

Preface

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Out of the air a voice without a face
Proved by statistics that some cause was just
In tones as dry and level as the place:
No one was cheered and nothing was discussed;
Column by column in a cloud of dust
They marched away enduring a belief
Whose logic brought them, somewhere else, to grief
(“The Shield of Achilles,” W. H. Auden).

Since its inception, *Hagar* has provided a platform for scholars of different disciplines to discuss various peripheral perspectives and phenomena. The journal focuses its attention on the issues, viewpoints and insights that emerge from the outside looking in, which endow scholars with unconventional vantage points in examining and reconsidering the terms of both center and periphery. This issue of *Hagar* asks what constitutes peripheral perspectives in the study of memory and what such perspectives can add to this important research field.

We editors have strongly felt the need for peripheral, alternative perspectives during the work on this special issue, when the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has reached new peaks of violence. The IDF’s massive bombardment of densely populated areas in the Gaza Strip and the Hamas’ extensive and long-reaching missile fire at Israeli cities have involved civilians in an unprecedented manner. As before, many depictions of this conflict portrayed a one-sided image, which saw “the others” as solely responsible for the violence. Yet this time we, as Israelis, faced a previously unfamiliar degree of socially accepted racism and indifference to human life, which was justified using a highly selective depiction of former conflicts and drawing on the trauma of the Holocaust as a mythical symbol of Jewish victimhood. Rather than follow such crude and simplistic

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interpretations, the texts gathered in this issue advance a view of memory that pays attention to the experiences of the marginalized, exposes the power mechanisms behind hegemonic narratives concerning the past, and offers new ways to conceive of memory.