c.A.L.L.

Communes At Large Letter

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNES DESK

YAD TABENKIN

No. 37 Winter 2013/14

Dear All,

As 2013 comes to a close, it seems appropriate to simultaneously reflect on the year that was, and look forward to the new opportunities that 2014 brings.

This is an exercise that we did as a community for many years, albeit in the autumn at the turn of the Jewish New Year. We discussed our past successes and failures, and made commitments to ourselves and each other with regards to the year ahead.

So what is my pronouncement? The highlight of my year was most certainly moving house. Yes, you did read that correctly, I look back on the packing, loading, unloading and unpacking that took place this summer as not just a high point of my year, but a high point of my 15 years in community.

You see, my whole urban kibbutz of 120 moved into one eight-storied building. We have family spaces, group spaces, a dry goods store, a pub, a gym, an art studio, a wood workshop, a music studio etc. etc. etc.

The change is dramatic; instead of living in apartments spread out over a whole neighbourhood, we can now stake our claim to be the largest intentional community in the world living under one roof.

This environment, for children and adults alike, facilitates a multitude of diverse day-to-day encounters. We bump into each other in the stairwells in the morning, sit around dinner tables for meals, and meet up in the evenings for a beer or for a meeting.

We are learning to take advantage of our new situation and it's certainly a learning process that I am thoroughly enjoying. Hey, why not come over for a visit and see for yourself?

Looking ahead to 2014, I want to wish us all a meaningful and fulfilling year of community – sharing our lives with others and deepening our relationships. That is the essence of what living in intentional community is all about.

I hope you enjoy this issue of C.A.L.L. – it contains material from the four corners of the earth, religious and secular communities, ecovillages and co-housing, an historical community and a modern hip New York commune – in short, something for everyone.

You can send us your suggestions, corrections, contributions and retributions regarding C.A.L.L., to the usual email address,

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12 Roommates, 3 Couples, 1 Loft

By Nate Hopper – nymag.com

Once autumn fades, and the sun slumps, its full glide becoming visible through the southern-facing windows of "the loft," the twelve residents on the third floor of a defunct garment plant will start to arm-wrestle. "We generally save up our grievances till the winter," jokes Chris, a chef, on a recent crisp evening. "I've been mostly doing one-arm curls."

His playful machismo nods to the loft's roots. Back in 2003, six twentysomething guys rented out 4,800 dust-caked square feet in Bushwick and began to build. Among the concrete pillars and rust-crusted pipes, small scrap-wood and drywall rooms started shouldering up next to one another, leaving the most possible space for a vast common area, a wood shop, and a band practice room. "Shit was just, like, everywhere," says Shah, one of the founders, now 38, "which was initially part of the appeal." The expanse became a near-anarchistic shantytown dreamscape dubbed "Mancamp." Soon, half-drunk, sleepy-eyed trips to the concrete nook that "miraculously had a toilet" doubled as encounters with a loftmate wielding a katana. They lived big on the cheap - an appealing strategy for many young adults nowadays. It beats a Lilliputian childhood bedroom.

The loft's current crew: age 26 to 39. There are four chefs. A filmmaker. An actor and stoner-rock musician (Shah, the only pioneer left). And several other artists/musicians with day jobs. There's Megan and Ethan, who tore through the wall separating their rooms after they began dating. Plus another couple, Chris and Jill. And the oldest resident, Jim, fell for Lili, 32, during one loft Thanksgiving; they now share a room, and she's pregnant with their child - whose imminent arrival will bring about their departure.

The rent is cheap ($600 per person and $800 per room-sharing couple); the temperature, a challenge (two hulking, costly gas heaters try to fend off the winter drafts, but body warmth, everyone agrees, works better); the vibe, no longer quite so Mancamp. There's now a noise curfew, designated (if oft-ignored) cleaning days, and an indoor garden. It's practically *adult*. They share know-how, job opportunities, and a washer-dryer.

But at the end of the day, there are still twelve people living in one apartment, and "sometimes you're like, I envisioned soaking in the tub and having a quiet night, but there's noise rock in the common space," says Megan. "So you put in your earplugs, and you share."

House of Commons Community, Canada

The Calgary Herald
By Kerianne Sproule, October 9, 2013

It's the time of year when people come together over food. For one night in October, solitude is taboo, orphans without local family are adopted, students are rescued from another night of instant noodles and live-streaming television, and life becomes more about a shared experience than about the serotonin-infused holiday feast.

If Thanksgiving is about celebrating the seasonal bounty and building a sense of community, some Calgarians are taking that shared spirit to the extreme. Meet Megan Biggs, a resident of the House of Commons, an "intentional community" in which co-habitants commit to living closely with each other and the surrounding community, sharing their possessions and meals. "Food is kind of like the great equalizer," says Biggs. "No matter what you've done throughout the day, you all sit around a table and you eat together."

Regular community meals, similar to the lavish home-cooked holiday dinners that take place several times a year in many Calgary homes, are essential to the close-knit fabric of those residing at the House of Commons. Here, in a four-bedroom bungalow on a corner lot in Bowness, housemates cook a free community meal every Thursday, and up to 30 members of the northwest neighbourhood drop in to share it with them.

For many urbanites, "connecting with community" (a phrase increasingly used to describe finding and then nurturing one's peeps) is just one more time-consuming task on an overloaded to-do list. But at a time when more Canadians are living alone than ever—27.6 percent of households have just one occupant, according to the 2012 census, compared to just 7.4 percent in 1951—a quiet minority is thoughtfully and deliberately choosing an alternative lifestyle. Like Biggs, people are seeking a way to reconnect, to carve out a socially rich living experience with "chosen families." While it may not be a new trend—communes have been part of North America's counter-culture for 200 years—collective living is a lifestyle that some young adults in Calgary are exploring.

Calgary's steep housing prices and tight rental market likely contribute to collective living. "It's not at all surprising to hear about people trying to share some of those costs, especially in an environment where vacancy rates are declining and rental costs are rising," says Richard Cho, a CMHC senior market analyst for Calgary.

Delayed marriage may be a factor, too. In 2008, Statistics Canada reported that the average age of first marriage is just over 31 years for men and 29 years for women—six years later than the average age of nuptials in the late 1960s. Could this interest in community-style housing have anything to do with people remaining single longer, yet still craving deep connection? "I think it's fair to say that that's part of it," says Lee Goodman, 33, one of the founders of the House of Commons and a housing supervisor at the Mustard Seed's Aftercare program. "Without being in a romantic relationship, there's still a need for intimacy [with others]."

Biggs greets me warmly when I drop by the House of Commons. Friendly and relaxed, she is clearly comfortable with strangers bombarding her living space. It's part of the deal: the Commons website advertises their free weekly community dinners, monthly house concerts and daily "drop-in coffee" to anyone who happens to be in the area and feels like visiting. "We do have people who stop by during the day, which is what we're here for. Many of our guests are 'habitat-challenged,' and might be hungry or thirsty. Sometimes people just want to talk," explains Biggs, a 27-year-old sales associate. Others are simply looking for old-fashioned neighbourliness, like the man who knocked on their door earlier that day, looking to borrow a can opener. Up to 12 people live in the rental house at any given time and currently they range in age from 23 to 34. During my visit, one of the roommates settled in to play his guitar in the relatively quiet confines of his makeshift bedroom—literally a bed in the entranceway closet (a big closet, yes, but a very small room).

The House of Commons began four years ago when a group of twenty-somethings who were part of a local social-justice group decided they wanted to do something more "hands-on" to make a difference in the community around them. Inspired by stories in the Bible of the devout who lived and prayed together, as well as other Christian community houses such as The Simple Way in Philadelphia, the group set out to find a house in the inner city that could support a lifestyle with an open-door policy. While their quest didn't prove easy, the owner of their current house, a landlord who believed in their cause and permitted their more transient ways, approached them.

Not surprisingly, it's a modest home. All of the living-room furnishings, from the carpet to the lamps to the small wooden tables on which they stand, look secondhand. "We believe that what we have is not our own, so we give freely. That's why we don't have very many expensive things," says Biggs.

"It isn't to say that we haven't been robbed or stolen from, or that our hospitality hasn't been abused. In our covenant (essentially a document that outlines the commitments of those living in the household) there's a line that says that we hold to our possessions loosely."

Covenants such as these, whether written or unwritten, set basic ground rules for those residing in very close quarters with others.

Sharing food, household possessions and vehicles sounds simple enough compared to the strong commitment residents make when it comes to the process of deciding on everything from who cuts the grass to how to resolve roomie conflicts.

"Ideally, consensus is the way we go about every decision, but it's not always possible, so we divide them up into small decisions and big decisions. Smaller decisions would be like moving the sofa to a different spot in the house. We make smaller decisions by popular vote," says Goodman of the meeting process at the House of Commons.

"Bigger decisions, like inviting someone to live in our house, would have to be a consensus. If someone isn't okay with it, we can't go through with it, because it's a big decision that affects everyone.

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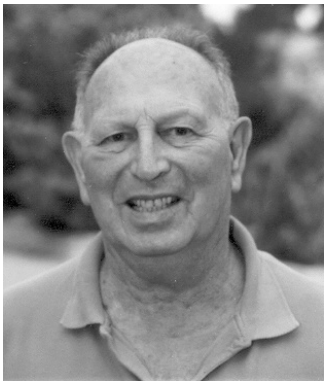


The Communitarian Scene from all Over and Under
Compiled (and partly translated) by **Joel Dorkam**

Joel Dorkam has now retired his column 'Kaleidoscope'. However, here are some final clippings which he asked us to include in this issue of C.A.L.L.. Thanks Joel, for always sharing your forthright views with us.

David Jansen of Dancing Rabbit advocates putting compassion ahead of ideals and authority. He remarks in Shalom Connections of Sept. 2012,

"Our vision of an ideal world and a model of community may bring us to the door, but it will not show us how to live inside the house of community itself…" We love to judge others by their worst behavior and ourselves by our highest ideals"..."As alcoholics learn in AA, there will always be a hypocrite lurking within us, ready to take over our lives in a moment of self-confidence…" And as for hypocrites, the distance between ignorance and knowledge can be a moment (or the latest book) but the gap between knowing and faithfully doing with others what we already know can be more than a lifetime…"

Ma'kwe Schaub Ludwig of Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage (wherever do they get all these funny, original names?) looks at voluntarism from an unusual angle, in Communities #152 of Fall 2011. She dives bravely into values, visions, passions and creativity, and soon comes up for air, together with the surprising recommendation "Cultivate a life that doesn't need to be atoned for". I guess that some of us might need some kind of elaboration about the exact meaning of that sentence and how it could be realized?

Right Livelihood, Wrong Volunteerism

"[Right Livelihood is] living in a totally authentic way, with no separation between work life and personal life."

- *Peter LeBrun, On the Path to Right Livelihood*

Sometimes I think that volunteerism is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, volunteering gives us a creative outlet for Service. On the other hand, it can distract us from our pursuit of right livelihood.

Geoph Kozeny traces Right Livelihood all the way back to Buddha. He says, "Originally, it meant doing honest work and harming neither person nor any living thing." He offers a modernized definition: "It's the art of clarifying what it is you are passionate about, then finding a way to make your living in pursuit of that passion… No longer is a teacher or higher authority required to determine what qualifies; the evaluation process has become personalized to the extent that each individual decides for himself/herself what's worthy and what's not."

Certainly, one can volunteer in an area he or she is passionate about, so on the surface it seems to be a compatible thing, and often it is. There's a downside, though. Volunteerism can serve a similar role in the work world that recycling sometimes plays in the world of eco-activism. How many times have you heard someone say, "Oh yeah, I care about the environment, I recycle!" This is the case of one good act being used as a smokescreen to mask an otherwise unconscious life. In the overall arena of environmental responsibility, there are literally hundreds of acts one could undertake. By focusing on one of these acts as complete evidence of care, we take a very narrow view. Put another way, it isn't evidence of a *lifestyle* of care so much as an *act* of care.

We all want to look good. In pursuit of this, we often publicly cultivate certain acts, certain places in our lives where we are living our values (or, sometimes, living the values we think others want us to live), and then privately let ourselves off the hook from looking at all the other areas.

Yalla Bye, Joel Dorkam

WORK is LOVE in ACTION

Since the age of 16, I have lived outside of the Hutterite Colony in which I was raised. I've adapted to a radically different culture, one referred to by Nelson Algren in his description of Chicago back in the early 20th century …***"making money is the only aim one can set oneself in a city wherein the dollar is the spiritual denominator as well as the financial one." …. For it isn't so much a city as it is a vast way station where three and a half million [now 8 million] bipeds swarm with the single cry, "One side or a leg off, I'm getting' mine!" It's every man for himself in this hired air.***

This year, inspired by the latest BBC documentary, *How to get to Heaven with Hutterites*, I framed my question: ***Do Hutterites have anything to teach the world?*** Eager to have a discussion about the communal values Hutterites have preserved for nearly 500 years, I wrote my proposal for a session at the International Communal Studies Association conference held at Findhorn, Scotland, June 2013. I described my communal upbringing as a place that was"… *a real, indestructible, flesh and blood colony; a place where for better or worse, through sickness and health, without reservation, people willingly practice what they believe and proceed in every aspect of their life to create the 'Kingdom of Heaven on Earth'."*

What a surprise for me when I returned from Findhorn to read the words: 'Creating Heaven on Earth' on a brochure describing Findhorn.

I said that I would *"explore through video and talk how a well functioning Hutterite Colony promotes entrepreneurship, conscious capitalism and compassionate egalitarian values. I hope to demonstrate that individualism and freedom can coexist with rules and discipline."* Sadly, due to flight delays in getting out of Chicago, I arrived at the conference just five minutes before the session was to start and my session was cancelled.

Of all the aspects of colony life, I focused on work as the significant one to talk about. I compared the colony to a beehive. The colony's collective intent is to insure the survival of the colony. It is through work that individual and collective values find expression and create results. On my return from the conference, I read excerpts from David Spangler's (2004) thoughts on Findhorn in which he states that at Findhorn WORK is LOVE in ACTION. I remember the words from my high school graduation speech when I was but 15 years of age, entitled: *All Work is Equally Honorable*. As I watched the work of Findhorn residents cooking, serving food, washing dishes, cleaning bathrooms and vacuuming floors for conference attendees, I could not help but think that the eagerness with which they proceeded to work had significance beyond the actual task at hand. They were working for the common good and for a larger purpose.

Ruth Lambach

In a Hutterite Colony it is through work that you develop a sense of belonging, a sense that work is social, playful, joyful, and meaningful. Work is something to look forward to because it is where you can interact socially with many people and participate in the latest gossip. Work requires discipline and awareness of time. Through work you develop your sense of identity as you compete against others in doing good work and developing new skills. Indeed, it is through work that you gratify the need for individual recognition. No matter what work you do, you can do it well or sloppily and how you work will eventually create your reputation. Individual expression through work demonstrates your level of commitment and competence. As you grow in your ability to work effectively, you will be rewarded by being given more and more recognition and greater responsibilities in the colony. Work is central to your life in a communal setting because it fulfills the need for ego satisfaction.

Abraham Maslow states that "without the transcendent and the transpersonal, we get sick…or else hopeless and apathetic. We need something bigger than we are to be awed by and to commit ourselves to…" Hutterites provide this to every person in the colony. There is a place at the table for everyone and all are watching out for each other for the common purpose of creating heaven on earth.

Ruth Baer Lambach

A coming together of Camphill and the intentional communities movement:

Communal Pathways to Sustainable Living

Andrew Plant, Milltown Community near Aberdeen, Scotland

I have lived in Camphill communities in north east Scotland for many years and over this time I have visited the world-famous Findhorn Community several times, but, despite my interest, I had never had the opportunity to take part in any of their many residential courses. Over this time I have also become increasingly fascinated by the history, development and modern manifestations of intentional communities, and especially interested in what light they can throw on the questions facing Camphill communities today.

Fortunately for me, these two interests came together this June 2013 when the International Communal Studies Association (ICSA) held its conference at The Findhorn Foundation - a conference of over two hundred and fifty people, both community researchers and academics and also people living in intentional communities. A further element was that Jan Martin Bang, who has spent many years living in kibbutzim and in Camphill and is the author of several books about Camphill and about eco-villages, has been the Chair of the ICSA for the last three years. In this time he made it his mission to bring Camphill and the worldwide movement of intentional communities closer together, and this conference was very much where this happened.

The conference itself ran from Wednesday 26 to Friday 28 June, but before this began I had signed up for the three day 'Taster of Findhorn' programme. There were about sixty of us, all of whom later took part in the conference. This was a chance to immerse oneself in the culture of Findhorn - to find out more about the history and development of the community, to meet and talk to community members, to sing, dance and play games and to bond and share with the others in several small groups, each led by two 'Focalisers'. Here also we were introduced to the Findhorn practice of attunement. Before each activity - whether it is washing up after a communal lunch, taking part in a work project, or a session of life-sharing-even before each session during the conference - the group would have a moment of peace. Somebody would guide the group to find an inner stillness and to create an inner mood of mindfulness; mindfulness of where we are, of what we are going to be doing, of the other people in the group and to bring to mind the significance of the moment and the active presence of all beings both visible and non-visible. In the same way activities often ended with a checking out, a moment of reflection to bring the activity to a close before moving on to the next thing. This practice is part of the legacy of the founders of Findhorn, especially Eileen and Dorothy. Eileen Caddy received guidance in her meditations from an inner source that she called 'the still small voice within' and Dorothy Maclean was able to intuitively contact the nature spirits that gave her instructions in how to work in harmony with nature in growing herbs, flowers and the legendary Findhorn vegetables. We had also an introduction to the Findhorn 'Game of Transformation', a form of board game that that can lead to new insights in self-awareness and to a new understanding of key issues in a person's life.

Part of the taster experience was a tour of the two main campuses: Findhorn Park near the village of Findhorn and Cluny Hill in Forres. I was especially impressed by the two new co-housing developments at the Park that have been built over the last years. Not only are these a visible sign of the fact that Findhorn is expanding but also a sign that the Foundation is becoming yet

more diverse and providing many different ways for people to find their relationship to the community.

The conference itself was a feast of presentations, papers, workshops and conversations during the day and dancing, singing and a film in the evenings. Both Jan Martin Bang and Michael Luxford made presentations about Camphill ('Spirituality in Camphill' and 'Camphill: Community and its Value' respectively). Vibeke Alfred came to give a poster presentation about Camphill and Social Pedagogy and, in addition, a number of Camphill people joined the ICSA Board, whose main task is to plan the next conference in three years' time.

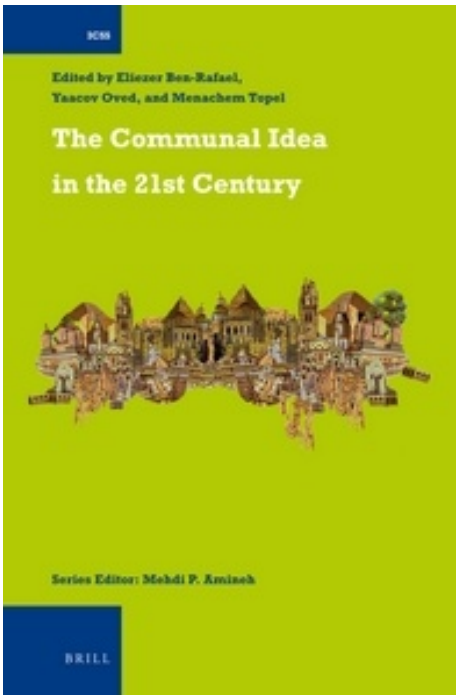
Many of the presentations and workshops described inspiring stories of people around the world working together in community. Others described processes of change and possible renewal at work in communities. Some of the talks and discussions had something of a dystopian flavour to them in that it seems there is recognition that we have reached a tipping point in terms of our economy, our society and our use of resources; and the future prospect is one of imminent crisis and collapse. The only possible hope is that people wake up and make the necessary move to a more sustainable way of life based on co-operation and sharing rather than competition and egoism. Robert Gilman, who has helped to shape the direction of the Global Ecovillage Network, gave an opening presentation about the historical transition in global culture and consciousness from what he terms the 'tribal age' to the 'age of empire'. He went on to imagine the kind of cultural transformation that will be necessary in order to enable us to move from the empire consciousness that dominates our society today to the planetary consciousness of the future. This cultural transition that is already at work will be characterised by diversity, innovation and choice, more person-to-person communication through electronic multimedia and the growth of self-organising, consensual collaboration. He says that intentional communities - as centres of research, demonstration and training - will act as 'cultural midwives' to the new era of planetary consciousness. This became the central theme of the conference, this sense that a sustainable future is only going to be possible if we make a fundamental shift to a new social and cultural paradigm. Our future will not simply be assured through new technological breakthroughs but through a shift in consciousness, a cultural transformation that will lead to social renewal. These ideas have much resonance in Camphill circles. Rudolf Steiner spoke at great length about the successive phases of human development from group consciousness to the present phase of individualisation and how we must find our way forward to a new sense of universal consciousness. In this light community is seen as a preparation for the next era of human development.

I think that what I got most from experiencing Findhorn over these days was a re-affirmation of the need to be open to diversity, to validate individual initiative and to seek active engagement with others beyond the boundaries of the community. I was also able to experience a sense of spontaneity, fun and celebration along with a welcoming openness to the other person that I feel has retreated more to the background in my Camphill experience. I have a feeling that with all the responsibilities of providing a professional care service and with all the many challenges facing us in recent years something essential has receded into the background - our celebration of community. As we move forward into a more complex and diverse future we might do well to try and restore the balance between all the many aspects of community life in Camphill.

Book Review: The Communal Idea in the 21st Century

Edited by Eliezer Ben-Rafael, Yaacov Oved and Menachem Topel.

Part one opens with an article by **Amitai Etzioni.** His writings are far too academic for my tastes, which I've always found so incongruous with the subject matter that he writes about. Having said that, this Israeli has been voted as one of the top American intellectuals, with a faculty position at Harvard Business School and an advisory role to US presidents. His ideas on Communitarianism are supposedly ground-breaking – I'm just not too sure what all the fuss is all about.



This book costs about the same as my iPad, with only a fraction of the fun. Yes, $179 for 350 pages.

However, his definition of community is not bad; community can be defined as "a group of individuals that possesses the following two characteristics: a web of affect-laden relationships which often crisscross and reinforce one another (rather than merely one-on-one or chain-like individual relationships); and some commitment to a core of shared values, norms, and meanings, as well as a shared history and identity – in short, to a particularistic normative culture"

Donald E. Pitzer also attempts to define the seemingly slippery concept which is community. His attempt looks like this: "small, voluntary social units partly isolated and insolated from the general society. Their members usually share an ideology, an economic union, and a lifestyle"

Pitzer credits intentional communities with bringing to the wider society things from such diverse fields as alternative and holistic healthcare, organic foods, alternative theories of education and educational practices and conflict resolution methodologies. He stops short at attributing folk music or 'the evening meal' to the communal scene.

He posits that what once were alternative forms of living away from the mainstream are now widely adopted and are part of the mainstream culture. So Donald, why do we still need communities? Well, "all the security, solidarity, and survival benefits, which have been the great appeal of communal living for millennia, are just as viable and vitally needed in the 21st century". Well said.

Next up is **Lyman Tower Sargent**, who must have woken up on the wrong side of the bed when he started to write his chapter. He quotes cuddly Tim Miller, only to criticize his

definitions, and then challenges Pitzer's ideas of developmental communalism and his book on America's Communal Utopias.

He then spends pages trying to define 'Intentional community", with a bottom line as obvious as putting "may contain nuts" on a packet of dry roasted peanuts, namely that we can't treat all intentional communities the same and definitions need different classifications.

On the other hand, the latter section on intentional communities and utopianism is rather interesting.

The following article is by **Graham Meltzer,** and this really gets me into the book, is a refreshing piece about how community can be the answer to an increased alienated, individualistic and consumerist society. As well as the requisite quoting of other contributors to this book (in this case mssrs Metcalf and Miller), he repeatedly quotes Eric Fromm, who I'm personally particularly fond of.

He goes on to talk about co-housing as the answer to life, the universe and everything, (he published a book on the subject back in 2005), and then goes on to describe the role of eco-communalism, of which cohousing is a subset, as a theory for sustainable urban communities, which he states, ever so matter-of-factly, has the potential to stave off the impending apocalypse.

Amitai Etzioni opens the book and subsequently takes a pounding from his fellow scholars across the pages that follow

Yiftach Goldman takes his opportunity to have a dig at Etzioni by making it clear that he is using the term communitarian in a different way than Etzioni (As if to say, 'I can use this word how I like'). He goes on to disparage Etzioni's examples of communities as 'doubtful'.

This paper attempts to reconcile Socialism and Communalism, which have not always been the coziest of bedfellows.

"Capitalism is a clear and present danger to the welfare of the inhabitants of the world and to their happiness" says Goldman, taking a leaf out of Meltzer's book. In fact, if this wasn't a bold enough statement in itself, the next sentence reads: It is a "threat to the mere survival of humanity". Nice!

Having said all that, Goldman talks about communal socialism, which is how I'd label the way in which I live my life today – what's there not to like about this article?!

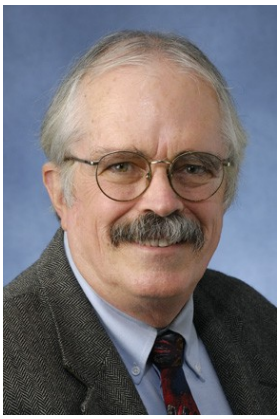
Part two of the book opens with The Godfather of communal studies, **Yaakov Oved**, who gives his historical perspective on communes, much of which can be found in his last book

"Globalization of Communes: 1950-2010". This piece is a must read for anyone who wants a comprehensive overview of communes over the past 60 years. Yaakov's article concludes with the assertion that communal and semi-communal groups are today rising in number, (a claim that I tried to challenge Yaakov by name in the editorial of C.A.L.L. #34).

A fellow with too many consonants and not enough vowels in his name, **Gyorgy Szell** wrote the next paper. In the list of contributors it states that he has been a visiting professor at more than 60 universities in 30 countries, and has written over 300 scientific publications. Still never heard of him. A Wikipedia search took me to the page of a fellow by the same name who "is widely considered [to be] one of the twentieth century's greatest conductors". I don't know if this is the reason why, but as the only author that I'd never heard of, his chapter put me to sleep.

The piece by American communal scholar **Tim Miller** includes sections from an article recently published in C.A.L.L., in turn taken from Communities magazine, in turn taken from his paper at the CSA conference in 2010! Phew!

He actually dares to refute some of Yaakov Oved's findings, both when I asked him about it when I met him this summer, and again in the opening page of his paper. Community, he says, is on the serious decline.


Cuddly Tim Miller

Miller paints the world as one nightmare catastrophe after another, and states that "without community our world is simply falling apart". Here's another that critiques the ideas of Communitarianism, labeling it as shallow. He doesn't mention Etzioni by name, but he doesn't need to, does he? What's missing from Etzioni's theories is "deep social change in concert with others".

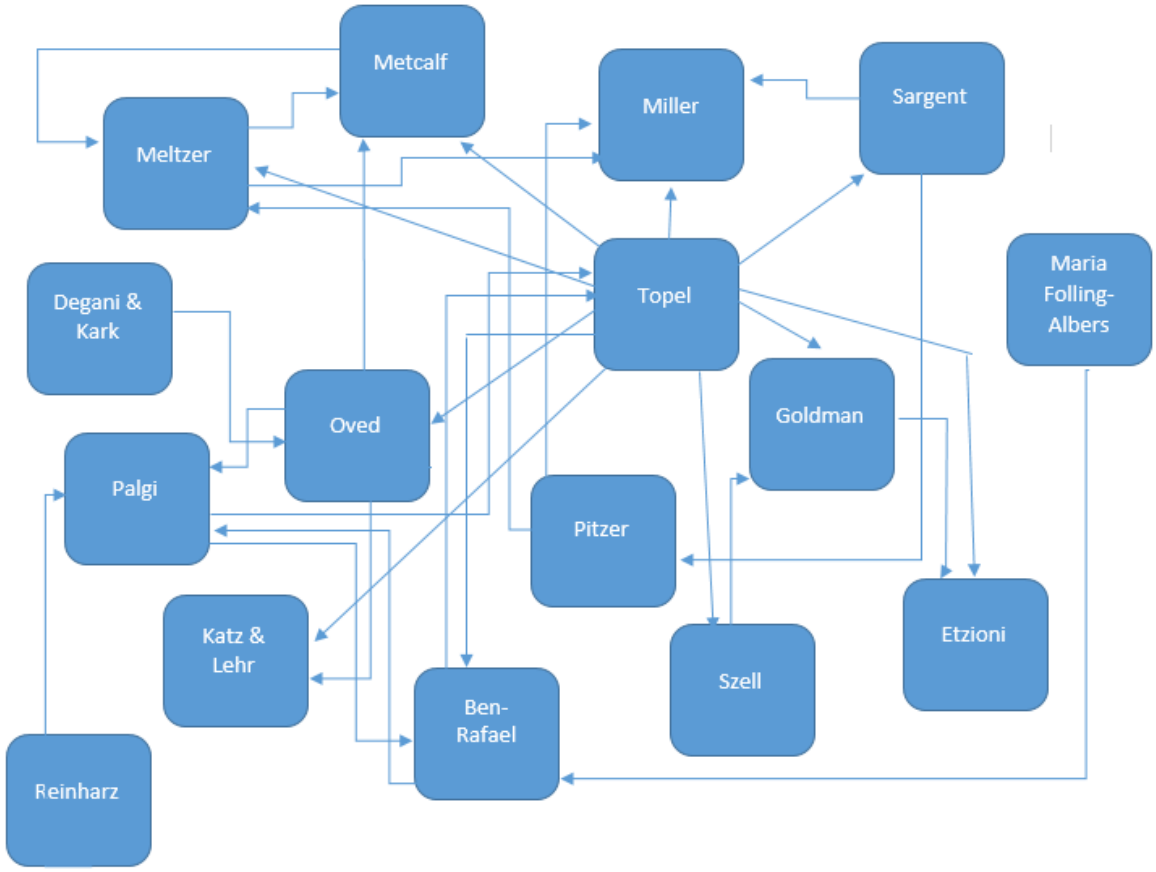
One of the most bizarre thoughts to be discovered in this book is Miller's musings on road-rage. Don't ask what the connection is to the communal idea in the 21st century, because I have absolutely no idea, but he reckons that "more courteous driving [would happen] if the name of each principal driver were painted onto the car in large graphics".

He concludes by trying to convince us that communal scholars need communities and how communities can benefit from communal scholars.

What follows is an article by **Warhurst & Trebeck**, on the quality of jobs, which seems to me to be about as out of place as a penguin in the Sahara for a book about communal living and the communal idea.

And on to **Bill Metcalf**'s article – an overview of the history of communes in Australia and New Zealand, followed by what he claims to be the four contemporary motivations for living in community: Environmental, economic, social and spiritual. Great stuff!

Hidden in the middle of the book, we have **Menachem Topel**'s contribution. He manages to namedrop pretty much all the contributors to this book, referencing their articles from elsewhere in this publication (a cheeky bonus of being a co-editor). He mentions Goldman, Etzioni, Miller, Meltzer, Katz & Lehr, Metcalf, Ben-Rafael, Szell, Sargent and Oved, just to prove that he has actually read the articles that they submitted.



Here is a graphic showing to what extent the scholars' reference each other in this book. It could be interpreted in many ways – a closed-shop, sycophancy or the nature of there being only a very small fraternity of communal scholars.

The content of his article is actually pretty fascinating. He describes the phenomenon of a development of communality based on traditional sources. Basically the "adoption of communal norms and organizational structures that promote solidarity". His examples highlight deprived neighbourhoods in South America, a far cry from the typical western middle-class commune dwellers.

Degani and Kark contribute with interesting profiles of six Christian communes in Israel – shedding light on their past, present and predicted future. This is followed by another double-act, which sounds rather like the name of a Lawyer's office, **Katz and Lehr**.

I reviewed their new book on the same research topic in the last issue of C.A.L.L., and Katz is still talking to me, so I must have liked his work. This paper addresses the topic that most bothered me about the Hutterites – the status of women in their society. They are sexist on a level that is hard to comprehend with our supposedly enlightened 21st century sensibilities. They occupy a significant part of the worldwide family of communal experiments, a least numerically - and yet the heterogeneity is stark.

It seems to me that though Katz and Lehr do accept that there is no gender equality in Hutterite society, they continually look for the places in which women do exert influence, or emphasize the signs of change over time and express their optimism for the future. It's a cup half-full approach, as opposed to criticizing the subjects of their studies (which they go to great pains to stress that it should not be taken for granted that the Hutterites have agreed to participate in their research).

Michal Palgi opens the final section of the book which features articles related to the kibbutz. Her research also concentrates on gender and the juxtaposition of these two articles one after the other helps to highlight the contrast between gender issues on kibbutz and gender issues on the Hutterite colonies. Far from glorifying the heady days of the Kibbutz, nevertheless Palgi does recognize the successes in kibbutz society (at least officially there was strict gender equality, if not in practice). She explains how the changes in kibbutz (privatization) affect women more than men. This is interesting and important work - exploring gender roles and related issues within communities.

The book concludes with articles from **Maria Folling-Albers** and **Eliezer Ben-Rafael**. The former presents an engaging exploration of the kibbutz education system and what it can lend to the theory and practice of education in western societies, whilst the latter looks at the changes that have swept the kibbutz. His summary, that "one may see in kibbutzims' renewal process a conscious sacrifice of central tenets in return for new material and social prospects", sums things up rather well. His final question of 'What does the future hold?', is the stand-out question which permeates every 50-cents-a-page of this book.

Anton Marks

Disclaimer: I am personally acquainted with nearly all of the contributors to this book, including the editors. In theory, there are two ways that this review could have panned out: 1) Showing undue bias by being overly complimentary about this book 2) Being uber critical and thus contributing to me eating alone at the next communal studies conference.

November 2013 saw the Pearlstone Retreat Center, in suburban Baltimore, hosting the inaugural conference of a growing Jewish movement of intentional community building in North America. What follows is a speech given by Rachael Cohen at the opening plenary session

My passion for intentional Jewish community building is likely a result of the social isolation I felt in my early years. I was a child of suburbia. My mother went back to her job when I was six weeks old and I went off to a babysitter each day. My father spent most of his waking hours at work. Both sets of grandparents lived out of town. My sister was five years younger and, in my opinion, an unacceptable playmate. We were minimally affiliated Jews. I went to Hebrew school, but we had no connection with synagogue life. We rarely, if ever, had guests. What if the house wasn't clean enough? The food tasty enough? We gave cursory waves to the neighbors, offered quick smiles to people we passed in the supermarket, made perfunctory exchanges with gas station attendants and bank clerks. I observed: be pleasant but detached.

I felt a loneliness and lack of connection that I could not adequately voice to my parents. As I matured, I had windows into other people's lives. Friends whose families took vacations together, my large pack of cousins that all lived in the same distant town, kids that went to one summer camp year after year, families with many children. These groups were building a shared sense of belonging and I felt envious.

When I was fifteen I worked at a small, rural, Jewish day camp. For the first time I felt held and supported through a sense of deeper meaning and connection to community. That fall I joined my synagogue's youth group, and again, felt the tenderness of intimate communal belonging I had never known but so instinctively craved. As I gently allowed myself to feel relevant and purposeful in these chosen communities, I saw myself defined not just by my own individual qualities, but by who I was in relation to the community. It was a revelation. Who I am is directly linked and impacted by who I am to you and who you are to me.

It took me fifteen years to find that sense of belonging again. I attended five colleges, nine programs in Israel, made Aliya, left Israel, and was a resident of more municipalities in America than I have fingers to count. I dragged first my husband Yishai, and then our kids, around with me to numerous conventional communities, gauging the social climate, measuring, calculating, computing, and assessing all aspects of the prevailing social systems and interpersonal patterns. And over, and over, and over again I was disappointed - sometimes

despondent - over the inherent lack of intention and substance. Yet I could not give up my search. I was compelled to address the insistent demand I felt within - to belong to something bigger than myself; to define who I was in the context of something greater than my individual experience alone.

Despite finding a handful of secular intentional communities that seemed absolutely perfect for our family, when I seriously considered our ultimate life in one of them, I realized a non-Jewish community could not serve our purpose of social sustainability. We would not be able to participate fully or authentically in community life without the aspects that define a Jewish community and resonate so profoundly for us. Regular communal prayer, shared holidays and life cycle events, acknowledgment of Shabbat, awareness and consideration of kashrut, and the collective consciousness of almost four thousand years of shared history are all imperative to me.

Finally, last year, when a seasonal job was advertised with Teva, the Jewish environmental education program, at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center, I knew we had to seize the opportunity.

Isabella Freedman is first and foremost a retreat center, hosting transformative theme-based Jewish retreats and rentals. But for those lucky enough to find themselves a position there, as staff of the retreat center or Teva, or as participants in the Adamah farming fellowship, it also serves as a Jewish intentional community. It is a short-term, cyclical community in that most people stay seasonally, for three to four months at a time. There are approximately fifty people living and participating on-site at any given time, most of whom are single and between the ages of twenty to thirty. Communal meals provide the setting for powerful relationship-building opportunities.

Yishai interviewed for the position and was offered the job. We were met with some raised eyebrows and questioning expressions from family and friends. Were we crazy? How would we survive on so little? Where would we live? There was no on-site housing available for families. No Jewish day school for our five year old. No regular synagogue services. Only three other families with children.

By moving to Isabella Freedman, we have chosen a lifestyle based on ideals. Despite some very real obstacles, we are more content and fulfilled than we ever have been as a family. Our children are growing up in a social environment much larger than we alone can provide. They have many aunts and uncles that love them, teach them, discipline them, and watch over them. The

depth and meaning in the relationships that they are creating is palpable, and the single most important reason we live in community. Authentic access to other human beings is sorely lacking in society today.

We have had to use savings and live frugally, but the rewards have been life-changing. We have opportunities to develop deep, authentic relationships based on shared values such as environmental stewardship, a progressive stance on Judaism regardless of affiliation, Jewish farming, mindfulness and personal improvement, and committment to communal living. The friendships we grow and nurture with members of our community serve to strengthen and enhance our own identities, interests, and independence as individuals, and ultimately, improve our relationships with each other as family members.

This type of community experience must become available to any Jew that desires it. In order to proliferate the creation of Jewish intentional communities, my husband and I created New Jewish Communities, an internet forum where ideas and views on Jewish intentional community building can be exchanged for the purpose of 1) connecting people with existing, forming, and conceptualized projects of intentional Jewish community; and 2) establishing the first Jewish Ecovillage in America: an intergenerational community of people who are consciously committed to living Jewishly, in the same geographic location, with the intention of becoming more socially, economically and ecologically sustainable

There has been much support for the agenda of New Jewish Communities. As a part of a growing global movement for a more sustainable world, these communities will integrate a supportive social environment with a low impact way of life. They will connect Jews through active and deliberate social participation in a vibrant Jewish context. They will strengthen and repair the individual, the family, Judaism and society by developing a system of mutual support that is becoming more difficult to achieve in conventional social systems. In this way, New Jewish Communities will change the face of contemporary Jewish life, and I look forward to being a part of that transformation.

Rachael Cohen is a big-picture thinker, captivated by social systems and social change. She believes in the process of community building as a means to remedy social disintegration and repair individual well-being. Rachael has a masters degree in macro social work and community practice, as well as a certificate in nonprofit management. She is currently working on relationship-based social change through the internet forum New Jewish Communities, and in Falls Village, CT, both at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center and within the local community. Rachael's full time job is raising two marvelous daughters.

Actors, academics celebrate Finnish commune on Vancouver Island

By Dirk Meissner, The Canadian Press
September 15, 2013

Mika Kaartinen is standing in his backyard in Masala, Finland, looking up at the night sky and musing out loud during an interview about the journey that will carry him thousands of kilometres to Canada to perform for the ancestors of the dreamers from his homeland who arrived on tiny Malcolm Island more than a century ago in search of their own paradise.

"It is really weird," says Kaartinen, 42, about the trip he and his 26-member theatre troupe are taking to the tiny community of Sointula — population 600 and located just off the northeast side of Vancouver Island — to perform their play "Sointula" on Sept. 21. "We had a play about the story and the history of the ancestors of the people still living there," he said. "It's really a strange feeling to travel there to meet all the people and see the place. We had to take this chance because you don't get these kinds of chances normally. It's a once-in-a-lifetime when you do something this crazy."

Kaartinen said his troupe has been performing Sointula, in Finland for the past two summers. The play tells the ultimately tragic story about the charismatic, free-love-espousing, political rebel Matti Kurikka, who led the Kalevan Kansa commune in Sointula, which translates into place of harmony in Finnish. Kaartinen said most Finns are aware that back in 1901, there was a commune of anti-capitalist Finns in Canada. But what many didn't realize was that the place still exists and some of the people still living there are connected to the original commune, although most of the population lives non-commune lives. Kaartinen said when his theatre troupe received a letter from Sointula residents about 18 months ago inviting them to come to perform their play, the first response was shock, followed by enthusiasm.

He said the journey will come full circle on Sept. 21 in Sointula when his troupe performs "Sointula" for the last time in the community where it all began. "Everything started in Sointula, and we have been living this life with Sointula for the last two or three years now, and this is the last time we will do the play, at the Finnish Organization Hall in Sointula — the right place to finish it all," said Kaartinen.

He said the troupe, who raised $50,000, to pay for their trip, had opportunities to stage the play in Nanaimo and Vancouver, but time constraints and their desire to bring the play home means only one performance in the 150-seat Sointula community hall.

"It's the end of one story, but I also believe it's also the start of something new," Kaartinen said. "We don't know what's going to happen, but something will start from there."

The current residents of Sointula, who now make their living fishing, logging, farming and in the arts, have embraced the appearance of the Finnish theatre troupe and turned the show into a three-day gathering that examines utopian life choices, past and present.

Culture Shock: Utopian Dreams, Hard Realities is bringing academics and amateur deep thinkers to Sointula for a series of lectures and events that examine the Sointula utopian dream, which at one point had about 200 people, but collapsed in 1903 after a fire killed 11 people, eight of them children.

Leader Matti Kurikka, left centre, with beard, and members of the Kalevan Kansa pose in Sointula, B.C., in this undated photo.

Experts will also discuss other utopian communities in nearby Washington State, while others will examine the recent Occupy movement and its similarities to utopian ideals. Religion Prof. Ed Dutton, who teaches at Oulu University in Finland, will deliver a lecture that connects the birth of the term "culture shock" to Sointula and the Canadian academic who spent his early years living in Sointula.

Dutton says Canadian anthropologist Kalvero Oberg, who was raised in Sointula and lost two sisters in the 1903 fire, is the father of the culture shock theory. His 1950s theory examined the stages people go through when expatriates are exposed to a new culture.

Sointula resident Annemarie Koch says Sointula has never lost its utopian roots and quickly viewed the opportunity to stage the Finnish play in their community hall as an opportunity to conduct a modern-day history lesson.

She said about 30 per cent of Sointula residents hold connections to the original commune. "The people of this community didn't give up, and there's a Finnish word for that, which is 'sisu,' the word they use for what we call tenacity or perseverance, and some might call stubbornness."

Koch said tickets for the conference and play are sold out.

Cherith Brook – Catholic Worker Community, USA

By Jill Wendholt Silva
The Kansas City Star - Jun 8, 2013

Bees buzz in a cloud overhead while 40 heirloom-breed barred Rock and white Brahma chickens scratch for food or lay eggs. Vegetables grow in the neatly terraced front yard, and 26 fruit trees are grouped around the back and side yard.

The grounds around the turn-of-the-20th-century, rust-red brick home and a former hardware store at 3308 E. 12th St. support an intentional community of seven adults and two teenagers. The house members are part of the Catholic Worker movement, a global community started by journalist/activist Dorothy Day. The goals of the movement include addressing an unjust food system and the violence of living on the streets by offering hospitality to the poor and downtrodden.

Cooking for large groups and constant rounds of laundry are just part of daily life at Cherith Brook. Four mornings a week, the group invites 40 to 50 homeless guests into its home for breakfast, and about half of those stay for a hot shower and a change of clean clothes. On Thursday nights they cook a community dinner for 50 and retire to the porch for a hootenanny.

"Hospitality is a big part of what we do," says community member Nick Pickrell, who has lived at the home for nearly five years. "Because of a sharing, we have an abundance."

The low-key, decentralized lifestyle does not represent a specific church, and most of the members are not Catholic. Nor does the group advertise its mission or post a sign on its door. Like their mentor who advocated Christian values, peaceful protest and started a movement of communal living outposts during the Great Depression, members prefer to let their relationships grow organically.

"It's mostly word of mouth," Pickrell says. "Most folks who need us know about us."

When it comes to providing for others, the community members say they have learned not to sweat the math. A signature egg bake, a heaping square of sauteed vegetables fresh from the garden and bacon donated by a friend, is one way they have learned to stretch meals far enough to feed whoever happens to show up.

"It's pretty beautiful (that) there's just always enough," Rozga says.

The group also takes pride in recycling. Members bike to a local grocery store to pick up recently expired food, which allows them to keep their grocery bill at about $400 a month. They compost most of their food scraps, placing only two trash bags out on the curb each week. A rain catchment system stores up to 1,500 gallons of water to water the gardens, enough even in last summer's drought. A grant they received for the installation of solar roof panels covers 65 percent of their electricity needs, while a wood-burning stove provides additional heat in the winter.

From the International Communes Desk (ICD) Study Group

SHLICHUT – "Being sent on a Mission"

On October 15, 2013 the International Communes Desk (ICD) studied some sources behind the idea of *Shlichut.* The concept of *shlichut* was central in motivating the kibbutz movement's founding generation. It was also a major factor in the utopian communes which sprang up in 19th century America. The many manifestations of communes and communal movements at this time demonstrate that "hearing the call" as an imperative to participate in "mission" is very much with us today.

The essence of the imperative nature of *shlichut* is that it propels to action – one does not only "talk the talk"- one's personal life is moved to "walk the walk".

The idea of *shlichut* is intimately connected with the concept of *Tikkun Olam* - the infinite process of repairing and transforming our world, "Spaceship Earth", into a better and sustainable home for all its inhabitants. *Tikkun Olam* will be the focus of a future discussion to be held by the ICD.

The ICD examined three excerpts from Hebrew sources, one from the Bible and two from the modern movement for Jewish renewal, the Zionist movement. Readers are invited to contribute examples from sources originating in their cultures.

The archetypical *shlichut* of the biblical Abraham, whether history or myth, generated a central strand in the history of Western civilization. Within the context of the Zionist movement, Eliezer Ben Yehuda and Hannah Senesh relate how the imperative nature of *shlichut* impacted on their personal lives.

Genesis 12: 1-4

1. The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

2 "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him…

Did God in fact speak to Abraham and make the promise reported (in Genesis 12: 1-3)? To biblical man and to believers today the matter was and is clear: God did speak, and his relationship to Abraham's children and to the land of Canaan was secured by his promise. Many interpreters, however, would understand God's challenge as something Abraham believed he had heard and that consequently he acted in accordance with this belief.

The Torah: A Modern Commentary, W. Gunther Plaut, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1981, pp 91,93.

Excerpted from Eliezer Ben Yehuda
The Dream and its realization (1918)
Translation: Ori Saltes

In 1880, when I was a student in the Russian college in the city of Dvinsk, and the Russians were battling the Turks for the freedom of Bulgarians, and all the Russian newspapers were unanimously praising the holy war that Russia was fighting for the liberation of the Bulgarian nation from the Turkish yoke and for the restoration of its ancient glory – it was then that the heavens seemed to open, and a bright light, a pure and glowing light shone before my eyes, and a great inner voice cried in my ears: *The revival of Israel in the Land of the Fathers!*

And by that voice, which from that moment on rang ceaselessly in my ears day and night, all my thoughts and all the schemes I had made for my future life were shaken. As dreams fade away at the morning light, my visions of devoting my life to the Russian people's struggle for freedom and to the advancement of all mankind, like most of my comrades in the middle and upper schools in Russia then, faded away, and after an inward struggle in my soul, the new idea got the upper hand and a new phrase took over my thoughts: *Israel in it's own land…*

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922)

…As my political feelings burgeoned, I felt more and more what a language means to a nation… Just as the Jews cannot be a living nation without returning to the land of their fathers, so they cannot be a living nation without returning to the language of the fathers. They must use it not only in books and in matters of holiness and wisdom alone… but rather by speaking it,

great and small, women and children, youths and maidens, in all the matters of daily life, at all hours of the day and night, like all the nations, each nation in its own language.

That was the greatest, the most crucial moment in my life. Now I had found what I needed to do, right away. I saw that one of the two things without which the Jews could not be a nation, the land and the language, the return to the land was not in our own hands but rather dependent upon those ruling it at the present. However, the return to the language of the fathers was in our own hands, and no one could stop us from doing it if only we wanted to…

A Voice Called and I Went

The Voice of Prophecy in the Literature of the Israeli Pioneering movement by Yariv Ben-Aharon

On the way…

A voice called and I went,
I went, for the voice called.
I went so as not to fall.
But on the crossroads
I shut my ears in the cold whiteness
And I cried,
For something I had lost
[Caesarea, 1942]

One year and a half before her death, Hannah Senesh gave expression to the voice that propelled her from home and friends in her native Hungary to a quest for a Jewish identity through a life of pioneering in Eretz Israel.

What is this voice that called Hannah Senesh? From where did it originate and evolve into her fateful summons? Her poem informs us that the voice beckoned her to go, in order that she should not "fall". To go that way, she had to shut her ears "in the cold whiteness" with that same wax with which Odysseus plugged his ears against the seductive voices tempting him on his journey home.

Hannah Senesh (1921-1944)

Hello Jan Martin,

This is Valerie writing from Twin Oaks - we met at the ICSA conference at Amana in Iowa some years ago.

I just read your latest contribution to CALL, writing about returning to your former kibbutz. I was struck by something you said in the article and wanted to share it with you.

You talked about how the social fabric had changed since the demise of communal dining - that there was no longer that natural overlap of people of differing opinions and from different social groups of the community, who wouldn't have spent time together otherwise, and how that changed things.

I was powerfully reminded of a similar phenomenon at Twin Oaks. In 2005, we lost our account with the national company Pier 1, who had been our largest hammocks customer (hammocks being our main community industry). So the community went from making about 14,000 hammocks a year to making more like 7,000 (for our other customers).

But this led to unforeseen social changes as well. Previously, with such a strong focus on making so many hammocks, it meant that most members spent at least some time in the hammock shop, weaving and chatting with whoever happened to be there at the same time. Night or day, there was almost always some smaller or larger group in the shop, and those people would have some casual but direct connection, discussing sometimes community issues, or just about whatever was up for them or they were currently interested in.

Once the need to make such a large volume of hammocks disappeared, many less people worked in the shop much less frequently. What became apparent only after some length of time was the social/cultural effect. Basically, we lost this subtle but rich cross-breeding grounds, where people had at least casual, direct interactions with most other members. More and more, members were involved just in their own smaller work areas, or worked in our other main community business, tofu-making, which has loud machinery and casual chats are impossible.

Myself having been here for 21 years, I now see the change. Members stick much more closely to their own small social groups, there is a much less wide network of casual yet meaningful connections between members who aren't "naturally" connected in other ways. We have become more of a group of individuals who happen to live in the same place, and less of a group who has chosen to share many aspects of their lives.

Okay, one last thing, amazing serendipity: while I was sitting here typing this email, a person here for a tour of the community came into the office and started chatting with me, and it turns out he lived at Kibbutz Gezer 1987 - 1990 and knows you! His name is Ben Randolph, he's American, he says he worked in the vineyards at Gezer.

I love it when this happens,

Take Good Care,
Valerie

The Colombian Renaissance

by Albert Bates

"In Colombia, the ecovillage movement is ceasing to be seen as the alternative, hippy, or maladjusted parts of society, but rather are coming to be known as 'the people.' They are the 99-percent, the cultural center and point of reference."

Since we visited and gave our first village design courses more than a decade ago, the ecovillage movement has been wedding Colombian grassroots organizations - the Campesinos, Indigenous and Afro-decendant people - into action-oriented environmental networks. The ecovillagers, Red de Ecoaldeas Colombia when we last visited, reformed 7 years ago into Renace Colombia. RC is developing a multilayered strategy for greater communication with other networks, sectors and movements in the country, as well as developing capacity to incubate new ecovillages and other varieties of experimental human settlements.

There are 16 ecovillages throughout Colombia, five or six of which are still in the formative stages. The longest existing ecovillage is 28 years old.

Some recent achievements of Colombian ecovillages:

- Pachamama Ecovillage in Quindio is exporting full containers of their organically treated bamboo as building material in Spain and the Caribbean.
- Aldea Feliz in Cundinamarca won the Fulbright Commission grant to build an 'ecoshop' with high green architectural standards.
- By the end of 2012, all the major ecovillages in Colombia will have their own Maloka - an ancestral house of gathering in the Amazonic tradition.

Each member community of Renace is building a Maloca, the traditional meeting hall in Amazonia

- Atlántida ecovillage in Cauca is the main training center for Latin America for leaders of Dances of Universal Peace. One of Colombia's indigenous traditions is the "mambeo," artistic decontamination of the world, merging the mind with the heart.

Another Colombian tradition is the "minga," the whole community working together for a purpose, whether to build a house or make a garden — what those of us who live in Amish country call "barnraising."

Renace brought the "Vision Council" (Consejo de Visiones) methodology to Colombia from Mexico in 2012, and changed its traditional annual ecovillage gatherings into an open space with clear facilitation for dialogue between alternative movements, of which the ecovillages are just one part. For the 2013 Vision Council, they decided to deliver 4 different parallel and simultaneous gatherings in 4 different bioregions of the country, as a contraction/expansion dynamic, to be introduced as a new national initiative in 2014.

We are also directly involved in the production of the first Ecovillage Design Education programme (EDE) in Colombia with the full 160 hours curriculum from Gaia Education, as a pioneer course offered sequentially in 3 different ecovillages. We were invited to instruct the ecological module and for that week we lived in the Pachamama village, just down the lane from the bamboo drying sheds. We also got to visit La Pequeña Granja de Mama Lulu, a one-hectare permaculture agroforestry project that rivals the best examples of futuristic eco-agriculture we have seen anywhere in the world.

Renace is in dialogue with several government branches and regional institutions about a project for the transformation of 100 indigenous villages that were victims of forced relocation. What is planned are 100 healthy and thriving ancestral ecovillages, combining the best practices of the native heritage with those of the modern sustainability movement.

After examining models of ecovillage networks in Brazil and Senegal, Renace sees their incubator program evolving into a non-profit, quasi-governmental agency, establishing quality standards and transferring technology and green enterprise models. In the fertile ground of post-civil-war social rebuilding, these young ecovillagers are capable of opening up historically closed circles of politics and economics, in a kind of reverse "disaster capitalism." They have a plan, they are ready, and the opportunity is now.

C.A.L.L.

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C.A.L.L. (Communes At Large Letter)

Editor
Anton Marks (Kibbutz Mishol)

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