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Elites Predation and Insecurity: A Perspective on the Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

Crosdel O. Emuedo [α], Henry Oghaotor [σ] & Michael Abam [ρ]

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I. Introduction

By virtue of its complex web of politically salient identities and history of seemingly intractable conflicts, Nigeria can be rightly described as one of the most deeply divided states in Africa. From the colonial era till date, Nigeria has faced a perennial crisis of state legitimacy that has often challenged its efforts at national cohesion, democratisation, stability and economic emancipation (Melson and Wolpe, 1970; Dudley, 1973:38; Herbst, 1996; Maier, 2000). The civil war that ensued from 1967-1970 barely few years after independence in 1960 was initially regarded as the high point of the country's instability. However, instead of abating, conflicts have since, become more pervasive and intense, thus, giving rise to palpable fear for the country's unity. Since the transition to democracy in 1999, the nation's political landscape has been characterised by youth belligerency. Violent youth activities have triggered insecurity; confronted the status of the state as the sole legal monopolist of the means of force and violence. The conflicts have also exposed the peoples' weak allegiance to the nation-state project and threatened its existence as one unified entity. It appears that decades of elite' predation triggered vicious frustration and deprivation that caused youths to embark on extra-constitutional method for negotiation, and redress their dehumanising conditions. Though violence exists in many parts of the country its rampant proliferation and seeming sustenance first in the Niger Delta and now in the North-eastern part of the country in the face of organised state violence is to say the least unprecedented.

The term "elites" is used to refer to those who occupy the most powerful positions in structures of domination" (Scott, 2008). As such, elites are "those small groups of people … in formal or informal positions of power who take or influence key economic, political, social and administrative decisions" (Leftwich and Hogg, 2007a). According to Hossain and Moore (2002), they number very few in small countries, while larger and more urban countries have more but in all elites make up a small portion of the population. But as Hossain and Moore (2002) opined, they usually control a very large piece of the national income and the influence that goes with it. According to Scott (2008), two types; coercive and inducing elites may be identified from the forms of power they exercise, base on the resources they control. Coercive elites control access to the means of violence or force while inducing elites have access to economic assets and induce others to conform "by influencing their rational, self-interested calculations of personal or group advantage" (Scott 2008:33). In Nigeria and Africa, elites have been associated with the formal political institutions of the state. As Chandra, (2006) observed, most often, those who have the capital to launch a political career tend to be 'elites', as politicians also do business personally or through proxies (Daloz, 2003). An important feature of the Nigerian post colonialism elite is that both politics and economics are entirely tied with the state. Thus, the development of the elites has been within or in close propinquity to the state; political power brings with it other forms of power. Hence, change is difficult as elite interests are deeply engrained, straddling economic, political and social dimensions. Besides, due to the systems of patronage and the non- autonomy of the elites from society, they are further embedded. The result is that the state lacks effective institutions, as formal rules are openly defied and ignored. According to Hyden (2006) though formal institutions exist, they do not influence the conduct of individual actors. This, according to Chabal and Daloz (1998) is a derivative of the fact that like other Africa states, the Nigerian state was not unbound from the society and hence not fully established. The public and private spheres are intertwined in their appointments functions and advancement based often, not on merit. As such, power remained personalised and based on

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informal relations. Given the pervasiveness of personalised rule, pressure for democratic reform only gave rise to what Mette Kjaer, (2004) labelled "partial reform syndrome", where leaders commit rhetorically to reform, that are carried out to prevent hurting politically important members of the political elite. In the opinion of Chabal and Daloz (1998:15), this arises from the fact that the elites derive legitimacy from fostering a network of clientele on which their power rest. The network is built upon the capture and control of state resources. This is even more so in the presidential systems, wherein access to state resources is warehoused in the presidency; the core source of resources and patronage (Chabal and Daloz 1998; van de Walle 2001, 2003; Hyden 2006).

In a democracy, elections are preceded with peaceful campaigns and open discourse of persuasion, as candidates compete for votes by presenting reasoned arguments about their suitability for an election to office (Kitschelt *et al*., 2010). Works on political parties; typologies (Duverger, 1951; Kirchheimer, 1966; Michels, 1968), social origins (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Aldrich, 1995) and spatial competition between parties (Downs, 1957), assumes programmatic linkages. Voters therefore, choose contenders with policy position closest to their own preferences. However, this is not the case in Nigeria, as elections appear to be mere struggles over access to state controlled resources. Given these high stakes, politicians have most often, resorted to a variety of "unfair" means to attain public office. Thus, though candidates routinely go through motions of presenting "electoral promises", often, the promises are unreliable (Keefer, 2004, 2007), mostly alike across parties (Mohammed and Nordlund, 2007) and evolve often, into personality attacks (van de Walle, 2003, 2007a, 2007b). As such, choice of candidates by voters is based not on policy option but on the patron potential of a candidate (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007; Bratton and Lewis, 2007; Bratton, 2007). Therefore electoral campaigns have mostly involve intimidation and quirky electoral practice; vote buying (Lindberg, 2003; Schaffer, 2007), and vitriolic electoral violence (Wilkinson, 2004; Lebas, 2006). Often politicians have recruited and armed youths to carry out these quirky electoral practices at a bargain. But politicians on attaining power have mostly reneged on their promises. The resultant angst has resulted in acute national insecurity. We have categorised Boko Haram activities into three but over lapping phases: the known, the political and the mysterious or caliphate (power) seeking eras.

II. Conceptual Framework: Predation and Violence

Barrington Moore Jr. was the first to use the term 'predatory' in a contemporary analytical context (1966, 1972, 1978). He used it to differentiate between the 'predatory' and 'rational' authority that elites in a society can have – the dichotomy he opined, should be appreciated "in terms of the misery they cause" (Moore, 1978:446). The more misery an elite causes, the less rational authority it has; the predatory elite is one that renders very few services to the people, it extracts for itself a huge surplus to create poverty on a massive scale that would otherwise not existed were the people left alone (Moore: 1978, 445-446). The normal assumption is that political leaders are motivated principally by a desire to achieve, retain and exercise power. It is based on this assumption that Levi (1981:435), sketched a theory of predatory rule that starts from "the Hobbesian dilemma that it is in every (ruler's) interest both to make a contract and then, at the first advantageous opportunity, to break it". She opined that policies are the outcome of an exchange between ruling and other elites and that all rulers are predatory in the sense that, "as much as they can, (they) design policies meant to maximise their own personal power and wealth" (Levi 1981:438). Furthering the argument, Fatton (1992) stated that predatory power relations have cultural and material roots. He asserted that ruling elites are predatory for they seek hegemony - all-embracing social domination, over subordinate groups. With specific reference to Nigeria, predatory rule was defined as "a personalistic rule through coercion and material inducement…that tends to degrade the institutional foundations of the state as well as the economy" (Lewis, 1996). That is, political predation involve the proclivity of leaders to unleash violence against (to "prey" upon) their own people. In other words, a predatory leadership not only fails to deliver developmental outcomes; it is also kills, maims and terrorises its citizens. In this regard, Alnaswari's (2000:2-3) depiction of predatory rule in Iraq under Saddam Hussein is more apropos for Nigeria, under the military and post military era.

Migdal (1988) ascribes rulers' policy decisions to a perverse paradox rooted in what he calls "the politics of survival." In order to accomplish developmental goals, political elites must establish strong institutions that are capable of mobilising resources, including political support. However, political rivals can also use these institutions to build independent power bases from which incumbents are challenged. As a result, rulers impose strict limits on the extent of institutional development by appointing officials based on political patronage and creating network of clientele (Joseph, 1987) for cementing loyalty and checking rivals. Hence, Bates (2009) argued that institutional and development outcomes depend on how ruling elites, whom he depicted as "specialists in violence" employ instruments of coercion to extract wealth from society. Other scholars have expanded the debilitating nature of the predatory state. In his study of the political causes of humanitarian emergencies, Holsti

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(2000) identified predation as a crucial latent cause. He opined that predation tends to lead to weak states; resulting in state breakdown and anarchy. Insecurity, in turn, feeds repression and often acute retaliation against the aggrieved (Holsti, 2000: 254). Insecurity, aside, predation is also linked with social and political decay. In other words, when the elite's political and economic interests are served by taxing production, infrastructure a lawful state is established. If, their feeling however, is that the costs of providing protection to society's producers outweigh the expected benefits, then they turn the state apparatus into an instrument of violent predation, giving rise to huge development deficit. As Diamond (2001; 2008) opined, predation causes 'predatory societies' – societies in which predatory behaviour permeates the entire fabric of social and political lives. As such, every policy is manipulated to someone's immediate advantage (Diamond, 2001:13; 2008:44). The elite manipulate power and privilege to steal from the state and plunder from the weak rather than engaged in honest productive activity all the while "shirking the law". Indeed, in such societies the line between the forces of law and criminality is very thin – the police do not enforce the law, and judges do not decide the law (Diamond, 2001: 13; 2008: 44). In Larry Diamond's view, predatory societies are, the polar opposite of a 'civic community' (Putnam, 1994). This is especially true for Nigeria, where despite over $600 billion revenues from oil (Watts, 2008), the Nigerian state remained encased in underdevelopment cocoon. Since independence in 1960, violent elite predation has been the hallmark of governance. This has caused mass poverty, as over 75% of the people live on less than a dollar a day (Weinstein, 2008). The result is that the living standards of people are no better than they were in the 1960s (Parker, 2009). Lewis (1996), in his interrogation of Nigeria (from 1985 to 1994), isolated a key feature of 'predatory' rule. He distinctly linked the economic hardships of the Babangida regime with vital shift during this period: the retrenchment of prebendalism for predation (Lewis, 1996). Here predation is viewed as fortification of rapacious and devastating insecurity under one regime (Lewis, 1996). This obtuse poverty created mass of uneducated youths, who are unemployable and un-trainable. Their situation is further exacerbated by politicians who give them false hopes, use them to climb to power and thereafter dump them. The resultant angst and frustration has led to dire security problematic for the Nigerian state. As we shall see later, often, the youths have been tools in the hands of the elite to short circuit their access to power and resources.

III. Elite Political Competition and Insecurity

The literature on clientelism (Shefter, 1977; Piattoni, 2001; Stokes, 2005; Nichter 2008), argued that politicians in many countries rely on direct exchange of targeted goods for electoral support, woven within an intricate patronage network. In the opinion of Keefer and Vlaicu, (2008) clientelism is due to lack of political credibility arising from the strong desires of politicians to favour narrow groups of citizens. Clientelism is a derivative of the dominant role of the "big man" (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997) in politics. In nascent democracies, clientelism results in the dearth of public goods (Chubb 1982; Calvo and Murillo, 2004; Cruz and Keefer, 2010). In addition, it increases benefits of incumbency for those with access to state resources (Graziano 1976; Fox 1994; Wantchekon 2003; Medina and Stokes 2007), while reward of political brokers who deliver votes by politicians results in avoidance of interaction with citizens (Scheiner 2006; Keefer and Vlaicu 2007). Clientelism has been closely linked to low competition and or monopolistic political regimes (Ward, 1998; Medina and Stokes, 2002; Hale, 2007). Some authors assert that pressure to engage clients are greater when elections are competitive (Scott, 1969b:1147; Shefter, 1977, 1994; van de Walle, 2007).

This may be what turned Boko Haram (an erstwhile religious sect) into a vicious terrorist killing machine in northeast, Nigeria. The *Jama'atul Ahlus Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad* (Brethren united in the pursuit of holy war), better known by its Hausa name Boko Haram, was started in Girgir village, in Jakusko, present day Yobe State, in 1963 by Modu Jon, Mohammed Yusuf's father. Abubakar Lawan succeeded Modu Jon, while Mustapha Modu Jon, otherwise known as Mohammed Yusuf assumed leadership in 1999 when Lawan left for study at the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia. The group was originally a Salafist group but later turned into a Salafist Jihadist group in 2009 (Cook, 2011:9-26); propagating a version of Islam that forbids interaction with the West and even traditional Muslim establishments (Bartolotta, 2011). Mohammed Yusuf was expelled from several mosques in Maiduguri due to his fiery teachings but he continue to attract large youth following; a sizeable electoral bloc. In 1999 Modu Sheriff won the Borno North senatorial seat. He also helped Mala Kachalla an older politician, win governorship election with the understanding that he would spend one term in office. But they fell out when Kachalla later reneged on this agreement (ICG, 2014). Sheriff then recruited Yusuf to organise his followers to help secure his victory through voters intimidation in the 2003 elections. Yusuf and his followers delivered victory to Sheriff and he was promised ₦10 million monthly stipends, sites for mosques and Quranic schools and protection against arrest. This is not surprising for in

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Nigeria various linkages exist between armed groups and political elites (Reno, 2002). Indeed, politicians routinely use their access to opportunities to loot to recruit youths groups, especially those who for a bargain are willing to become their tools (Nwachukwu, 2000:32). Other candidates in Yobe, Kano, Bauchi, Katsina and Gombe besides Sherrif also benefited from Yusufs services based on the same bargain. Really pleased, Modu Sherrif appointed the deal's facilitator Alhaji Buji Foi, Commissioner for Religious Affairs. One of Foi's, first duty was to grant Yusuf permission to develop a compound with a mosque and Quranic schools in Maiduguri. But the relationship between Yusuf and Sherrif later collapsed as Sherrif soon reneged on the ₦10 million monthly payments; the other governors inclusive.

Before long, Sherrif began receiving security reports of the group's arms stockpile (*The Guardian* (Lagos), 2009-08-02). Sherrif in his attempt to either control or cow Yusuf asked the security forces to dislodge the sect from its compound in 2009. In an operation code-named "Operation Flush", the security forces arrested nine of the sect's members; seizing weapons and bomb-making equipments (Nossiter, 2009; Adesoji, 2010; Bavier, 2012; AP, 2012; BBC, 2012; Obateru and Dakat, 2012; HRW, 2014). By this time however, Yusuf was well established with large youths following in his benefactor's states. Thus, the sect responded with unbridled attacks on politicians, government offices and institutions, giving stoppage of its monthly payments as, reason for the attacks (Aziken *et al*., 2012). The violence took place between July 24 and July 28, 2009 in Borno, Bauchi, Yobe, Gombe, Kano and Katsina states. An account by *Newswatch's* stated that violence started 4 kilometres from the sect's Maiduguri headquarter after a bomb killed one person and injured several others. The sect members attacked and burnt police stations, prisons and government offices. Concurrent attacks also, occurred in Bauchi, Kano and Yobe states. Maiduguri was worst hit; 100s of persons killed, several state properties, over 30 vehicles and several houses burnt. One of the houses burnt is the residence of the Commandant, Police Training College Maiduguri. Also burnt were five primary schools and the headquarters of the Universal Basic Education. In Yobe state, the sect burnt the Federal Road Safety Commission, headquarters, a Police station, office of the National Population Commission and many vehicles in Potiskum (*Newswatch*, August 10, 2009, pp. 33-35 and 43). On their part, the security forces killed over 500 sect members in Borno, while 41 persons including a soldier and a policeman died in Bauchi. Also, 43 persons mostly sect members died in Yobe state. By the time normalcy returned, between 1,000 and 1, 400 persons have died and inestimable properties destroyed. The extent of the group's attacks may be gleaned from Table 1.

Table 1: Boko Haram Activities and Attacks 2004 - 2009

Date of Attack	Place	Casualty
Dec. 23-31 2003	Kanamma And Geidam	A group of about 200 members of a BH splinter group launched attacks on police stations in the towns of Kanamma and Geidam in Yobe State from their enclave outside Kanamma on the Nigerian border with Niger. The militants killed several policemen and requisitioned police weapons and vehicles. Following the deployment of soldiers to contain the crisis, 18 sect members s were killed, and large number arrested.
Jun. 2004	Damaturu	4 BH members killed by prison guards in a foiled jail break in the Yobe State capital.
Jan. 7, 2004	Damboa	7 sect members killed and 3 others arrested by a team of local vigilantes in Borno State, near the border with Chad. Recovered were bags containing AK-47 rifles.
Sept. 23, 2004	Gwoza and Bama	4 policemen and 2 civilians killed in attacks on police stations in the towns of Gwoza and Bama. They took to the Mandara mountains along the Nigeria-Cameroon border. Soldiers and two gunships were deployed in the mountains and after two days of battle 27 sect members were killed while the rest escaped. 5 sect members who escaped into Cameroon were arrested by Cameroonian gendarmes and handed over to Nigerian authorities.
Oct. 10, 2004	Kala-Balge	A BH splinter group attacks a convoy of 60 policemen near the border with Chad, taking 12 policemen hostage. The men were presumed killed as all attempts to trace them failed.
2005-2008		BH concentrated on recruiting new members and shoring up its resources. As evidence of their growing popularity, Borno State governor Ali Modu Sheriff appoints an influential BH member, Buju Foi, as his commissioner of religious affairs in 2007.
Jun 11-12, 2009	Maiduguri	BH leader Mohammed Yusuf threatens reprisals in a video recording to the president following the killing of 17 sect members by security forces. This was after a disagreement over BH members' alleged refusal to use crash helmets while in a funeral procession to bury members who had died in a car accident.
Jul 26, 2009	Maiduguri	BH launches a short-lived uprising in parts of the north, which is quelled by a military crackdown that leaves more than 800 dead - mostly sect members, including BH leader Mohammed Yusuf. A mosque in the capital of Borno State (Maiduguri) that served as a sect headquarters, burnt down.

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Sept 7, 2010	Bauchi	The sect free over 700 inmates including around 100 sect members from a prison in Bauchi. 4 persons; 1 soldier, 1 one policeman and 2 civilians killed.
Dec 24 and 27, 2010	Jos and Maiduguri	Over 86 persons killed in a series of attacks in Jos and Maiduguri.
Dec 29, 2010	Maiduguri	8 persons including the governorship candidate of the ruling All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) killed.

Source: Al. 2014; de Montclos, 2014.

The crisis soon spread to Bauchi, leading to the arrested of several members of the group. This sparked further clashes between the group and the security forces that killed about 700 people. In Maiduguri, the sect held the security forces at bay for 3 days, while Yusuf tried an escape into Chad Republic. He was later arrested by army personnel in a chicken coop in his father-in-law's house. The army handed Yusuf over to the police hale and hearty in whose custody he died few hours later (Nossiter, 2009, BBC, 2009; Al Jazeera, 2009). In our opinion, two reasons may be adduced for the death of Yusuf in police custody few hours after soldiers handed him over to them hale and hearty. The first is that his hitherto benefactors are afraid of being exposed by his confession. While the second may have been to the erroneous thought by northern elite that Yusuf's death would cause the sect to fizzle out. This opinion seems strong as exemplified by Borno elders support for his execution. For instance, a classified cable sent from the US Embassy in Abuja in November 2009, available on WikiLeaks, stated that "[Borno political and religious leaders] ... opined that the state and federal government responded appropriately and, apart from the opposition party, overwhelmingly supported Yusuf's death without misgivings over the extrajudicial killing" (US Embassy, 2009). But like the phoenix, from his ashes emerged a new leader and a group more vicious than hitherto. The death of Yusuf ended the known era.

IV. Predation and Spiralling Insecurity

The 2009 crisis that signalled the emergence of the Boko Haram group was a battle with a well known group; its leaders, mosques, bases, homes, family backgrounds and even friends where well known. But thereafter, Boko Haram as it were became faceless. A new leader emerged whose identity was not immediately known after Yusuf's death (Bartolotta, 2011). Yusuf's former deputy Abubakar Shekau, also thought killed in 2009, (Jacinto, 2012), was in January 2012 shown in a YouTube video, as the group's new leader. Under Shekau's leadership Boko Haram has been very audacious in its operations. In September 2010, the group broke into and freed 105 of its members along with over 600 other prisoners from the Maiduguri prison (Ewi, 2013). The group has continuously wrecked havoc across some states in the North since then. It started initially with attacks on the security forces, politicians and government offices in Borno, Yobe states and later Gombe and Bauchi states. Between July 2009 and June 2014, Boko Haram killed more than 5,000 civilians, about 2,000 of which were within the first few months of 2014, in attacks across several northern states (*Guardian*, 19 July 2014; CoFR, 2014). The group has also abducted more than 500 men,(BBC January 3, 2015; Huffington Post, August 15 2014) women and children, including 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in April 2014 (HRW, 2014) 650,000 people had fled the conflict zone by August 2014, an increase of 200,000 since May; by the end of 2014, 1.5 million had fled (Wall Street Journal, 2015).

Furthermore, it attacked Police Headquarters Abuja in June 2011, killing 6 persons, and in August attacked UN headquarters also in Abuja killing 23 persons including 11 UN staffers and over 100 others injured. The group warned of attacks on America and Nigerian government interests while claiming responsibility. The dexterity of the group led to observers' belief that it has link with AQIM that was active in Niger (Mshelizza, 2011; Brocks, 2012; Marama, 2014; The *Guardian*, 2014). The sect has maintained a steady rate of attacks since 2011, striking a wide range of targets, multiple times weekly. The tactics of suicide bombing, used in the two attacks in Abuja; police headquarters and UN office, was new to Nigeria. In Africa as a whole, it had only been used by al-Shabaab in Somalia and, AQIM. (Dowden, 2012; Aljazeera, 2013; Cook, 2011; BoC, 2014). Boko Haram under Shekau was so active that by July 2014, Nigeria recorded the highest number of terror associated deaths in the world in a year; 3477 deaths in 146 attacks (Nkala, 2014). Hardly can the Nigerian state be talked about without reference to religion (Falola, 1998; Kukah, 1994; Suberu, 2009) and often, it's mention, is, negative, due to the myriads religion related crises that had occurred. Boko Haram was, thought initially to be just a religious sect. But it would seem by later events that some members of the northern elite had other ideas about the sect; a tool that could be used to elicit certain reactions and or advantages. This is in synch with the pattern of politics of the dominant ethnic tripod since the General Abacha's era.

The acute repressions of the Abacha era (1993–1998) led to the creation of ethnic militias by the major ethnic groups to defend their primordial interests. For instance, the O'odua Peoples Congress (OPC), (pan Yoruba Organisation, Afenifere youth wing) was created in 1994 in the southwest to protest the annulment of the 1993 elections won by M.K.O Abiola, a Yoruba Muslim.

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The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) (pan Igbo organisation, Ohaneze Indigbo youth wing) emerged two years later in the southeast; to resuscitate the failed Biafra Republic bid of 1967. The Arewa Youth Congress (AYC) (pan northern organisation, Arewa Consultative Forum youth wing) also came into being in 1999 in the north ostensibly to prevent "national dismemberment" by the Yorubas but was actually a reaction to the killing of northern elements in Lagos and other Yoruba towns by OPC cadres. However, while OPC and MASSOB were in actuality ethnic armies, AYC would seem to be mere group of noise makers. As it were, the northern end of the dominant ethnic tripod seemed left out in the balance of force.

Thus, some northern elites would seem to have fancied the Boko Haram as APC's answer to OPC and MASSOB. As such, the northern elite actively protected the group from the law, as exemplified by the forgoing: in an operation code-named, "Operation Sawdust" conducted by the security forces in Borno, Bauchi and Yobe states, in 2005, Yusuf Mohammed, a certain Bello Maiduga and one Ashafa and some other Islamic extremists were arrested. Their arrests gave the first hint of the links between the sect and the Al-Queda terrorist group. Yusuf and his men revealed that they had received training in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Pakistan and Iraq. Amongst items recovered from them were maps and detailed drawings of some public buildings and government offices in Abuja (*Tell*, August 17, 2009:69). They were detained till the end of Obasanjo's presidency in 2007. But, upon Yar'Adua's assumption of the Presidency, Muslim scholars and northern elites pleaded for their release, asserting that they were mere Islamic evangelists. President Yar'Adua ordered their release. However, this was despite 14 strong reports by the State Security Service (SSS) on the subversive activities of the group to President Yar'Adua, Governor Sherrif and the Police Inspector General (*Tell*, August 17, 2009:69).

The usefulness of Boko Haram to the northern elite may have become manifest with President Yar'Adua's death in 2009. When President Yar'Adua died two years into his four-year tenure, the northern elite despite clear constitutional provisions, wanted another northerner sworn in as president. Indeed, it took a so called "doctrine of necessity" by the Nigerian Senate before then Vice-president Jonathan was sworn in as Presiden. It seems however, that the understanding was that President Jonathan would only complete late Yar'Adua's tenure. Thus, at the onset of the 2011 elections, stringent emanated from northern elite asking President Jonathan not to contest. Adamu Ciroma, a former Finance minister threatened President Jonathan that the country would become ungovernable, should he contest the elections. But Jonathan contested and won the elections. Thereafter, Boko Haram went on killing spree across many northern states. The group's attacks post the 2011 elections to the December 2012 is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 : Boko Haram Attacks from 2011 – 2012.

Date	Place of Attack	Casualty	Remark
May 27, 2011	Damboa	4 policemen and 4 civilians killed in a simultaneous attacks on a police station, a police barracks and a commercial bank.	
May 29, 2011	Bauchi	13 persons killed and 33 injured following 3 bomb blasts in a beer parlour in a military barracks.	
Jun 6, 2011	Biu	Muslim cleric Ibrahim Birkuti, critical of BH, killed outside his house.	
Jun 7, 2011:	Maiduguri	14 persons killed in attacks on a church and two police posts.	
Jun 16, 2011	Abuja	2 persons killed and over 70 cars burnt in a suicide bomb attack on National Police Headquarters.	
Jun 20, 2011	Kankara,	5 policemen and 2 civilians killed in gun and bomb attacks on a police station and a bank.	
Jun 27,2011	Maiduguri	Over 25 persons killed and scores injured in a gun and bomb attack on a beer garden.	
Aug 25, 2011	Gombi,	16 persons including 7 policemen killed in a gun and bomb attacks on two police stations and two banks.	
Aug 26, 2011	Abuja	Over 23 persons killed in a suicide bomb attack on UN compound.	
Sept 4, 2011	Maiduguri	A cleric Malam Dala killed outside his home by two persons.	
Sept 12 2011	Misau	4 policemen and 3 civilians killed in bomb and shooting attacks on a police station and a bank.	The bank was successfully robbed by the attackers.
Sept 13 2011	Maiduguri	4 soldiers injured in an ambush.	15 members of the sect arrested in their hideout.
Sept 17 2011	Maiduguri	Babakura Fugu, brother-in-law to slain BH leader Mohammed Yusuf killed two days after attending a peace meeting with ex-President Olusegun Obasanjo.	The sect denied taking part in the killing
Oct 1, 2011	Maiduguri	2 butchers killed at Baga market; attacks on an army vehicle taking meals to soldiers at a checkpoint killed 3 persons.	
Oct 3, 2011	Maiduguri	Attacks on Baga market kill 3 persons (1 tea-seller, 1 drug store owner and 1 passer-by).	The victims are all civilians

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Oct 23, 2011	Saminaka	A bombing and shooting attacks on a police station and two banks kills 1 policeman and 1 security guard.	
Oct 23, 2011	Katari	2 persons killed in a gun attack on a market.	
Oct 25. 2011	Damaturu	A police officer killed in his house in a targeted attack.	
Oct 29, 2011	Maiduguri	A Muslim cleric Sheikh Ali Jana'a killed outside his house.	He was said to have given information about the sect to security forces.
Nov 1, 2011		The sect rejects dialogue with government until all its detained members are released.	
Nov 2, 2011	Maiduguri	1 soldier killed outside the main market.	
Nov 4, 2011	Maiduguri Damaturu and Potiskum	Borno State governor's motorcade bombed on his way from the airport; About 150 persons killed in a coordinated attacks on police facilities; 2 persons killed in a botched suicide attack outside the headquarters of the Joint Task Force.	
Nov 9, 2011	Maina village	A police station and the office of the Federal Road Safety office bombed.	No one was hurt
Nov 26, 2011	Geidam	3 policemen and a civilian injured in bomb and shooting attacks; 6 churches, police station, a beer parlour, shopping complex, a high court, a local council building and 11 cars burnt.	
Nov27, 2011		A protocol officer in Borno State governor's office killed.	
Dec 4, 2011	Azare Maiduguri	1 soldier, 1 policeman and 1 civilian killed in attacks on police station and 2 banks; A groom and a guest killed at a wedding.	
Dec 7, 2011	Kaduna	8 people killed by bomb attack.	
Dec 13, 2011	Maiduguri	10 persons killed and 30 others injured in a bomb and shooting attack on a military checkpoint.	
Dec 17, 2011	Kano Maiduguri	3 policemen and 4 civilians killed in a shootout at a raid on a sect leader's hideout. 3 sect members killed assembling IEDs in a hideout.	4 sect members killed and 14 arrested; large cache of arms and bombs seized.
Dec 19, 2011	Damaturu	1 sect member killed and 2 others injured while assembling home-made bomb.	
Dec 22, 2011	Maiduguri Potiskum Damaturu	20 persons killed by bombs; 4 policemen and a civilian killed in an attack on a police facility; Over 100 persons killed in multiple attacks on soldiers	
Dec 25, 2011	Madalla, Damaturu and Jos	42 worshippers killed in an attack on Saint Theresa Catholic Church; 3, SSS operatives and a BH bomber killed in a suicide attack on SSS headquarters. A policeman killed in a botched BH bomb attack on a church in the Ray Field area of Jos.	
Dec 28, 2011	Mubi	15 persons injured in an attack on a beer parlour.	
Dec 30, 2011	in Maiduguri	4 Muslims leaving a mosque after Friday prayers killed in an attack at a military checkpoint.	
Jan 3, 2012	Birniwa	A young boy killed and policeman injured in an attack on a Police station.	
Jan 5, 2012	Gombe	6 persons killed and 10 others injured in an attack on a church.	
Jan 6, 2012	Yola and Mubi	8 persons killed in a church and 17 persons mourning one of those killed in beer garden killed	
Jan 7, 2012	Biu	3 Christian killed and 7 others injured.	
Jan 9, 2012	Biu	An SSS operative and a civilian friend killed as they exit a mosque.	President Jonathan says BH has infiltrated the executive, NASS and judiciary.
Jan 10, 2012	Damaturu,	8 persons, 5 policemen and a young boy killed in a beer parlour.	
Jan 11, 2012	Potiskum	4 Christians fleeing Maiduguri for the East killed in a petrol filling.	
Jan 13, 2012	Yola and Gombe	4 killed, 2 injured including a policeman, in two separate attacks on bars	
Jan 17, 2012	Maiduguri,	2 soldiers and 4 BH gunmen killed in an attack on a military checkpoint	6 sect members arrested by soldiers
18 Jan, 2012		A key suspect in the 2011 Christmas Day bombing in Abuja that killed more than 40 persons, escapes from police custody.	The scandal forces the Inspector General of Police, Hafiz Ringim, to resign.
20 Jan, 2012	Kano	250 persons mostly civilians, amongst whom are 3 Indians	Boko Haram gunmen also freed

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		and Channels Television journalist killed in coordinated attacks on police facilities.	between 50 and 100 members from jail.
2 Feb, 2012	Maiduguri	6 dissident members of the sect killed.	The sect promise to kill any of its members who makes contact with government.
8 Apr, 2012	Kaduna	41 persons killed in a suicide car bomb on Easter Sunday.	The army alleged, the sect's execution of its spokesman, Abul Qaqa II, adding that the sect is riven by internal divisions. (In January 2012, the SSS said it had captured Boko Haram's previous spokesman, Abul Qaqa I).
26 Apr, 2012	Abuja and Kaduna	The offices of *ThisDay* newspaper in Abuja and a building housing several media outlets inclusive in Kaduna were bombed killing 4 persons in Abuja and 3 in Kaduna.	The sect gave "lies" reported about it and 2002 article that dishonour the Prophet, as reasons for attack.
29 Apr, 2012	Kano	19 people, including 2 lecturers killed in attack on two Christian services at Bayero University, Kano.	
10 May, 2012	Kano	Shiite Islamic sect leader Muhammad Ali, killed by elements of Boko Haram.	
17-19 Jun, 2012	Kaduna and Zaria	100 persons killed and over 300 injured in attacks on churches.	21 Hausa-Fulanis killed in reprisal attacks by Christian youths in Kaduna
6 Aug, 2012	Sokoto	7 policemen killed in suicide attack on police station just metres away from the house of former President Shehu Shagari.	
21 Aug, 2012	Biu	A Muslim religious leader and one of his aids killed in a mosque.	Men of the Joint Task Force (JTF) began distribution of anti-Boko Haram video tapes in Maiduguri town.
5-6 Sept, 2012		Over 2 dozen mobile telephone towers destroyed across northern Nigeria.	This was to avenge the mobile phone companies' cooperation with Nigerian intelligence services.
6 Oct, 2012	Gubio and Maiduguri	3 Chinese cooks killed as they leave a market in Gubio. 1 Ghanaian and 2 Indians also killed in Maiduguri.	
7 Oct, 2012	Damaturu	The JTF announce the killing of Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau and 30 members and arrest of 10 others in Kandahar.	
8 October 2012	Maiduguri	A JTF officer is killed in an IED attack on his convoy.	Soldiers killed 30 ivilians and burnt 50 houses, stores, and vehicles in reprisal
28 October 2012	Kaduna	8 persons killed and 145 others wounded in an attack on St. Rita's church	Christian youths attack Muslim areas in reprisal.
20 Dec, 2012	Katsina	Francis Collomp a French engineer adopted in his compound.	4 days later, Ansaru, an offshoot of Boko Haram claims responsibility.

Source: Al. 2014; de Montclos, 2014, The Nation Online July 24, 2014, Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia.

V. Predation and the Transmutation of Boko Haram

A palpable state of insecurity engulfed Nigeria following the spate of wanton killings across the north, giving room for serious concern about the country's unity. This became acutely exacerbated with targeted killing of Christians in churches, markets, parks, and entertainment spots. Though Babel of voices from other parts of the country strongly condemned the heinous killings and wanton destruction of properties, no northern (Muslim) elite was heard voicing even mild condemnation of the sect's actions. The ominous silence in the north would seem to indicate northern elite tacit if not full support for the group. This is exemplified by the fact that the first statement by the northern elite was a call for dialogue with the sect by the federal government. In it's seemingly attempt to rein in the sect the federal government imposed a state of emergency on the embattled states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. In response ACF issued a statement stating that "No force can stop Boko Haram" adding, "The federal government should commit itself openly and unambiguously in guaranteeing the security of the leaders of Boko Haram when they eventually come out for dialogue". Before the import of this statement could sink in the Arewa Consultative Forum (AFC) issued a statement stating that "There will be nothing intrinsically wrong, if Boko Haram is ACF's military wing. After all, it has now been effectively proven that (with recent pronouncements by the ACF and its Arewa Citizens Action for Change, youth wing) what the Haramites are to the ACF, what the OPC is to the Afenifere and their

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Egbe Omo Oduduwa counterpart; just as it is fast becoming a fact, that MASSOB has gradually transform into the military wing of the Ohaneze" (Offoaro, 2012). Thereafter, several northern elite eagerly promised to make contact with a hitherto faceless group.

This was not surprising because to keen observers of Nigerian politics Boko Haram's actions post 2011 elections differed markedly with its actions pre the 2011 elections. Boko Haram not only turned the north into killing fields, the sophistication and dexterity of some of their actions left little room for conjecture. Their attacks seem too well planned and executed to be carried out by the sect. Besides, most often, the attackers not only appear to have all the time to execute their heinous acts, they also seem to operate unimpeded. It is not uncommon to hear reports of attacks in areas surrounded by military checkpoints, barracks and patrols. For example, for some inexplicable reasons, soldiers were withdrawn moments before Boko Haram's attacks on Buni Yadi. Furthermore, cases of dubious and curious passages of insurgents through military "secured" areas to their targets unhindered abound. An example is the reported failure of critical military hardware, when Boko Haram attacked Giwa barracks in Maiduguri. It would seem therefore, from all intent and purpose that the sect was gored into its murderous acts by the northern elite following their failure to prevent President Jonathan from contesting the 2011 elections, which he also won. It is surmised that the actions of the set were either to teach President Jonathan a lesson or to help them gain some advantages. This view is given credence by the northern elites' reactions to the federal government's attempt to rein in the sect. For instance, while no northern elite ever condemned Boko Haram's heinous killings, they utterly disparaged the federal government declaration of a state of emergency in fifteen local government areas in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states. Instead northern leaders, governor Kwankwaso of Kano state inclusive began calls for granting the group amnesty (Ogbu, 2013). The calls became strident and stringent when President Jonathan extended the state of emergency to the entire areas of the three states in 2013 (Jackson, 2013). However, extraneous events appeared to have changed the course of things for everybody, as, Boko Haram transformed from an ethnic army into a vicious bloodletting terrorist group.

The ouster of Gadaffi in Libya led many of the motley Islamist rebel groups, his erstwhile supporters to flee. Many of the groups escaped into northern Mali, and declared the area an independent state under strict Islamist rule. Following the failure of the Malian army to effectively engage them, they started their advance towards the capital unchecked. To stem the tide of events, France spearheaded a move for intervention. On October 12, 2012 the United Nations Security Council passed a French sponsored resolution approving an African-led force to assist the Malian army battle the Islamist and separatist groups, Ansar Dine, MOJWA, and AQIM in northern Mali. In pursuant of the resolution, France on January 11, 2013 launched "Opération Serval" to oust these groups and it did within a short time period. The dislodgement of these groups from Mali it would seem led some members of these groups to join Boko Haram. Strengthened by these fighters the sect's leader, Shekarau may have decided to answer to nobody but himself; thus, began Boko Haram's mysterious or power seeking era. This era in our view began with the attack on the convoy of the Emir of Kano that killed his driver and two palace guards. Since then killings and attacks by the group has been haphazard. The group became the enemy of all; northerners, southerners, Muslim and Christians alike. This may be gleaned from Boko Haram's attacks during this period, Table 3.

Table 3 : Boko Haram Attacks from 2013 – 2015

19 Jan, 2013	Kano	2 palace guards and a driver killed in an attack on the Emir's convoy	
8-11 Feb, 2013	Kano and Potiskum.	9 female polio vaccinators killed in two attacks on health centres 3 North Korean doctors killed three days later.	
16 Feb, 2013	Bauchi	7 expatriate workers of Setraco construction company kidnapped in Jama'are.	Adoption was by Ansaru Boko Haram's splinter group.
19 Feb, 2013		7 members of French Moulin-Fournier family kidnapped in Waza National Park, Cameroon.	Boko Haram claims responsibility
10 Mar, 2013	Bauchi	7 expatriate construction workers abducted by Ansaru executed	Rescue attempt by British forces , given as reason
18 Mar, 2013	Kano	Over 70 persons killed by bomb at luxury buses park	Target was Christians
22 Apr, 2013	Baga	Over 185 persons killed in fighting between the sect and security forces	This was started by gun fire in a video-viewing centre
14 May 2013		President Goodluck Jonathan declares a state of emergency in Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states to effectively combat Boko Haram head-on.	The largest contingent of army personnel mobilised in Nigeria since the Civil War.
Jun-Oct, 2013	Borno	100s killed in myriads clashes between Boko Haram and the JTF in various parts of Borno, Yobe, and also Adamawa.	The "Mechanised Division's Operation BOYONA" also uses the air force and heavy artillery to bomb Boko Haram camps.

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19 Aug, 2013	Borno	JTF spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Sagir Musa claimed Abubakar Shekau died between 25 July and 3 August 2013 from injury in a clash with the JTF in the Sambisa forest.	
25 Sept, 2013		Abubakar Shekau appears in a video spoke about some recent events of the conflict, including attacks that killed 90 persons in Benisheik on September 17 and mocks his death claim by the military.	The JTF states the authenticity of the video is doubtful.
29 Sept, 2013	Gujba	40 students killed in an attack on the College of Agriculture.	
Jan, 26, 2014	Kawuri	45 persons killed in an attack on a marked.	
Feb, 11 2014	Konduga	23 persons killed and entire A village burnt down	
Apr, 14 2014	Chibok	About 276 girls kidnapped from a boarding school.	They are yet to be found
May, 13 2014	Borno	3 villages raided by hundreds of gunmen	over 200 gunmen killed resisting villagers.
May, 20 2014	Jos	118 persons killed by twin bomb blasts in a market	
Jun, 3-4 2014	Borno	About 400-500 persons killed in various attacks across the state	
Jun, 7-8 2014	Garkin Fulani	About 20 young women kidnapped over a weekend	The village is 8km from Chibok
Jun, 18-22 2014	Kummabza	4 villages held hostage for four days; 30 men killed and about 60 women and children adopted.	
Jul, 17-20 2014	Damboa	Over 66 persons killed while about15,000 fled due to siege on the town.	
Jan, 3 2015	Baga	About 2000 persons killed and multinational military base seized in an attack on Baga and neighbouring villages	Everywhere was littered with dead bodies.
Jan, 10-11 2015	Maiduguri Potiskum	Over 20 persons killed and 18 others injured at a market checkpoint by a teen girl suicide bomber. 3 persons killed and 43 others injured in a market by two teen suicide bombers.	

Source: Al. 2014; de Montclos, 2014, The Nation Online July 24, 2014, Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia.

Besides the spate of indiscriminate killings and wanton destruction of properties, the sect also appeared invisible. They seized large portions of the Nigerian territory and set up their own administration. Poorly kitted, the army crumbled like pack of cards in every encounter with the sect; “retreat” and “flee” became common lexicon amongst Nigerian troops. Thus, then Borno state governor, Kashim Shettima, said in frustration, in February 2014 that "Boko Haram was better armed and motivated than Nigerian troops. Adding that given the state of affairs, it is absolutely impossible for Boko Haram to be defeated” (Onuoh, 2014). The governor’s view seemed apt as, cases of mutiny and court marshals became rampant, leading to season of court marshal of officers and men of the army (*Vanguard*, 2012; Soriwei, 2014; Tsokar, 2015; Ajobe, *et al*., 2015). Soldiers court marshalled alleged that besides poor kits, they lacked vital supplies including bullets; making all encounters between the army and the sect a suicide mission for erstwhile gallant troops (Ndahi and Ukpong, 2014, *The Nation*, 2014; BellaNaija News; Odunsi, 2015; Chinedu, 2015). The poor state of the army arose because the elite turned the crisis into easy access to resources. The failure of soldiers to engage the enemy bare handed led to It is our own opinion that the Nigerian elite saw the insurgency as an opportunity to benefit themselves in several ways. For some members of the elite, Boko Haram presents an opportunity for access to easy money and others, continued access to power. As a result, of these mutually exclusive selfish interests no serious consented effort was made to tackle Boko Haram. Thus, army procurement contracts are not executed or poorly executed and resources routinely shared; a view supported by others. For instance, the US Department of Defense seem s to share the same view when it stated in 2014 that funds are being "skimmed off the top", troops are "showing signs of real fear," and are "afraid to even engage” (Blanchard, 2014).

Also, rather than decisively tackle Boko Haram at inception, President Jonathan left it to fester. Even adoption of over 200 Chibok school girls could change this trend, until it grew into a monstrous and vicious terrorist group. It is our view that this is because Jonathan and his party saw the insurgency as an election winner. In their view, routing Boko Haram in an election year would swing voters in their favour. Thus, immediate routing Boko Haram would not serve their election prospect, as, it memory would have faded before the elections. Thus no intense effort was made to end the insurgency, while the elite contrived schemes to garner resources. Thus, the army was weakened through denial of appropriate battle gears and equipment giving rise to low troop morale. It appears this fact was well known for Reuters news agency reported a former British military attaché as describing the Nigerian military as, "a shadow of what it's reputed to have once been. In his own words, It's fallen apart", as morale is very low due to shortage of basic equipment; radios and armoured vehicles. This is the result of senior officers skimming military procurement budget that are intended to pay for the standard issue equipment of soldiers (Cocks, 2014). For instance $9.3 million supposedly meant for procurement of arms was seized in South Africa (Ibekwe, 2014; Taiwo, 2014; Punch, 2014). The huge sum was ferried into South Africa in a

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jet owned by a pastor (closely linked with the presidency); the money remains in South Africa till date.

Our views about Boko Haram and election seem vindicated by actions of President Jonathan at the approach of the 2015 elections. Barely few weeks to the February 14, 2015 start date, the elections were postponed for six weeks. The postponement according to the government was to decisively rout Boko Haram and make every part of the country eligible for the elections. Soon the dreaded Boko Haram, erstwhile nemesis of Nigerian troops was in full flight and both the print and electronic media a washed with news of troop victories over the sect, including the rescue of over 1000 persons. This reinforces our earlier surmise that the sect could have been stopped but for the selfish interests of the elite. Indeed, it would appear that arising from the easy access to resources that the Boko Haran insurgency provided the elite were not interested in ending it. Thus, the elite have contrived myriads schemes to ensure the insurgency festered. Thus, when the government finally jolted out of its lethargy to seemingly engage the sect and it appears to be gaining ground, "ceasefire" option was spawned (*Leadership* Ng, Oct. 17, 2014; *Daily Trust* Ng, Oct, 17, 2014); claiming that it would bring peace to the north. According to Ajani (2015) senior state officials, find claim of engagement with Boko Haram a very lucrative means of siphoning millions of dollars. But as, it turned out, the "ceasefire" was a mere gimmick for Boko Haram to regroup and after, it attacked with more venom, wrong footing the army (*Telegraph* Uk, Oct 20, 2014). It would seem that even now some factions of the Nigerian elite are unhappy with the present lot of Boko Haram following the joint action by Niger, Chad and Nigeria to end the Boko Haram's scourge. This exemplified by the fact that despite all its despicable deeds, northern elites including Mohammed Uwais, former Chief Justice of Nigeria, (CJN), Ambassador Babagana Kingibe former Secretary to the Federal Government (SFG), and former Nigerian Ambassador to the United Nations, Ibrahim Gambari have continued their calls and even asked newly elected President Buhari to grant Boko Haram amnesty (Daniel and Erunke, 2015).

VI. Conclusion

Boko Haram started like any other religious group in Nigeria not long after independence and it remain purely so for decades. We argued that the sect would have remained religious but for the intervention of predatory elite that sought the group's help to gain power and access to resources. However, after using the sect to gain power, the elite reneged on their promises to the sect. This proved fatal as the sect peeved by the failed promises tried to even score with its erstwhile benefactors by deployment of violence. The elite to gain control, in return, deployed state's instruments of violence against the sect. We further argued that the violence spewed by the sect against its benefactors gave rise to unintended outcomes. A faction of the elite courted the sect as a tool that can be deployed to obtain some desired advantages, while other elite factions fancied the sect as an election winning tool. Arising from these mutually conflicting interests, no concerted effort was made to rein in Boko Haram, rather it was seemingly protected and or deliberately ignored giving it time to consolidate, till it grew into Frankenstein monster; controlled by none but injurious to all. Thus, it can easily be concluded that insecurity that has engulfed the country is due primarily to actions or inactions of the Nigerian elite to acquire power for predatory purpose.

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