

Transnational Influences and National Appropriations: The Influence of Hindi Film Music on Muslim Hausa Popular and Religious Music

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Abstract

This paper is a study of how transnational musical genres and forms, specifically from Hindi film music, became appropriated and domesticated by Muslim Hausa of northern Nigeria and integrated as part of their youth popular culture, as well as religious musical performances. It specifically analyses how the Muslim Hausa music of northern Nigeria became transformed first as a result of Islamic encounters, and subsequently as a result of global media flows which appraises the musical relationships that have been formed and continue to be formed between different regions of the world of Islam. It looks at how Hindi film music became appropriated by the Muslim Hausa and recast as a new form of secular and religious performance in an Islamicate society, and the consequences of such circulation on the structural character of Hausa traditional music.

Introduction and Context

An essential tension exists between Muslim Hausa public culture and popular culture. Public culture reflects the quintessential Hausa social makeup with its agreed boundaries defined by cultural specificity such as dress code, language and rules of social discourse. Popular culture, on the other hand, is seen as the realm of the unsophisticated class. Secular music, in all its forms, belongs to this class. What is contentious in Hausa popular culture is not so much the quality of the music, but the social context of its reproduction and mediation. Hausa societies are predominantly Islamic, and had been so since about 13th century when Mandinka Dyula merchants from Mali brought Islam to the ruling classes (Palmer 1908). However, those Hausa who refused to accept Islam retained their traditional pagan religious beliefs, and are often referred to as Maguzawa (for more studies on Maguzawa and their relationship to Hausa see Greenberg 1941, 1947; Parrinder 1959, Barkow 1973, Besmer 1977 and Last 1979).

Medieval Hausa Islam did not differentiate between secular and religious entertainment, and eventually performances became part of social rituals. Indeed before the whole scale adoption of Islam, the traditional musical performances of the Hausa center around *bori* cultish performances. As Joseph Greenberg (1947:49) observed,

in discussing the possession cult known as *bori*, we must distinguish those simple individual performances among the Maguzawa, carried on for specific purposes, from the performances of the Bori societies whose aim is principally to give amusement, and which requires the use of elaborate costumes and other paraphernalia, and are carried on in the presence of a large number of performers and spectators. Both in the simple cult of the villages and in its more elaborate manifestations met with in the cities, the underlying principles of possession and initiation are the same.

The *bori* is essentially a trance and spirit possession cult of non-Islamic Hausa – although often patronized by Muslim Hausa. Its central template revolves around musical performances, during which as Veit Erlmann (1982:50) pointed out,

specialized musicians provide such music as praise-songs for important cult members, informal dance music to entertain the cult members before and after a ceremony, and above all individual tunes (*taakee*) for each of the more than four hundred spirits. These tunes are sung and/or played by a combination of gourd-rattles (*cakii*) and/or calabashes (*k'waryaa*) and a one-stringed bowed lute (*googee*), or alternatively by a set of calabash-bodied drums (*dumaa*).

This spirit-invoking performance constitute a genre of Hausa music, but essentially defines the medieval origins of the music form. Indeed, as Erlmann further argues (p. 55), the Hausa theory of music draws parallels between human and ghostly susceptibility to praise-songs, and led to the emergence of Hausa *bori* music as praise-singing. This link between an essentially pagan ritual performance and praise-singing would eventually define the character of a traditional Hausa musician. It also helps to explain how musical performances made the transition from religious to public spaces.

A further emphatic feature of the Hausa *bori* performance was its gender focus. During the musical performances in *bori* rituals, there was no gender segregation – women participate as equally as men, both as performers (musicians, dancers) as well as spectators. However, Adeline Masquelier (1995:888) argues that

Despite the popularity of *bori* among women, membership in the cult is itself tantamount to becoming a *karuwa* (prostitute) in the eyes of many men, both Muslims and spirit-followers alike. There are at least three reasons for assuming that a female *bori* adept will never be a faithful and obedient wife and that *bori* circles are dens of vice. First, as the epitome of lasciviousness, unrestrained behavior, and excessive self-gratification, *bori* ceremonies (*wasani*) stand in direct opposition to Muslim ideals of modesty and control ...Second, *bori* ceremonies are held to be conducive to romantic encounters. As a result, women who make up the audience of a *bori* ritual are mostly unmarried girls, divorced women, or women past menopause who do not have a reputation to protect. Third, it is held to be common knowledge that most young women attending *wasani* are prostitutes (*karuwai*) looking for male customers. A few are members of the cult, but most come only to have a good time and to rent their bodies to an eager clientele after the ceremony.

Thus the participation of women in public space in Hausa societies already pre-dates the Islamic delineation of gender participation in public sphere. However, although *bori* provides a most focused theater for musical performances among the non-Muslim Hausa, the music is often re-channeled in other spheres of social intercourse. As Cogdel (1984:167) further explains,

Hausa *bori* rites are generally performed for entertainment at social events such as weddings, naming ceremonies, and festivals, or specifically as a means for treating maladies or ill-fortunes believed to have been caused by spirits.

Thus the nature and character of music in Hausa societies became defined initially by religious connotations of music and spirit worship, before becoming “secular” and being re-enacted in non-religious settings of popular entertainment.

Margaret Kartomi’s works (1973, 1981, 1994, 1998,) reveals similar “shamanistic” connections between a religious cult and musical performances in many pre-Muslim

Sumatran communities in Asia. For instance, she notes (1998:156-157) that in the performance of pre-Muslim ritual forms in West Sumatra,

It is in villages like Sungai Kuok that the most intimate and personal of pre-Muslim rituals and associated shamanic music and dance forms are still practiced. The *dukun bdian* (curing shamans) who cure the sick by carrying out rituals, reciting mantras, singing magically potent songs and brandishing talismans (*azimat*, Ar.) are highly respected for their efficacy. Other kinds of dukun perform love magic, capture tigers, and carry out a range of other very difficult feats to the accompaniment of their own chant or song and playing of soft magically powerful instruments such as a jew's harp (*rinding*) or flute to attract a lover or a bullroarer (*gasieng*) for black magic (*ilmu sihir*).

Similar rituals that connects mystical numbers and Manch traditional music in China (Lisha 1993) and the Tibetan rituals of flight to the world beyond (Ellingson-Waugh 1974). Thus the links of music and bori or shamanistic linkages is clearly on a collision course with an Islamicate social culture.

From 1804-1810, an Islamic reform movement took place in the Hausa societies of what became northern Nigeria led by a Fulani cleric and ascetic, Shehu Usman Danfodio. The reform movement focused on structural and spiritual transformations of the Hausa society which the reformers believed was sliding away from the true path of Islam (Johnston 1967, Last 1967, Adeleye 1971, Sulaiman 1986).

Many justifications were provided by the reformists for engaging in the reform. Of those that concern public perception of popular culture was the ones given in *Kitab al-farq*, written by Sheikh Usman Danfodio, the spiritual leader of the reform movement (translated, with commentary by Mervyn Hiskett 1960). A fairly typical quotation from the Shehu concerning popular culture included the accusations against Hausa traditional governments and peoples that:

One of the ways of their government is their being occupied with doing vain things (continuously) by night or by day, without legal purpose, such as beating drums, and lutes, and kettle-drums. The Muslims only beat the kettledrum, and similar instruments for a legal purpose, such as wishing to gather the army together, or to signify its departure, or the setting up of camp, and its arrival, and as a sign of the advent of the festival, as the kettle-drum is beaten for the advent of *'Id al-adhd*, and they confine themselves to what necessity requires (Hiskett 1960: 569).

This is so far one of the strongest indictments against musical performances in Hausa societies by the Shehu. And considering the spectacular success of his reformist movement—which replaced the entire Hausa ruling class with the Fulani, this particular view, coming as it were from a *Mujaddadi* (reformer) conferred on it spiritual and religious credibility and re-defined the perception of music in Hausa public space.

Two clear views therefore emerged concerning the status of Hausa music and Hausa musicians in the subsequent Islamicate—the product of a civilization produced by religion (Hodgson 1970, 1974)—society of northern Nigeria. The first was the low status of Hausa musicians due to its client-focused nature. The praise-singing characteristics of musicians to the spirits of the bori performances, which eventually became part of popular entertainment created a vocation for praise-singers (*maroka*) who made a living out of praising dignitaries in the community.

The second picture that emerged was that of music as performance. Devoid of rituals and praise-singing, music became a conventional mode of cultural reproduction that provide a community focus during significant events (weddings, parties, inaugurations, etc). Since this inevitably involved some form of gender mixing, it became a contentious issue in a Shari'ah society. This helped to lower the value of music and musicians, for as Ames (1973b:274) noted

Though music is valued by the Hausa, musicians collectively enjoy very low social rank and are alleged to have weak character. Consistent with their social placement and stereotype, many non-musicians refuse to marry them or to have other close social relations with them.

Consequently, Hausa society, being structured on specific occupational hierarchies often considers music a low art form (Ames 1973a). Musical appreciation can however be both low or high. For instance, the existence of complete orchestras in palaces of Hausa emirs from Zaria to Damagaram indicates the acceptance of music as an entertainment genre within the conventional establishment. However, it is not acceptable for the ruling class to engage in the same music—thus a prince cannot be a musician.

But perhaps the biggest ripple in Hausa concept of highbrow musical genre was the media intrusion of Hindi film soundtracks from popular Hindi films. These soundtracks, introduced via radio and cinema houses from 1960 when Nigeria became independent from Britain, leapt from the screen to the street, first via children's playground songs patterned on the most popular Hindi film music tracks. This was almost immediately taken up by "lowbrow" bar and club circuit musicians such as Abdu Yaron Goge who picked up *Raati Suhani* from the film, *Rani Rupmati* (1957), and Ali Makaho with his rendition of *Kahbie Khabie* from *Khabie* (1975) and popularized not just the soundtracks, but also the adaptive process they introduced.

However the most perverse influence of Hindi film soundtrack on Hausa musical genre was the emergence of Hausa video films from 1990. These are video dramas shot with a VHS camera (although they are now increasingly using digital camcorders) to record a 3 hour drama (often split into two parts). It is an invariable article of faith of the Hausa video dramatists to include a series of song and dance routines in their video dramas. As much 80% of the Hausa video film dramas are directly ripped-off Hindi films in one form or another, including the music soundtrack, which is Hausanized.

The focus of this paper is on the catalytic influence of Hindi film music on the transformation of a traditional genre of music in an African society. It specifically analyzes the transformation of Hausa music as a traditional genre of popular culture. It pays homage to the structural characteristics of Hausa traditional music in order to provide a template for understanding how radically different the Hindi film soundtrack is from Hausa entertainment mindset.

The Hausa System of Class and Popular Culture

The Hausa are predominantly Muslim group in northern Nigeria and formed the largest ethnic group in the country. The Hausa language itself is widely spread from northern Nigeria to Niger Republic and all the way to other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, stretching to Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia and Senegal. Due to their contact

with Islam as early as 12th century, the Hausa have acquired a considerable Arabic vocabulary in their language, such that at least 1/5 of Hausa words, from 1750-1960, are directly Arabic in origin (Abubakar 1972). Despite this linguistic affinity, however, Arab popular culture – in the form of music, whether classical or contemporary, theater and literature has had never had wide appeal among the Muslim Hausa. Consequently, Arab sources were not seen as a basis for inspirational adaptation for Hausa popular culture.

According to Smith (1959:249), the Hausa system of social status has

three or four 'classes'. Sometimes the higher officials and chiefs are regarded as constituting upper 'class' by themselves, sometimes they are grouped with the Mallams and wealthier merchants into a larger upper class. The lowest 'class' generally distinguished includes the musicians, butchers, house-servants and menial clients, potters, and the poorer farmers who mostly live in rural hamlets. The great majority of the farmers, traders and other craftsmen would, therefore, belong to the Hausa 'middle-class'

This categorization, as imperfect as Smith himself identified it to be, nevertheless serves as a rough guide to the position of a musician in Hausa society. The main reason for including musicians in the lower level status is the client-focused nature of Hausa music. With its main pre-occupation of appeasing specific clients, it thus becomes a non-art form – art for art's sake – but tailored towards a specific paying-client. A song composed for one client, for instance, will not be performed to another client. What further entrenches the lower status of musicians also is the *maroki* (praise-singer) status of most Hausa traditional musicians – praising their clients for money or other material goods (Smith 1957). A mean client gets the short-end of the musician's stick, often with sarcastic barbs thrown in for good measure. As Ames (1973:266-267) points out,

Generally, the bigger the gift received or expected, the more extravagant the praise. Liberties are taken with the "truth." For example, if the person being praised in song has low-ranking kin on his father's side, the singer may mention only a prestigious titled official, even if but distantly related on the mother's side. Kin substitutes are invented when the singer or praise-shouter doesn't know the genealogy of his client, e.g., a Hausa clerk employed by a European firm may be praised as *dan Ingila* (literally, "the son of England").

Naturally a very generous patron get the full-blown poetic powers of the musician. However, as Besmer (1971:22) also observes,

Court musicians...have a higher relative status than most other musicians and praise-singers with the possible exception of nationally famous Hausa musicians whose songs may be heard in nightclubs and over the radio. In social situations, a court musician holding a senior title responds to a nationally famous musician as an equal. This is in marked contrast to his behavior towards non-royal musicians whom he treats as social inferiors. There can be no question that musicians in Hausa society are a distinct and socially recognized occupational group whose status is generally ranked below the majority of non-musicians in the total social fabric. (p.22).

This classification of Hausa musicians, however, excludes the poet-musicians, who often recite their poetry without any accompanying instrumentation. And as Schuh (1994:1) points, out

Discussion of Hausa poetry has generally distinguished *oral* poetry, which finds its roots in ancient Hausa tradition, and *written* poetry, which dates from the 19th century and whose

meters can be traced to Arabic Islamic verse. Though the large and continually evolving body of Hausa poetic literature derives from these separate origins, there has now been considerable cross-fertilization between the two traditions, both thematically and metrically. Moreover, the “oral” vs. “written” distinction is misleading. Although poets working in the so-called “written” tradition generally codify their works in writing using regular stanzaic patterns, *all* Hausa poetry is composed for presentation in sung or chanted form—prose-like recitation, much less silent reading of poetic works is quite foreign to Hausa.

Such poets are often seen as representing Hausa oral art form, and the cultural references of quintessential Hausa higher form of entertainment. Because it forces the listener to think about the lyrics, it is considered an art form. Mainly highly educated (both in Western and Islamic traditions, and in contrast to traditional “low brow” musicians who often had only Islamic education), the thematic elements of these poets tended to be either political or religious. Aliyu Namangi’s nine-volume *Imfiraji*, for instance, is a Dantesque exposition of life, death, and what comes after death – all admonishing the Muslim to lead a pious life. Ahmadu Danmatawalle’s *Wakar Tsuntsaye* is a blistering critique of the ruling house of one of the emirates of northern Nigeria structured in the form of an Animal Farm (George Orwell) landscape in which the characteristics of the various courtiers were juxtaposed with perceived personality traits of specific birds and animals in a jungle in their quest for a new ruler.

Categorization of Hausa Music

Mainstream popular traditional Hausa music is divided into two distinct categories – the instrumental accompaniment, and the vocals. This division might seem trite; but it should be pointed out that vocals form the main component of the music. It is very common for Hausa musical groups to play on one type of instrument – predominantly a percussion instrument such as the *kalangu* or “African” drum, maintaining more or less the same beat throughout the song. The skills of the lead “musician” are essentially in the philosophy and poetry of his songs.

About three distinct structures typify Hausa music. In the first instance, even if it has no specific instruments, but relying on the voice, it is still called *music*. Secondly, it is predominantly a single-instrument process in which a single type of instrument, mainly a drum, is used in a variety of combinations, with the lyricist providing the focal point of the music – the words, which with some musicians such as Muhammad Dahiru Daura, a blind beggar minstrel poet, can be in the form of opera. Third is the gender dimension of Hausa music which sees a strict separation of the sexes – in effect a reflection of the Hausa traditional society which segregates the sexes. Thus Hausa traditional music, like most musical forms around the world, is based on a single gender voice – either male or female; but rarely a combination of the two in the same composition

The most distinctive characteristic of subject matter of mainstream traditional Hausa musicians is their client-focused nature. The subject matter of the songs could either be a courtier, an emir, a wealthy person, an infamous person, or simply iconic interpretations of the mutability of life. Thus Hausa “music” excels on its *vocal* qualities—with Hausa musicians producing songs of utter philosophical and poetic quality, reflecting Hausa proverbs—rather than instrumental virtuosity.

There are often “orchestras” comprising of many backing musicians, with different instruments; however the predominant instrument is the drum in all variety of shapes and sizes, and often constitute the sole instrument in some ensembles.

When Hausa societies became more cosmopolitan, and began to absorb influences from other cultures, limited mixed-mode instrumental “groups” started to appear, combining the percussion instruments with predominantly stringed instruments such as *goge*, *kukuma* (fiddles) leading the orchestra, or as in the case of *koroso* music, a combination of flute, drums and *lalaje* – calabash discs pierced in a stick to form a rattle. Rarely are there musical combos with string, percussion and wind instruments in the *same* band. Indeed, wind instruments, such as *kakaki* (trumpet) are mainly royal palace instruments, while *sarewa* (flute) which is predominantly used in Fulani music genre, is often a solo instrument used on its own, or accompanied by voice.

Traditional Hausa music and musicians were often divided into specific categories, just like any music genre. In one of the most comprehensive studies of this categorization, Gusau (1996) in a biographical study of 33 Hausa classical to modernist musicians provided at least five categories (Gusau 1996). The first was *Makadan Yaki* (war musicians) and who flourished from mid 19th century up to 1920. Singing for palace armies of Sokoto territories such as Gobir, Kebbi, and Argungu, these included Wari Mai Zarin Gobir (d. 1800), Ata Mai Kurya (d. 1899), Kara Buzu Mai Kan Kuwa (d. 1920), etc. Their instruments included *zari* (any piece of equipment used to create a musical tone, e.g. a ring beaten with a metal rod), *kurya* (a variety of drum) and *molo* (a three-stringed “guitar” like a lute) each accompanied with a backing choir.

Extending the musical influences from 1900 were *Makadan Sarakuna* (Emir’s palace musicians) – centering their musical instrumentation around drum orchestras. Again found predominantly around Sokoto basin, these included Buda Dantanoma Argungu (1858-1933), Ibrahim Gurso Mafara (1867-1954), Salihu Jankidi Sakkwato (1852 to 1973), Aliyu Dandawo Argungu (1925 to 1966), Ibrahim Narambada Isa (1875-1960), and Muhammadu Sarkin Taushin Sarkin Katsina (1911-1990). Their main music styles was based on a variety of drumming accompanied by slow mournful and elegant vocals, as befitting one in the presence of royalty. The main drums were *kotso* (a drum with only one diaphragm), *taushi* (a conical drum with only one diaphragm, beaten softly), *kuru* (a long drum about 3 feet long), *turu* (a large drum). Although predominantly palace musicians, nevertheless they use their skills to sing about other issues such as politics, importance of traditional culture, etc., especially those who were still alive (such as Sarkin Taushi Sarkin Katsina) during the Nigerian independence in 1960.

Included in this category were also Musa Dankwairo (1909-1991), Sa’idu Faru (b.1932), Sani Aliyu Dandawo Yauri (b. 1949), and Abu Dankurma Maru (b.1926), among others. Playing the same drum orchestra these latter court musicians tended to cater for both well-heeled members of the gentry and the Emirs.

The third category of traditional Hausa musicians was *Makadan Sana’a/Maza* (those who sing for members of specific occupational guilds and professions, predominantly male occupations). Perhaps the most famous of these was Muhammadu Bawa Dan Anace (1916-1986) whose main, although not exclusive, specialty was singing for

traditional boxers, the most famous of whom was Muhammadu Shago. Dan Anace also sang for farmers and members of the aristocracy.

However, the most eclectic category was *Makadan Jama'a* (popular singers). Although often singing for Emirs and other gentry, their predominant focus was on ordinary people and their extraordinary lives. And while the other category of musicians tended to favor the drum in its various incantations, popular singers used a variety of musical instruments, and incorporate a variety of styles and subject matter—marking a departure from a closeted traditional society to a more cosmopolitan product of transnational flow of media influences.

These categories did not merge into each other historically, but rather even developed concurrently, with the last category, *Makadan Jama'a*, gaining predominance in recent years.

Departing from the dominance of Sokoto musicians and the staid Emir's courts, Hausa popular folk musicians also adopted different instruments, rather than the predominantly percussion-based music of Emir's courts and occupational guild singers. Thus percussion instruments such as *duman girke*, *ganga*, *tauje*, *banga*, *taushi*, *kotso*, *turu*, *kalangu*, and *kwaira*; as well as wind instruments like *algaita*, *kakaki*, *kubumburuwa*; stringed instruments like *garaya*, *kuntigi*, *molo*, *kwamsa*, *goge*, *kukuma* all became the vogue among Hausa street and popular folk musicians up to 1990s (Kofoworola and Lateef 1987).

Mamman Shata, the most famous of all Hausa folk popular entertainers, for instance used the *kalangu* (an hour-glass shaped drum, or “African” drum) orchestra; Dan Maraya Jos used *kuntigi* (a small, one-stringed instrument, a kind of fiddle). Equally diverse was their subject matter. Shata was predominantly a praise singer (maroki) for Emirs (*Sarkin Daura Mamman Bashar*), gentry (*Garban Bichi Dan Shehu*), “peoples” heroes (*Bawa Direba*), women (*Kilishi Jikar Dikko*), infamous (*Ammani Manajan Nija*), high life (*A Sha Ruwa*), civil servants (*Abba 33*), etc, having composed thousands of songs for all categories of people (see, for instance, Abdulkadir 1975).

Dan Maraya Jos operated on the other side of the spectrum. Despite being a popular singer, he refused to be client-focused and composed songs of poetic elegance that reflect the vicissitudes of life. Examples included *Wakar Sana'a* (virtues of gainful employment) *Dan Adam Mai Wuyar Gane Hali* (lamenting human nature), *Jawabin Aure* (married life), *Bob Guy* (the dude, a parody of drunkards and young urban dudes intoxicated with “modernity”), *Ina Ruwan Wani da Wani* (virtue of minding your own business), etc. He remained one of the few Hausa popular artistes with international collaborations (Yusha'u 2003).

Hausa female popular singers were very few – perhaps due to the low class status often afforded to musicians in the Hausa society. As Smith (1959:249) pointed out, Hausa social status classification tends to “place officials, Mallams (Muslim scholars) and merchants at the top, in that order, and put musicians and butchers at the bottom.” This categorization also excludes female specialisms in Hausa society of which music is one.

Generally music and popular entertainment are not seen as credible or acceptable career options for women in a traditionally closeted society. Nevertheless, the few women musicians exist to provide female-themed entertainment for especially married women in *pardah* (Islamic seclusion). The most notable of this category of Hausa musicians was Uwaliya Mai Amada, a female vocalist accompanied by an orchestra of women calabash musicians (led by her husband!) in a music genre referred to as *amada*. The early stage sets in her career were often a bawdy performances full of comedic innuendos of the sexuality of *marabouts* – Muslim religious scholars who claim to deal with supernatural forces on behalf of women, and who often, as suggested in her songs, use their position of spiritual trust to sexually abuse their women clients.

Singing predominantly for women and especially during women-themed ceremonies, she carved a respectful niche for herself as an energetic voice for women, bringing out their fantasies and cocking a snook at the conservative establishment, as reflected in this excerpt from *Malam Ya Ga Wata!* (The teacher eyes another one!)

Hausa folk musicians with youth focus such as Habibu Sakarci, Dankashi (*Safiya Kano*), Amadu Doka (*Garba Tabako*), Garba Supa (*Amarya Ango*), Hassan Wayam (*Sai Wayam*), Surajo Mai Asharalle, Ali Makaho (*Wakar Mandula*—a provocative street song on marijuana), Idi Na Kumbo, Sani Man Bango, Haruna Uje, and other others provided Hausa youth with a vibrant entertainment space that, in the main, remained traditional and reflected of the Hausa social space.

Hindi Film Factor in Hausa Popular Culture

The main cinematic interest of the Muslim Hausa of northern Nigeria before the advent of the Home videos is the Hindi cinema which was brought to northern Nigeria by Lebanese distributors after independence from Britain in 1960.¹ From 1945, when the first cinema, Rio (often called Kamfama, after the fact of its being located initially in a former French Military Confinement area, now Hotel De France) was opened in Kano, to 1960, film distribution was exclusively controlled by a cabal of Lebanese merchants who sought to entertain the few British colonials and other imported non-Muslim workers in northern Nigeria by showing principally American and British films.

Despite strict spatial segregation (from 1903 when the British conquered the territory to 1960), the British did acknowledge that the locals (i.e. Muslim Hausa) maybe interested in the new entertainment medium, and as such special days were kept aside for Hausa audience in the three theaters then available. The British, however, were not keen in seeing films from either the Arab world, particularly Egypt with its radical cinema, or any other Muslim country that might give the natives some revolutionary ideas. Indeed, there was no attempt to either develop any local film industry, or even provide African-themed entertainment for the locals.²

After 1960s there were few attempts to show cinema from the Arab world, as well as Pakistan, due to what the distributors believe to be common religious culture between Middle East and Muslim northern Nigeria. However, these were not popular with the Hausa audience, since they were not religious dramas, but reflect the culture of the Arabs—which the Muslim Hausa were quick to separate from Islamic culture. And although the Hausa share quite a lot with the Arabs (especially in terms of dress, food

and language),³ nevertheless they had different entertainment mindsets, and as such these Arab films did not go down well.

The experimental Hindi films shown from November 1960 proved massively popular, and the Lebanese thus found a perfect formula for entertaining Hausa audience. Subsequently, throughout urban clusters of northern Nigeria, from Kano, Jos, Kaduna, Bauchi, Azare, Maiduguri, and Sokoto, Lebanese film distribution of Hindi films in principally Lebanese controlled theaters ensured a massive parenting of Hindi film genre and storyline, and most especially the song and dance routines, on urban Hausa audience.

Thus from 1960s all the way to the 1990s Hindi cinema enjoyed significant exposure and patronage among Hausa youth. Thus films such as *Raaste Ka Patthar* (1972), *Waqt* (1965) *Rani Rupmati* (1957), *Dost* (1974) *Nagin* (1976), *Hercules* (1964), *Jaal* (1952), *Sangeeta* (1950), *Charas* (1976), *Kranti* (1979), *Dharmatama* (1975), *Loafer* (1974), *Amar Deep* (1958) *Dharam Karam* (1975) and countless others became the staple entertainment diet of Hausa urban youth, as well as provincial cinemas. It subsequently provided a template for future young filmmakers.

However, although the Hindi cinema was popular, the actual process of going to the cinema to watch it was still associated with a furtive activity. In the first instance, and for some reasons undefined, the Muslim Hausa conservative society considered cinema going a roguish activity that only the rowdy and troublesome ('*yan iska*, which include drug users, prostitutes, loiterers, and other underbelly of the society) go to.⁴ Women were – and still are – definitely excluded—and if a woman did attend, then she was seen as a prostitute (*karuwa*). Women and girls therefore had no entertainment except at home. This all changed, however, when in the mid-1976 a television station, the Nigerian Television Network Authority's NTA Kano, was established. The network was also established in other States of the Nigerian federation.

Subsequently, the biggest boom for Hindi cinema in Northern Nigeria was in the 1970s when state television houses (as distinct from Federal broadcasting networks) started operating and became the outlet for readily available Hindi films on video tapes targeted at home viewers. For instance, the NTA Kano alone screened 1,176 Hindi films on its television network from 2nd October 1977 when the first Hindi film was shown (*Aan Bann*) to 6th June 2003.⁵ At the time of starting the Hindi film appearance on Hausa television houses, young school boys and girls aged seven or less became avid watchers of the films and gradually absorbed templates of behavior from screen heroes they thought share similar behavioral patterns. By early 1990s they had become novelists, moving to the home video arena towards the end of the decade.

The entire commercial Hausa video film industry started in Kano, northern Nigeria, in 1990 with a video film titled *Turmin Danya*, a traditional boy-meets-girl drama.⁶ By 2004 the industry had grown and spawned more than 1,500 video films,⁷ with most production and distribution facilities in Kano, which became dubbed *Kanywood* by the industry insiders.

Screen to Street – Hausa Adaptations of Popular Hindi Film Music

Hindi films became popular simply because of what urbanized young Hausa saw as cultural similarities between Hausa social behavior and mores (e.g. coyness, forced marriage, gender stratification, obedience to parents and authority, etc) and those depicted in Hindi films. Further, with heroes and heroines sharing almost the same dress code as Hausa (flowing saris, turbans, head covers, especially in the earlier historical Hindi films which were the ones predominantly shown in cinemas throughout northern Nigeria in the 1960s) young Hausa saw reflections of themselves and their lifestyles in Hindi films, far more than in American films. Added to this is the appeal of the soundtrack music, the song and dance routines which do not have ready equivalents in Hausa traditional entertainment ethos. Soon enough cinema-goers started to mimic the Hindi film songs they saw.

Four of the most popular Hindi films in northern Nigeria in the 1960s and which provided the meter for adaptation of the tunes and lyrics to Hausa street and popular music were *Rani Rupmati* (1957), *Chori Chori* (1956), *Amar Deep* (1958) and *Khabie Khabie* (1975).

The first of this entertainment cultural leap from screen to street was made by predominantly young boys who, incapable of understanding Hindi film language, but captivated by the songs in the films they saw, started to use the meter of the playback songs, but substituting the “gibberish” Hindi words with Hausa prose. A fairly typical example of street adaptation was from *Rani Rupmati* (1957), as shown below:

<i>Itihaas Agar... (Rani Rupmati)</i>	<i>Hausa playground version</i>
Itihaas agar likhana chaho,	Ina su cibayyo ina sarki
Itihaas agar likhana chaho	Ina su waziri abin banza
Azaadi ke majmoon se	Mun je yaki mun dawo
(Chor) <i>Itihaas agar likhana chaho</i>	Mun samu sandan girma
<i>Azaadi ke majmoon se</i>	Ina su cibayyo in sarki
To seen khoo upne Dharti ko	Ina su wazirin abin banza
Veroo tum upne khom se	
<i>Har har har mahadev</i>	<i>Har har har Mahadi</i>
<i>Allaho Akubar</i>	<i>Allahu Akbar</i>
<i>Har har har mahadev</i>	<i>Har har har Mahadi</i>
<i>Allaho Akubar...</i>	<i>Allahu Akbar...</i>

The Hausa translation—which is about returning successfully from a battle—actually captured the essence of the original song, if not the meaning which the Hausa could not understand, which was sung in the original film in preparations for a battle. The fact that the lead singer in the film and the song, a woman, was the leader of the troops made the film even more captivating to an audience used to seeing women in subservient roles, and definitely not in battles.

A further selling point for the song was the *Allahu Akbar* refrain, which is actually a translation, intended for Muslim audiences of the film, of *Har Har Mahadev*, a veneration of Lord Mahadev (Lord Shiva, god of Knowledge). Thus even if the Hausa audience did not understand the dialogues, they did identify with what sounded to them like *Mahdi*, and *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest, and pronounced in the film exactly as the Hausa pronounce it, as *Allahu Akbar*) refrain—further entrenching a moral lineage with the film, and subsequently “Indians”. This particular song, coming in a film that opened the minds of Hausa audience to Hindi films became an

entrenched anthem of Hausa popular culture, and by extension, provided even the traditional folk singers with meters to borrow.

Thus the second leap from screen to street was mediated by popular folk musicians in late 1960s and early 1970s led by Abdu Yaron Goge, a resident *goge* (fiddle) player in Jos. Yaron Goge was a youth oriented musician and drafted by the leftist-leaning Northern Elements People’s Union (NEPU) based in Kano, to spice up their campaigns during the run-up to the party political campaigns in the late 1950s preparatory to Nigerian independence in 1960.

A pure dance floor player with a troupe of 12 male (six) and female (six) dancers, Abdu Yaron Goge introduced many dance patterns and moves in his shows in bars, hotels and clubs in Kano, Katsina, Kaduna and Jos—further entrenching his music to the moral “exclusion zone” of the typical Hausa social structure, and confirming low brow status on his music. The most famous set piece was the bar-dance, *Bansuwai*, with its suggestive moves – with derriere shaken vigorously – especially in a combo mode with a male and a female dancer.

However, his greatest contribution to Hausa popular culture was in picking up Hindi film playback songs and reproducing them with his *goge*, vocals and *kalangu* (often made to sound like the Indian drum, *tabla*). A fairly typical example, again from *Rani Rupmati*, was his adaptation of the few lines of the song, *Raati Suhani*, from the film, as shown below:

Hindi lyrics

Music interlude, with tabla, flute, sitar.

Raati suhani
djoome javani
Dil hai deevana hai
Tereliye

Hausa adaptation (Abdu Yaron Goge)

Music interlude, with *tabla* simulation

Mu gode Allah, taro
Mu gode Allah, taro

Duniya da dadi
Lahira da dadi
In da gaskiyarka,
Lahira da dadi
In babu gaskiyarka,
Lahira da zafi

The Hausa lyrics was a sermon to his listeners, essentially telling them they reap what they sow when they die and go to heaven (to wit, “if you are good, heaven is paradise, if you are bad, it is hell”). It became his anthem, and repeated radio plays ensured its pervasive presence in Muslim secluded households, creating a hunger for the original film song.

Another song, *Phool Bagiya*, from the same film was to be adapted by folk musicians, as exemplified by Ali Makaho in the lyrics below:

Phool Bagiya

Phool bagiya main bulbul bole
Dal pe bole koyaliya
Pyar karo
Pyar karo rukhi pyar ki yaare
Hann ruth kehiti he kalya
Hojiho, hojiho
Hojiho, hojiho

Hausa adaptation (Ali Makaho)

Za ni Kano, za ni Kaduna (to rhyme with *Pyar karo...*)
Mu je Katsina lau za ni Ilori
Na je Anacha
Hotiho hotiho
Hotiho hotiho
Ni ban san kin zo ba
Da na san kin zo ne

Pyar to he salwa rukhi har rukhi	Da na saya miki farfesu
Pyar ki mushkil he kaliya	Ni ban san ka zo ba
Pyar mera daaba bari bangaye	Da na san ka zo ne
Raat ke raat ke savaliya	Da na saya maka funkaso
<i>Hojiho, hojiho, hojiho</i>	Za ni Wudil,
<i>Hojiho, hojiho, hojiho</i>	Za ni Makole
	Na zarce Gogel,
	Za ni Hadeja
	Na kwan a Gumel

Even cultured Hausa poets were not averse to borrowing a Hindi film meter to compose Hausa songs to make them more palatable to their audience. A further example is an adaptation of *Panchi Banu* from the Hindi film, *Chori Chori*, by a noted and well-respected Hausa political poet, Akilu Aliyu, as shown below.

Panchhi Banu (Chori Chori, 1956)

Hindi lyrics

Panchhi banu udati phiruu mast gaagan mei
Aaj mein azaad huun duniya kii chaman mein
Panchhi banu udati phiruu mast gaagan mei
Aaj mein azaad huun duniya kii chaman mein
hillorii hillorii ...) o ... oho
hillorii hillorii ...) o ... oho

Hausa Adaptation, Akilu Aliyu (Poet)

Sun yi shiri sun yi miting sun hada kwamba
Wai za su kashe NEPU a binne su ci gumba
Sun yi kadan basu da iko su kashe ta
NEPU dashe ne wada Allah Ya kafata
Masu kufurtu suyɪ noma su yi huda
Sai kaga an barsu wajen bare takanda

The same soundtrack song was also adapted by Abdu Yaron Goge, the fiddler:

Hindi lyrics

Panchhi banu udati phiruu mast gaagan mei
Aaj mein azaad huun duniya kii chaman mein
Panchhi banu udati phiruu mast gaagan mei
Aaj mein azaad huun duniya kii chaman mein
hillorii hillorii ...) o ... oho

Hausa adaptation (Abdu Yaron Goge), *Fillori*

Mai tafiya za ka ina zani Ilori,
Zani sayan goro da taba da turare
Mai tafiya za ka ina zani Ilori,
Zani sayan goro da taba da turare
Ilori, lorri lorri, Ilori

In both the adaptations of the lyrics, the Hausa prose has, of course, nothing to do with the actual Hindi wordings. However, the meter of the Hindi songs became instantly recognizable to Hausa audience, such that those who had not seen the film went to see it. Since women were prohibited since 1970s from entering cinemas in most northern Nigerian cities, radio stations took to playing the records from the popular Hindi songs. This had the powerful effects of bringing Hindi soundtrack music right into the bedrooms of Hausa Muslim housewives who, sans the visuals, were at least able to partake in this transnational flow of media. It is hardly surprising, therefore that Hausa housewives became the most avid watchers of the Hindi films when they became available on video cassettes in the late 1970s.

A Paradox: Islamic Hindinization of Soundtrack Music

As noted earlier, the leap from screen to street was made predominantly by boys who often get to sneak into the theaters (which allowed an extremely flexible interpretation of “adults” only) and watch the films. Girls had to rely on radio stations playing the soundtracks, and soon enough predominantly girl pupils from Islamiyya Schools (modernized Qur’anic schools) also started adapting Hindi music. However, instead of using the meter to sing usual playground plaza songs, they decided, at the instances of their teachers, to adapt the meters to singing the praises of the Prophet Muhammad in Hausa language. Some of the more notable adaptations are listed in Table 1:

Table 1: Islamic Hindinization of Hindi film soundtrack songs

S/N	Song from Hindi Film	Hausa Adapted Islamic Song
1.	Ilzaam (1954)	Manzon Allah Mustapha
2.	Rani Rupmati (1957)	Dahana Daha Rasulu
3.	Mother India (1957)	Mukhtaru Abin Biyayya
4.	Aradhana (1969)	Mai Yafi Ikhwana
5.	The Train (1970)	Lale Da Azumi
6.	Fakira (1976)	Manzona Mai Girma
7.	Yeh Wada Raha (1982)	Ar-Salu Maccina
8.	Commando (1988)	Sayyadil Bashari
9.	Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak (1988)	Sayyadil Akrami
10.	Yaraana (1995)	Mu Yi Yabonsa Babu Kwaba
11.	Dil To Pagal Hai (1997)	Watan Rajab

Thus Islamiyya Schools predominantly in Kano started using the meter of popular Hindi film soundtracks to religious songs.⁸ An irony, considering that a lot of the Hindi songs they were adapting were tied to Hindu religion, with its multiplicity of gods, as opposed to the monotheism of Islam. These adaptations, which were purely vocal, without any instrumental accompaniment, were principally in the 1980s during particularly religious resurgence in northern Nigeria post-1979 Iranian Islamic revolution which provided a template for many Muslim clusters to re-orient their entire life towards Islam in Muslim northern Nigeria. Entertainment was thus adapted to the new Islamic ethos. Thus while not banning watching Hindi films – despite the fire and brimstone sermonizing of many noted Muslim scholars – Islamiyya school teachers developed all-girl choirs that adapt the Islamic messaging, particularly love for the Prophet Muhammad, to Hindi film soundtrack meters. The basic idea was to wean away girls and boys from repeating Hindi film lyrics which they did not know, and which could contain references to multiplicity of gods characteristic Hindu religion.

Having perfected the system that gets children to sing something considered more meaningful than substitution of Hindi words from film soundtracks, structured music organizations started to appear from 1986, principally in Kano, devoted to singing the praises of the Prophet Muhammad. These groups – using the *bandiri* (tambourine) – were usually led by poets and singers.⁹ They are collectively referred to as *Kungiyoyin Yabon Annabi* (Groups for the Singing the Praises of Prophet Muhammad). The more notable of these in the Kano area included Usshaqul Nabiyyi (established in 1986), Fitiyanul Ahbabu (1988), Ahawul Nabiyyi (1989), Ahababu Rasulillah (1989), Mahabbatu Rasul (1989), Ashiratu Nabiyyi (1990) and Zumratul Madahun Nabiyyi (1990). All these were led by mainstream Islamic poets and rely on conventional methods of composition for their works, often done in mosques or community plazas.¹⁰ Most were vocal groups, although a few started to use the *bandiri* (frame-drum) as an instrument during their performance. The *bandiri* itself has a special place in Hausa Muslim Sufi religious performances, a practice that often leads to controversies about the use of music in Islam, as well as the use of music in mosques during Sufi religious activities.

The one group, however, that stood out was *Kungiyar Ushaq'u Indiya* (Society for the Lovers of India). They are also devotional, focusing attention on singing the praises of the Prophet Muhammad, using the *bandiri* to accompany the singing. They differ

from the rest in that they use the meter of songs from traditional popular Hausa established musicians, and substitute the lyrics with words indicating their almost ecstatic love for the Prophet Muhammad. Upon noticing that Islamiyya school pupils were making, as it were, a hit, with Hindi film soundtrack adaptations, they quickly changed track and re-invented themselves as *Ushaq'u Indiya* and focused their attention on adapting Hindi film soundtracks to Hausa lyrics, singing the praises of the Prophet Muhammad.¹¹ As Brian Larkin (2004:96) noted,

They take a particular Indian film, such as *Kabhi Kabhie (Love Is Life*, dir. Yash Chopra, 1976) and divide up the songs between them, each one responsible for translating a different song from the film into a Hausa praise song. Then during the performance the singers take turns competing with one another for the best performance.

Some members of these groups migrated into the home video production. They included Dan Azumi Baba, Mudassir Kassim, and Sani Garba S.K. They became midwives to the use of Hindi film soundtracks in Hausa home film industry.

Screen to Screen – the Hausa Video Film Soundtrack

The Hausa video film industry started in 1990 with the video *Turmin Danya* from Tumbin Giwa drama group in Kano, northern Nigeria. The first Hausa video films from 1990 to 1994 relied on traditional music ensembles to compose the soundtracks, with *koroso* music predominating. The soundtracks were just that – incidental background music to accompany the film, and not integral to the story. There was often singing, but it is itself embedded in the songs, for instance during ceremonies that seem to feature in every drama film. The Hausa video film to pioneer a change over to electronic music (in the sense of a Yamaha keyboard melodies) was *In Da So Da Kauna* in 1994. The video was an adaptation of the a best selling Hausa novel of the same title.

The initial soundtrack for the video was composed with Hausa traditional musical instruments by the Koroso Entertainment ensemble housed at the Kano State History and Culture Bureau (HCB). It featured the Fulani *sarewa*, accompanied by drumming and a *lalaje*. It was this music that featured in the film when it was shown throughout cinema houses in northern Nigeria, as was the practice then. However, the video was pirated, and to counteract this, a new release was made with “modern” soundtrack composed with Casiotone MT-140. This caught up with the industry such that other Hausa video film producers started experimenting with the keyboard sound, leading to a market for the Yamaha PSR series of synthesizers. The first used was PSR-220, which was later replaced by PSR 730. The sound of this particular keyboard was used to compose soundtracks for *Sangaya*, the 1999 Hausa video film that became the wake-up call for Hausa Technopop music and radically altered Hausa traditional music production.

The earlier Yamaha PSR-220 provided an instant appeal to a Hausa musician seeking ways to explore combination of sounds without being hampered by inability to play real traditional instruments. It also made it possible to do the impossible in Hausa music – produce a perfect blend of various instruments, thus breaking the monopoly of the single-instrument characteristic of traditional Hausa music. In so doing, it enables Hausa video film soundtrack artistes the opportunity to approximate the creative space of Hindi film music, which they avidly copy.

This was made possible because Yamaha took actual instruments and digitally recorded them, thus giving the keyboard everything from the standard piano, to a jazz organ, to a distorted guitar, and even a full orchestra voice section. In addition, it features 99 voices to choose from (plus a drum kit). Thus the flexibility given by PSR-220 enabled improvisations that would not have been possible with Hausa traditional orchestras. Significantly, it enabled a combination of sound samples whose outcomes clearly departed from the traditional definitions of Hausa sounds, even if retaining a digital sound-alike of Hausa instruments like *bandiri* (tambourine), flute (*sarewa*), *ganga* (*drum*), *goge* (fiddle) and others.

With a vast expanded range of Country, Jazz, Dance, Latin, Rock, Soul and Waltz, the PSR-730 opened up the doors to revolutionizing Hausa video film music. The first playback song to benefit from its superior range of sound samples was *Sangaya* from a video of the same title in 1999. Trailers of the home video, with the lead song, *Sangaya* being performed in the background—complete with choreography—immediately captured the imagination of Hausa urban audience, helped along by the inclusion of a whole array of instrument sound samples such as flute, tambourine and African drums. The music, and most especially the choreography, from the soundtrack catapulted the video into the charts of “big league” Hausa video films, and one of the most successful Hausa films of all time.¹² Four years after its release, it still remained the definitive reference point for the emergence of Hausa video film music.

The synthesizer business in Kano therefore blossomed. Iyan-Tama Multimedia studios purchased a higher Yamaha PSR 740 in 2001. By then other music studios had been established in Kano. These included Muazzat, Sulpher Studios, and in Jos, Lenscope Media. Sulpher Studios, in addition to Yamaha PSR-2100, illustrated in Plate 7, also use Cakewalk Pro (version 9) music software.

The availability of these modern studios opened up a whole new range of services for individuals interested in music—not just home video producers. Thus Islamiyya school pupils, who had hitherto remained vocal groups, joined in the act, and started using the Yamaha sound for their recordings, which are sold in the markets. In a fascinating cross fertilization of influences, the Islamiyya school ensembles stopped using meters from Hindi film songs and started using the meters of Hausa video film soundtracks. Thus soundtracks from popular Hausa films such as *Sangaya*, *Wasila*, *Nagari*, *Khusufi*, were all adapted by Islamiyya pupils, often with Arabic lyrics.

It is significant that in almost all Hausa video film soundtracks the songs are duets – a boy and a girl singing. Yet in the “Islamized” versions, it is only one voice – either a male or a female voice. The Islamic etiquette of not allowing mixed-gender formations effectively prevent a reproduction of the Hindi film soundtrack format in the Islamized versions, no matter how arrived.

The success of *Sangaya* sent a strong commercial message that singing and dancing can sell massively, especially if done with what the practitioners call a “piano”. It was at this point that the Hindi cinema influence came to the fore in full force and a new crop of Hausa video film producers, quite intent on repeating the success of *Sangaya*, took over with Hindi film cinema storylines.

In their desire to replicate Hindi films as closely as possible in the Hausa ripped-off versions, Hausa video producers had to rely on the synthesizer to enable them to create the complex polyphony of sounds generated by the superior musical instruments of Hindi film music.

While a lot of the songs in the Hausa video films were original to the films, yet quite a sizeable are direct rip-offs of the Hindi film soundtracks – even if the Hausa main film is not based on a Hindi film. This, in effect means a Hausa video film can have two sources of Hindi film “creative inspiration” – a film for the storyline (and fight sequences), and songs from a different film. Table 2 shows a list of some of the Hindi films whose songs were appropriated into equivalent songs in Hausa video films

Table 2: Journey from the East – Hindi Songs as Hausa Soundtracks

S/N	Hausa video Film	Hindi Source Appropriated
1.	Shaukin So	Pyar Ishq Aur Mohabbat (2001)
2.	Al'ajabi	Ram Balram (1980)
3.	Aniya	Josh (2000)
4.	Bulala	Phool Aur Angaar (1993)
5.	Cuta	Qurbani (1998)
6.	Da Wa Zan Kuka	Dil To Pagal Hai (1997)
7.	Darasi	Hogi Pyar Ki Jeet (1999) Mann (1999)
		Kaun (1999)
8.	Gudun Hijira	Josh (2000)
		Mast (1999)
		Dhadkhan (2000)
		Raja Hindustani (1996)
9.	Izza	Disco Dancer (1982)
10.	Juyin Mulki	Maine Pyar Kiya (1989)
11.	Ki Yarda Da Ni	Sanjog (1982)
12.	Kalubale	Hero No 1 (1997)
13.	Kasaita	Major Saab (1998)
14.	Kulli	Pyar Kiya To Darna Kiya (1998)
15.	Laila	Zameer (1975)
16.	Mahandama	Dos Numbari No 10
17.	Shaida	Darr (1993)
18.	Sharadi	Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (1995)
19.	Tsumagiya	Shaktiman (1993)
20.	UmmulKhairi	Mohabbat (1997)
21.	Zakaran Gwajin Dafi	Vishwatima (1992) Dharmatma (1975)
22.	Zinare	Ajnabi (1966)
23.	Alaqa	Suhaag (1940), Mann (1999)
24.	Aljannar Mace	Gunda Raj (1995)
25.	Hisabi	Gunda Raj (1995), Angarkshak (1995)
26.	Ibro Dan Indiya	Mohabbat (1997), Rakshak (1996)
27.	Jazaman	Lahu Ke Do Rang (1997)
28.	So Bayan Ki	Kuch Kuch Hota Hai (1998),
		Yes Boss (1997)

Thus beside providing templates for storylines, Hindi films provide Hausa video film makers with similar templates for the songs they use in their videos. The technique often involves picking up the thematic elements of the main Hindi film song, and then substituting with Hausa lyrics. Consequently, anyone familiar with the Hindi film

song element will easily discern the film from the Hausa video film equivalent. Although this process of adaptation is extremely success because the video film producers make more from films with song and dances than without, there are often dissenting voices about the intrusion of the new media technology into the film process, as reflected in this letter from a correspondent:

I want to advise northern Nigerian Hausa film producers that using European music in Hausa films is contrary to portrayal of Hausa culture in films (videos). I am appealing to them (producers) to change their style. It is annoying to see a Hausa film with a European music soundtrack. Don't the Hausa have their own (music)?...The Hausa have more musical instruments than any ethnic group in this country, so why can't films be produced using Hausa traditional music? Umar Faruk Asarani, Letters page, *Fim*, No 4, December 1999, p. 10.

Interestingly, other musical sources are often used as templates. Thus a Hindi film template can often have songs borrowed from a totally different source. *Ibro Dan Indiya*, for instance, with had an adaptation of a song from *Mohabbat*, contains an adaptation of a composition by Oumou Sangare, the Malian diva, *Ah Ndiya* which was ripped-off as Malama Dumbaru in the Hausa video film.

By 2006 the Hindi film music template had become so pervasive that it has been adopted by the marketing strategies of major companies in northern Nigeria selling various products. Thus radio jingles and advertisement slots came to be characterized by the “fiyano” sound, and in almost always a duet between a boy and a girl advertising a variety of goods and services from spaghetti to airline tickets. This revolution in marketing was facilitated by the emergence of new independent FM radio stations in major cities of Kano and Kaduna – the main axis of Muslim Hausa entertainment culture.

Conclusions

In analyzing the influence of musical transformations, Willard Rhodes (1977) quotes George Peter Mudock (1971) describing several processes of cultural change which are common in art and other areas of cultural expression. According to Murdock (1971) *innovation* is the simplest process in which individuals modify already existing patterns or practices. Eventually they become accepted as part of conventional practice. The second process of cultural change, *invention*, involves the synthesis of exiting elements of cultural expression which shows creativity. The third process is *tentation*, a process which “represents conscious attempt to create something new and “may give rise to elements that show little or no continuity with the past.” (Murdoch 1971 in Rhodes (1977:39). A final process is *cultural borrowing*, in which alien forms of music are adopted and integrated into an indigenous product.

In this study of the changes of Hausa traditional music, we note some elements of these processes. In a reflection of the invention process, for instance, Hausa bar room and club musicians such as Abdu Yaron Goge and Ahmadu Doka introduced the multi-instrument mode in their playing, combining their stringed instruments – *goge* or *kukuma* – with *kalangu* drums. Hassan Wayam took the stage further by incorporating *kukuma*, *kalangu* and *gora* (calabash). This is innovatory to the “classical” structure of more restrained single-instrument Hausa traditional musicians like Mamman Shata, Musa Dankwairo, Salisu Jankidi and Dan Anace, who rely exclusively on a single instrument (a variety of drums of different tonality). In this process of invention – although actually a modified form of innovation – we also see

elements of tentation because new musical routines were created by the innovatory practices of introducing multiple instruments. For instance, a dance routine, *Bansuwai*, was popularized in clubs and bars in the 1960s in northern Nigeria by Abdu Yaron Goge, while Garba Supa introduced a “traditional discofied” musical concerts during weddings, immortalized by “Amarya Angon Ba Da Wasa Ya Ke Ba” dance routines sung for newly weds.

Thus the most significant effect of media flow of influences – whether from the West or the East – in the Hausa popular culture is radical transformation of Hausa music. A push and pull factor is at play in the process. The Hausa traditional music seemed to have outlived its client-focus in a depressed economy where the clients cannot afford the praise singing that keeps the traditional musicians in jobs. Further, quite a few of the musicians have declared in various interviews that they do not wish their progeny to succeed them in the business. A typical example is this response by Alhaji Sani Dan Indo, a *kuntigi* musician who responded to a question of whether he wants his children to succeed him.

“Unless it is absolutely necessary. I definitely don’t want my son to become a musician. I have seen enough as a musician to determine that my son will really suffer if he becomes a praise-singer. You only do praise-singing music to a level-headed client, and it is only those who know the value of praise-sing that will patronize you. Those times have passed. I certainly would not want my own son to inherit this business. I would prefer he goes to school and get good education, so that even after I die, he can sustain himself, but I don’t want him to follow my footsteps, because I really suffered in this business. Therefore I am praying to Allah to enable all my children to get education, because I don’t want them to become musicians like me.” Interview with Sani Dan Indo, a Hausa popular culture *kuntigi* musician, *Annur*, Vol 1, August 2001, p. 48

Similarly, Sani Aliyu Dandawo, a court musician in the Argungu basin expressed his doubts about whether his children will sustain the family’s musical tradition. As he stated,

“Among my children I don’t think there is any who might be interested in sustaining our family’s musical tradition since they are all in higher education, some are studying for degrees while others are studying for Higher National Diploma; some have completed and are working. Thus there is no way *dan boko* (educated person) will waste his time with singing (as a career)...Only among my backing musicians am I likely to get someone to sustain my music, since at the moment one of them always stands in for me in my absence” Interview with Sani Aliyu Dandawo, *Fim*, October 2004, p. 50.

Thus with the reluctance of the traditional musicians to pass on their skills to their own children,¹³ or even open music “schools” to train others, and with the legendary ones dying (e.g. Mamman Shata, Haruna Oje, Musa Dankwairo), the Hausa traditional musical genre therefore become wide open to influences that follow the path of least resistance. Hindi film culture provided this road-map, and the Yamaha soft synthesizer enabled younger Hausa “musicians” to follow the path to transnational flow of influences. In so doing, they have radically altered the landscape of Muslim Hausa music and its status in the Hausa society in four main ways.

First, they have introduced the multi-instrumental mode to Hausa music. For besides just the film soundtrack, the new technique is now widely used in radio jingles to advertise products and services. It has therefore become legitimized in Hausa public sphere. Even Hausa traditional musicians now often go to the studios (e.g. Sulpher

Studios in Kano) and ask for drum synthesizers to be played for them until they get the closest approximation to their natural drum sounds, and they overlay the sample sounds with their voice. A perfect example is Abdu Boda Mai Asharalle from Katsina, who plays *duma* and *tandu* drums for his *Asharalle* music form, and who has abandoned these traditional percussion instruments and has gone Yamaha. Incidentally, Abdu Boda also became a film maker (producing *Tauraron Bisa Hanya*, *Nasir* and *Sarauniya*) in which he composed his own soundtrack music, becoming the first traditional Hausa musician to cross-over to the film soundtrack medium using the new technology.

This contemporary production which breaks with tradition is further facilitated by another circulation of media technology: the availability of cheaply pirated computer programs such as FruityLoops, CakeWalk Pro and Sound Forge – all easily purchased on a compilation mega CD for less than US\$7 – and sold by transnational resident Lebanese merchants.

Perhaps interestingly, is the almost total acceptance of the Yamaha synthesizer sound by the *bandiri* musicians who use the *bandiri* in Sufi religious poetry. What was further surprising was their ready acceptance of Hindi film tunes to Islamic religious chants – often, as their accusers point out, not aware of the Hindi religious connotations of some of the songs they are adapting. Many devotional Hausa musicians, such as Rabi’u Usman Baba and Bashir Dandago, have abandoned the *bandiri* and have gone Yamaha. This is evidenced by the fact that the best-selling Muslim pop hit of 2004 in northern Nigeria was a poem composed for Fatima, Prophet Muhammad’s daughter, titled *Fatima*. It was accompanied by the Yamaha sound in a religious community that has now accepted the instrument as a symbol of modernity – essentially to attract younger audience to religious poetry.

Secondly, in this process of acceptance of new forms of reproduction, modern Hausa musicians have created new genres of Hausa music. Using a combination of music software and Yamaha keyboards, they have created what three distinct forms of Hausa urban music: Hausa Video Film music (composed specifically as video film soundtrack to be performed during song and dance routines in the films), Hausa Glocal music (which is based on appropriated sound from either United States rap musicians, or from Hindi films), Hausa Technopop (based on excessive reliance on the sound effects of the synthesizers used), Hausa rap and hip-hop (based on repeated drum-beats and loops)(Adamu 2007).

Consequently, urban Hausa music is no longer defined by its traditional technological forms of acoustic instruments which made it possible to have categories of music forms for specific groups (e.g. occupational guilds, ruling class, rich patrons). It has made the uncertain leap into a World Music format, without actually understanding what such transformation entails – or its consequences.

Thirdly, the new technology and its purveyors have also created what I call “mixed-space” interfaces in Hausa music by providing templates for male and female interaction. Hausa music had evolved as a single-sex, single-voice process – with either the male or the female lone vocalist leading the song, although often accompanied by similar-voiced background singers.

The Hindi film cinema adopts a dialogic state which sees overlapping male and female spaces during which terms of endearment are intensified with background symphony of sounds. Religious groups who had accepted the new technology (e.g. *bandiri* musicians and Islamiyya school choirs) have retained the single-sex voice due to the strict separation of the sexes in a Muslim polity, especially on religious occasions. The realm of public culture, however, has accepted this new gender configuration and as such the playback singers and musicians have created a new avenue for advertisement music, which in almost every case, is a reflection of the Hausa video film soundtrack.

Further, the *bandiri*-Yamaha musicians also adopt the same format used by secular Hausa musicians in using female voices in their performances, although with limitations. For instance, while on a *majalisi* (concert performance) the female vocalists are often not invited, and strict gender segregation is enforced among the *majalisi* spectators in a public space. However, female voices almost always accompany the studio recordings of the various poems composed in the praises of the Prophet Muhammad. It is clear therefore that a tensed balance is still being maintained – between the preaching of *Kitab al-farq*, and the desire to be part of what the performers see as modern popular religious culture.

Fourth and finally, the Hausa film soundtrack genre has led to a re-definition of a musician in at least youth culture of the Hausa society. The keyboardists (and FruityLoops software programmer) and playback singers of the Hausa video film soundtrack genre have become megastars, attracting hordes of literally squealing girls and gawping young boys (including the odd-housewife or so). Thus by 2006 the image of the musician as a praise-singer, has been altered by a new social re-classification made possible by the popularity of using the new media to express music, even in a traditional form. Traditional Hausa music, which still appeals to the thirtysomethings and above, did not actually die – it just ceased to be relevant to the teen brigade, which is the main target audience for the Hausa video films. However, with the traditionalist migrating to the synthesizer, a new voice for Hausa traditional music is certainly in the offing.

Thus what eclipsed in this opportunistic transformation is the Hausa traditional music genre. Very few traditional musicians are willing to sustain the process of acquiring new traditional musical instruments, especially when all the sounds they generate are easily produced by the Yamaha synthesizer. Since the availability of the Yamaha synthesizer to the Hausa video film industry, only one Hausa film producer, Shu'aibu Idris Lilisco, has experimented with creating a video film soundtrack with traditional instruments, abandoning the synthesizer. This was done in his 2004 video film, *Gamji*, which used *sarewa*, *duman girke*, *kuntigi*, *lalaje* and *duma*.

Roger Elbourne (1976:465) observed that

It would appear that traditional music can reveal a great deal about social and cultural patterns, but it should not be seen as a simple reflection. Some folklorists have warned against the tendency to draw hasty conclusions from the content of the traditional materials.

Yet this view did not take into consideration the current and cross-currents of transnational global media flows that act as catalytic forces in radically altering the

nature of traditional music that neutralizes the function of music as a social mirror. For looking at contemporary Hausa music – both in production, circulation and performance – it is not clear whose image it is mirroring. It seems therefore the battle lines for “globalization” of the Hausa video film soundtrack have been drawn.

About the Author

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Notes

1. In Kano, the first “Indian” film screened was *Gheghis Khan*, shown in Palace cinema, Kano city in December 1960. It is interesting to note that the film was not “Indian”, but seen as so. Before independence, films shown in northern Nigerian cinemas were American cowboy, war and feature films. NOTES....
2. Abdalla Uba Adamu (2004) *Space Oddities: Urban Space, Racism and Entertainment in Northern Nigeria, 1930-1968*. An unpublished seminar/discussion, Department of Education, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. NOTES
3. For details of Arab influence on Hausa society, see Adamu, M. U., ‘Some Notes on the Influence of North African Traders in Kano’, *Kano Studies*, Vol. 1, No 4, 1968 pp. 43-49, and Adamu, M. U., *Further notes on the influence of North African traders in Kano*, being a paper presented at the International Conference on Cultural Interaction and Integration Between North and Sub-Saharan Africa, Bayero University Kano, 4th–6th March, 1998. NOTES
4. For a detailed study of the materiality of cinemas in Hausaland, see Larkin, B (2002), ‘The Materiality of Cinema Theaters in Northern Nigeria’, in Faye Ginsburg, Lila Abu-Lughod and Brian Larkin (eds). *Media Worlds: Anthropology on a New Terrain*. University of California Press.
5. Figures obtained from the daily program listings of NTA Kano library, June 2003.
6. Prior to the commercialization of the Hausa video films, there were extremely popular television dramas. Indeed, the home video film industry was initiated by the television soap opera stars. For a detailed analysis of the Hausa television dramas, Louise M. Bourgault (1996), *Television Drama in Hausaland: The Search for a New Aesthetic and a New Ethic*, *Critical Arts* 10 (1) and chapter 5 of *Mass Media in Sub-Saharan Africa* by Louise M. Bourgault (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995)
7. See Adamu, A.U. (2005) *An Anthology of Hausa video film Films*. Kano, Center for Hausa Cultural Studies (www.kanoonline.com/chcs).
8. These were not accompanied by any musical instrument because the whole issue of music in Islam is a hot debate. Even these songs by the Islamiyya School groups were frowned up by the more orthodox Islamic establishment scholars who do not see any role of Music in Islam.
9. The *bandiri* is an open, basin-shaped, hide vessel beaten with the hands by adherents of Qadiriyya sect whilst they chant the name Allah unceasingly. While not strictly a tambourine, it is the most

- approximate equivalent I can think of, and I use the word tambourine to refer to *bandiri* in this essay.
10. For a textual analysis of the songs, see Aminu Isma'ila (1994), "Rubutattun Wakoki a Kasar Kano: Nazarin Wakokin Yabon Annabi (SAW)" (*Written Poetry in Kano: A Study of the Poems of the Praises of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)*). Unpublished B.A. (Hons)(Hausa) undergraduate dissertation, Department of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano.
 11. An extensive treatment of this particular group is given by in Brian Larkin (2002) *Bandiri Music, Globalization and Urban Experience in Nigeria*. In, *Cahiers D'Études africaines* 168 XLII-4 pp.739-762. Musiques du monde. <http://etudesafricaines.revues.org/document164.html>
 12. The Hausa video film tape was sold for N250 (\$1.80). Sangaya then sold for about \$107,914 (at the rate of N139 to USD in 2000). The sales figures were revealed by Alhaji Auwal Mohammed Sabo, the producer of the video film, Kano, July 2003.
 13. The son of the late *kukuma* player, Garba Supa, took picked up his father's plectrum, as it were and sustained his musical repertoire.

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