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Our Man in Abu Dhabi

For once, a man who often remains in the shadows is now in the spotlight. An international consultant and the man behind the creation of the Sorbonne in Abu Dhabi, Pascal Renouard de Vallière (photo) has been nominated to the rank of Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur on the recommendation of Bernard Kouchner, Minister for Foreign Affairs. This honor is a true recognition by the Ministry, which has remained silent on the "Desert Sorbonne" matter.

With his childhood passion for the Near and Far East, Renouard de Vallière lives between France, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. An advisor to a number of members of the Royal Family, he acts as an intermediary for investments between Gulf States and France. It took five years of efforts to bring his idea (somewhat mad) to reality: the installation of an annex of the Sorbonne in the United Arab Emirates to compete with the influence of American universities. Actively supported by Jean-Robert Pitte, the former President of Paris IV-Sorbonne, and by Olivier Dassault, the Chairman of the "Groupe d'Amitié" France-United Arab Emirates at the French National Assembly, the project was entirely financed by Abu Dhabi.