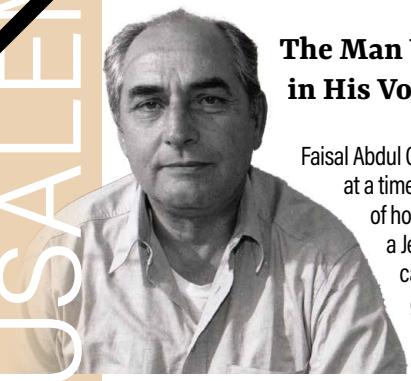
A FACE FROM JERUSALEM

Faisal Al-Husseini

(1940–2001)



The Man Who Carried Jerusalem in His Voice and His Steps

Faisal Abdul Qader Al-Husseini was born in 1940, at a time when Palestine lived on the edge of hope and collapse. He was raised in a Jerusalemite family whose lineage carried the banner of struggle for generations; his father was the martyred commander Abdel Qader Al-Husseini, and his grandfather one of Jerusalem's prominent leaders. From childhood, he understood that a Jerusalemite is not afforded the luxury of an ordinary life – his fate was to be both witness and guardian at once.

His education took him through Cairo, Baghdad and Aleppo, where he became active early on in the student movement and helped found the General Union of Palestinian Students. As his experience matured, he returned to Jerusalem to establish the Arab Studies Society and the Orient House, which became the political mind and living memory of the city amid persistent attempts at erasure.

Faisal was not a traditional politician; he was a reader of history, a fighter through words, and a negotiator who knew that rights must be seized just as they are dreamed. He mastered Hebrew, confronted Israeli media with courage, and articulated the Palestinian narrative with a cool mind and a heart burning with homeland. During the First Intifada, he became one of its pillars – a voice that set the rhythm and reassured people that Jerusalem was not alone.

Faisal was later appointed in charge of the Jerusalem portfolio, but he remained larger than titles, closer to the image of a unifying "symbol" than a bureaucrat. He walked the city's alleys as if stitching back what had been torn, placing his hand on a stone as though listening to its pulse, speaking of Jerusalem as if she were both mother and destiny.

When he passed away in May 2001 in Kuwait, Jerusalem paused for a moment, then called for him again. His memory remains etched in its stones ... as though the city is still waiting for him to return from a meeting that has lasted longer than it should.