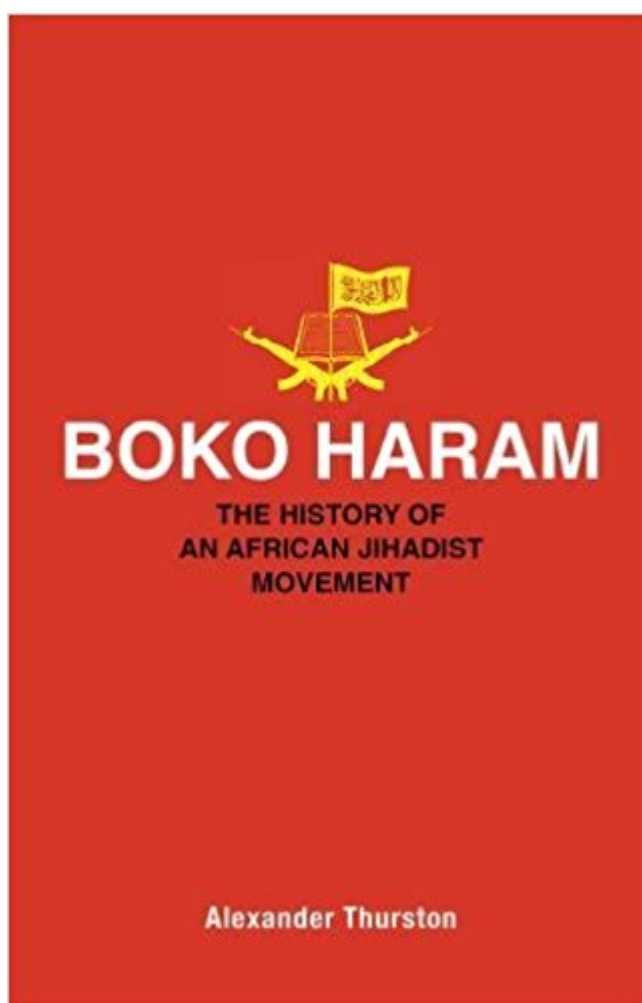


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Boko Haram: The History Of An African Jihadist Movement (Princeton Studies In Muslim Politics)



Synopsis

A comprehensive history of one of the world's deadliest jihadist groups Boko Haram is one of the world's deadliest jihadist groups. It has killed more than twenty thousand people and displaced more than two million in a campaign of terror that began in Nigeria but has since spread to Chad, Niger, and Cameroon as well. This is the first book to tell the full story of this West African affiliate of the Islamic State, from its beginnings in the early 2000s to its most infamous violence, including the 2014 kidnapping of 276 Nigerian schoolgirls. Drawing on sources in Arabic and Hausa, rare documents, propaganda videos, press reports, and interviews with experts in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger, Alexander Thurston sheds new light on Boko Haram's development. He shows that the group, far from being a simple or static terrorist organization, has evolved in its worldview and ideology in reaction to events. Chief among these has been Boko Haram's escalating war with the Nigerian state and civilian vigilantes. The book closely examines both the behavior and beliefs that are the keys to understanding Boko Haram. Putting the group's violence in the context of the complex religious and political environment of Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, the book examines how Boko Haram relates to states, politicians, Salafis, Sufis, Muslim civilians, and Christians. It also probes Boko Haram's international connections, including its loose former ties to al-Qaida and its 2015 pledge of allegiance to ISIS. An in-depth account of a group that is menacing Africa's most populous and richest country, the book also illuminates the dynamics of civil war in Africa and jihadist movements in other parts of the world.

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"Alexander Thurston has written the definitive history of Boko Haram. By weaving a complex tapestry of politics and religion, he explains the peculiarity and potency of one of the world's most lethal jihadist insurgencies. A violent and secretive sect that was impenetrable even to experts is now laid bare."--William McCants, author of *The ISIS Apocalypse*"This is an extremely important book, not just for the light it sheds on a movement that has confounded many but also for the approach it takes in attempting to make sense of seemingly senseless violence based on religious ideology. Students of other such movements around the world will have much to learn from this rich and careful account of Boko Haram's origins and transformation."--Leonardo Villalón, University of Florida"A work of serious scholarship, especially on Islamic matters, this book shows an impressive depth of understanding."--Murray Last, University College London"Alexander Thurston provides a well-argued and richly documented account of Boko Haram. This book will be useful to scholars, students, policy makers, and the larger public eager to learn more about the group."--Ousmane Oumar Kane, Harvard Divinity School

Alexander Thurston is visiting assistant professor of African studies at Georgetown University and the author of *Salafism in Nigeria: Islam, Preaching, and Politics*.

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