brazilian Landless Workers Movement is the largest social movement in Latin America and one of the most successful grassroots movements in the world. Hundreds of thousands of landless peasants have taken onto themselves the task of carrying out a long-overdue land reform in a country mired by an overly skewed land distribution pattern. Less than 3% of the population owns two-thirds of Brasil's arable land.



Visit the MST's Portuguese website at [www.mst.org.br](http://www.mst.org.br).

While 60% of Brasil's farmland lies idle, 25 million peasants struggle to survive by working in temporary agricultural jobs. The Landless Workers' Movement (MST) is a response to these inequalities. In 1985, with the support of the Catholic Church, hundreds of landless rural Brazilians took over an unused plantation in the south of the country and successfully established a cooperative there. They gained title to the land in 1987. Today more than 250,000 families have won land titles to over 15 million acres after MST land takeovers.

The success of the MST lies in its ability to organize. Its members have not only managed to secure land, thereby guaranteeing food security for their families, but have come up with an alternative socio-economic development model that puts people before profits. This is transforming the face of Brasil's countryside and Brazilian politics at large.

These gains have not come without a cost, however. Violent clashes between the MST and police, as well as landowners, have become commonplace, claiming the lives of many peasants and their leaders.

The MST has resisted this repression and has been able to gather support from a broad international network of human rights groups, religious organizations, and labor unions. It has received a number of international awards, including The Right Livelihood Award and an education award from UNICEF.

In order to maximize production, the MST has created 60 food cooperatives as well as a small agricultural industries. Their literacy program involves 600 educators who presently work with adults and adolescents. The movement also monitors 1,000 primary schools in their settlements, in which 2,000 teachers work with about 50,000 kids.

# K A L E I D O S C O P E

The Communitarian Scene from all Over and Under

Compiled and (partly translated) by *Joel Dorkam*



Dear friends ,

It is a well-established fact that almost all intentional communities started off as homogeneous, single-generation groups of young people, with only dim notions about the future prospect of setting up families, raise children and, eventually, take care of aging members. These were the Good Old Days, and the emphasis was put on creating a better world, a just society, improved human relations - remember?

Only later did the communards come to realize the need to educate the next generation and imbue them with communitarian values. Frequently they assumed it would happen all by itself: a new type of "Homo Communicus" would emerge from the communal children's house.

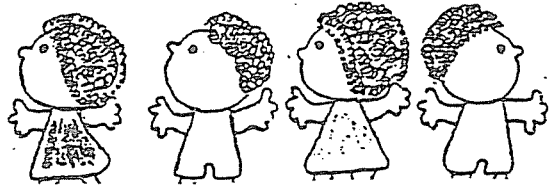
Now the third (and even fourth) generation kids are growing up in the older communities in different parts of the world, it becomes more and more evident that no such evolution has materialized as yet, and anguishing questions are spreading around. There just may be a chance left to change our attitudes, invest more resources and put more stress on education in our communities. To paraphrase a well-known saying:

**IT'S THE EDUCATION, STUPID!**

The FRANZISKUS-GEMEINSCHAFT of Austria dedicated the last issue (No 15) of their periodical "Francesco" to a frank discussion of how the brethren and children of the community conceive their living together "Around the Common Table". Here are some excerpts:

Under the title "Daring to Trust" (sich trauen zu trauen), sister Anne Ploss writes: For over 11 years I have been living in the Franziskusgemeinschaft. I have been sharing life, working, laughing and weeping together since the founding of the community in May 1988. I'm married to Berno and have three children: David, Josefine and Simon.

Looking back I perceive how vividly our beginnings have stayed alive in my memory. From the birth of our idea to



found a community until its realization, a year and a half went by. It wasn't easy to find a house that fits our space requirements and would not overstretch our financial resources,

All these years were filled with emotions, lust for adventure, pleasure, anticipation, excitement and religious zeal - all in a completely positive meaning - and then again discouragement and misgivings that we may have undertaken too much. For me the scale of feelings went up and down, sometimes even several times a day. But in spite of all my doubts, I stayed enthusiastic to this day, moved by God's spirit and convinced that this is my way.

## And now to the younger generation:

My name is David Pless, 18 years old and the eldest of the Franziskusgemeinschaft children. As such I may be the one who quarrels most with the principles of the community and frequently positions himself across them.

After prolonged reflection it is clear to me that I won't spend my life in the community, but rather find and go my own way. In spite of everything, I want to contribute my share to community life, even if it is hard and I come across incomprehension and even rejection.

And now, that the time of my leaving here approaches, I'm more and more conscious of my belonging to this place. Looking back I'm grateful and proud to have been able to experience community life. These years will imprint me for the rest of my life: an apprenticeship in tolerance, communication, harmony.

## Sister Bettina Lange writes under the caption: "I AM, I AM":

Already as a small girl, my school report said: Bettina has a pronounced sense of justice and stands up in favor of her schoolmates. Today, almost 30 years later, after difficult and often harsh times, I assume that my strength is God-willed and strives to release me to a devoting love.

Born 1963 in an evangelical priesthouse in Western Germany, I grew up with the feeling of being different, even peculiar. This was the result, on the one hand, of a natural opposition to the political circumstances at the time; on the other hand - of my unilateral outlook: for many years my world clearly distinguished between good and bad, for me or against me, totally or not at all. I thank my parents that I could always rely on them, in spite of my rebelliousness...

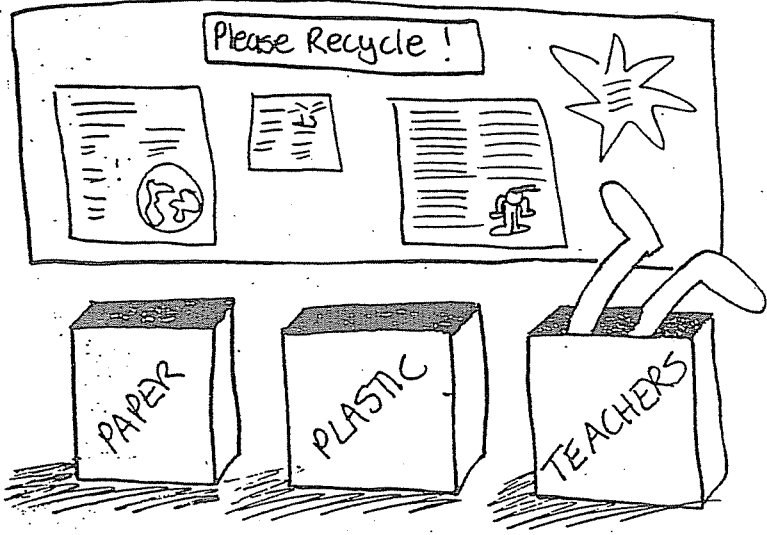


Maria Lange writes in a more moderate mood, but she too seems to feel the need for an interval period of "Looking Around" before she will be able to commit herself:

My parents have helped to found the Leutwitzer Community in 1988 - at that time I was six years old, so I am a true community child. This life wasn't always easy for me, but mostly I perceived it positively, especially as we children were never alone - and the forest began ten paces behind our house. Nevertheless I would like, after school, to live at first "differently", meaning "normally", like a normal family. I can imagine that afterwards I could certainly live in a community.



Are you aware of the existence of a periodical named **"Positive News"** (what a refreshing concept, for instance "man licks dog")? It is published in Great Britain, and here we bring you a little piece:



I am eighteen years old and I have just come out from the educative system. I know that a whole world is waiting for me to be discovered. Yet, I have been able to build up my own "Conception of Education" because I felt that my interests were being restricted or directly ignored. I realised I was part of a structure, a number, that had just come out of the production-line. I was a copy of somebody else. I was hopeless until I discovered that the difference between all of us lays on our desires, interests, feelings, abilities, passions. We need to knock down the old building of education within us and build a brand new world of creativity and imagination!

**The Pioneers for Change**

Searching on the web, I found that there are already some schools which have innovated in self-directed education. At The Clearwater School in Seattle, USA; 'students may work independently or in small groups - spending hours of intensely focused time pursuing their interests. There are no preset curriculums to interfere with student choices, no bells to interrupt long projects, no standardised tests to measure preset benchmarks. Students direct their own education'. It certainly is a challenge, but The Clearwater School says "Pursue Your Passion", and deeply believes in the wisdom of each person to do so'.

**Re-starting our minds...**

However, we are so afraid of changing - in fact, afraid of what an amazing experience this could be - that we keep on making the same mistake. We believe that being inside an educational structure that is exactly the same for all of us, makes things safer and more consistent. However, we are neglecting one of the biggest realities, that **WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT!**

**Dreaming your own Education**

How would the school of your dreams be? The teachers would be open and eager to learn from their pupils, **creating a dynamic learning interchange**. Someone that instead of teaching you facts to remember,

teaches you how to think so that - afterwards you can direct your own education whenever, wherever or whatever you want to study.

Teaching would be based on a practical criteria. Studying a specific type of ecosystem that would involve going out and checking the environment: watching, testing, smelling, feeling, experiencing. Oh, sorry! Perhaps you prefer to stay in the tidy and quiet classroom learning about things - that are happening, around you - from the books!

Well... enough about my dreams. What are your dreams like? Be creative (this is not a test) think, open your eyes and realise that there are other paths in this long walk that is Education.

by Dominique Mansilla Hermann Aged 18

There simply couldn't be a Kaleidoscope without a citation from our dear **"Down to Earth"** magazine (Australia). Here comes a little pearl by Dale Winbrow:

**THE MAN IN THE GLASS**

When you get what you want in this struggle for self,  
and the world makes you king for a day,  
Then go to the mirror and look at yourself,  
And see what that man has to say.  
For it isn't your father, your mother, or wife,  
Whose judgment of you you must pass,  
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life,  
Is the guy staring back in the glass.  
He is the man you must please - never mind all the rest,  
For he's with you clear up to the end.  
And you have passed your most difficult and dangerous test,  
When the man in the glass is your friend,  
You can be like another and chisel a plum,  
And think you're a wonderful guy,  
But the man in the glass says you're only a bum,  
If you can't look him straight in the eye.  
You can fool the whole world, down the pathway of years,  
And get pats on the back as you pass,  
But your final reward will be heartaches and tears,  
If you've cheated the man in the glass.

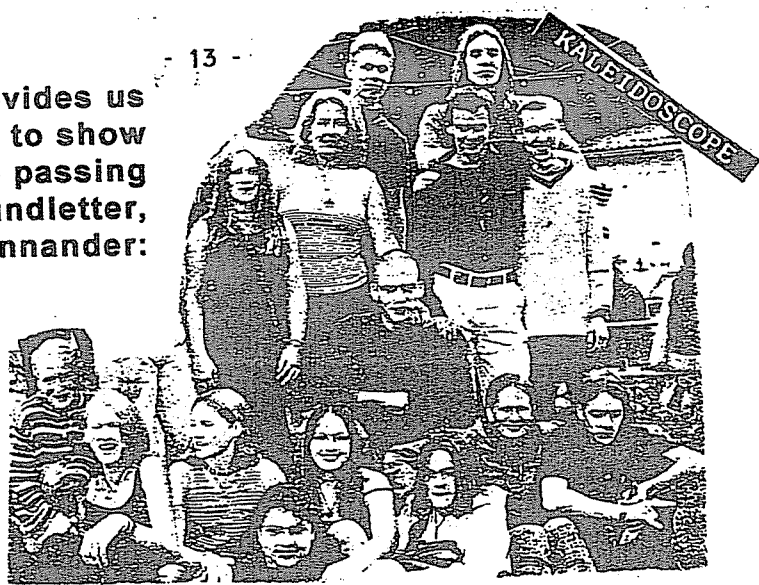
By Dale Winbrow

**ZEGG magazine (Germany) always provides us with plenty of food-for-thought. Here is to show you an entirely new way to celebrate the passing from youth into adulthood (ZEGG Roundletter, November 1999, by Rita Linnander:**

There are rites for all stages of transition in life. What I mean to address here is the unique step from childhood to adulthood, from the young girl/boy to the young woman/man. It is very moving to me to concern myself with my own puberty time, to remember and reconstruct events. This ritual of Rites of Passage nurtures us too, because a bridge is built to the teenagers and a broken link was re-established - the link between youths and adults.

The same gap exists also in our relationship to the old people. For that reason the introduction of the Rites of Passage naturally also means that we begin again to honor and value our Elders and find appropriate forms to realize that purpose...

Those Rites of Passage will last five days. The youths will be separated from their parents and from the community. In their own space, they will receive Teachings - like prayer, direct communication. and how to create links to the Earth, to Nature, to the Elements. The teenagers learn something about one another, their relationship to their own and to the other gender, sexual themes and much more...



**Another piece taken from the ZEGG "roundletter" (the Feb. 2000 issue):**  
**"here come a few excerpts from**

**Dieter Duhm's contribution named "Sustainable Communities":**

Trust means that children will no more be lied to, lovers will not be humiliated, animals not be deceived anymore. When I go fishing, do I sow trust when I go fishing, when I suggest to the fish that he is going to get food and he hungrily bites into the hook? These things have become second nature to us and we commit those mistrust-deeds very day...

But we cannot create a healing environment on that basis. As long as we take cheating live creatures for granted, this trust cannot arise...

---

**The Belgian community La Poudriere brings us a soulful Christmas message, which may be applicable to all seasons:**



At the end of the millennium, the global village is navigating by sight, piloted by an anonymous helmsman called MARKET whose only aim appears to be PROFIT.

Globalization might be good for all of us, provided that it be humanized,

affects each and everyone of us, wherever we are, whatever we are - in our family, our workshop or office, in the street; in citizen's presence inside a movement, an association; by a social or spiritual commitment...

Hope is contagious.- like enthusiasm it transmits itself by a thousand little gestures of listening, encounter, tenderness, solidarity, trust... Let us pass from an egotistical, indifferent culture to one of Peace, Participation,



**KAIROS EUROPA, on the other hand, are not content with dreams and messages. In a more practical mood, they brought people together last October, in Brussels, to plan their ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM:**

Various **Kairos Centres** and programme lines are preparing to participate in the activities. The Kairos Heidelberg office which is co-ordinating the writing of the **Kairos Document** will be holding a workshop on the Kairos Document. A number of written responses to the document from groups right across Europe have been received and many of the groups will be attending the event in Brussels. The **Communal Alliances Programme** in Mannheim and **Kairos Germany** will be mobilising representatives from marginalised groups, trade unions, charities and solidarity groups in Germany to participate in the event. The **Culture & Identity Programme** Line will be organising a cultural identity workshop and would be coming with participants from the Celtic Isles of Ireland and Scotland. The Programme Line on **Spirituality of Resistance and Solidarity** will be bringing participants from South Eastern Europe and offer a workshop of „story-telling“ to share their experiences with small-scale alternatives. Alternatives dealing with street children in Rumania, the issues of minorities in Trans-sylvania, the peace movement in Serbia, rehabilitation of drug addicts in an eco-village in Hungary, projects by women in the Ukraine...

The **Kairos Youth Co-ordination** providing a platform on the European level for groups and organisations working with young migrants and minorities will be using techniques of artistic expression and creative means of communication to address some of the themes of the festival. **Kairos UK** is bringing a coach-load of participants from Birmingham some of whom would be providing cultural and musical interludes during the event. **Kairos Poland** would be bringing representatives of groups from North Eastern Europe addressing the issues of alternative agriculture, sustainable communities, and the repercussions of EU enlargement and its asylum policies. Participants are also expected from the KAIROS nuclei in the **Southern Peninsular** and from the contact groups in Italy. Members of **Kairos Wallonia-Brussels** and the Kairos Brussels office will be playing host to the whole event and will be looking forward to welcoming all participants.

**From Kibbutz Trends" (Spring 2000), published by Yad Tabenkin, we selected this enlightening sum-up from a research entitled "INTIMATE FRIENDSHIPS OF KIBBUTZ ADOLESCENTS" by Ruth Sharabani and Hadas Weisman:**

Intimacy among peers is an important developmental task in adolescence. From a study of adolescents in kibbutz regarding the development of intimacy, the kibbutz affords conditions that help improve quality of life, lessen feelings of alienation, and strengthen the feeling of cooperation. In contrast to researchers who focused on the theory of attachment (Bowlby, 1969), we cannot be satisfied with the factor of lodging as sole explanation of the quality of relations of closeness in the present and the future, because our interest is in adolescents who are exposed to many attachment factors. It is supposed that values directly touching social relations in kibbutz, like normative positions about intimacy, may also influence relations of closeness in adolescence.

In the founders' generation, for example, could intimacy be grasped as threatening the egalitarian belonging to the "whole". In the past intimacy and self-exposure were not valued, indeed they were considered weaknesses in Israel society in general and in kibbutz in particular.

Social and educational changes that grant more room to individualism and family will almost certainly come to expression in the level of intimacy and its characteristics. Private frameworks will enable more intimacy and expression of feelings. At the same time, the emotional openness expected to encourage expression of positive feelings probably will strengthen in the same degree expression of negative ones.

Heavenly father

Look on us, your humble obedient tourist servants,  
who are doomed to travel on this earth,  
taking photographs, sending postcards and buy souvenirs.

We beseech you, oh lord,

that our plane will not be hijacked

and our baggage will not be lost

and our overweight goes unnoticed.

Give us this day, divine guidance on our selection of hotels.

We pray that the telephone works

and that the operators speak our language.

Lead us to good inexpensive restaurants,

where the wine is included in the price.

Give us wisdom to tip correctly in currency we do not understand.

Make the natives love us for what we are,

and not for what we can contribute to their worldly goods.

Grant us the strength to visit the museums, cathedrals and palaces,

and if we skip a historic monument to take a nap after lunch.

Have the mercy on us, for our flesh is weak.

Dear God, protect our wives from bargains they can't afford,

and do not need.

Lead them not into temptation, for they know not what they do.

Almighty father, keep our husbands from looking at foreign women  
and then comparing them to us.

Save them from making fools of themselves in night clubs.

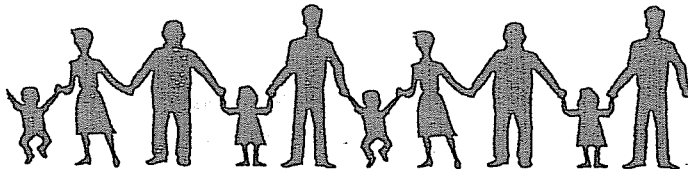
Above all, forgive them their trespasses, for they know exactly what  
they do.

When our journey is over, grant us the favor of finding someone  
who will look at our holiday snaps and slides and listen to our  
stories.

So that our lives as tourists will not have been in vain.

Amen !

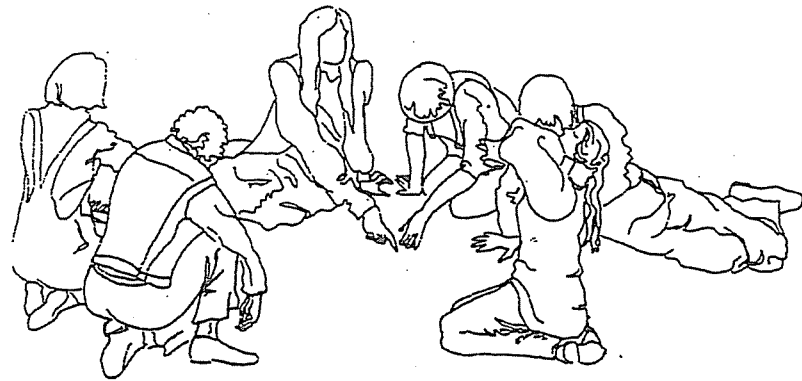
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For our Hebrew-wise readers, here comes some good news: Our "INT. COMMUNES DESK" is preparing a new quarterly publication, called KESHEV, edited by our friend Tse-Tse Regev from Kibbutz Baram, author of the book "The Kibbutz is dead, long Live the Kibbutz". Let's wish the new magazine much success and a long, well-read life!

# INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES AND KIBBUTZ

Contrary to the world-wide tendency towards privatization and individualization, there grows a steadily increasing resistance to the inhumane character of "Global Capitalism" - unemployment, loss of ethical values, destruction of environment etc. On this background I discern the chance of cultural and social revival, at which the praxis of the Kibbutz could serve as an example. I am trying to outline the following considerations as an outsider, whose attitude towards the Kibbutz is friendly but critical.



I am aware of the fact that all (or most) of these issues have long been discussed and analyzed amongst Kibbutz insiders. But I'd like to participate in such analyses and debates in the capacity of a social psychologist. As I propose in my book "Arche Noah" (Noah's Ark), the Kibbutz has still to realize its intrinsic meaning and purpose in the crisis-ridden world situation.

1. Development of the current internationalization, regardless of frontiers, together with the existing Intentional Communities and their regional contact-nets, such as Universities and the mass media. The target would be to exercise an enzyme-like function in the social metabolism, with the intention of spreading a Shalom-culture.

2. Deepening of historic consciousness, which is already present in the minds of most insiders of the Kibbutz movement. Processing the bankruptcy of the Soviet system

is a primary part of it: what effect does the failure of the macro-social experiment in Socialism have on the re-orientation of the meso-social beginnings, which are incorporated in the Kibbutzim.

I see our task in widening international federations, creative re-consideration of monastic traditions of world-religions. This includes the problem of the over-all culture of different intentional communities.

3. It was the monastic economies who in their halcyon days were the pace-makers of economic-technical progress. Here, newly founded "Noah"-projects could function as initiators for infra-structural regional developments, for instance around the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea.

4. Broadening the scope of the CALL magazine, with more information and discussion of present, past and future life-style of Intentional Communities, advertising their views and perspectives. In this way it could grow into an attractive periodical, in co-operation with high schools and media, also with the new "Middle East University"

Horst von Gizycki, Birkenkopfstr. 4a

32132 Kassel , GERMANY

# Anarchy Rules!

Twenty five years after they got together, the founders of Kibbutz Samar are still making a success of a no-rules lifestyle that looked doomed to failure

Michael Liskin

**A** FEW WEEKS AGO, AT THE height of the harvest season, Mussa Menahem and a group of other Kibbutz Samar members descended on the date groves. Although the heat was sweltering in the Arava, they wore long work-pants and long-sleeved shirts — as protection against the sharp needles of the palms and the persistent flies attracted by the sticky sweetness of the dates. The kibbutzniks had young volunteers to help them in the dusty orchard — some to clip the date stalks from the trees, others to separate moist dates from dry ones.

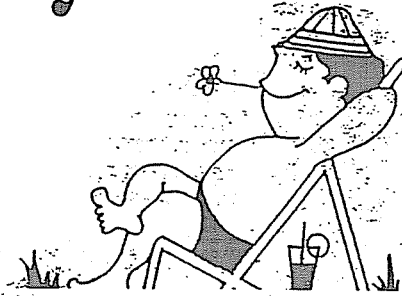
Similar scenes were repeated at agricultural kibbutzim across the country. But none of them pick their dates quite like Samar. In fact, none of Israel's 265 other kibbutzim do anything quite like Samar, whose members delightedly call their way of life "communal anarchy."

Mussa and the team he headed in the date palms — Samar's most successful money spinner — were not straining in the heat because of a suffocating work schedule, but because, over the years, they've decided for themselves that that's where they're most needed. The same goes for the jobs done by all Samar's members. They've slid into positions that suit their particular talents, or taken the initiative because, as they put it, "nobody else was doing it."

Uniquely, Samar has no hierarchy or committees, almost no rules, and no collectively dictated budget for each member — in short, none of the nitty-gritty of normal kibbutz life, the way it has developed since Deganiah was founded in the Jordan Valley 90 years ago.

Samar is a throw-back to the days when kibbutzim really were communities guided by principles of true equality, not the heavily structured businesses many have become.

Situated about 30 kilometers north of Eilat, Samar is this year marking the 25th anniversary of its founding *garin* — the nucleus of youngsters who went through the army together and then set up the kibbutz in 1976



Apart from the groves, which produce four kinds of mostly organic dates, members work in a thriving dairy, and various individual economic enterprises. And despite the unorthodox manpower and budgeting arrangements, the kibbutz breaks even, says Shelly Ashkenazi, the secretary. This enables members to maintain a modest, but comfortable, way of life — families have personal computers, TVs and VCRs, and cellphones.

Of the 160 people on Samar, 70 are members and the rest are children, volunteers and candidates for membership. The numbers are kept down; there is little housing for new candidates. Ashkenazi, a sun-tanned woman in her 30s, who came to Israel from Chicago in 1983, says she has stopped keeping a waiting list.

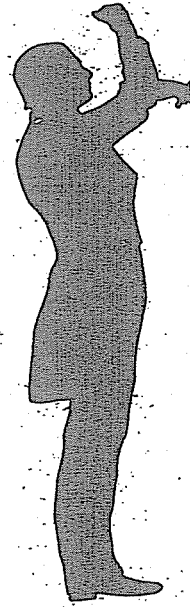
The most striking example of Samar's unique way of life is the way members get money — from a *kupah p'tuha*, or "open cash box," instead of the "personal budget" system of other kibbutzim. In the early days, members would just help themselves to cash from a box in the dining room. This was changed when outsiders began helping themselves too, so today there's a kibbutz credit card — but members have free, unlimited access. "If someone wants to spend \$10,000 on an addition to their house," says one member, "they do it. There's nothing to stop them." Nothing, that is, except responsibility toward the other members.

Over the years, only two members have been expelled for abusing the system: "They pretended not to know the difference between 350 shekels and 35,000 shekels," says Ashkenazi, outraged, comparing the offense to "a husband who rapes his wife and then claims he has every right to have sex with his spouse."

**A**N ANARCHIST KIBBUTZ seems like a contradiction in terms: How can a socialist society function without strict rules? But the pure communism behind the kibbutz idea — from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs — actually goes hand in hand with anarchism, which is based on people

acting voluntarily out of a sense of responsibility towards the community.

This view is enthusiastically espoused by the umbrella Kibbutz Movement's head Avshalom (Abu) Vilan, a Meretz party Knesset member, and one of Samar's biggest fans. In 1977 Vilan, then head of the Young Adults Division of the Kibbutz Artzi Federation, told the members of the young kibbutz that their anarchic system was doomed to failure. It couldn't work, he opined, because it required each member "to behave like he or she is the treasurer of the kibbutz, with all the responsibility of the kibbutz on his or her shoulders." Twenty years later, Vilan went back to Samar and admitted that he'd been wrong. (His own kibbutz, Negbah, meanwhile, is in deep financial and social trouble.)



According to Daniel Levy, 38, a nine-year Samaritan who grew up in Detroit, "Samar has taken the collective idea and stood it on its head. With the traditional kibbutz collective, the individual is subservient to the needs of the community. The kibbutz gets to tell me where I go to work. I have to ask committees to do anything. Individual freedom is greatly limited. On Samar, the individual has total autonomy."

The celebration of personal freedom is a constant theme at Samar. Says Gigi Strom, who runs the dairy: "It's the right attitude to let people do what they want to do — happier people are more productive." She only wonders why more kibbutzim don't see things this way.

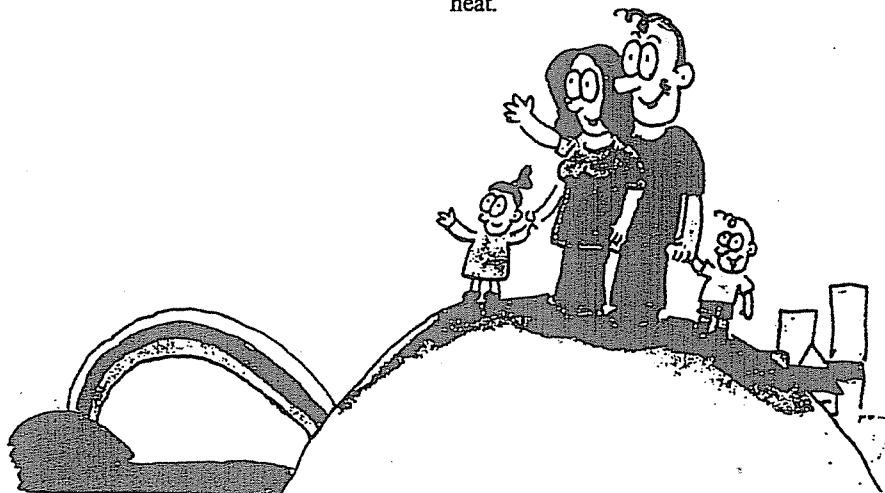
In the 70s and 80s, that personal freedom manifested itself at the swimming pool, where the absence of dress codes saw Samar become known as the nudist kibbutz. But members protest that this was not ideology — just laziness. And the nudity has declined of late.

In more significant examples of members' independence, two Samaritans are breeding exotic aquarium fish for export, others have opened a health-food store in Eilat, and another is researching potentially commercial solar energy technologies. All revenues, of course, go to the kibbutz.

**H**OW DOES "COMMUNAL ANARCHY" work? Ask Randi Spier, who was sent to Samar by the New York-based American Management Association's Global Best Practices Group. As with any successful organization, she concluded, Samar thrives because members have clearly defined roles, show initiative and take personal responsibility, and display a rare capacity for relaxed, fluid com-

munication that more rigid businesses would do well to emulate.

But Samar does have its problems. A minor one: Finding people to work with pre-school kids in the kibbutz daycare center. (From Grade 1 they are bused to school at Yotvata.) After a great deal of squabbling among parents, with no one coming forward to fill the positions, four non-members have been hired. The issue is expected to continue generating a lot of heat.



## Kibbutz Lotan

Dear Editor:

I was moved by Yiscah Bracha's stirring article about Kibbutz Lotan in southern Israel

Her article successfully captures the sense of spirituality, innovation, drive, and willingness to take risks that characterize Lotan. It is indeed a "crazy" place, in all the positive senses of the word, and thank goodness it continues to attract exceptional and sometimes somewhat odd people who continue to add wonderfully to the dynamic nature of the community.

What the author did not fully describe, however, was the very strong and stable human foundation at Lotan. The members and residents there are quite open about their dreams and fears, their aspirations and frustrations. Such openness is part of the sense of community and trust that is exuded by the place. They articulate their frustrations and disappointments, but that should not be misconstrued as losing the dream. Their dream evolves as the community evolves.

But unlike most kibbutzim today, the members of Lotan decided not to give up the core communal social and economic values that so characterized the original kibbutz movements. The results are tremendously inspiring. They still have a housing shortage, but they are about to begin building their next generation of houses using ecologically viable straw-bale construction that is excellently suited for the desert. And they have a waiting list of individuals and families who want to come to Lotan and apply for the long process required to become full members of the community. The kibbutz is thriving socially, culturally, and even on the verge of getting there economically. The responsible social and communal values of the place may keep it from becoming economically rich, but it certainly is rich in spirit. Our children and we can't wait to get back again for our next extended visit.

**Reuven Firestone**

Hebrew Union College/  
Jewish Institute of Religion

A far more critical problem relates not to the youngest kids, but to their older brothers and sisters. Kibbutzim nationwide are blighted by the departure for city life of most of the young generation. Will Samar be able to sustain itself?

THE JERUSALEM REPORT JANUARY 17, 2000



## NIEDERKAUFUNGEN (KOMMUNE)

Kirchweg 1  
34260 Kaufungen  
GERMANY  
0049-5605/3015

Kommune Niederkaufungen was founded in 1986. The original group consisted of 15 people, and by now we are about 40 adults (22 men, 18 women) and 12 children; the planned size is 100. We live in a village 10 km away from the city of Kassel (pop. 200,000) in central Germany, so we are rather semi-urban. We understand ourselves as a political but undogmatic group. We don't orient along a specific community tradition or in spirituality.

Our main principles are shared income, decision making by consensus, reduction of nuclear-family structures, reduction of gender-typical hierarchy, Left understanding of politics, collective work structures, ecologically and socially sound products.

Our areas of work are carpentry, vegetable growing, seminar work, animals, playschool, architecture/planning, kitchen, construction, leather and clothing, metalwork, administration, external jobs (15%).

Newcomers go through a 3-6 month trial period, and we expect new members to bring in what they have. We frequently have weekends and weeks for interested people. Visitors have to check with us in advance. SASE requested. 1/25/93

Communities, Journal of Cooperative Living  
Rt 1 Box 156  
Rutledge MO 63563

# Federation of Egalitarian Communities

HC 3-F7, Box 3370, Tecumseh, MO 65760

Phone: 417-679-4682

e-mail: [fec@ic.org](mailto:fec@ic.org) (at Acorn)

Web page: <http://www.crl.com/~eastwind/fec.html>



Our communities are homes to over 200 individuals committed to sharing our lives and working together for a better world. We have much in common: our own self-managed businesses, cooperative child care, participatory government and commitments to work for peace, nonviolence and the environment.

## WE DON'T PROMISE UTOPIA

But we do have fun, satisfying time building our communities, learning to live together and reaching out to like-minded people, near and far.

## WE INVITE YOU TO COME AND SEE

All our groups are open to new members. Come visit! To arrange a visit, write to the individual community. We also are available for lectures, host tours and conferences. Our mail order book service, Communities Bookshelf, specializes in publications on communal and cooperative living. A free catalogue is available on request from East Wind.

## Reading Window School

by Piper

I first joined Twin Oaks in 1971. I joined as, and still am the oldest member here (now 75). One of the things that keeps me excited about Twin Oaks is that by sharing resources and supporting each other, we can help each other to have a positive impact on the world outside Twin Oaks.

While some members put hard work into worthy political causes, and others do volunteer work at a women's shelter, an animal shelter, a food kitchen, and prison workshops, my main vehicle for 'making a difference' is Reading Window School.

Reading Window School gives me the chance to use the special methods I've developed to help at-risk children learn to read. After doing individual tutoring for years, in 1997 we expanded our reach and successfully applied for Reading Window

School to be a tax exempt 501 (c) (3) organization. Along the way, we discovered that children as young as three can- and do-learn to read with pride. And 'average' and 'disadvantaged' six and seven year olds can- and do-leap ahead in school, becoming eligible for local Talented and Gifted' programs.



As I get older, my desire to share the excitement and importance of this work keeps increasing. I don't want the learning I've achieved to be lost when I die. But, for now, I'm still here, trying my best to positively impact the world, both as an individual and as part of an intentional community.



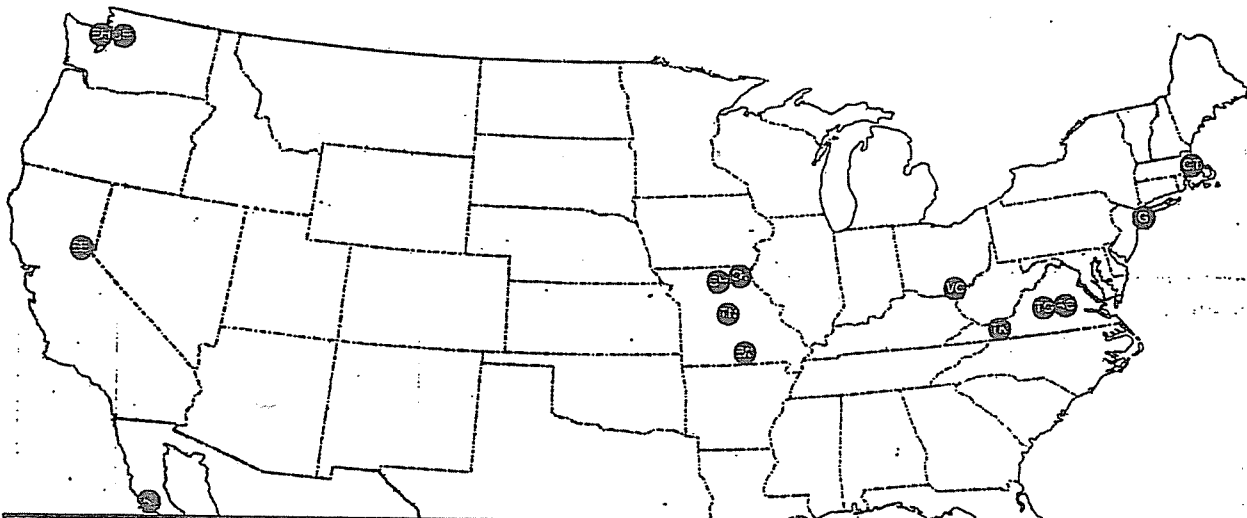
## The Federation of Egalitarian Communities?

The FEC is an association of fourteen communities which hold land, labor, and other resources in common and distribute the products of members' labor and all other goods equally or according to need. FEC communities also commit to non-violence, participatory governance, non-discrimination, environmental responsibility, and healthy interpersonal relationships.



# FEC Member Communities

Map Code, Community Name	Mailing Address	E-mail	Web site	Phone
AC Acorn	1259-S9 Indian Creek Rd, Mineral, VA 23117	acom@ic.org	www.ic.org/acorn	540-894-0595
BHH Beacon Hill House	1309 13th Avenue S., Seattle, WA 98144	bhhouse@yahoo.com	www.infoteam.com/ nonprofit/nica/Bhh1.html	206-324-6822
EW East Wind	HC-3, Box 3370-S9, Tecumseh, MO 85760	visit@eastwind.org	www.eastwind.org	417-879-4682
JR Jolly Ranchers	2711 S. Elmwood Place, Seattle, WA 98144	jollyranchers@ic.org	www.ic.org/fec	206-322-8071
SH Sandhill	Route 1, Box 155-S9, Rutledge, MO 63563	sandhill@ic.org	www.eastwind.org/ brochure/sandhill.htm	660-883-5545
SK Skyhouse	1 Dancing Rabbit Lane-S9, Rutledge, MO 63563	skyhouse@ic.org	www.dancingrabbit.org/ skyhouse	660-883-5511
TO Twin Oaks	138-S9 Twin Oaks Rd., Louisa, VA 23093	twinoaks@ic.org	www.twinoaks.org	540-894-5128



## Communities in Dialog

Map Code, Community Name	Mailing Address	E-mail	Web site	Phone
BB Blackberry	PO Box 208-S9, N San Juan, CA 95960	janiekess@ hotmail.com	www.ic.org/fec	530-288-3600
CT Common Threads	PO Box 441713, Somerville, MA 02144	commonthreads@ ic.org	www.eastwind.org/ fecdialog.htm	617-576-8878
G Ganas	139-S9 Corson Ave, Staten Island, NY 10301	ganas@well.com	www.well.com/ user/ganas	718-720-5378
K Krutsio	Apertado Postal 174, Guerrero Negro, California Sur, Mexico 23940	Beja	www.eastwind.org/ fecdialog.htm	n/a
TK Tekiah	439 Valley Dr. NW, Floyd, VA 24091	joyabounds@usa.net	www.ic.org/fec	540-745-5835
TN Terra Nova	1404-S9 Gary Street, Columbia, MO 65203	terranoval@aol.com	www.ic.org/fec	573-443-5253
VC Veiled Cliffs	15826-S9 State Route 218, Scottown, OH 45678	hosmervcc@ eurekanet.com	www.ic.org/fec	740-256-1400

Soundings Summer 1999

# Soundings

The Newsletter of The Federation of Egalitarian Communities

# THE URFELD CIRCLE

## ( A Moving and Exciting Visit)

Last April a six-member delegation from the Circle set out to meet with our Israeli members. It was the week of Passover and Easter and a few days after the Pope's visit to Israel. It turned out to be a very moving and exciting time, anticipating the next large meeting in Israel (Winter 2000).

Of course one can describe the various places we saw, but the real meaning was deeper, as all we viewed and experienced is connected to history - of the Jews and the Christians, the holocaust - and the immediate history of our community. It is, of course, not surprising that our reception and welcome by the Jewish members of the Urfeld Circle was so familiar and deep-felt!

Our Circle seems to have real power of attraction in Israel. First at Kibbutz Tzuba, where we made new friends, and then at the meeting at Kfar Menachem on Easter Sunday we met four new people concerned with our common matters, and they took an important part in our talks.

We toured the urban, 40-member Kibbutz Tamuz, guided by Yiftach and Dana. When we'll succeed to buy a house in Israel, we shall surely find good relations with the Tamuz People.



**Kfar Menachem Scenery**

The house itself, very near Jerusalem, is a very concrete and immediate task, and we hope to call it soon our own and make it our center in Israel.

At our day-long meeting at Kfar Menachem (Yoel Darom's Kibbutz), over forty people attended. Tse-Tse (Kibbutz Baram) gave a survey of intentional communities in the world, and a lively discussion followed. Many subjects were brought up, from practical matters of communal living to highly spiritual issues, visions of the future, new and old content of Living-together and sharing possessions, traditions, beliefs and visions.

Part of the discussion touched Jewish-Christian issues. Amnon Shapira said: "Our Urfeld Circle must find one way for Jews and Christians alike. I see myself in the same boat as Rudolf...". Rudolf (Pesch) afterwards added some information about the Pope's visit to the "Holy Land", and it seems that somepart of the Papal tendency towards reconciliation with Jewry is the result of the Integrierte Gemeinde's activity.

We (the Gemeinde delegation) expressed our delight in the harmony and concord of our group during the whole journey, which included also the city of Jerusalem, Chaim Seligman's Kibbutz Givat Brenner, Aryeh's Kibbutz Ga'ash and more.

**Ingeborg Pesch u. Maria Schlegel**

# On Human Awareness

- 22 -

## Open Letter to Open-Minded Communards

In this day and age the Expression "New Kibbutz" is being used all over the Kibbutz movement. The term means many different things to many people. To some it means going into the hi-tec era. To others it means more money in their personal budgets. Some Kibbutzniks talk of living in Kibbutz "on contract", selling their skills and talents while buying social amenities and services.

Many suggestions are raised, many formats proposed. There are even camps shaping up into parties pulling in one direction or another. One thing is clear: the Kibbutz we shall see evolve in the next 20-30 years will present a concept vastly different to the one we now hold as the classical Kibbutz.

Some of us have come to the conclusion that not all Kibbutz ills can be cured by more efficient economic regimes. Increased income and efficiency are certainly welcome to every Kibbutz and each of its members. However, there is something missing.

The questions are:

- \* What's happening to our human relations?
- \* How are we getting along with our fellow kibbutzniks?
- \* Where's our sense of content and purpose in life?
- \* Is there anything we can do to improve the social interaction between the members, who live in a pressurized society where even a measure of aggression, hostility and alienation do appear?



### Open ongoing dialogue

-----

A new Kibbutz format can be founded, linked to the human awareness movement. The base-line should be constant interaction. Open, honest, non-destructive, confrontational dialogue is the key to a well rounded satisfying life. It is no secret that when we get on with our fellow members, we are mentally and physically healthier, and we recreate a feeling of common purpose. When all cooperate, the sum of the whole is much greater than the individual parts.

This letter invites you to consider this proposal and ask yourself if you would be prepared to join in the effort of making this happen. What are your thoughts about family? What are your ideas concerning direct, ongoing dialogue? How do you see a true improvement in personal relationships happening on a permanent basis?



These and many more questions were dealt with by a number of Kibbutzniks. They came to the conclusion that the commune (either within an existing Kibbutz or as a new Kibbutz) should be based on:

- \* Collective production, as in existing Kibbutzim ;
- \* Collective consumption, mutual aid, equality (while freezing outside private assets), and INVOLVEMENT with the local and national scenes on a more intensive level than today ;

## MORE - OR LESS ?

The new millennium is a fitting occasion to consider the past and glance at the future of

The year 1999: first thing I see is that we are less people than last year. Some left us, some did not even join after their probation period, only one woman joined us this year. We count now 7 women, 3 men and two young girls. A year and a half ago we were twice as much

I personally like the present situation. All these months there had been an somewhat tense atmosphere of coming-and-going like in a railway station, so now I sense a feeling of relaxation and the prospect of coming to terms with substantial problems. The group consolidates, I feel that they want to be together and shape our joint future.

Of course, I am aware that changes may occur. Even I myself had intended to leave the community last year, but luckily I stayed on, and what I want today is to grow old here...

HEIKE - LUTTER GRUPPE  
3372 Lutter am Barenberge, Germany

- \* Two ideas that are new (or at least quite different):

decisions by consensus and ongoing confrontational dialogue.

If you find yourself in agreement with this list, you are invited to contact Meir Hurwitz or Hilde Snippe at:

Kibbutz Kfar Ha-Maccabi,  
30030 (Israel)

Meir Hurwitz



## Emmanuel Cluster in Reba Place Fellowship

In Emmanuel Cluster we have had on-going conversations about the future direction of our communal life. Even though our present experience with one another is quite substantial and satisfactory, we sense that we are on the edge of some significant changes.

**A fuller experience of shared life:**  
One possibility under consideration is that we might restructure our daily life so as to bring about a much fuller experience of shared life and ministry. This might happen a couple of ways: 1) engaging in a common ministry project that would occupy all our normal working hours; or, 2) re-arranging our dwelling space and daily life into some kind of household format, to increase the common life and cut living expenses. Rearranging ourselves into a more closely shared life might involve forming several smaller functioning units, rather than keeping the entire cluster together in its present format.

# THE BRUDERHOF



AUGUST 11-13, 2000  
FARMINGTON  
PENNSYLVANIA, USA



IF KIDS CAN  
LIVE IN PEACE,  
ONE DAY  
ADULTS CAN TOO!



"Surely we can all see the horror adults perpetrate on themselves and the children of the world. It is time for us adults to listen and let the children lead."

Betty Williams, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

Dear Yoel and Rachel Darom,

Special greetings to you... We have fond memories of our last visit to you and your Kibbutz. Now we enjoy the CALL magazine as a regular link between us. We do want to remain in contact with you and all our Kibbutz friends.

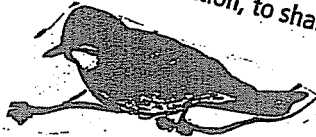
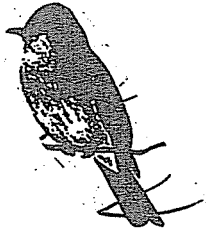
We had a nice visit from Nancy and Chaim Farchi (from Kibbutz Revivim in the Negev desert). Nancy came here to see "her girls", whom she had taught and taken special care of while they studied Hebrew at her Kibbutz (where over the years many Bruderhofers had been enthusiastically hosted...).

We really hope that this visit will encourage more

Martin and Burgel Johnson  
Maple Ridge Bruderhof, USA

## The Plough

*Publisher and Bookseller since 1920*  
Plough is the publishing house of the Bruderhof, a community movement of families and single men and women. Our common basis is faith in Christ; all the same, we acknowledge God's working in all people, no matter their background or creed, who strive for justice, peace, love, and joy. The goal of our publishing program is to challenge the assumptions of institutional Christendom, to encourage self-examination, discussion, and nonviolent action, to share hope, and to build community.



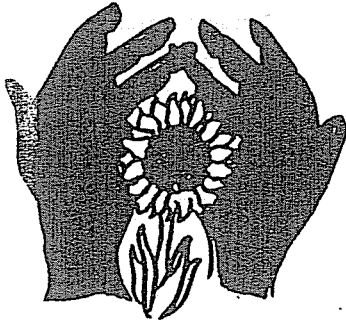
## A LETTER FROM A YOUNG BRUDERHOFER IN ISRAEL, DECEMBER 1999

Well, lots has happened here since I e-mailed you last, including the trip we took this weekend down to the Dead Sea for Tim's farewell. But first I can tell a little bit of what our Kibbutz High School experience was like. My first impression of the kibbutz near the Sea of Galilee, that we first visited, was that it was very well off compared to even the Jewish sections of Nazareth and Afula and also that it is very like a giant Hutterite colony out west. (Many single family homes/ trailers and a lot of agriculture).

As you know, the two of us Bruderhof young people, who are currently travelling in Israel, were invited to talk to two 12th grade classes at a Regional Kibbutz High School, near the Sea of Galilee. What I found different at first was that the kids were even more rowdy than in our Kingston NY High School that I attended! It took 5 minutes in each class for the teacher to get them to quiet down. But once I started talking about our Bruderhof community history etc, how we got kicked out of Germany by the Nazi's and how our members had to go across the Atlantic during WWII across the German submarine-infested Atlantic, they really paid attention! I got the feeling that all the kids were thinking people, because all of the questions they asked were about our way of life and belief. There was nothing about whether we can date or if we can wear what ever clothes we like etc... However the kids were very scared of commitment. One question they all wanted to know was if you can leave the Bruderhof, and if I was thinking of going back. I told them that yes! I wanted to go back and no! it is a life time commitment and they were all shocked.

# DEFINING "GOOD"

## SOME REFLECTIONS FOLLOWING THE COLLOQUIUM "IN SEARCH OF THE GOOD SOCIETY" Haifa University (Israel) , Summer 1999

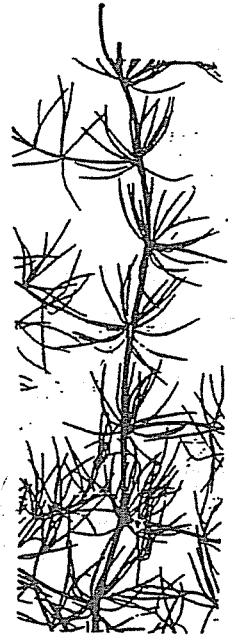


- In the course of the colloquium, a regrettable misunderstanding occurred as to the distinction between two different meanings of the term "good": The **moral** vs. the **instrumental**.
- A discerning definition of these two concepts is proposed.
- Confusion between the two meanings is common in current social literature. Examples are presented.
- Examples from the colloquium are discussed, where confusion between the two meanings of "good" caused misunderstandings.
- According to our definition, a morally "good society" means a society comprising morally "good" people.
- During the first decade of Kibbutz' history, a shift in aspiration took place: from the desire to constitute a **morally** good society to contentment with being an **instrumentally** good one.
- An **instrumentally** good society may exist without being a **morally** good one, but this is possible within an **authoritarian** context only.
- Kibbutz is no more an authoritarian society, and since it was not formed as a morally "good society" in the first place, it can no more be a "good society", neither in the moral nor in the instrumental sense.

### Moral- vs. Instrumental "Good"

Whenever we came to use the concept of "Good" in the course of discussions, I sensed some confusion. I wondered whether we were duly aware of the fact that the term "good" is used in more than one meaning. First, there is the **moral** meaning, by which, to put it plainly, "A Good Person" means "one who wishes everybody well". But there is the other common use of the same term. One may say, for instance, "as far as I am concerned, 'good' is what makes me happy, what serves my own goals". Thus, he or she uses the term in another sense, which obviously does not coincide with the moral one. For our purpose, let us name it the **instrumental** sense.

"Good" in its moral sense, refers to a person's emotions, wishes, intentions or motivations toward people, whereas "good" in its instrumental sense refers to things, events, acts or situations and their outcome for a person's well-being.



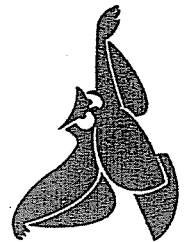
I am aware of the ever-changing, culturally determined character of the concept of moral "goodness". In certain cultural contexts, to be morally "good" means to follow God's commandments, whatever they might be. In a different context "good" persons in authority may be said to act for their subjects' "well being" against their subjects' own will. As for me, I obviously cannot interpret moral "goodness" otherwise than in the sense of "sovereign-morality". To be "good" in that sense means to wish for the other's "good", whereas the other's "good" is always defined by him- or herself. It should be noticed that within the sentence above, the term "good" is repeated three times. The first one denotes the concept in its *moral* meaning, which is the one to be defined. The other two instances stand for the *instrumental* meaning of "good".



It should be noticed furthermore, that the above definition stresses the element of *wishing* (the intention, the motive) rather than the actual behavior of a (morally) "good" person. Indeed, I am of the opinion that without (morally) "good" intentions, a person does not deserve to be called (morally) "good", even though the outcome of his or her behavior may be (instrumentally) "good" for others. On the other hand, a person does deserve to be called (morally) "good" if he or she just retain (morally) "good" intentions, even if they fail to do any (instrumental) "good" for others. Yet, speaking of "good intentions" or "good wishes" is by no means to be understood as a kind of mere uncommitted yearning. It definitely means a commitment to realize these wishes and intentions for the others' well being.



At this point I will certainly come up against controversy. Although my definition of the "moral good" sounds reasonable, it contradicts a huge body of traditional moral thinking. Religions generally do not rely so much on genuine moral "goodness" of their devotees. They try to motivate them to (instrumentally) "good" conduct (not quite to morally "good" intentions) by threats of punishment and promises of rewards in this world or another. Judicial systems do the same by earthly punishment. The market system also presupposes a selfish (non-moral) human nature, and tries to influence human behavior to be (instrumentally) "good" by means of material incentives. As is well known, some Kibbutzim have recently also adopted such *market* considerations, which makes this discussion quite relevant for them.



Most of the outstanding efforts made by kibbutzim to solve their current problems have nothing to do with rendering the kibbutz a (morally) better society. The kibbutzim take, whether explicitly or implicitly, the moral level of their population for granted. They do not try to change it either by moral preaching or by whatever means. Explanatory efforts within the kibbutz merely stress the (instrumental) benefits of communal arrangements or, alternatively, the personal benefits of privatization. Hence, all these efforts intend to change the kibbutz into an *instrumentally* better society, not into a *morally* better one. They try to adapt new social arrangements to the existing, *not so* (morally) *good* people. These Kibbutzim adapt themselves to the same impossible rule as market society in general allegedly does, namely, to rely on the market's "invisible hand" (Adam Smith<sup>4</sup>) to make people who lack (morally) good intentions act as if they had them.

Eliyahu Regev  
Kibbutz Baram 13860, Israel

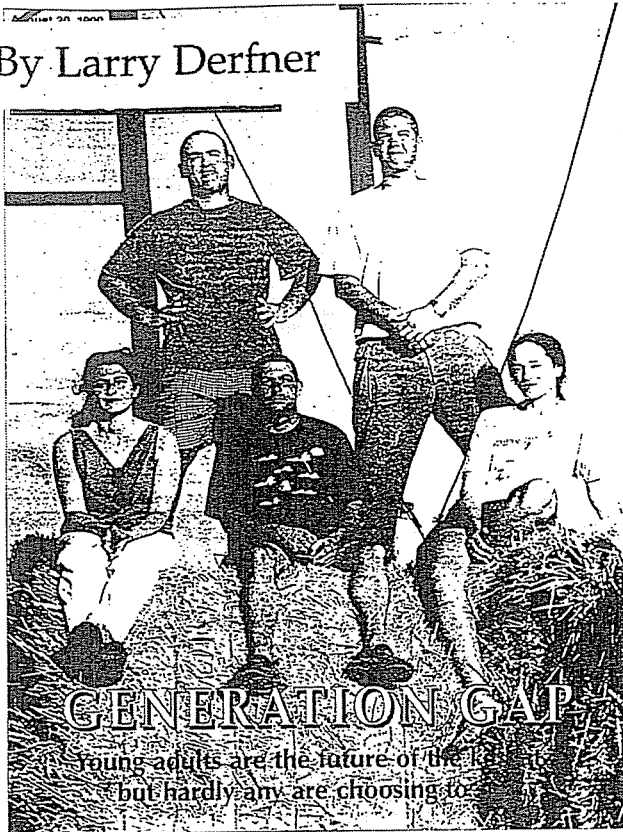


I evaluate the contribution of the Kibbutz experience as very important with regard to quality. Even in a crisis, the Kibbutz movement proves that there is a societal alternative to „free“ market economy - for those, who are ready to study it. Despite all, the Kibbutz is an encouraging, humane contribution against the „normative force of the facts“.



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Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH),  
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By Larry Derfner



By age 28, young people who have grown up on kibbutzim have to choose whether or not they want to become members. Many kibbutzim extend the deadline by a couple of years or so, but 28 is the benchmark age.

Asked what proportion of these people become candidates for membership, Uzi Lowenbach, head of the youth division of the United Kibbutz Movement (UKM), which represents 176 of the 277 kibbutzim, replies: "In about 70% of UKM kibbutzim, the number of people who apply for membership is virtually zero."

Not only is the quantity of young adult kibbutzniks going down, so is their quality, as far as economic productivity and leadership potential are concerned, officials say.

"I'm afraid that in the last few years, a high percentage of people who left the kibbutz were those who had advanced education and professional skills — people who felt they had the wherewithal to succeed on the outside," notes Marle.

"Conversely, many of those who stayed on kibbutz were people with lesser education and professional skills, and who may feel less confident about their chances outside.

"Some stayed because they had strong ideological motivation. Some others stayed out of weakness, because they were afraid to try to cope with life on the outside. And some just stayed out of inertia."

Meanwhile, as the kibbutzim's pool of young people thins out, hardly any new people are coming in. The previous absorption sources are drying up.

The chief source of new members is non-kibbutzniks who marry in. A trickle comes in from the Zionist youth movements, and here and there individual Israelis or new immigrants join up — mainly for the peaceful, rural way of life, and because kibbutzim are still thought of as great places to raise children.

The exodus of the young is a key component in the kibbutz population's nationwide decrease from 125,000 in 1990 to about 115,000 today.

Reasonably enough, kibbutzniks consider this hemorrhaging of young blood a threat to the movement's existence. They predict that in the not-too-distant future, most kibbutzim will be transformed into *yishuvim kehilati'im* — community settlements whose members own their own homes and keep whatever they earn at their jobs. Certain basic services, like health and education, may continue to be provided, but members would have to finance these out of their own pockets.

"A certain number of financially well-off, traditional kibbutzim will continue to function as kibbutzim on the classic model, but there probably will be very few of these," says Avi Kadosh, a kibbutz veteran and sociologist affiliated with Yad Tabenkin, the UKM research center, who researched the attitudes of the next generation.

"A lot of them go to university on the kibbutz's tab and then leave," notes Yael Tivon, 29, a graduate student in agriculture who became a member of Tzora a couple of months ago.

"The idea of commitment doesn't appeal to them," Kadosh continues. "They're very individualistic, they focus on the here and now, they don't want to decide on their future, only to experience more and more of the world. They've adopted the 'Peter Pan syndrome.'"

A widely accepted assumption is that young adults are put off by the kibbutzim because of the awful problems within their little society. After all, the kibbutz movement is sinking in debt and, as a way of life, it's a relic from a suffocating socialist past that Israel has left behind.

Kadosh, however, sees it differently. From research on young adults in the West, especially the US, Scandinavia, and Germany, he found the same kind of dislocation that shows up among the next generation of kibbutzniks. There is a general trend in much of the West, he points out, for people in their late 20s to stay uncommitted and unattached as long as possible, to keep all their options open, to think of themselves above all else.

"What's happening to the kibbutz's next generation has more to do with the crisis of modernity than with the crisis in the kibbutz," he maintains.

The kibbutz movement does, however, carry a share of the responsibility for creating its own lost generation, Kadosh maintains. Seeing that its "children" are leaving home in droves, he says, the movement has responded like an insecure, overly permissive parent.

"The kibbutz is doing everything it can so that its young people won't cut the rope completely," he notes. "It delays the time they have to decide whether they want membership, it lets them rent rooms and work on the kibbutz even if they're not members, it gives them money to keep studying whatever they want, it lets them travel as long as they want.

"And by allowing all this, the kibbutz sends the message that it lacks the self-confidence to assert its authority. And the youth, even without knowing it, lose respect for the kibbutz and take advantage of all the opportunities they're given to keep on dawdling with their lives."

These are generalizations, though, Kadosh stresses; there are also plenty of solid citizens among the next generation of kibbutzniks.

Lowenbach of the UKM likewise tries to keep his chin up.

"It's important for me to stress that the kibbutz movement is very proud of its sons and daughters, whether they're still on kibbutz or not," he says. "Many of those who left have become leaders in Israeli society; the best example is the prime minister [who left Kibbutz Mishmar Hasharon in his 20s]."

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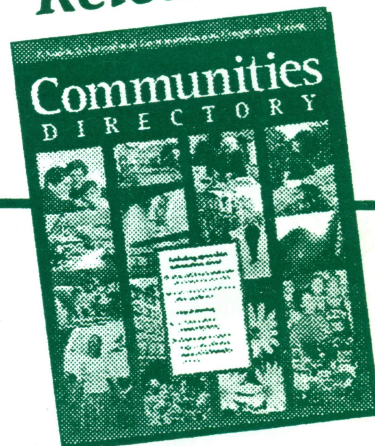
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## A ripening merger

The two large kibbutz movements, the United Kibbutz Movement and Hakibbutz Haartzi, are well on their way to unification, after it was decided at their winter conferences that a national framework would be created, called *The Kibbutz Movement*. Although the Religious Kibbutz Movement has not yet joined, this is likely to happen when the time is ripe. Past dissension, even if justified at the time, has been dwarfed and set aside, in view of the crisis affecting many of the kibbutzim and the movements.

The united movement is obliged to redefine basic kibbutz values, to formulate an ideological covenant and jointly determine the norms of behavior of the communities and their members. This concerns relations between the individual and the community, members' obligation to the collective and the community's responsibility to each one of its members. This will require agreement on the level of partnership and solidarity among the members within the kibbutz, and among the kibbutzim within the national framework.

In view of far-reaching changes taking place both within Israel and on a world scale, it is necessary to readapt the economic-business management and the social organization to the new developments, in order to confront the challenges of the twenty-first century. Consolidation of values, principles and management procedures to be shared by most of the kibbutzim is likely to contribute to the painful and protracted process of change and adaptation currently experienced in most of the kibbutzim.

Let us wish the unifying movements that they may know how to preserve the basic values which permeated former frameworks, without consecrating old structures and traditions.

## RESOURCES

Descriptions and contact information for major resource organizations within specific interest areas—organizations who make it their business to compile information about their niche and will know the best, most up-to-date resources to point people toward. Categories include: community networking, agriculture, ecology, energy, economics, technology, spirituality, education, sexuality, personal growth, and more.

## RECOMMENDED READING LIST

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