

This month we commemorate 70 years of *Al-Nakba* as we remember the expulsion of 700,000 Palestinians from their homes and homeland, and highlight the ongoing repercussions. We also raise our voices to decry the continuing measures that prevent Palestinians from enjoying peace and prosperity in a Palestinian state. The term *Nakba*, catastrophe, was first employed in 1948 by Constantin Zureiq, a professor at the American University of Beirut, who called the events a catastrophe of unprecedented proportion. The term was taken up a year later by the Palestinian poet Burhan al-Deen al-Abushi and gained further prominence when, in the 1950s, Aref al-Aref published a book entitled *Al-Nakba*, which detailed accounts of the events based on his own personal experience and interviews of witnesses. We are publishing this issue with a heavy heart, given the fierce onslaught against protesters in Gaza.

Our sincere Thank You goes to The Negotiations Affairs Department and the Palestine Investment Fund, the sponsors of this issue.

The three theme-based sections of this issue feature a number of prominent authors and artists. *What was* – and therefore has been lost – is the theme behind a photo essay by Mona Halaby that shows Palestine before the *Nakba*, thriving on all levels – culturally, socially, and economically.

The guiding theme of the middle section, *What was and still is*, contains reflections by Dr. Honaida Ghanim, Amjad Alqasis, Faten Nastas Mitwasi, Dr. Bashar Shammout, Roubina Ghattas, and Lubnah Shomali. Images of destroyed villages, taken by award-winning photographer Bruno Fert, are dispersed throughout the articles.

*Where do we go from here?* is the question addressed in the third section. It reflects the positive and resilient spirit that has allowed this nation to persevere and, in many ways, thrive against all odds! Here you will find some of our most weighty articles by such authors as Sam Bahour, Jamal Haddad, Palestine Investment Fund Chairman Dr. Mohammad Mustafa, and PLO Secretary General Dr. Saeb Erekat.

Our personality of the month is Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, and our artist of the month Shehab Kawasmi. Both *The Last Earth: A Palestinian Story* and *Erased from Space and Consciousness* are featured as books of the month, our exhibition of the month features John Halaka's *Faces from Erased Places*, and TWiP Kitchen hopes to entice you to try out a recipe for lentil soup, a staple entrée for iftar, the meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan. Enjoy the many events that are listed.

The entire team at TWiP wishes a *Ramadan kareem*, a blessed Ramadan, to those who are celebrating, and we offer our gratitude to all for your continuing support of TWiP.



Sincerely, **Tina Basem**

## Forthcoming Issues

June 2018: **Design in Palestine**

July 2018: **Sustainable Gaza**

August 2018: **Discover Palestine: Hiking Trails and Alternative Tours**

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