



## BIOGRAPHY

### **Karim Nagy**

Chief Executive, Kalima

An Egyptian national who has worked in Abu Dhabi for the last five years, Karim Nagy is an entrepreneur whose passion in life is books.

Karim counts himself as fortunate that his education in English has enabled him to read and be inspired by writers, philosophers and thinkers from around the world, many of whom are not available in Arabic. He passionately believes in the importance of books in spreading knowledge, ideas, and tolerance. His motivation is to widen access to such great works in the Arab world.

His passion for books and reading also extends to collecting old and rare titles. Karim has been collecting books since 1999, and his particular topics of interest include history and Arab heritage.

Karim is also an enthusiast for classical Arabic music, and a patron of a number of performers and musicians.

Before setting up his own group of companies in Abu Dhabi, Karim worked in business development, investment and private equity. In his earlier career, he was a consultant for McKinsey & Company.

### **Sherif-Joseph Rizk**

Business Development, Kalima

Joe Rizk was born in Columbus, Ohio and educated at the American University in Cairo, where he studied with fellow colleague Karim Nagy. He has been responsible for driving business development at Kalima since its inception in early 2007.

Like Karim, Joe has a passion for books and his particular interest lies in philosophy. He has been inspired by many writers, philosophers and thinkers from all over the world including Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche and Gilles Deleuze. He is committed to broadening Arabic speakers' access to translated writing and to reviving the translation gap in the Arab world.

He spent his early career working in business development for internet and telecoms companies such as Bellsouth. More recently he was an English lecturer at the American University in Cairo and has also taught history and psychology at a secondary school in Cairo.



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### **Denys Johnson-Davies**

Translator

Born in Canada in 1922, Denys Johnson-Davies' childhood was also spent in Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Kenya and England. He is one of the world's most eminent translators of Arabic into English, has translated some thirty volumes of novels, short stories, plays and poems from modern Arabic literature into English and has published more than 40 children's books.

Denys studied at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and at Cambridge University. Early in his career, he worked for the BBC's Arabic Service and taught at Cairo University. He returned to London and became a barrister, then went to Qatar to work for an American oil company. He then set up a translation company, established a quarterly magazine, publishing the work of writer friends Ghassan Kanafani, Zakafaria Tamer, Tayeb Salih and Badr Shakir al-Sayyab. He also ran a broadcasting station in Dubai and then went to Beirut where he acted as a translation consultant for businessmen in the Arab world.

Throughout this period Denys was at the heart of the modern Arabic literary movement. In 1967 he published, with Oxford University Press, the translation of the first representative volume of short stories from the Arab world which included stories by the leading writers of the time. He then set up "Arab Authors", publishing 24 volumes of novels, short stories, plays and poems translated from Arabic. He was also responsible, along with Mark Linz, for instituting the Naguib Mahfouz Prize.

Edward Said is quoted as calling Johnson-Davies "the leading Arabic-to-English translator of our time." In 2006, he was awarded the Sheikh Zayed Prize of 'The Personality of the Year' for his services to Arabic literature.

### **Mr. Bashar Chbaro**

Secretary General, Arab Publishers Union

Partner, Arab Scientific Publishers

Bashar Chbaro was born in Beirut in 1956. He is the Secretary General of The Arab Publishers Union, and a partner of Arab Scientific Publishers.

Mr. Chbaro is a graduate of The Lebanese University, and has occupied several cultural posts including Secretary of the Lebanese Publishers Association Syndicate, President of Al-Bayan Cultural Centre, and member of the Arab Cultural Club.

Mr. Chbaro is married and has two sons and two daughters.



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### **Maroun Nehmè**

CEO, Librairie Orientale

Maroun Nehmè is Lebanese-French and the CEO of Librairie Orientale, a major publishing house.

He has a BA in Economics from the American University in Beirut and an MBA from INSEAD.

Maroun Nehmè combines his role at Librairie Orientale with a number of additional roles including founder and member of Children's Book Publishers Association and President of Books Importers Syndicate.

### **Hassan Yaghy**

Founder and Director of the Arab Cultural Centre, Beirut

Hassan Yaghy founded the Arab Cultural Centre in Beirut in 1988 and now runs the Centre's publishing arm. The Arab Cultural Centre is an established publishing house which has gained many rewards for its books and authors.

Mr. Yaghy decided on a career in publishing due to his passion for reading and all things cultural.

He was also previously on the editorial board of "Al Nasheroon" magazine, which is issued by the Lebanese Publishers Association.