

## 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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*Islam, Preaching, and Politics*

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Alexander Thurston

International African Institute, London  
*and*



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-15743-9 — Salafism in Nigeria  
Alexander Thurston  
Frontmatter  
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## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107157439](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107157439)

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First published 2016

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Thurston, Alexander, author.

Salafism in Nigeria : Islam, preaching, and politics / Alexander Thurston.

New York : Cambridge University Press, 2016. Series: The international African library ; 52

Includes bibliographical references and index.

LCCN 2016026912 ISBN 9781107157439 (hardback : alk. paper)

LCSH: Salafeiyah. Salafeiyah – Nigeria. Boko Haram. Salafeiyah – Saudi Arabia.

LCC BP195.S18 T48 2016 DDC 297.8/109669 – dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016026912>

ISBN 978-1-107-15743-9 Hardback

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## Acknowledgments

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Many people helped me with the research and writing for this book. I have benefited tremendously from the generous mentorship and collegiality of Muhammad Sani Umar, Benjamin Soares, Rüdiger Seesemann, Robert Launay, Leonardo Villalon, Murray Last, Paul Lubeck, John Campbell, Terje Østebø, Brannon Ingram, John Voll, Jonathan Brown, Adam Higazi, Matt Page, Ibrahim Yahaya Ibrahim, Dan Eizenga, Mamadou Bodian, Brandon Kendhammer, Susan O'Brien, Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, and Carl LeVan. In Nigeria, the research assistance of Usman Aliyu was invaluable to me, as was his friendship. I was also welcomed and helped by Ibrahim Muhammad, Abubakar Mustapha, Uba Abdalla Adamu, Haruna Salihi, Mustapha Ismail, Munir Maitama, Hafizu Zailani, Adamu Sagagi, Ahmadu Bello Hassan, Carmen McCain, Jack Tocco, Hannah Hoechner, Abbe Katerega, and many others. Many people gave generously of their time for interviews, especially Abdulwahhab Abdullahi, Bashir Aliyu, Abdullahi Saleh Pakistan, Nazifi Inuwa, Lawi Atiku, Baba Uba Ringim, Kabiru Uba Ringim, and Bashir Tijjani Uthman. The faculty and staff at Bayero University Kano and at Aminu Kano College of Islamic and Legal Studies were generous with their time and assistance. Colleagues at Georgetown University, especially Scott Taylor, Lahra Smith, Jonathan Brown, and Paul Heck, provided a stimulating intellectual atmosphere and a friendly environment in which to teach and write. My thanks to all of you.

In 2015, as I was revising this book into its final form, the African Studies community lost two great scholars to cancer: Stephen Ellis and J. D. Y. Peel. I was privileged to correspond with each of them in their final months and was humbled that each of them took time to push a young scholar to sharpen his thinking: Professor Ellis encouraged me to revise a conference presentation, while Professor Peel, as series editor at the International African Library, gave me incisive comments that led me to rewrite this book's introduction. Both men embodied an ideal of thoughtful and generous mentorship, and I am grateful to have known them.

The research for this book was supported by fellowships from the Social Science Research Council, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, the African

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Studies Program at Northwestern University, and Northwestern's Buffett Institute. Other versions of two chapters have previously appeared in print: Chapter 3 was published as "Ahlussunnah: A Preaching Network from Kano to Medina in Back" in *Shaping Global Islamic Discourses: The Role of al-Azhar, al-Medina and al-Mustafa*, edited by Masooda Bano and Keiko Sakurai; Chapter 5 was published as "The Salafi Ideal of Electronic Media as an Intellectual Meritocracy in Kano, Nigeria" in the December 2015 issue of the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. I am grateful to Edinburgh University Press and Oxford University Press, respectively, for permission to republish those chapters. My thinking for this book was decisively shaped by my attendance at the conference "Centres of Learning and Change," held at Oxford University in 2012 and organized by Masooda Bano and Keiko Sakurai; I thank the conference organizers as well as Mike Farquhar and Stéphane Lacroix, from whose input I benefited tremendously. My intellectual debts to several scholars I have not met – especially Thomas Hegghammer, Joas Wagemakers, and David Commins – should be clear, although I bear sole responsibility for any mistakes and misinterpretations. Finally, I thank Stephanie Kitchen of the International African Library and Maria Marsh of Cambridge University Press for their patient shepherding of this manuscript through the review and publication process, and I thank Miles Irving for designing the book's maps.

I also thank my family and friends for their love and support. My grandparents, Theodore and Yetta Ziolkowski, have inspired me through their embodiment of the life of the mind. My sister Lara is not only a keen observer of international affairs but also all that one could ask for in a friend and confidante. Friends, including Josh Nelson, Lance Steagall, Jason Rosenbaum, and Brett Sweeney, have always encouraged my scholarly pursuits and have helped me make that scholarship relevant to a wider audience. Ann Wainscott is the love of my life, and without our ongoing conversations on Islam and politics, as well as her daily companionship, this book would not have come together. The extended Wainscott family has also welcomed and supported me, and I am grateful to them for that. Finally, my parents, Bob Thurston and Gretchen Ziolkowski, have given me a life of possibilities while teaching me to affirm the inherent dignity of all people. I dedicate this book to them.

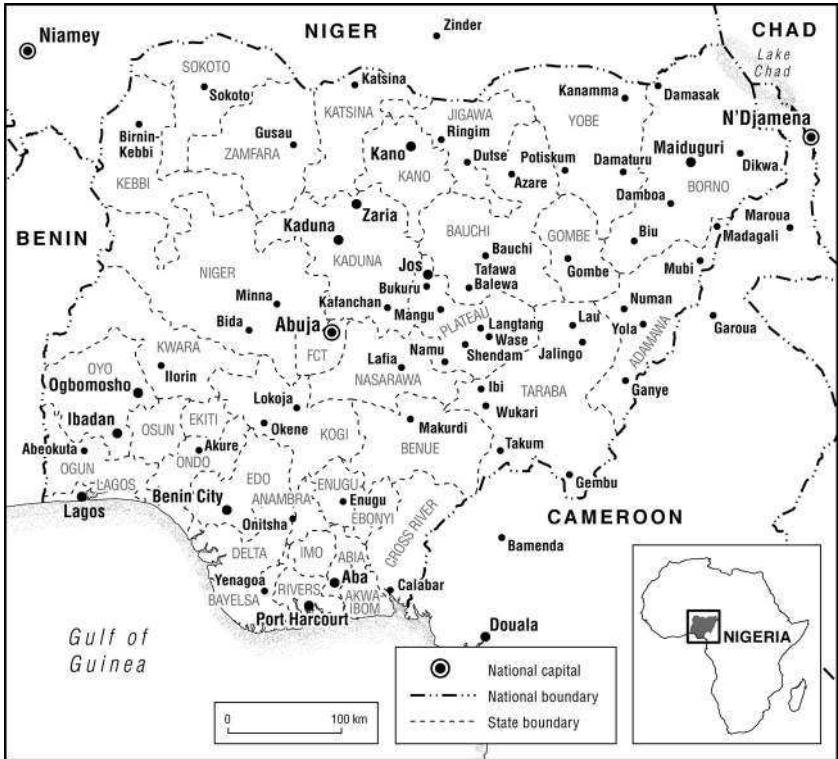
## Maps

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Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-15743-9 — Salafism in Nigeria  
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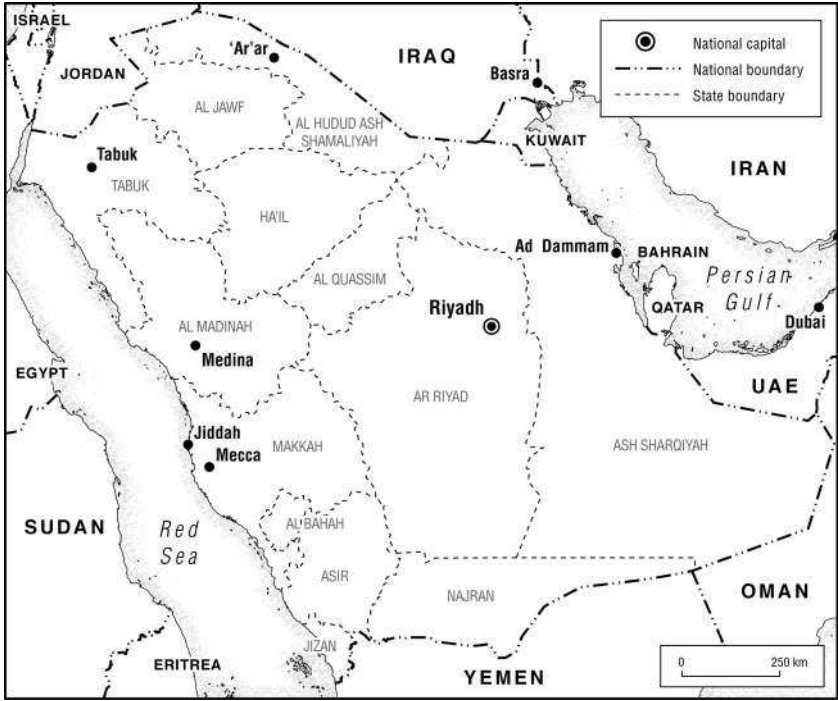


Map 1. Present-Day Nigeria

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Map 2. Local Government Areas in Kano State, Nigeria



Map 3. Present-Day Saudi Arabia