

## Press Release

22 April 2024

### Against the clichés

#### Photo book "Moin und Salam" depicts the diversity of Muslim life in Germany

***Frankfurt am Main. Headscarves and minarets or bearded men praying: Islam's image in Germany and its media is often characterized by clichés. In a joint publication, photographer Julius Matuschik and religious scholar and political scientist Dr. Raida Chbib showcase images that transcend the usual stereotypes. The bilingual illustrated book "Moin und Salam", by Goethe University Frankfurt's Academy for Islam in Research and Society, has now been published by Kerber Publishing House.***

Using historical images, snapshots of everyday life, multimedia links and explanatory texts, photographer Julius Matuschik and researcher Dr. Raida Chbib trace the history of Islam in Germany from the past to the present, exploring the question: Do Muslims and their religion belong to Germany? The illustrated book "Moin und Salam" shows that rather than being a question of "if", the answer should instead focus on "since when". Using select historical documents, Matuschik and Chbib show that Islam did not just arrive in Germany with the guest workers. Traces of Muslim life date back much further.

The five chapters of the book shine a spotlight on topics such as identity, affiliation, religious practices and holidays, Muslim youth subcultures as well as the first mosques and community foundations. The pictures are accompanied by short introductions of dedicated personalities or initiatives from Muslim communities that showcase the voluntary work that has been ongoing for years to promote coexistence in a pluralistic society. On more than 200 pages, the illustrated book not only reveals the diversity of Muslim life in Germany – whose multitude is probably unknown to many. The photographs also offer insights into the everyday lives of Muslims.

"German media often use imagery that portray Muslims and Islam in a one-sided and stereotypical manner. These recurring images create a framing effect that makes the Muslim presence appear foreign, dangerous or exotic. This imagery does not reflect our immigration society, in which religious freedom prevails and of which Muslims have long been a natural part," says the photographer.

Julius Matuschik and Dr. Raida Chbib already collaborated on the homonymous multimedia "[Moin und Salam](#)" blog, which – together with the [islamimbild.de](#) image archive – is based on Matuschik's practical project, funded by Stiftung Mercator and carried out at the Academy for Islam in Research and Society (AIWG).

"One of our objectives in this project has been to create a knowledge transfer between science and practice that takes place at eye level, which is also one of the AIWG's main goals. The photographic research and audiovisual material constitute the framework for examining the history, backgrounds and contexts, and thus also for the accompanying texts. This approach brought to light exciting facts and questions, including how the act of making the history of minority groups more visible can contribute to a more pluralistic German culture of remembrance," says Dr. Raida Chbib.

Chbib and Matuschik's joint illustrated book is designed with a broad, international audience in mind.

**Publication:** Moin und Salam. Muslimisches Leben in Deutschland – Muslim life in Germany. Eine Reportage. Edited by Julius Matuschik and Raida Chbib. Kerber: Berlin, Bielefeld, 2024 (208 p., hardcover German/English, ISBN 978-3-7356-0952-6). Publisher's website <https://www.kerberverlag.com/en/2109/moin-und-salam>

### Save the date

A discussion with authors Julius Matuschik and Dr. Raida Chbib is planned for 8<sup>th</sup> June in Frankfurt am Main. Further information will be available on the [AIWG homepage](#) soon.

**Julius Matuschik** works as a photojournalist for various online and offline media. He is active in Cameo Kollektiv e.V., where he works together with others to realize socio-cultural projects and implement measures promoting cultural and political education. He first began photographically documenting Islam in Germany in 2013.

**Dr. Raida Chbib** is managing director of the Academy for Islam in Research and Society at Goethe University Frankfurt. Her research focuses on migration and religion, religious diversity, the organizational processes of Islam, as well as relations between the state and Islam in both Germany and Europe. She studied political science, international law and Islamic studies at the University of Bonn and received her doctorate in religious studies at Ruhr University Bochum (RUB).

### **About the AIWG**

The Academy for Islam in Research and Society (AIWG) at Goethe University Frankfurt conducts interdisciplinary research and transfer activities with a focus on Islamic Theological Studies and Muslim life in Germany. It connects all faculties for Islamic Theological Studies or Islamic religious pedagogy found at universities in Germany. The academy addresses issues of social participation by including perspectives related to religion. The AIWG is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

### **Further information and press contact (for interview requests)**

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## **Images**

The images offered for download on our website may be used in the context of reporting on the illustrated book.