“Rasta” Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali

Benjamin F. Soares
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11:00 AM
4020 HSSB

In this talk, Benjamin Soares is concerned with understanding changing modalities of religious expression and modes of belonging among Muslim youth in contemporary Mali. While much recent scholarship about Muslim youth privileges Islamism, trajectories of political radicalization, as well as ethical modes of self-fashioning associated with so-called piety movements, the case of young self-styled Sufis -- sometimes dubbed “Rasta” Sufis -- in urban Mali helps to illustrate other ways certain youth have been refashioning how to be young and Muslim. By focusing on these young Muslims’ activities, including their religious practices, sophisticated engagement with the media, and religious marketing, Soares explores the cultural politics of Muslim youth who are involved in building new communities and dreaming of a world different from the one in which they find themselves.

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