

# Accompaniments Mystic-Cultural Volunteers for the Defense of the Fatherland (VDP) in the Fight against Terrorism: Experiences of Boulsa Fighters

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## Abstract

This article, The Result of Research on the Mystical-Cultural Support of Volunteers for the Defense of the Homeland in the Commune of Boulsa, Studies the Different Possibility Offered to the Community to Support Its Members who are engaged in the Fight Against Terrorism. Answering the Main Research Question, The Hypothesis Put Forward Considers these supports as operations rooted in the tradition and culture of the environment, are initiated and supervised by informed prescribers and provides comfort to combatants on the group. It emerges after analysis that thesis mystical cultural accompaniment are real individual, community and societal practices and beliefs in the study area. They are seen as psychological aids for combatants and as groups for cohesion and the promotion of values for the entire community.

## Keywords

Support, Mystical-Cultural, VDP, Terrorism

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## 1. Introduction

Since 2014, Burkina Faso has faced a problem never known in its history. It is the terrorist phenomenon that rages in ten regions out of the thirteen that the country has. For more than seven years, several solutions to deal with the scourge of this security crisis have been implemented under which we can cite local security initiatives (Kogelweogo, Dozo, Ruga) and the volunteer institution for the defense of the homeland etc...Indeed, more and more, there is a question of involving populations in the management of their own safety. But, when populations that are

not used or authorized for the handling of weapons are found at the center of the fighting and they often pay heavy tributes by leaving life, around these types of commitments and implications, psychosociological and anthropological reflections must be carried out. In this study, we want to be interested in mystico-cultural accompaniments of non-military fighters that are the volunteers for the defense of the fatherland (VDP). The objective of the study is to analyze the routes and the contribution of these kinds of support in the performance of the combatants. Our research question is: in a context of commitment to volunteer for the defense of the fatherland, what consists of the mystico-cultural accompaniments of the combatants recruited and what are the routes, the actors, the contributions of these accompaniments? To this main question, we hypothesize that mystico-cultural accompaniments constitute operations rooted in the tradition and culture of the environment, that they take place throughout the commitment according to the orientations of the wise prescribers and provide comfort to the combatants by guaranteeing their courage and results on the ground. The article revolves around the literature on the mystico-cultural, the description of the characteristics, the course and the results of the Boulsa fighters, the stages, operating modes, actors and contributions of these accompaniments and finally, the questions about myth or reality of these practices.

## **2. Data Collection Methodology**

In order to better explore the theme, we have called on the qualitative approach that best responds to the nature of such a study. We carried out surveys in the form of an interview with the actors of this support and with combatants. Given the sensitivity of the subject, at times, we used the relationships of trust that we were able to establish with certain initiators to have access to almost secret data and information. We had the privilege of participating physically in the execution of certain rituals. Thus, direct observation and life accounts have served as data collection tools. The field surveys lasted three (03) months because having taken place from July 2023 to September of the same year in Boulsa and in the surrounding villages with 27 respondents. On the theoretical level, conceptual approaches and analysis of structuralism, functionalism and sociology of culture have been used.

## **3. Analyzes and Interpretations of the Results**

### **3.1. Mystico-Cultural in Literature**

It is important to try an understanding of the concept of mysticism which appears to be a main concept of our research. For Dietmar Miath (1985: p. 151), “the semantic field of the word” mysticism “is today so vast and diffuse that the term may seem almost empty of meaning, we nevertheless agree to attach it to the general domain of religion”. It should be noted that of all religions, it is the Christian tradition which seems to have generalized the use of the adjective “mystical” to speak of a particular form of religious experience as McBrien & Chapman (1984:

p. 1085) for whom: “From the historical point of view, the use of the mystical word to describe a particular religious experience.” As for Hudson (1968: p. 27), he was able to qualify the mysticism as a belief in the sphere of inexpressible to express vague aspirations towards a beyond; evokes a feeling of non-belonging to this world here or expresses a deep dissatisfaction, which can go as far as resentment towards this world where we are obliged to live and thus opening the way to irrationalism.

According to Edmund White (1999: p. 8), in Marcel Proust we observe a rather free mysticism, independent of Christianity. A recent study defines him as “a mystical atheist”, that is to say someone who was imbued with spirituality, but who did not believe in a personal god, and even less in a Savior.

J.-L. Borges uses the word “mysticism” (mística) in a short text entitled “Dialogue on a dialogue” to evoke an almost Platonic sense of the unreality of this world and the possible existence of another. Also, more recently, Alan Sokal & Jean Bricmont (1998: p. 198) associated the spectrum of irrationalism with “mysticism” in their criticism of postmodern thought. By trying to predict what will follow postmodernism, they write: “We could consider a violent reaction which would lead to a new form of dogmatism, mysticism (New Age for example) or religious fundamentalism.” Although it may seem improbable, at least in university circles, the defeat of reason was radical enough to open the way to an extreme irrationalism. According to these authors, this perspective is opened by the post-modern shaking of reason.

In the African context and Burkina Faso, M. algré the presence of so-called revealed religions and the evolution of science and technology, African societies remain strongly permeated by mystico-cultural beliefs, with various mystical practices according to p.m. Hebga, 1979 quoted by Ovambe Mbarga & Nguimfack (2022). A reality that employs techniques and objects with the reputation of exercising a mystical power likely to be used for defensive or offensive purposes such as power tanks during situations of violence and war (Ellis, 2000). The observation is that all over the African continent, the soldiers engaged in ferocious conflicts do not hesitate to be accompanied by the holders of these mystico-cultural powers. They are most often solicited and in view of the nature of the phenomenon that the actors committed are confronted. What makes say (Malinowski, 1948, quoted by Bonhomme & Gabail (2020) that the use of magic is all the more important that it concerns activities whose outcome is uncertain and which have dangers. Faced with extreme difficulties, the use of sources becomes a necessary refuge. This allows you to find the forces of various dimensions to bounce back.

Closer to Burkina Faso, the Ivorian politico-military conflict which covered the period from 2002 to 2013 and documented by Marie Miran-Guyon evokes the central place that mystico-cultural occupied on the military field and in the Communication War. For this author quoted by (Hurbon, 2002), the fighters called in particular “New Forces” proclaimed that they have the support of the traditional mystical powers so that their fighters are invulnerable to the balls and even have

“medical secrets”. The latter give themselves as the name the “warriors of light”, and represent the whole traditional system of African beliefs and practices.

Today, with the advent of terrorism, the various fighters with regard to the nature of this war described as “asymmetrical war”, requires supernatural or even magical support. Sometimes, at the very summit of the State, this is desired and even express requests for supporting the combat forces are publicly formulated with the depositaries of these mystico-cultural forces. In this regard, Bassolma Bazié, Burkinabè Minister of State before an audience of customary and religious leaders wished a new relationship between the latter and all the combatant forces committed for the conquest of the territory. We clearly note this will through this assertion where the Minister of State wishes to be arrested in these terms: “Bassolma come, here is a canaries, takes and then defend you.” This is what we ask. It is to tell us, here is my suras that I know, take such sura, and arrived if it heats up and your rifle is blocked, recites that and disappeared (Minute, 2023).

If, from a general point of view, the approach is collective, the fact remains that certain citizens are distinguished in the field in the mystico-cultural field in an individual way. This is the case of El Hadj Sommoïla Ganamé, known as “Ladji Yoro” recognized as a legend in the fight against terrorism in Burkina Faso and particularly in the North region. For Burkina24 (2021), his courage and her feats of arms in combat are no longer to be demonstrated. For him, whether his mystical powers are real or not, whatever, the evocation of his only name was enough to rally the sons and the daughters of Loroum to the cause and made the opponent shudder. The same is true for chef Kogelweogo de Boulsa, of which we will zoom in on the course, actions, and the results.

The various results show that mystico-cultural support is strategic in the fight against TER roarism. This has a psychological effect on combatants. As a result, mystico-cultural plays a role of psychological adjuvant and allows the sacred union between sons and girls to better fight the enemy. On the cultural level, some communities manage to bring together religious, customers, the various social groups present in a territory plagued by terrorism, for the end of appealing to ancestral practices to dissuade the accomplices and those which are already engaged and protect the combatants against the forces of evil. In this perspective, during the “day of living—ensemble” held on August 19, 2023 in Boulsa in Burkina Faso, mystico-cultural practices were made in the presence of religious, customary officials and populations released massively. On this occasion, there was a question of informing the entire local community about the consequences that the members of each of them face in case of betrayal after having witnessed this cultural ceremony tinged with ritual practices carrying engagement and strict respect for the principles resulting from the recommendations of the day. Being all rooted in these beliefs, such practices strongly contribute to encouraging all the actors engaged in the fight against terrorism and to slow down the complicity of some of its sons (IAB, 2023). However, the question that arises today is how and by whom the different rituals are made during the various ceremonies. Effect, in the era where the money is king, the usur-

pations of titles are legion. The counterparts linked to services during ceremonies are not respected, which can lead to harmful results.

### 3.2. Description of the Characteristics, the Course and the Results of the Boulsa Fighters: From Kogelweogo to VDP, the Central Role of a Warlord Called “Namendé”

Boulsa is the capital of the Namentenga province in the Burkina Faso North Center region. This region can be considered one of the most abused by terrorism as the fact that it is declared “the cradle of internal displaced” in the country and by the observation that all its three (3) provinces are affected by the phenomenon. In the province of Namentenga, every 8 municipalities (Boulsa, Bouroum, Boala, Dargo, Nagbingou, Tougouri, Yalgo and Zeguedeguin) are all prey to terrorism. To defend the integrity of the lands of their ancestors, local initiatives of struggles will be taken. It was in this context that civilian fighters were born in this province. In this battle, a figurehead appears, it is El Hadj Nandbanka Boureima, Kogelweogo chef de Boulsa, nicknamed Namendé. Indeed, *naabanaminde* is the founder of the province of Namentenga<sup>1</sup>.

**Images of Namende, a major actor in the fight against terrorism in the province of Namentenga.**



This character is nicknamed Namendé because the inhabitants compare him to the founder of their province because of his total gift of self to save them first, the framework of the Kogelweogo, grievances of thieves and road cutters who skipped the regions and who stole the property of the poor populations in. Then, a central room remained in the fight against terrorism for the whole country, evidenced by its multiple outings and actions on the ground. After they were violently criticized and fought by human rights defendants because of their expeditious and often inhuman methods on the supposed criminal apprehended, the Kogelweogo

<sup>1</sup>“Namentenga” means in Moore “land of Namende”, designating the name of the founder of Boulsa in the 14th century: Naaba Namende. Namentenga which is part of the moogo, falls under the sovereignty of the Mogho Naaba of Ouagadougou. It is characterized by two (02) major phases: on the one hand, there are the former occupants who include the Kibsi or Dogon, the Fulse or Kurumba, the Saaba or Ninsi and the Bimba or Gulmanceba On the other hand there are those who are described as a group of immigrants who came between the 15th and the 19th century: the Yônyonse, the Yarse, the Gigma or Yâm-weoogo and the Nobdamba.

quickly joined the fight against terrorism. As a reminder, as Kibora, Patrice Kouraogo & Amado Kaboré, the Kogelweogo phenomenon appeared in: “Certain regions and therefore aimed to fill a security vacuum marked on the one hand by the inability of the defense and security forces (FDS) to ensure a complete security network of the territory and Banditry made armed flights, robberies, road cutters throughout the country in the country” Kibora, Kouraogo, & Kaboré (2018: p. 2).

As part of the fight against terrorism, in the North Center, in Namentenga and Boulsa, the actions of *Namende* can be highlighted through mobilization, organization, deployment, coordination and protection of civilian fighters.

About the teams of civilian combatants of Boulsa, we can remember **1 is characteristic, the route and results following:**

First, it should be noted that there are mainly two (2) teams of combatants on the ground. The first is the one who operates with chief Kogelweogo, *Namendé*. It is more formed...men recruited by the latter and trained by Defense and Security Forces (FDS). They are either former members of Kogelweogo converted to VDP or new recruits but have the moral guarantee and the guardianship of *Namendé*. This team acted under their orders and commandments. Very often, it is the Kogelweogo chef who takes care of their logistics, their fuel allocation, their command on the field and the resolution of any type of problem encountered by fighters both in the context of their mission and in their social life. Indeed, being a resource person in the fight against insecurity and always holding the title and the Kogelweogo teams, the latter constitutes a centerpiece in this struggle despite the hiccups, difficulties and often the misunderstandings with the military, administrative and customary authorities. Despite everything, unanimously, before returning in detail on his role in the mystico-cultural support of the fighters, the populations of Boulsa, the province of Namentenga and the neighboring provinces recognize the important combination of this character in the fight against banditry, insecurity and terrorism.

The second team is that constituted under the law establishing the recruitment of VDPs in Burkina Faso voted in 2020 (AN, loi no002-2020, AN). This team is entirely under the thumb of the mobile gendarmerie of Boulsa and acts in accordance with the related prescriptions.

Then, in terms of course and results, it should be note that the team1 a is a lot of talk of it beyond of the borders of Boulsa and even Namentenga.

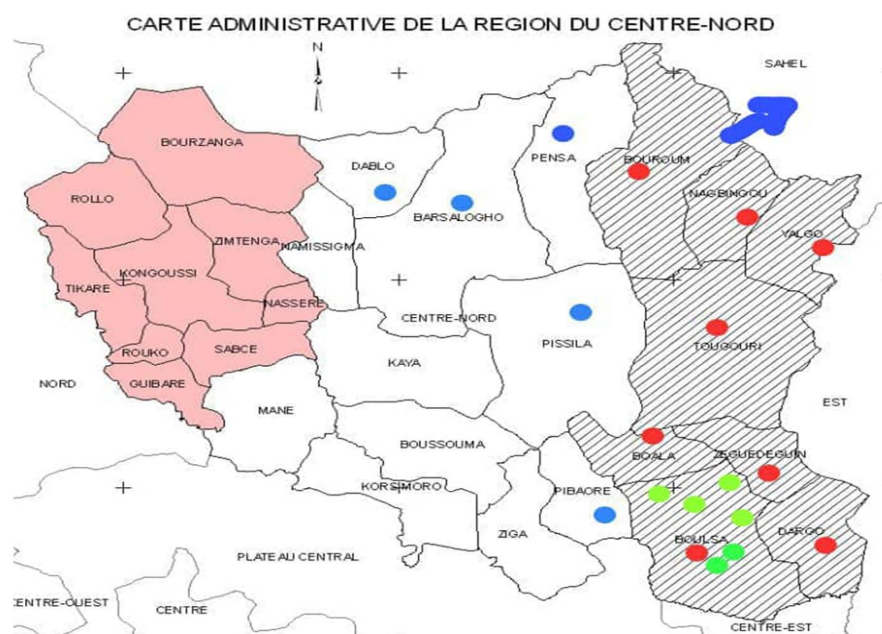
First, internally, it carried out control and securing actions of the city of Boulsa and the surrounding villages for more than 5 years making this area an impenetrable fortress. In a video on social networks that was viral, chef Kogelweogo threatened: “*Boulsa will be the cemetery of terrorism in Burkina Faso. Many terrorists called me for me dissuade by threats or seduction to continue the struggle that we have engaged against these criminals. My speech remains the same, if they are boys, they only have to come to the gates of Boulsa, they will know that they are only cowards which attack the poor defenseless populations*”. It is true that the continuation of the events was not pink for the surrounding villages as in the im-

age of Poli, a village of residence of chief Kogelweogo and even for himself who first deserted his village and even left Boulsa squarely, but these diatribes made it possible to measure the determination, the pugnacity of a proactive person to do battle with the terrorists.

Second, there have been combated victories garnered in the villages z Ambanga (5 km from Boulsa), of Gaoga (5 km of bo ulsa), Kologonsom (15 km from Boulsa), Tanghin (12 km from Boulsa), Bonam (15 km of Boulsa) where terrorists or have neutralized either attack.

Third, in the municipalities of Boala, Zegudeguin, Boala, Tougouri, Bouroum in the province of Namentenga, elements under guardianship of *Namendé* were sent to combat often in support with local fighters who respond to the same sub-couverte.

Fourth, we can note that the actions of this team and its relays with an interesting meshing won since the existence of the Kogelweogo and seasoned to the fights were often on the ground outside the province as was the case in Pissila, Pibaoré, Sanematenga, in Arbinda, in Nasombou in the Sahel, in Bogandé in the Gnagnan, in Fada N’Gourma, and s Elon the testimonies of the chief *Namendée*.



Source: Author of communication; green points: The villages where the VDPs led fights; red points: the municipalities of the province where equipping it was involved; points and arrows blue: The municipalities outside the province of the Namentenga engage and the other provinces where the actions of the team extend.

### 3.3. Accompaniments Mystico-Cultural Fighters: Stages, Operating Modes, Actors and Their Roles

Encounter by mystico-cultural accompaniment of combatants all processes, conditioning based on beliefs to mysticism and cultural principles set up to help those who engage in the fight against terrorism. These are all actions tending to

strengthen the psychological, physical, mental and even social capacities of the fighter. They are initiated by known actors who are generally trustworthy people. They run in a specific time distribution. Here, we can retain the preparation period to go into combat, that during the fight on the field and the time after the fight. In addition to the actors, these support actions follow well distinguished operating modes. In the case of Boulsa fighters, we will try by concrete illustrations to identify the actors and their roles and to describe the operating modes and their stages. We have opted to proceed by the declination of the progress of the stages, the identification of the actors and the description of the operating modes of mystico-cultural accompaniments.

To do this, we have retained four phases that are the preparatory phase of the team, the **phase of u reinforcement, that of fight and that of after combat. For each of them, we will try to distinguish if possible the actions relating to mystical and those in connection with cultural support.**

So, to start, **we have the preparatory phase.** It corresponds to the period of recruitment of combatants and especially to their solemn commitments. As we said sometimes, chef Kogelweogo is the guarantor and the main recruiter. With people resources from villages or neighborhoods, targeting young people of good morality is taken and the steps with them and their parents are undertaken. Individual interviews are carried out to convince the targets. This is Barim's testimony:

"Those who pushed me to enter the fight are on the one hand the Kogelweogo chef but on the other hand the old and the resources of my neighborhood. They estimated that young people like me should commit. With a galvanizing speech which explained that the struggle must be waged for ourselves because to engage is to protect oneself in a safe way and with the pressure of parents and resources, I was not hot, I ended up joining it."

The only support action consists of divinatory consultations. They are used to question the ancestors, the sacreds of the village (fetish and lands) if the interested parties expected to be enrolled are able, loyal and worthy to lead this collective and honor fight of the safeguard of the territory. They are carried out with the Bagba (Kinkir-Bagba, Divine and Schools) and marabouts who have an interest in telling the truth if there are impediments and if the latter are remediable. They are requested by the parents, the godfather (Kogelweogo chief), the interested parties themselves, the chiefs of villages. If they are favorable, the necessary is made to ensure the smooth running of the preparations for the mission.

In this same phase, the solemn engagement of combatants comes. The fighters, populations, the person resource, the parents, the imam, the heads of land meet for a ceremony of presentation and commitment of the combatants. During this ceremony, there is the recitation of the verses of the Koran carried out by the Imam and his suite and the accomplishment of the sacrificial rites on certain sites by the heads of land under the forecast of the village chief. All these acts are accompanied by engagement speeches, of encouragement as testified by an interviewee:

*The ceremony brings together people and rites are made to guarantee the protection of combatants. First, we read the Koran and then we make sacrifices (especially the Tengsob-Damba) to ask for this protection. Another interviewee adds: "In the incantatory discourse, we ask the leniency, the strength and protection of the templem (the earth) to defend the a dignity, the fruit of their work. Also, we ask that the impulse and the criminal project is broken because they are not on a good road."*

In the same vein, we recall the need to work according to cardinal values. Indeed, it is at the same time that we announced, according to Chef Kogelweogo: *"The rules of the functioning of the team and the work process. The supervisors insist on honesty, the loyalty that must reign in the work team. We warn them that the one who wants to betray the struggle and the team, the templem and the Koran will be after him". "Truth, this speech of clarity and honesty has scratched us in our choice and commitment"*, proclaims a fighter.

We remember that this first phase is to prepare the combat team by proceeding by its recruitment, its presentation to the community and the deities in order to obtain encouragement and protection. Prayers and support rites are executed by specialists and populations are taken from witnesses to the fact that moral and cultural values are the compass that guide the steps of combatants.

We can say that a pact has just been sealed between the fighter and his community and the ancestors, the deities are the guarantors.

Then we have the **phase of strengthening or shielding of combatants**. Once accepted and committed, fighters must be prepared to be sent to the front at any time. To be sure of their efficiency and their solidity, sessions of their strengthening or shielding must still be organized. It is a question to continue sacrificial rites on specific and non-popular sites. As a reminder, we said in the first phase that the whole community and the combatants were in a ceremony for the presentation and commitment of the team. Generally, these kinds of ceremonies are popular. They run on ten-kuuga (fetches) most known to all and the highest hierarchically classified. In a village, there may be a dozen fetishes. But one or two are the most emblematic. The sacrifices are made on one or on two of them in front of the whole community and give rise to feasts of meat and dolo (local beer). The messages and complaints of the population will be transmitted by the sites visited to the rest.

But, there are others whose access is regulated. Sacrifices will be made there but in consecrated intimacy and underground consecrated. Can attend this ceremony, the people's resources, representatives of the fighters or all of them, the notables and the holders of the sites. These fetishes can be materialized in mountain hollows, by forests, stones and other species representing a mystical life. For example, in one of the neighboring villages of Boulsa, a site made up of sacred forest exists and was asked by the VDP. It is deemed to make anyone invisible in the event of danger. The sacrifices of es sites are not cyclical as in the first. This is in the event of specific solicitation needs as is the case with the fight against terrorism.

In addition, there will be a collective strengthening and individual. Under the p collective repair, we have sessions of “washing” (collective shower) and consumption of decoctions and products, wearing objects (belts, amulets, rings) prepared by specialists. All these acquisitions have the desire to fight against assaults (knife, rifle, wood, iron) physical but also behavioral disorders like fear, “out of the soul”. They can also provide mystical powers by making the fighters invincible s and invisible s vis-à-vis the enemy.



A mosaic of rites, prayer and wearing protective objects among combatants.

Finally, in this phase also, in addition to these factual elements, there is the discourse which is always held to accompany doping morale. Preparers will still and always insist on the respect prohibitions.

**As for the third phase, it corresponds to that of the combat field.** Once the preparations are completed, the land invites itself. Support continues. Here is the testimony of a fighter:

*“I did mission in Kerboulé and Nasoumbou. Before leaving, the chef talks with us. He advises us and gives us indications on the limits of our mission so that we do not go. Also, he supports us with the necessary because we go there because we are looking for enrichment there. He gives us things for our protection and reassures us that nothing will happen to us if it is not our destiny that decided.”*

It should also be noted that the land remains the moment to test the effectiveness of the arrangements made. At this level, a set of devices can be made available to the combatants who must take them before hitting the road. They can be in consumption mode in form powder and liquid, a device to wear on the belt, on fingers and arms, etc. These are “*zu-song tiim*” (“Chance doors”), “*Gûudem*” (protectors). In the protection series, we want either bypassing the danger or getting out victorious. The example of “*yim-poren*” is illustrative. This is an acquired faculty that allows the danger to be always behind. This is how a device as an explosive agent will break out behind the obstacle steps or a “watch Apen” will fail. Also, “Lance” can allow you to be in the middle of the danger but get out victorious or lucky. A fighter during an attack in the village of Zambanga gives this testimony icing:

*“We were at the foot of the telephone antenna to ensure its surveillance because the day before there were threats. Suddenly, a column of terrorists sets off towards us taking care to make gas fire in our place. Many of my comrades vanish. Using a scarf I avoided inhaling toxic substances. I was running in search of refuses to a concession and shot the column from time to time. 100m from the house, I am reached by an enemy ball in the thigh. I fall and realize that I am prosecuted. From my position, between continuing to defend myself by pulling and trying to save myself while crawling, I chose the last option. I bring together my last energies, I pick up my injured foot and hang out by my left hand and my weapon to my right. I don’t know how I could reach the dealership. I opened a box throwing me away, I closed the door. The column of terrorists came to do two laps from the concession, fired in the air and repeatedly repeated the ‘Allah Hak Koubaro’ before evaporating in the wild”.*

In all cases, the recommendations are given to the fighters of take these mystical devices before leaving the house.

Even a full fight, chief Kogelweogo guides combatants by indicating the strategies and prescriptions to take into account.

We wanted to know if when they are at the front, do the devices equipped really protect them and do the instructor surround them with insurance, advice and even assistance and protection always? This fighter responds to us without ambokery:

*“When we are at the front, you never feel alone. There is a follow-up. The chef calls to inquire about evolution. He always provides advice and strategies.”*

*He draws all the scenarios and teaches us the posture to be taken according to the cases which will present. He warns us not to be afraid because she is the enemy of the fighter insofar as she can precipitate us in the problem that we are afraid. It guarantees that the ancestors, the manes and the templem are by our side and that for that, nothing can happen to us. He predicts our victories and keeps us going on the certainty of our return healthy and except.”*

Finally, the phase after combat can have three (3) from the fighter on an individual level. Either get out victorious, therefore unscathed with the feeling of a well accomplished mission. Unfortunately, he can be injured or even die. In all cases of figures, mystico-cultural accompaniment continues. For survivors and even injured, supervisors are preparing anti-shock decoctions, some may not have physical injuries but have received shocks of fear or horror. They live nightmares, hallucinations and trauma. They can be consumed by moral and psychological suffering. When we find ourselves in the presence of them, we feel that they are emptied of content. In Moore, we can say that their “soul is out” (Tuundo Yiibu). However, when we come to this stage, a race against the clock must commit to recover the person concerned by bringing the soul back. It is therefore necessary to consult the soothsayers, to obtain healers of decoctions or gray-gray to do care. For example, one of the care rituals of this kind can surprise the patient in his sleep, call his name three (3) times for men and four (4) for a woman, to throw the liquid on him/her. Thus, his “tundo” (soul) which was wandering is summoned to return home. Other products intended for consumption can devote total healing. In addition, the type of support at this stage reserved for the missing is to ensure acceptable treatment for their respectful body and burial. To do this, you have to win the battle to be able to have the body of the missing. There have been cases where the combat zone is inaccessible due to the presence of terrorists who tend ambushes and traps on respectful bodies. The team does everything to recover the bodies and come to proceed to the burials while strictly respecting the principles and recommendations in terms of burial “red deaths” for the rest of souls. As a reminder, in the Moaaga environment, the “red deaths” (accidental dead) are buried on the trait, instead of the accident or crime and there is no commemorative ceremony or condolences. Some relatives of the disappeared (woman, children, friends, wrestling comrades, etc.) are accompanied to take the shock through decoctions and other treatments holding.

Finally, Support must tackle ways and means to re-mobilize the troops and rekindle their mental. To get there, in addition to new products to encourage and cultivate courage and efficiency, the old products and practices can be renewed. Thus, that for the fact that the team occurred, even if there have been elements fallen, the promises made to the fetishes must be discounts. As a reminder, commitments made to altars and fetishes to thank them in the event of the combat team must be held. This is how animals and poultry will be immolated as a sign of thanks and Incantations of renewal of s request s of Protection will be repetition. Also, Doua and prayers in mosques and churches will be organized to ex-

press the gratitude of the community and the combatants but above all to contract a new protective lease.

### **3.4. Apports of Mystico-Cortural Accompanies: Psychological Adjuvants, Terres of Cohesion and Sacred Union through Calls for Patriotism**

In this part, it is Questi we examine the role, the place and the impacts of these accompaniments on the combatants but in general on the community.

Before coming to the facts, two (2) preliminary facts worthy of interest deserve to be exposed because they pose the foundations of the role of psychological adjuvants of traditional practices in the fight against terrorism.

The first is the fact that part of the Burkinabè collective imagination considers Boulsa as the “city of Wacks”. Several facts corroborate this image as for example, the mystical clashes that they engage as well at the Palais du Mooro Naaba and on the field during candidates for the boulsa chiefdom. At the same time, both the inhabitants of this communal locality and those of the whole province of Namentenga are taxed with super-men, fears and especially with whom one should not have mesh to leave under penalty of being victims of spells and to be the subject of bewitching practices. This gives a certain reputation as well pejorative (fear, prejudice, etc.) but also positive and glorifying in the sense that any son/son must embody a certain bravery, etc...

Also, it came out during our surveys that all the sons/sons of this province would have gathered several times to seek the ways and the means of won out what they call “a spell” which could however be considered a reputation. Indeed, noting that in all areas of activity (economy, politics, trade, agriculture and farming, gold panning), regardless of self-denial, seriousness and means invested by the national entrepreneurs of this province, success is never there compared to the sons of other regions, they have undertaken to seek causes and explanations. The main reason would be that the ancestors would have, to the creation of this region, issued this grievance to their deities and great-grandparents: “Any son/daughter of Namentenga must not know shame wherever he is there. The affront that launched it must be noted thanks to the ancestors and the set of deities.” Obviously, for the young generation, his poverty will come from this oath. In place of abundance and wealth, their ancestors would have requested bravery, courage and automatic revenge of confronts.

This community oath illustrates the establishment of a collective profile of the sons of this province. Any national must always show this bravery in any situation and circumstance. This is also a favorable soil to draw the courage of the Combatants and that of communities in the fight against terrorism.

We can say that chief Kogelweogo’s commitment is a realization of this collective profile of Namentenga. Let us remember that he is a courted character, fears and adored because of the mysticism around him. It was through the appearance of the phenomenon and subsequently in the fight against terrorism that he turned

out to the Burkinabè public. However, despite the fact that he was a Muslim fervent (he made the pilgrimage to the Mecca) with the title of El Hadj, he embodies mysticism. It is deemed to have supernatural powers and extraordinary capacities of invincibility. He is courted by political leaders (presidents), the military and customary authorities, the FDS and the politicians who see in him a person who can help them to acquire mystical powers and various powers but also a large mobilizer. These facts described prepare a field favorable to the acceptance and consideration of mystico-cultural accompaniments.

We will approach the reflection on the contributions towards two (2) poles. First, the role of psychological adjuvants of support through the expression of community and societal values and then the same accompaniments seen in the form of land of cohesion.

On the psychological role of these accompaniments, it appears indisputably, both for the community and for fighters, that they are perceived as psychological adjuvants because they copy the mind of men on the ground, cultivate their courage by fighting against fear and apprehensions, betrayal and individualism opposed to altruism and self-gift. In reality, mystico-cultural accompaniments promote a number of values. This is the fighting spirit, of courage, of dignity, honesty, of Loyalty. Here is the testimony of this panel of values contained in these accompaniments described by a fighter:

*“The kogelweogo chief also insists that it succeeds, we will have to stay on our honesty, dignity and loyalty. It gives us rings to wear, decorations to wash and other things to eat and execute. But, he gives us the contraindications. For example, once the protection powers have been acquired, the fighter is prohibited from considering himself protected and wanting to commit crimes and abuses. He also indicates that these protections do not mix with the fear. Every prepared fighter must consider himself invincible. This is how things are, once he takes them, he must not run before the enemy nor give up or abdicate. He must firmly believe in it because any doubt or fear will bring him trouble and inconvenience.”*

As for the **accompaniments seen in the form of terraces of cohesion, it should be noted that they are opportunities of** strengthen beliefs to the sacred, invisible and ancestors. The various sacrifices, prayers and speeches revive the community of life and especially the solid links that this community has with the sacred and the predecessors.

Also, they testify to the liveliness of the culture of the sacred union around the essentials. As proof, several respondents have expressed the abyssal resemblance to us between the appeal, the course, the purpose of the ceremonies of accompaniments to an old practice in times of curses which was called “kuunga” or call for combat for the survival of a community. They explain that in traditional society, when a certain danger (an imminent attack of kidnappers, appearance of a virulent epidemic, imposition of a mystical embargo in the form of a spell thrown in response to a provocation (theft of woman of Ynonyonsé, etc.)), was announced, the village chief ordered the Tansoben-Damba (1st line combatants) to inform

Rhythm of “Kuunga”. Tengsoben-Damba (landlords or ynonyonse), Ra-Pobi (chief’s guards), poece and other fetishness. In these specific moments, there is no room for controversies (sterile debates on the merits of the fight, the number of horses and men, the beauty, goodness, the wickedness of the chief) or for disputes even less for disobedience. Also, personal fights (rivalries in matters of women, chiefdoms, shops and harvests) were buried so that the community is in a psychosociological homogeneity and in a cultural harmony under the philosophical pretext that it is “because there is a head that saliva flows”.

Therefore, interest becomes unique. The community is committed, rid of all the impurities, united, determined and guided for victory. The only objective is to bring the victory to show it to children and women who, as a recognition, will organize a great celebration of rejoicing to thank the intrepid warriors.

It is precisely because these supports create social cohesion that the mission of the fighter is experienced as a social utility, a priesthood well appreciated by the populations who know how to make politeness:

*“When we are back safe and except or injured, the population meets e to express their solidarity with the fighter. She comes to visit, she congratulates, encourage, can go cultivate we field, she can even make a millet contribution or a utre to help your little family. Often, only chief Kogelweogo can make a modest financial gesture to encourage you. But you are happy because you feel valuing yourself for having fought for the release of your country. Your family is honored to have a brave and courageous son who engaged and illustrated in a noble fight.”*

Finally, accompaniments constitute expressions of culture and beliefs because they are punctuated by cultural and traditional practices. Upstream and downstream of these accompaniments, we can read the expression of various cultural heritage (material, intangible) of the locality.

Despite the undeniable contributions of these accompaniments, it would be important to question their effectiveness to complete the cycle of the analysis.

### **3.5. Myth or Reality of Mystico-Cultural Accompaniments: Efficiency, Failures and Lessons**

Our surveys emerge that the question of the efficiency of mystico-cultural accompaniment arises with acuity. Despite its prevail and its importance for both combatants and community, the effectiveness of this type of support questions. Indeed, despite the insurances given by holders and initiators, many victims come from the ranks of the combatants. But before examining the elements of ineffectiveness, let’s see the results. Both among the beneficiaries of this support and the initiators, there are anecdotes of success. During our surveys, chef Kogelweogo exhibited us with pants perforated with bullets that would belong to the combatants returned from the battles. This would be proof that the protection devices are effective. Also, as we have said, many cases of bravery, luck and “yim poore” (having the chance that the problem occurs behind) were reported by the fighters. The balance sheet of the Boulsa team was positive because on several combat fields, it

was intractable and brought hard to the terrorists. The explanation of these victories would come from this largely part support.

Notwithstanding this positivism, there are quarrels received by the teams and the populations that are difficult to explain.

First, we note many human losses, especially among the supposed combatants receiving protections. Then we found the disappointment and the desertion of the combatants. A fighter is expressed:

*“Discouragement is settling because we leave with our own motorcycles. If at a certain time, your motorcycle is exhausted and you cannot afford to buy another, you discourage yourself. If you have to be satisfied only with the help of the populations, it is not easy and easy. You have to give up to take care of the survival activities. When you die too, it is your family the real loss because your children become orphans and your widowed wife”.*

In addition to this state of destitution of VDP, there are risks of targeting and assassinations of their loved ones who discourage them. The third patent failure is that boulsa and all a province are reduced as a grief skin. Currently, Boulsa is surrounded on all sides and all the Environment villages have been at the center, which causes an accentuation of security and humanitarian crises.

But what can be the explanatory reasons for these failures?

We asked the question of why chess to the main actor of this support which is chief Kogelweogo and especially the fact that despite mystical practices on combatants, they remain vulnerable. According to him, there are several reasons. This is not a questioning of these practices or doubts about their effectiveness. But, rather violations of the rules and principles underlying this phenomenon. We have counted four categories. First, the violations of the prohibitions. Our interlocutor explains that most of the cases that the prepared fighters have remained, the explanations would come from prohibitions not respected downstream as upstream. For example, he argues that once you return from the fighting, young people either court the same women or either, they practice adultery between them by leaving with the women of their wrestling comrades. This is a rule of rigor in the Moaaga environment that when you have bonds of trust either by kinship or by friendship or camaraderie, you are forbidden to pass together on the same woman. When these situations arrive, this sacred link breaks for good because you become de facto rivals. By engaging in the same combat team for the dignity of the community, the fighters mark their belonging to the latter and reaffirm this sacred link between them. It is this link that is expressed in the solemn commitment to stay together and never betray yourself. When we come to violate this oath, we attract misfortune and bad luck in the group. We thus exhibit his own life and that of teammates.

Then, the second category of reasons is the fact of betraying the struggle by posing acts favorable to the enemy. In the war against the forces of evil manifested in terrorism, there are social challenges and important cultural. In the objective to take any profit or save an individual interest, combatants may be tempted to sell

sensitive information. This is considered an act of betrayal still because they swore before the community and the fetich s of help and bring mutual assistance. If similar cases are multiplied, we arrive at the point where the fight is sold and the commitments are failed.

As for the third category of the reasons, it makes case of the fact to use the powers to pose reprehensible acts. Indeed, with the ardor of youth and especially with the mystical preparations, the combatants acquire supplements power and strength. If the objective of this support is to lead the fight well, its benefits can be diverted to produce damage such as theft, rape, banditry of all kinds or of a source of incredible violence against the vulnerable populations. In this case, the support may stop working because there have been corruption objectives.

Finally, the fourth level is when doubt settles in the head of the fighter. Doubt is the first gangrene which begins self-confidence and when mystico-cultural accompaniment installs in the Subconscious of the Combatant, failure is no further. Support must be used to maintain and maintain this self-confidence and that of the instructors guarantees membership and belief in all the products that the fighter has taken to protect himself. If this confidence is started, even if we send all the gray-gray in the world, they will have no effect.

Another type of reason involved in the explanation of recorded failures in the fight concerns these contradictions and disagreements between the actors and some leaders. Indeed, the chief Kogelweogo is in bichering with Some military, administrative and customary authorities. The intervention methods in the event of attacks are not the same at the level of the team coordinated by the gendarmerie and that overseen by Namendé. Suddenly, if the teams are not on their feet, they do not frankly cooperate to the point that the enemy takes advantage of it. Also, in the control operations of the entrances and exits of the city of Boulsa, the administrative authorities find that the team 1 goes beyond its role and usurp its functions. Finally, with the traditional authority that is the head of Boulsa, real difficulties of understanding and cooperation exist with Namendé. All these misunderstandings reveal among the the combatants of the team of Nanbanka, the impaired insubordination.

Finally, it should also be noted that terrorists also use these mystico-cultural accompaniments. It came back to us that at some point, noting that the terrorists skipped the same spaces and sites to solicit the same accompaniments, the Kogelweogo chef had requested and obtained the closure of the sacred sites on the extent of Boulsa to dry up the requests for the protection of the enemies. We ask ourselves the questions how and why, can sites of the sites agree to accompany the criminals by transmitting their complaints to the manes? Very often, individual complaints are secret. The holders of the sites open the doors of the sites and everyone can enter and in silence the success of their projects.

The main lessons of all the analyzes of this research report the following:

**-Den the survival of traditions and customs:** mystico-cultural accompaniments illustrate that the use of traditions and customs constitutes an effective way

to fight against terrorism. The place of the temple and the values of loyalty and honesty in the process of the struggle show the importance of the traditions embedded in the cultural reorientations of the communities which practice them and admit to them an unshakable confidence and belief despite the revealed religions.

**-Extreme need to generalize practices:** Several of our interlocutors have made the suggestion to generalize these accompanying FDS and VDP from all over the country because that would certainly protect them as a fighter testifies:

“You have to bring together VDPs and send them to traditionalists so that they do what is necessary and teach the control process. We came back from the battle because we were loyal and we followed all the indications. If all the fighters confided in the traditionalists and engaged in the sense of values, we will succeed better and completely.”

**-The Burkinabè people victim of their divisions than of terrorism?** It would be utopian after examining these accompaniments not to note that cohesion, solidarity, honesty and loyalty constitute the recipe necessary to fight against this hydra. Unfortunately, the considerations Politicians, economic and personal ambitions undergoing the implementation of these values and all the energies. Thus, the people would be the victim of their divisions than terrorism since it was enough to highlight these cultural requirements to boost terrorism out of the state of nuisance.

#### 4. Conclusion

Ultimately, after analysis, mystico-cultural accompaniments are presented as individual practices and beliefs, community and society in the study area. They play multiple roles such as psychological adjuvants for combatants and land of cohesion and promotion of values for all populations and communities that practice them. Despite the fact of not being able to verify their total effectiveness, due to human life losses and the spaces that continue, it remains certain that they contribute to the victories of VDPs and populations on the Hyretterrorist. Thus, after having exposed and analyzed the different phases of their deployment and described the contributions of these accompaniments, we studied the reasons which led to failures in the fight in Boulsa and the Namentenga. We have learned lessons, which, if they are corrected guarantee the hope of taking these practices as successful and “implementable” models everywhere in Burkina Faso and elsewhere. Consequently, the main hypothesis of our research which stipulated that accompaniments constituted operations anchored in the tradition and culture of the environment and would bring comfort to the combatants by guaranteeing their courage and the results on the field, is well and beautiful confirmed. How then, to make the generalization of these practices and beliefs accepted throughout the territory and especially within the defense and security forces (SDF) remains the great challenge.

#### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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