



“Family firms are the backbone of the MENASA economy, their longevity and good business practices are essential for regional growth and development. Understanding family business legacy will enable us to draw valuable lessons for the future and create regional best practice.”

**Farida El-Agamy**  
**General Manager**  
**Tharawat Family Business Forum**

## New York University Abu Dhabi



NYU Abu Dhabi is the first comprehensive liberal arts and research campus in the Middle East to be operated abroad by a major American research university. NYU Abu Dhabi has integrated a highly selective program with majors in the sciences, engineering, social sciences, arts, and humanities with a world center for advanced research. Its campus enables students to succeed in an increasingly interdependent world, and to advance cooperation and progress on humanity’s shared challenges. NYU Abu Dhabi’s high-achieving students have come from over 125 countries and speak over 100 languages. Together, NYU’s campuses in New York, Abu Dhabi, and Shanghai form the backbone of a unique global university, giving faculty and students opportunities to experience varied learning environments and immersion in other cultures at one or more of the numerous study-abroad sites NYU maintains on six continents.

“The histories of individual family businesses and their founders are not only an essential part of the economic history of the MENASA region; they are also a fascinating prism through which to explore the region’s culture and its intertwinement with local, national, as well as global developments.”

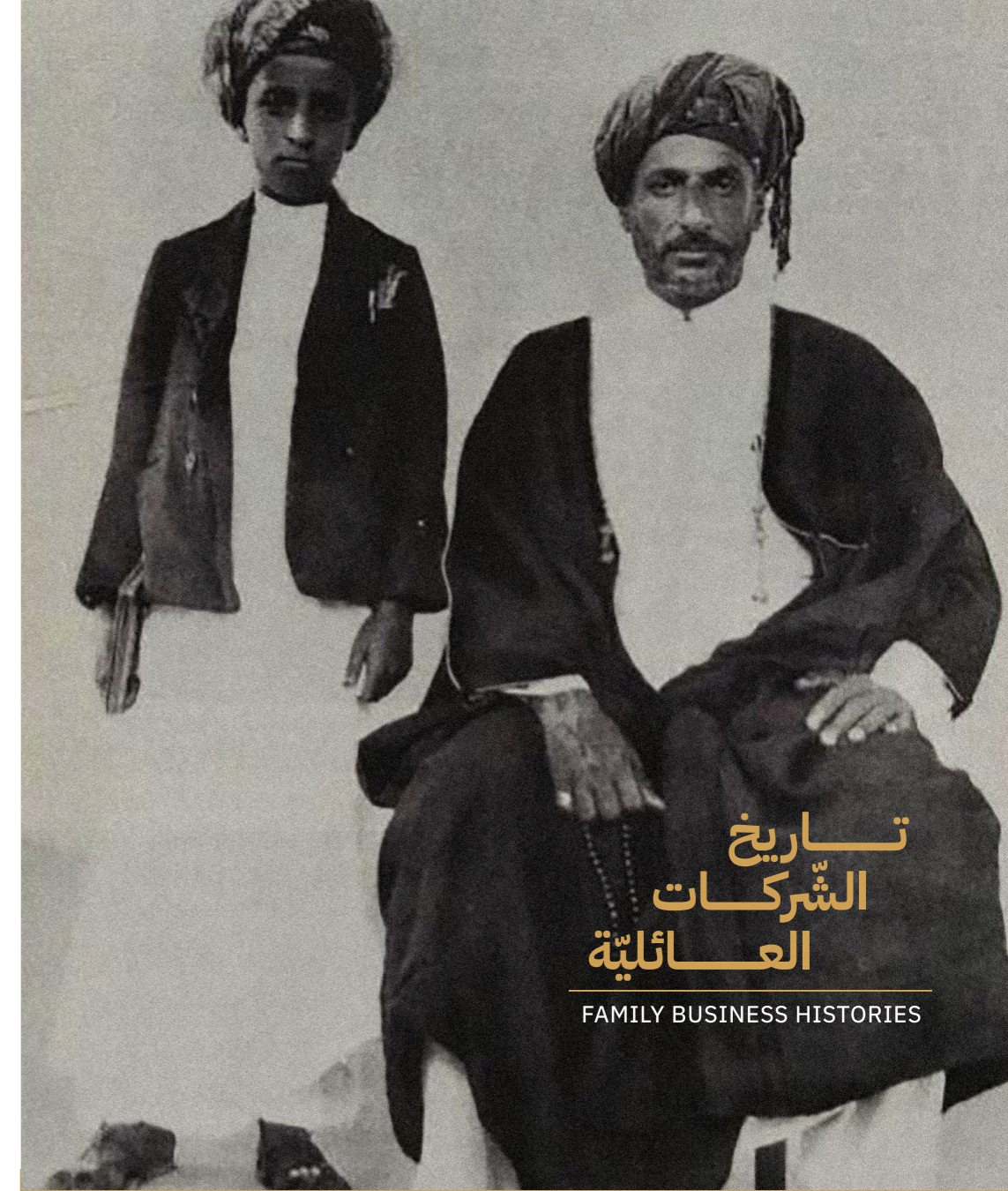


**Martin A. Klimke**  
**Vice Provost, Associate**  
**Professor of History**  
**New York University Abu Dhabi**

## Tharawat Family Business Forum



The Tharawat Family Business Forum is an independent, membership network dedicated to the sustainability, innovation, and growth of MENA family businesses. The organisation was founded in 2006 by leading family-owned companies from across the Middle East, who shared a vision to build a strong peer community and platform for family businesses. Today, Tharawat plays an instrumental role in developing knowledge and expertise around family businesses in the region and beyond.



تاريخ  
الشركات  
العائليّة

FAMILY BUSINESS HISTORIES

A COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT BETWEEN NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ABU DHABI AND THARAWAT FAMILY BUSINESS FORUM

## Our Project

Family businesses are the pillars of economies in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) and their sustainability is crucial to the region. We see in the history of family businesses an exceptional opportunity to gain insight into the economic and entrepreneurial history of the region.

## Our Aims

Our project aims to capture the stories behind some of the leading regional family businesses. In so doing, we examine reasons for their longevity, explore correlations between the founder stories and the business durability and look at underlying factors for entrepreneurial success specific to the MENASA region.

## Our Goals



### UNDERSTAND THE HISTORY

Empirical academic research is being conducted to help explore the impact of family businesses on the region's economy.

### HIGHLIGHT THE LEGACY

With our research, we aim to highlight the legacy and economic impact of selected family businesses on the region.

### PRESERVE THE HERITAGE

We are in the process of building the first archive of family businesses in the MENASA, which will produce an invaluable repository for researchers and practitioners.

### INSPIRE THE FUTURE

Our research findings will enable us to understand family business decision-making and develop models for the future

## Research and Publications



### SPOTLIGHT SERIES

As a first-of-its-kind endeavor in the MENASA region, the Spotlight Series is an ever-growing collection of brief case studies, aiming to shine a light on the unwritten stories of family businesses of the region. The profiles are available online, where the histories of family businesses from various countries, company sizes and industries are compiled.

**Visit:** [familybusinesshistories.org/spotlights](http://familybusinesshistories.org/spotlights)



### ARTICLE SERIES

Our article series consists of interviews with family business members and contributions by experts from the family business field in order to frame and contextualize the research produced by the Family Business Histories project and its contribution to the field globally. The article series features insights from various stakeholders in the region and beyond around the topic of legacy and family business history.

**Visit:** [familybusinesshistories.org/articles](http://familybusinesshistories.org/articles)



### CASE STUDIES

Our comprehensive case studies explore the historical evolution of leading family businesses in the MENASA region. Each case articulates the story of one family business. The research scope encompasses biographical background of the founder, the onset of the early entrepreneurial journey and the birth of the business, the wider economic and political environment, as well as the business succession and integration of next generations of family members.

**Visit:** [familybusinesshistories.org/case-studies](http://familybusinesshistories.org/case-studies)



Website



LinkedIn

## FAQ



### HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

If you are a family business interested to participate in the research, or a scholar interested to join our scholarly network, or if you have general inquiries, please contact us at [contact@familybusinesshistories.org](mailto:contact@familybusinesshistories.org)



### DOES MY FAMILY BUSINESS QUALIFY TO PARTICIPATE?

We are interested in discovering the founding stories of MENASA family businesses from all industries, and company sizes - whether the business is still operational or not. Contact us at [contact@familybusinesshistories.org](mailto:contact@familybusinesshistories.org) for any questions you might have.



### HOW DO I DOCUMENT THE HISTORY OF MY FAMILY BUSINESS?

We encourage you to download our Checklist, which will provide you with a step-by-step guide on how to document your family business history.

**You can find it at** <http://familybusinesshistories.org/>



### WHAT ARE THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES?

- > Academic conferences, lectures, and webinars
- > Educational events and webinars for family business community
- > Development of curricula material and engagement of undergraduate students locally, regionally and internationally

*Cover photo credit: Photograph of 13-year old Easa Saleh Al Gurg and his father, 1940. From Easa's self-published autobiography "The Wells of Memory: An Autobiography."*