

FEYZA AKOVA

4007 Jenkins Nanovic Hall, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556

Feyza.Akova.1@nd.edu

EDUCATION

PhD, Sociology Expected 2024

University of Notre Dame Notre Dame, IN

Dissertation: *Journeys to Traditional Sufi Islam in America: Self-transcendence, Tradition, and Social Change in the Contemporary Modern World*

Committee: Christian Smith (Chair), Ann Mische, Kriag Beyerlein, and Mahan Mirza

Comprehensive Exams: Religion (*passed with distinction*), Culture

MA, Sociology 2014
University of Houston Houston, TX

BA, Sociology, Psychology (Double Major) 2012
University of Istanbul Istanbul, Turkey
Highest GPA in Sociology (among 70 students)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Theory, Religion, Culture, Social Change, Collective Action

PUBLICATIONS

Feyza Akova. 2023. "Treating Religion as a Personal Choice: Possibilities and Dilemmas in Turkish Muslim Immigrants' Religious Identity Constructions." *Sociology of Religion* 84 (3): 243-264.

***Winner**, 2021 Robert J. McNamara Student Paper Award, Association for the Sociology of Religion Student Paper

***Winner**, 2021 Mary Ellen Konieczny Best Graduate Student Sociology of Religion Paper Award, Notre Dame Center for the Study of Religion and Society

Feyza Akova. 2022. "Returning to God: Constructing Agency Through the Practice of Dhikr in Sufi Islam." In *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Ritual and Practice*, edited by Oliver Leaman, 200-209. New York, NY: Routledge.

NEWSLETTERS AND ESSAYS

Mentioned as "Emerging Social Theorist" in *Perspectives*, American Sociological Association Theory Section Newsletter, Fall 2022. (Accessible online: <http://www.asatheory.org/current-newsletter-online/emerging-theorist-spotlight-feyza-akova>)

"Becoming the Change," *Insights*, Lake Institute on Faith & Giving Newsletter. February 14, 2023. (Accessible online: <https://lakeinstitute.org/resource-library/february-issue1-2023/>)

WORK IN PROGRESS

Ann Mische and Feyza Akova. [First draft.] “Transformative Interventions: Assessing Cultural Technologies for Personal and Systemic Change.”

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- Lake Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship**, *Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy* (\$25,000) 2022–2023
- Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship**, *Muslim Philanthropy Initiative at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy* (\$5,000) 2022
- Dissertation Research Grant**, *Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts* (\$2,500) 2021
- Emergency Dissertation Grant** (referencing COVID-19), *Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts* (\$2,500) 2020
- Dissertation Research Grant**, *Center for the Study of Religion and Society* (\$1,800) 2019
- Professionalization Grant**, *Kellogg Institute for International Studies* (\$1,500) 2018
- Summer Seminar Fellow**, *The New School Institute for Social Critical Inquiry* 2018
- MA Scholarship**, *Turkish Ministry of National Education* (\$70,000) 2012–2014

AWARDS AND HONORS

For Research:

- John J. Kane Memorial Award for Outstanding Graduate Student**, *Department of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame* (\$200) 2022
- William V. D’Antonio Award for Graduate Student Excellence in the Sociology of Religion**, *Center for the Study of Religion and Society at the University of Notre Dame* (\$1100) 2022
- Emerging Scholars Award**, *Muslim Philanthropy Initiative at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy* (\$1,000) 2022
- Robert J. McNamara Student Paper Award**, *Association for the Sociology of Religion*, “Implications of Treating Religion as a Personal Choice: Possibilities and Dilemmas in Turkish Muslim Immigrants’ Religious Identity Constructions” (\$500) 2021
- Mary Ellen Konieczny Best Graduate Student Sociology of Religion Paper Award**, *Center for the Study of Religion and Society*, “Implications of Treating Religion as a Personal Choice: Possibilities and Dilemmas in Turkish Muslim Immigrants’ Religious Identity Constructions” (\$250) 2021

Best Paper Award in Social Sciences, Northeast Turkish American Scholars Association (NETA), “A Qualitative Study of Turkish Immigrants’ Approaches to Modernity” (\$1000) 2015

For Teaching:

David L. Dodge Memorial Teaching Award, Sociology Department at the University of Notre Dame (\$100) 2022

Excellence in Teaching Award, Midwest Region Teaching Award Competition in Doctoral Category, Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) (\$750) 2022

- **University Nominee for the Teaching Award, Doctoral Category**, nominated by University of Notre Dame Graduate School for the *Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS) Teaching Award Competition*

Outstanding Graduate Student Teacher Award, Kaneb Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Notre Dame 2022

Striving for Excellence in Teaching Certificate, Kaneb Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Notre Dame 2022

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Notre Dame
Instructor Notre Dame, IN
Fall 2021
SOC 30900-02: Foundations of Sociological Theory

University of Notre Dame
Teaching Assistant for Professor Christian Smith Notre Dame, IN
Spring 2020
SOC 20666: Environment, Food, Society

University of Notre Dame
Teaching Assistant for Professor Christian Smith Notre Dame, IN
Fall 2019
SOC 63911: Classical Sociological Theory (Graduate Level)

PRESENTATIONS

American Sociological Association Annual Meeting (Los Angeles, CA) August 2022
“Transcending Selves and Society: Sufi Mystics, Self-transcendence, and Social Change,” presented at session panel entitled *Ideology, Ideas, and Information in Social Movements*

American Sociological Association Annual Meeting (virtual) August 2021
“Freedom from the Inside: Islamic Cultivations of Agency and Selfhood Among Converts to Sufi Islam”

Annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the October 2020

<i>Religious Research Association</i> (cancelled due to COVID-19) “When Religion Becomes a Personal Choice: Possibilities and Dilemmas in Turkish Muslim Immigrants’ Religious Identity Constructions”	
<i>American Sociological Association Annual Meeting</i> (virtual) “Implications of Treating Religion as a Personal Choice: Possibilities and Dilemmas in Turkish Muslim Immigrants’ Religious Identity Constructions”	August 2020
<i>American Sociological Association Annual Meeting</i> (virtual) “Transformative Interventions: Assessing Cultural Technologies for Personal and Systemic Change” (presented by co-author Ann Mische)	August 2020
<i>Association for the Sociology of Religion Annual Meeting</i> (New York, NY) “The Meaning of Modernity in Everyday Life”	August 2019
<i>Istanbul Conference Center, Invited Panel Presentation</i> (Houston, TX) “Brave New World: Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment”	March 2014

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

University of Notre Dame <i>Research Assistant</i> for Professor Kraig Beyerlein	Notre Dame, IN Fall 2020–Spring 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted with coding of The National Study of Protest Events (NSPE) 	
University of Notre Dame <i>Research Assistant</i> for Professor Ann Mische	Notre Dame, IN Fall 2016–Spring 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collected data and created a database for Ann Mische’s book Assisted with coding and categorizing data 	
University of Notre Dame <i>Research Assistant</i> for Global Religion Research Initiative	Notre Dame, IN Fall 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluated grant applications 	
Inspiring South Asian Youth (I-SAY) Non-Profit Organization <i>Research Intern and Program Evaluator</i>	Fort Lee, NJ 2014–2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created program evaluation survey for the Teach and Travel Program Collected and analyzed program evaluation data for the Youth Development Program Assisted with grant applications 	

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Editorial Board Member , Review of Religious Research Journal	2023–Present
Participant , Notre Dame Press Publishing Boot Camp for Academic Book Publishing, University of Notre Dame	Summer 2022

Undergraduate Student Mentor , Grad Guidance Mentorship Program, University of Notre Dame	Spring 2022
Advisory Board Member , Routledge Handbook of Islamic Ritual and Practice	2020–2022
Chair , Jack Shand International Travel Grants Committee, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting	2021–2022
Committee Member , Jack Shand International Travel Grants Committee, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting	2021–2020
Moderator , Mentoring Panel “Developing as a Teacher,” American Sociological Association/Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASA/ASR)	Aug 11, 2021
Mentor , Department of Sociology’s Graduate Mentoring Program University of Notre Dame.	Fall 2018–2021
Mentor , Northeast Turkish American Scholars Association (NETA)	2016–2020
Organizer , “Tradition Reading Group” Graduate Reading Group, University of Notre Dame	Fall 2020
Student Ambassador , Society for the Scientific Study of Religion Annual Meeting	2020–2019
President , Turkish American Women Student Association, University of Houston	2013–2014
Treasurer , Turkish Student Association, University of Houston	2013–2014

LANGUAGE AND SOFTWARE

- Turkish (native)
- English (fluent)
- Arabic (pre-intermediate)
- Stata
- Airtable Database Software

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- American Sociological Association
 - Sections: Sociology of Religion, Theory, Teaching, Culture, Collective Behavior and Social Movements
- Association for the Sociology of Religion
- Society for the Scientific Study of Religion

REFERENCES

Christian Smith, PhD

Professor, Department of Sociology
4032 Jenkins-Nanovic Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556
(574) 631-4531 (office)
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Ann Mische, PhD
Kellogg Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
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Kraig Beyerlein, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology
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