

Is the Y Becoming an Alternative to the Synagogue?*

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Each institution (the Y and synagogue) is striving toward a common purpose that even transcends the struggle for self-preservation, the preservation of the Jewish community. That shared goal has helped release cooperative energies to achieve the common good, and such efforts have overbalanced any possible conflicts between the two.

I recently found a fascinating article published in 1925 in the *92nd Street Y Bulletin*, which quotes a talk by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver to the Young Judaeon Club: "Nothing can take the place of the synagogue in Jewish life, not even Palestine, not even nationalism. The synagogue became a place of assembly, place of study where youth was instructed, a place where a stranger was welcomed."

The Rabbi also recognized the Y's importance, when he said, "Let (youth) have an environment which is Jewish, so that when they face life, they will face it not afraid, not apologetic, but as normal human beings, ---. That was the youth that I had, that was the youth which forty of us had in the Doctor Herzl Club (of the Y)."¹

This brief quotation has established the frame of reference of my presentation today. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver did not see the synagogue as an alternative to the Y. Neither did he regard the Y as an alternative to the synagogue. Both institutions appear to have complemented each other in influencing his life and the lives of his friends.

The word alternative derives from the Latin root *alternativus*, and is defined as being a choice between two, or among more than two, things or routes.

Institutions can behave in accordance with alternative choices, the same as human beings. For example, institutions can be made to compete with one another. Such rivalry may

arouse emotions of hostility and even cause open conflicts. Institutions can also be made to take an alternative course, resolving their differences in the face of conditions that may threaten their survival.

What does preoccupation with the subject of this article tell us? Does the question of an alternative bespeak real tension between synagogues and Ys? What is the nature of such tension? Where does it manifest itself? Who sees the Y as an alternative choice? If New York is representative in this respect, what evidence is there in New York to support the hypothesis that the Y is an alternative to the synagogue today?

In order to investigate these questions, I undertook to examine synagogues and Ys in the Greater New York area about their relations with one another. The cooperation of important "insiders" in these institutions had to be enlisted so that they could convey as objectively as possible some official account of what is taking place in their areas. These "insiders" would have to be assured that they would personally not be identified in the study, to free them of constraints.

With the advice of the rabbinic consultant at the N.Y. Federation, we identified a random sample of eleven Ys and eleven synagogues to be interrogated. I next designed an open-ended questionnaire for use in telephone interviews with their rabbis and executive directors.**

Sociologist Amitai Etzioni once cautioned that: "Modern society is a society of organi-

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¹ *The YMHA Bulletin*, Vol. XXVI, No. 3, January 16, 1925, p. 3.

** I am grateful to Isaac Trainin, the late David Kleinstein, and Graenum Berger for their help and suggestions; also to Rabbi Paul Kushner for his assistance in collecting replies to questionnaires.

zations, but the obvious question of how these organizations interact has not been systematically explored. We know a great deal about interaction among persons, something about interaction among groups, but surprisingly little about interaction among organizations.²

Following are the questions that were asked of each executive director and rabbi in the 22 institutions which are located in four boroughs and six suburban communities of New York.

I. Briefly describe the social conditions of the Jewish population in your area: (housing, stability of population, economic level; age).

II. a) Please describe any cooperative program or other form of interrelationship with Ys (or synagogues) in your area.

b) Why were these relationships developed?

III. What are the benefits derived from such interrelationships by each organization?

IV. Please outline the benefits derived by the Jewish community.

V. Outline any problem areas that may have arisen during the relationship: (i.e. personality conflicts; tensions with staff; deficits; lack of progress of the project; failure to fulfill part of the "bargain;" inadequate response of the community to the project; administrative difficulties).

VI. Have there been any ideological, religious or philosophical conflicts between the two institutions?

VII. Have you any concluding comments?

The rabbis were asked 4 additional questions:

1. Please name the Y or Center nearest your synagogue.

2. Do you think that the Y is in competition with your synagogue?

3. Philosophically, do you think that the Y as an institution can replace the synagogue in Jewish life?

4. What joint programs has your organization run in cooperation with the Y?

The rabbis did not see the Ys as alternative competitors. From the responses of the rabbis

² Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964, pp. 110, 111.

I found that the majority were interested in the recreational and group activities provided by the Y. There seems to be a strong desire in their congregations to provide maximal opportunities for young people to relate to one another in friendship situations as a counterbalance to assimilation; to make participation in synagogue, yeshiva or school a recreational experience, supplementing prayer of education with play and fun; and to provide personality development opportunities, apparently in response to the influence of progressive education.

While some synagogues formerly strove to provide extra-curricular outlets by themselves, this has recently become increasingly difficult, because of budgetary restrictions, inflation, and space and scheduling problems. Youth activities are often in conflict with other program priorities. In addition, such recreation programs are not fully appreciated or understood by all synagogue leaders. In the past, most of the synagogues had also suffered from the lack of group leaders with the capacity, training and skill to motivate young people, to sustain their interest in keeping with the spirit and objectives of the synagogue. These problems have been aggravated in areas losing Jewish population. The inadequate response of young people has often frustrated those dedicated synagogue planners who have worried and cared. There is an important relationship between Jewish youth and the Jewish future. If only they could reach more young people through recreational group activities, perhaps the future might look more promising.

The Jewish Y is perceived by most of the Rabbis of the sample as a helpful and valuable alternative to "going it alone" with youth programs. The Y is seen as budgetarily more viable in running group and recreational activities, because of the financial support of Federation. The Y is also recognized for the expertise of its staff in such matters, and for its ability to administer and supervise programs of informal education and recreation.

Rabbis of Orthodox, Conservative and

Reform Congregations in this survey may be quoted as follows:

1. "The synagogue could not conduct an adequate youth program on its own;"
2. "This synagogue is limited by finances and space in dealing with youth;"
3. "The Y is better equipped and they have more expertise to run programs for teens;"
4. "The Y knows more about group dynamics than we do;"
5. "The Y plays an important role with youth, and we appreciate what it is doing. We have found we can live together."

The representatives of the schuls and temples did not express fear that the Y is becoming an alternative to the synagogue. Their views signify a common recognition that one institution can help the other in areas deemed important to both.

They appear to have a pervasive sense of calm about the Y, due to the apparent absence of ideological disharmonies between both institutions.

The Y spokesmen expressed positive impressions also. One said that when he came to the Y there were no contacts with the local congregations. He reached out to them, hoping they could work together. After 9 months, that Y received an important award for their effort. I quote other executive directors:

"The key people of the board see this as a most important development."

"We all now enjoy broader contacts in the Jewish community. Even the rabbis are getting to know each other through the Y's effort."

"We reached out and proved our sincerity about serving the Orthodox."

"The only way this Jewish community can survive is for each element in it to help the whole."

"When we get together with the synagogues we help stabilize the Jewish community and we all achieve a deepened sense of our Jewish identity."

These expressions symbolized the Y's respect for the synagogue, the executive direc-

tors recognizing it as a corner-stone institution in Jewish life. They saw all institutions in the organized Jewish community as precious segments in the Jewish mosaic. There was a readiness to grasp the extended hand of the synagogues seeking help. The first steps taken in the cooperative process were not the exclusive domain of either Y or synagogue, however.

The sentiments of the executives about the synagogue were not motivated by a desire for identification with the religious character of the schul, but were rather an evocation of the Y's identification with the Jewish community, to the service of which both institutions are ideologically dedicated.

The conception of the community that emerged from the Y interviews was idealistic, more emotional than spatial, and seemed to correspond with the characteristics of organizations in the *community* described by Inis L. Claude, Jr.:

Mutual reliance is a product of their recognized interdependence; having been thrown together, they have grown together. They take pride in their corporate identity; the collectivity shapes and nourishes their individuality. Although disharmonies inevitably occur within such groups, -- trust, forbearance, and mutual respect tend to prevent antagonisms from disrupting the fabric of unity. In the last analysis, members can be counted upon to stand together, to protect and assist and share with each other, and to demonstrate devotion to the common good.³

In summary, it seems clear that the Ys had no desire to become an alternative to the schul. Their sentiments were those of mutuality, forbearance, respect, devotion to their counterpart.

Contrast with the 1950's and 1960's

These accepting attitudes of both synagogues and Ys contrast sharply with the competitive climate of the 1950's and 1960's, a

³ Inis L. Claude, Jr., "Community and World Order;" *The Virginia Quarterly Review*. (University of Virginia, Charlottesville) Vol. 50, No. 4 (Autumn 1974), p. 489.

period of remarkable growth of Jewish interest in, and affiliation with, congregations, community centers, and all other Jewish organizations. It also was a time which saw the expansion of many synagogue-centers, a development that prompted Sanford Solender to state at the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service in 1957:

“... the synagogue-center aspiration is based upon a philosophical conviction (that) ... has far-reaching implications, not only for the replacement of the Jewish community center by the synagogue, but eventually for the substitution of synagogue activities for many other programs and services now conducted by communal agencies.”⁴

Solender's statement underscored the competitive climate of those times. Were the present paper to have been presented in that period, its title might have been reversed, positing the synagogue as an alternative to the Y.

Today, there seems little likelihood that much excitement would be generated by any such inversion of the subject, because both institutions appear to have reached an accommodation, although some evidence points to the continued existence of some tension.

Definition of Accommodation

Sociologists Wilson and Kolb explain that *accommodation* is a process of . . . reciprocal adjustments (that) are worked out . . . “Accommodation is accompanied by a redefinition of participant attitudes and a new equilibrium of opposing forces. Arbitration, compromise, coercion, rationalization and other specific varieties of accommodation may be effected to establish . . . a relationship.”⁵

⁴ Sanford Solender, “The Place of the Jewish Community Center in Jewish Life,” *Trends and Issues in Jewish Social Welfare in the United States, 1948-1958*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1966, p. 540.

⁵ Logan Wilson and William L. Kolb, in Robert K. Merton, Ed., New York: *Sociological Analysis*, New York: Harcourt Brace Company, 1949, p. 685.

There were cogent reasons for cooperation between the Ys and the synagogues.

Two of the Y spokesmen expressed the conviction that their outreach was consistent with the highest purposes of their agencies—to serve the Jewish community wherever feasible, and to develop new programs that would give their organizations an on-going thrust and dynamism. This outreach seems to be accepted by the majority of Y Boards, and is encouraged by the N. Y. Federation, and the National Jewish Welfare Board. All the executives recognize that the times call for institutional relations of a close character. According to Graenum Berger's view, expressed in 1971, “It is manifest that we cannot and should not vie with each other, particularly as the synagogue and the center have been growing to be a little more like each other than different.”⁶ Most Ys and schuls in the sample are similarly affected by such phenomena as deteriorating neighborhoods, tight money, and aging or declining Jewish populations. The impact of some of these problems on synagogues and Ys alike could only be mitigated through forms of mutual aid. These conditions have only deepened the long held conviction of the organized Jewish community which has rejected institutional competition.

Demography

There were certain striking similarities in the demographic conditions described by most of the Ys and synagogues under investigation. A drop in the Jewish birth rate was reported ubiquitously, with the number of Jewish children proportionately declining more rapidly than those of other religious denominations. With varying degrees of severity, this affected enrollments in public and private schools, Hebrew Schools and Ys. These drops were further aggravated by the egress of Jewish families from most of the areas investigated. In the case of Yonkers, for

⁶ Graenum Berger, “Innovation by Tradition,” Norman Linzer, ed., *The Jewish Family*, New York: Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, 1976, p. 136.

example, it was reported that the public school system had lost 5,000 children in the last five years, causing the closing down of seven schools. Jewish children formed a significant proportion of the 5,000.

The demographic information culled from the telephone calls corresponded generally with the data contained in the National Jewish Population Study about the characteristics of the Jewish population of Greater New York.⁷ In the year 1970-1971, the Jewish population of Greater New York was estimated at 1,993,000 individuals, a drop of ½ million residents as compared with the 1960's. In January's *Congress Monthly*, Jack Diamond estimated we are down to 750,000 Jews in the 5 Boroughs today!⁸

The National Jewish Population Study gave other data about Greater New York that are relevant to this study:

Children below the age of 5 were largely concentrated in suburbia. In Westchester, they represented 13.5 percent of the Jewish population.

The major concentrations of the Jewish aged were 33.6 percent of the Jewish population in the Bronx; 27.2 percent of the Jewish population in Manhattan; and 18.7 percent of the Jewish population in Brooklyn, in that order of importance.⁹ These figures should be looked upon as trends rather than fixed situations.

The institutions regard the future of their areas with varying degrees of assurance or pessimism, depending on the nature of their situation. One agency, Bronx House, expects 10 to 15 years of stability in its service area. The Riverdale City Planning Commission

⁷ Fred Massarik: “Basic Characteristics of the Greater New York Jewish Population.” *American Jewish Year Book*, 1976, Volume 76, American Jewish Committee, New York, N.Y. 1975, pp. 239-248.

⁸ Jack Diamond, “How Many Jews in New York City?,” *Congress Monthly*, Vol. 45, No. 1, January 1978.

⁹ David Sidorsky, Ed., *The Future of the Jewish Community in America*, Basic Books, Inc., New York, pp. 160-161.

foresees 25 secure years for that area before radical changes are expected to set in. Each Y and Synagogue has reacted to these current or future stimuli in individual ways. When the rabbis and executive directors were asked to describe any cooperative program or other form of interrelationships between their organizations, they gave many interesting examples which illustrate how their situations have caused them to plan for today and tomorrow. The sheer volume of the programs mentioned in the survey tends to create a climate of mutuality in and around the City, going contrary to any impression that one organization is striving for ascendancy or dominance over the other. I cite four such cases of institutional cooperation.

In Manhattan, the Emanu-El Midtown Y and its neighboring synagogue merged their Hebrew Schools, and are now jointly sponsoring a Judaica Library and an Adult School of Jewish Studies. The results are reported positively.

Washington Heights Y recently developed a recreation program for Orthodox children in response to the request of Agudath Israel. In the process, the Y has been changing. Kosher food is now being served in the Golden Age program, they have closed down Friday night activities and have survived the resignation of some Board members who would not tolerate the Y's employment of a mashgiach. Children are bussed to the Y every other Sunday from a local yeshiva. They are directed by an observant staff which is in the employ of the Y. The Y has also reached out to another yeshiva in the area. The boys and girls are separated in gym, crafts, sewing and needlework, music, group singing, painting and folk dancing. The Y is now planning an Orthodox Day Camp, with funding for this now being considered by Federation. Although 70 percent of the current week-day membership is non-observant, this is changing due to neighborhood trends, from young to old, from non-observant to Orthodox. The local Jewish population is constantly shrinking, but the most stable element in the area is the Orthodox.

The Y feels it is fulfilling a communal

responsibility, and the children of Yeshivoth are profiting from a program that is enriching their lives, while their classroom experience is balanced with recreational programs that the children greatly enjoy.

The Traditional Synagogue of Co-op City, Orthodox, is located a mile away from Bronx House. The Rabbi sees Bronx House as a social agency with competence for dealing with recreation; the teens; problems of the handicapped; the single parent family; etc.

Sixty to seventy-five percent of the Co-op City population is Jewish.

Because the synagogue had limited finances and space, it sought the willing cooperation of Bronx House in running a Youth program in locally rented facilities. "We have a partnership with Bronx House," said the Rabbi.

The Synagogue also has a daily feeding program for Senior Citizens that is federally funded. "Bronx House and the synagogue have a unified system for serving the recreational, social and continuing - education needs of the aging," he said. Both are exploring the establishment of a joint program for single parents, and are co-operating in the creation of the day camp for Orthodox children referred to above.

The Jews of Yonkers are 17 percent of the population. Despite the continuing decline in their numbers, the Center has been able to increase membership by 1,147 individuals in the last 4 years through a system of service - contracts with 15 outside organizations, five of them synagogues. These contracts have become a vital means for replenishing Y membership and increasing income. Under these contracts, each synagogue pays the Center to develop the programs for approximately 300 teens, many of whom come from Jewishly unaffiliated families.

Both the affiliated and unaffiliated have been involved in *Onegai Shabbat*, *Shatatonim* and other Jewish programs.

A city-wide program for 20-33 year olds, and 30-40 year olds meets at the Center, at synagogues or in private homes. The only kosher feeding program for the elderly in Westchester was recently inaugurated at the Center with federal funds. The Center has also assisted the local Jewish Council, giving it new vitality. The Center Board has

members from the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Synagogues of Yonkers, who demonstrate concern for each other's welfare.

Generally, the synagogues get the professional services of the Center, which include publicity, administration, supervision, program, and staff. But the program remains in the name of the synagogue. The Center has become more Jewish in the process. The groups of the synagogues have become more cohesive; and the Center has become the common meeting ground for people from many congregations.

Joe Harris, Social Planning Consultant of the N.Y. Federation, has suggested that cooperation between synagogues and Ys may be classified into 4 functional categories:

1. Service relationships, where the Y provides services to the synagogue at no cost;
2. Cooperative relationships, where the synagogue buys services from the Y;
3. Membership relationships, where synagogue members join the Y at a special group rate, enjoying the privileges of both institutions;
4. Co-sponsoring relationships, where both synagogue and Y are co-sponsors of a particular service.

Tensions Persist

Despite all the instances of accommodation cited thus far, tensions between the two institutions seem to persist as each one seeks its level of cooperation and equilibrium. These tensions are apparently subordinated to the primary desire of both for reciprocity, but frictions exist in direct proportion to ideological or institutional confrontations. The most vulnerable issues in this inquiry had to do with *Halachic* practices or with any threats to the exclusive control of the synagogue over Jewish education.

Any Y attempt to inaugurate a Jewish education program will be resisted by the synagogue. The synagogues exercise subtle sanctions against any potential violators. Since the early 40's, when Jewish education came under the control of the synagogue, this control has been guarded religiously by the congregations, which expect their supplemental, Sunday and Day schools to educate

the children toward participation in their particular form of ideological worship. The family of each child enrolled in such schools is valued as a potential affiliate and supporter of the religious institution. How did this tension manifest itself in the inquiry?

The Questionnaire asked two questions of synagogue spokesmen that were intended to evoke expressions of criticism and/or emotion.

- Do you think that the Y is in competition with your synagogue?
- Philosophically, do you think that the Y as an institution can replace the synagogue in Jewish life?

A Conservative Rabbi complained that the Y runs a Jewish enrichment program on Sundays for 8-12 year olds; this gives parents an alternative to sending their children to a synagogue for religious instruction.

An Orthodox respondent said the Y is primarily focused on physical education and is not related to prayer or Jewish education; hence it could not be a competitive alternative to the synagogue.

I quote a Conservative Rabbi: "We feared that our members would desert the synagogue if the Y ever erected a new building. They never built their building, hence they are not competitive. On the other hand, they could become competitive, if they had a Hebrew School."

Some synagogues were envious of the budget given the Ys by Federation.

Programming after sun-down on Fridays and during *Shabbat* by Ys located even in far-away places caused resentment in the traditional community. There were other *Halachic* rumblings concerning *Kashruth* and *Mashgichim*.

Some of the Rabbis felt a proprietary responsibility for "youth," and they thought the Y should not vie with the synagogue to attract them.

The attitude towards the Y was often colored by the feelings of synagogue leadership toward Federation. Not a single Rabbi, however, intimated that such negative atti-

tudes predominated in the present schul community.

Negative feelings were also expressed by Y spokesmen in response to the following question: "Please outline the problem areas that have resulted from the relationship: (i.e. personality conflicts, tensions with staff; deficits; lack of progress of the project; failure to fulfill part of the 'bargain;' inadequate response of the community to the project; administrative difficulties; etc.)."

The answer of one Y executive probably summarized the complaints of many of his colleagues:

"All those problems have existed at one time or another, but never at the same time anywhere. As a general rule, though, the problems have been minimal, and have never overshadowed our friendliest relations with our synagogues. Where problems arise, we try to overcome them speedily."

Ike Trainin has echoed observations about persisting tensions in his book, "*From the Pages of My Communal Diary*," under dateline of June 2, 1976:

"In retrospect, I realize that the friction between Ys and synagogues is still existent in many quarters and that the work of our task force is far from finished. Much more will have to be done to bring about a closer cooperation between the Y and synagogues. There still remain legitimate reasons why synagogues fear the Y movement."¹⁰

I found no expressions of fear of the Y in my inquiry. Nor did I find expressions of hostility or resentment toward the Y movement here or elsewhere. That does not gainsay an occasional manifestation of uncertainty about "them" vis a vis "us."

Problems for Further Research

This inquiry, of necessity, had its limitations. It did not reach significant numbers of

¹⁰ Isaac Trainin, *From the Pages of My Communal Diary*, New York: Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, 1977, p. 137.

the Ys and synagogues in Greater New York. It studied the perceptions of the executive directors and rabbis of a small sample. It has left significant questions to other investigators. For example, we do not know the attitudes and perceptions of the Y's lay leadership as to whether the Y is an alternative to the synagogue; nor do we know the views of the staffs, and memberships of both institutions. The thinking of Jews who are unaffiliated with synagogues deserve to be examined about alternatives, too. The synagogues and Ys in future studies should be more carefully individualized.

It would be valuable to compare the modest findings of this inquiry with Jewish communal institutions in other urban areas of the United States. There are numerous other questions for future study.

Summary Observations

1. The Ys and synagogues struck a dominant note of cooperation. It definitely was not a note resounding with competitive alternatives.

It may be conjectured that cooperation has resulted between the two institutions because they have grown aware of the discrepancy between their former levels of aspiration and their accomplishments. The aggravated economic and social problems of both organizations have sharpened this awareness. Each institution is striving toward a common purpose that even transcends the struggle for self preservation, the preservation of the Jewish community. That shared goal has helped release cooperative energies to achieve for the common good, and such efforts have overbalanced any possible conflicts between the two.

2. The Y has shown greater flexibility than the synagogue in moving to new concentrations of Jewish population. The Y has used experimental programs, developed new buildings, extensions, branches, etc. It has this capacity, thanks to the communal support it receives from Federation, and because of its lay and professional leadership. By contrast, the synagogue largely depends on its local

constituency for financial support and leadership. Have such circumstantial differences made the Y appear to some as an aggressive and competitive institution, by comparison?

3. The strict monopoly of congregations over Jewish education, and the voluntary or forced aloofness of the Ys from involvement with it have grown increasingly anachronistic in the face of shrinking enrollments, and the dissolution of once familiar neighborhoods and regions. Except for the case of the Emanu El - Midtown Y and its neighboring synagogue, no other merger of a Hebrew School with a Y was reported.

Does it make any sense today for the Y to continue to remain aloof from Jewish education? The Y and the synagogue together can jointly have a new impact on the Jewish educational system today.

The Y has access to families whose children receive no Jewish education. The falling enrollments can be offset by more mergers and, if possible, by moves into Y buildings. An enlarged student body can lead to more viable classifications based on age and attainment. As already shown in Washington Heights, the curriculum can be enriched by the Y staff, giving the children gym, swimming pool, library, informal group activity, crafts, arts, music, dance, drama. The Y also has important skills that can be used in working with the parents, who should not be left out of the educational process affecting their children. An improved esprit de corps can result, lifting the spirits of children and teachers alike. Some teachers are potentially also valuable to the Y for improving the quality of Jewish programs. Teachers can also be afforded a greater measure of security and recognition. I am bold enough to wonder if the cooperative involvement of the Y with the synagogue in Jewish education can possibly provide new support for Jewish community schools. Is not consolidation a valuable alternative to disintegration? Local Ys and synagogues, Jewish community councils, Federation, the Board of Jewish Education, JWB and the coordinating bodies of the synagogue

communities should collectively seek to evolve new approaches to the growing communal dilemmas in Jewish education. That is an indispensable alternative today.

4. Adult Jewish education deserves no less attention. The survey found that adult Jewish education programs appear to be episodic, disjointed, consisting of incidental lectures, even where Ys and synagogues sponsor them jointly.

Because the intellectual and educational level of young adults in the community continues to rise, we must offer new and more stimulating opportunities for adult Jewish learning, perhaps in coordination with the Seminary, Yeshivah, etc. If adult Jewish education is aimless, the result is bound to be disaffection, and loss. The motivational expertise of the Ys and the scholarship of the synagogues, should be pooled on a community-wide basis. That would be a wonderful alternative.

5. Bernard Lazerwitz, analysing the National Jewish Population Study, found that only 50 percent of adult Jews were synagogue affiliated in 1970, and only 20 percent of single adults and young marrieds without children were so affiliated. There is nothing found in this survey that would support the theory that the Y attracts principally non-affiliates. All kinds of Jews are in the membership of the Y, and they reflect all the different elements of the Jewish community today.

Those Jews who have been outside the synagogue for a major part of their lives appear to continue to live that pattern, rarely deviating from it, and their children follow the life-style of their parents. But their sense of

Jewish identity is often more profound than is signified by their aloofness from synagogue participation. If they are identified with the Y, it is a fortunate circumstance.

6. The growth of the Orthodox community has been reported by Ys and synagogues alike in numerous areas in New York City, for one. The Orthodox have now become a significant component of Y memberships in those areas, and elsewhere, and they appear to be particularly appreciative of the Y's readiness generally to accommodate to Orthodox mores. While the numbers of Orthodox members are growing in many Ys, it may be assumed that their synagogues are also growing.

7. All the Ys and synagogues we studied are similar in an important respect. Each institution senses the historic message of Chaim Nachman Bialik's poem: "Im Yest et Nafshichah Ladaat." The few lines of Bialik's freely translated verse with which I conclude, re-echo a sentiment expressed by Abba Hillel Silver at the very outset of this paper.

"Should you wish to meet our old, devoted,
loving mother, . . .

Then heigh you to the Synagogue, ancient
and hoary, Oh brother.

Behold, its state is dilapidated, worn;
T'is a sight defying any stranger's ken.

"As you enter this living tabernacle
Your inner heart will reveal,
And your blinking eyes will unseal
The precious source of our salvation."

There is not now, and there never has been
an alternative to our ancient, motherly
sanctuary, the secret source of our survival.