Christians and Muslims in Africa. Towards a Framework for the Study of Multi-Religious Settings
Summer School, ZMO, Berlin, 14-20 July 2016

Convened by Birgit Meyer (Utrecht University/ZMO), Abdoulaye Sounaye (ZMO), Marloes Janson (SOAS), Kai Kresse (Columbia University/ visiting fellow BGSMCS)

Across Africa, Christians and Muslims co-exist in shared settings, defining themselves in distinction to each other and at times engaging in heavy, violent conflicts, but also being entangled in complicated ways and showing unexpected similarities. In current scholarly research on religion in Africa, the study of Christianity and the study of Islam are thriving, but alas so far these study fields exist more or less independently from each other. This trend is to some extent further enhanced by the recent deployment of distinct anthropologies devoted to separate religious traditions. Scholars with expertise regarding either Christianity or Islam barely engage in conversations with each other. And yet, the long history of encounters between Muslims and Christians – involving a complicated dynamic of becoming similar and asserting difference or involving a complex dynamic of approach and detachment – calls for an encompassing conceptual framework that is devoted to draw out similarities, differences and entanglements. There is need for a broader conceptual umbrella, which entails a comparative orientation, a concern to synthesize the domains of text and doctrine and everyday religious practice, and a combination of historical and ethnographic research. This calls for a multidisciplinary collaboration among scholars from history, religious studies, anthropology, Islamic Studies and the study of world Christianity. Building upon a number of recent scholarly works,¹ it is the central aim of this summer school to further the

development of a conceptual framework for the study of Christianity and Islam in multi-religious settings in Africa, and beyond. We seek to do so by synthesizing conceptual reflection about comparison and comparability in regard to multi-religious settings with detailed historical and ethnographic studies that focus on concrete encounters and interactions among Christians and Muslims in such settings, which also include other religious traditions (e.g. Hinduism, Buddhism, and so-called traditional religion).

This summer school is an initiative of the project Habitats and Habitus, Politics and Aesthetics of Religious World-Making hosted at the ZMO, which seeks to further the development of comparative approaches to the study of Christians and Muslims in Africa, especially in urban multi-religious settings, and beyond. We have invited 25 junior scholars – advanced PhD students and postdocs – whose research focuses on Muslims and Christians in Africa or who study either Muslims or Christians and feel the need to situate their research against a broader comparative horizon. During the summer school, all invited PhD students and postdocs will present their work and there will be ample formal and informal opportunities to get feedback and engage in discussions. Every day, there will be lectures by senior scholars. Themes addressed include the question of comparison and comparability in a setting of religious diversity; a critical review of terms denoting religious mixing (from syncretism to assemblage); the articulation of both religions in the public domain; practices of piety in everyday life; convergences and differences regarding attitudes to health, education, and the state; conflict and violence, interfaith dialogue and peace initiatives. Lasting for one week, the summer school will be held in the premises of the ZMO.

southwest Nigeria chaired by Insa Nolte:
http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/historycultures/departments/dasa/research/knowing/project.aspx

2 Directed by Birgit Meyer, the project involves two PhD students, Murtala Ibrahim and Hanna Nieber, who study Muslim-Christian encounters in Abuja, Nigeria and Zanzibar, Tanzania. The project (hosted at the ZMO between 2012 and 2017 and taking place in collaboration with Utrecht University) is funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in the framework of the Anneliese Maier Research Award. For more information see:
https://www.zmo.de/forschung/projekte_2008_2013/Habitats_Habitus_e.html

3 We are able to fund travel costs and stay for a limited number of participants. Participants in graduate programs are encouraged to investigate possibilities of receiving (partial) funds from their own institutions.
Draft program

Thursday 14 7

13.00 Arrival

13.30-15.30 Panel 1. Introduction: Towards a framework for the study of multi-religious settings
    Chair: Ben Soares
    Marloes Janson: From “Syncretism” to “Assemblage“: Studying Chrislam’s Religious Pluralism in Lagos
    Birgit Meyer: “Pentecostalism, Islam and Culture” Revisited
    Abdoulaye Sounaye: Studying Islam, Keeping in Mind Christianity
    Kai Kresse: A “Double Periphery”: Senses of Marginalization and Rivalry as Starting-points for Research

15.30-16.00 Break

16.00-17.30 First meeting working groups (parallel)

17.30 Drinks and Buffet (ZMO)

Friday 15 7

09.30-11.00 Lecture 1. Insa Nolte: “Muslim husbands, Christian wives: marriage, gender and religious difference in SW Nigeria”

11.00-11.30 Break

11.30-13.00 Working groups

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.30 Panel 2. Muslim-Christian Interactions in Everyday Life
    Chair: Marloes Janson
    Ben Soares: Reflections on Muslim-Christian Encounters in West Africa and Elsewhere
    Joseph Wandera: Living Together in ‘Little Mogadishu’: Conviviality in Nairobi’s Urban Space
    Samuel Ntwusu: ‘Too Much Meat Does not Spoil Soup’: A Historical Analysis of Muslim-Christian Relations in Ghana

15.30-16.00 Break

16.00-17.30 Working groups

Saturday 16 7

09.30-11.00 Panel 3. Comparison and Comparability
Chair: Brian Larkin
Kai Kresse: Working ourselves into an understanding of comparison from within
Roman Loimeier: Why do we compare religions at all? The traps of comparison
Birgit Meyer: Comparison in action – how to study it

11.00-11.30 Break

11.30-13.00 Working groups

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.30 Lecture 2. Brian Larkin: “Media, form and religious movements”

Sunday 17 7

10.00 - 12.30 Citytour
"Moving Religions: an interreligious tour through the Schillerkiez in Neukölln"
Meeting point: Rathaus Neukölln

14.00-16.00 Service at International Christian Revival Church

Monday 18 7

09.30-11.00 Panel 4. Islam and Christianity in the Public Domain
Chair: Birgit Meyer
Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu: Religion and the Quest for Public Presence in Africa: Perspectives on Christianity and Islam in Ghana
Jörg Haustein: Contesting Religious Boundaries: Politics and the (Im)possibility of “Religious Neutrality” in Ethiopia
Corey Williams: Interreligious Encounter in Nigeria’s Public Domain: Chrislam and Multiple Religious Belongings and Identities

11.00-11.30 Break

11.30-13.00 Working groups

13.00-14.00 Lunch, BGSMCS


16.15-16.45 Break

16.45-17.45 Presentation of research at BGMCS
Drinks
19.00 Biergarten Josef und Maria, Drinks and Food

**Tuesday 19 7**

09.30-11.00 Panel 5. Confrontation, Conflict and Violence
   **Chair:** Samuel Ntewusu
   Abdoulaye Sounaye: “I’m Christian...I’m not Charlie”
   Hassan Mwakimako: Hero or Villain: Aboud Rogo and Re-Interpreting of Religious Violence on the Coast of Kenya

11.00-11.30 Break


13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.00-15.30 Panel 6. Health and Healing
   **Chair:** Hansjoerg Dilger
   Rijk van Dijk: Counseling as a Socio-Religious Technology of Disclosure
   Kodjo Senah: Healing Practices across Religions: The Ghanaian Experience
   Felicitas Becker: Health Concerns in the Growth of Muslim and Christian Communities in the Twentieth Century: Convergences and Divergences

15.30-16.00 Break

**Wednesday 20 7**

09.30-11.00 Panel 7. Education
   **Chair:** Kai Kresse
   Hansjoerg Dilger: Learning Morality in (New) Christian and Muslim Schools in Dar es Salaam
   Britta Frede: Girls and women education in Muslim African communities

11.00-11.30 Break

   **Chair:** Marloes Janson
   Abdoulaye Sounaye: Yan Agaji: Pious Servants of the Sunna
   Amidu Sanni: Religiosity and Piety in Contemporary Sudanic Africa: A Narrative from Nigeria
   Kwabena Asamoa-Gyadu: “Meccanizing” Jerusalem: Christianization of Islamic Traditions in Contemporary African Christianity

13.00-14.00 Lunch
14.00-14.45: Concluding Discussion
Departure