



**Samih K. Farsoun, Ph.D.**  
1937 - 2005

Dr. Samih K. Farsoun, who was born in Haifa, Palestine, died unexpectedly at the age of 68 on 9 June 2005 in New Buffalo, Michigan (USA).

Dr. Farsoun was Professor Emeritus of Sociology at American University in Washington, DC where he taught for thirty years until his retirement in 2003. During his long career at AU, he served as chairman of the Department of Sociology for eleven years, chair and member of numerous University-wide committees, and founder of its Arab Studies Program. He served as founding Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the newly-established American University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates from 1997-99. In 2004, Dr. Farsoun was named founding Dean of Academic Affairs and the College of Arts and Sciences at the newly-established American University of Kuwait, where he served until February 2005.

In addition to his scholarly pursuits, Dr. Farsoun was a dedicated activist and mentor to students, having served as a founding member and president of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc., founding member of the Arab Sociological Association, editor of the *Arab Studies Quarterly*, a member of the International Advisory Board of the *Journal of Holy Land Studies* (London), a founding fellow of the Middle East Studies Association (Tucson, AZ), board member of Partners For Peace, formerly the American Alliance for Palestinian Human Rights (Washington, DC), and board member of the Middle East Children's Alliance (Berkeley, CA). Dr. Farsoun was also one of the first members of the Board of Directors of the Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development (established in 1977) and of the Executive Committee of the Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, now the Palestine Center (established in 1991). He is a founding member of the Trans-Arab Research Institute (Boston, MA).

Dr. Farsoun published six books about the sociology and politics of the Middle East, including *Palestine and the Palestinians* (Westview Press, 1997), for which a new revised and updated edition was scheduled to appear in 2005; an updated Arabic edition of the book was published in Beirut, Lebanon in 2003. He also recently authored *Culture and Customs of Palestine* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004). In addition, he has published over 75 papers, book chapters, and articles. His articles and books have been translated into several languages, including Arabic, Farsi, French, Italian, and German. Dr. Farsoun also published numerous columns in Arabic and English journals and newspapers. He lectured at numerous conferences, and provided commentary on various radio and television news reports on the Middle East.

Dr. Farsoun received his Ph.D. and M.A. in Sociology from the University of Connecticut and an A.B. in Mathematics and Physics from Hamilton College in New York. Dr. Farsoun is survived by his wife, Katha Kissman, of Washington, DC and New Buffalo, Michigan; a daughter, Rouwayda, of Northampton, Massachusetts; a brother, David, of Beirut, Lebanon; sisters Regina, Despina, and Samia of Vancouver, British Columbia; and many beloved nieces, nephews and cousins, and his adopted family of the Kissmans.

Funeral services will be held at the Sommerfeld-Smith Funeral Home, 15 North Barton Street, New Buffalo, MI 49117 (Tel. 269-469-2233). The viewing will be held on Monday, 13 June 2005, from 4:00-9:00 PM; the service on Tuesday, 14 June 2005, at 11:00 AM. All friends, colleagues, and well-wishers are welcome. Memorial services will also be held in Vancouver, British Columbia and in Washington, DC; details will follow at a later date.

Contributions in memory of Dr. Farsoun may be sent in lieu of flowers to the Trans-Arab Research Institute at P.O. Box 1514, Onset, MA 02558, or to the Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development, 2425-35 Virginia Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037. Condolences may be posted online at [www.thejerusalemfund.org](http://www.thejerusalemfund.org).

---

The Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development  
2425 Virginia Avenue NW ✧ Washington, D.C. 20037 U.S.A.  
Tel. 202.338.1958 ✧ Fax 202.333.7742 ✧ [www.thejerusalemfund.org](http://www.thejerusalemfund.org)