

ISLAM AND MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN ENCOUNTERS IN AFRICA

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Since late 2016, I have been one of the editors of the journal, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, which has been an incredibly rewarding but also time-consuming experience. I also co-edit the International African Institute's book series, the International African Library, which is a series that publishes monographs about Africa in the fields of social anthropology, development, history, and politics that privilege an ethnographic approach.

During the summer of 2018, I worked on my ongoing research project about Muslim-Christian encounters in West Africa, consulting archival collections in Rome where I was able to speak with current and former Roman Catholic missionaries. During this time, I gave a seminar, "Excavating Contentious Muslim-Christian Encounters in Mali," at the Italian Institute of Oriental Studies at Università La Sapienza in Rome. At Universidade NOVA in Lisbon I attended a meeting of the ERC (European Research Council)

project, CAPSAHARA, that anthropologist Francisco Freire directs. This project on whose advisory board I serve focuses on the intersection of Islam and social and political discourses in the Sahara.

During summer 2018, I also visited the University of Bayreuth and the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) as part of an ongoing visiting senior fellowship. In addition to meeting with PhD students in Bayreuth I have been mentoring, I gave a seminar about Muslim-Christian encounters in Africa. I also attended WOCMES (the World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies) in Seville where I chaired a panel about Islam in the Sahara organized by colleagues from CAPSAHARA.

In September I attended the meetings of ASAUK (African Studies Association of the UK) in Birmingham. Along with Marloes Janson (SOAS, University of London) and Birgit Meyer (Utrecht) I co-organized a panel about multi-religious settings in Africa that was part of a series

of panels for the 90th anniversary the journal *Africa*. In addition to participating in editorial meetings for *Africa*, I also chaired the book launch of Hannah Hoehner's new book, *Quranic Schools in Northern Nigeria*, published in the International African Institute's book series.

During academic year 2018-19, I am busy directing the three-year multi-disciplinary project, "Islam in Africa in Global Context," funded through a grant from the Henry Luce Foundation's Initiative on Religion in International Affairs to the University of Florida. The project is being carried out by the Center for Global Islamic Studies in conjunction with the Center for African Studies and will involve workshops, summer institutes, and seminars.

Benjamin Soares is director of the Center for Global Islamic Studies and professor in the Department of Religion.