Salafism in Nigeria

Islam, Preaching, and Politics

The specter of Boko Haram dominates much media coverage and academic analysis of northern Nigeria. But, as Alexander Thurston argues here, beyond the sensational headlines this group generates, the dynamics of Muslim life in northern Nigeria remain poorly understood. Drawing on interviews with leading Salafis in Nigeria as well as on a rereading of the history of the global Salafi movement, this volume explores how a canon of classical and contemporary texts defines Salafism. Examining how these texts are interpreted and – crucially – who has the authority to do so, Thurston offers a systematic analysis of curricula taught in Saudi Arabia and how they shape religious scholars’ approach to religion and education once they return to Africa.

Essential for scholars of religion and politics, this unique text explores how the canon of Salafism has been used and refined, from Nigeria’s return to democracy to the jihadist movement Boko Haram.

Alexander Thurston is Visiting Assistant Professor of African Studies at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service. He has conducted field research in Nigeria and Senegal and has published in African Affairs, the Journal of the American Academy of Religion, the Journal of Religion in Africa, and Islamic Africa, as well as with the Brookings Institution, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the Carnegie Endowment.
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Alexander Thurston

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