

# MONDAY LECTURES | WISE 2024/25

## IN RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

RESEARCH BUILDING "WELTBEZIEHUNGEN" | C19.00.02/03 | 16:15 - 17:45

**27.01.2025 | AYŞE ALMILA AKCA**

### HEALING THE CREATION BY HEALING THE COMMUNITY: ON TRANSFORMING MUSLIM LEADERSHIP AT THE INTERSECTION OF ECOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP, ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION, AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

This paper explores ecological leadership and ecological conversion as analytical frameworks from a comparative Muslim perspective, focusing on how selected Muslim faith leaders in Germany engage with ecological agendas. Drawing on empirical findings, as well as sermons, community activities, media platforms, and relevant media coverage, the paper seeks to answer the following questions: How, under what conditions, and to what extent do these leaders perceive their role in "greening" their religious traditions and practices?

It examines whether and to what degree a faith-based agenda motivates these leaders, how they interpret religious teachings in environmentally friendly ways, how their ecological conversion occurs, how they perceive their mission and specific roles within their communities, and what kind of leadership they pursue in envisioning an ecologically sustainable future. Furthermore, it critically assesses whether ecological conversion and practices within a religious framework engage with decolonial concepts that aim to heal creation through the healing of both the community and the individual. The paper highlights an Islamic practical-theological and lived religion approach, addressing topics at the intersection of community leadership, healing, ecological conversion, religious practices, and theological teachings.

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**Ayşe Almıla Akca** is currently a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Islamic Theology and Education at the University of Innsbruck and a visiting scholar in the Department of Religion and Theology at the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town. From 2019 to 2023, she led the Junior Research Group Islamic Theology in Context: Scholarship and Society at the Berlin Institute for Islamic Theology, Humboldt University, Berlin. She earned her PhD from Freie Universität Berlin in 2018 and was awarded the 2019 Dissertation Prize by the German Association of Middle Eastern Studies (DAVO) for her ethnographic study on Islamic knowledge and authority in Germany's mosques.