



FROM THE EDITOR

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE of *JPS* celebrates the work of the renowned anthropologist Rosemary Sayigh, a pioneer in the field of refugee studies and the first scholar to emphasize the signal importance of Palestinian refugees in the revival of Palestinian nationalism in the 1960s—notably in her pathbreaking *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*, published thirty years ago. At the same time, Rosemary was one of the first researchers to examine issues of gender in Palestinian and Arab society, as her reliance on women as resources for her investigations revealed to her—and through her, to generations of readers—the crucial role played by women in the social and economic structure of Palestinian refugee camps and Palestinian political life.

The issue begins with a long interview with Rosemary conducted by Mayssun Soukariéh, who, together with Beshara Doumani, organized and prepared this special issue. The interview is revealing of Sayigh's research methods, the evolution of her scholarly concerns, and provides a rich background for understanding her work. It is followed by articles by Diana Allan, Penny Johnson, Stéphanie Latte Abdallah, and Falestin Naïli; original research examining topics that emerge from various aspects of Sayigh's work: the economic role of women, women's narratives as a means to explore changing political and social contexts, the role of family and marriage, and memories of the "peasant past."

This issue also includes two essays on the winter 2008–2009 Israeli assault on the Gaza Strip. The first, a personal account by an international humanitarian worker in Gaza, describes the isolation and immiseration of a million and a half Palestinians by Israeli policies and military operations, with the acquiescence of most of the world community. The second essay, by Camille Mansour, places the assault on Gaza in the context of Israeli strategy, in particular the employment of Gaza and its population as a laboratory for testing means of making up for Israel's summer 2006 misadventures in Lebanon.

Finally, the third installment of the Congressional Monitor appears in this issue, covering the second session of the 110th Congress from January 2008 to January 2009. Originally slated to run in the spring 2009 issue, it was held to make room for *JPS*'s coverage of Operation Cast Lead.

—*Rashid I. Khatidi*

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