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TO OUR READERS

With God's help, I believe this will be the last time that we will be asking our readers' forbearance for the tardy appearance of an issue. After five years of exciting but perilous journeying as an independent venture of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies and the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, *Nashim* has arrived in the safe port of Indiana University Press, henceforward our publisher and exclusive distributor. Editorial supervision remains firmly in the hands of the two institutes, and the editorial office remains in Jerusalem, with Renée Levine Melammed as Academic Editor and myself as Managing Editor. We look forward to years of fruitful partnership with IUP.

Shulamit Reinharz of the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute and Alice Shalvi of the Schechter Institute, sharing as they do a combined zeal for feminism, Judaism, peace, and human rights, urged the choice of the topic of Women, War, and Peace for this issue, and it was Alice who took it upon herself to turn that suggestion into a viable project. When we wrote the Call for Papers, we envisioned a collection that might span Jewish history, whose course has been marked by so many transformational conflicts, from the initial conquest of Eretz Israel, shrouded in myth, through the wars of the Maccabees, the rebellions against Rome, and the conflicts that overtook the Jews in the lands of their Diaspora. The same possibility was indicated in the letters that went out to the participants in the Symposium of personal essays by leading feminist Jewish women on the theme of this issue. Nevertheless, the actual submissions that arrived revolve almost entirely around aspects of the military conflict in modern Israel/Palestine. We can only conclude that this painfully unresolved conflict is in the foreground of the concerns of Jewish feminist scholars in both Israel and the Diaspora. Several submissions were developments of presentations originally given at a conference on War and Peace from a Feminist Perspective that took place in 2002 under the auspices of the Israel Association of Feminist and Gender Studies and the NCJW Women's and Gender Studies Program at Tel Aviv University.

The articles themselves demonstrate the range of gendered concerns emerging from a feminist analysis of the social and cultural repercussions of conflict. In the following pages, these include prostitution, childraising, law, and the kinds of literary and artistic images that emerge when creative women find themselves in situations of conflict. Two articles treat the

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differential considerations relating to women's military service in diverse social and religious groups.

We had also extended an invitation to Palestinian feminists to contribute to this issue. No contributions were forthcoming, echoing the great difficulty of cooperation in a time of bloodshed, even among women and even in academia. Nevertheless, the voices of Palestinian women are not entirely absent from these pages. They may be heard in Hanita Brand's article on loyalty in Jewish and Palestinian cultural discourse in the period of the British Mandate, and, indirectly, in the collection kindly sent us for review by Ronit Lentin and Nahla Abdo, which brings together the recent narratives of Israeli Jewish and Palestinian women.

As the issue goes to press, we are laying plans for future issues on multicultural tensions among feminists; Jewish women's spirituality; and health, healing, and the medical professions. Each topic is an adventure. With the help of Indiana University Press, we hope to bring these explorations to a widening audience of feminist scholars, creative women, and all those interested in partaking of the fruits of their efforts.

We long for a day when such topics can occupy the entire foreground of our concerns. Meanwhile, we offer the contents of this issue as a contribution to the goal of reasoned discussion fired by feminist passion for the liberation from oppression and the security of women and men everywhere, and, in particular, of the Jews and Arabs of the Middle East and all who care about them.

Deborah Greniman, Managing Editor, Jerusalem