

The New Rural School in Upper Galilee (Eretz Israel) at the Beginning of the 20th Century

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This article proposes a model for rural education based on the idea that history can assist in the determination of contemporary educational policy. A case study of a rural school in Upper Galilee in Eretz Israel at the beginning of this century is the source of a comprehensive model. The model combines desirable characteristics of rural education organized in four innovative educational paradigms: education for work (including agricultural education), community education, social-ideological education, and the fourth element on which the others depend, the curricular autonomy of the teacher and school in remote rural areas. The result complements the partial and administrative definitions that exist at present.

Introduction

This article proposes a progressive comprehensive model for rural education based on the case history of a rural school established by Zionist Jews early in this century in northern Eretz Israel. The progressive and moral-values approaches of that era are considered in light of contemporary educational innovations (Karim, 1985).

The terms "rural education" and "rural school" usually refer to institutions in remote regions that function under difficult objective conditions, specifically small size and remoteness from urban centers, and thus require special programs and methods for developing their students' skills (Zeidman, 1981). Definitions of rural education are usually organizational and technical and lack reference to curriculum or to an overall educational viewpoint. In particular, they fail to deal with social education in the rural school, which is so necessary to students and their communities in overcoming the constraints imposed by their rural locations.

This problem of definition is also mentioned in research dealing with reforms in rural education or in the small—generally elementary—school. Nachtigal (1982), in *Rural Education: In Search of a Better Way*, sums up thirteen American projects for rural educational reform: "Obviously the characteristics distinguishing rural communi-

ties from urban communities are not clear cut; rather they form a continuum from rural to urban" (p. 8). Galton and Patrick (1990), in their research on the small primary school in England, state: "The debate about the viability of the small primary school is complicated by the fact that throughout its long history there has been no agreed definition of what constitutes a small school" (p. 4).

Moving from the problem in general to the example under discussion, the Upper Galilee case study, I begin with a brief historical background. The Upper Galilee experience is then presented together with a definition for rural education arising from it. This is compared to existing definitions and its advantages are discussed.

The historical research is based upon primary sources found, for the most part, in the archives of the Rosh Pinah settlement and in the Jewish Education Archives (Federation of Teachers) at Tel Aviv University. Other archives also contributed, as did many personal memoirs and a few research studies on education conducted during the first wave of Zionist immigration, or aliyah, to Eretz Israel between 1882 and 1904 (Wallek, 1980; Karim, 1985). Contemporary models of rural education are taken from the rich literature in this area and from four surveys done in the early 1980s, covering all the continents and major rural-education projects (Zeidman, 1981; UNESCO, 1980; Sher, 1981; Nachtigal, 1982).

The Early 1900s in Eretz Israel

The historical research deals with *moshavot* (small farm settlements; singular, *moshava*) established with the first Zionist immigration and based on private farms. Some have remained private agricultural settlements to this day, while others have become medium-sized or even large towns. Zionist education in the Upper Galilee settlements began at the end of the nineteenth century but became firmly established between the early 1900s and the end of the First World War.

Most Zionist leaders and teachers, and those of the first *moshavot* in particular, came from Europe and were influenced by its trends—"nationalism, science (and psychology) in education of the 19th century" (Cordasco, 1976, pp. 93-106). Nationalist trends in education accelerated in central and western Europe as the twentieth century approached. They had several common characteristics: emphasis on national language and history, including the intellectual and religious heritage as a model for the world; love of country and study of its natural environment; and free education for all (e.g., Brubacher, 1947; Wallek, 1980; Scharfstein, 1964). All were to be integrated into the work of the school.

From the end of the eighteenth century to the period under discussion, Jewish intellectuals in central Europe, like their non-Jewish counterparts, were exposed to the influences of humanist and liberal philosophers, including the educational reformers among them. They were particularly close to the New Education, whose mentors were students and successors of Comenius, Locke, and Rousseau. Later exemplars were Froebel, creator of the kindergarten; Pestalozzi, who was among the founders of psychology and inspired the movement toward educational democratization; and Herbert, with his modern pedagogy and didactics (Elboim-Dror, 1986). Recognizing these influences is essential to an understanding of our case history.

Brameld (1955) deals with philosophies of education in cultural perspective and divides his classic book into three philosophical domains: progressivism (education as cultural transition), essentialism (education as cultural conservation), and perennialism (education as cultural regression). The educational philosophers who influenced the *moshavot* belong, obviously, to the progressivists, although this term is essentially American. O'Neill (1981) indicates Brameld's importance while pointing out his shortcomings, and he

proposes his own division into liberal and conservative educational ideologies, liberalism including the New Education reforms already mentioned. O'Neill defines educational liberalism thus:

For the educational liberal, the long-range goal of education is to preserve and improve the existing social order by teaching each child how to deal effectively with his own emerging life problems. Educational liberalism ranges in its intensity, however, from the relatively mild method liberalism of a theorist like Maria Montessori, through the directive (or structured) liberalism, which is perhaps most characteristic of John Dewey's philosophy, to the virtually nondirective or laissez-faire liberalism of the perspective of A. S. Neill or Carl Rogers. (p. 66)

Gutek (1988) bridges the two previous educational philosophies in that he confronts the "traditional philosophies" with "the educational theories that are related to Dewey's pragmatism-progressivism and reconstructionism. Progressivism, a reaction against traditionalism in schooling, stresses the liberation of the child's needs and interests" (p. 9). Gutek's confrontation between the conservative-traditional and the new is close to O'Neill (1981) but appears in Brameld (1955) also; Gutek's "progressivism" resembles that of his predecessors. O'Neill's definition of Dewey's "directive liberalism" is almost identical to Gutek's progressivism as influenced by Dewey. All this leads to a kind of equation where directive liberalism = progressivism = new education. These three educational concepts, integrating the centrality of the individual with the improvement of the national society, are of the beginning of this century, with roots in Europe in the previous ones. Their influence extended to the teachers in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Eretz Israel.

The Moving Spirits: Epstein and Wilkomitz

The first formative period centered around Rosh Pinah, where the local school, and education in Upper Galilee as a whole, was run by two of the most eminent teachers of that time: Dr. Yitshak Epstein and Simha Haim Wilkomitz.

Yitshak Epstein was born in a village in Russia in 1863. As a youth he studied in a Jewish heder and afterward in an academic high school in Odessa. He immigrated to Eretz Israel in 1885 and worked as an agronomist until 1890. Then he was

asked to head the new school for girls in Safad, after which, in 1895, he was appointed head of the newly established school in the moshava Metullah and supervisor of the other schools in the region. In 1899 he settled in Rosh Pinah as head of the local school and supervisor of those schools in Upper Galilee founded by Baron de Rothschild's organization.¹ In 1902 Epstein went to Lausanne in Switzerland to study and in 1908 moved to Saloniki in Greece to run the Jewish Alliance school. In 1915 he returned to Lausanne to complete his doctorate and came back to Eretz Israel at the end of the first World War. Between 1919 and 1923 he headed the Levinski Teachers College in Tel Aviv and later supervised the Zionist Federation's Hebrew schools. In 1929 he retired from teaching, and in 1943, at the age of eighty, he died. Throughout his professional life he worked on research on language and teaching. His biography and writings go far beyond Upper Galilee at the beginning of the century, reflecting his broad experience and the great esteem he enjoyed, which resulted in his appointments to so many educational institutions (Sharfstein, 1964; Haramati, 1984).

Simha Haim Wilkomitz was also born in a village in Russia, in 1871, and he trained as a teacher in Vilna. He immigrated to Israel in 1896 and taught in Rehovot, then a moshava, until 1899, when he moved to Galilee to replace Epstein in Metullah. When Epstein went to Switzerland in 1902, Wilkomitz again replaced him—this time as head of the school at Rosh Pinah and as supervisor of schools in Upper Galilee. In 1903 he played a central role in the formation of the Hebrew Teachers' Federation of Eretz Israel in another moshava, Zihron Ya'akov. Wilkomitz worked in school administration and supervision for the next sixteen years until he died in 1918. Throughout his life he continued studying and even spent a short period in Lausanne with Epstein and another prominent educator from Eretz Israel, Nisson Touroff. He continued and intensified his predecessor's work and made his mark on the history of education in the Galilee and in Eretz Israel as a whole. Epstein taught for seven years in the Galilee settlements,

after five years in Safad, and his main field was teaching and research on language. Wilkomitz, however, taught for nineteen years in these moshavot. Earlier, during his three years in Rehovot, he began to develop his unique educational approach. During the twenty-two years he taught in moshavot, he established the innovative didactic methods of the rural Hebrew school which Epstein had earlier begun (Scharfstein, 1964; Haramati, 1979). The schools in the moshavot around Rosh Pinah—Metullah, Mishmar Hayarden, and Yesod Hama'alah—tried to emulate its schools, but being even more remote, they faced a severe problem. At the beginning of the century they suffered from a lack of teachers, and those from Rosh Pinah assisted in different ways. Among them were some, like Epstein and Wilkomitz, who had previously taught there. The rural school at Rosh Pinah served as a model for nearby settlements, especially since Epstein and Wilkomitz were educational supervisors in Upper Galilee. Despite this, the model was only partially followed, for lack of the necessary educational means. Hence, we concentrate on the school in Rosh Pinah with its unique characteristics. After the historical description below, these characteristics will be summarized (Tur-Shalom, 1966; Harozen, 1978; Ever-Hadani, 1965).

Hebrew in Hebrew: The Natural Method²

Various scholars, particularly Shlomo Haramati (1979, 1984), the linguist, have described Epstein's work on language in detail. It suffices here to list briefly the principles of the Natural Method, from which his battery of educational approaches derives:

1. learning the language naturally, as one learns one's native tongue;
2. learning through all five senses;
3. inductive learning, from the particular to the general;
4. structured teaching, from the easy to the difficult; from the immediate local environment to that which is more distant and less familiar; from the known to the unknown;

¹Edmond de Rothschild, a wealthy French-Jewish leader and "The father of Jewish settlement," established new moshavot and supported many others in the beginning of Zionist settlement in Eretz Israel.

²"Hebrew in Hebrew" was the Zionist approach towards the Hebrew language. Until this period, and in the non-Zionist Jewish populations, Hebrew was only the religious language of prayers and not of everyday use. The rationale was to teach Hebrew in Hebrew, without translations and as a living language, from the infancy of every Jew in order to educate the young generation and their parents to be proud Zionists.

5. learning based on the child's interest;
6. contact with nature;
7. learning through songs and games; and
8. the use of language within a national renaissance, as a national instrument connecting the learner with the landscape of his or her homeland (Epstein, 1898, 1920, 1929).

Not only did Wilkomitz realize many of these educational goals, but he even set out a Hebrew curriculum of his own for the "six-year rural school." All its components except for "arithmetic, calculation and geometry" attest to the didactic-national blend. In Hebrew language instruction he included "Bible stories, annotated texts, reading, selected poems, writing and grammar, prayers, and religious laws." "Practical classes and natural history" included "the school and its environment" and "the home, the yard and the garden," side by side with "the grove, the field and the vineyard" as well as "talks about nature and physiology." Stress was placed upon "national geographic knowledge," especially the country's historical sites, settlement renewal, and neighbors in the Near East. "Jewish history" included important national events from the Second Commonwealth period up to "the more famous personages in Israel from recent times up to Herzl" (Wilkomitz, 1910?).

Educational-Geographical Bonding Excursions

The writer Ya'akov Hurgin (1943) describes Epstein's excursions, which were both didactic and national in character:

At the top of Mt. Cana'an and in the depths of the surrounding valleys his students learn geographical, botanical, and geological concepts from him. They hear history laced with passages from the Bible and the sayings of the sages; and all this is done like a game, with no coercion or burden. (p. 17)

Content was spelled out by Wilkomitz in 1903:

The school also uses the excursion for physical and moral education. Once or twice a month the teachers will take the pupils to one of the towns or settlements or to a nearby village . . . their leg muscles will grow stronger . . . their eyes will accustom

themselves to recognizing everything from afar . . . the boys and girls will leave the settlement in twos, walking and singing. And while walking in line the pupils will learn to adjust to general order . . . an excursion like this is better for the children's morals than a hundred sermons by prattling teachers. (Niv, 1983, pp. 175, 179)

Rural-Agricultural Education Through Work

Epstein believed in physical work as part of national education: "There is nothing like working in the field to develop body movement. The child at first needs to be trained in large, rough movements in order to develop the senses" (Epstein, 1920, p. 25). Hurgin (1943) attests to his didactic and national work thus:

Do you know how to sow garlic? — Epstein sings with his pupils in the garden, and, right there, plants the fork in the ground and carries out the act of sowing as he points out the name of everything. And thus, together with the melody, with a teacher's pleasant voice and the smell of the earth and its secrets, the [Hebrew] language is absorbed into the soul of the child as an experience, by the emotions and brain and all the senses. (p. 17)

The school garden in Rosh Pinah during Wilkomitz's period was best described by a student: "Next to the school was a small plot divided up into rectangles, and each given to four pupils to work together . . . the produce was sold to the local settlers and the income donated to the Jewish National Fund" (Niv, 1983, p. 24).

A fundamental discussion of educational principles was carried on around the subject of nationally oriented agricultural work. Some thought that the future farmer should be satisfied with minimal education: "The children receive too broad an education—more than a simple farmer needs . . . and they all have ambitions in the direction of Paris or Australia" (Niv, 1983, p. 24). The theories of the European educators Pestalozzi and Froebel influenced Epstein and Wilkomitz to blend education and agriculture in order to train the settlement children for better and more modern agriculture and, in this way, ensure their hold on the settlements. Wilkomitz even developed a program for an agricultural school at Rosh Pinah,

but the program died with him (Riklis, 1959; Carmi, 1965; Yelin, Yehieli, and Rivlin, 1931; Wallek, 1980).

Kindergarten Integrated into the Eight-Grade School

Epstein emphasized the importance of language learning in early childhood through the children's songs he composed, as well as by means of exercise and games (Zuta, 1938; Niv, 1983). Wilkomitz worked out the details that would put Epstein's ideas into practice. At the Teachers Conference at Zihron Ya'akov in 1903, he proposed a kindergarten in which Hebrew speech, Hebrew singing games, and handicrafts would be learned according to both Epstein's method of Hebrew in Hebrew and Froebel's methods (Riklis, 1959). Because of the small number of children, each section would study for two years: one year in grades 1 (Kindergarten/Beginners), 3, 5, and 7, and the next year in grades 2 (Kindergarten/Preparatory), 4, 6, and 8. New pupils would graduate from their group in two years (Torkenitz, 1919; Riklis, 1959). Wilkomitz thus established Epstein's idea for early-childhood learning throughout the country.

Adult Education: A Second Chance

Epstein proposed the establishment of community cultural centers where adults could learn Hebrew through discussions, singing, and games (Epstein, 1947; Ben-Aryeh, 1980?). Wilkomitz put the idea into practice:

The school teachers, led by the principal Mr. S. Wilkomitz, established a night school with four sections. Classes in arithmetic, Bible and other branches of learning were taught. The first section—for older boys who have left school to assist their fathers in the field . . . ; the second—for young and older ladies who have their hearts set upon learning Hebrew; the third and fourth—for workers in the silk factory who have no education . . . most of them have never known how to read and write . . . [they] are the nation's unfortunates living in Safad. (Niv, 1983, p. 174)

Thus Wilkomitz actualized the idea of a second chance for basic education as well as the concept of continuing education beginning with the kindergarten and going beyond the school: "Every one must learn all his life" (Wilkomitz, undated).

These advanced educational ideas, highly innovative at the beginning of the century, were blended with the study of Hebrew and other nationally oriented content.

School Theater and Choir Serve the Community

At the beginning of the century, with no Hebrew theater in the country, the Rosh Pinah school offered performances with a national message to the students and the community at large, sometimes traveling to other places, including Safad. The teachers adapted and translated plays and directed actors and a choir. There were adult actors too: the young people from the settlements who established a troupe called the Rosh Pinah Theater Lovers. The troupe also presented shows, such as Goldfaden's operettas "Bar Kochva" and "The Jewish King Lear," as well as classical European authors such as Shakespeare and Molière. The choir took part in Sabbath eve services, in traditional festival prayers at the school, and in all festive occasions throughout the area. Drama and choir acted as national cultural instruments emerging from the school and serving all of Upper Galilee (Niv, 1983; Riklis, 1959; Ben-Aryeh, 1980?).

Traditional Values in School and Community

In his writings, Epstein dealt in a general way with cultural instruments that could inculcate the national heritage. Wilkomitz in 1903 laid stress upon "the national festivals [in which] the pupils will present imaginative shows, tell stories from our people's history, read chapters from sacred writings, rhetoric and poems—and sing Zionist songs" (Riklis, 1959, p. 169). Participation in festivals contained elements of both education and nationalism: to get the children used public speaking, to give them something to remember, and to bring the parents closer to the school—and, at the same time, "to lift the spirits of both sons and fathers regarding our national aspirations." He wanted "to guide his pupils along the road of pure religion" (Riklis, 1959). Traditional and national values were realized in the school and community through Sabbath and festival services. All took place in the school assembly hall, where there was a traditional ark containing the scrolls of the Torah. The school and its teachers led the commemoration of four traditional dates, stressing their contemporary significance. Hanukkah and Purim commemorated deliverance from ancient enemies,

trees were planted on the New Year of the Trees, and the Ninth of Av mourned the destruction of the Temple and with it the end of Jewish political independence (Riklis, 1959; Ben-Aryeh, 1980?; Torkenitz, 1919).

Informal Educational Activity Complements the Formal

The last activities, though both didactic and national, were not usually recorded, but were carried out in practice and only by Wilkomitz. Wilkomitz's significance as an educator lies, first of all, in the informal activities he initiated: "The school at Rosh Pinah acted as a spiritual center for all the settlers. The youth who left the school... maintained contact through evening classes, choir, physical education, and lectures on general and national subjects. The school was as crowded in the evening as during the day" (Riklis, 1959, pp. 112-14).

During the First World War, a society called Young Rosh Pina was established. It concerned itself with sports, astronomy, concerts, excursions, and parties, and "undertook national-pioneering responsibilities such as independent farm work, a prohibition on leaving the country, speaking Hebrew exclusively and so on" (Niv, 1983, pp. 239-40). The society wanted to expand into Young Yesod Ha'maleh and even Young Galilee societies, but with the war's end and the departure of one of its moving spirits, activities diminished instead (Riklis, 1959; Ben-Aryeh, 1980?).

Informal Contacts, Discipline, and Uniforms

Wilkomitz encouraged structured informal activities through personal daily contact. After school hours he was available for conversation with students, much of it devoted to literature, though he also dealt personally with students' difficulties (Riklis, 1959; Niv, 1983).

With this informality, in the European spirit of the time, he insisted upon cleanliness, order, discipline, and uniforms; even excursions began with an inspection of uniforms in an assembly in the school yard (Riklis, 1959; Niv, 1983).

Enrichment

Wilkomitz introduced a number of enrichment methods taken for granted today, but which were in those days pioneering. There was a children's library at the school for extracurricular

reading, as well as a "small museum containing pictures, fossils, vermin and bugs through which the teacher engaged his students in a serious and scientific way" (Zuta, 1938, p. 127). Progressive group and individual methods were used. In the classroom, a lecture would be followed by a group discussion; no notes were taken. Afternoon study groups reviewed what had been learned in the morning; everybody spoke and students corrected each other's errors. They would then each write a summary of the lesson. Wilkomitz would examine notebooks from time to time, which gave him individual feedback (Torkenitz, 1919; Riklis, 1959). All these means were used for national goals and coordinated with excursions, work, and the other unique features of the school.

A Consolidated Curriculum, a Single Approach

Conspicuous by its absence during the period of the first aliyah, or Jewish migration, was a single educational approach expressed in writing as a consolidated curriculum. Wilkomitz was remembered for a "permanent and orderly curriculum for the schools in Galilee, terminology for different subjects, the improvement of agricultural studies, singing and physical education in the schools" (Touroff, 1918, p. 4). Wilkomitz also deserves to be remembered for the "six-year rural school curriculum." Details concerning the natural Hebrew in Hebrew method were presented at the teachers' conference at Zihron Ya'akov in 1903 and were distributed throughout the settlements, parallel to the urban Hebrew school curriculum brought out by the Teachers' Federation in 1907 (Azaryahu, 1954).

Supervision and Teacher Organization

During the the first settlement period, not only was a systematic curriculum missing but so were pedagogical guidance, literature, teaching aids, and teachers' meetings for the exchange of information within and between the settlements (Karim, 1985). Wilkomitz's extensive supervision and guidance of the Upper Galilee teachers stood out against this background. In Rosh Pinah the teachers met

every Friday evening in Mr. Wilkomitz's house. They would discuss everyday affairs and general problems of education, and exchange views on some literary event in the country or overseas . . . apart from drinking

tea and eating cakes . . . they would sing popular songs. (Niv, 1983, p. 177)

The national-educational task orientation emerged, too, at the semiannual conferences of Upper Galilee and Safad teachers, supervised by Wilkomitz for the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA). These opened with Wilkomitz lecturing on pedagogical or psychological issues. He frequently traveled to neighboring settlements, sometimes staying for several days to offer detailed pedagogical guidance. The Upper Galilee branch of the Hebrew Teachers' Federation was established by Wilkomitz and Torkenitz³ as an organizational framework to support the schools materially and intellectually and to facilitate mutual professional and material assistance among teachers. The general assembly of the branch members met at least once a year (Riklis, 1959; Wilkomitz & Torkenitz, 1914; Wilkomitz, 1914?).

Historical Research toward a Comprehensive Definition of Rural Education

The foregoing historical case study fits into an inclusive educational definition of the rural school, one not limited to the technical and anchored in the inclusive educational paradigms. "Paradigm" has been defined by Kuhn (1970) as a "complete set of ideas, values, techniques and so on shared by a certain community" (pp. 174-75). Hills' (1984) educational dictionary states that this term "refers to our total view of a problem. It refers to a total outlook, not just a problem in isolation" (p. 213).

Our alternative definition of rural education proposed in conclusion embodies the liberal and progressive practices found at Rosh Pinah. They are coordinated in four educational paradigms: education for work (including agricultural education); community education; national, social-ideological education; and curricular autonomy for teacher and school.

Education for Work and Agricultural Education: A Totality

The rural school at Rosh Pinah prepared students to be enlightened people and successful farmers through farmwork that got them used to a life of labor and cooperation (Corson, 1991; Dror, 1991a). The teaching of agriculture and practical work in this field were supplemented by a range

of informal means that emphasized the social-ideological and national aspects of work.

This historical description fits with the definition accepted today of education for work, which extends beyond narrow vocational education (for our purposes, agricultural education), and relates to "general education for the world of work" (Watson, 1983). In a comparative study in Israel the definition included all content and formal and informal educational means that physically and intellectually prepare the student for the world of work (Dror & Bar-Lev, 1992). While all schools can teach about work formally and informally, rural schools such as the one at Rosh Pinah have an advantage. Physical work is part of daily life in the village, and adults act as examples to children, who begin to work early. This paradigm of education for work, taken from the historical case study, thus becomes part of an alternative model proposed for the rural school.

Two-Way Contacts with the Community

The rural school at Rosh Pinah maintained two-way contacts with the community serving it—not only on the sabbath and festival days, but also during the week, when it served as a cultural, study, and educational center for youth and adults. The leadership of the school and the settlement overlapped. The curriculum included Rosh Pinah and its environs, and community aspects in the curriculum were integrated with national and ideological aspects of life at Rosh Pinah, as they were in the other contemporary settlements in Eretz Israel.

This historical summary matches the definitions accepted since the middle of the 1940s for community education (Olsen, 1945; Watson, 1980; Rennie, 1985). These definitions include the use of school equipment and resources for community, cultural, study, and educational goals; the mutual involvement of school and community representatives in administration and decision making; and the development of curricula dealing with the community. Close contact between the educational and social systems is generally necessary, but it becomes especially important in limited rural settings. The rural school is also preferable from this point of view to the regular urban school, as it fits within the paradigm of community education that emerges from the historical research and the over-

³Aharon Torkenitz was Wilkomitz's successor as the manager of Rosh Pinah School. Earlier a Zionist leader in Russia, he came to Eretz Israel in 1904.

all comprehensive definition proposed for the rural school.

National Social-Ideological Education in Methods and Content

The rural school at Rosh Pinah was part of the Zionist settlement program, planned and operated to link social and educational systems. All its formal and informal educational pursuits embodied both educational-didactic and national aspects, over and above the needs of the local community. The national-ideological aspect of the Rosh Pinah curriculum touched upon the school community, on moshavah Rosh Pinah itself, and on the region, the country, and the whole Jewish nation. The curriculum, formal and informal, dealt with each of these widening circles and focused on them year after year, moving from the near to the remote, from the familiar to the unknown (Dror, 1991b).

These social-ideological features appear in different definitions of ideological education and social education. Lee (1980) states: "The term 'social education' will . . . be used to cover all those teaching or informal activities which are planned by curriculum developers, teachers or other professionals to enhance the development of one or more of the following: knowledge, understanding, attitudes, sensitivity, competence, in relation to: the self and others, and/or social institutions, and/or social issues" (see also Brown, Harber, & Strivens, 1986; Tomlinson, 1986). These definitions include both means and content, within a national and social context.

Greater Autonomy for School and Teacher

Many people felt that Epstein and Wilkomitz's activity and autonomy, greater than what their professional contemporaries assumed, was the main explanation for the success of the Rosh Pinah school at a time when educational leaders played key roles among the general Hebrew public.

The autonomy of the teacher and his or her ability to develop programs, or at least to adjust existing curricula through suitable didactic measures, has a significant place in modern curricular terminology (Sabar, Rudduck, & Reid, 1987). School autonomy, also called "school-based curriculum development," is an accepted educational approach linked with comprehensive methods and curricular concepts such as community education

or different value-oriented emphases in curricula (Skilbeck, 1984). The double autonomy that characterized the Rosh Pinah school is especially important in remote rural villages. Hence it is part of—and even a necessary basic condition for—the definition of rural education in general (Zeidman, 1981; UNESCO, 1980).

A Paradigmatic Definition Complements Organizational and Curricular Definitions

As briefly noted in the introduction, the existing definitions of rural education are mainly organizational and technical. Curricular definitions are fragmentary, containing a list of rural elements rather than a comprehensive educational viewpoint. A detailed comparison between the paradigmatic definition and the existing organizational and curricular definitions in rural education literature demonstrates how the proposed definition can complement the existing ones to great practical advantage.

Broadening Organizational-Technical Definitions

Most existing definitions are narrowly technical and administrative. In a comparative study based on UNESCO data, Halsall (1973) points out the problems of defining rural education and lists possible criteria from different countries: Inhabitants; distance from the centre of a town; type of administration; type of economic activity; and combinations of several factors—demographic, geographical, economic, and social. In a comprehensive anthology on rural education in urbanized nations, Sher (1981) presents an "overview of conditions": school size, school transportation, boarding schools, noncompulsory education, and special-needs populations—to which Nachtigal (1982) adds: "personal/tightly linked; homogeneous; make do/response to environment; self-sufficiency; poorer" (p. 270). He divides rural education into three categories—rural poor, traditional middle America, and communities in transition—according to moral, socioeconomic, and political variables. In her study, Zeidman (1981) built a comparative analysis model of two rural schools in Israel based on the existing literature (Binyon, 1970; Stewart, 1974). The model is made up of constraints (conditions more widespread in rural schools), outcomes (positive and negative implications of these conditions in the rural school), and solutions to reduce or eliminate nega-

tive outcomes. Zeidman (1981) summarizes the constraints: the rural setting; nature of the population; school size; distance from students' homes; psychological and physical distance of the school from an urban center and the established authority; and community-school relations. Outcomes relate to teachers, students, parents, experts, and to the community as a whole. Solutions involve preservice and in-service teacher training, on the one hand, and various school models on a continuum between local and regional, on the other (Stewart, 1974; Zeidman, 1981).

The model I suggest broadens organizational-technical components of rural educational administration. It includes constraints and their outcomes, but proposes more comprehensive solutions. These touch not only upon school location and staff training, but also upon the exploitation of these constraints and outcomes to actualize progressive, comprehensive educational approaches.

A Comprehensive Progressive-Liberal Approach Replaces Fragmentary Curricular Definitions

The few definitions relating to curriculum are incomplete, constituting a checklist rather than a rationale.

- Coombs and Ahmed (1974) define "four main headings of educational needs for rural development: (1) general or basic education, (2) family improvement education, (3) community improvement education, and (4) occupational education" (p. 15).

- J. P. Sher (1981) lists the characteristics of curricula matched "to the unique needs of remote rural communities: A strong foundation in the teaching of basic skills and essential facts; an emphasis on practical skills; training in self-directed study and the development of initiative; a focus on the community; an orientation to familiarizing students with the outside world; attention to the futures of the students" (pp. 61-64).

- The approach of Fitzsimmons and Freedman (1981) to rural community development in the United States is similar. Besides school consolidation, various programs have attempted to improve rural education. These can be categorized in terms of four objectives: rural development, social improvement, vocational training, and academic preparation" (p. 23).

- The 1980 UNESCO report emphasizes the main educational principles of the curriculum:

The pedagogical principles of renewal in rural education are a national education, simultaneous education of children and adults, an education linked to life, equality of opportunity, and general education and training.

The curricular and educational characteristics of the rural school—development of the individual and his or her connections with the immediate and the more distant community—are liberal/progressive in nature, as for example in Gutek (1988). Our model is not only progressive, but also more detailed and comprehensive than the foregoing. Education for work is perceived as a means toward individual development and habit formation as early as the practical education of Kirsteiner. The community element begins with the student's work in his or her immediate surroundings, progressing through involvement with the local community to the region, and reaching beyond to patriotism and its values. Teacher and school autonomy is essential in the development of special educational content for a particular school and community. Comprehensive and inclusive, the proposed model has advantages over those now available in the literature on rural education and is suitable for any rural community. It is a product of two dimensions, an aggregate of formal, informal, and semi-informal "educational means" that deal with the school, local, regional, and national "community."

The Proposed Model for Rural Education World-Wide

The need for detailed progressive dimensions is mentioned in the world literature on rural education, exemplified in that of the United States and England. Coombs and Ahmed (1974) stressed adaptation of means to different communities and nations as early as 1974, when they presented an approach to community development in developing countries. Research on rural education in the United States stresses developing alternative models for small, rural schools (Nachtigal, 1982) that will meet specific community needs and no longer regard them as just small, remote, city schools. Galton and Patrick (1990) conclude as regards England:

It may be that the greatest contribution small schools can make over the next decade will be to develop our ideas about classroom practice in ways which replace what John Dewey as long ago as 1928 described as 'the

negative aspects of progressivism' by a more coherent theory of teaching and learning for primary schools. (p. 181)

We conclude by examining the application of our model in Israel beyond the rural school. The Workers' Trend, which was the educational arm of the labor movement during the British mandate, included many small rural schools. It nurtured education for work, community ties, and national-patriotic values through a variety of new and progressive means that assumed the autonomy of the teacher and the school. Rural education, and particularly the agricultural and kibbutz schools, were emulated in the cities, even by schools not connected with the labor movement. After the state was established in 1948, its education systems were integrated, and compulsory education was enacted in 1953. The national administrative set-up as a whole internalized many progressive characteristics of the Workers' Trend and of the first moshavot schools. It established permanent units to guide projects of activity-based learning, community schools, education toward social and national goals, and school autonomy. Rural schools have maintained their independence, particularly the secondary schools. To this day, the Ministry of Education and Culture has a Settlements Section that includes kibbutz and other rural schools, agricultural schools, youth villages, and other residential frameworks. It is run by people from the kibbutzim and other cooperative settlements in a progressive, community-oriented spirit, independent of the political party in power. This stems from national recognition of the uniqueness of Israel's rural education and of its contribution to the educational system.

In conclusion, the rural school, because of its constraints, is an experimental laboratory for educational solutions. Research into additional models of rural schools could assist educational research in many areas, only some of which have been suggested in this study.

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