

IPTSA

ISLAMIC PROTEST, TERRORISM

AND SECURITY IN AFRICA

Report on Islamic Protest, Terrorism and Security in Africa
Team meeting and research presentations



Canadian Association of African Studies
2019 Conference & Annual General Meeting
May 16-18



Centre
de recherche
et d'enseignement
sur les droits
de la personne



Human Rights
Research
and
Education
Centre



uOttawa



SSHRC  CRSH



Report on Islamic Protest, Terrorism and Security in Africa
Team meeting and research presentations
@
Canadian Association of African Studies
2019 Conference & Annual General Meeting
Montréal, PQ, Canada
16-18 May 2019

The second meeting of the SSHRC Project, "Boko Haram, Islamic Protest and National Security", now known as "Islamic Protest, Terrorism and Security - Africa" (IPTSA), was held during the IPTSA team's attendance at the Canadian Association of African Studies (CAAS) 2019 Conference and Annual General Meeting hosted by the Université du Québec à Montréal at the Hôtel des Gouverneurs in Montréal, Canada which ran from 16-18 May. The principal investigator for the project, Paul Lovejoy, and project coordinator, Burno Véras had organized and were co-chairs for two panels presenting research related to IPTSA, and members of the project presented various papers at the conference over its three days. Those who attended the conference included Paul Lovejoy, of York University, Abdourahamani Mahamadou of Abdou Moumouni University, Chétima Melchisedek of Université de Maroua, Merideth Teretta of the University of Ottawa, Muhammad Bashir Ismail of the University of Hull, Feisal Farah from the American University of Nigeria, Seyni Moumouni of Université de Niger, Bruno Véras from York University, Leidy Alpízar from York University, Kartikay Chadha of University of Toronto, and Ian Hood of York University.

The conference itself was very widely attended, with historians, researchers, and interested parties from various disciplines attending from countries around the world. More than fifty panels and discussions were hosted at the conference on various aspects of African history, as well as contemporary issues and discussions of future of the humanities as a field. The CAAS Annual General Meeting was also held at the Université du Québec à Montréal on the final day of the event.

May 16

On the first day of the conference, project members began to arrive and had the opportunity to meet informally. The panels of that days' program were not connected to the work of the IPTSA project, however, researcher, Meredith Teretta chaired the panel *Author Meets Critic- A Conversation around Florence Bernault's Colonial Transactions*, which discussed topics of imaginings and transactions from Bernault's work on Gabon from the late nineteenth century to present. Bruno Véras presented *Crossing Memories, Art and Digital Scholarship*, an examination of the techniques and roles of digital humanities in the field of historic studies and the Baquaqua Project Initiative.

May 17

During the morning of day 2 of the conference, research collaborators, partners and affiliates were hosted in the Hôtel des Gouverneurs restaurant for the IPTSA second project meeting. Introductions were made around the table, and each of the attending project members were given the opportunity to meet one another in person, and describe their current projects, and work they had completed in which was relevant to the IPTSA project. This provided an opportunity for each to learn from one another's experiences and expertise and strengthen the group network.

Minutes of the meeting can be found in Appendix A

In the afternoon of day 2 of the conference, Feisal Farah presented his work *Al-Shabab, Boko Haram, The Evil Twins of the African Continent* a discussion of similarities in the origins of each organization during the panel on Society, History and Ideologies of Islam.

May 18

On May 18th, the main presentations and panels associated with IPTSA research to date presented their works in room "Gouverneur 3". The first panel presented during the Saturday morning session (May 18) from 8:30-10:00AM entitled "*Boko Haram: Islamic Militancy and Global and Regional Terrorism*" consisted of Paul Lovejoy & Bruno VÉRas (co-chairs), Feisal Farah, Melchisedek Chétima, and Daniel Olisa Iweze. Paul Lovejoy and Bruno VÉRas opened the presentation with an introduction to those in attendance about the IPTSA project, and introduced the panellists who continued to present their research on the following topics within the project:

Feisal Farah, American University of Nigeria, School of Arts and Science
"Al-Shabab, Boko Haram, The Evil Twins of the African Continent: The Historical and Contemporary Social Context that Led to their Birth" - a comparison of the two organizations' ideologies, actions and goals and the historical contexts which led to their existence.

Melchisedek Chétima, University of Maroua
"Pourquoi les Gens à la Frontière entre le Nigeria et le nord du Cameroun Qualifient Boko Haram d'Hamaji?" - an examination of the perception of Boko Haram by residents of the Nigeria-Cameroon borderlands as reminiscent of Hamman Yaji and his practices of violence and slave-raiding along the Mandara Mountains.

Daniel Olisa Iweze, University of Benin
"Insurgency in the North-East of Nigeria and its Implications on Inter-State and Trans-Border Mobility" - an examination of the effects of targeting of transportation routes and vehicles on political and economic stability and well-being of the population of the region.

The audience was very engaged in the presentations, and extremely interested in the current and future endeavours of IPTSA. Many members of the audience also remained to hear the second IPTSA panel which ran from 10:30AM-12:00PM. This panel, entitled *Boko Haram: Islamic Scholarship, Ideologies and Local Dynamics* was also chaired by Paul Lovejoy and Bruno VÉRas, and consisted of presentations in both English and French from Adam Mahamat, Muhammad-Basheer Ismail, Mahamadou Abdouramani, and Seyni Moumouni.

Adam Mahamat, University of Maroua
"Boko Haram au Cameroun: Discours et controverses sur une insurrection qui divise" - (French) An examination of the discourses and controversies surrounding Boko Haram actions in Cameroon, and its divisive effects.

Muhammad-Basheer Ismail, University of Hull
"Terrorism for Jihad: Examining Boko Haram Crisis from Islamic and International Humanitarian Law Perspectives" - (English) Through an IHL lens, this research examined Boko Haram as a military actor which should be governed under international laws regarding state actions in war.

Mahamadou Abdourahamani, Université Abdou Moumouni
"Les éleveurs de la rive nigérienne du lac Tchad face à l'insécurité de Boko Haram : entre mobilités forcées et revendications identitaires" - (French) Examining the experiences of members of farmers/herdsmen on the Niger region of the Lake Chad Basin facing insecurity due to Boko Haram violence in terms of forced migrations and self identity.

Seyni Moumouni, Université de Niger
"*Écrits et propagande Jihadiste : cas de Boko Haram*" - (French) Research on historic jihadist texts and propaganda and its relation to current Boko Haram literature and media practices.

This panel was also very well received, with a very engaged audience who was very interested in the work and asked many questions to all of the members of the IPTSA team.

Concurrently, in the morning of the 18th, Meredith Teretta chaired and participated in a roundtable discussion entitled *Author Meets Critic Roundtable: A Conversation around Bonny Ibhawoh's Human Rights in Africa* with scholars from Illinois State University, Ottawa and York Universities, and Wilfred Laurier University.

On this final day, CAAS also hosted the Annual General Meeting at Université du Québec à Montréal, where topics affecting the organization were discussed as well as holding elections for a new executive council President, Uwafiokun Idemudia, to replace outgoing President, Meredith Teretta. Many of the members of our research group were able to share a final informal lunch, and talk about the how enjoyable this opportunity to meet was, and how they had enjoyed participating in the conference, and supporting each others work on Islamic Protest, Terrorism and Security in Africa. All are looking forward to the next time the project members have the opportunity to meet at the Media and Terrorism Conference in Toronto, at the University of Toronto in the fall of 2019 which some plan to attend, or the proceeding formal meeting of the project membership in Maroua, Cameroon, date yet to be determined.

APPENDIX A

Boko Haram, Islamic Protest & National Security
(Currently operating as: Islamic Protest, Terrorism & Security in Africa)
Project Meeting @ CAAS Conference, Montréal

May 17, 2019

Objective:

The objective of the second IPTSA meeting is provide those involved from various international locations to meet in person and discuss project background, current state of the project and future steps involved in moving the project forward.

In attendance:

- Paul Lovejoy, Abdourahamini Mahamadou, Chétima Melchisedek, Merideth Teretta, Muhammad Basheer, Feisal Farah, Seyni Moumouni, Bruno Véras, Leidy Alpízar, Kartikay Chadha, Ian Hood

Introductions:

To open the meeting, Paul Lovejoy introduced himself to the table and expressed his thanks to all in attendance, and appreciation for the many members who had travelled great distances to attend. Paul Lovejoy also emphasized the very different areas of expertise of attendees, and the importance of learning from one another's experience and knowledge to strengthen the project overall. To this end, introductions were made around the table, where each attendee could outline their background, current projects, and their work related to the field and the project. A short description of introductions follows:

- Paul Lovejoy - York University – Principal Investigator to the IPTSA project, is a Distinguished Research Professor at York University (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) with the Harriet Tubman Institute and the History Department, currently researching several topics related to African Diaspora history under the umbrella project SHADD focusing on biographies and testimony of individual Africans.
- Mahamadou Abdourahamani – Université Abdou Moumouni – Research collaborator whose work focuses on Boko Haram as well as other conflicts within communities in the Chad Lake Basin area. He has been involved in several publications on economic and agricultural development and the aftermath of violence within communities in the area.
- Chétima Melchisedek – University of Maroua – Researcher and recipient of the Banting fellowship to take place at York University, whose work on conflict in communities in Chad Lake Basin includes examination of historic conflict in the area, and examinations of parallels to other violent insurgencies.
- Merideth Terretta – University of Ottawa – Whose research involves issues of displacement and the ways in which people manage displacement as well as legal and human rights history. Merideth Terretta currently holds the Gordon F. Henderson Chair in Human Rights at the University of Ottawa, and is the outgoing president of CAAS.
- Muhammad-Basheer - University of Hull – Linking Islamic teachings with International Humanitarian Law, Muhammad-Basheer studies how the actions of Boko Haram would be treated under international laws and courts if the organization were recognized the same ways as formal military actors.

- Feisal Farrah – American University of Nigeria – Feisal Farrah's comparative work linking Al-Shabab and Boko Haram tactics and beliefs expand the understanding of the origins of Boko Haram as "twinned" with that of Al-Shabab which provides insight into motivations and operations of the organization
- Seyni Moumouni – University of Niger – Seyni Moumouni has worked on manuscripts of Islamic writings and on Boko Haram research since 2005. His published work is derived on manuscript researches, and recently, in Niger, he has interviewed prisoners arrested for alleged involvement with BH. His investigation includes prisoner writings and the books they are using from the prison library.
- Bruno Veras – PhD Research Assistant (African History), York University – Coordinating research efforts at York University and managing research connections with other York University projects such as the Conjugal Slavery in War project.
- Leidy Alpizar – PhD Research Assistant (Afro-Caribbean History), York University – Assisting with research sources, travel logistics and conference planning
- Kartikay Chada – PhD Research Assistant, University of Toronto – Working on IT elements of the project
- Ian Hood – Undergraduate Research Assistant (Disaster Management), York University – Assisting with research sources, database coordination, travel logistics and planning

Minutes:

- **Introductions:** Introductions were made around the table, outlining each other's work related to the field and the project (as reflected above). Paul Lovejoy emphasized the importance of learning from each other's experiences and expertises. Because of all of the different experiences each of the research participants bring to the table, IPTSA is very well positioned to do some very high level inter-disciplinary work.
- **Travel:** We will try to hold a meeting in Niger after Maroua. Because travel complications are making meetings difficult, and we should be having meetings local to the areas of other researchers. Some researchers are having great difficulty in obtaining travel visas in timely manners and because of this, are not able to attend all meetings with other members, or attend conferences and other events associated with the project. Having the team meeting will allow all members to participate equally, as well as involve local expertise to the project.
- **Budget for CAAS Conference:** An honourarium was discussed, each member to receive 600 for this week to cover daily expenses (ie: meals and entertainment) upon receipt, members to sign a receipt book which will be held by Leidy Alpizar. This will be paid through the Project's York University account and come from the project budget. Travel and Visa costs are to be forwarded to Leidy Alpizar for inclusion in the meeting/conference costs to the project.
- **External Support:** It was brought up by Paul Lovejoy, and recognized by those in attendance that external support for the project is very important, and it was also recognized the recently, the Canadian High Commissioner has been and should continue to be very supportive of project activities.

• **Future Steps of the Project:** The results of this SSHRC grant will be to develop partnerships between project participants, then application toward a larger grant will be needed to continue operating the project. This stage is the planing of this portion of the grant to develop relationships between researchers and lay the foundation for the future research initiatives.

• Chétima Melchisedek will play a larger role in the project as a Banting fellow awardee. He will be working on his post-doctoral work at York University in the fall and will be able to work alongside Paul Lovejoy to begin a position of coordinating future project initiatives.

• Focus of the project's current state may not necessarily on Boko Haram or terrorism but instead on the development of research tools, networking and access to knowledge to make the next steps of the project successful.

• **Website:** Currently the website is in an unfinished state, and will be undergoing changes over the summer and fall of 2019. To develop this site, the participants around the table agreed to the following details:

- There is a need to develop text about each project member for site.
- An email has been sent outlining the length of profile information and what details are required will be sent
- Content of the website will have project details, participant information, online blog and outcomes, as well as also including reports on meetings and conferences.

Quickly, the logistics of Maroua meeting which is planned for 2020 was discussed. Next meeting will be in Maroua, as discussed earlier in this meeting, so that any difficulties in Visas and other travel requirements would be easier to address. This meeting is potentially planned for the end of 2020 and will be organized with the help of Chétima Melchisedek. No final decision of meeting timing could be made at this point, but the general consensus around the table was that in terms of weather and travel ease at least, December would be best, though all felt that December of this year was too soon, and 2020 would be preferable.

At this point, the meeting came to a close, and all participants began to leave to prepare for the conference panels in which they were participating as panellists, chairs, or observers. As an aside, all in attendance were reminded of the October conference organized by Abdoulaye in Ottawa about which details were circulated to all members, and will be forwarded to any members who had not yet been invited.

<http://www.iptsa.org>




Centre
de recherche
et d'enseignement
sur les droits
de la personne



Human Rights
Research
and
Education
Centre



SSHRC  CRSH

