Contributor Biographies

Samim Akgönül, Ph.D. (2001), historian and political scientist, is teaching at the Institute of International Relations and at the Department of Turkish Studies of Strasbourg University. He conducts his research at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) at the Research Laboratory DRES (Droit, religion, Entreprise, Sociétés). He is coeditor of the Journal of Muslims in Europe, and of the Yearbook of Muslims in Europe (Brill). He works on religious minorities in Turkey and in the Balkans and on “new minorities” in Western Europe. His recent publications are The minority concept in the Turkish context: Practices and Perceptions in Turkey, Greece and France, (Leiden: Brill, 2013); La Turquie et l'Europe, une évolution en interaction, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2013); Grecs et Turcs entre Eris et Eros au tournant du siècle, (Frankfurt: Dictus, 2012).

Hanan Alexander is Professor of Philosophy of Education and Head of the Center for Jewish Education at the University of Haifa where he serves as Dean of Students and Head of the International School. A Senior Research Fellow at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, he is also a Visiting Fellow of St. Edmunds College, Cambridge University, and has served as a Lecturer in Education at UCLA and Visiting Professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Leyla Almazova is an Associate Professor in the Department of Oriental and Islamic Studies, Institute of International Relations, History, and Oriental Studies, at the Kazan Federal University where she teaches courses in Islamic Studies, the Ethno-Religious Situation at the Middle East, the History of Arab-Muslim Phi-
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**Ednan Aslan** is the Chair of Islamic Religious Education in the Centre for Teacher Training and Institute for Islamic Studies at the University of Vienna. Prof. Aslan is chairperson of various working groups on the development of curricula in Germany, Austria, and Southeast Europe and has published extensively on Islamic religious education in Europe. His research focuses on Islamic identity, the future of Islamic theology, and imam training in Europe. His books include *Islamic Education in Europe* (Böhlau 2009), *Islamic Textbooks and Curricula in Europe* (2011), *The Training of Imams and Teachers for Islamic Education in Europe* (2013), *Islamic Education in Secular Societies* (2013).

**Brad Anderson** (PhD) undertook postgraduate studies at Durham University, England, where he received his doctorate. He is currently Lecturer in the School of Theology at Mater Dei Institute of Education, a College of Dublin City University, Ireland, where he teaches biblical studies, religious studies, and research methods. His research interests include identity and otherness in the biblical traditions, reception history of biblical texts, the intersection of religion and society in contemporary contexts, and study skills and research methods in religion and theology. Recent publications include the co-authored volume *Making Sense in Religious Studies: A Student’s Guide to Research and Writing* (OUP 2012) as well as *Brotherhood and Inheritance: A Canonical Reading of the Esau and Edom Traditions* (Bloomsbury 2011). Brad is currently President of the Irish Biblical Association and serves as an advisory board member for the Irish Centre for Religious Education.

**Rositsa Atanasova** holds a Master’s degree in Islamic Studies from the Harvard Divinity School. She further completed a Bachelor of Law degree at Cambridge University and is currently pursuing a Master of Laws degree at the Católica Global School of Law in Lisbon, Portugal. Rositsa is interested in the interaction of Islam with secular legal systems and her graduate work explored the institutional framework of Islamic education in post-communist Bulgaria. As a lawyer Rositsa specializes in constitutional law, public international law and European human rights law.
Denis Brylov is an Associate Professor in the Department of Culturology (National Pedagogical Dragomanov University, Kiev). Brylov received his Ph.D. degree in Religious Studies from Taras Shevchenko University (Kiev). He has a special research interest in contemporary Sufism, transnational Sufi networks, and Islamic education and political activism in Islam. Denis Brylov is a Director of the Islamic Studies Minor Program at National Pedagogical Dragomanov University, and was a core faculty member of the Higher Education Support Program (HESP) Regional Seminar for Excellence in Teaching (ReSET) Project “Islam: Religious and Social Practices. Universality and Locality”, and a member of Editorial Board of the journal Essays on Religious Studies.

Ranja Ebrahim is a pre-doctoral research assistant at the Institute for Islamic Religious Education in the Centre for Teacher Training, University of Vienna. She holds a Master’s degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies from the same University, with the main focus on Islamic history. She is working on her doctoral thesis, which deals with the development of a pedagogical concept which aims to revive the God-human (student) communication on the basis of the Occasions of Revelation (asbab an-nuzul) and Ruth Cohn’s Theme-Centered Interaction Model (TCI). She also teaches at Vienna University and the Viennese Teacher’s College.

Matteo Gianni is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Geneva. He is a founding member of the Groupe de Recherche sur l’Islam en Suisse (GRIS) and a specialist in the field of the political theory of multiculturalism, in particular with respect to the theory of citizenship, theory of recognition, and integration theory in multicultural settings. He received a grant from the Federal Commission of Foreigners to conduct research on the identity profile of “ordinary” Muslims living in Switzerland. He has also directed a Swiss Nation Science Foundation research project on the representations of Muslims and Islam in the Swiss French-speaking press and he is currently leading a research project on the integration of Muslims in Switzerland (NCCR On the Move, University of Neuchâtel). Gianni has contributed numerous articles in these areas. His publications include coediting the volume Musulmans en Suisse. Profils et intégration. (Lausanne, 2015).

Marcia Hermansen is Director of the Islamic World Studies program at Loyola University Chicago where she teaches courses in Islamic Studies and Religious Studies as a Professor in the Theology Department. Her books include Islam and Citizenship Education (2015) (co-ed.), Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim
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**Bayram Karci** is Assistant Professor of Philosophy of Religion at Fatih University. Dr. Karci received a B.A. degree from Dokuz Eylül University Faculty of Theology Izmir, Turkey, an M.T.S. degree from Drew University, in Madison, New Jersey, and a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Religious Sciences from Marmara University Institute of Social Sciences Istanbul-Turkey. After completing his PhD in 2011 Dr. Karci moved to Albania and joined the academic staff of Hëna e Plotë Bedër University. There, he has served as the Director of Center for Islamic Research, Head of the Islamic Sciences Department, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Head of the Communications Department and Director of the Office of Research. In 2014, he returned to Turkey and started working for Fatih University as a lecturer in the Philosophy of Religion.

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Ali Pajaziti, Ph.D. (1972) is a sociologist and translator from Skopje (Macedonia) and lecturer at SEE University in sociology, ethics and anthropology. He is President of the Balkan Sociological Forum, editor of humanities publications at Logos-A Publishers, and a member of the Council of the Max van der Stoel Institute. His books include Sociological Essays (Logos-A, 2003), University Youth and Religion (Logos-A, 2003), In Veritas-Sociological Tractatus (Logos-A, 2005), Public Ethics (trans. & ed., Logos-A, 2005), Information Technologies and Ethics (SEEU, 2008), Culture and Quality of Life: The Case of Macedonia (Logos-A, 2011), Culturological Studies: Education, Politics, Identity (Dauti Foundation & ISP, 2012), Quality of life in an Era of Global Crisis: The Reality of Macedonia’s Albanians (ISPN, 2013). He is also the author of the first Albanian sociological dictionary (Dictionary of Sociology, 2009). Pajaziti has translated some 20 academic books from English and Turkish into Albanian and Macedonian, participated in numerous conferences and symposiums throughout Europe and published articles in national and international journals (SEER, Contemporary Issues, Social Studies, SEEU Review Revista di Ştiinţe Politice).

Emil B.H. Saggau holds a Master’s degree in Theology from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark (2014). He has been employed since 2011-13 as an assistant at the Centre for European Islamic Thought and to the editor-in-chief of the Yearbook and Journal for Muslims in Europe published by Brill, Leiden. He is currently working as an Academic Officer at the University of Copenhagen. His main interest lies within the study of relations between Islam, Christianity and various states. He has published several popular and academic articles on the subject of state and religion, religious identity, and ecclesiology.

Minela Salkic-Joldo holds a Master’s degree from the Institute of Islamic Religious Education, Vienna, and a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Bihac, Bosnia, in the same field. She is completing her doctoral thesis, which consists of a qualitative empirical study investigating youth’s conceptions and images of God in the Islamic context. She is also engaged with teaching at the University of Vienna and is part of the curriculum committee of the new upcoming Bachelors program in Islamic theology at Vienna.
Henning Schluß grew up in Dessau (East Germany). After an apprenticeship in electronics he studied Protestant Theology in Berlin. His Ph. D. in Educational Science is from Berlin Humboldt University as is his Habilitation. He has (co-) initiated and (co-) directed numerous surveys in the field of religious and ethical education as well as conducted research projects on historical videography of school lessons. From 2008 to 2010 he was responsible for Educational Tasks for the Protestant Church, especially for the German state of Brandenburg. Since 2010 he has served as Professor for Educational Research and Theory at the University of Vienna.

Friedrich Schweitzer is professor of Religious Education and Practical Theology at the faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Tuebingen, Germany. He has studied and worked in Germany, Switzerland and the United States and holds degrees in theology and education/social science. He has published many books on religious and moral education, including historical as well as empirical studies. Some of his books have been translated into several languages (Danish, Dutch, English, Hungarian, Japanese, Korean). His latest book is on interreligious education Interreligiöse Bildung (Guetersloh, 2014).

Laurentiu D. Tănase holds a Ph.D. from the University of Strasbourg, France and teaches Sociology of Religions in the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Bucharest. He was the State Secretary for Religious Affairs in the Government of Romania (2001-2004). At present he is a member of the Parliamentary Commission for Research on the Communist Period in Romania-CNSAS. He is a member of International Society for the Sociology of Religion and the French Association of Religious Sociology. He is the founder director of the Center for Studies in “Society, Law and Religion” in Bucharest, Romania. He has made many television academic appearances, is the author of numerous articles and studies on the evolution of the field of religious studies, secularization, pluralism, globalization, new religious movements, and Islam including the edited volume, Pluralisation religieuse et société en Roumanie (Peter Lang, 2008).

Andreas Telser holds a M.Div. from the former Weston Jesuit School of Theology (Cambridge, MA), now Boston College, as well as a Ph.D. in Catholic Theology from the Catholic University in Linz, Austria, where he is currently engaged in scientific research. His main research interests include pluralism, religion/theology and the public sphere, sociology of religion as well as religion/theology and humour. His doctoral thesis “Theology as Public Discourse” was awarded the Karl Rahner Prize from the University of Innsbruck.
Niels Valdemar Vinding received his Ph.D. from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark (2013), and has been employed as an assistant professor since 2014. He wrote his Ph.D. on the religio-organizational fields of Denmark, Germany, and England at The Centre for European Islamic Thought and was involved in the largescale research project of RELIGARE (2010-13). He is currently working on a project on Imams in the West.