



**Imperialism from Below: Media Contra-flows  
and Emergence of Metro-Sexual  
Hausa Visual Culture**

**LECTURER**

**Professor Abdalla Uba Adamu**

Department of Mass Communication,  
Bayero University, Kano-Nigeria

Wednesday, 9th July, 2014

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# Imperialism from Below: Media Contra-flows and the Emergence of Metrosexual Hausa Visual Culture

**Abdalla Uba Adamu, D.Phil**

Professor of Media and Cultural Communication  
Professor of Science Education  
Department of Mass Communications  
Bayero University, Kano – Nigeria

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## Summary of the Presenter's Bio-data



Personal Data	
Name	Professor Abdalla Uba Adamu
Date of Birth	25 <sup>th</sup> April, 1956
Marital Status	Married
Number of Children	Four
Place of Birth	Daneji Ward, Kano City, Kano
State	Kano – NIGERIA

Academic Qualifications	
D.Phil, Sussex University, Falmer, Brighton, England	1988
M.A. (Science Education), Chelsea College, University of London	1983
Postgraduate Diploma in Science Education, Chelsea College University of London	1982
B.Sc. (Education/Biology/Physiology), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	1979
Schools Attended	
Sussex University, Falmer, Brighton, England	1988
Chelsea College, University of London	1983
Chelsea College, University of London	1982
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	1979
Working Experience Since First Graduation	
Professor of Media and Cultural Communication	2012
Professor of Science Education and Curriculum Studies	1997
Associate Professor in Science Education and International Comparative Higher Education	1994
Senior Lecturer, Science Education	1991-1993
Lecturer I, Science Education	1988-1991
Lecturer II, Science Education	1984-1988
Assistant Lecturer, Science Education	1981-1984
Graduate Assistant, Science Education	1980-1981
Biology and Agricultural Science Teacher, Ekwerazu Girls Secondary School, Umoarkrika	1979-1980

Professor Abdalla Uba Adamu was born on 25th April, 1956 in Daneji, Kano city, Nigeria. He was employed as Graduate Assistant in Science Education at the Faculty of Education, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria in July 1980. Subsequently he rose to become the Head, Department of Education, (1995-1998 and 1999-2001), Professor of Science Education and Curriculum Development (1997), Director, Management Information Systems Unit (1999-2005), and Head, Department of Science and Technology Education (2010-2013). Nationally, he served as a member of the Presidential Task Team on Education in 2011 and which led to the reformulation of the National Policy on Education in 2013.

In the field of *media and cultural communication*, Prof. Adamu has 33 publications, 20 of which were international. In the area of Education, he has 46 publications, 11 of which were international, including books in Paris (1992) and New York (1994). At the moment he is awaiting the publication of additional 10 publications from both national and international publishers. In addition, he has edited six books, written four article reviews (for *Ethnomusicology Forum*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, *Africa*, and *UBE Forum*), a book manuscript review (for Indiana University Press) and delivered three published Public Lectures (held at Bayero University, Kano; IBB University, Lapai and Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Lagos). He also presented 183 research papers out of which 35 were at international events in France, UK, US, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Morocco, Kenya, Niger Republic, South Africa, Egypt, Senegal, Ethiopia and Ghana.

Professor Abdalla Uba Adamu was at various times Visiting Professor and Distinguished Lecturer in Media and Culture within Nigeria and abroad. He equally participated in Quality Assurance process of the National Universities Commission as a member of the Accreditation Team of Science Education programs in nine Nigerian Universities from 1999 to 2011. He is engaged in consultancy services for international NGOs and has submitted 31 commissioned technical consultancy reports to organizations and agencies such as MacArthur Foundation, The World Bank, USAID, DfID, British Council, UNESCO and Unicef. He was the first African Senior Fulbright Scholar (University of California, Berkeley, US) and the first Rockefeller Foundation Resident Scholar (Bellagio, Italy) from northern Nigeria. He was also the first to be acknowledged in *Who Is Who in Science Education Around the World*, when he became Professor of Science Education in 1997.

Seeking a new research direction in after 1997, Professor Adamu started to explore the interface of media and cultural discourse, particularly in the Muslim public sphere. Subsequently, from 1999 he expanded the focus of his research to Media Anthropology, with a focus on media and cultural communication.

On 24th April 2004 Professor Adamu delivered the Bayero University 7th Inaugural Lecture titled *Sunset at Dawn, Darkness at Noon: Reconstructing the Mechanisms of Literacy in Indigenous Communities*. This marked his increasing commitment to interrogating the infrastructure of media in cultural discourse. Later in the year he attended his first International Conferences on Media and Cultural Communication in Nairobi (International Institute of African Affairs) and Germany (Universities of Cologne and Guttenberg). As a result of his academic research engagement with media, in 2005 he was employed as a Part-Time Lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication, Bayero University, Kano where he taught Advanced Communication Research, Media Studies (for M.Sc. and PhD classes), Online

Journalism (PG and UG classes), ICT and Public Relations, Film Aesthetics and Criticism (PG classes) and Introduction to Film Production, Filmmaking Techniques (UG classes). He also supervises M.Sc. and PhD students in the Department.

His subsequent ethnographic research focuses on the interface between the vibrancy of media and traditional culture among the Muslim Hausa of northern Nigeria has led to more invitations as Guest Lecturer and Commissioned Paper presenter. Consequently, over the years he presented special invited guest lectures on Muslim Hausa Popular Culture at the Polish Academy of Science (2012), University of Warsaw, Poland (2012); University of Florida at Gainesville (2010); University of Basel, Switzerland (2009); Barnard College, Columbia University, New York (2007); Hamburg University, Germany (2008); School of Oriental and African Studies, London (2007), and the University of Cologne, Germany (2004). In 2011 he was cited in *Who is Who in Research - Film Studies* (Intellect, UK).

In 2012 Professor Abdalla Uba Adamu was awarded the European Union Visiting Scholar grant for 'The Modern University Project' as a Visiting Professor to teach *African Popular Culture*, and *Oral Traditions – Local and Global Perspectives*, at the University of Warsaw Poland for a semester (March to June 2012).

In October 2012, Professor Adamu became one of the few double Professors in Nigeria when the Council of Bayero University Kano approved his appointment as Professor of Media and Cultural Communication, and his subsequent permanent staff transfer to the Department of Mass Communications of the University where he had been teaching for seven years. His new status was acknowledged immediately by the National Universities Commission which appointed him to the Accreditation Team for Mass Communication at the American University Yola in March 2013. He is currently expanding his research scope to Cultural Anthropology, working on a book that explores the intersections of race, culture and identity among Nigerian Arab populations.

He is also a filmmaker with his own production company, Visually Ethnographic Networks Ltd (Kano, Nigeria), whose most important feature film is *Equestrian Elegance: The Hawan Sallah Pageantry of Kano Emirate* (2009) which records the Sallah durbar pageantry of Kano. This is freely available on YouTube channel he created for his media ethnography. He is currently shooting another documentary, *Al-Hausawi Al-Hindawi – The Hausa Indian* (a film about a young Hausa who hosts his own radio program in Hindi language in Kano) which explores the translinguistic process of language acquisition. In addition, he is also a music director, and has recorded a CD with a band he created, *Al-Fijr*, which recorded what he calls 'Hausa Classical Music' – a series of non-vocal recorded performances which showcases the individual sonority of Hausa musical instruments, especially the *sarewa* (flute), *duman girke* (bongo drums) and *gurmi* (bowed lute). He has archived Hausa music in various ways by re-recording the originals in a modern studio. Examples include Aliyu Namangi's 9-volume *Wakokin Imfiraji* (recited by Fauziyya Sarki Abubakar in 2010), Hausa children's playground songs (originally commissioned by Maison des Cultures du Monde, Paris), and the archives of blind beggar minstrel, Muhammad Dahiru Daura.

## Abstract

My reference to ‘imperialism from below’ pays homage to what Robertson and White (2007) refer to as the distinction that emerged in the early 2000s between notions of globalization from above (the ‘enemy’) and globalization from below (the ‘good guys’). In this Inaugural Lecture, I argue that globalization from below merely represents re-enacted globalization from above, where the below now becomes sub-below and recast as new-above.

The instrument of this recasting is *media contra-flows* which create new centers of globalized connectivity which, to all intents and purposes, since it is often riding piggy-back on economic mobility of goods and services, becomes a new ‘imperial’ center, but without an empire, or what Nye (1990) refers to as ‘soft power’. Data and arguments about the various media flows both from West and non-Western media centers, although with specific focus on motion pictures clearly supports a new re-negotiations of what constitutes ‘media’ or ‘cultural’ imperialism, especially in the face deconstruction of Hollywood as the source of ‘hard power’ of media products, and creation of new centers in Asia and Africa that are both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ powers.

I weave in Agency (Giddens, 1984) as a factor in the deconstruction of both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ media flow to African Muslim communities of northern Nigeria. Based on this, and drawing heavily from representative analysis of contra-flows in Hausa film industry, I propose *Transcultural Contra-Flow Theory* as a media theory that explains post-imperialist *horizontal* media flow from non-Western centers of media cultural production to non-Western audiences, including their receptivity.

## Introduction

Cutting through the morass of definitions (e.g. Fieldhouse, 1981; Hyam, 1990) that look at the concept from various angles and therefore merely add to the melee of confusion, Clayton (2009, p. 373) looking at the concept from human geographical perspective took a simple approach to defining imperialism as “an unequal human and territorial relationship, usually in the form of an empire, based on ideas of superiority and practices of dominance, and involving the extension of authority and control of one state or people over another.” This framework covers the series of conquests of the less fortunate by the stronger, and consequently, imperial European powers, ranging from colonialism, slavery and economic domination even after independence from slavery and colonial clutches. This is more as both imperialism and colonialism are “intrinsically geographical – and traumatic – processes of expropriation, in which people, wealth, resources and decision-making power are relocated from distant lands and peoples to a metropolitan centre and elite (through a mixture of exploration, conquest trade, resource extraction, settlement, rule and representation).”(ibid.).

With empires crumbling, territorial independence sought, fought and won, the concept of imperialism takes on a new turn, which Barbara Bush refers to as “informal imperialism” which “exists without colonialism”. (Bush, 2006, p. 46). Bush went on to argue that the contentious nature of the concept of informal imperialism is reflected in the polarized debates in the postcolonial era over the existence of neocolonialism and neo-imperialism, and cites additional arguments that show how generally imperialism ended with decolonization (as in Fieldhouse, 1999); although for third world countries, as Samir Amin (1973) pointed out, informal imperial power relations were perpetuated by economic exploitation and political domination. This is reflected in so many ways – from preference to Western over non-Western (even Asian, and by even Asians themselves) goods to adoption of political models of governance resulting in series of coordinated chaos in governance in many developing nations since independence.

The concept of imperialism, from whatever perspective, was closely followed by “globalization”, another term with as many meanings as “imperialism.” So many indeed that Roland Robertson (who first coined the hybrid term “globalization” in 1995) and Kathleen White (2007) argued that the concept is contested, accusing writers of simply coming up with their own understanding of the term in various ways. This is more so “as has become increasingly apparent in recent years, concern with globalization in effect began many centuries ago.” (Robertson and White, 2007, p. 55). Incidentally, Robertson and White did not provide a clear singular conception of globalization either – which merely reiterate the contested nature of the term. This is further emphasized by William Robinson (2007, p. 126) who also argues that “there is no consensus on what has been going on in the world denoted by the term “globalization”; competing definitions will give us distinct interpretations of social reality.” These ambiguities were, however, simplified by Tomlinson (2007, p. 352) who looked at globalization as

“a complex, accelerating, integrating process of *global connectivity*. Understood in this rather abstract, general way, globalization refers to the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterize material, social, economic and cultural life in the modern world”.

Tomlinson continues to explain that globalization describes these networks and their implications. Such globalization therefore acknowledges the flows of capital, commodities, people, knowledge, information and ideas, crime, pollution, diseases, fashions, beliefs, images and so forth. Looked at from historical perspective, therefore, globalization is as old as human communities; for virtually

all these factors are part and parcel of movement of people across borders, even when nations were not demarcated and deemed to exist. Underlying all this connectivity, however,

“is the *economic* sphere, the institution of the global capitalist market, that is the crucial element, the *sine qua non* of global connectivity. This is the dimension that dominates the imagination and the language of corporate business, of politicians and of anti-globalization activists alike; it is the easy shorthand of the media discourse which forms most ordinary people’s immediate understanding of what globalization is all about” (Tomlinson, 2007, p. 353).

References to connectivity bring to forth the blurring of boundaries—or territories—through which goods and services percolate. The most elegant concept for this mobility—both visible and invisible—is the application of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1983) term, “deterritorialization”, which, together with “reterritorialization” explain the process of translocational connectivity. At its base meaning, deterritorialization is taking control away from a land which is already well-established, and subsequently reverse or even destroy existing structures. Reterritorialization follows when new alien symbolisms replace those that have been “deterritorialized.”

Consequently, researchers like Tomlinson give the concept of “deterritorialization” a significant focus in works on global connectivity. Culture is no longer restricted to particular location. Thus within Tomlinson’s perception of globalization, connectivity reaches into local culture and the localities of everyday life.

This Inaugural Lecture explores the transformation of the media imperialism thesis through analysis of media contra-flows which creates news sites of non-imperial, ‘soft power’ and yet equally subversive media domination and control.

### **Mediated Imperialism, Agency and Structuration**

Over the last decades media in all forms, transnational flows of representative identities and the globalization of American entertainment ethos have combined to create a climate of mistrust for either globalization as a concept, or Americanization of entertainment ethos as a process of entertainment in not only Muslim countries and communities, but also in traditional societies. This is because of “the development and extension of the processes of mediatization, migration and commodification which characterize globalized modernity produce a considerable intensification of deterritorialization, understood as a proliferation of translocalized cultural experiences” (Hernandez, 2006, p. 92).

Thus what is of further significance is the way media is used to construct identities and share these constructs with communities not sharing these identities; in effect, “deterritorialization” which often dons the garb of “cultural imperialism”. Obviously then, the usage of identity-construct kits from different communities may communicate different conceptions of the communities and consequently lead to misrepresentation of identities. And yet, the desire for globalized acceptance—even if the “globalized” is localized to acceptance beyond the immediate community—leads to experimentation of various forms of acceptance of representational identities beyond the immediate localized communities. This is the scenario that creates issues of the role of entertainment in such communities.

As Blakely (2001) points out, academic responses to various facets of global entertainment have changed drastically over the last forty years, reflecting for the most part huge changes in technology, media infrastructure, and entertainment content. This naturally led to development of

theories of imitation—with the view that availability of new communication technologies would enable developing countries to imitate the West in a process of modernization.

Additionally, Park & Curran (2000) argue that two contrasting attitudes towards globalization can be found. The first is expressed by cultural theorists who welcome globalization as a means for the reinforcement of international dialogue. It enables minorities to gain attention beyond national borders. An opposing point of view stresses the threat that globalization poses to democracies and international politics, aiming at limiting the influence of worldwide capitalism. Both these views at least concur a certain degree of weakness in recipient systems as a result of the transnational flow of influences. What needs to be determined is the extent to which the recipient systems—I do not accept Part & Curran's term of "nation-state"; such entities are too complex to be treated as single—are transformed.

Indeed Media and Cultural Studies' theories of globalization tended to focus attention on the role of mass media in the society (e.g. Beck, Sznaider & Rainer, 2003, Appadurai, 1996), how they are communicated and preserved in transnational context. Another focus is on how people appropriate media, and which identities they create with the new transformed media (see particularly Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1996; Schiller, 1976; and Boyd-Barrett, 1977).

Consequently, as Patterson (1994) argues, industrialization and modernization both entail the spread of common sets of behaviors and attitudes within the context of economic change. However, the globalization of culture also takes place independent of whatever economic changes are occurring in a particular region or society. Traditionally, the transmission of culture across societies was facilitated by two main media: migration and literacy. People learned about other cultures either through traveling themselves or from travelers, or by reading about other cultures and adopting or adapting what they learned. These traditional media could, under certain circumstances, be effective means for the transmission of cultures across the globe. I will close this section by reiterating Tomlinson (1991) and point out that the dominance of Western multinational, and particularly American media in the world is not in dispute, "what is doubted is the cultural implications of this presence (p, 57).

Although Tomlinson (1991) argues that the term "cultural imperialism" has no specific universal meaning due to different interpretations of "imperialism" and "culture", he nevertheless presented "four ways - actually, five, but we can dispose of the first one quite briefly - to talk about cultural imperialism." (Tomlinson, 1991, p.19). From a variety of perspectives, Tomlinson argues that there is no single accepted conception of cultural imperialism; there is, instead, a variety of interpretations and meanings of the terms that construct the concept. Despite this ambiguity, however, one of the varieties given by Tomlinson dominates, i.e. media imperialism, which, as Schiller (1973) points out, pivots around the accusation that Anglo-Western media products are consumed in non-Western societies, and thus suppressing local production and creating dependency on the Western varieties—from popular culture, to television programs and newspapers and magazines. In this argument, which again Schiller advanced much later, "media-cultural imperialism is a sub-set of the general system of imperialism, since cultural outputs are also ideological and profit-oriented to the larger system." (Schiller, 1991, p.14).

Various subsequent studies would seem to support the view that the paucity of media products especially from Africa, and specifically targeted at African audiences, thus with African appeal, created a vacuum in which non-African media products are readily consumed by increasingly urbanized African audiences—lending support to the theoretical perspectives that point out the stifling of local media creativity. Indeed the seeming affiliation to Western settings and filmic styles in emergent African video film (though not "authentic" African cinema) would lend support

to this, as evidenced by the urban dramas depicted in Nigerian Nollywood films which have emerged as the central reference points for “African” video dramas. This view, however, needed to be revised in the light of two major developments.

First was granting of independence to many African nations by colonial powers in the 1960s—which therefore changes the focus of media consumption; for while colonial officers reside in African cities, all media-entertainment would invariably be from the West, for the audience is not the local African audiences, but European residents.

Secondly, the postcolonial States saw the entrenchment of what Anthony Giddens labeled “agency” in debates about postcolonial African mediated entertainment forms. Giddens (1984) proposed the idea of agency and structure in sociological theory to explain human behavior. Agency generally refers to micro-level, individual human actors, but it can also refer to collectivities of that act. Structure usually refers to large-scale social structures, but it can also refer to micro structures, such as those involved in human interaction.

Thus in what emerged as “structuration theory” which focuses on the mutual constitution of structure and agency, Giddens argues that structure and agency are a duality that cannot be conceived of apart from one another. Human practices are recursive—that is, through their activities, individuals create both their consciousness and the structural conditions that make their activities possible. Because social actors are reflexive and monitor the ongoing flow of activities and structural conditions, they adapt their actions to their evolving understandings. As a result, social scientific knowledge of society will actually change human activities. Giddens calls this dialectical relationship between social scientific knowledge and human practices the double hermeneutic.

Consequently, actors continually develop routines that give them a sense of security and that enable them to deal efficiently with their social lives. While their motives provide the overall plan of action, it is these routine practices that determine what shape the action will take. Giddens emphasizes that actors have power to shape their own actions but that the consequences of actions are often unintended. Structure is the rules and resources that give similar social practices a systemic form. Only through the activities of human actors can structure exist

It is this power to shape actions—agency—that counterbalances the media imperialism theory in African media-mediated entertainment forms; for it reverses the notion of passive absorption by African audiences, and puts control into selection, acquisition and engagement of any media product in the hands of audiences.

Alternative theories to Giddens’ Structuration Theory merely reinforce the theory within certain communities. For instance, Margaret Archer (1995) has criticized the concept of structuration as analytically insufficient. She argued that it is useful for social scientists to understand structure and agency as independent, because it makes it possible to analyze the interrelations between the two sides—what she calls a “morphogenetic sequence”. Thus Archer believes that Giddens underplays the relative autonomy of culture from both structure and agency. Yet even in Giddens’ theory culture is reflected in structure—for structures as he described are not isolated concepts but the very foundation of society. Indeed this is reflected in Muslim communities in which Islam provides a readily acceptable behavioral framework for linking structure and agency.

In Muslim societies, which their deliberate focus of forming an identity that is uniquely Islamic, the social structuration is provided by the Islamic State machinery in all forms. Thus Islam provides the Muslim African with both a structure (Islamic viewpoint) and agency (Islamic purity) as bulwarks against mediated imperialism.

Thus I argue in this presentation, that agency and structure, as counterpoints to media imperialism generate a new conception of media imperialism which passes through structure, agency, exits through the same structure, emerges as contraflow and re-enters back into structure.

### **The Imperialist Trans-Eastern Express**

As my main focus on the transformation of media imperialism thesis—particularly moving images and sound—my starting point is the source of the media imperialism theory: Hollywood.

The Hollywood film industry, from whatever cultural perspectives, provided the first early role model for other film industries to copy, even in the early stages of binary oppositions between the intellectualizing European cinema (pioneered by the French) and the commercial focus of American cinema. As Teo (2010, p. 413) argues, it achieved this status “by setting up studios, implementing the star system, and making films that employ conventional formulas”. Consequently, almost every other commercial cinema—whether “actual” celluloid cinema of Asian countries, or “video film” dramas of latter day African filmmakers—employs this strategy of telling, and selling, stories. This power of Hollywood to sell is reflected, for instance, in the global film market which in 2006 and 2007 in which 64% of worldwide box-office gross was from Hollywood films (Motion Picture Association of America, 2007).

Hollywood became successful because it is “a commodity, a craft, and a social force” (Jacobs, 1939, p. 21) which account for its meteoric rise from 1910s. To this day, Hollywood reigns supreme in its glossy packaging, superiority of craftsmanship, availability of a vast array of imaginative technologies, and the simple power to keep audiences glued to their seats as they watch drama produced by a large number of talented stars, directors and producers. It is this success that created the capacity to influence others. Based on these arguments, Teo (2010, p. 416) argues therefore that “Hollywood is therefore a paradox. On the one hand, it is looked up to as a model and on the other hand, it is put down as a corrupting influence.”

It is this perception of global and “corrupting influence” of Hollywood that lies at the base of all the arguments and counter-arguments on cultural/media imperialism. The technical superiority of Hollywood productions is seen as supplanting “local” media entertainment forms which lead to local filmmakers to begin to “lose” themselves and adopt Hollywood ethos as their creative templates at the expense of their local circumstances and creativity. Yet at the beginning of cinema’s history, the reverse indeed was the case. Without specific artistic style to itself—if one can dispense with its capitalist orientation—Hollywood cinema started to look towards group styles, specifically German Expressionism, Soviet montage cinema, and the French New Wave (Bordwell, 1985).

Early Soviet cinema, for instance, did not derive its inspiration from Hollywood, but rather from French art films, with the first Russian feature appearing in 1908. The filmic focus was therefore on historical epics, and the adaptations of Russian literary classics. As Youngblood (1992, p. 2) pointed out,

“sensational love stories (often based on popular novels) and lurid melodramas also attracted a large movie-going public, drawn from the lower urban classes, especially the petty-bourgeoisie... This public demanded a rather remarkable level of violence and catastrophe in its entertainment films: romance was better thwarted, especially if ending in death—whether by murder, suicide, or some other tragedy. Multiple deaths were best of all”.

Russian cinema therefore developed two strands—high art and commercial low art. The high art actually influenced aspects of Hollywood cinema, especially the montage process; whereas the commercial low art was in turn influenced by Hollywood, and later, Indian cinema, or Bollywood. Co-operation between Hollywood and Russian cinema became necessary at one point because “film was regarded partly as a way of promoting greater understanding between the two countries as well as a means of exporting Soviet ideological values” (Teo 2010, p. 41). Thus while the globalization of Hollywood is seen as subversive to importing cultures, at one stage the Soviet union was also contemplating “contaminating” American cinema audiences. The years after World War II created a Soviet desire to learn from the American experience, which further led to a growing sense of competition. However, all rapprochement ended with the emergence of Cold War (1947-1991). This was a sustained state of political and military tension between Western Bloc countries represented by the United States and its NATO allies) and Eastern Bloc countries represented by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies). As Teo (2010, p. 46) pointed out, “as part of this process Soviet cinema quite deliberately tried to distance itself from the Hollywood model” and reverted back to its classical literary heritage.

Filmmaking in India did not receive its technical antecedents from Hollywood, but through Paris when on 28th December 1895 Maurice Sestier, part of the French Lumiere brothers credited with initiating commercial cinema, on his way to Australia, stopped briefly in Bombay and seeing an opportunity to showcase the new filmic medium he was advocating, arranged a screening of the some of the Lumiere brothers films on 7 July 1896. As Bose (2006: p. 41) analyzed,

“It was the turn of the century, there were urban masses eager for mass entertainment and the cinema with its direct visual impact, easy accessibility and its relatively straightforward themes seemed “the natural answer”.

The new medium attracted the attention of local entrepreneur, Harischandra Sakharam Bhatvadeka, who was a photographer and found it easy to order motion picture cameras and start shooting short, non-feature films up to 1907 when he retired from filmmaking after some seven short years in the business.

As a British colony, India was officially laid open to British and Western filmmakers to exhibit their products in the Indian market without any fiscal hindrance. As Bose (2006) pointed out, “from the beginning the Indian film scene was extremely international. France...was the leading source but America, Italy, England, Denmark, and Germany were competing for a share of the Indian market.” (Bose, 2006, p. 47). Despite this early international – almost always from the “imperial” nations, the first Indian feature film affirmed the identity of the Hindu nation.

Dhundiraj Govind Phalke (also referred to as Dadasaheb Phalke) was widely accredited with being the “father” of Hindi cinema (Vāṭave, 2004; Ganti, 2004; Vilanilam, 2005) – at least giving it its early identity of obsession with Hindu religion and ideology. He was inspired in this direction when at a Christmas cinema show in 1911 in Bombay he saw *The Birth, the Life and the Death of Christ* (dir. Alice Guy, 1906). As the images of Christ flashed before his eyes, he mentally visualized the Hindu gods Krishna and Ram and spent a restless night imagining bringing them to the screen. He achieved this feat when on 21st April 1913 he screened *Raja Harishchandra*, the first feature film by an Indian in India.

Subsequent early Indian filmmakers, while using a global medium to express themselves, fell back on classical Sanskrit theatre and traditional folk drama to engender a hybridized narrative technique that has survived the ravages of time even as it has kept the threat of foreign cultural domination largely at bay. As Chatterjee (2003, p. 13) pointed out, “the most significant of these

influences is the obligatory interpolation of songs, dances, and sequences of comic relief, ingredients that can be found in classic Sanskrit plays...of...the 5th century.”

Despite this “attachment to spiritual nation”, however, Hollywood provided a ready-made template for non-spiritual Indian cinema. This was hardly surprising considering that well over 80% of the films screened in India in the early decades of the 20th century were from Hollywood (Chatterjee 2003); for as Chapman (2003, p. 327) reported,

“There is no prejudice against western films, which are much enjoyed and appreciated. There are certain types of western films which appeal to all classes and communities. The spectacular super-films and the films featuring Douglas Fairbanks, Harold Lloyd and Charlie Chaplin have a universal appeal. A film in which any of these world-famous figures of the screen appears can be sure of an enthusiastic reception in any cinema in India”.

While overwhelming academic focus on Indian cinema tended to see the Indian film industry as “national”, it only became so after the Indian independence in 1947. Prior to this, there were regional film production centers producing films in Pune, Madras, Bombay, Calcutta and Lahore (now in Pakistan) producing films in various regional dialects. When the Hindi language became India’s “official” language after independence, Bombay, producing films in Hindi language, found itself elevated as the “national” film production center.

The 1930s saw a fascination for social themes and, subsequently, interplay of tradition with modernism that included questioning aspects of the feudal patriarchy (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 1998). This created a new template for the export of Hindi films outside of India. Perhaps one of the most significant Hindi film to kick-start the “Indian” invasion of international cinemas was *Awaara*, directed by Raj Kapoor in 1951. As Gopal and Moorti (2008, p. 15) noted, “any account of the global travels of Hindi film music must commence with Raj Kapoor’s *Awaara*”. The film portrays a rebellious, daring and at the same time, vulnerable youth. Kapoor sees himself as the

Indian Charlie Chaplin, the “little man” at odds with a world in he survives by his wits and hides the pain in his heart behind a smiling face. He copied Chaplin’s gestures, facial expressions, and movements and crated a screen persona that was a reflection of both himself and of the average Indian that he sought to construct, matching his “Raju” to Chaplin’s “Charlie” (Chakravarty, 1993, p. 134).

Released at the height of the “golden era” of the Indian film, the film and its one of its accompanying songs, “Main awaara hoon” was massively successful in India and beyond, finding its way to captive audiences in Middle East, Africa, Soviet Union, China, Iran, Turkey, amongst others. In the Soviet Union it was released as *Bradyaga* in 1954. Consequently, post-independence Indian cinema became,

“a tension between modernity and tradition, westernization and indigeniety, evolved in the cinematic imagination. Out of these dialectical tensions emerged a particular notion of the Indian identity. Through the 1950s and 1960s, directors like Raj Kapoor and Bimal Roy made films that portrayed the world of underprivileged, and marginalized, and which represented the Indian society as iniquitous and inequitable” (Rao 2007, pp. 58-59).

This ideological, almost socialist cinema of India gradually gave way to “global” forces in Hindi cinema leading to the emergence of new templates that radically differ from the idealistic mythology-driven Hindi cinema of the “golden era” of Raj Kapoor. This is because if Raj Kapoor epitomized the “golden era” of Hindi cinema, then Amitabh Bachchan epitomizes its global re-incarnation. This came in 1973 with the release of his major film, *Zanjeer* (dir. Prakash Mehra)

which created for Bachchan the trademark of the “angry young man”, which spawned a genre of Hindi films with “an urban figure both wronged and rejected by society, often from childhood. He had to suffer incredible hardship, often including public humiliation and physical violence” (Varia, 2012, p. 98).

Amitabh Bachchan spearheaded a new Hindi cinema tradition not based exclusively on Indian mythology—although paying homage to it; and borrowing heavily from American gangster films—which started appealing to post-imperialist nations. The latter term was popularized by Herbert Schiller (1991) who held on to the view of the perceived pervasive and destructive influence of media products on non-Western audiences especially by media corporate America. Schiller thus devised two layers of imperialism: ‘hard power’ which means using force to impose; and ‘soft power’ (after Nye, 1990), a more persuasive way of getting desired results through the use of non-material resources such as culture. Yet this new perspective on the flavors of imperialism did not take into account the acquisition of new Hindi film audiences outside of India. This is because the Hindi film era of the ‘angry young man’ enabled Hindi films to acquire newer audiences outside of India. Companion genre films to *Zanjeer* such as *Deewar* (dir. Yash Chopra, 1975) and *Sholay* (dir. Ramesh Sippy, 1975) created the pathways to non-Indian pockets and hearts. As Rao (2007, p. 59) noted,

“The changes precipitated by liberalization of the Indian economy throughout the 1990s facilitated the growing internationalization of the production and distribution of Hindi films. With the entry of satellite television, Indian filmmakers began operating in a new media landscape, where a vast range of options, including easy access to Bollywood and Hollywood films, were available to viewers at home”.

Thus since early late 1980s, some of the most popular Hindi films featured westernized themes, foreign locations, actors and singers, and liberal use of English in the dialogues. Examples of post-2000 film with heavy accent on these features include *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (dir. Nikhil Advani, 2003), *Dhoom* (dir. Sanjay Gadhvi, 2004) and *Salaam Namaste* (dir. Siddharth Anand, 2005). It is these westernized Hindi films that provided the lightning rod to sparking off interest in the spread of Hindi films. Ironically, Tyrrell (2000, p. 317) was to argue that “within Indian popular culture, the commercial success of Indian cinema has become emblematic of India’s resistance to the West, and Bollywood stars have become figureheads in what is now viewed as a battle against Westernization.” What makes this argument ironic is the massive way Indian popular culture not only use Hollywood films as creative templates, but also indeed directly appropriate many Hollywood films and convert them into Hindi films. This is more so as

“In the era of globalization, Hindi cinema’s increasing desire for world-wide appeal and its attempts to reel-in Indian diasporic audiences can be considered primary catalysts for the cinema’s increased modernisation and experimentation” (Wright, 2009, p. 199).

Indian filmmakers see this experimentation and modernization in the form of directly appropriating Hollywood films in order to increase the Hindi version’s international appeal, particularly to non-Western audiences. In effect, serving as new centers of “media imperialism” in which Hindi films now combine two post-imperialist cultural baggage of both Hollywood and India. In a critique of this process which Wright labels “reverse colonialism” (ibid.), the very notion of Indian identity seems to collapse, a process that is “symptomatic of the recent impact of postmodernism, globalization, modernization, Westernization and internationalization in India and its film industry” (Wright, 2010, p. 122). The end product is that “non-Indian audiences, as well as Western critics, have often found Bollywood’s attempts to mimic Hollywood’s American

coolness difficult to accept, often rejecting them as cringe-worthy and unconvincing” (ibid. p. 165).

Part of the new Indian cinema’s “coolness” aesthetics incorporates Western metrosexual mindset, which, as Gehlawat (2012, p. 62) points out, was prompted by “a growing shift towards a neo-liberal middle class culture in India, one celebrating and promoting both a feel-good ideology and a focus on the self.”

Coined in 1994 by the British journalist Mark Simpson, the term “metrosexual” has come to reflect a new ultimate urban male obsessed with looking and feeling good, demonstrated in expensive fashion and accessories, hair care, sports cars and exquisite and exotic dining out. The typical Western metrosexual male was modeled on the footballer (soccer) David Beckham. As originally articulated by Mark Simpson on his website which echoes the original article in *The Independent* (UK) in its 15th November 1994 online edition:

“Metrosexual man, the single young man with a high disposable income, living or working in the city (because that’s where all the best shops are), is perhaps the most promising consumer market of the decade...He’s everywhere and he’s going shopping. Metrosexual man wears Davidoff “Cool Water” after-shave (the one with the naked body-builder on the beach), Paul Smith jackets (Ryan Giggs wears them), corduroy shirts (Elvis wore them), chinos (Steve McQueen wore them), motorcycle boots (Marlon Brando wore them), Calvin Klein under-wear (Marky Mark wears nothing else). Metrosexual man is a commodity fetishist: a collector of fantasies about the male sold to him by advertising”.

Metrosexuality enters the Hindi film lexicon through acquisition, or at least reaffirming, another metrosexual attribute: dancing; for dancing brings out the fitness freak in the metrosexual man and further accentuates his sophistication. Indian film stars such as Hrithik Roshan became the poster boy of the Indian metrosexual star, as shown in his “skilled dancing, as well as built (and, more often than not, bare) body [in films such as] *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham*, *Dhoom 2*, and *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*” (Gehlawat, 2012, p. 66). Gehlawat adds that it is Roshan’s physique that becomes the object of consumption. Roshan therefore becomes a metrosexual commodity. In this vein, metrosexual stars do not engage in onscreen violence, preferring to display their muscles so that they can be admired, particularly in song and dance sequences using non-threatening voices in their miming. Thus massively successful metrosexual films such as *Kal Ho Naa Ho* provide a template to what constitute the “cool” in new Hindi cinema—reflect a paradigmatic departure from the cinema of both Raj Kapoor and Amitabh Bachchan.

Wright (2010) adds that the Indian appropriation of American “coolness” would appear unflattering and puts off potential non-Indian Western spectator. This, however, is not so. As I will further demonstrate, it is this “metrosexual cool” that is to provide a vehicle to the clear demonstration of imperialism from below, through the process of entertainment contra-flows.

### **Contra-flows of Hindi films as Global Movements**

I now come to the central core engine of the Trans-cultural Contra-flow Theory, where I trace how the emergence of new metrosexualized Hindi cinema created a new model in global connectivity particularly for non-Western countries. Media influences. It is perhaps an irony of political economy that the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), the agency that distributes the main films produced by the main Hollywood studios does not have any distribution plan in Sub-Saharan Africa. Only South Africa seems to receive official copies of American blockbuster films for official screening. Yet latest Hollywood films are available at traffic light markets throughout most of sub-Saharan Africa for less than \$2, as well as via torrent site downloads that telephony

services seem incapable or unwilling to block. The absence of formal trade in commercial film distribution, therefore, would seem to absolve Hollywood from blames of cultural contamination—any pirated copies of any film seen by anyone would seem to be at their own risk.

Piracy and free-to-air Satellite TV, particularly from particularly the Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC)—cheaply available in most of sub-Saharan Africa—provide a subversive gateway to Hollywood through dedicated channels such as MBC2 (solid diet of Hollywood films) MBC4 (US soap operas) and Zee Aflam (exclusively Hindi films).

The MBC Group is the first private free-to-air satellite broadcasting company in the Arab World. It was launched in London in 1991 and later moved to its headquarters in Dubai in 2002. MBC is part of the larger network of ArabSat and Nilesat broadcasting systems. It was however, the MBC with its Hollywood and Indian cinema orientation that serves as the main attraction point to audiences in Africa who do not have Hindu cinemas legitimate access to both Hollywood and Hindi films.

ArabSat, Nilesat and MBC therefore provide starting points for “re-broadcasting” of transnational programs that filter their way to other un-intended audiences. In this regard, Daya Kishan Thussu (2007) noted that this is an evidence that global media traffic is not just one way, even though it is disproportionately towards non-Western directions. Thus new networks from the Southern urban creative centers of Cairo, Hong Kong and Mumbai represent what could be called “subaltern flows”. (Thussu, 2007, p. 18). Such global traffic therefore leads to the emergence of counter, or *contra-flows* of media influences, often absorbed by audiences sharing the same, what I call, “virtual cultural resonance”—for often such sharing is not seamless as it is disconnected from both historical factors or notions of nationality. Thus “in the era of globalisation, the one-way vertical flow has given way to multiple and horizontal flows, as subaltern [contra-flow] media content providers have emerged to service an ever growing geo-cultural market” (Thussu 2007, p. 18).

The very concept of contra-flow was articulated by Anandam P. Kavoori (2007, p. 44) who offers “the following definition of media contra-flows:

“Media contra-flows are the semantic and imaginative referents for the institutional, cultural and political matrix of a world framed by processes of global cultural power and local negotiation: a world experienced through the identity politics of nations, individuals and cultures and negotiated through contestations of locality, nationality and global citizenship”.

Thus as Kavoori (2007) further explained, media contra-flows are usually seen through the circulation of national frames which included Hindi cinema, Brazilian telenovelas, etc. These in fact create the locus of contestations of locality of non-Western films to non-Western audiences. I will therefore explore this media contra-flow from the analysis of how commercial Hindi language cinema spread and became new models of media entertainment among principally non-Western audiences.

Brian Larkin (2003) has observed that despite the successful dislodging of Hollywood in the global arena, there have been little studies on why Indian films achieved such success. Hindi films outside India are absorbed in two ways: the first was by audiences who simply prefer them to Western films; and the second was by popular culture purveyors, especially filmmakers, who appropriate Hindi films as local variants—using the same storyline structure as well as cinematographic styles.

Studies done in the area of re-enactments of Hindi films outside India and especially by non-Indian audiences would seem to indicate three countries where such practices were previously

prevalent: Pakistan (Khan 2005), Indonesia (Khan 2003), Turkey (Gürata 2009) and in the case of Hindi film music, Greece, (Abadzi, 2004) Indonesia (David 2008) and Egypt (Armbrust 2008).

The travels of Hindi films were initially mediated by migrations of Indians across the globe, where the films played a role in producing “diaspora belonging, cultural knowledge, and even language training” (Larkin, 2003, p. 173). The Indian diasporic attachment to Hindi films as a form of reconnecting back to India provides their host communities with opportunities to partake in Hindi film fantasies—either at entertainment level as just another form of “other” entertainment, or in severe cases, provide templates for domestications to host popular culture. Thus Hindi films are patronized on a global scale by what Athique (2006) defined as “non-resident” audiences. In this regard, an audience might be considered “resident” under conditions where viewers perceive what is on- screen (in terms of either fantastic or “realist” representation) as coterminous with the society in which they live. When a media artifact operates outside of an environment where it can claim to present a social imagination “about here and about us” (Athique, 2006, p. 191), then the artifact and the audiences it addresses have a non-resident relationship

The spectacular nature of the Hindi film seems to have influence on the entertainment ecology of many parts of the world—both in where Indians constitute a percentage of the population, to where there were few Indians both as residents as well as entrepreneurs. Perhaps the first and natural direct influence of Hindi cinema was in Pakistan which established its own film industry in about 1929 and which subsequently came to be referred to as Lollywood. Pakistan’s first indigenous film was *Teri Yaad* (dir. Daud Chand, 1948). The power and influence of Hindi films in the region provided the Pakistani filmmakers with a template to imitate either Hindi films or their techniques. Thus, according to Omar Khan (2005), more and more Lollywood producers found that plagiarism was the easiest and most effective way of making a fortune and thus when the import of Indian films was stopped in the 1950s, the copycats simply went wild churning out carbon copy remakes of popular Indian films and releasing them shamelessly as “original” work in Pakistan (Khan 2005).

“Considering the bitter acrimony that ensued in the separation of India into what eventually became Pakistan and Bangladesh, it was surprising that the emotional grammar of Hindi films was spoken and understood in Muslim Pakistan. This is more as the Hindi film genre is inevitably tied to the Hindu religion. According to Amitabh Bachchan, perhaps the most visible Hindi modern film performer, most Hindi film stories revolved around the epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the main epic sources of Hindu religion, which explains why there is so much idolization” (Bachchan, 2005).

Thus while Islam does not feature too strongly in Pakistani cinema, the emotional grammar of the classic domestic conflict reflective of Hindi family dramas provided strong fodder for domestic conflict enactment and resolution. It is significant that early Lollywood films contain strong ideological messages about nationhood and independence, with strong “anti-Western” messaging.

In Greece, as in Pakistan, Hindi films of 1945-1965 were extremely popular in a society dealing with economic devastation, “illiteracy, limited life expectancy, and low status for women.” (Abadzi 2004). In such depressed circumstances, Hindi films provided an escape, especially as the plots of the movies resonated with the wounded Greek psyche. Suffering women, street children who had to drop out of school, jealous sisters-in-law, vengeful mothers-in-law, interdependencies, betrayals, and frequent unhappy ends

“resonated with the difficult choices of poorly educated Greek people subsisting in large cities. In particular, the characters appealed to poor women. The maidservants and factory workers saw themselves depicted on the movie screen, hoping for deliverance. Maybe the rich young man would marry the poor beautiful girl

who worked at his house. Maybe lost relatives would appear to take care of the abandoned street child who sang so beautifully” (Abadzi 2004).

The appeal of Hindi films to Greek audiences was such that the producers eventually ended up imitating Hindi success recipes. The result was Greek films with 8-12 songs (mainly set in bouzouki night-club scenes) and tragic plots and titles. To lure the audiences of Hindi films, Greek titles were sometimes almost indistinguishable. The Hindi-to-Greek film technique, however, focused more attention on the musical elements, creating a new genre of Greek popular music called *Indoprepi* (Hindi-style). The Greek intellectual class, with centuries of inherited critical tradition did not take kindly to the plagiarization of Hindi popular culture, and serious backlash ensued against such practice. As noted by a critic, “the drawn-out and bothersome Indian music which accompanies these sad creations also tends to become our national music.. It is not permissible, when we fight to stand in the geographical space of Europe to have become a spiritual colony of India” (Abadzi 2004).

South-East Asia can be considered “Indian-belt” with cultures and religions cutting across the borders. Making the border leap was the unstoppable Hindi film, for as Sonia Trikha indicated, Hindi films are the “rage in Indonesia” where songs from Hindi films are dubbed in local language, Bahasa Indonesia (Trikha 2001). This is not surprising because most Indonesians, especially those who live in the island of Java (about 60% of Indonesian population lived there), have a Hindu background. Their culture, dances, language (based on Sanskrit), philosophy, and their traditional ceremonies, all reflect this Hindu influence in their lives which has come to be a mix between Hinduism and most especially Sufi Islam (Khan 2003). A convergence of cultures therefore favors the presence of Hindi films in Indonesia which subsequently had a long history of showing Hindi films.

Further acculturative influences of the Hindi cinema is in Malaysia, which can be considered part of Muslim Asia. Malaysia, with a large concentration of ethnic Indian residents who were attracted to Hindi films also falls into the same cinematic mold as Indonesian audiences. In discussing this, Manik Mehta (2003) observes the firm grip of Hindi films on Malaysian cinema-goers, evidenced by the fact that although the “average Malaysians.. do not understand Hindi (though subtitles help them).. they can very well relate to the films and their characters”.

In Egypt, Hindi films, though not massively popular with elite class, nevertheless were accepted mass culture due to similarities in the customs and traditions of the two peoples such as honor and protectiveness towards women. Consequently, the “secret to the success of Indian films in Egypt is that they portray a common life of both the Indian and the Egyptian, with only trivial differences attributable to environmental factors.” (Armbrust, 2008, p. 212).

Despite these views, however, Walter Armbrust analyzes that India has had a long, though not always welcome, presence in Egyptian film culture. Egyptian filmmakers and most elites disparage Indian cinema, and “this is consistent with the more generalized attitude about things Indian. “Hindi” in everyday language labels things that are strange, silly, or just plain dumb”(Armbrust, 2008, p. 201).

In Tibet, Ann Morcom notes that although Hindi cinema, especially its music is far from standard fare in Tibetan nightclubs, there is however, an increasing interest in reproducing Hindi film dances and Hindi songs which were sometimes performed in groups by the staff dancing troupes at nightclubs (nangma bars), who usually learn from VCDs, imitating dance moves. These troupes perform very much in the style of Tibetan dance created by the state and spread from the 1950s, now rearticulated with meanings of desirable modernity. They almost invariably perform Hindi cinema with a similar body language, which “results in a performance that is stiff, unsensual

and overly modest compared to original Bollywood. They also tend to have dead-pan facial expressions” (Morcom, 2009, pp. 155-156)

We have seen how Hindi films became popular in the old Soviet Union, even though audiences were aware that the entertainment philosophy of Hindi films was steeped in the Hindu religious culture, this did not deter Soviet audiences, essentially because the early Hindi films in Soviet Union, especially in Moscow, in the 1950s were seen as socialist messaging. India was a newly independent nation with socialist leanings; Russia was in the grip of the cold war, closed off from the West and the two countries began diplomatic and trade relations. The early Hindi films, with their nominally socialist outlook were very alluring to audiences raised on diets of official socialist realism. Subsequently Hindi films became the most popular cultural export between the two countries, starting, as I earlier indicated, with Raj Kapoor’s *Awaara* (1951), which was dubbed in Russian as *Brojyaga*.

The popularity of Kapoor’s filmmaking technique in the Soviet Union also led to *Shree 420* (1955), and an Indo-Soviet co-production, *Pardesi* (1957) by Khwaja Ahmad Abbas and Russian director Vasili Pronin. By the time Kapoor did *Mera Naam Joker* in 1970, interest was beginning to fade, accelerated by the end of the Cold War in November 1990. Nevertheless, Hindi film stars remained popular in Russia, as attested by Amitabh Bachchan who told an interviewer:

“when I first went to Moscow for the first time, I was received by Russian female fans, who were actually dressed in our Indian dress and wore the bindi and the jewelry and everything, and spoke Hindi, which is our language. And said that they were going to university to study the language so that they could follow our films. Remarkable. Very astonishing”(Bachchan 2005).

Thus Hindi cinema still retains its appeal in the Russia that emerged out of the Soviet Union after 1990, with stars such as Shahrukh Khan appealing to both young and older audiences. For instance, Elena Igorevna Doroshenko notes that Indian cinema in Russia, even after the long period of “silence,” still holds promise and has a future as cultural and political ties between India and Russia grow closer again with Indian films playing a significant role. For example, when the Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev, visited Mumbai at the end of December 2010, he met Shahrukh Khan and mentioned the first Indian film he had ever seen back in the 1970s (Doroshenko, 2012).

Turkey also became smitten with Hindi films through *Awaara*. The film was released in February 1955 in Istanbul and became an instant hit, leading to repeated releases of the same print. Due to this success, Gürata (2010) notes that over 100 Hindi films were shown in Istanbul between 1952 and 1962. *Awaara* was successful in Turkey not only due to its melodramatic cinematic appeal, but also due to the title song “Awaara hoon” and which was played throughout Turkey as a top selling record, “and was performed by a number of Turkish singers who circulated it as a Turkish record in music markets” (Gürata, 2010, p. 83) making it part of Turkish folk culture, played with traditional instruments at weddings and other ceremonies, including official functions.

“Prior to the massive importation of Hindi films in Turkey, the Egyptian cinema was in vogue. The liberalization of the trade process which enabled more Indian films to be imported into Turkey was encouraged as “distributors perceived these as substitutes for Egyptian films, whose influence officials were anxious to curtail” (Gürata, 2010, p. 69).

In Zanzibar, fans stressed the educative potential of Hindi films, which “opened their eyes” to new ways of thinking about life’s possibilities as well as new strategies for coping with life’s heartbreaks and constraints (Fair, 2009, p. 60). Further acceptance of Hindi films was also because such films developed themes and issues in ways that were far more relevant to East African life

than those dreamed up by Hollywood. Thus “the lessons on love that people took from Hindi films were.. far more resonant with local social life”(ibid.).

In Ghana, audiences of Hindi films perceive India as a spiritual space or a sacred land, “full of magical, occult, and esoteric forces” (Wuaku, 2009, p. 128). These views were reinforced by Hindi cinema, for as Albert Wuaku further explained, the appeal of Hinduism in Ghana can in part be explained by the fact that India, its birthplace is an “outside” world. But this appeal is also strong because of the influence of narratives of Ghanaian people’s actual encounters with powerful Hindu spirits, gods and esoteric truths in India. Indian films, popular theatre, and Western texts on Hindu mysticism that found their way to Ghana, reinforced the narratives. The result was the belief that there must be something very spiritual or magical about India and its religions and people curious and eager to explore these easily turn to Hindu religious traditions (Wuaku, 2009). The power of the imagery in Hindi films, coupled with returnee Ghanaian WWII soldiers who served in the British Army in Asia served to create an African Hindu Ministry in Southern Ghana.

Younger and more contemporary Ghanaian audiences prefer a different path. The musician, Sony Achiba, for instance, entered into African music history by creating first High-life/ Hindi film music fusion, a genre he calls *Hip-Dia*, and performed in rap form on two individual CDs, *Indian Ocean 1&2*, *Indian Ocean 3* (Achiba, 2006). Accompanying these CD releases were YouTube video clips of Sony Achiba and dancers performing songs from the CDs wearing full Indian costumes. Even his name is a homage to transnational media and show business: “Sony” is taken from the Sony Corporation, while “Achiba” stands for Action, Compassion, Humble or Honest, Irresistible, Blessed and, Achiever (Achiba 2012). He has refused to reveal his actual given name, preferring the media nomenclature he created for himself.

In Senegal, a “francophone country without an Indian expatriate community” Gwenda Vander Steene (2008, p. 118) records that obsession with Hindi cinema by the local population (or “Indophiles” as she refers to them) who prefer Hindi films was because of values which are, according to some Indophiles, highly regarded in Senegalese society and can also be found in such films: such as respect for elders and marriage, piousness, and respect for women. The importance of family networks and living in an extended family is also mentioned as a strong similarity. The appreciation of values such as respect for elders or the extended family also relates to a preference for older films. More recent films are often criticized (especially by older Indophiles) for imitating Hollywood and for their “deteriorating” values. The fact that Senegalese appreciate this aspect of Hindi cinema shows how they actually would like to see themselves: it is a Senegalese ideal projected in Hindi film (Steene, 2008, p. 121)—a recurrent argument and rationale for identifying with Hindi films in African communities.

In all these cases of audience rapture and often internalization of Hindi film and Hindu identity, it should be pointed out that the main focus was on their popularity as entertainment from another country, and in some cases, their cultural resonance with the local audiences. The large numbers of Non-Resident Indians (NRI) living in many countries ensured the continuous presence of Hindi films which often arouse the curiosity of non-Indians. Further, in the cases of the popularity of Hindi films indicated above, some common elements seem to be discernible between the countries and India itself. Thus the Hindi films exported and made popular in other countries were either steeped in ideological bondage (Greece and Soviet Union), artistic inclinations (Egypt) or cultural affinity (Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia) with India. Further, collaborations, as they were, were focused on exploring areas of artistic cinematic representations.

The non-Hollywood media audiences were not restricted to Hindi cinema. Beside Hindi cinema providing a post-imperialist media contra-flows to non-Western audiences, televisions programs

across the world from South America to Japan have also provided non-Hollywood media contra-flows. As Ana Lopez (1991, p. 597) noted,

“In Latin America, the melodramatic has been important not only as the most popular form of narrative entertainment (with roots in older oral traditions), but also as a form that is particularly well suited to represent the sociopolitical conditions of modern Latin America from the position of the dominant classes”.

The most vivid example was the massive world-wide popularity of Brazilian telenovela which challenged the traditional debate over cultural imperialism and the North-South flow of media products (Rego and La Pastina 2007). This contra-flow of media products is further illustrated by the export potentials of the telenovela to Egypt, Russia, China, Africa, as well as throughout Europe (Benavides 2008). For instance, as Thussu (2007, pp. 23-24) argued,

“The success of telenovelas outside the “geo-linguistic market” of Spanish and Portuguese consumers, shows the complexity of media consumption patterns. Such telenovelas as *The Rich Also Cry* were very successful in Russia in the 1990s, while Sony developed its first telenovela in 2003—*Poor Anastasia* for the Russian network, CTC...The genre has become popular even in Western Europe: a German company has produced their own telenovela, *Bianca: Road to Happiness*, shown in 2004 on the public channel ZDF. In India, Sony has successfully adapted the popular Colombian telenovela, *Betty la Fea* into Hindi as *Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin*, which became one of the most popular programmes on Indian television...The transnationalisation of telenovelas is an indication of contra-flow in television content”.

Further media contra-flow influences are reflected in the popularity of “Hallyu Korean wave” - the significant increase in the popularity of South Korean entertainment and culture starting in the 1990s. As Martin Roll (2006, p. 38) noted,

“South Korean pop culture “Hallyu” – embracing fashion, music and film – is rapidly becoming an export success for South Korea. The rise in popularity of Korean pop culture led the Chinese media to call it the “Korean wave” in 2001. The wave or Hallyu has spread to Southeast Asia and lately to Japan where it has had a strong impact”.

The arrival of Hallyu as media contra-flow from Korea to Philippines since 2003 through “Koreanovela” (Kwon, 2007; Tuk, 2012) prompted an international conference on the impact of Hallyu on the Philippines, such that the term seems to connote the influence of Korean social and cultural aspects such as clothes, fashion, and technological goods among the Asian countries.(Kwon, 2007, p. 258). The export of Korean popular media contents has continually expanded even to Singapore, Vietnam and Mongolia, which is beyond East Asia to South East Asia.

Yet regional studies of media influences indicate that a cultural resonance is often created from a media-rich country to another country sharing similar norms and values, and it is certainly cultural resonance at play in the spread and acceptance of the Hallyu. For instance, the phenomenal Taiwanese soap opera hit *Meteor Garden* in 2003 has transformed the face of Philippine programming. It paved the way for the influx of Asian dramas from Taiwan, Korea and Japan. Dubbed in Filipino (the local language), these *chinovelas* (a play of words from the words *Chino* meaning Chinese and *telenovela*, derived from the soap opera format of Latin American countries) is common fare on Philippine television, with about one or two of them occupying the primetime schedules of the top networks and some appearing in non- prime time slots like daytime and weekend timeslots (Vinculado, 2006).

This “Asian media invasion” was welcomed by Vinculado’s respondents, for as she further reported, in terms of cultural affinity, respondents feel that they can relate to the physical characteristics of the characters, being Asian and exposed to the physicality of the actors in their everyday lives. Since some Filipinos look like the characters, they are not alien to them compared to the Caucasian-looking characters in the Latin telenovelas. Respondents also feel a cultural connection to the settings used in the programs and not in the way we expect (Vinculado, 2006, p. 238).

However, “cultural affinity” soon translates into “cultural proximity” in explaining the inter-regional spread of Korean media products especially to China and Taiwan. Dong Hwan Kwon quotes studies that analyzed the contents of widely accepted Korean television dramas among East Asian countries for commonalities of acceptance. The analysis revealed that “Korean dramas that have been widely accepted in Asia contain the Confucian values that are close to Chinese culture” (Kwon, 2006, p. 262). This was premised on common culture and value systems between Korean and Chinese.

Similar trends were noted with regards to the popularity of Japanese drama series in Taiwan. For instance, Koichi Iwabuchi (2002) reported that most of respondents in a survey indicated that they emotionally engaged more with Japanese dramas than they did with Western or Taiwanese dramas. Further, his respondents explained that the ways of expressing love in Japanese dramas which are delicate and elegant are much more culturally acceptable than those of American dramas, and human relations between family and lovers also look more culturally proximate to Taiwan. This proximity allows Taiwan audiences to relate to Japanese dramas more easily.

Thus countries sharing common cultural proximity find it easier to provide “oppositional resistance” to media programming from non-proximity sources. This is further facilitated by the inclusion of linguistic commonalities even within linguistic clusters and groups. (see for instance arguments given by Straubhaar 1991). Interestingly enough, colonized countries often feel they share the same linguistic—and therefore cultural—spaces with the metropolitan countries, thus partaking in the latter’s transnational programs. This is illustrated, for instance, by African Francophone countries where, as Mytton, Teer-Tomaselli and Tudesq noted that the rapid and successful development of the more popular and successful francophone transnational television stations in Africa has resulted from France’s own political and cultural approach, which among other things seeks to extend and strengthen co-operation between countries that have the French language in common. Mytton, Teer-Tomaselli & Tudesq, 2005, p. 101).

A final transnational horizontal post-imperialist visual culture is the Nigerian film industry. Before I look at its horizontal impact, I would first briefly look at the generalized picture of African filmmaking.

A central characteristic of mainstream African cinema is its focus on social and political themes rather than any commercial interests, played out through an exploration of the conflicts between the traditional past and modern times. The creative medium in African cinema harks back at the griot oral nature of narrative structures in African folktales.

Discussions and discourses on transnational flows of media have always ignored African media products—which, for the most part were only shown in Western universities dealing with ‘African films’. Further, ‘Africa’ in discourses of African filmmaking tended to be racialized—virtually ignoring North African Arab filmmaking, as that is usually categorized under the more general rubric of ‘Arab cinema’.

Discussions of African film makers (see, for instance, Ukadike, 1994; Gugler, 2003; Thackway, 2003; Ames, 2006; and Armes, 2008) tended to focus on prolific, predominantly West African

directors such as Ousmane Sembène, Djibril Diop Mambéty (Senegal), Idrissa Ouedraogo, Gaston Kaboré (Burkina Faso), Mahamat Saleh Haroun (Chad), Souleymane Cissé, Manthia Diawara (Mali), Ola Balogun, Hubert Ogunde (Nigeria). The dominance of Francophone African film directors arose because, as Armes (2006, p. 38) noted,

“In most francophone African countries the government has at some time or another offered financial support for at least some filmmakers, and in certain states the list of government-supported films is virtually the total list of films produced”.

Such financing inevitably invites censorship. Anglophone countries such as Nigeria and Ghana tended to rely virtually on market forces to sell their films, and therefore tended to be more commercial, less artistic, than Francophone films. With no State funding and illusions of oil economy—illusion excellently supported by institutionalized corruption in governance (see, for instance, Smith, 2007), budding filmmakers in Nigeria turn to the then popular VHS video system and created a video film industry, which Norimitsu Onishi labeled ‘Nollywood’ in article for the *New York Times* in 2002.

The industry that emerged established a new ‘soft power’ locus of production, distribution and consumption that actually competed with Hindi cinema in Africa. Nollywood would seem to be what African post-Imperialist, and what I call NRAD (Non Resident Africans in Diaspora) visual audiences were waiting for. As Okome (2007, p. 2) observed,

“Nollywood is commercially-savvy. It values the entertainment of its clientele. The entertainment bit is primary to the mode of representation in the industry, yet in that pursuit, one cannot forget its sense of mission, which is to produce culture from the bottom of the street, so to speak. Nollywood provides the imaginary for certain marginal sections of the society where it operates. It is the poorer part of its postcolonial base, which is no longer restricted to Nigeria. This marginal clientele is now found among people on the continent and in the black diaspora where such postcolonial conditions prevail”.

As purely commercial ‘cinema’ which sought to ‘decolonize’ African entertainment, Nollywood aims to supplant the Western and Easter offerings for African Audiences with distinctly African offering. As Okome further noted,

“it is its acute notation of locality that gives it an unprecedented acceptability as *the* local cinematic expression in Nigeria and indeed in Africa. With the emergence of video film, the discourse of African cinema will need to be rephrased in very radical ways. While the wholesale adoption of video technology by practitioners in Nollywood has been an unqualified local success, it is the spirit to defy the economic malaise of the cinema industry in Nigeria that led to the adoption of this “new” technology” (Okome 2007, p. 3).

The phenomena of Nollywood is captured in the interest shown in what it generated and referred to as ‘Nollywood Studies’ in collections such as Haynes (2000), Saul & Austen (2010), and Krings & Okome (2013). In many of the studies, the popularity of Nollywood among African audiences both in Africa and diaspora is carefully recorded, by for instance Ajibade, 2007 (Cameroon), Cartelli, 2007 (Caribbean), Jedlowski, 2012 (Italy) and Ugochukwu 2013 (France), among others.

However, while most of these studies deal with the political economy of an alternative African film industry, perhaps the most clear example of the transcultural and catalytic nature of Nigerian Nollywood on an African audience was in Tanzania, where consumption lead to ‘re-scripting’ in which basic elements of successful Nollywood video films are re-worked in Kiswahili, as Krings (2010, p. 75) reports:

“New local forms of media production in Tanzania have used Nigerian video films as “scripts,” drawing on them in varying degrees. Earlier forms, such as the remediation as photonovel (based on screen shots with Kiswahili in balloons), or the audio dubbing into Kiswahili on VHS cassettes, were attempts to provide some form of intercultural translation and thus to localize Nigerian video films for Tanzanian audiences. Current forms of localization, such as can be observed within some part of the local Kiswahili video film production itself, rather aim at appropriating, what, for want of a better term, could be referred to as the aura of Nigerian video”.

This comes about certainly because Nollywood cinema is devoid of Hollywood spectacular and Hindi film melodramatic storylines embellished with long song and dance sequences. It is a realist cinema based on African realities such as

“infertility or childlessness, the problems of polygamy, child abandonment or desertion, legacy or inheritance issues, prostitution, sibling rivalry, philandering, wife or husband snatching, problem of in-laws, house helps, bonding and oath-taking” (Okome 2010, p. 29).

One might add: corruption, gang warfare, questioning/alternative sexuality, witchcraft and magic (thanks to pre-set digital effects libraries that accompanies most film editing software), a dash of supernatural horror and ballistic urbanism expressed through outrageous conspicuous consumption and opulent set props. It is these social, community and personal episodes that link Nollywood audiences to a collective lived memory, and racialize it in way Hollywood and Hindi cinema could not.

### **From Contamination to Transformation**

While Hollywood was accused of dominance by the media imperialism theory (e.g. Schiller. 1991), Hindi filmmakers have a different perception; for Hollywood and its blockbuster films provide a perfect template for appropriation by Hindi filmmakers, rather than cultural substitution. As Thussu (2008, p. 107) noted, “it is not unusual to see Indian filmmakers adapting Hollywood plots to Indian tastes, in the process of refiguring the Hollywood hegemony in a hybridized product”. This product, a direct appropriation of Hollywood blockbuster films by Hindi filmmakers has been well studied by Orfall (2009) and Wright (2010). For instance, Blair Orfall reproduced an interview with an Indian film producer who claimed that “easily 60 percent of movies—almost one film that releases every week—is either blatantly copied or inspired by some fairly big American film. In addition to that, I’m going to stick my neck out and say a good 10 to 15 percent are borrowed from non-American sources. And maybe 25 percent – I’m not even comfortable saying 25 percent – is original” (Orfall, 2009, p. 91).

Thus Hindi filmmakers openly admit appropriating Hollywood in their films, for according to the columnist Vikramdeep Johal, “the floodgates, so to speak, opened in the 1970s, when our filmmakers began to steal Hollywood stories with gay abandon. The Godfather became Dharmatma, *The Magnificent Seven* was turned into *Khotey Sikkey*, *The Exorcist* into *Jadu Tona*, *Some Like it Hot* became *Rafoo Chakkar* etc.. Today, most filmmakers openly acknowledge the sources of their films and consider it a matter of great pride to be involved with the rehash of a famous film, thereby uniquely combining “inspiration “ with “perspiration” (Johal, 1998, online).

Subsequently, in a closer reading of the Hindi film appropriation of 142 Hollywood films were appropriated into Hindi films, Wright (2010) shows that the predominant emphasis of the appropriations was on Hollywood films with international appeal that were commercially successfl. Table 1 shows a sample of the Hollywood films appropriated into Hindi cinema.

Table 1: Indian Appropriation of Hollywood Films

Original Hollywood Film	Hindi Film Remake
Shawshank Redemption	3 Deewarein
Silence of the Lambs	Sangharsh
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	Aabra Ka Daabra
Point Break	Dhoom
The Fast and the Furious	
Man On Fire	Ek Ajnabee – A Man Apart
Mission Impossible	Main Hoon Na
The Matrix	
Indiana Jones & the Temple of Doom	Mr. India
Memento	Ghajini
“Crocodile” Dundee	Jo Bole So Nihaal

Source: After Wright, 2010, pp. 201-203

Hollywood films such as *Point Break*, *Mission: Impossible*, *The Fast and the Furious*, *The Matrix* all created ultra-cool metrosexual characters that are larger than life, and reflect a radical departure from the melodramatic narratives of Hindi cinema. The array of choreographed singing and dancing in most of the appropriations—absent in the originals—added the metrosexual garnishing to the remakes without being encumbered with the necessity of artistic homage. Guns, explosions, fast cars and bikes, sleek women, ultra-urbanism is the message of these remakes; not artistic commentaries. They became Indian postmodernist commentaries from a traditional society.

Having seen how Hollywood became domesticated in postmodernist Hindi cinema, I will now turn my attention to a post-Imperialist media phenomena rarely documented in both discourses of media/cultural imperialism or general film studies. This was how Hindi cinema—both localized and trans-border appropriations—in turn become templates for the transformation of national or semi-national cinemas. Two locations provide my case study examples: Turkey and Kano, northern Nigeria.

In both of these locations Indian cinema, more than Hollywood created what I call nexus of connectivity between contamination and transformation of political economy of film production. Interestingly, despite Turkish overwhelming preference for Hindi cinema (see Gürata 2010), yet as Smith (2008) indicated, the first attempt at appropriation of a film from a major world industry in Turkey was not sourced from India, but from Hollywood.

The Turkish first foray into transcultural filmmaking was the appropriation of the popular American TV series, *Star Trek*. The Turkish version was a feature film called *Turist Omer Uzay*. The story of the film recycled plots from two Star Trek episodes, *The Man Trap* and *Amok Time*, retold within the comedic backstory of a Turkish bridegroom beamed aboard the Star Trek's Enterprise space ship during his wedding feast (Mitchell, 2001; Smith 2008).

Thus in Turkey, appropriation of various sources into a singular Turkish film was very common. According to Gürata (2006), in 1972 Turkey ranked third among major film-producing countries, with 301 films. Yet almost 90 per cent of these films were remakes, adaptations or spin-offs: in other words, they were based on novels, plays, films and even film reviews or publicity materials of foreign origin. As he further stated,

“The notion of plagiarism in Turkey is not identical with that prevalent in the West. Furthermore, the appropriation of material whose sources (filmic or non-filmic) are almost impossible to identify, rendered

proper legal procedures unnecessary for the filmmakers” (Gürata, 2006, p. 242).

The most significant source of the appropriations, however, were from Hindi cinema, with *Awaara* being the biggest all-time favorite. Some of the Hindi films appropriated into Turkish cinema are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Turkish Appropriation of Hindi Films

Hindi Original	Turkish Remakes
Aah	Ah Bu Dünya (Nuri Ergün, 1965)
Sangam	Arkadaşımın Aşkısın (T. İnanoğlu, 1968)
Mother India	Toprak Ana (Memduh Ün, 1973)
Awaara	<i>Turkish versions of Awaara</i>
	Berduş (Osman Seden, 1957)
	Gençlik Hülyaları (Halit Refiğ, 1962)
	Avare (Semih Evin, 1964)
	Ağla Gözlerim (Mehmet Dinler, 1968)
	Berduş (Hulki Saner, 1969)
	Avare (Remzi Jöntürk, 1970)
	Avare Aşık (Hulki Saner, 1970)
	Kader Bu (Fate) (Çetin İnanç, 1976)
	Avare (Remzi Jöntürk, 1978)

After Gürata (2009)

*Awaara* was so popular that it was remade nine times at various years by Turkish filmmakers. Indian films were modified and adapted into the local context by the local distributors, exhibitors or censorship bodies. These modifications took the form of various programming and translation methods from trimming to dubbing. Furthermore, certain scenes were removed or in some cases performances or acts featuring local stars were inserted into the original prints (Gürata, 2006).

I will now focus on Nigeria. The film culture of the Muslim Hausa of northern Nigeria could not be categorized under the rubric of Nigerian ‘Nollywood’ simply because of religious differences: Nollywood is predominantly southern Nigerian and Christian, reflecting Christian ethos. The perennial mutual distrust between northern Nigerian Muslim culture and the southern Nigerian Christian culture, which resulted in a civil war between 1967-1970 (see for instance, Falola, 1999) certainly prevented the formation of a singular national cultural mindset.

However, just like their southern Nigerian counterparts, northern Nigerian filmmakers cut off from what I call ‘celluloid cell’ of early Hausa films and embraced the video film format—necessitated by lack of government funding and personal capital; but motivated by amateurish enthusiasm backed by years of watching endless screenings of popular Hindi films on TV, mediated by various drama clubs formed in the city of Kano, the most significant commercial hub in the north.

Thus in March 1990 the Hausa video film industry was born with the release of a VHS tape of *Turmin Danya* (The Draw, dir. Salisu Galadanchi) by Tumbin Giwa Drama group. For the next few years after this release, Hausa video film production was moderated by the various drama groups. Quick commercial success—coupled with instant fame and stardom—lead to internecine feuds, mutual mistrust and what I can ‘ninanci’ (self-aggrandizement, rather than focus on the emergent industry) lead to break-away producers, directors, actors, and others forming independent filmmaking studios, often run from their bedrooms.

*Turmin Danya* was hugely successful on many fronts. First, it gave birth to an industry. Second it introduced the idea of re-packaging Hausa folktale into a new non-TV format, although using the same cinematic conventions as the TV series most of the actors were part of. It was a conflict in a Hausa traditional ruling house about succession to the throne, with romance thrown in for good measure. The overt-screen romance tallies with the Hindi film mindset the actors, producers and directors of the new industry were weaned on (see Adamu 2007 for details of this).

In the years following this release, a whole industry has emerged patterned on the Hindi film industry star system. In August 1999 the industry was tagged “Kanywood” in a Hausa language magazine created to cater for the industry—the magazine, *Tauraruwa* (Star) was itself patterned on the Hindi film magazine, *Stardust*. It is instructive to note that this is the first labeling of a video film industry in Africa. This is because the larger Nigerian film industry, ‘Nollywood’ was coined by Norimitsu Onishi, a newspaper columnist for the *New York Times* in his column of 16th September 2002 (Onishi 2009).

Kanywood films are based on three sub-plot elements: forced marriage, gender rivalry, singing and dancing. These elements characterize, by and large, Hindi commercial cinema. The first theater of Hausa youth cinema was an inevitable rebellion against *auren dole*—the romanticized forced marriage scenario. This is a theme well played-out in thousands of Hindi films. The second formulaic structure of the Hausa video film is a refinement of the *auren dole* theme—a love triangle where either two girls love the same boy, or two boys love the same girl, with parents or guardians opposing. Both these formulaic patterns, are of course, adopted from Hindi cinema, which is why Hausa video film makers latch on them due to what they perceive as cultural similarities. The third defining characteristic of the Hausa video film is the song and dance, especially from 2000 to 2008. This became a necessary vehicle for the expression of the love, conflict (and often violence as a means of conflict resolution or enforcement of turf territoriality, with the turf often always being a girl as an object of desire).

Considering the historical antecedent preference for Hindi films among the Hausa, it was not surprising therefore that the Hausa video film industry sought its creative templates from Hindi film culture. The transformation of the Hausa video film to a Hindi film clone started from 1995 with Mr. USA Galadima’s *Soyayya Kunar Zuci* (Pains of Love), produced under the auspices of the Nigerian Film Corporation, Jos. The video film was based on the Hindi film, *Mujhe Insaaf Chahiye* (dir. Rama Rao Tatineni, 1983). Before its cinema release, it was premiered to a select private audience in a video store in Kano in 1996, and the overwhelming audience response was that it was too Hindi and too adult to be accepted in a Hausa culture as a video film; more so since it was also the first Hausa video film with body contacts between genders. This was probably what informed the decision not to release it commercially, and restricting its viewing to cinema showings only. However, in 1999 Sarauniya Films in Kano released the trailer of a new video film, *Sangaya* (My Lover, dir. Aminu Muhammad Sabo). It contained catchy tunes, and most importantly a tightly controlled choreography which heightened anticipation for the film which was to be released in early 2000.

Noting the anticipation for *Sangaya*, raised by the trailer, Almah Films in Jos decided to pipe it at the post by immediately releasing *Hanzari* (Haste, dir. Magaji Mijinyawa) a video based on Hindi comedy film *Do Jasoos* (dir. Naresh Kumar, Dimple Films, 1975). The significance of this video was not that it was the second direct Hindi-to-Hausa adaptation, but its mimicking of the *Sangaya* dance routines with 15 dancers - 10 male and five female in a choreography that echoes the original Hindi film *Do Jasoos*.

The race then, had started. In the stampede that followed, no one was focusing attention too much on serious storylines or drama with Nigerian appeal or even African; the focus was on creating video films for Hausa-speaking audience that clone the Hindi films which the audience was already addicted to. In many interviews with popular culture press, the producers claimed that they were trying to wean away Hausa audiences from their addiction to Hindi films by providing readily digestible alternatives that frame the same Hindi central storylines, but within a more African setting. Yet they were merely reinforcing their focus on Hindi cinema by couching it as ‘African’.

Subsequently each producer was attempting to upstage the other in the appropriation game, trying to prove that his video film could produce a better Hindi adaptation than others. Thus HRB Studios in Kano released *Abin Sirri Ne* (Mystery, dir. Tijjani Ibrahim) in 1999, based on *Judwaa* (dir. David Dhawan, 1997). This was followed by Tijjani Ibrahim’s *Dijengala* (female nickname) in 1999 which entered the Hausa entertainment history as the first Australian-to-Hindi-to-Hausa appropriation. *Dijengala* was based on Hindi film *Khoon Bhari Maang* (dir. Rakesh Roshan, 1988), which itself was based on Australian mini-TV series soap opera, *Return to Eden* (dirs. Karen Arthur and Kevin James Dobson, 1983).

The three studios (Almah Productions in Jos with Hanzari; and in Kano, HRB with *Abin Sirri Ne* and HB with *Dijengala*) that spearheaded the Hindi-to-Hausa adaptation technique were merely sustaining the tradition of direct copying initiated in the industry by well-respected directors such as the late Tijjani Ibrahim who favored not only direct Hindi-to-Hausa conversion, exemplified by his *Mujadala* (Pious Woman, based on *Dillagi*, dir. Sunny Deol, 1999) and *Badali* (Transformation, based on *Hum Hai Rahi Pyar Ki*, dir. Mahesh Bhatt, 1993) but also Hindi motifs (especially romantic storylines).

Hausa film director Tijjani Ibrahim’s open endorsement of the Hindi makeover, using then young up-and-coming stars to appeal to Hausa housewives and schoolgirls confirmed on the genre a degree of respectability. In 2000 Ibrahimawa Studios in Kano released *Akasi* (Opposite, dir. Ishaq Sidi Ishaq). It was based on one of the most popular Hindi films to Hausa audience. Subsequently, a market suddenly opened in using Hindi film themes and storylines in Hausa video films. The Sangaya revolution provided a perfect opportunity for endorsing this because of the availability of a multi-instrument sound synthesizer which made it possible to re-enact the complex soundtrack along Hindi film soundtrack lines.

Thus the main creative mechanism adopted by the new wave of Hausa video filmmakers is to appropriate Hindi films, remaking them into Hausa copies, often complete with storylines, or appropriating songs and choreography from various Hindi films. In the few cases where the producers come up with original scripts, they nevertheless rely on Hindi film motifs—both in the storylines and in the production process—to increase the appeal of their films to Hausa audience already fed on Hindi films leading to what is called “Indiyanci” (the process of appropriating Hindi films by filmmakers) to reflect the main mechanism of this cluster of young, and essentially urban, metrosexual Hausa filmmakers. Their metrosexuality is reflected in opulent stage sets, squeaky-clean groomed actors wearing expensive ‘swagger’ gear of designer jeans and American hip-hop jerseys; and if in African costumes, starched brocade dressing. In almost every video film, there has to be a complement of the obligatory song and dance routine, with full Hindi film style choreography.

The industry itself refers to such appropriations as “wankiya” (lit. washing off, but used to mean duping or deception; i.e. passing off a copy as if it were the original). Thus the Hausa video films that started to emerge from 2000 were often collages of about three or four Hindi films, essentially

done to mask the identity of the actual Hindi films appropriated. My intertextual survey of Hausa video films released to the market from 2001 to 2003 indicates that some 124 were appropriations of one Hindi film or other in various formations. A sample of 12 is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Hausa video film Hindi film Inspirations/Appropriations

<i>Original Hindi Film</i>	<i>Hausa Remake</i>	<i>Element Remade</i>
Agni Shakshi	Izaya	Storyline
Azaad	Jirwaye	Scenes
Bhoot	Almuru	Storyline
Chandni	Ayaah	Storyline
Chori Chori Chupke...	Furuci	Storyline
Jurm	Jumurda	Storyline
Judwa	Abin Sirri Ne	Storyline
Major Saab	Kasaita	Song
Dillagi	Mujadala	Scenes
Hum Apke Hain Kaun	Kudiri	Scenes
Sanam Bewafa	Akasi	Scenes
Yaraana	Hakuri	Scenes

Source: Adamu (in press)

This table is based on the entire range of intertextual relationships between Indian films and the corresponding Hausa video films; some were shot-by-shot remakes, others used the Hindi songs and thematically re-arranged them using Hausa lyrics, or borrowed scenes here and there; yet others used artwork (poster and editing techniques) from Hindi films, and finally, some use similar special effects to create similar scenes from Indian films. An analysis of the main list of 124 shows that 77 of the Hausa video films were directly based on the storylines of a corresponding Hindi film, while 30 adapted the songs, 17 used various scenes and one simply used the title of the equivalent Hindi film.

Further, both young emergent, and established Hausa video film stars started bearing names of their perceived Hindi cinema star equivalents—with the monikers often given by their fans. These included Fatima S. Abubakar (Karisma Kapoor), Fati Mohammed (Indiyar Hausa, Indian Hausa), Tahir Fage (Sunny Deol), Danladi Shehu (Akshay Kumar), Rabi Landiyo (Sridevi). In a bizarre name change, a Hausa actress, Farida Abubakar, changed her name to Farida Jalal—to mirror the equivalence of a Hindi film star with the same name.

Male Hausa who, in the absence of locally-flavored cinema, saw these Hindi films closely approximating their own social space. The effect was even more electrifying on house-bound young housewives who had no opportunity to go to cinema and therefore rely solely on the television programming. The elaborate song and dance routines characteristic of commercial Hindi cinema available in northern Nigeria captivated urbanized Hausa so deeply that many of them can recite the Hindi-language songs word for word, from the beginning to the end. The outcome of these “Hindunese” cinema language is obsession with Hindi cinema motif.

Further, the flowing saris of the actresses, and the macho posturing of the actors, coupled with an obsession with love triangles—an obsession shared by the Hausa marital spaces—made Hindi films immediately acceptable, and rapidly enough, Northern Nigeria became the biggest market for Hindi films in Nigeria.

Hausa video film producers argue that the Indian society is “just” like the Hausa society, at least in its approach to marriage—the main obsession of young Hausa video film producers. Thus Hausa video film makers who seek their inspiration from Hindi commercial film sources focus on the

visual similarities between Hausa culture and what they perceive as Hindi culture, as shown in films, rather than their divergences. Brian Larkin (1997, pp. 412-413), working in the city of Kano in the 1990s analyzed the Muslim Hausa affinity for Indian cinema, when he observes that the popularity of the films was because of the

“many visual affinities between Indian and Hausa culture. Men in Indian films, for instance, often dress in long kaftans similar to the Hausa *dogon riga*, over which they wear long waistcoats, much like the Hausa *palmaran*. Women are also dressed in long saris and scarves which veil their heads and accord with Hausa ideas of feminine decorum. The iconography of Indian ‘tradition’, such as marriage celebrations, food, village life and so on, even when different from Hausa culture, provides a similar cultural background that is frequently in opposition to the spread of ‘westernisation’. Indian films place family and kinship at the centre of narrative tension as a key stimulus for characters’ motivation to a degree rare occurs in Western films”.

These observations were complemented by similar perceptions of the reason for the popularity of Indian films by the Hausa video filmmakers, as for instance explained by Abubakar ‘Baballe’ Hayatu (2002, p. 47):

“our culture (Muslim Hausa) is similar to Indian culture, the difference being in fashion and make-up only. We used to watch the films and note the things we should change such that when a typical Hausa person can relate to it as his culture, rather than shunning it. Thus we adapt what we can to suit our culture and religion. If any scene is neutral on these two issues, we leave it as it is.” (Hayatu, 2002, p. 47).

A vibrant youth entertainment film and music industry thus became established in northern Nigeria and which released hundreds of video films consumed locally and in the neighboring Niger Republic. Fig. 1 shows the official number of Hausa video films available to 2008.

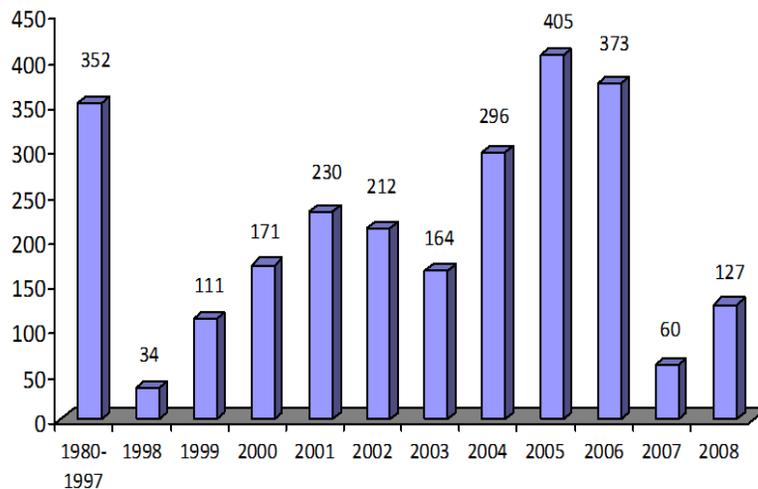


Fig. 1. Production of Hausa video films over the years  
Source: Adamu (2007)

The figures from 1980 to 1997 were seen as “unofficial” (based on claims by producers of their existence) because these films were not regulated through the official channels; but this was because official censoring of video films in Nigeria started in 1996. While many factors can be attributed to the fluctuations in the productions, yet the sharp drop in 2006 can mostly be attributed

to a scandal involving a popular Hausa film actress, Maryama “Hiyana” Usman which affected film production, such that in its coverage of the scandal, *Fim* [sic] magazine of September 2007 devoted an entire issue to the detailing how “Maryam Hiyana has killed the Hausa video film industry.”

By 2011 with a new, far more liberal political regime in Kano, the Hausa video film has become more metrosexual, emphasizing the sexuality and ‘ultra-coolness’ of its particularly male stars. A typical example is the video film, *Nas* (nickname, from Nasir, dir. Adam A. Zango, 2013). This was an ultra-violent character story of a drug baron, complete with private jets, 10 choreographed body guards, all with dark suits and glasses, moving about in SUVs kidnapping young girls, raping them and dumping them, and quite simply blowing away rival drug lords—and throwing in the odd song and dance on a well-kept lawn. Films such as these became the new contra-flow in Hausa diaspora in West Africa.

## Conclusion

In the first exploratory study of the Hausa video films in the early 1990s when the video films started acquiring their transnational characteristics, Brian Larkin advocated a concept of parallel modernities to explain the Hausa-Hindi links in the Hausa popular culture. This framework was used to refer to “co-existence in space and time of multiple economic, religious and cultural flows that are often subsumed within the term “modernity” (Larkin 1997: 407).

Larkin’s use of parallel modernities as an explanation for the Hausa video film development is premised upon the application of theories of media effects, particularly television programming, on Hausa viewers. Thus in seeing the Hausa film makers’ imitative absorption of Hindi film cinema technique in Hausa popular literature, Larkin assumes that Hausa filmmakers and their audience “participate in the imagined realities of other cultures as part of their daily lives”. (Larkin 1997: 407). Yet this presumes a cultural entertainment vacuum among the Hausa, and this is not the case. Hausa popular culture had always had strong dosage of drama, miming, singing and dancing, long before contact with non-African popular culture. When Hindi cinema brought these elements to the visual medium, they merely reaffirmed a visual cultural lineage.

Similarly, Hausa society had had to deal with the embedded issues of *auren dole*, or what I prefer as *soyayyar dole* (forced love), again long before the intrusion of Hindi cinema in urban northern Nigeria. Hausa film makers merely reproduce Western cinematic techniques in telling the same old stories from their communities. The Hindi film contra-flow, therefore, transcends visual mimicry; but reflects a sharing of cultural commonalities and memory facilitated by common religious subscription packaged in various forms of popular culture—Indians’ shared Islamic culture and the Muslim Hausa mindset. With the exception of Ghanaian Hindu worship a process that actually waned— other centers of Hindi film contra-flow influences latch on social dynamics of family life and structures and readily absorb their resonance, rather than the gamut of Indian social realities. Significantly, when Hindi films jettisoned their traditional family-drama structure and became more Westernized and metrosexual, they lost their contra-flow appeal to Southern nations because these same nations had access to the Western media products; same as the Indian entertainers. Metrosexuality therefore had multiple entry points into non-Imperialist popular culture; for the Hausa filmmakers, though, it came via appropriation of Hindi filmic styles and techniques to appeal to African urban audiences.

For the rest of Africa, though, the Nigerian English-language film industry, Nollywood, provides a ready substitute to both Hollywood and Hindi cinemas. This video cinema represented a wake-up call not only for African audiences, but also for African diaspora who readily see the

reflection of the African and Black realities—rather than Hindi romantic fantasies—they deal with on a constant basis. Nollywood therefore becomes a new contra-flow center of cinematic gravity that pulls—and energizes—other Southern nations, especially in Africa. The influence of Nollywood became more globalized with its availability as Nollywood TV on various satellite TV services.

I want to therefore contribute to the media imperialism debate by suggesting Transcultural Contra-flow Theory to explain the behavior of Muslim Hausa video filmmakers in their use of Hindi film motif in their video films. Both Hausa and Hindi filmmakers are subject to the same social antecedents rooted in Islamicate societies. In this, I argue that conceptions of modernities did not take into consideration the violent intrusion of small media technologies that helped to create *media* identities—rather than social identities divorced from the religious, political, economic and transnational lived-in experiences of Hindi film audiences. Before the Hausa youth acquired these new technologies, they relied on Hindi films to reproduce their realities. When they acquired the technologies, they started telling the same stories - in their own cinematic languages. Using the mechanism of cultural Agency (after Giddens, 1984) they appropriate elements of Hindi cinema that enables them—just like the Turkish did—to recast similar stories in different locations, in a clear demonstration of transcultural contra-flow.

Yet the ‘cultural’ could only go far. As we have seen, the allusion to ‘similarity of cultures’ between Indians depicted in Hindi films and Hausa social mores brings ‘distance closeness’—with Agency acting as barrier; for just as Turkish (Gürata, 2010), Greek (Eleftheriotis, 2006) and Egyptian (Armbrust 2008) public cultures derided the intrusion of Hindi cinema and its music within the entertainment motif of these countries, so does the Hausa societies. It is this derision from the Hausa public culture that served as the Agency limiting the extent of ‘soft imperialism’ of Hindi films among the Hausa. Hausa filmmakers point out that their appropriation of Hindi films does not extend to their cultural lives—their food, their clothing, their customs and their beliefs still remain rooted in their ancestral memories and not in the on-screen sociology of Hindi films, whether native to India, or appropriated from Hollywood. This therefore recasts the whole cultural/media imperialism in a new light, for it reveals what I call ‘transparent engagement’ with whatever media culture they come in contact with.

Thus constant global circulation of the media clearly shows that the traditional patterns and flows have charted new directions. It is no longer sufficient to discuss the flow of media from the West to “less-West” audiences. The development of media mediated popular culture has seen a paradigm shift in the flow of media in Asia, Middle East and Africa, and enabled the development of new horizontal networks (within the third world nations) of media influences, rather than the traditional vertical networks (from developed to developing nations).

Based on this circulation of imageries and imaginations, I would therefore like to propose a *Transcultural Contra-Flow Theory* that captures and explains the mechanisms of these circulations. This theory can therefore be defined as:

The circulation, audience consumption, and often creative appropriation of visual imageries among culturally resonant and horizontal, i.e. non-Western, entertainment cultures through the mechanism of Agency that propels a wilful adoptive behavior leading to domestication of convergent resonant media narratives.

Perhaps one of the drawbacks of this theory is the fact of the catalytic influence of Hollywood on the subsequent development of cinemas in non-Western countries; for admittedly, other modern cinemas developed *after* Hollywood’s spread. Indeed the massive appropriation of Hollywood films by Indian cinema, and occasionally Nollywood video film industry; as well as the similar

appropriation of Hindi films by Kanywood video filmmakers clearly underscores the significance of Hollywood as primary sources of inspiration. However, it did not substitute, destroy or replace indigenous cinemas. It provided indigenous filmmakers with the ability—through Agency—to either accept, appropriate, or simply ignore, but use the structure as a template to their own storytelling.

Further, the development of Black Afrocentric cinema narratives of Ousmane Sembène, Idrissa Ouedraogo, Mahamat Saleh Haroun, Souleymane Cissé, Abderrahmane Sissako, Ola Balogun, Djibril Diop Mambéty, Gaston Kaboré and others are clear testimonies of Black African cinema, rooted in African realities. This is because of their focus on social and political themes rather than any commercial interests, and often on an exploration of the conflicts between the traditional past and modern times. The lack of diffusion of this cinema across Africa, and the adoption of the Hollywood cinema's glitz, glamor and commercial focus therefore does hint at echoes of 'imperialism from above'.

However, the appropriation of cinema from Hollywood, as well as creation of new narratives that conform to social realities of horizontal cultural networks is an indication of both ability to absorb, and at the same time, turn-around, cinematic messages to suit newer audiences. This creates visual contra-flows in a source different from the 'normal' flow of Hollywood, or 'imperialism from above'.

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The Vice Chancellor  
**Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, mni, MFR**  
and the entire community of the Bayero University, Kano

Invite The General Public  
To The

**15<sup>th</sup> PROFESSORIAL  
INAUGURAL LECTURE**

**Topic:**

**Imperialism from Below: Media Contra-flows and  
Emergence of Metro-Sexual Hausa Visual Culture**

**LECTURER**

Abdalla Uba Adamu, D.phil  
Professor of Media and Cultural Communication  
Professor of Science Education  
Department of Mass Communication, Bayero University, Kano-Nigeria

**CHAIRMAN**

Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed mni, MFR  
Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Kano

**DATE:** Wednesday, July, 9th, 2014

**TIME:** 10:00am Prompt

**VENUE:** Musa Abdullahi Auditorium,  
Bayero University, New Site

**ANNOUNCER:**

**Professorial Inaugural Lecture Committee**