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general methodological issues. It is here that the collection is at its best, with much interesting dialogue between the various writers in both the main text and the notes.

One issue in particular that recurs throughout many of the articles is Soloveitchik's much discussed relationship with modernity in general. Indeed the collection opens with Walter Wurzbürger repeating (disappointingly) the characterisation of Modern Orthodoxy as willing 'to make all sorts of concessions to modernity at the expense of genuine religious commitment'; Wurzbürger then argues that Soloveitchik cannot be accused of acquiescing to modernity in this way.

One reason that capitulation in the face of modernity cannot be said to be Soloveitchik's way is emphasised by Marvin Fox, who argues that the halakhah is the unifying point behind Soloveitchik's entire philosophy. Though Fox, to my mind, underplays what appear to be instances of genuine contradiction in Soloveitchik's thought, he is correct to stress the centrality of halakhah in his thought (despite Shubert Spero's rigorous and fascinating criticisms of Fox in his contribution to the volume). The idea that any philosophical conclusion must be derived from Jewish sources would seem to defuse possible accusations that Soloveitchik espouses a diluted form of Orthodoxy.

At the same time of course, this very conservatism could lead to the claim that Soloveitchik is not a genuine philosopher. In this spirit, his modernity has sometimes been seen merely as a form of window dressing. Against this view, Wurzbürger opens the book by arguing that despite his use of traditional halakhic methodology, his stances towards such things as Religious Zionism and secular studies make for his modernity. It seems as if for Wurzbürger, though Soloveitchik's methods fall into the 'Orthodox' category, some of the substantive conclusions fall into the category of 'the Modern'. However,

he goes on to write that these modern conclusions arise out of religious philosophy that includes 'the conviction that a *Torat Hayyim* addresses the realities of the world rather than seeks an escape from them'. Given Soloveitchik's claim that any such religious philosophy must derive from the halakhah, even Wurzbürger actually seems to end up with an entirely traditionalist affirmation of modernity.

In contrast Moshe Sokol, who in a much discussed article in *Modern Judaism* (Vol. 2, 1982) argued that the modern form of Soloveitchik's writing was mere 'window dressing', revises that view in his contribution to this collection in a way that seems to me instructive. While mentioning the sophisticated justification of the religious world-view put forward in *The Halakhic Mind*, his main argument is that as a result of his modernity Soloveitchik re-embraces his orthodoxy in a characteristically modern heroic gesture that is unabashedly fideistic. Thus, in contrast to Wurzbürger, Sokol seems to have Soloveitchik putting forward a 'modern' affirmation of his Orthodoxy.

Most significantly Sokol now argues that this modern packaging in fact 'fashioned [Soloveitchik's] own theological world-view to a significant degree'. This point that the 'packaging' cannot but affect the content brings a new perspective to this discussion. For one peculiarly modern, or even post-modern, preoccupation is the casting of doubt on the very form/content distinction. The very use of the 'form' of modernity is in itself substantive and cannot be relegated to the status of mere window dressing as Sokol seems now to realise. In a similar vein, one could argue that the assumption that we have two unproblematic and independently definable packages – Orthodoxy and Modernity – with which to deal here is questionable. While there might be issues for which we can identify 'Modern' as opposed to 'Orthodox' stances, the assumption that we can always

apportion each facet of the Rav's thought to one or the other and then tot up the results in order to see which feature predominates is far too simplistic. Comments by Sokol such as that quoted serve to introduce a welcome level of complexity to the discussion of this issue.

Generally, this is a very interesting and useful collection and the dialogue running through the book between the different opinions on Soloveitchik's thought, albeit only within the Orthodox camp, is illuminating. Both the academic and the layman, indeed anyone with an interest in Modern Orthodoxy, should find many points of interest in its pages.

Daniel Rynhold

#### Sociology and Politics

**BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER: VIOLENCE AND EXTREMISM IN ISRAELI POLITICS FROM ALTALENA TO THE RABIN ASSASSINATION**, Ehud Sprinzak, Free Press, New York, 1999, \$27.50.

Sprinzak's work is a detailed historical study of violence and extremism in Israeli politics during its first fifty years, set within a scholarly, theoretical framework that conceptualizes the phenomenon of political violence in general and in the Israeli context in particular.

The author observes four areas in which political violence erupted: (1) the ideological, internal schism regarding Israel's final borders and the settlement of the Middle East conflict; (2) the socio-ethnic tension between European and Oriental Jews; (3) the tension between Israeli Jews and Arabs; (4) The conflict between ultra-orthodox and secular Jews.

Readers who are not familiar with the socio-political history of the State of Israel may well be under the impression that the scope and intensity of political violence in Israel is of appalling dimensions and exceeds that of other western countries in the same period. After all, the State of Israel is situated in a

violent region, exposed to existential threats; the psyche of its Jewish people is encumbered by heavy layers of historical, traumatic experiences that sensitized it to radical changes. The gap between messianic expectations harboured by some sectors of the Jewish population and the western-style socio-political and cultural reality cherished by others who are the majority all converged on the formation of a society that may easily be swept into violent situations. Indeed, the gloomy graphical design of the book cover, as well as the very title 'Brother Against Brother' convey such an impression. However, the information contained in the book reflects a reality that is much less troublesome and dreadful. I would suggest that the sub-title of the book 'Violence and Extremism in Israeli Politics' is certainly more reflective of its contents than the main title, since most of the extreme cases of violence occurred between Jews and Palestinians rather than among Jews themselves. Except for four cases with lethal consequences – Altalena 1948, Kastner 1957, Grunzweig 1983 and Rabin 1995 – all other violent cases with similar intensity and consequences, refute the dramatic title, 'Brother Against Brother'. Moreover, the concept of violence as used by the author is admittedly of a broad and comprehensive nature. He specifies that '...political violence is related to a variety of extremist behavior and it covers a vast territory, ranging from verbal violence to terrorism', stressing further that 'within this field, one may comfortably place such forms of militancy as illicit riots and physical confrontation with the police, property damage, physical assaults, random killing and political assassination.'

Indeed, most of the information brought by the author refers rather to militant expressions of protest and to spontaneous riots or vigilante violence with a non-intentional physical violence. Violence was hardly adopted as a strategic option.

In the first year of statehood and in the early 1950s, domestic violence was an echo to the pre-state conflict between the Mapai-governed establishment and the right-wing undergrounds. The Altalena affair brought the newly-born state to the brink of a civil war which was narrowly avoided due to Begin's principle that 'as long as the enemy is at our gate, there should be no civil war.' The period from the late 1950s until 1967 was marked by a stable parliamentary politics; the only exception was a three-week eruption of violence by groups of oriental Jews who accused the Ashkenazi-dominated establishment of arrogantly discriminating against them. This period also saw the crystallization of some marginal attempts to form right-wing, ultra-orthodox underground movements, with the ultimate intention to make some religious principles the basis of Israel's legal norm. These attempts were promptly curtailed by the Israeli secret services.

The first significant rebellion of the extra-parliamentary periphery began after the Six Day War, but until the Yom Kippur War, it was confined to vocal protest of marginal peace groups. The period from 1973 to 1978 saw an intensity of extra-parliamentary politics when two major rival movements, the left-wing Peace Now and the right wing Gush Emunim occupied the extra-parliamentary arena. Even at this stage, violent eruptions were scarce and insignificant. The early 1980s were marked by intensification of left-right ideological conflict. Yet, with the exception of the killing of the Peace Now activist, Emil Grunzweig, severe, intentional violence was directed against Palestinians only and not against fellow Jews. It seems from Sprinzak's book that at least until 1992 (when Labour resumed power), much of the violence produced by right-wing groups was not a product of extra-parliamentary activities, but rather of their involvement in the conflict with the Palestinians.

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