EDITORIAL

The AIS-Berghahn Partnership

For the first two decades of its existence as an organization, the Association for Israel Studies issued its semi-annual publication on its own. The mostly informational tool, *Israel Studies Newsletter*, and its successor, *Israel Studies Bulletin* (which included brief essays and book reviews), facilitated a modest link among AIS members in between their annual meetings.

Over the last several years, we decided to turn the publication of the Association into a full-fledged scholarly journal. First, the name of the publication was changed to *Israel Studies Forum: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, reflecting its new character as a primarily scholarly publication. Secondly, a reputable editorial board was appointed. Thirdly, a strict policy of peer-reviewed refereeing was instituted. The results were swift and encouraging: the number of submitted papers and their quality rose appreciably, and the content became increasingly interdisciplinary, reflecting the diverse interests of AIS members.

Most importantly, we began seeking a publisher to work with us on a newly formatted scholarly publication. Our initiative was based on the assumption that a publisher can produce a more sophisticated journal and market it energetically to individuals, institutions, and academic libraries. Following discussions with several potential publishers, we settled on Berghahn Books of Oxford, England, and New York City. Last year the Association entered into an agreement establishing the AIS-Berghahn linkage. This new partnership was made possible by generous financial contributions from the Israel Studies Program at the University of Calgary in Canada and from the Institute for the Study of Israel in the Middle East at the University of Denver. We express our deepest thanks to these institutions.

You are holding in your hand the end product of these activities. This issue includes four essays dealing with the “State of the the Field” of Israel Studies. The Winter 2005 issue will include four additional essays dedicated to that theme. We thought it appropriate to inaugurate the newly established AIS-Berghahn collaboration by assessing where our field is and where it might be going and that essays dealing with sub-fields and themes can do so successfully.

Irrespective of the professionalization of the *ISF* reflected in the journal, we would like to sustain the intimate connection between the membership that contributed so much to the success and growth of the Association and its journal. For that purpose, we would like to encourage our readers to write Letters to the Editor in response to the essays and reviews. We hope that such responses will lead to public dialogue that will invigorate our scholarship.

As always, we would like to ask you also to submit the fruits of your research for consideration and to urge your librarian to subscribe to the *Israel Studies Forum*.

— Ilan Peleg, Editor

21ST AIS CONFERENCE

Institutions and Civic Culture

The 21st annual conference of the Association for Israel Studies will take place in Tucson, Arizona, 29–31 May 2005. The theme of the conference is “Institutions and Civic Culture.”

Conference accommodations:

Marriott University Park Hotel

880 E. 2nd Street

Tucson, AZ 85719

Tel: 520-792-4100 Fax: 520-903-9906 (ask for special AIS rates)

Located in the historic Main Gate district of the University of Arizona, the Marriott University Park Hotel captures the spirit of Tucson's most vibrant social and cultural neighborhood. It is a short drive to the gorgeous Sonoran Desert.

For information on registration and reservations, visit the Association for Israel Studies Web site: www.israelstudies.org.