THE POLITICAL SYMBOLISM OF UNMARKED GRAVES: THE KILLING AND SECRET BURIAL OF THE NIGERIAN LEADER OF BOKO HARAM, MUHAMMAD YUSUF

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ABSTRACT
Fewscholarly articles show interest in the study and impact of the dead-on politics and society, especially in Nigeria. This paper is a breakaway from the norm into an unharnessed field of political inquiry, the perceived possible influence of the dead. History shows that the socio-economic standing of an individual shapes the final disposition of his body either in a marked or an unmarked grave. The dead has now overridden ideological significance in domestic and international politics. Some were given recognition and respect even in death by having deserving monuments, as witnessed in Ancient Egypt, for example, while others died with their history completely erased and buried with them in an unknown or unmarked place for fear of influencing the living. Thisessay discusses the strategies adopted in disposing the dead body ofMuhammad Yusuf, the leader of Boko Haramin an unmarked and unknown graveyard outside Maiduguri, Borno State and its political implication. This research uses the public safety theory to explain the denial of a burial ground to the leader of Boko haram, Muhammad Yusuf.

Introduction

Graves embody the power of the past to shape the present and endure even as civilizations evolve as symbols of the unredeemed ideals that have yet to be fully realized. Thus, burying the dead is one of the earliest signs of human capability of executing multifacetedemotiveand rational behaviours. Digging the ground to bury a fellow, which seems to be an easy task nowadays suggests the earliest development of the human faculty of thinking, love, grief and loss. Thus, the graveyard is one of the sources of preserving human history. The culture of burying the dead is ahistorical and, therefore, cannot be easily dated. It predates religion and humanity's 'hunter-gatherers' era.' Homonaledi, an extinct species of archaic humans, were known for burying their dead underground in a cape system, which dates back to 200,000 BC.Efforts are, however, being made by archaeologists to understand this culture through the excavation of grave sites all over the world.The oldest and earliest known graveyards, such as the Mount of Olives (Israel/Palestine, 3000 years old), Odigram (Pakistan, 3000 years old), Kerameikos (Greece, 5000 years old), Gross Fredenwalden (Germany, 8000 years old), Tanana River House (Alaska, USA,11,500 years old) Raqefet Cave (Israel/Palestine, 11,700-13,000 years old), PangayaSaidi Site (Kenya, 78,000 years) and The Levant (Middle East, 55,000-120,000 years old).These findings are not conclusive as of a recent excavation spot in South Africa that dated the grave site back to 200,000 BC.(Day, 2021, Doyen, 2023, Crowther and Faulner, 2021 and Milano, 2018) Thus, the grave symbolizes the past and shapes the present. It endures the rise and decline of civilizations as a memorial cherished by societies and a mark of respect for the dead.

Despite the efforts and successes of archaeologists in the excavation of burial grounds, the graves of renowned historical figures, such as Alexander, the Great (King of Macedonia), Genghis Khan (the Mongol leader), Queen Cleopatra VII Philopator (the last queen of Egypt), Mark Anthony (the Roman General), Attila, the Hun (the founder of Hunnic Empire(Hungary), King Khufu (the Egyptian King), Pharaoh Thutmose II (Egypt), Ramesses VIII (the Pharaoh of Egypt), Queen Boudica (the Iceni tribe of Britons), Alfred, the Great of Wessex(the King of Anglo-Saxons), King Harold II (England), Emperor Montezuma II (Aztec, Mexico), Christopher Columbus (the European Explorer), Leonardo da Vinci (the Italian Artist, Engineer and Proto-scientist)Vlad Dracula (a Romanian National hero), and Mansa Musa (the Emperor of Mali Empire) are still unknown. Time has erased the grave sites, although their history and memories still linger today.

This can be explained as some of the great historical figures arranged and prepared to go with their glories and reminiscences, such as Emperor Genghis Khan. Tradition has it that the emperor's last wish was to be buried in an unidentified site. Thus, when he was laid to rest, his soldiers rode 1000 horses over his grave to destroy any remaining trace of its specific site (Craig, 2022). While others likeJulius Caesar, a Roman General and a statesman, who was assassinated while holding a meeting with Senators on theconcern about his grip on power in 44 BC, was cremated as the custom then. Thus, Caesarhad no burial site nor a tomb or gravestone, although a funeral pyre was constructed at the site of cremation as ahonour at the south-eastern quarter of the Roman Forum (Natalie, 2011).

Thus, history has shown us cultural differences of how societies dispose the dead. The most popular ones areearthlyburial, water burial, Zoroastrian body exposure, entombment and the cremation of the remains. Earthly burial is the oldest method based upon the archaeological evidence cited above. This method provides the deceased a burial site and even a tomb stone for easy identification. The early Romans and present-day Hindus are known for the culture of cremation. However, this process is now becoming more prevalent in the developed countries, such as the United States of America. The cremated remains are buried, placed in a crypt or niche or scattered, aswished by the dead and his relatives or religious dictum. Water burialis hardly practicednowadays. The method involves laying the remains on a raft or canoeto drift on a river until it sinks or eaten by sharks, crocodiles, and fishes. Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome were known for such practices. Body exposure is widely practiced by the followers of Zoroastrianism, who are found majorly in Iran and India. Under this, the dead body is placed where scavenging birds and animals devour it.

However, no society has an elaborated treatment of the dead as the Ancient Egyptians. The numerous magnificentpyramids dotting the land of Egypt situated at Giza and the Nile Valley were built more than 4,600 years ago as monuments to house the tombs of Pharaohs (and sometimes with membersof their families). Such structures were meant to glorify life after death. This explains the treasure items found inside the tomb, such as gold, jewellery, pottery and the mummified body and statue of the Pharaohafter excavation by archaeologists. The Egyptians believed in the afterlife. The pyramids were meant for the spirit of the Pharaohto pass over to the next life. The Pyramid of Djoserin Saqqara was built in 2650 BC (to house the remains of KingDjoser), the Great Pyramid of Giza built in 2589 BC (to house the remains of King Khufu and his wife), the Pyramid of Khafrewas built in 2494 BC in honour of King Khafre and the Pyramid of Menkaure (has the remains of King Menkaure) (Lesso, 2022, Tomorad, 2009, and Barnes and Lacovara, 2002).

Behind the Egyptians'attachment to the dead are the*Shi'ites*,the followers of the fourth Caliph, Ali ibnAbiTalib and his family dominant in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Bahrain and Lebanon.This sect is the first ideologically based Islamic group that came into existence after the death of Prophet Muhammad in 632 AD. *Shi'ism*is populated by those with the belief that Ali and his progeny were the rightful authority to lead the Muslim Community.The sectflourishes and survives for centuries through its numerous rites and shrines built in Najaf and Karbala (in Iraq) for its deceased religious leaders, such as Ali IbnAbiTalib, Imam HusaynIbn Ali, Al Abbas, Al Askari, Imam Abu Hanifa, Al-Mukhayam, Tal Al Zainabeiah and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. *Shia* Muslims hold a special reverence for Imam shrines, considering them the centre and focal points of spiritual guidance and intercession. These shrines function as places of rituals and arecentral points of the Imam's life and teachings. Furthermore, theyserve as ideological brainwashers and rallying points for theirsupporters. The temples are at the centre ofthe sect'sdynamism, influence and expansion throughout the world. Millions of *shi'as*visit such shrinesas pilgrims, thereby strengthening their religious and political solidarity (Price, 2001, Karimitar, 2019).

Shi'a shrine building practices and veneration of the dead for their Imams and other holy figures influence other sects, such as the Tijaniyya,

Qadiriyya, Muridiyya andAhmadiyya. Magnificent shrines and mosques dot everywhere in Muslims' society from Asia, the Middle East to Africa as memorials and rallying points for followers. Renowned Islamic scholars, such as Abdul QadirGilani (1077-1166) (the founder of Qadiritariqa, Iran);MirzaGhulam Ahmad (1835-1908) (the founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, India),UthmanIbnFodio (1754-1817) (the founder of Sokoto Caliphate, Nigeria), Shaykh Ahmad Bamba (1853-1927) (the founder of Muridiyya sect in Senegal), Ahmad al-Tijani (1735-1815) (the founder of Tijaniyya Sufi Order in Fez, Morocco) Shaykh Ibrahim Nyass (1900-1975) (a TijaniyyaIbrahimiyyasufi of Kaolack, Senegal) and Sheikh Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Kabara(1924-1996) (a Qadiritariqa leader in Kano)are just a few whose gravesites are now shrines for pilgrimage and political and cultural rites(Rahim, 2008, Mutrofin, 2022, Roman, 2011, Wright, 2005 and Brigaglia, 2000). Maintaining such shrines has kept fresh the memory and influence of the deceased. They serve as sites for pilgrimage and the dead in such shrines are seen as intercessors with God and visiting the shrines is believed to bring to followers' blessings and spiritual connection. They offer and provide a sense of spiritualism and a place for education and learning of the belief. The shrines also function as the promoters ofa sense of belonging and identity for the followers.

Theoretical Framework

While scholars may not focus specifically on our topic of discussion; the denial of a final resting place for some individuals, such as criminals, terrorists and extremists due to their acts when alive, there are works on punishment, social control, morality, criminology and societal control and reactions to deviance that are valuable perspectives that can be applied to our case study. Psychologist and criminologist theorists, such as Sigmund Freud (the theory of repression), Elisabeth Kůbler-Rose (the five steps of grief), Ernest Becker (the terror management theory), Sheldon Solomon (the mortality silence hypothesis), Ewald W. Busse (the theory of bereavement), Emile Durkheim (the theory of collective consciousness), George M. Kelling (the broken widow theory), Albert Bandura (the social learning theory), Carl Jung (the shadow archetype theory), Viktor Frankl (the logotherapy) and Erving Goffman (the social stigma theory) have contributed directly or indirectly in explaining the different perspectives of this phenomenon.

However, despite the popularity of the cited theories, others such as the retributive justice theory, the social control theory, the social panic theory, the risk theory and the public safety theory are becoming more dominant in the field nowadays. The retributive justice theory (Kant, 2017) sees such an action as a way of ensuring that the individual receives the ultimate punishment for his acts while aliveand even in death. The Social control theory (Hirschi,1969) suggests that punishing an offender is the way for society to maintain order and control. It is a means of maintaining social stability and upholds the values and beliefs of the community. Social panic or the moral panic theory (Cohen, 2011) explains how societies respond to apparent present and future threats posed by the dead.

Nevertheless, the central model utilized by this research is the public safety theory (Wilson, 1975, Kelling, 1982, Sherman, 2018, Goldstein, 1990) to explain the denial of a burial ground to the leader of Boko haram, Muhammad Yusuf.From this theoretical perspective, denying him a grave site is for the safety of the society, (Foucault, 1977, Durkheim, 1984, Becker,1966, Sutherland, 1940, Garland, 2003, Elias, 1982, Guffman, 1963 and Mills, 2000). It is a means of preventing the grave from becoming a site of martyrdom or worship for others who share similar extremist tendencies. In the context of this theory, denying a grave is to mitigate the risk of glamorizing or glorifying Yusuf and his group actions, which could inspire others to engage in similar terroristic rebellion. By refusing such a privilege to Yusuf, the society has signalled a rejection of his behaviour. It is a clear message that his group actions are not welcomed for emulation. Thus, the fear of the probability of an unwanted event that may occur in providing a resting site for an extremist, such as Yusuf, led to the decision of the authorities to bury him in an unmarked grave to erase his history and eliminate the possibility of the site becoming a rallying point for his supporters and new converts that may lead to future uprisings. It is a way of stigmatizing, marginalizing and out-casting Yusuf and his followers. It also reinforced the societal disapproval and retribution against Boko Haram's extremism. Through such actions, Muhammad Yusuf was punished even in death and his existence erased and dishonoured.

Denial of A Resting Place

However, from time immemorial there are instances where some of the dead are denied the benefits of a burial. Such denial may be linked to the acts of the dead when living, which was considered repugnant by the society or authorities. It is an open act of condemnation and renunciation of the historical existence of them. It is meant to erase that individual memory from the surface of the earth. Denial of the leisure of a grave can also have political and religious motives. Certain individuals with political and anti-establishment principles and

religious or *jihadist* tendency and influence suffered the fate of not having graves. Case examples are Muhammed Marwa Maitatsine, Che Guevara, Patrice Lumumba, Osama Bin Laden, and Muammar Gaddafi. Maitatsinewas born in 1927 atMaroua, Northern Cameroon. He settled in Kano around 1945 and started his propagation of the tenets of Islam by condemning modernization. British colonialauthorities early enough identified his extremism, leading to exiling him to his country of origin, Cameroon, which was then a French colony. With Nigerian Independence in the 1960, he returned to Kano and reenacted his propagation with vigor, leading to numerous confrontations with the police. He was adherent and the promoter of the *Qur'aniyyun*sect. He was known for his anti-modernization stance. Maitatsine led a religious uprising in Kano and was killed and cremated by the security on December 18, 1980 (Braji, 1998, Hiskett, 1987 andDanjuma2010). His remains are preserved in a bottle kept at BompaiPolice Station, Kano State.Che Guevara, a communist revolutionary, was executed, dismembered and buried in a mass grave in Bolivia on October 9, 1967 (Ratner and Smith, 2011 and Castañeda, 1998). Patrice Lumumba, an elected Prime Minister, was killed and burned to ashes with two of his Ministers in the Democratic Republic of Congo on January 17, 1961 (De Witte, 2001, Robert, 1971 and Robin, 1969) by the CIA and local collaborators for being Pro-Soviet Union and a communist. Osama Bin Ladin, a Saudi Arabian citizen and a pan-Islamist *jihadist,* was hunted and killed by the United States (US) Marines in Pakistan on May 2, 2010 and his corpse buried in the northern Arabian Sea (Bowden, 2012; Hersh, 2017) for masterminding the September 11, 2001 bombings in the US and the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, was killed in Sirti, Libya, on October 20, 2011 and buried in an undisclosed location in the desert with his son, Mutassim, and his Military Chief, Abu BakrYounes (Netto, 2014; and Davidson, 2017). These individuals shared the same fate and ended without a marked gravesite for fear that such a luxury may rally for them sympathy, support and instigate an uprising against the system.

Muhammed Yusuf

The history of Islam in KanemBorno is linked with the arrival of explorer, traders and scholars from the northern part of Africa around the second half of the 7th century (Tijani, 1993, Zanna, 1993, and Shehu, 2018). Since that era, Islam has shaped the socio-economic and political setup of the region and its surroundings by becoming the state religion after the conversion of traditional rulers, the *Mais.* The acceptance of the religion by *Mais,* such as *Mai* Dunama, *Mai* Bulu*, Mai*Aiku, *Mai*Kadi and *Mai* Ummi, led to its dominance and expansion within the Kanem-BornoEmpire and the neighboring territories covering the entire Lake Chad Basin. The *Mais*were not only practicing Muslims but showered respect and honor to the *Ulama* (Islamic scholars) by bringing closure to the throne and appointing them to sensitive positions as judges and advisers. The area was known for its Islamic knowledge, literature and culture. Renowned scholars and jurists, such as Sheikh Al-Bakari, Sheikh al-Najib al-Takiddawi, Sheikh Abu Bakar Al-Bakumi, Sheikh Tahirbn Ibrahim, and Sheikh Tahir, flourished and taught the religion to the local people (Yusuf, 2016). However, Islamic scholarship is embodied in the struggle to follow and return to authentic tenets and the abandonment of non-Islamic practices. Thus, for decades many sects, such as *Qaddriyya*, *Tijjaniyya*, *Shi'a, Muridiyya, Ahmadiyya, Kala-Kato, Qur'aniyyun, Muhammadiyyu, Fiffikayyu, Salafism*and *Sufism* struggled to have more adherents, as the roots of revivalism are part and parcel of the traditional learning system of the religion in the region, where thoughts and ideas are changed from intellectual differences to warfare. The region witnessed numerous Islamic revivalist movements for centuries. Mai Dunama Dabbalemi reigned Kanem Borno from 1210 to 1259 and waged a *jihad* against surrounding tribes and incorporated and expanded the influence and reach of Islam. The victory of Sultan Ali Yaji of Kano after the battle of Santolo led to the transformation of the Hausa Kingdom into an Islamic Sultanate around 1359–1385. Thus, Islam and Islamic revivalism had been part of the history of these areas even before the arrival and propagation of the religion by Usman Dan Fodio and the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate. It is therefore wrong to assert that Dan Fodio's 1804 *jihad* was the first seed of an Islamic revolt in Northern Nigeria. It is, however, true to say that the 1804 Sokoto revivalism is more studied for its reformist agenda against polytheism in Northern Nigeria and for the establishment of a theocratic state, the Sokoto Caliphate. Dan Fodio used the religion to recruit the peasantry, who had been under the exploitation and corrupt system of Habe Kings. The Sheikh succeeded in uprooting the Habe hereditary system of governance and substituted it with another under his lineage, the Fulani (Phillips, 2017). Nevertheless, the *Mais*of the Kanem-Borno Empire had Islamized most of Northern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin area decades before Dan Fodio's uprising. Despite this cementation, the areas had witnessed violent uprisings led by Islamic fundamentalists, such as MalamDubaba (alias Sheriff ad-Din), who declared war against Baghirmi; MalamIbrahimu (of the 1870 uprising in Kano); Hayatu bin Said (1878–1898), a *Mahdist* opponent of the Sokoto Caliphate, who waged war against the

Shehu of Borno with the help of a rebel, RabehZubayr; Alfa Saibu or Shuaibu Dan Makaho (of the uprising of 1906 inDosso, Niger); Malam Isa (a *Mahdi* rebel of 1914); Miji-n-Aoun of Katsina (1927) and the 1967 revolt of Youra Bourdon from Ladou of South Geidam, Yobe State (de Montclos, 2021). The most recent were Annabin (Prophet of) Doko (a town in the present Jigawa State), the Maitatsine uprising in Kano in 1980, Kaduna and Bulunkutu in 1982 and Yola in 1984, the Kala-Kato crisis in Bauchi in 1985 and Muhammad Ali's Kanamma uprising in 2003 (Adesoji, 2010, Braji 1998, and Walker, 2016).

Muhammed Yusuf's Ideological Basis

MuhammedYusuf was born and grew up under this atmosphere and culture shrouded in confusion from his birth to his struggle for Islamic knowledge and relationship with diverse sectarian scholars in northern Nigeria. TheYobe State native's father was a staunch supporter of Maitatsine and a participant of the 1980 Kano religious uprising, which led to the death of hundreds. He was born in Girgi, a village in Jakusko Local Government, which is populated by a conservative Muslim community committed to practicing *Almajirinci*system of education. Thesystem is the traditional and non-formal meansof educating children in Islam and Qur'anic knowledge under the guidance and supervision of a Qur'anic*Mallam*(cleric) (Edinyang et al., 2020; Abdulgadic, 2003 and Zubairu and Yahaya, 2020). Yusuf as the other children of the area, sought knowledge from one itinerant *mallam* and *AlmajiriTsangaya*(schools) to another as the system allowed.

Yusuf grew upin the Kanem-Borno Empire famous for its rooted *Sunni* Islamic tradition (Monguno, 2017) and its role in the dissemination of knowledge, literature and scholarshipfor those seeking knowledge in the "the East" (*Gabas*) that saw the emergence of "Islamic revivalist movements" under the persuasive conviction of the imminent apocalypse and the rise of the *Mahdi* (Islamic Reformer) (Brakoniecka, 2016; Thurston, 2016 and Sani, 2007). Scholars believedhe would appear and resort to armed struggle to establish a *Daula*(Caliphate) (Yusuf, 2016).

Yusuf's Maturity

As he matured in age and scholarship, Muhammed Yusuf began to move from one renowned scholar or sect to another (Gari, 2017). Although a *Sunni* adherent, he, however, found himself with the *Shi'ite* sect under the leadership of an Iranian-inspired, influenced and funded leader of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN), Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzakky (Hassan, 2015). The group believes in the creation of an Iranian-style Islamic state in Nigeria and acknowledges the authority and pledges its loyalty to Ayatollah Khomeini, the Supreme Leader of Iran. IMN views itself as a government, with Sheikh El-Zakzaky as the only source of authority, leading it to have running battles with constituted authority andsuffer the imprisonment of its leader in numerous prisons and the killing of around 300 members between December 12 and 14, 2015 in its clash with the Nigerian Army (Tijani, 2015). Yusuf's affiliation with Sheikh El-Zakzaky was brief and disagreements with some of the Sheikh's ideas led him to join *Jama'atuTajdidi Isl*am (JTI), one of the sect's breakaway groups (Salaam, 2013). The *Al-Thaqalayn* Cultural Foundation and the *RasululA'azam* Foundation are two other notable Shi'ite factions in Nigeria that oppose El-Zakzkkay and the IMN's ideology and propagation techniques. Yusuf, on the other hand, could not remain with JTI and its brand of *Shi'ism* for long because his ambition to lead could not easily be achieved through the sect (Braji, 2023) and returned to the *Sunni* doctrine by joining *Jama'at Izalatil Bidia waIqamatus Sunnah* (in short: *Izala*) (translation: Society for the support of the Prophet's tradition and against innovations), the dominant and most influential popular Islamic movement in northern Nigeria.

Yusuf joined *AhlSunnaWalJama'ahHijra*, a Maiduguri-based *Izala* group created in 1995 by a relatively unknown preacher, AbubakarLawan (Oyegbile and Lawan, 2007). Seizing a vacuum created by AbubakarLawan's relocation to Saudi Arabia for further studies in 2002, Yusuf propelled himself to prominence as the leader with a large following. His ascension to the leadership was not smooth, as followers like AminuTashenIllimi opposed him for being too liberal (Gusau, 2009). *Izala*, on the other hand, provided him with the benefits of developing rapport with and receiving guidance from great *Sunni Salafist* Islamic scholars and members of the group, such as the late Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam and Sheikh Muhammad AuwalAlbani, Sheikh Muhammad Abba Aji, Imam Ali Gabchiya and Sheikh AbubakarMujahid (Kassim, 2015 and Braji, 2023). This allowed him to broaden his horizons and garner followers from Borno, Yobe, Adamawa and Bauchi States, as well as neighboring nations like Niger, Mali, Chad and Cameroon.

The Initial Stage of Jihadist Propagation

Showing no signs of extremism, fanaticism or a violent temperament throughout the early stages of his development as a scholar, Yusuf had a friendly demeanor and was eager to learn and share views with experts, such as Sheikh Muhammad Albani or even debate with other religious intellectuals. The debate he held with Sheikh Isa Ali Pantemi on June 25, 2006 (Abubakar, 2017, Cook, 2018i) was one of

many conducted from 2004 to 2006 between him and Idris Abdul Aziz Bauchi in February 2008 (Mohammed, 2014 and Braji, 2023). However, as his ideas grew and his violent *jihadist* tendencies became more obvious, gaps appeared between him and the *Izala* scholars and political leaders in his home state of Borno. Heregularly attended Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam's *tafsir* at Indimi Mosque in Maiduguri, Borno State (Smith, 2016). Differences of opinions and tendencies between them led to the murder ofSheikh Ja'afaron April 13, 2007 while conducting the Subh morning prayers at DorayiJuma'at Mosque in Kano (Brigaglia, 2012b and Braji, 2023i) "carried out on the orders" of Muhammad Yusuf in response to his criticism of the group's hardline views on many Islamic issues (Walker, 2012:4).

With the murder of Sheikh Ja'afar and severing the relationship with the *Izala*group, *Yusufiyya,* an Islamicrevivalist group following his teaching, evolved (Fasure, 2009). It transited to what is known globally as Boko Haram. However, the moniker "Boko Haram" is a crude representation of the group's opposition to the corruptive effect of Western culture and influence on Muslim society. However, no leader of the group has ever referred to the religious movement as Boko Haram (translated: Westernization (Education) Is Sacrilege or Western Education is a Sin or Sinful). It is a name popularized especially by the press worldwide and accepted by international community.However, the names preferred by the leadership and membership of the group are *Jama'atAhl al-Sunnah li-l Da'awahwa al-Jihad, Jama'atulAhlisSunnahLidda' AwatiWal-Jihad* or *Jama'atAhl al-Sunnali'l-Da'wawa'l-Jihad 'alaMinhaj al-Salaf,* which translate as "People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and *Jihad*" or "The Association of the People of the *Sunna*(i.e., tradition of the Prophet) for Preaching and Jihad according to the *Salafi* Method". By claiming these names, the group can be categorized as a revivalist movement intending to reform the old entrenched traditional system in society to the genuine tenets of Islam.

Yusufiyya became a revivalist crusade in search of regime change. Revivalism is a revolutionary movement that seeks to overthrow the existing system. Islamic revivalism is an attempt to rediscover Islamic identity and heritage. It is a defensive tactic aimed at combating social vices, foreign influence and culture and domestic tyranny. Although it is not a unified movement, all Islamic revivalists share a common goal: the Islamization of society. Their techniques and emphases varied, depending to the era of existence, ideology and sectarianism, environment or the primary issue confronting society at the time of inception and development. Numerous scholars tried to strengthen Islam through peaceful means, while others preferred the outright destruction of the existing system through violence. Militant hardliners consider violent uprisings as the central means of cleansing the system by engaging in vicious extremism for the establishment of a new social order.

Yusuf revivalism, however, is not spontaneous spiritual renascence of a messianic type, as seen in Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini rebellion, but rather a moderately reformist movement seeking followership in order to lead people back to what he thought to be the real Islam. He was more of a follower of Syed Abu Al'aMaududi than a radical Islamic propagandist. Maududi was a Pakistani religious leader and Islamic philosopher, who moved Pakistan through politics and political involvement from a secular to an Islamic Republic. He was not a revolutionaryor an instigator of violence in his project to establish an Islamic state in Pakistan. Yusuf attempted to implement his theological program within the democratic political framework. That explains Yusuf's and his group's 2003 election involvement and the installation of Ali ModuShariff as the Governor of Borno State. The group was rewarded with a slot in the State Executive Council. A staunch member of the group, AlhajiBujiFoi, occupied the seat as Commissioner for Religious Affairs.

The Germination of *Yusufiyya* Ideology

Yusuf found fertile ground for the propagation of his tenets of Islam. The youth and the poor under economic privation followed and saw in him a savior (Salkida, 2012) against the nation's injustice and maladministration. The area has a history of believing in the rise of *Mahdi,* a redeemer, (i.e., the rightly guided reformer/revivalist or eschatological redeemer) who would restore the religion to its pristine beginnings (Brakoniecka, 2016). His ability to speak to his audience in their dialects and provide instances of the situations around them, such as widespread poverty, class exploitation, injustice and dominance, endeared him to them enormously (Cilliers, 2010). Thus, without means of subsistence, the destitute, the dispossessed and the uprooted without genuine prospects to lead a good life took refuge in the extreme stance of Boko Haram. The majority of its foot soldiers are members of the lumpen proletariat class, motorcycle and taxi drivers, manicurists, shoe-shiners, laborers, school dropouts, *Almajirai* (Qur'anic students), wanderers and the majority of the unemployed youth suffering from economic hardships or loss of livelihood due to the drying of Lake Chad and the effects of wars in neighboring Chad, Niger, Mali and Libya.

Yusuf's lectures emphasized armed *jihad* as an essential responsibility for all Muslims, as he was very critical of westernization thathe regarded not just as a continuation of foreign dominance but also a breach of Islamic Law. His sermons and lectures were distributed via audio, video and social media platforms and his writings, such as *HadhihiAqidatunawaManhaajuDa'awatin* (This is Our Creed and the Method of Our Preaching), preached the precise implementation of Islamic Law, therefore building an intellectual base. This text (which was the outcomes of the numerous debates he had with other scholars) laid the intellectual foundation for a more extremist movement bent on transforming the Nigerian society into a Caliphate through violent uprisings (Cook, 2018). However, this manuscript is not an original thought but a reflection of a *jihadist* scholar, Abu Muhammad Essam al-Maqdisi's book, *this is Our Agenda*.

Though his sermons instigated revivalism, he was never openly confrontational except for a few schismsuntil his group clashed on July 26, 2009 with the security forces in Maiduguri, Borno State, which spread across the neighboring states of Yobe, Bauchi, Kano, Kaduna, Adamawa, Gombe, Niger and Plateau. The insurrection led to the deaths of scores of people. Yusuf was arrested by the military and handed over to the police. He was killed while under their custody. This murder was the 'smoking gun' (to use the Condoleezza Rice (2001-2005), President W. G. Bush's National Security Adviser's words) (Wolf, 2003) that transited the group to become one of the most extremist, militant, dreaded and violent terrorist units in the world.

Unmarked and Unknown Grave Site

The bullet-ridden body of Muhammad Yusuf was displayed to the public and his remains and those of hundreds of his supporters killed during that week's upheaval on July 30, 2009 were buried not in any known cemetery inside the Borno state capital, Maiduguri. The State capital isknown for its numerous graveyards, such asthose of Sheikh Ahmad Abulfathi's family, Moduganari, GoniKachallari, Kwawarmaila, Maximum Security, Bolori II, Zajeri, MakabartarBullunkutu, Army, Kululluri, Bolori, Dalaand Shehuri North. Yusuf and those killed with him were buried at the outskirts of Dolari Village along Bama Road, close to where sand and gravel areexcavated for building. The site is not a normal gravesite but abackveld land. Yusuf's grave has neither mark nortombstone to indicate someone of significant influence and religious standing laid there. This decision by the government may have been motivated by the apprehension that Yusuf's grave could end up being used as a shrine or a rallying point by his supporters for future uprisings.

A marked grave should have given the group a relying field to galvanize and mobilize support for followers. The grave, which is a symbol of death and also a memorial to the countless historical figures that have shaped our world, was denied to him. Extremists, such as Yusuf, were denied a burial site or a marked grave because their acts were so contested that they could not be buried, as if their souls were forever condemned to the eternal realm of chaos. The graves of those who die for extremism are denied to them as a symbol of the condemnation of their cause. While the graves of the dead may be physical reminders of loss, they serve as poignant reminders of the dearly departed and the enduring impact they left on our lives, transcending mortality to connect us across generations. However, the unmarked grave has not removed the symbolism of his ideology, as his radical teachings still reverberate through the minds of disillusioned youth, leading to extremism and terrorism. Though denied a martyr's shrine, his message has continued to inspire new recruits to his distorted cause. The unmarked grave symbolizes a loss sense of identity and connection to one's ancestors, reflecting the disregard for the dead that has been perpetuated throughout history.

Conclusion

The denial of a grave is meant not only to refute the existence of the dead but also downgrade his significance and punish him for the heinous crimeslinked to him while alive. It is a punishment beyond death. This behavior is not of recent but has been around since the era of pre-Roman Greece. History has it that in classical Athens and Sparta individuals that wronged the society were cast away into the sea or deposited in a solitary and unmarked grave far away from the communityas punishment. It was a tradition that aimed at disgracing and ostracizing undesirables. Thus, burial was an honor in itself in such societies. It is, therefore, understandable if in the present era *jihadists*, revolutionaries and nationalists, such as Osama Bin Laden, Che Guevara and PatriceLumumba respectively, were denied such luxuryof having a resting place. Such action is meant to erase their history and influence even after their death.

Nevertheless, the killing and secret burial of Muhammed Yusuf has not achieved the required results, as Boko Haram transited to become the world's deadliest terrorist and pseudo-*jihadi* organization under the leadership of his lieutenant, Muhammad Yusuf, Abu Mohammad Abubakar al-

Sheikawi (Shekau). In spite of Shekau's suicide, the group extremism is still destructive. It has internationalized its terrorism. Most of the Lake Chad Basin has become a war zone.Although the group has no gravesite ofMuhammed Yusuf to use as a shrine for pilgrimage, spiritual support and as a rallying point,the ideology he left behind is still attracting sympathizers, who are more committed to the cause of transforming the nation to a caliphate under the*Shari'a*.Although, now leaderless, Boko Haram's strike on public and private installations and civilian population has intensified leading to the displacement of millions thereby aggravating food and health insecurity. However, intra-group struggle for leadershiphascompounded the already tensed situation in the North eastern Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin. Fractionalization leads to violence as the groups have turned their arms on each otherleading to the killings of factional leaders, such as BakuraSahalaba and the surrendering of thousands of its members to authorities. Despite the negative effects of fractionalization, Yusuf's ideological indoctrination is still vibrant and influencing a rat-tag group to be a formidable force threatening West African nations. Thus, it is not easy to uproot ideological indoctrination. The nation is now transiting into a new phase of waging a war against a leaderless enemy.

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