

Call for Papers

Book Project

'The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Arab World and Europe'

Overview (see a more detailed description on the next page)

The COVID-19 pandemic has quickly spread around the globe and put almost all countries under immense pressure. The book project **'The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Arab World and Europe'** aims at analysing the various impacts the pandemic has on different aspects of social, political, economic, cultural, academic and individual life in countries of the Arab region as well as in Europe. The edited volume, for which the three AGYA members mentioned below equally share editorial tasks and responsibilities, shall be published by an **internationally renowned academic publishing house**.

Reaching out for contributions from the whole **variety of academic disciplines**, the edited volume shall become a multi-disciplinary collection of articles that tackle questions relating to the following three main sections, all with regard to Arab and European countries (either as single case studies or in comparative perspective):

1. The general situation of public health and the overall crisis preparedness in Arab and European countries;
2. Actual impacts of COVID-19 on governance (whether democratic or authoritarian), and societal responses to the pandemic;
3. Regional implications of the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., political, economical, cultural, academic etc.).

Abstracts are welcome from any academic discipline and shall not comprise more than **250 words**. Interested contributors should send their proposal in **English language** together with their full **contact details** and a **short bio** of not more than **100 words** to jan.voelkel@abi.uni-freiburg.de until **31 August 2020**. The editors will evaluate all incoming proposals based on criteria of academic rigourousness, innovation of research and overall suitability into the book project. **Notifications of acceptance and rejection** will be sent out by **15 September 2020**.

An intermediate **one-day authors' workshop** will be held online in late **October 2020**, the **full chapters** of approx. **7,500 words** (the exact word count will depend on the eventual publishing house's authors' guidelines) will be due for submission until **1 December 2020**. An internal review will follow, the **revisions of chapters** by each author are scheduled for **February/March 2021**. The eventual **submission of the whole book manuscript** is planned for **May 2021** after a thorough language editing process by professional language editors.

Co-authorships are possible and welcome. Further **questions and inquiries** about the book before abstract submission can be addressed to jan.voelkel@abi.uni-freiburg.de as well.

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Detailed Description of the Book

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only brought the whole world into a state of comprehensive uncertainty, it has also challenged and questioned many established habits and certainties. The sudden shutdown of public life in spring 2020 has brought major consequences for individual citizens on even very private levels: required distancing from others, reduced income due to short labour or even unemployment, and massive changes in daily routines. These impacts on the individual level have posed serious organisational, but also emotional challenges to people around the world.

At the same time, communal service providers (such as public administrations or local transport authorities, the cultural sector, schools or universities, sports facilities and, not least, hospitals), private businesses and even superordinate political systems have come under immense pressure (= local/national level).

Also relations on the regional/global level have become to totter, with many countries being at risk of financial overextension, an unpredictable halt of international traveling (hampering economic, scientific or cultural/ touristic exchange), and potential damages to established decision-making procedures. Tumbling international alliances give further reason for concern about the manifold impacts of COVID-19.

The Arab World offers highly interesting possibilities for case studies to examine in great detail the various outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's individual, local/national and regional/global living conditions. While some of the world's poorest (Sudan, Yemen), most conflict-ridden (Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen) and most-densely populated areas (Gaza, Greater Cairo) belong to the Arab World, it also hosts some of the world's richest (Qatar, UAE) and touristic prime destinations countries (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia). As a region located between Europe, Asia and Africa, it also offers plenty of occasions for studying regional and global relations, not only towards the European Union as one of the Arab World's closest cooperation partners, but also China, Russia, the US or Sub-Sahara Africa.

Europe has likewise gone through very diverse Covid-19 experiences, from high infection and fatality numbers in countries such as Italy, Spain and the UK to limited responses such as in Sweden. Germany is meanwhile understood to have manoeuvred the crisis relatively well, with health facilities never exceeding their organisational capabilities and infection/fatality numbers in comparatively excellent ranges.

Besides the individual case studies, the book will also contribute to the ongoing debate on 'social resilience' in democratic and non-democratic systems. Are there differences in how democratic regimes and authoritarian ones perform in protecting their citizens? How can economically weaker countries still generate successful strategies to safeguard businesses and people's living conditions? Which role does religion play in consoling people in times of personal crisis? How can international cooperation help overcome the exceptional hardships? To what extent do 'fake news' hamper public information campaigns? And which 'lessons learned' for the future can be identified both for the Arab World and Europe? These and similar questions shall be addressed by this collective volume.

We welcome contributions especially (but not exclusively) on the following aspects:

1. The general situation of public health and the overall crisis preparedness in Arab and European countries

- Health in Islam, Christianity, Judaism – socio-religious aspects of health care in the Arab World and Europe
- Strengths and weaknesses of public vs. private healthcare systems
- Authoritarian vs. democratic regimes: do they differ in their pandemic responses?

2. Comparative analyses of COVID-19 impacts on governance in democratic or authoritarian systems, and societal responses to the pandemic

- Regime type analyses: Democratic vs. non-democratic regimes, military regimes, rentier states, war-torn states
- Sectional analyses: Health, education, science, culture, social life, media, economy, etc.
- Country chapters (of potentially any Arab or European country)

3. Regional implications of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Intra-regional cooperation between (or within) both regions (e.g., political, economical, touristic, cultural, academic etc.)
- Do pandemics strengthen populism? Observations from democratic and non-democratic polities

Questions and inquiries can be addressed to jan.voelkel@abi.uni-freiburg.de.

This is a project of the AGYA Working Group *Transformation*.

About the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA):

The Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) is based at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) in Germany and at the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt. It was established in 2013 and is the first bilateral young academy worldwide. AGYA promotes research cooperation among outstanding early-career researchers from all disciplines who are affiliated with a research institution in Germany or any Arab country. The academy supports the innovative research projects and collaborative initiatives of its members in various fields of research as well as in science policy and science communication. Currently, more than 50 members – in equal numbers Arab and German scholars – realise joint projects and initiatives. AGYA is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and various Arab cooperation partners.

More information: www.agya.info

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