

FROM THE EDITORS



With this issue, *Hebraic Political Studies* happily welcomes two new members to our editorial board, Jonathan Jacobs, professor of philosophy and director of the Center for Arts and Humanities at Colgate University, and Abraham Melamed, professor of medieval Jewish philosophy and director of the Center for the Study of Jewish Culture at the University of Haifa. Professor Jacobs has made several contributions to our journal; his latest essay is published here. He works in the general areas of ethics, moral psychology, and medieval Jewish thought. Professor Melamed, a contributor to our first issue, is a specialist in Jewish intellectual history and medieval political philosophy.

The bulk of this issue consists of papers presented at our recent conference at Princeton University, co-sponsored by *Hebraic Political Studies*, the Judaic Studies Program at Princeton, and the Shalem Center. The conference attracted over 100 attendees from the United States, Canada, Europe, and Israel and featured thirty-six papers, more of which will be published in future issues.

In the opening essay, “Where Were the Elders?” the conference keynote address, Michael Walzer reflects on a previously neglected but important curiosity—the relative silence of the Bible about the actual political activities of the frequently-mentioned “elders.”

The other papers are from a roundtable on “Jerusalem and Athens,” a contentious subject that has already been discussed several times in our pages. We do not flatter ourselves with the hope—let alone the belief—that these contributions will put an end to the debate about this perennial topic, but we do hope that they will advance it. And we would not have it any other way: the relationships and conflicts between what are often conceived as the cradles of theology and philosophy—between faith and reason in all their varying guises—have been part of the stuff

of political philosophy from the very beginning; Tertullian did not invent or discover the issue. However fervently we might disagree with one another, we are also profoundly committed, indeed, no less than were Spinoza, Jean Bodin, and John Stuart Mill, to that “freedom to philosophize” that necessarily characterizes our discursive world and is at the very heart of Hebraic political studies.

The Editors, Summer 2008