

A satellite-style map of the Middle East and surrounding regions, including parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia. The map shows the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf. The landmasses are colored in shades of green, yellow, and brown, representing different vegetation and terrain types. The sea is a deep blue. A white L-shaped graphic element is overlaid on the top left of the map.

JUNE 23–26, 2019

# ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS & ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

RHODES, GREECE

*UConn Abrahamic Programs for Academic Collaboration in the MENA Region Workshop*  
[www.abrahamicprograms.uconn.edu](http://www.abrahamicprograms.uconn.edu)



# ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

Taken together, the three Abrahamic traditions include nearly half of the world's population. These religions, have particular claims to 'truth,' which have sometimes led to past conflicts. Yet they share common cosmologies and ethics and provide many similar teachings in their respective sacred texts. They have each developed particular worldviews regarding the value and meaning of life. However, to a large extent they have comparable doctrinal and normative teachings: a belief in one God beyond the known and the observable; a commitment to social justice; and a sense of wonderment towards the universe and Earth, among others.

The Abrahamic religions have exhibited shared sensibilities of global awareness and responsibility and have worked as inspired catalysts for social change. The history of Judaism, Christianity and Islam indicate clearly that these traditions have consistently represented a genuine moral force, while exhibiting strong spiritual energy. Despite secularization and the one-sided criticism of their supposed outdated, ineffective ideologies, the Abrahamic religions remain foundational to how people of these faiths think, feel and act to this day.

Another important element that distinguishes the Abrahamic traditions from other religious ones: all three originate from a similar ecological setting—the dry lands of southwestern Asia—a fact that functionally contributed, at least in the early times, to shaping the human-environment relationship and patterns of interaction.

Current environmental challenges in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Region and beyond suggest an urgent need for cross disciplinary debate and understanding of the causes and consequences of environmental change as a prelude to successful mitigation and adaptation. Thus, one of the main tasks of this workshop is to explore how the Abrahamic traditions impact the ways in which humans perceive and interact with nature and the potential to translate those perceptions and interactions into positive social and ecological action. More than twenty years ago Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions initiated multiple conferences on issues pertaining to religion and ecology that resulted in the publication of 10 seminal books between 1996 and 1998. Today, the *Forum on Religion and Ecology* ([www.fore.yale.edu](http://www.fore.yale.edu)) at Yale University continues this work and is "the largest international multi-religious project of its kind" aiming at broadening understanding of the relationships between religious worldviews and environmental issues, in part by promoting scientific dialogue between the fields related to religious studies and other academic disciplines.

This *Abrahamic Traditions and Environmental Change* workshop builds on these past and present academic conversations with the aim of looking for a means through which the three Abrahamic faiths can help understand and counteract contemporary environmental change in the MENA region. It is also our intention to initiate a relevant, scalable and sustainable collaborative program between MENA scholars & practitioners and their North American and European partners.

# WORKSHOP RATIONALE & OBJECTIVES

Human-induced environmental change is not new. Humans have for a very long time accessed elements of the environment to support their expanding needs and wants. The environmental changes of the present time, however, are intensifying and literally creating new environments. The urgency of contemporary environmental change calls for policies and practices that reverse current degradation trends to help produce socially and ecologically sustainable development solutions that are consistent with the broad U.N. Sustainable Development Goals.

In their “Overview of World Religions and Ecology,” written in 2009, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim formulated in a clear manner the need for a more holistic ethical change:

*“Emerging biocentric, zoocentric, and ecocentric ethics are attentive to life forms, animal species, and ecosystems within a planetary context. A new ‘systems ethics’ of part and whole, local and global, will assist the religions in articulating a more comprehensive form of environmental ethics from within their traditions. This is a major part of the development of religions into a dialogue with the sustainability movement. Humans are seeking an ethics to respond not only to suicide and homicide but also to biocide and ecocide... Thus religions are gradually moving from exclusively anthropocentric ethics to ecocentric ethics.”*

Spirituality can and must contribute to sustainability. The Abrahamic religions, with their moral authority and grounding in ethics can instill new directions in nature-society theory and practice.

This workshop takes place with the assumption that ethical, moral and spiritual dimensions of Abrahamic religions can and must help shape cultural and value systems that impact environmental change mitigation and adaptation. Furthermore, these religions—viewed by some as part of the causation of human induced environmental change—have the potential to move societies towards ecocentric ethics. The Abrahamic traditions on human-nature relations can contribute in many ways towards material struggles for environmental sustainability and support workable solutions that help mitigate the impacts of contemporary environmental change.

It is our expectation and hope that the workshop will be a meaningful opportunity to discuss religion and ecology in the Middle East/North Africa context with a unique group of academics and practitioners. Workshops results – if we are to be successful – should include: 1) dynamic group and individual conversations that contribute conceptually and politically to current debates; 2) concrete plans for post-workshop collaboration; and 3) the establishment of new friendships and professional relationships.

# PROGRAM

## VENUE

### **RODOS PALACE HOTEL**

Iraklidon Avenue (Trianton), Ixia

85100 Rhodes, Greece

Telephone: +30 22410 97222

Workshop events take place at the Rodos Palace Hotel unless otherwise specified.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2019 – OPENING CEREMONY

**ALL DAY      SHUTTLE SERVICE BETWEEN AIRPORT & HOTEL**

**7:30 PM      WELCOME FROM WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS**

**7:35 PM      WELCOME FROM RHODES COMMUNITY**

*Hrisi Vitsilaki, Rector of University of the Aegean, Rhodes, Greece*

*TBC, Imam, Rhodes, Greece*

*Carmen Cohen, Director of Jewish Center, Rhodes, Greece*

*Hon. Fotis Hatzidiakos, Mayor of Rhodes, Greece*

*Hon. George Hatzimarkos, Governor of the South Aegean Islands, Greece*

*His Eminence Kyrillos Kogerakis, Metropolitan (Archbishop) of Rhodes, Greece*

**7:45 PM      DINNER**

## MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2019

**8:00 AM** CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

**8:45 AM** WELCOME & PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS

*Daniel Weiner, Vice President for Global Affairs and Professor of Geography, University of Connecticut, Storrs, USA*

**9:15 AM** SESSION I: WORLD RELIGIONS & ECOLOGY

*John Grim, Co-Director of the Forum on Religion & Ecology, Yale University, New Haven, USA*

*Mary Evelyn Tucker, Co-Director of the Forum on Religion & Ecology, Yale University, New Haven, USA*

**10:15 AM** COFFEE BREAK

**10:30 AM** SESSION II: ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS & THE ENVIRONMENT

*Jeremy Benstein, Director of Research & Publications, Heschel Center for Environmental Learning, Tel Aviv, Israel*

*Jame Schaefer, Associate Professor, Department of Theology, Marquette University, Milwaukee, USA*

*İbrahim Özdemir, Visiting Professor of Philosophy, Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland*

*Moderated by Abdellatif Bencherifa, Professor, Public Policy Center, Université Internationale de Rabat, Morocco*

**12:00 PM** LUNCH

**2:00 PM** SESSION III: LESSONS FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PART 1) –  
A CASE STUDY OF THE JORDAN RIVER

*Gidon Bromberg, Tel Aviv Director of EcoPeace Middle East, Tel Aviv, Israel*

*Rana Al Qaimari, Program Officer, EcoPeace Middle East, Ramallah, Palestine*

*Yana Abu Taleb, Amman Director of EcoPeace Middle East, Amman, Jordan*

*Moderated by Esti Kramarsky-Winter, Board Member, EcoPeace Middle East, Tel Aviv, Israel*

**3:15 PM** COFFEE BREAK

- 3:45 PM**      **SESSION IV: LESSONS FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PART 2) –  
CASE STUDIES FROM MOROCCO, OMAN & IRAQ**  
*Yossef Ben-Meir, President of Operations, High Atlas Foundation, Marrakesh, Morocco*  
*Jenan Anwar Al Asfoor, Corporate Relations Manager, Environment Society of Oman, Muscat, Oman*  
*Ahmed Saadoon Mohammed, Director, Duhok Organization for Volunteer Youth, Duhok, Iraq*  
*Jalal Mohammed Salih, Academic Staff, University of Duhok; Consultant, Duhok Organization for  
Volunteer Youth, Duhok, Iraq*  
**Moderated by Kathryn Libal, Director, Human Rights Institute, University of Connecticut, Storrs, USA**
- 5:00 PM**      **BREAK**
- 7:00 PM**      **DINNER AT LEISURE**  
Dinner at the hotel restaurant is available as part of your accommodations

## TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2019

**8:00 AM** CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

**9:00 AM** **SESSION V: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE (PART 1)**

*Ebtesam Al Ketbi, President, Emirates Policy Center, Dubai, UAE*

*Iyad Abumoghli, Principal Coordinator of Faith for Earth, Policy and Programme Division – UN Environment, Nairobi, Kenya*

*Alon Tal, Chair, Department of Public Policy, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel*

*Adil Najam, Inaugural Dean, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University, Boston, United States*

**Moderated by Nawal Ammar, Dean and Professor, College of Humanities & Social Science, Rowan University, Glassboro, USA**

**10:15 AM** COFFEE BREAK

**10:45 AM** **SESSION VI – ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE (PART 2)**

*Fazlun Khalid, Founder, Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science, Birmingham, United Kingdom*

*Knut Myrum Næss, Research Management Adviser and Visiting Research Fellow, BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo, Norway*

*Simon Skira, Secretary General of the French Federation of Moroccan Judaism, Paris, France*

**Moderated by Khalid Sendide, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco**

**12:00 PM** LUNCH

**2:00 PM** **SESSION VII – GRADUATE RESEARCH**

*Norah Elmagraby, Ph.D. Student, Islamic Civilization Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, USA*

*Mary Elston, Ph.D. Student, Histories and Cultures of Muslim Societies, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA*

*Munjed Murad, Ph.D. Student, Divinity School, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA*

*Zhinan Chen, MA Student, Environmental Management, Yale University, New Haven, USA*

**Moderated by Ilham Idrissi Bichr, Ph.D. Student, Islamic Civilization Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, USA**



**3:15 PM COFFEE BREAK**

**3:45 PM SESSION VIII – GROUP DISCUSSION ABOUT CORE THEMES**

Guided Discussion led by:

**John Grim**, *Co-Director of the Forum on Religion & Ecology, Yale University, New Haven, USA*

**Mary Evelyn Tucker**, *Co-Director of the Forum on Religion & Ecology, Yale University, New Haven, USA*

**5:00 PM BREAK**

**7:00 PM DINNER**

Hosted by His Eminence Metropolitan Kyrillos of Rhodes at Mount Filerimos

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2019

**8:00 AM**     **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

**9:00 AM**     **SESSION IX: THE WAY FORWARD**

Guided Discussion led by:

**Zaid Eyadat**, *Professor of Political Science, University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan*

**Daniel Weiner**, *Vice President for Global Affairs and Professor of Geography, University of Connecticut, Storrs, USA*

**11:30 AM**    **TOUR OF THE CITY OF RHODES & LUNCH**

Paideia led tour of the city and Monte Smith Pass

**1:30 PM**     **RETURN TO HOTEL**

**5:00 PM**     **DEPART HOTEL FOR LINDOS**

**6:00 PM**     **CLOSING GALA DINNER**

Hosted by Paideia Director Ilias Tomazos, Mayor of Rhodes Fotis Hatzidiakos and Governor of the South Aegean Islands Georgios Hatzimarkos

## THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2019

**7:30 AM**     **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & CHECK-OUT**

Breakfast ends at 9:00 am. Checkout of room by 12:00 pm.

**ALL-DAY**     **SHUTTLE SERVICE BETWEEN HOTEL & AIRPORT**

## PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

### YANA ABU TALEB

Yana Abu Taleb is the Jordanian Director of EcoPeace Middle East, which is a unique regional organization that brings together Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli environmentalists to promote sustainable development and advance peace efforts in the Middle East. The organization has offices in Amman, Ramallah and Tel-Aviv.

As Jordanian Director, Abu Taleb leads EcoPeace activities concerning the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, the Good Water Neighbors and the Water Energy Nexus Projects. Her responsibilities include supervising international project development and management, serving as a liaison to and lobbying of governmental and private sector figures and organizations on major regional policy issues relevant to environmental protection and transboundary water. She is heavily involved in solar energy projects in the region and promotes renewable energy initiatives in Jordan. She co-authored many reports and policy papers and speaks regularly at local and international conferences.

Before becoming the Jordanian director of EcoPeace Middle East, Abu Taleb was the Deputy Director and Regional Projects Manager of the organization. She also managed a program aiming at modernizing the educational system in Saudi Arabia implemented by the British Council. She received a degree from the University of Jordan in 1996.

### IYAD ABUMOGHLI

Iyad Abumoghli has more than 35 years of experience with international organizations, the private sector and scientific institutions. Abumoghli's expertise is in strategic planning, sustainable development, water resources management and knowledge and innovation. Currently, Abumoghli is the Lead Principal Advisor on Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations at UN Environment and the founder of #Faith4Earth. Previously Abumoghli held several leading positions including the Regional Director and Representative of UN Environment in West Asia 2012-2017, Director of Knowledge and Innovation at UNDP's Regional Office in Cairo 2009-2012, Senior Environment Advisor at UNDP's Sub-Regional Resource Facility in Beirut 2006-2009, Global Practice Manager for the Energy and Environment Group in New York 2003-2006, Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP in Jordan 1997-2003.

Abumoghli adopts a holistic multi-sectoral approach to development ensuring cross-thematic integration with internal and external partners.

Abumoghli holds a Ph.D. in Bio-Chemical Engineering from the University of Bath, UK, an outstanding graduate of the Virtual Development Academy – Johns University and a BA in Chemical Engineering from University of Jordan.

## **EBTESAM AL KETBI**

Ebtesam Al-Ketbi is the President of the Emirates Policy Center (EPC), which she founded in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in September 2013. EPC undertakes the task of studying and foreseeing future regional and international geopolitical projects and their impact on the Gulf region based on the region's self-perception of its concerns and interests. The center also focuses on exploring current and future issues that have an impact on the security of the UAE and the region as a whole. EPC provides strategic analysis and policy papers on these issues that serve the UAE and Gulf governments. The center is considered now as one of the most renowned think tanks in the region. Abu Dhabi Strategic Debate, which is organized annually by EPC, has also become one of the key platforms for dialogue in the world to discuss regional and international security.

In recognition of her role as a leader of one of the most important think tanks in the Arab world and the great respect she enjoys as part of the distinguished elite, not in the UAE only, but also in the Gulf region as a whole, Al-Ketbi was appointed in 2015 as member of the Consultative Commission of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC). She was also chosen by *Arabian Business* magazine on July 2018 in its list of 50 Most Influential Women in the Arab World as she was the first woman to lead a think tank in the Arab world.

Before she founded EPC, Al-Ketbi was a professor of political science at the United Arab Emirates University. She also held several posts such as the General Coordinator of the Gulf Development Forum, and served as a member of the Executive Committee of the Arab Association for Political Science and as a member in the board of trustees in the Center for Arab Unity Studies, the Arab Thought Foundation and the Arab Anti-Corruption Organization.

Al-Ketbi published a number of research papers on Gulf Security, US-GCC relations and War on Terrorism. Moreover, she has participated at many conferences that address regional and global affairs, and is frequently hosted by many Arab news channels as an expert in the Gulf and Iranian affairs. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Cairo University.

## **RANA AL QAIMARI**

Rana Al Qaimari is the Education Programme Manager at EcoPeace Middle East, Palestine Office. Originally from Ramallah, Palestine, Qaimari holds an MA from Birzeit University in Water Science and Technology. Qaimari has fifteen years of professional experience in education directly related to water and environmental education. Additionally, she has three years of experience working as a Program Officer for the EU Erasmus+ Office in Palestine. Qaimari has been an Environmental Coordinator for youth environmental awareness programmes for the Palestinian Academy for Science & Technology, the Royal Society for Protection of Nature, Latin Patriarchate Schools and the Hellen Medien Projekte/ Peter Maffy foundation. Qaimari worked as deputy principal for Al-Ahliyyah College School, Catholic High school in Ramallah from 1998-2014.

## **NAWAL AMMAR**

Nawal H. Ammar is a Professor of Law and Justice and Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Rowan University, New Jersey. Ammar's areas of research and teaching focus on minorities and social justice. She has explored research on immigrant battered women in the U.S. and Canada, Muslims in U.S. and Canadian prisons, Muslim women and the law and environmental justice in Islam.

Ammar has an extensive administrative record and has served in numerous capacities including Women Studies Department Chair, Graduate Studies Director, Program Director of Paralegal Studies and Associate Dean. Before coming to Rowan she spent nine years as the Dean of the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. Prior to that she spent 15 years at Kent State University, Ohio and moved up in the academic ranks from Assistant to full professor in 12 years. Before her tenure at Kent State Ammar worked in a variety of organizations both in the United States and abroad.

Ammar has participated in a number of United Nations Conferences, has served as a consultant and authored or co-authored several reports for the organization. She is a frequent speaker at conferences with close to 150 presentations both invited and refereed. She has served on review panels for the Soros Foundation (Open Society Institute), National Institute of Justice, Social Science and Humanities Council and Department of Justice on research proposals addressing violence against women and underserved communities. She also served as a participant in or consultant to activities of the governments of Bahrain, Lebanon, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and the USA to address issues of women, development and victimization.

Ammar received her Bachelors of Science (Honours) and Masters of Science degrees in Sociology from Salford University, Greater Manchester University, United Kingdom and she earned her Ph.D. degree in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Florida in Gainesville, USA.

## **JENAN ANWAR AL ASFOOR**

Jenan Anwar Al Asfoor is currently working as Corporate Relations Manager at the Environment Society of Oman (ESO) since 2013. ESO is the only non-governmental organization in Oman that focuses environmental conservation within the country.

She established Reef Check Oman with the support of the international non-profit organization, Biosphere Expeditions, and became the first Omani Reef Check EcoDiver Trainer in the country. Reef Check Oman is a volunteer group with a mission of conserving Oman's coral reefs, natural marine beauty and local livelihood.

Her passion for nature and the environment, specifically the marine environment, directed her towards environmental conservation where she started to get involved in many volunteering activities to protect the marine life in Oman. Working closely with the nature in Oman has made her passionate about exploring marine life as a Scuba diver since 2010 and participating as a volunteer on Coral Reef Expeditions in Musandam/Oman and the Maldives with Biosphere Expeditions. She also took part in the Azores expedition studying whales, dolphins and turtles around the Azores archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean.

## **ABDELLATIF BENCHERIFA**

Abdellatif Bencherifa is an expert in the fields of social geography, arid land and mountain geocology, rural development and social/institutional change in North Africa and the Mediterranean region. As a senior Faculty, Bencherifa currently holds the position of Advisor to the President and Director of the Public Policy Center (PPC) at the International University of Rabat.

Bencherifa holds a Ph.D. in Cultural-Social Geography from the Graduate School of Geography at Clark University (1986). He was Professor of Geography at Mohammed V University in Rabat from 1976 and until 1994. From 1994 to 2005, he held senior executive management positions in higher education including Vice-President at Al Akhawayn University (1994-2002), President of Meknes Moulay Ismail University (2002-2005). Subsequently, he served for 12 years in high profile public administration roles—as a Wali of the Region of Kenitra, then as a Wali Director General of Local Governments in Morocco, Ministry of the Interior.

Bencherifa's research interests revolve around various matters such as: Agricultural development and pastoral nomadism; Arid land development; Mountain Geo-ecology and Resource use systems; Social change in the rural areas; Institutional impact on development; Moroccan International migration. He has been a post-doctoral fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation; a visiting Professor at the University of California in Berkeley (Geography Department and Middle Eastern Studies Center, Spring 1991); a former President of the African Mountains Association, 1990-1993; a Member of the Advisory Board of the Middle East Awards (Population Council Regional Bureau, Cairo), 1998-2002. Bencherifa has published four books; edited seven books; and published more than 40 articles in Academic Journals (in French, English, German, Spanish and Arabic).

## **YOSSEF BEN-MEIR**

Yossef Ben-Meir is President of the High Atlas Foundation, a Moroccan-U.S. nongovernmental organization founded in 2000 and dedicated to sustainable development. He has been working and researching in the field of international development since joining the Peace Corps in Morocco (1993-1995). Ben-Meir was a faculty member at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Al Akhawayn University (2009-10). In 2003, he was a research fellow at the

American Institute of Maghrib Studies, and earlier an Associate Peace Corps Director (1998-99), managing the agriculture and environment sector. He writes on the subject of promoting human development in the Middle East and North Africa. Ben-Meir holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of New Mexico (2009) where he also taught, an MA in international development from Clark University (1997) and a BA in economics from New York University (1991).

## **JEREMY BENSTEIN**

Jeremy Benstein is the co-founder and Deputy Director of the Heschel Sustainability Center in Tel Aviv, and former director of the Center's Environmental Fellows leadership program. He holds an AB degree from Harvard, a master's degree in Judaic Studies from the Schechter Institute and a doctorate in environmental anthropology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He works extensively in leadership development and capacity building with environmental activists and educators in Israel, and has lectured widely (US, Canada, England, Italy, Spain, Turkey) on Judaism, Israel and the environment, including the environment as a focus of shared citizenship between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Benstein's interests focus on the interplay of religion, culture and values with the environment, topics he has explored in his book *The Way Into Judaism and the Environment* (Jewish Lights, 2006). He also teaches environmental ethics at Tel Aviv University's Porter School for Environmental Studies. He is married and lives with his spouse Prof. Annabel Herzog and their five children and two cats in Zichron Yaakov, Israel.

## **GIDON BROMBERG**

Gidon Bromberg is a co-founder and co-director of EcoPeace Middle East, an Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian environmental peacebuilding organization. Together with his Palestinian and Jordanian co-directors he was honored by TIME Magazine as Environmental Heroes of 2008 and was granted the prestigious Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship in 2009, in addition to numerous other awards over the years.

Bromberg is an attorney by profession and previously worked in public interest environmental law. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics and a law degree from Monash University in Australia. As a fellow of the New Israel Fund, he completed a master's degree in international environmental law at the American University in Washington D.C. and has published over twenty academic and popular publications concerning Middle East environmental policy and water security issues.

Bromberg speaks regularly on water, peace and security issues in various forums. He has presented before the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, the United States House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the European Parliament and the advisory meeting to the UN High Level Panel on Security. In 2007, Bromberg was invited to join the prestigious East West Institute's International Task Force for Preventive Diplomacy. In 2007 he was awarded a

Fellowship at Yale University on global leadership and was invited by Yale University in 2009 to serve as an Advisory Board Member for the World Fellows Program.

## ZHINAN CHEN

Zhinan Chen is currently a first-year master of environmental management candidate at Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Prior to Yale, Chen received her BA in Arabic and economics from Peking University in China. She is now combining her undergraduate expertise in Middle Eastern studies with her graduate focus on environmental management to understand the relationship between Islam and ecology, as well as the various dimensions of water and energy resource management in the Middle East. Chen is also interested in the relationship between traditional culture and modern environmental activism in China as well as the environmental impacts of China's foreign investments. This summer, Chen is working with the Energy Security and Climate Initiative at the Brookings Institute in Washington D.C on environmental issues relevant to the Middle East and China. Outside school, Chen has spent months studying and travelling in Oman, Morocco, UAE, Jordan and Israel while documenting and reporting the political, ecological and religious culture in these countries.

## NORAH ELMAGRABY

In 2010, Norah Elmagraby co-founded the first environmental social enterprise in Saudi Arabia, Naqaa Sustainability Solutions, with the aim of promoting environmental initiatives in both public and private sectors. As part of her work as an environmental consultant she managed local sustainability initiatives. In her two years working with Naqaa, Elmagraby cultivated an interest in broader issues of the environment and respective social and political perceptions in the Middle East. Subsequently, she pursued training in Sustainability Management and received her Master's degree from Columbia University in 2014. Currently, Elmagraby is building on her academic and professional experiences as a Ph.D. candidate in Islamic Civilizations Studies at Emory University with a specialization in Islam and Ecology.

Her current research examines the perception of the environment in the Saudi Arabia and includes insight into transnational discourses drawing from religious sources. This work is an interdisciplinary effort that examines the intersection between politics, environmental activism and Islamic theology. Elmagraby has presented her preliminary work at regional and international forums, including the American Academy of Religion, the World Economic Forum and The Leadership and Multifaith Symposium at the Candler School of Theology. As an extension of her scholarship, she is investigating environmental sustainability in the Middle East and the ways in which Islam influences attitudes towards the environment – with long term goals in sustainable development, environmental protection and social activism.



## MARY ELSTON

Mary Beinecke Elston is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. She holds an MA in Social Sciences with a focus in Anthropology from the University of Chicago (2012) and a BA in Middle East Studies and Development Studies from Brown University (2007).

Elston's research interests include the anthropology of Islam, the history of modern Egypt, Islamic educational institutions and religious authority. She is currently working on her dissertation, which asks how the religious scholars of al-Azhar – the preeminent institution of Sunni learning – conceptualize, practice and debate the meaning, form and relevance of traditional Islamic knowledge (*turāth*) in contemporary Egypt. Through a combination of ethnography and historical analysis, her dissertation argues that the revival of traditional Islamic knowledge at al-Azhar reflects a critique of the reforms set in motion by the Islamic modernists of the late nineteenth century. As such, the present revival represents a new answer to a question that has concerned Muslim intellectuals since the nineteenth century: how to be modern and remain Muslim. Mary's research in Egypt has been supported by the Loeb Dissertation Research Fellowship, the Frederick Sheldon Traveling Fellowship and the American Research Center in Egypt. At Harvard University, Mary has taught classes on Islam and Politics and the History of the Modern Middle East.

## ZAID EYADAT

Zaid Eyadat is Professor of Political Science and Human Rights, expert on international and comparative politics and the chairperson of the board of trustees and the advisory board of Arab Renaissance for Development and Democracy (ARDD). He is the founding chairperson of the Department of Human Rights – which later became the Department of Political Development – and the founding Dean of the Prince al-Hussein School of International Studies at the University of Jordan. His training and research interests are in the fields of international politics, comparative politics, international political theory, modelling and game theory. He is a leading and distinguished expert on Middle East politics, Human Rights, Islamic thought and Islam & Human Rights. His research has been published in many leading scholarly journals.

Some of his published articles and book chapters include “Minorities in the Arab World: Faults and Fault Lines,” “Islamic Feminism: Roots, Development, and Policies,” “The Calculus of Consensus: an Alternative Path to Arab Democracy,” “Fiqh Al-Aqalliyyât and the Arab Spring: Modern Islamic Theorizing,” “Public Reason and Islamic Reason in the Post-Secular,” “The Rationality of Political Violence: Modelling Al-Qaeda vs. the United States,” “A Transition Without Players: The Role of Political Parties in the Arab Revolutions,” and “Arab Revolutions of 2011: An Explanatory Model.” He is also the co-editor of the book *Migration, Security, and Citizenship in the Middle East* and the co-translator of Count Bernadotte's *Mediation to Palestine 1948: Mediation and Assassination*. He has just completed the translation of a book entitled *Global Justice: Towards an International Theory of Human Rights*.

Eyadat holds a Ph.D. and MA in Political Science (both with distinction) from the University of Southern California, an MA in Political Science (honors) and a BA in Political Science and Economics (honors) from the University of Jordan.

## JOHN GRIM

John Grim is a Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar teaching in the joint MA program in religion and ecology at Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and Yale Divinity School. He is co-founder and co-director of the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale with his wife, Mary Evelyn Tucker. With Tucker, Grim directed a 10 conference series and book project at Harvard on “World Religions and Ecology.”

Grim is the author of *The Shaman: Patterns of Religious Healing Among the Ojibway Indians* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1983) and editor of *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community* (Harvard, 2001). Grim and Tucker are co-authors of *Ecology and Religion* (Island Press, 2014). Together they edited Thomas Berry’s books and published *Thomas Berry: A Biography* (Columbia University Press, 2019). They have edited the following volumes: *Worldviews and Ecology* (Orbis, 1994); *Religion and Ecology: Can the Climate Change?* (Daedalus 2001); *Thomas Berry: Selected Writings on the Earth Community* (Orbis, 2014); and *Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to Journey of the Universe* (Orbis, 2016), and with Willis Jenkins the *Routledge Handbook on Religion and Ecology* (Routledge, 2016). Grim is the co-executive producer of the Emmy award winning film, *Journey of the Universe*. He is the President of the American Teilhard Association.

Grim holds a Ph.D. and MA in the History of Religions from Fordham University and BA in Theology and History from St. John’s University.

## ILHAM IDRISSE BICHR

Ilham Idrissi Bichr is an experienced former diplomat and trade negotiator with leadership experience establishing a sustainability and corporate social responsibility program in a major overseas private bank. She has been a member of the steering committee of the UConn Abrahamic initiative since 2015.

Idrissi Bichr served as project manager in the Sustainable Development Department at the Banque Marocaine du Commerce Extérieur (BMCE Bank), Casablanca, Morocco. BMCE Bank is the first Moroccan financial institution to commit to sustainability and corporate social responsibility, and the first bank in North Africa to adopt Equator Principles. Prior to joining BMCE Bank, Idrissi Bichr was a Moroccan diplomat for ten years. In her position as Counsellor of Foreign Affairs to the Permanent Mission of Morocco in Geneva in charge of World Trade Organization

(WTO) issues, she managed Doha Round negotiations on agricultural products, market access for goods and trade in services for the Government of Morocco. She was also lead negotiator for the WTO African Group in Trade Facilitation and Trade in Services Negotiations.

As Counsellor of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Washington D.C., Idrissi Bichr directed Moroccan diplomacy with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). She was also principal point of contact with Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) on the implementation of Morocco/US Free Trade Agreement. Idrissi Bichr tracked US/Europe bilateral cooperation with State Department contacts. She served as a member of the Moroccan delegation to 2<sup>nd</sup> round of negotiations on a Plurilateral Anti -Counterfeiting Agreement (ACTA).

Idrissi Bichr holds a master's degree in diplomacy from the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies from the University of Malta, Malta, a master's degree in international relations from the International School for Humanities and Social Sciences at the Universiteit van Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and a bachelor's degree in social sciences from Al Akhawayn University, Morocco, with a major in global interdependence and a Minor in women and development. She also holds international professional training certificates from the WTO, UNEFI and GRI London Lodestar Marketing Limited. She is fluent in English, French and Arabic.

## FAZLUN KHALID

Fazlun Khalid has a worldwide reputation as an indefatigable advocate of environmental protection rooted in religious traditions and is now recognized as one of fifteen leading eco theologians in the world (Grist magazine, USA 24 July 2000). He appeared on the Independent on Sunday list of the top 100 environmentalists in the UK in 2008 and was also listed amongst the "500 Most Influential Muslims in the World" by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre of Jordan. He was also the recipient of the Muslim News Awards for Excellence in Engineering, Science and Technology in 2004 for developing a scientific approach to Islamic environmental practice. Khalid founded the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences which is now established as the world's leading Islamic environmental NGO.

He was the convenor and chairperson of the drafting committee that produced the Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change launched in Istanbul in August 2015.

Most recently, Khalid published *Signs on the Earth – Islam, Modernity and the Climate Crisis*, a major study of environmentalism and Islam in practice and theory, with an historical overview that sets out future challenges, including reformulating the *fiqh* (Islamic legal tradition) to take the ecological dimension seriously.

## ESTI KRAMARSKY-WINTER

Esti Kramarsky-Winter is a Board Member of EcoPeace Middle East and an environmental consultant working with academic, government and non-governmental sectors. American born and educated (B.Sc.), she holds an M.Sc. and a Ph.D. from Tel Aviv University in Marine Ecology. Kramarsky-Winter worked as a research associate at Tel Aviv University for over ten years leading numerous studies regarding environmental issues in the Gulf of Aqaba/Eilat. She has worked with numerous agencies and universities in Israel and in the US (including USAID, EPA, NOAA and private NGOs) on matters concerning water pollution, emerging contaminants and aquatic animal disease and pathologies.

Her studies have been instrumental in changing policy including:

- The environmental effects of in situ intense fish farming on the Gulf of Aqaba. This resulted in the net pens being removed from the Gulf by government decree.
- The effects of emerging toxicants on aquatic organisms. This resulted in legislation regarding the ban of sunscreens containing oxybenzone and its derivatives in a number of states and countries including Hawaii, Florida and California as well as a ban in Mexico, Belize, Palau and US Virgin Islands.

Kramarsky-Winter is currently involved in studies assessing microbial and toxic contaminants in aquatic and land based natural and industrial regions. She is also involved in studies searching for natural solutions preventing or remediating development of destructive biofilms in natural and industrial environments.

## KATHRYN LIBAL

Kathryn Libal, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Social Work and Human Rights at the University of Connecticut. She directs the university's Human Rights Institute. She received her doctorate in cultural anthropology at the University of Washington. Since 2007, she has taught at the School of Social Work and Human Rights Institute, specializing in human rights, humanitarianism and migration and social welfare in the Middle East and United States. Libal is currently conducting qualitative research on the politics and practices of voluntarism and refugee resettlement in the United States and Canada. She has co-edited *Human Rights in the United States: Beyond Exceptionalism* and co-authored *Human Rights-Based Approaches to Community Practice in the United States*. Her latest book is a co-edited volume on *Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the United States: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (forthcoming in 2019). In addition, Libal serves on the USA Steering Committee for Scholars At Risk and serves on the Human Rights Committee of the Council on Social Work Education's Global Commission.

## MUNJED MURAD

Munjed M. Murad is a Jordanian-American doctoral student at Harvard University. He studies Islamic and Christian traditions in the field of religion and ecology. He has published on topics in Islam and ecology, and he is currently studying the works of Jalal al-Din Rumi and Origen of Alexandria for their potential to contribute to contemporary ethical environmental discourse.

## KNUT MYRUM NÆSS

Knut Myrum Næss is Research Management Adviser and Visiting Research Fellow at BI Norwegian Business School. He is a contributor to a forthcoming book exploring challenges to civic space in the Nordics and co-author of three forthcoming articles on the Nordic biofuel markets, biofuel industry and biofuel policy. He is Programme Coordinator for the Arne Næss Programme on Global Justice and the Environment at the Center for Development and the Environment, University of Oslo.

Næss holds an M.Phil. in Culture, Environment and Sustainability from the University of Oslo, with a master thesis on hydropolitics in the Nile basin. The work is a semiotic study of the ideological conflict between Egypt and Sudan over the construction of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). His BA is in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies, with coursework on cultural history and environmental studies. He has lived three years in Cairo, learning Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and the Egyptian dialect and completing an internship at the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI) during the eventful summer of 2013. He recently completed an executive program on the Foundations of Leadership at BI Norwegian Business School.

His main fields of interest are political culture, regulation and market design for environmental and social sustainability. He has worked on the Nordics and the Nile Basin. Aside from sustainability he concerns himself with democracy and surveillance capitalism. He is an avid mountain biker and swimmer, known to fall off his bike on occasion. He is registered with the Norwegian National Registry of Interpreters for Arabic-Norwegian.

## ADIL NAJAM

Adil Najam is the Inaugural Dean of the Pardee School of Global Affairs at Boston University, where he is also a professor of international relations and of earth and environment. Former Vice Chancellor of Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), he has also been a professor of negotiation and diplomacy at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, Director of the Boston University Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future, and taught at MIT.

Author of over 100 scholarly papers and author or editor of over a dozen books, Najam was a lead author for the third and fourth assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), work for which the IPCC was awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. His areas of specialization include global climate change and sustainable development in developing countries; and human development and human security, particularly in Muslim societies. He was on the Advisory Board of the 2011 UNDP Human Development Report and was Lead Author for the 2017 Pakistan Human Development Report.

Najam holds two Masters and a Ph.D. from MIT, a Specialization in Negotiation from Harvard Law School, a civil engineering degree from University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, and one honorary doctorate. Najam was elected to the International Board of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), is a Trustee of The Asia Foundation, chairs the Board of the Switzerland-based Luc Hoffmann Institute, has been a Council Member of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Vienna, was the Board Chair of the South Asia Network of Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE), served on the Academic Council of the South Asia University in New Delhi, and was former Chair of LEAD-Pakistan.

He has been awarded the Sitra-i-Imtiaz in 2009, and is a past winner of MIT's Goodwin Medal for Effective Teaching, the Fletcher School Paddock Teaching Award, and the Stein Rokan Award of the International Political Science Association. In 2019 he was appointed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan on his Advisory Council on Foreign Policy.

## İBRAHİM ÖZDEMİR

İbrahim Özdemir is a professor of philosophy and the Founding President of Hasan Kalyoncu University, Gaziantep Turkey. Currently, he is Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Abo Akademi University, Turku, Finland.

He holds a doctorate degree in philosophy from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara and a Bachelor's degree in Islamic Theology and Islamic Philosophy from Ankara University, Turkey.

His most recent publications include *The Ethical Dimension of Human Attitude Towards Nature*, 2nd edition, Insan Publications: Istanbul, 2008; *Jalaluddin Rumî and Confucius: Messages and Visions for a New Century*, Tugra Books: New Jersey, 2013; and *Globalization, Ethics and Islam*, editors: Ian Markham and Ibrahim Ozdemir, Aldershot: Ashgate. 2005.

He has traveled widely in the Muslim world and the West. He was visiting a professor of Islamic Studies at Hartford University and Hartford Seminary (2001-2003). He gives many scholarly and public lectures in Turkey, Europe, the United States and other countries.

After returning from the USA, he appointed as Director-General for International Relations, Ministry of National Education. He represents Turkey at EU, UNESCO and OECD educational programs. (2003-2010).

In August 2015, he was part of the drafting team of the “Islamic Declaration for Global Climate Change”, which called on the world's 1.8 billion Muslims to play an active role in combatting climate change and have urged governments to conclude an effective universal climate change agreement in Paris the end of the year 2015. The declaration welcomed by environmentalist groups and major media outlets in the world such as Newsweek, NYT, aa-Jazeera, Nature Magazine, the Guardian etc. He was a consultant at UNEP (United Nation Environmental Program), 2015–2016, New York, USA.

He was selected as a jury member to The Higher Committee of The Award of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Environmental Management in The Islamic World, 2014–July 2018.

## **AHMED SAADOON MOHAMMED**

Ahmed Sadoon is the Co-Founder of Duhok Organization for Volunteer Youth (DOVY) in Iraqi Kurdistan. DOVY is comprised of a group of passionate individuals aiming to serve their community, provide help to vulnerable individuals through different activities and increase the spirit of volunteerism among young people. DOVY engages with agencies such as the UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, IRD, IOM, WFP, UNV, World Vision and Rawanga. Sadoon previously directed an NGO which worked to promote social cohesion, environmental awareness and self-confidence among youth in at-risk communities in Duhok. These activities further included the supervision of "Development of Youth" centers in refugee camps and the voluntary representation of the General Directorate of Culture in Duhok, as well as supervision of a youth radio channel for that city.

## **JALAL M. SALIH**

Jalal M. Salih has served as an academic staff member at the University of Duhok in Iraqi Kurdistan for over 10 years. Additionally, Salih currently serves as a General Consultant for Capacity Building for Duhok Organization for Volunteer Youth (DOVY)'s programs of community cohesion, coexistence, education and protection, aiming to provide strategies to minority communities to aid in societal integration.

Salih holds a Ph.D. in physics, and has previously worked as a volunteer in the United Kingdom to help refugees fleeing from Syria, Iran, Iraq and other countries in the MENA Region. Salih was also a freelance aid for persons seeking asylum in the UK, and provided interpretation services for the private sector. In Iraq in 2016, he volunteered for local NGOs in the protection and community cohesion sectors. Salih took part in a gender-based violence Training of Trainers workshop by UNICEF in Duhok and trained with UNFPA partners in GBV protection.

## JAME SCHAEFER

After several years serving in various environmental policy positions by appointment of local, state, federal and binational governments, Jame Schaefer embarked on an academic career at Marquette University (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA) where she earned a Ph.D. in Religious Studies (1994) and continues to focus her research and teaching on constructively relating theology, the natural sciences and technology with special attention to religious foundations for ecological ethics. From 2001-2017, she directed the Interdisciplinary Minor in Environmental Ethics that she developed with faculty of other pertinent disciplines, advised Marquette Students for an Environmentally Active Campus, and co-steered the Albertus Magnus Circle. Her publications include *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic and Medieval Concepts* (Georgetown University Press, 2009), *Confronting the Climate Crisis: Catholic Theological Perspectives* (Marquette University Press, 2011) and *Environmental Justice and Climate Change: Assessing Pope Benedict XVI Ecological Vision for the Catholic Church in the United States* (Lexington, 2013), essays in several edited volumes, articles in *Anglican Theological Review*, *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*, *Environmental Ethics*, *Journal of Moral Theology*, *Theological Studies*, and *Worldviews: Religion, Culture, Science* and the inaugural “Animals” entry in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Gale, 2013). In her *Frontiers in Marine Science*, *Geosciences*, and the *International Journal for Climate Change Strategies and Management* articles, she discusses theological and practical contributions by the Abrahamic religions singularly and collaboratively for addressing complex biodiversity and biospheric problems. She serves as the Handling Editor of manuscripts submitted to *Conservation Biology* that incorporate religious, ethical and values perspectives, spearheaded the Best Practices Project of the Society for Conservation Biology that yielded *Guidelines for Interacting with Religious Leaders and Communities: A Proposal by and for Members of the Society for Conservation Biology* (2018), and participated in interreligious dialogue on the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals in Vatican City (2019) at the invitation of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Dicastery on Promoting Integral Human Development.

## KHALID SENDIDE

Khalid Sendide holds a Doctorate in Biotechnology from the University USMBA, Morocco (1995) and a Ph.D in molecular immunology prepared at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada (2005). Sendide started his professional career as Assistant Professor at University Mohammed Ben Abdellah in Fez, Morocco back in 1996, where he taught courses and conducted research both at the school of sciences and the school of Medicine. In 2006, he joined Al Akhawayn University where he currently is an Associate Professor.

Sendide has been a post-Doctoral fellow at UBC, Canada, and a Fulbright Scholar at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, USA in 2009. Sendide’s teaching interests are in molecular biotechnology, environmental biology and environmental chemistry. He also taught courses on evolution and faith. Sendide’s current research interests are in the field of bioactive molecules and their applications in health and in bio-industries, he has also been working on



education and sustainable development, supervised many masters and Ph.D. students, and his work has been patented and published in renowned journals. From the administrative side, Sendide has been coordinator of Science and Engineering programs at Al Akhawayn University from 2011-2015. In 2016, he has been appointed Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs in charge of research and graduate studies at the same University, a position that he still occupies today. During the past 10 years, Sendide has been heavily involved in school and university quality assurance and accreditation processes at Al Akhawayn University.

## **SIMON SKIRA**

Simon Skira is Secretary General of the French Federation of Moroccan Judaism, and in 2018 was elected Vice President of the World Union of Moroccans Abroad. In 2018, he started the company Smartpoint Group based in Casablanca, which operates in the fields of advanced technologies by offering Moroccan companies innovative solutions for smart cities and IT security.

Skira is a speaker on relations between Muslims and Jews in Morocco, having worked for more than twenty years for various educational institutions in developing cities with strong Moroccan majorities in France and Israel. He taught Jewish history in Morocco and directed one of Israel's most prestigious boarding schools.

Skira is involved in several immigrant associations in Morocco, France and Israel, an experience he shared as part of the documentary film "Jewish Moroccans, thwarted destiny". In his testimony for the film on Jewish-Muslim relations in Morocco, he sought to answer the question as to the causes of the evaporation of 280,000 Jews from Morocco between the years of 1948 and 1968.

In 1996, Simon Skira was the Founding President of the Israel-Morocco Friendship Association in Tel Aviv. The association has organized numerous delegations and exchanges in several fields in collaboration with Moroccan specialists for agriculture, medicine, technology and other fields. Skira has also been appointed Deputy Director of the Beer Sheva and Ashdod Engineering School (5500 students), for French-speaking European countries.

## **ALON TAL**

Alon Tal is presently chair of the Department of Public Policy at Tel Aviv University. Tal has held faculty appointments at Ben Gurion and Hebrew Universities in Israel, and was a visiting professor at the University of Otago in New Zealand and Stanford University in California. Between 1990 and 1998 he was an adjunct faculty member at Harvard University. Between 2004-2016 Tal was a member of the international board of directors of the Jewish National Fund where he oversaw forestry and land reclamation as well as the Committee for Sustainable Development. Between 2010 and 2013, he served as chair of Israel's green party – "the Green Movement".

Tal was the founding director of Adam Teva V'din, the Israel Union for Environmental Defense from 1990-1997, a leading public interest law group. Subsequently, he was chairman of Life and Environment, an umbrella group for eighty environmental organizations in Israel from 1998-2003. Here he established a launched an outreach initiative “A Place For Everyone” to expand participation of Arab Israeli environmental organizations and activists. In 1996, Tal founded the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, a regional graduate studies center for Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian students. He has served as head of the Israeli delegation to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and oversaw the international conference on desertification at Sede Boqer along with the UNCCD for ten years. In 2006, he was awarded the Charles Bronfman humanitarian prize for environmental leadership. In 2008, in honor of Israel’s 60th anniversary the Ministry of Environment granted him a life achievement award.

Tal has published over a hundred academic articles and book chapters as well as eight books. His most recent book, *The Land is Full* was published by Yale University Press and won the Haiken prize for best geostrategic book in Israel for 2017. Previously, the University of California Press published *Pollution in a Promised Land*, considered to be the definitive environmental history of Israel. His research focuses on issues of water policy, climate change mitigation / adaptation, natural resources management and conflict, risk analysis, conservation and park management as well as overpopulation and the environment. Tal has received degrees in political science and economics from the University of North Carolina, Law from Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He completed his Masters and Doctoral degrees from the Harvard School of Public Health in Environmental Health Policy. Tal is married with three daughters and enjoys long distance running, tennis and playing bluegrass fiddle in the Arava Riders band.

## MARY EVELYN TUCKER

Mary Evelyn Tucker is a Senior Lecturer and Research Scholar at Yale in the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, the Divinity School, and the Department of Religious Studies. She directs the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale with her husband, John Grim. She received an Inspiring Yale Teaching Award in 2015.

She earned her Ph.D. from Columbia University in Asian Religions. Since 1997 she has been a Research Associate at the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard and has published five volumes on Confucianism. She also served on the International Earth Charter Drafting Committee.

Her concern for the growing environmental crisis, especially in Asia, led her to organize with Grim a series of ten conferences on World Religions and Ecology at Harvard (1995-1998). They were series editors for the ten volumes from the conferences. After these conferences she and Grim founded the Forum on Religion and Ecology. They wrote *Ecology and Religion* (Island Press, 2014) and with Willis Jenkins they edited the *Routledge Handbook on Religion and Ecology* (2016). They also are series advisors for the *Ecology and Justice Series* at Orbis Books.

Tucker and Grim studied with Thomas Berry and worked closely with him for 30 years. Tucker edited Berry's books and with Grim she wrote *Thomas Berry: A Biography* (Columbia, 2019).

Tucker created a multi-media project with Brian Thomas Swimme and John Grim called "Journey of the Universe", which includes an Emmy award-winning film, a book from Yale (2011), *Journey Conversations*, and online classes.

## DANIEL WEINER

Daniel Weiner joined the University of Connecticut (UConn) in 2012 as Vice Provost for Global Affairs and Professor of Geography. In February 2016, he was promoted to Vice President for Global Affairs. Prior to joining UConn, Weiner spent four years as Executive Director of the Center for International Studies at Ohio University and eleven years as Director of the Office of International Programs at West Virginia University. He earned a B.A. in 1979, an M.A. in 1981 and a Ph.D. in 1986, all in Geography at Clark University.

In his role as Vice President, Weiner serves as the University's Senior International Officer (SIO) and leads the UConn Office of Global Affairs. With more than two decades leading as a public research university SIO, he is one of the longest serving SIO's in the United States.

Weiner is a development geographer with area studies expertise in Eastern/Southern Africa and Appalachia. He is a specialist in the theory and practice of participatory geographic information systems (GIS). His research areas include agricultural geography, climate and society, energy, GIS and society, land reform and political ecology. He has received 15 externally funded grants totaling over \$2.5 million, published three books, 59 journal articles and book chapters. Weiner lived in Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe for almost three years during the 1980s.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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