

Bayreuth International Summer School (BISS) 2019

Islam and Christianity in Africa

Week 1 - Islam in Africa

The commonly applied division of the Maghreb from sub-Saharan Africa spread by Western scholarship gives rise to innumerable problems since it denies the many forms of intertwinings and inter-connectedness that exist between the two shores of the Sahara. The forms of interlacing between the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa are broad and rooted deeply in the collective unconscious, as this is manifest in contemporary African arts and literature. They have been formed through the centuries from a variety of events and a vast network of relationships, ruptures, influences, insertions and rejections.

This course will attempt to look at one of the numerous connecting factors, Islam, which was introduced to Africa since the early 7th century. It is well known that Islam is the majority religion in Africa north of the Sahara, often detached from the continent and assimilated to "the Middle East" or "the Arab World." What is much less known is the fact that today Islam may be the most widely professed faith in Africa south of the Sahara, in what western scholarship often calls "Black Africa".

We will start the course with an overview of the history of Islam in Africa, from the arrival to Ethiopia of the earliest Muslim migrants, to its expansion in the rest of the continent. Then, focusing on North and West Africa, we will attempt to shed light on the processes of Islamization of the African peoples and the Africanization of Islam.

The objective is to arrive at an understanding of how the (North and West) African settings have influenced the practice of Islam in the region and how in turn, Islam has shaped religious, social, political and economic developments in this expanse.

Among the topics that will be covered by the course there are:

- The forms, processes and agents of Islamization of the continent;
- The forms, processes and agents of Africanization of the religion;
- The Muslim Medieval kingdoms of Western Africa;
- Africa and the "Islamic West" (The Almoravid and Almohad Empires)
- Islam, women and gender relations;
- Arabic and Islamic education;
- The Islamic Art and literary tradition in Africa;
- Islam face to colonialism;
- The Islamic tradition of revival and reform in Africa;
- The "war against terror" seen from Africa.

The course will consist of 2 lectures per day, followed by a film screening, a reading and discussion of an historical document or a student presentation.

Evaluation of the Students will be done through their participation in the discussions, a book (or article) review, or a class presentation. A proposed list of topics and books (articles) for review will be distributed at the beginning of the class.

Lecturers:

Prof. Fatima Harrak

Université Mohammed V, Morocco

Week 2 - Christianity in Africa

The dramatic growth of Christianity in contemporary Africa has transformed the continent. This course concerns this expansion and the socio-historical processes through which Christianity has been shaped by indigenous beliefs and practices, ethnicity, class, gender, and politics in Africa. It adopts a historical approach to understand the recent expansion in the context of the past two hundred years, including the impact of European colonialism, African nationalism, and post-colonial politics. The focus is on how Christianity has influenced African lives, both within religious communities and outside.

Topics include:

- Initial Christian missionary efforts and African responses
- African initiatives to found independent churches
- African adoption and transformation of charismatic expressions
- Christianity and post-colonial politics
- Christianity in religiously plural contexts.

Students will gain knowledge of Christianity in Africa and insights into religious change on the continent.

Lecturer:

Prof. John Hanson

Indiana University Bloomington

Coordinator:

Dr. Franz Kogelmann

University of Bayreuth

Further information: <http://www.summerschool.uni-bayreuth.de>