

# Contributors' Biographies

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## Book Editors

**Dr. Hanan Badr** (Dr. phil. Universität Erfurt) is Professor and Chair for Public Spheres and Inequalities at the Department of Communication, University of Salzburg, Austria. Her work focuses on the interactions between journalism, media, power, and transformation processes, focusing on digitization and globalization. She held positions at Freie Universität Berlin, Cairo University, Gulf University for Sciences and Technology, and Orient-Institut Beirut/Max Weber Foundation. Her work has been published in *Digital Journalism*, *International Communication Gazette*, *Media and Communication*, and *Media, War & Conflict*. She is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Communication*. She serves on the editorial boards of the *International Journal of Communication*, *Digital Journalism*, and the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. Her awards include the Kluge Fellowship at the Library of Congress and the DAAD Scholarship Award. She is elected Chair for Activism, Communication and Social Change at the International Communication Association.

**Dr. Nahed Samour** is a postdoctoral researcher and Core Emerging Investigator at the Integrative Research Institute Law & Society in the Faculty of Law at Humboldt University Berlin. She studied law and Islamic studies at the universities of Bonn, Birzeit/Ramallah, London (SOAS), Berlin (HU), Harvard, and Damascus. She was a doctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for European Legal History in Frankfurt/Main. She clerked at the Court of Appeals in Berlin, held a postdoc position at the Eric Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights, Helsinki University, Finland, and was an Early Career Fellow at the Lichtenberg-Kolleg, Göttingen Institute for Advance Study. She also taught as Junior Faculty at the Harvard Law School Institute for Global Law and Policy from 2014–2018. Her current work focuses on religion, race and gender in law.

## Authors

**Iskandar Abdalla** is a researcher, educator, and film curator. He was born in Alexandria, Egypt, and is now based in Berlin. He studied history and Islamic Studies at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich and Freie Universität Berlin, and is currently a doctoral fellow at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies. His research interests encompass Islam and migration in Europe, film and cultural production in modern Egypt, and feminist and queer research methods. Apart from his academic pursuits, Iskandar has been working in the field of political and cultural education in Germany for several years, conceptualizing workshops on topics like racism, gender and sexuality, and empowerment through artistic and cultural practices. Iskandar is also a program curator at the Arab Film Festival in Berlin.

**Fadi Abdelnour** was born in Jerusalem and studied archaeology, linguistics, and cultural studies at Birzeit University in Palestine, where he was socially and culturally active in the student movement. He graduated in Visual Communication/Communication Design from the art school Burg Giebichenstein in Halle in 2010. Since then, he has been working as a freelance designer in Berlin. Fadi Abdelnour co-founded the ALFILM – Arab Film Festival Berlin in 2009 and was its artistic director until 2019. In 2020, he co-founded Khan Aljanub, an Arabic bookshop and publishing house in Berlin. He lectures on Critical Design and Creative Thinking at the design university, Hochschule für Medien, Kommunikation und Wirtschaft in Berlin. He was a member of Berlin's Art Council (Rat für die Künste) between 2014 and 2016 and has also served on various juries, including the Stuttgart International Festival of Animated Film.

**Hashem Al-Ghaili** is a producer, filmmaker, and science communicator based in Berlin, Germany (and soon Dubai, UAE). Originally from Yemen, Hashem Al-Ghaili graduated from Jacobs University Bremen and earned his master's degree in molecular biology. He uses his knowledge and passion for science to educate the public through social media and video content. His flagship page, Science Nature, has garnered over 33 million followers on Facebook, with his hundreds of original videos viewed over 17 billion times. His sci-fi film short, *Simulation*, received multiple international awards at film festivals, with his first sci-fi novel, *Simulation: The Great Escape*, appearing in 2023. He is currently completing his first sci-fi feature film, *Orbital*. Hashem Al-Ghaili uses his background in science and technology to develop brand-new concepts, including the Sky Cruise Flying Hotel, and the world's first artificial womb facility, EctoLife.

**Amro Ali** is a member of the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA), a researcher, and a visiting fellow at Hassan II University of Casablanca. In his work, Amro Ali focuses on Arab public spheres, Mediterranean studies, intellectual history, cities, citizenship, exile, technological modernity, and political philosophy. He received his Ph.D. in political sociology and political philosophy from the University of Sydney. Currently, he is co-writing a book on the Arab exile and intellectual phenomenon in Berlin. His writings can be found at <http://www.amroali.com>.

**Dr. Mohamed Alwahaib** is a faculty member at the Department of Philosophy at Kuwait University and a member of the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA), a faculty member. He completed his Bachelor of Arts at Kuwait University and his Master of Arts in philosophy at Boston College, earning his Ph.D. in political philosophy at Florida State University. His doctoral dissertation explored the thought of Hannah Arendt.

**Mahmoud Dabdoub** is a photographer known for his emotionally charged, black-and-white photography that explores themes of displacement, hope, and human dignity. Born in Lebanon to Palestinian parents, Mahmoud Dabdoub assisted at the Palestinian Cultural Office in Beirut before going to the GDR in 1981 to study photography at the Academy of Fine Arts, carrying with him nothing but a Praktica LLC. After graduating in 1987, he stayed in Leipzig as a freelance photographer, observing everyday situations. Documenting the hopeless life in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria for over 20 years was also a matter close to his heart. Since then, his photographic work has been published in magazines and books, including *An Archive of Love*, as well as in exhibitions in Jerusalem, Berlin, Beirut, and elsewhere. His numerous books include: *Alltag in der DDR* (Everyday life in the GDR), *Wie fern ist Palästina?* (How far is Palestine?) and *Neue Heimat Leipzig* (New home Leipzig). Mahmoud Dabdoub has been recognized through several awards, including silver and bronze medals from *Ogoniok* magazine and the International Journalists Organization competition in Baghdad.

**Dr. Islam Dayeh** is Assistant professor of Arabic and Islamic studies at Freie Universität Berlin. He received his PhD from FU Berlin in Arabic studies, MA degrees from the University of Leiden (Islamic studies) and the University of Oxford (Jewish studies), as well as a BA from the University of Jordan in Amman. He is the director of the transregional research programme "Zukunftsphilologie: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship" (2010-), and the founding editor of the journal and mono-

graph series *Philological Encounters* (2016-). In 2022, he was awarded a European Research Council Consolidator-Grant for his project “Polymathy and Interdisciplinarity in Premodern Islamic Epistemic Cultures”. He has held visiting professorships and fellowships at Columbia University, the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, the American University in Cairo, the Library of Congress, the Luxembourg School for Religion & Society and the Maria Sibylla Merian Centre (Mecila) in São Paulo.

**Dr. Ehab El Refaee** (MD, MSc, Dr. med.) is a professor of and consultant for Pediatric Neurosurgery at Cairo University. He also works as the coordinator for the long-standing collaboration between the Greifswald and Cairo universities. After completing his specialized surgical training, he was accredited as a German-certified neurosurgeon in 2015. Ehab El Refaee’s outstanding scientific work on nervous system diseases has been complemented by his extraordinary focus on promoting intercultural medical education. He and his colleagues have developed and published unique approaches to modernizing neurosurgical research in postgraduate and undergraduate medical programs. He has received several grants from the DAAD to support his work.

**Julia Gerlach** is a Berlin-based journalist and author. In 2016, she and her sister founded Amal, a local news platform with news reporting in Arabic, Farsi, and since 2022 Ukrainian. Amal started in Berlin and now has branches in Hamburg and Frankfurt. Julia Gerlach was based in Cairo from 2008–15, working as a correspondent for the Arab World, and worked for ZDF heute Journal before that. She earned her degree in political science from Freie Universität Berlin and Aix-en-Provence and trained as a journalist at Berliner Journalistenschule. She has written several books on Arab Uprisings and Young Muslims in Germany.

**Dr. Sonja Hegasy** is Vice Director of the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) in Berlin. She studied Arabic and Islamic Studies at the American University in Cairo, and the Universities of Witten/Herdecke and Bochum, graduating from Columbia University in 1990 with a thesis on Violent Narratives – Narrative Violence. Her Ph.D. on State, Public Sphere and Civil Society in Morocco was published in German in 1996. Her research and publications focus on modern Arab intellectual thought, civil society, social mobilization, and the politics of memory in post-conflict societies (including Germany). Recent work was published in *Memory Studies*, *Arab Studies Journal*, and *polylog. Forum für interkulturelles Philosophieren*. In 2016 she was a Fulbright Fellow at the City University of New York. From 2019 to 2021 she was the guest professor for Postcolonial Studies at the Barenboim-Said Akademie in Berlin.

In 2023 she was a Fellow at the International Centre of Advanced Studies 'Metamorphoses of the Political' (ICAS:MP) in Delhi.

**Eman Helal** is an Egyptian photographer based in Germany, with experience in breaking news coverage and documentary projects in the Middle East, Africa, and the US focusing on women's rights and religious minorities. She studied photography at the Danish School of Media and Journalism in 2018 and is currently a master's student at Fachhochschule Bielefeld. She was a Human Rights Fellow at Magnum Foundation between 2013 and 2016. Eman Helal has won several awards, including the Portenier Human Rights Bursary in 2016 and the Egypt Press Photo Award in 2014. Her photographic work has been published worldwide in *The New York Times*, *The Times*, *Stern*, *Polka*, *The Guardian*, *CNN*, and *AP*. She has had exhibitions in New York, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Seoul, Addis Ababa, New Delhi, Hannover, and Berlin. She served on the TPS, Egypt Press, and Shawkan Photo Awards juries. She is co-author in the books "Our women on the ground" and "Balas para todos".

**Tal Hever-Chybowski** is a historian, editor, and translator who resides in Paris and Berlin. He has been the director of the Paris Yiddish Center—Medem Library (Maison de la culture yiddish—Bibliothèque Medem) since 2014, where he teaches Yiddish literature and Jewish history and culture. In 2016 he founded *Mikan Ve'eylakh: Journal for Diasporic Hebrew* (Berlin & Paris), of which he is editor-in-chief. He is founder and coordinator of "Yiddish in Berlin: Summer Program for Yiddish Language and Literature" at the Free University, Berlin. Recently, he directed the apocalyptic tragicomedy *Jacob Jacobson*, written in Yiddish in 1930 by Aaron Zeitlin, which premiered at Paris' Theater of the Oppressed (Théâtre de l'Opprimé) in October 2021. Currently, he is pursuing a PhD in history at the Georg-August University in Göttingen.

**Abir Kopty** is a journalist and writer, based in Berlin. Abir Kopty completed her BA at Haifa University in economics and accountancy. She then moved to work in the media and communication field in Palestinian civil society organizations. In 2006–2007 she was a Chevening Scholar of the British Council and completed her MA in Political Communication at the City University of London. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in the Institute for Media and Communication Studies, Freie Universität Berlin. Her research interest includes power dynamics in online communities.

**Abdolrahman Omaren**, a journalist and writer of Syrian origin. He worked in several Arab newspapers and magazines, and moved to work on Arab television, but he was forced to leave his country because of the conflict after the Arab Uprisings. Today, he is the editor-in-chief of the Arabic section of the Amal, Berlin! platform. He has many articles published in German newspapers and magazines.

**Dr. Detlev Quintern** (Dr. phil. University Bremen) is Assistant Professor at Turkish German University in Istanbul where he teaches History, Heritage and Museum Studies. His work focusses on universalist history of knowledge, science, ideas and culture, and its musealization. He conceptualized museum exhibitions in Germany and Turkey. Detlev Quintern is on the editorial board of the “Islamic Philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology in Dialog (IPOP)” series. His latest collectively edited book is “From Marx to Global Marxism: Eurocentrism, Resistance, Postcolonial Criticism” (2020).

**Nazeeha Saeed** is a Bahraini Journalist based in Germany, with more than 23 years’ experience in journalism and human rights issues in the Gulf region and the SWANA in general. Nazeeha focus work is on Human rights, politics and gender. She studied English Literature & Psychology in University of Bahrain 2006. Living in Exile since 2016 because of her journalist work. Saeed won several awards like Johann-Philipp-Palm- Award for Freedom of Speech and Press 2014, Heikal award for Arab journalism. She is also Journalist Security & Safety, Gender journalism Trainer. Saeed’s work could be found on Raseef22, Awmaj.media, Muwatin.net. and other independent platforms. She served on the jury of Interfilm Berlin 36th International Short Film Festival Berlin 2020. She co-wrote “We Shall Bear Witness” and “Kein Land, nirgends”.

**Dr. Miriam Stock** (Dr. phil. Europa Universität Viadrina Frankfurt O.) is Professor of Cultural Studies and head of the master’s programme “Interculturalism and Integration” at the University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd. In her research, she focuses on migration and societal transformation between the Middle East and Europe. She has conducted research about urban consumer landscapes, about transnational families, as well as about school participation and interaction of newly migrated families. She has been the head of two EU Erasmus Plus Project “Enable-Tamkin” (2017–2019) as well as “Parentable” (2019–2021) which were both honored as “good practice”. Her work is published as monograph at transcript (Der Geschmack der Gentrifizierung, 2013) and diverse journals such as City, Culture and Society and

the German Journal for Forced Migration and Refugee Studies. She also co-edits a series at Springer "Migration – Gesellschaft – Schule".

**Dr. Jan Claudius Völkel** (Dr. rer. pol. Universität Freiburg) is DAAD Seconded Professor in German Studies and International Relations at the School of Political Studies and the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa, Canada. His work focuses on Euro-Mediterranean relations and the contemporary Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Before coming to Ottawa, he was Academic Dean at the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES Abroad) in Freiburg and held positions at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Cairo University, the European University Institute in Florence, Universität Salzburg and Universität Freiburg. Besides, he is the MENA regional coordinator at the Transformation Index of Bertelsmann-Stiftung (BTI). His articles have been published in *European Foreign Affairs Review*, the *Journal of North African Studies*, *Mediterranean Politics*, *Middle East Critique*, *Middle East Law and Governance*, and others. He was awarded the European Union's prestigious Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship in 2017 and is an alumnus of the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA).

## Interviewees

**Dr. Nadine Abdalla** is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the American University in Cairo (AUC), Department of Sociology, Egyptology, and Anthropology (SEA) and AGYA alumna. In 2014, she received her Ph.D. in Political Science from Sciences-Po Grenoble with the highest honors, and in 2006, her MA from Sciences-Po Paris in France. Her research interests include contentious politics, social movements (labor and youth movements), state-society relations, local politics, and bottom-up approaches to democracy in the MENA region, focusing on Egypt and Euro-Med relations. Nadine Abdalla's research papers and articles have been published by distinguished academic journals such as *Mediterranean Politics* and renowned policy outlets such as the Middle East Institute (MEI) in Washington and the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin. She is working on her book, *Labor against the State in Egypt: Workers Mobilizations Post-2004*, to be published by Syracuse University Press. She is also a columnist at the Egyptian Daily, *Al-Masry al-Youm*.

**Younes Al-Amayra** is a comedian, political scientist, and teacher. He co-founded “Datteltäter”, a group that produces satiric videos on life in Germany from a Muslim perspective. These videos are part of the FUNK video-on-demand service operated by the German public TV broadcasting service ZDF. In 2019 the group set up Datteltäter Academy, offering social media training to encourage POC talents to succeed in social media. Younes Al-Amayra has trained in deradicalization programs and taught as a schoolteacher.

**Christoph Dinkelaker** is a co-founder of Alsharq Travels. At 16, Christoph Dinkelaker learned about the Middle East during a concert trip to Syria and Lebanon. After this formative experience, he volunteered at a Lebanese orphanage for one year. During that time, he started to guide tours in Lebanon. Having traveled to most MENA countries and focused on the region during his university studies, he combines academic knowledge, language skills, and first-hand experiences there. With Alsharq Travels, he has designed and guided numerous study trips to countries such as Turkey, Iran, Oman, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestine, Syria, and Northern Iraq.

**Dr. Florian Kohstall** heads the Global Responsibility Unit at the Center for International Cooperation at Freie Universität Berlin. In 2016, he founded Academics in Solidarity, a transnational peer-to-peer mentoring program for displaced scholars. Since 2020, he is responsible for the Berlin Center for Global Engagement, the platform of the Berlin University Alliance. From 2010 to 2015 he directed Freie Universität Berlin’s Cairo Office. His research focuses on varieties of internationalization and the politics of higher education reform in the Middle East and North Africa. He has taught political science in Aix-en-Provence, Cairo and Lyon. He is a former research fellow of CEDEJ, the French research center in Cairo, and an alumnus of AGYA, the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities. His recent publications include: “Academics in Exile: Networks, Knowledge Exchange and New Forms of Internationalization”, co-edited with Vera Axyonova and Carola Richter, transcript 2022.

**Mahmoud Salem** is blogger and cybersecurity activist. He was in his late twenties when the revolution in Egypt started. He had been blogging anonymously for several years, publishing the “Rantings of a Sandmonkey,” and had accumulated 35,000 Twitter followers by February 2011. He described himself on Twitter as a “micro-celebrity, blogger, activist, new media douchebag, pain in the ass!” After what happened, he specialized in cybersecurity and now lives in Berlin.

**Salah Yousif** is a poet and owner of an antique shop. He came to Berlin when the city was at its best: In the Seventies, Berlin was still an Island that attracted interesting people, revolutionaries, and hippies from all over. He came for a stopover and stayed. He started writing when he was thirteen and wrote about his life in Khartoum. Now he is writing about Berlin and its streets and people. He owns a shop in Urban Strasse, selling old cupboards, African handicrafts, and records from his collection.

# [transcript]

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