

WRITING, PERFORMANCE AND LITERATURE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 3RD CONFERENCE
ON LITERATURE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**



Editors
Sa'idu B. Ahmad
Muhammed O. Bhadmus

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Divergent Similarities: Culture, Globalization and Hausa Creative and Performing Arts

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Introduction

As Dilip Gaonkar and Benjamin Lee (1994) argued, we are living in a world where the local, national, and transnational are increasingly intertwined, whether it be the production of commodities, social movements, or ideas and values in Hong Kong, New York, or Moscow. Consumer products are assembled in one country from parts and raw materials from many others, and then marketed internationally; global capital and investment move through transnational corporations capable of coordinating information about new sites of production with new markets. Networks of coordinated production are now competitive alternatives to more traditional, 'vertically' organized, hierarchical corporations. At the same time, these networks are producing global classes of 'symbolic analysts' and 'information professionals' that link Bangalore to Palo Alto and Taipei. The forces behind this internationalization are increasingly outside direct state control; and yet they form the dynamic edge for changes all over the world.

The interplay between the local, national, and transnational is producing a world in which dealing with local and domestic issues requires placing them in cross-national contexts, while understanding the 'emerging global order' requires greater cultural sensitivity to such problems elsewhere. From this interplay, a paradox seems to emerge: there can be no understanding of the global without understanding it as the ways in which different 'local' sites are coordinated; yet there can be no

understanding of any 'local' without understanding the global of which it is a part. Our existing forms of knowledge production and expertise are not exempt from these global processes; it is increasingly impossible for us to understand contemporary changes both here and abroad without seeing how they are intertwined with other perspectives. The challenge is how, from a given location, we create forms of understanding that can grapple with both the situatedness of local knowledge and its more global implications. Globalization, according to Susie O'Brien and Imre Szeman (2001 p. 604) is associated with

...transculturation, the various forms (from cultural to economic) and periods (from the time of Columbus to the present) of imperialism and colonialism, the violent and uneven impact of socio-cultural and economic systems on one another as they come into contact, the eclipse of traditional ways of life, the temporal (modernization) and spatial (nationalism-internationalism-transnationalism) demands of European modernity, the global spread of capitalism and Western liberalism, and so on.

Further, Blakely (2001) points out that 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. This is illustrated, for instance, by the strategies adopted by the most commercially successful Hausa video filmmakers who see their success reflected in the Westernization of their craft. Ali Nuhu, the Hausa-speaking actor who pioneered the Hindi-to-Hausa film cloning technique justifies Westernization of Hausa video film on the basis of progress and modernity. In an interview granted in Niger

Republic, he justifies cloning American and Hindi films by arguing that

“The political systems in Nigeria and Niger Republic are based on Western models. Why didn't these countries create their own unique political systems? The Western society is the most progressive in the world, and everyone is trying to copy them. Even Arabs, who are strongly attached to their religion and culture, are now aping Americans, in their mode of dress and other things. It is modernity, and you must go with the times, or you will be left behind.” Interview with Ali Nuhu, *Ra'ayi*, Vol 1 No 1, February 2005, p. 7.

But as Curran (2000) argues in his introduction to *De-Westernizing Media Studies*,¹ 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 on 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 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 and Rainer 2003, Appadurai 1996), how they are

¹ Curran, J., and Park, M. (2000)(eds), *De-Westernizing Media Studies*. London/New York. Routledge.

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). For instance, as Stephen Greenblatt (2001, p. 52) points out,

English literature was always an unsteady amalgam of Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Cornish, and other voices of the vanquished, along with the voices of the dominant English regions, and the English language itself, so securely and apparently imperturbably at the center of the field, is revealed, under the pressure of examination, to be a mixed, impure, and constantly shifting medium.²

In debating how global trends are expressed through, facilitated, and/or inhibited by literature, O'Brien and Szeman (2001 p. 604) suggest that this should be reflected in not just how globalization is reflected thematically in fiction, for example, but also about literature's role in the narrative construction of the numerous discourses or "fictions" of globalization. As they argue further,

one of the first things to realize about globalization is that its significance can only be grasped through its realization in a variety of narrative forms, spanning the range from accounts of the triumphant coming-into-being of global democracy to laments about the end of nature; literature no doubt has a role to play in how we

² On the fictional or discursive character of globalization, see J. K. Graham-Gibson, "Querying Globalization," *Rethinking Marxism* 9.1 (1996-97): 1-27; Arif Dirlik, "Globalization As the End and the Beginning of History," *Rethinking Marxism* 12.4 (Fall 2000); Thomas Peyser, "How Global Is It: Walter Abish and the Fiction of Globalization," *Contemporary Literature* 40.2 (1999): 240-62; and Anna Tsing, "Inside the Economy of Appearances," *Public Culture* 12.1 (Spring 2000): 115-44.

produce these often contradictory narratives about globalization.

Thus in their view, whether one sees globalization as a contemporary phenomenon that defines the character of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, or merely as an extension of a process initiated millennia ago, there can be no doubt that the generation of narratives about globalization has assumed particular urgency over the last few decades. Consequently as Patterson (1994) argues, industrialization and modernization both entailed 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.

This transnational flow of cultural influences across boundaries—of geographical, cultural and psychological spaces—perhaps led the sociologist Roland Robertson to popularize the term *glocalization*. This is a term that was invented in order to emphasize that the globalization of a product is more likely to succeed when the product or service is adapted specifically to each locality or culture it is marketed in. The term combines the word globalization with localization. An earlier term for globalization in terms of product preparedness for international marketing is internationalization. The term was modeled on Japanese word *dochakuka*. It first appeared in the late 1980s in articles by Japanese economists in the *Harvard Business Review*.

Dochakuka defines the adjusting of the techniques of cultivation according to local conditions. This Japanese expression created the new term "glocal" which combines the words global and local – the one not repressing and succumbing the other but adapting to each other in order to create a new compound. Thus according to Paul James (2001 p. 13), dragged into the context of global micro-marketing campaigns such as 'This is Our Town'; the term came to be instrumentalised as the act of adapting locally to meet global circumstances. This in itself should have given pause for thought, but nevertheless the term quickly became part of the social theory lexicon as an easy shorthand concept for an extraordinarily complicated phenomenon. In the early 1990s, Roland Robertson (1992: pp 173-174) used the concept advisedly. However, by the middle of the decade it unreservedly took a centre place in his writings (for instance, Robertson 1995).

Within the context of Hausa literary adaptations, glocalization resonates with the strategy adopted by Abubakar Imam to "transmutate" (Malumfashi, 1998) various Asian and Middle Eastern stories into Hausa versions and published in *Magana Jari Ce* in 1937. The Imamian paradigm of adaptive translation soon enough found favor with subsequent Hausa prose fiction writers of the and 1950s, who due to their exposure to Arabic sources were able to cull a story here and there – thus media availability became an important factor – and re-cast it as a Hausa tale.

Thus additional source of learning—and subsequent glocalization—is media bombardment. In northern Nigeria, this was almost right from the start of the literary experience of the Hausa educational systems. The British educational system as operated in northern Nigeria from 1910 created a catalytic facility which saw a continuous broadcast of foreign media literary cultures, especially from Asia and Middle East. This bombardment often comes in the way of cross-border free flow of packaged

media products that enable Hausa public intellectuals to absorb (but not export) media re-enactment of popular cultural forms of other societies which the British—and to some extent, the Hausa intellectuals themselves—perceived as being similar to Muslim Hausa cultures. Thus globalization and the break down of the invisible communication barriers have ensured a steady flow of transnational ideas that does not respect boundaries or mindsets.

Antecedent Global Literary Tradition among the Hausa

When the British colonized what later became northern Nigeria in 1903, they inherited a vast population of literate citizenry, with thousands of Qur'anic schools and equally thousands of Muslim intellectual scholars.³ Since it was clear that it would be against the grain of British colonial ethos to encourage Islamic scholarship, a way has to be devised to slow down the progress of Islamic education. That way was simply the forceful intrusion of Roman alphabet into a newly created education system in 1909, at the expense of Ajami, the adapted Hausa language Arabic script. As Crampton (1975 p. 99) notes,

As early as 1900 Lugard was debating the question of whether to use Roman or Arabic script in the official Hausa orthography. Although some of his officials would have preferred Arabic script, Lugard chose the Roman. Had he chosen Arabic it would have made it harder for the pupils to learn English later on in their school careers and would have further widened the gap between the educational systems in the North and south of Nigeria.

Subsequently, the colonial administration, in cohort with Christian Missionary agents conspired to destroy the scriptural basis of Muslim Hausa literacy. Crampton (ibid) further records that

³ The colonial records of 1913 show that there was an estimated 19,073 Muslim schools, with 143,312 pupils in what later became Northern Nigeria.

(Rev.) Miller said that in an interview with Lugard in 1900 he strongly urged him to adopt the Roman script because he felt that the scholars of the future would thus be drawn to the 'endless storehouse of Western literature', and the 'priceless heritage of Christian thought' rather than 'the somewhat sterile Muslim literature and the religion of Islam'.

Reverend Miller got his chance to entrench the use of Romanized script to replace Arabic (and ajami) when

On August 2nd, 1902, even before the conquest of Sokoto, Lugard asked the missionary Dr. W. R. S. Miller to translate proclamations into Hausa for use by his administration. Miller expected English and Roman letters to replace Arabic and Ajami.' He also thought that the liquor and trees proclamations could not be translated into Hausa, only Arabic. Therefore he submitted translations of the sections "that can be thought by a Hausa". Who, if not educated Hausa scholars, was supposed to understand the Arabic versions Miller did not say, and it is likely that Miller's own Hausa was more at fault than the language itself. Still, it should perhaps be remembered that Arabic was the language of law and administration in the Caliphate, and that the idea of translating proclamations into written Hausa was very new and strange to local scholars as well. As late as the 1950s Arabic was the only language most Shari'ah court judges read or wrote and they tended to "think legally in it."¹¹ Hausa would need more development and would need particularly to acquire more vocabulary, both from English and from Arabic as it was used for administration in Northern Nigeria (Philips 2000 p. 32).

When Hans Vischer took over as the Director of Education and established the first western school in Kano in 1909, he ensures further that ajami was not to be taught in any government school. His main arguments against using ajami were articulated in his position paper written in March 1910 where he stated, inter alia,

1. ...I have no hesitation at all in recommending that the Government should confine its efforts entirely to spreading the knowledge of writing in the Roman character for the following reasons:
2. By encouraging the study of the Arabic Alphabet the government would be actually assisting in the propagation of the Mohammadan religion.
 - b) The Arabic alphabet is suited to the Arabic language but is essentially unsuited to represent graphically the sounds of any other language. An English or Hausa word can nearly always be spelt in two or three different ways in Arabic character and it is hard to say which of these ways is right. (In point of fact when they write "Ajami" (i.e. Hausa in Arabic character) the Mallamai do frequently spell the same word in different ways in the same page.)
 - c) The Roman alphabet can be acquired by a Mallam in about a month, and by a boy who does not know Arabic in about two months. It takes the later more like two years to learn the Arabic character. (The rapidity with which small boys at Sokoto have learned to read Hausa in Roman character has astonished me).
 - d) It is very expensive to print the Arabic character (especially if the vowel points have to be added as is necessary when Hausa is written in Arabic character). The publishing of text books in Arabic character would be difficult and expensive.

- e) Comparatively few Political officers have mastered the Arabic character (the running hand).⁴

Vischer point 2 (b) above was aimed at emphasizing the lack of standardization of Ajami across the various Hausa dialects, and which encouraged the myth of "ajami gagara mai shi" (ajami difficult even to the scribe). The British, of course, given the point indicated in 2 above—about encouraging "Mohammedan religion"—had no intention in encouraging the standardization of Ajami, and instead prefer to replace it with the Roman script which had to be learnt from scratch.

Thus with the coming of the British colonial interregnum from 1903, the scriptural ownership of the Muslim Hausa was eroded. Those who acquired education through the Islamic education medium became relegated to the background and in Nigeria's development literature became labeled "illiterate". Those who acquired the new Roman-based literacy gained ascendancy and became leaders of thought and development. Romanization became the new panacea for development, while the development needs of millions of Muslim Hausa who became educated daily through the maktab and madrassa systems were ignored.

In 1929 the colonial administration set up a Translation Bureau initially in Kano, but later moved to Zaria in 1931 and becoming the Literature Bureau in 1935.⁵ The first Director of the Bureau

⁴ Roman and Arabic Characters: Which Should Be Encouraged by the Government for the Writing of Hausa (NAK) SNP7-4864/1908. "Primer for Teaching the Hausa Roman Character to Mallams" From the Resident, Lokoja 1st October, 1908. Report by Hanns Vischer, Director Education (July 1, 1908) Northern Protectorate, March 2, 1910

⁵ Alhaji Hussaini Hayatu, NORLA and the story of publishing in former Northern Nigeria—An overview from the Colonial times to the present. Paper presented at the National Symposium on Culture and the Book Industry in Nigeria, during the 6th

was Mr. Whiting, although he was replaced later by Dr. Rupert East. The objectives of the Bureau were:

- To translate books and materials from Arabic and English
- To write books in Hausa
- To produce textbooks for schools
- To encourage indigenous authors

Mr. Whiting's tenure saw the Hausanized (Roman script) versions of local histories in Arabic texts, notably *Tarikh Arbab Hadha al-balad al-Musamma Kano*, Anon, the oft quoted *Kano Chronicles* as translated by H. R. Palmer and published in the *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol 38 (1908) pp. 59-98 and re-published in his *Sudanese Memoirs* (3 volumes: London, 1928), 3: 92-132. The Hausa translation was *Hausawa Da Ma}wabtansu*.

The establishment of the Translation Bureau ensured, through a literary competition in 1933, that a whole new set of reading materials, and consequently literary style, was created. This yielded the first clutch of now Hausa *boko* literature written in classical Hausa (*Ruwan Bagaja*, *Shehu Umar*, *Gandoki*, *Idon Matambayi*, *Jiki Magayi*) published in 1935. Since the scholastic tradition of the Hausa has always been the preserve of the *mallam* (teacher, scholar) class; consequently even in popular literature the fountainheads, being carved out of that class, reflect their antecedent scholastic traditions. Consequently, these novels were written mainly by scholars, some, like Abubakar Imam who wrote *Ruwan Bagaja*, were young (he was 22 when he wrote the novel), with deep Islamic roots (who actually took some convincing to even agree to write in the *boko* — Romanized —

National Festival of Arts and Culture, November 7th-18th, 1983, Maiduguri; reprinted in Hussaini Hayatu (ed), *50 Years of Truth—The Story of Gaskiya Corporation*, Zaria., 1939-1991. Zaria, Gaskiya Corporation, 1991.

scripts in the first place, considering such activity as dilution of their Islamic scholarship). As Dr. Rupert East, the arch-Svengali of the Hausa classical literature, exasperatedly noted,⁶

...the first difficulty was to persuade these Mallams that the thing was worth doing. The influence of Islam produces an extremely serious-minded type of person. The art of writing moreover, being intimately connected in his mind with his religion, is not to be treated lightly. Since the religious revival at the beginning of the (19th) century, nearly all the original work produced by Northern Nigerian authors has been either purely religious or written with a strong religious motive. Most of it was written in Arabic, which, like Latin in Medieval Europe, was considered a more worthy medium of any work of importance than the mother tongue (East, 1936 p. 350).

The main focus of the Translation Bureau was just that—translation of non-Hausa language works using the sparkling brand new Hausanized Roman script. It was only when Dr. Rupert East took over in 1932 that it acquired its *Istanci* persona and became devoted to wholesale translation of works from far and near (although the further, the better) into Hausa in order to generate reading material, more essentially to enable colonial officers to polish their practice of Hausa language than to empower the “natives” with enriched literary heritage. As Yahaya (1989 p. 80) argued,

The decision to set up a translation Bureau was probably informed by the general belief that translating from other

⁶ Rupert East., “A First Essay in Imaginative African Literature”, *Africa*, Vol 9, No. 3, 1936, pp. 350-357.

languages into a given language enriches the lexicon of the language, its literature and culture.⁷

It was this obsession with *translation* of carefully selected works, rather than fully encouraging local indigenous initiatives into literary explorations that earned this era of Hausa literary development the epithet of *Istanci* – principally due to the forceful nature of the Rupert East, its main protagonist.

The most outstanding of the five Hausa novels published in 1935, to Rupert East, was Abubakar Imam's *Ruwan Bagaja* (The Healing Waters). However, it was clear from the plot elements and general thematic structure of the novel that it was *not* a Hausa tale, unlike others that had clearly identifiable Hausa settings. Abubakar Imam, in an interview with Nicholas Pwedden (1995, p.87) stated that he was "inspired" to write *Ruwan Bagaja* after reading *Muqamat Al Hariri*. In giving his account of the birth of *Imamanci*, Abubakar Imam further told Pwedden:

In that story (*Ruwan Bagaja*) there were two characters – Abu Zaidu and Harisu – with one trying to defeat the other through cunning. I also used two men, on the basis of that technique, but *I used the Hausa way of life* to show how one character (Abubakar) defeats the other (Malam Zurke).⁸ (Emphasis mine).

⁷ Ibrahim Yaro Yahaya, "The Literary Works of Alhaji Abubakar Imam in Perspective", *Harsunan Nijeriya*, XIV (Twentieth Year (1969-89) Commemorative Edition), 1988/89, pp 71-98.

⁸ Pwedden, N, The Abubakar Imam Interview, *Harsunan Nijeriya*, Vol XVII, 1995, pp 86-110, CSNL, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. The interview between Nicholas Pwedden and Abubakar Imam was conducted on Monday 28th June 1976. An English translation of the same article by Ibrahim Sheme was published in *New Nigerian Weekly*, Friday November 14, 1997, pp12 and 14.

It was this "inspiration" that was to become the root of the glocalization of foreign media by the Hausa performing artistes, and was heavily promoted by the British. In effect, Abubakar Imam and the British had planted a Trojan Horse within the entertainment mindset of the Hausa.

The Maqamat, translated in English by various authors as *The Assemblies of Al-Hariri: Fifty Encounters with the Shaykh Abu Zayd of Seruj Maqamat* was written by Abu Muhammad al-Qasim Hariri (1054-1121) and was widely available among Muslim scholars and intellectuals of northern Nigeria in its original Arabic as set reading material for the advanced course of Arabic grammar after the completion of the Qur'anic phase of a Hausa Muslim's education. Plate 1 shows the cover art work of the two tales:

The Assemblies of Al-Hariri



Retold by
Amina Shah

Maqamat Al-Hariri: "Ruwan



Ruwan Bagaja –

Bagaja" – Original

***Transmuted Hausa
Version***

Plate 1: Global and Glocal versions of *Maqamat Al-Hariri*

Thus even the cover artwork was designed to imitate the original—setting the pace for artistic and literary adaptation among the Hausa. However, other sources used to write *Ruwan Bagaja* included the core plot element from *The Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales* (especially *The Water of Life* from where the book derived its title) *Sinbad the Sailor*, and stories from *Thousand and One Nights*. Thus *Ruwan Bagaja* actually marked the transition from *Istanci* – direct translations of other works into Hausa – to its adaptive variety, *Imamanci* – the “transmutation” the literature of the Other, into Hausa mindset. As Imam further revealed, he was taught the art of literary transmutation by Rupert East who

...taught me many dos and don'ts. For example, he taught me never to allow a miscreant to triumph over a good character in any fictional story, such as a cheat or a fraud, even if he appears to be winning in the beginning and he is being highly respected and praised. That it is better to make him the loser at the end...On translation, he said if someone utters something nice, either in English or in Arabic, or any other language, when translating it into Hausa you shouldn't be enslaved to the wordings of the statement, trying to act like you're translating the Koran or the Bible. What you're supposed to do, as long as you fully understand what the man said, *is to try and show genius in your own language just as he did in his*, i.e. yours should be as nice in Hausa as his was nice in English. That way Dr. East kept teaching me various techniques of writing until I understood them all (Pwedden 1995, p. 87) (emphasis added).

Rupert East was thus the originator of Imamian transmutative strategy—*genius in your own language*—while Abubakar Imam its script reader. It is from this transmuted strategy of Abubakar that we received the term *Ofishin Talifi*, for the Translation Bureau (instead of its original translation of *Ofishin Juye-juye*), and later, *Majalisar [inkin Duniya* for United Nations.

Imamanci as a literary technique and an emergent media technology device worked brilliantly because of the skills of the adapter, Abubakar Imam. However, Imam was to acknowledge the Svengali in Rupert East, when the latter recruited him, albeit temporarily, to work on producing more reading materials along the mould of *Ruwan Bagaja* and using its adaptive literary technique for the newly re-named Literature Bureau. According to Imam,

From then on he (East) assembled for me many story-books in Arabic and English, especially Iranian texts. Fortunately I knew Arabic because I had learned it right from home. That's why I could understand the Arabic books unless if the language as too advanced. I read all of these books until I understood the techniques of established writers. When Dr. East realised that I had finished he told me what to do and I set out to write. The first book I wrote was *Magana Jari Ce* (Knowledge is an Asset)(Pwedden 1995 p. 88).

It is this book, *Magana Jari Ce* that became the unalloyed classic of Hausa literature, despite the heavy dosage of foreign elements it contained from books as diverse as *Alfu Layla wa Laylatun*, *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, *Bahrul Adab*, *Hans Andersen Fairy Tales*, *Aesop Fables*, *The Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales*, *Tales from Shakespeare*, and *Raudhul Jinan* (Abdallah 1998).

Magana Jari Ce is composed of about 80 stories—mainly narrated by a parrot, Aku (although joined in a competitive mode by another parrot, Hazik) to various audiences and settings. In an interview, Abubakar Imam stated that he had taken the figure of the parrot and its technique of storytelling from a Persian book (Wali, 1976), most likely *Tuti-Name* (Book of Parrot)(Jez 2003 p. 11) written by Zia ul-Din Nakhshabi (Kablukov 2004 p. 1). Indeed further analysis of *Magana Jari Ce* (Jez 2003 pp 24-28) revealed the following as its sources material:

- 11 stories from *Thousand and One Nights*
- 2 stories from the Indian collection *Panchatantra*
- 2 stories from a Persian version of the Indian collection *Sukasaptati*
- 1 story that is of Persian origin
- 14 fables from the Brothers Grimm
- 2 fables from Hans Andersen
- 7 short stories from *Decameron* by Boccaccio
- 1 based on a Biblical story (from Old Testament)
- 1 based on a Greek myth about the king of Macedona
- 1 based on a fable by W. Hauff
- 14 stories were either original or derived from unknown sources⁹

The narrative style adopted in *Magana Jari Ce* was closely patterned on *Thousand and One Nights* in that the narrator relates a series of stories to delay the departure to war of a very strong-willed prince; whereas in the original *Thousand and One Nights*, the narrator created the stories to delay the execution of a stubborn princess.

⁹ Graham Furniss, *Poetry, Prose and Popular Culture in Hausa*. Edinburgh, International African Library, 1996, p. 273.

Imam's transmutative genius is illustrated, for instance, in his interpretation of a poem in *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. The Hausa version appeared in "Labarin Sarkin Busa", one of the stories in *Magana Jari Ce*, Volume 3 (1937). In the original German story from Brothers Grimm's collection of German legends, a magic flutist charmed away the children from a village over breach of contract for a job duly done—which was getting the village rid of rats. One of the children who was left behind recounted his sadness in a poem which was also recorded in the original tale. The original poem and Imam's transmutation—glocalization—including the illustrations that follow the stories are shown below.



Illus from Robert Browning,
The Pied Piper of Hamelin:
A Child's Story
Original Poem¹⁰



Illus from *Magana Jari Ce*, Vol 3,
Labari Sarkin Busa
Imam's Adaptation

Here waters gushed and fruit-trees
rew, Ku zo ga daula wa zai }i

¹⁰ Robert Browning *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. London: Frederick Warne and Co., Ltd., 1888.

nd flowers put forth a fairer hue,	Alo alo mu ci da]i
nd everything was strange and new;	Tuwo nama sai mun }oshi
he sparrows were brighter than	Alo alo mu ci da]i
eacocks here,	
nd their dogs outran our fallow deer	Zagi mari mun huta shi
nd honey-bees had lost their stings,	Alo alo mu ci da]i
nd horses were born with eagles'	Siliki ran salla ba datti
ings;	
	Alo alo mu ci da]i

Strictly speaking, the Hausa version was not a translation of the original stanzas. However, since the whole essence of the original poem was to convey childish joy and celebration of life, this was perfectly captured in Imam's Hausa adaptation with a refrain of *alo alo mu ci da]i* (roughly, "hey, hey, let's party!", or in contemporary rap-speak, "yo, yo, let's get down"!).

Magana Jari Ce was not only the literary adaptation of Middle Eastern and Asian tales especially *Alfu Layla wa Laylatun*. In East Africa, the British colonial administration followed a close strategy of educational development as that of northern Nigeria. Thus when Tanganyika became part of the British empire in 1919, the school system was modernized and the Swahili language was then standardized in 1925–30. In the following years, there was a need of Swahili materials for reading matter and also as a medium to propagate the modern way of life in a world widely ruled by Britain.

An important medium in this respect was the monthly journal *Mambo Leo* (Today's Affairs), founded by the Education Department in Dar es Salaam in 1923. Besides essays and news of all kinds, the journal also contained entertaining texts, among them translations of foreign literature. These were usually issued in serialized form. Issues from the initial period of 1923–32

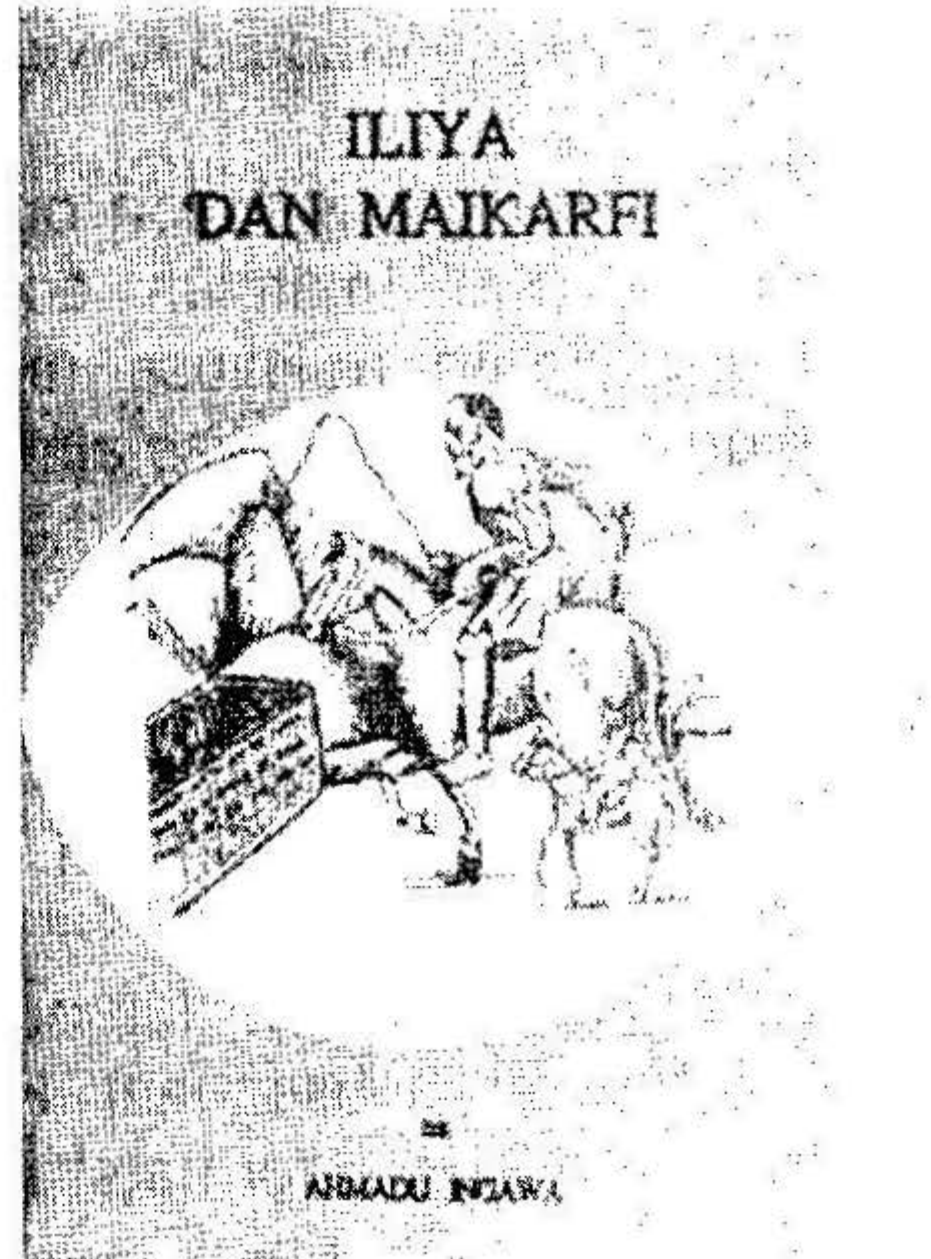
include adaptations of literary tales such as "The Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor" (1923–24), "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" (1925–26), "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" (1926), Longfellow's *Tale of Hia-watha* (1927) or Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1928). All of these stories were published without any introduction, source reference or further comment. Further translations included Stevenson's *Kisiwa chenye hazima* (Treasure Island; 1929), Haggard's *Mashimo ya Mfalme Sulemani* (King Solomon's Mines; 1929), Kipling's *Hadithi za Maugli, Mtoto Aliyelelewa na Mbwa Mwituu* (The Story of Mowgli, the Child Who Was Raised by a Wild Dog, The Jungle Books; 1929), Swift's *Safari za Gulliver* (Gulliver's Travels; 1932) among others (Thomas (2004, p. 252).

The various changes that the Literature Bureau in northern Nigeria underwent subsequently, and the need to increase the number of reading materials for burgeoning primary and secondary school student population encouraged other authors to begin their writing. The works that emerged in the early 1950s included, *Ilya [an Mai Karfi* (Ahmadu Ingawa, 1951), *Gogan Naka* (Garba Funtuwa, 1952) and *Sihirtaccen Gari* (Ahmadu Katsina, 1952).

For instance, *Ilya...* sustained the Imamian paradigm by adapting a Russian byliny (narrative poetry) transmitted orally. The oldest Russian byliny belong to a cycle dealing with the golden age of Kievan Rus in the 10th-12th century. They center on the deeds at the 10th-century court of Saint Vladimir I of Kiev. Prince Vladimir I and his court. One of the favorite heroes is the independent Cossack *Ilya Muromets of Murom*, who defended Kievan Rus from the Mongols¹¹. Unlike the aristocratic heroes of most epics, *Ilya*

¹¹ A more direct link was made by Yu. K. Scoglov, "...who identified Waldima (in Ily Dan Maikarfi) with Prince Vladimir, and the mysterious town of Kib with Kiev." See

was of peasant origin. He was an ordinary child who could not walk and who lived the life of a stay-at-home, sitting on top of the stove until he was more than 30 years old, when he discovered the use of his legs through the miraculous advice of some pilgrims. He was then given a splendid magic horse that became his inseparable companion (in the Hausa version, the horse is called *Kwalele*), and he left his parents' home for Vladimir's court. There he became the head of Vladimir's retainers and performed astonishing feats of strength. He killed the monster Nightingale the Robber and drove the Tatars out of the kingdom. His legend was the basis of the *Symphony No. 3* (1909-11; *Ilya Muromets*) by Reinhold Glière. Plate 2 shows both the two versions of the novel, and how similar they were even in cover artwork:



Stanisław Pitaszewicz, "Literature in the Hausa Language" in B. W. Andrzejewski, S. Pitaszewicz, and W. Tyloch (eds.), *Literatures in African Language: Theoretical Issues and Sample Surveys*. Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 224.

Ilya Murom of Muromets, Kiev, Ilya Dan Maikarfi, Hausaland
Russia

Plate 2: Galloping similarities: Ilya Dan Murom

And while it was not clear which literary work “inspired” *Gogari Naka*, it is equally evident that the tale also borrowed heavily from Eastern sources, since the hero – Abdul Bakara, or Bokhara, India – after gallivanting all over Asia, ended up as a king of Egypt. *Sihirtaccen Gari*, however, was different from the other two in the sense that it was not even an Imamian adaptation; it was a direct translation of an Arabic language collection of short stories, *Ikra* by Sayid Kutub, as revealed by the author in a brief introduction to the book. It is an instructive coincidence that Imamanci was created in Katsina College in early 1930s, and the subsequent novelists who promoted it were indigenes of Katsina!

Other Hausa prose fiction outputs in both the 1950s and 1960s continued the Imamian adaptive strategy, often adapting a foreign tale to a Hausa mindset, or directly translating from foreign sources. It is almost an article of faith that any Hausa prose fiction produced in the period *must* be an adaptation of a foreign tale. Thus *Robin Hood*, *Twelfth Night*, *Animal Farm*, *Saiful Mulk*, *Tanimuddari*, *Baron Manhausen*, *Hajj Baba of Isfahan* were all directly translated from their original sources to Hausa with varying degrees of Imamism.

More significantly, the “famous five” 1930s Hausa novels provided templates for subsequent Hausa authors to recast the same stories in different formats! Almost all the five were thematically copied – media rip-off – by subsequent authors by merely changing the names and settings, but retaining the central core of similarities with the earlier tales—creating templates for internal globalization. Thus *Nagari Na Kowa* (Jabiru Abdullahi, 1968)

harked back at *Shaihu Umar*, while *Tauraruwar Hamada* (Sa'idu Ahmed, 1965) could be called *Ruwan Bagaja Part II* if it were a film. Similarly *Da'u Fataken Dare* (Tanko Zango, 1952) built up on the plot elements of *Idon Matambayi* (Muhammadu Gwarzo, 1934) tale of brigandage, and *Dare [aya* (Umaru Dembo, 1973) with *Jiki Magayi*.

Hindi Film Motifs in Hausa Performing Arts

In 1937 Lebanese merchants in Kano introduced the colonial administration—and to a limited extent, the natives—to the wonders of cinema and Rex Cinema in Sabon Gari was opened. The subsequent years saw more cinemas being opened in Kano and an increasing entrapment of the Hausa to entertainment ethos of Western Europe, and from 1960, Asia in the form of Hindi commercial films. This was supplemented by radio broadcasts of Hindi, Sudanese and Arabic music especially during strategic times of the day aimed at women.¹² Gradually therefore women became targets for entertainment within the confines of their private space.

The increasing exposure to media in various forms, from novels and tales written in Arabic, to subsequently radio and television programs with heavy dosage of foreign contents due to paucity of locally produced programs in the late 1950s and early 1960s provided more sources of *Imamanci* (Imam's methodology of adaptation) for Hausa authors. The 1960s saw more media influx into the Hausa society and media in all forms – from the written word to visual formats – was used for political, social and educational purposes.

¹² Most the entertainment programs, under the banner of request shows sponsored by companies such as PZ and Lever Brothers to advertise their commodities, were targeted at women, as evidenced by their names: *Uwargida Barka da Rana*, *Zaben Almurru*, *Zaben Dare*, etc.

One of the earliest novels to incorporate these multimedia elements—combining prose fiction with visual media—and departing from the closeted simplicity of the earlier novels, was *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya* by Umar Dembo (1969). This novel reflects the first noticeable influence of Hindi cinema on Hausa writers who had, hitherto tended to rely on Arabic and other European literary sources for inspiration. Indeed, *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya* is a collage of various influences on the writer, most of which derived directly from the newsreels and television programming.¹³

It was written at the time of media coverage of American Apollo lunar landings as constant news items, and *Star Trek* television series as constant entertainment fodder on RTV Kaduna. The novel chronicles the adventures of an extremely energetic and adventurous teen, Kilba, with a fixation on stars and star travel, wishing perhaps to go “boldly where no man has gone before” (the tagline from *Star Trek* TV series). He is befriended by a space traveling alien, Kolin Koliyo, who promises to take him to the stars, only if the boy passes a series of tests. One of them involves magically teleporting the boy to a meadow outside the village. In the next instance, a massive wave of water approaches the boy, bearing an exquisitely beautiful smiling maiden, Bintun Sarauta, who takes his hand and sinks with him to an undersea city, Birnin Malala, to a lavish palace with jacuzzi-style marbled bathrooms with equally beautiful serving maidens. After refreshing, he dresses in black jacket and white shirt (almost a dinner suit) and taken to a large hall to meet a large gathering of musicians (playing *siriki* or flutes) and dancers.

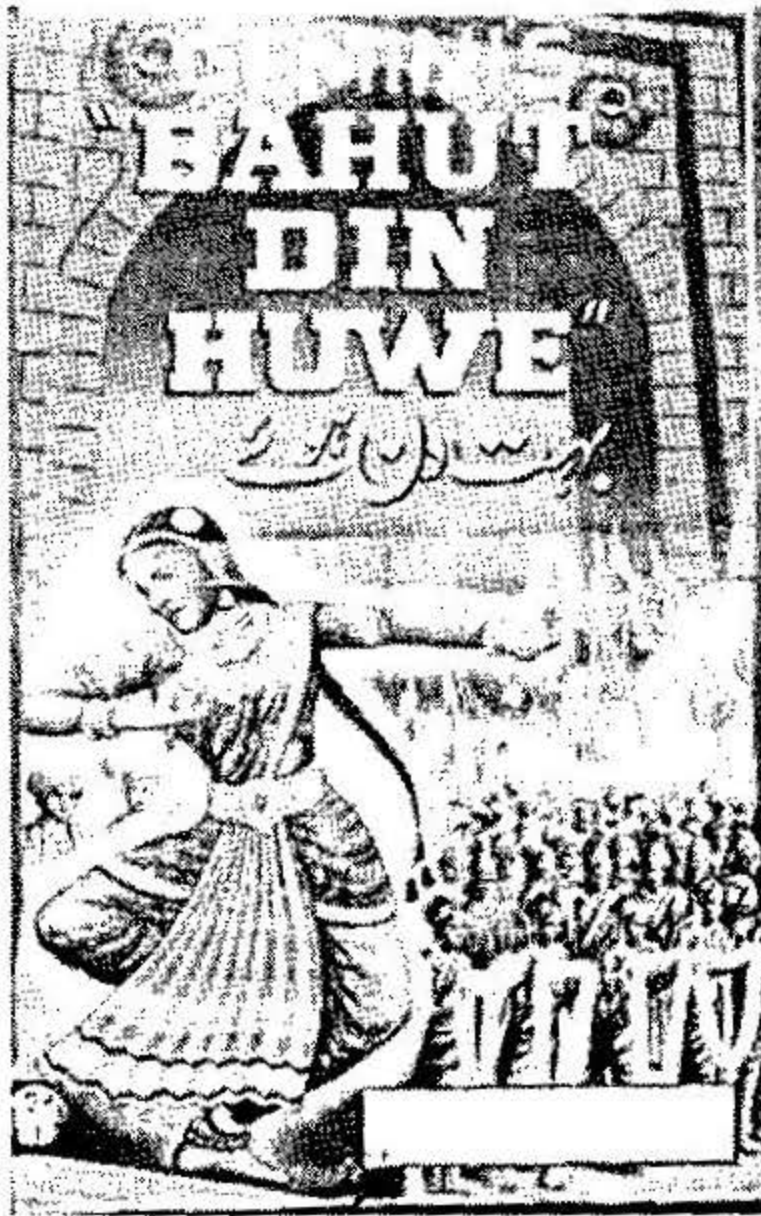
¹³ A.G.D. Abdullahi, *Tasirin Al'adu da Dabi'u iri-iri a cikin Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Hausa Language and Literature*, held at Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria, July 7-10, 1978. Kano, CSNL. Kano, Center for the Study of Nigerian Languages.

When the music begins—an integrative music that included drums, flutes, and other wind-instruments, as well as hand-claps; all entertainment features uncharacteristic of Hausa musical styles of the period—a singing duo, Muhammadul Wa}a (actually Kolin Koliyo, the space alien, in disguise) and Bintun Wa}e serenade his arrival in high-octave (*za}in murya*) voices, echoing singing duets of Hindi film playback singers, Lata Mangeshkar and Muhammad Rafi—the Bintun Wa}e and Muhammadul Wa}a of *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya*. As fully narrated in the novel:

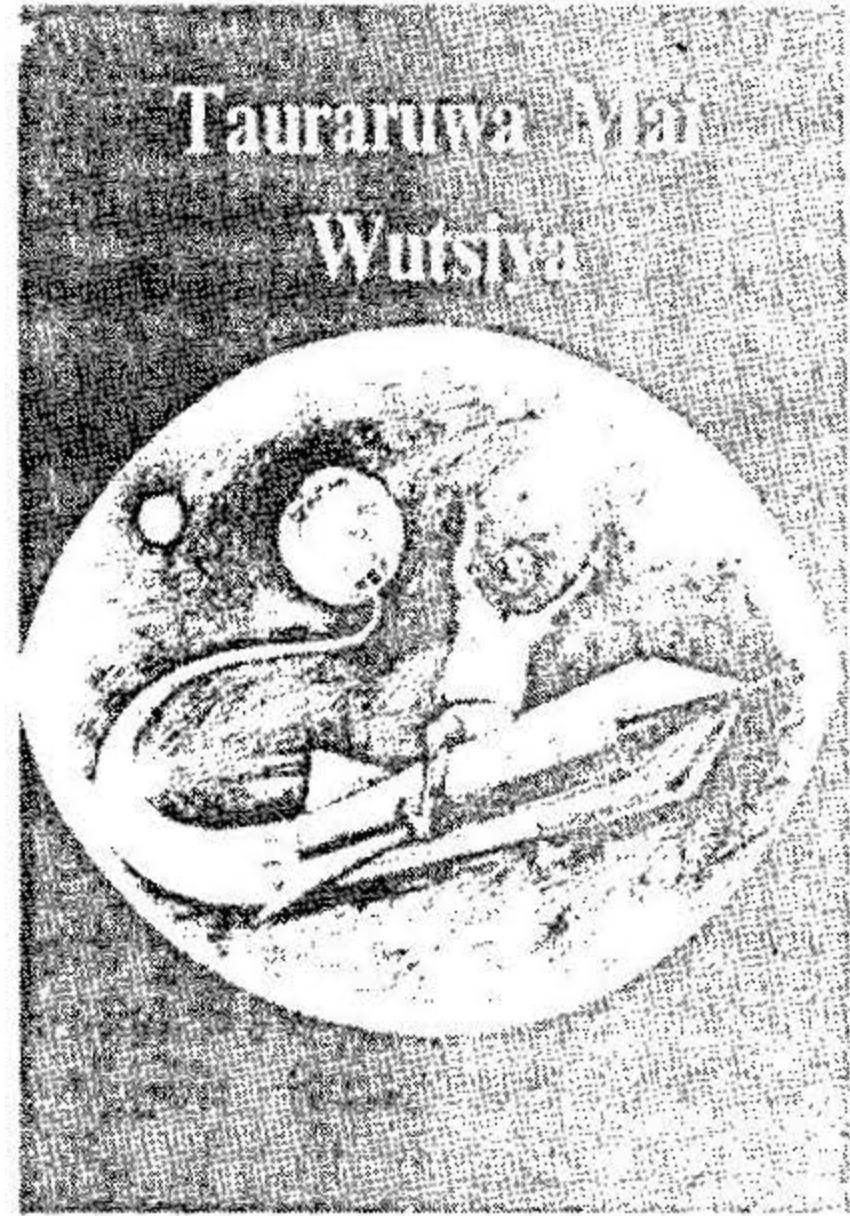
The audience burst out in applause, and the band played on, with drums, flutes in full symphony, with drums beaten in low beats. Then the hall went silent, everyone waiting to see what happens next, waiting for the next movement from the musicians and the two singers. Then the drummers resumed their beat, old men started shaking their feet, priests started shaking their heads, young men were shaking their bodies—all swayed by the music. Everyone was waiting for the song to start. Suddenly the lead drummer skidded as if he was leaving the hall. He pulled up his drum and went into solo beat, making people wondrous of what was about to happen. Then an incredibly sweet voice of oratorical proportions burst out singing a beautiful song that cools the heart. Everyone looked towards the sound to it was see Bintun Wa}a (sic) who started her singing. Then she was joined by Muhammadul Wa}a, with his own style of singing, swaying his body at the same time, while Bintun Wa}e joined him, also swaying her derriere and breasts (Dembo 1969 p. 12).

This scene, unarguably the first translation of Hindi film motif into Hausa prose fiction, and which was to give birth to Hindinization of Hausa home videos, displays the author's penchant for Hindi films and describes Hindu temple rituals; in Hausa Muslim music structures, *limamai* (priests) do not attend dance-hall concerts

and participate. In Hindu culture, however, they do, since the dances are part of Hindu rituals of worship. Plate 3 shows the poster a Hindi film inspiration, *Bahut Din Huwe* (1954) and the cover of the Hausa novel (1969).



Hindi film, *Bahut Din Huwe* (1954)...



...inspired many scenes in Hausa novel *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya* (Umar Dembo, 1969)

Plate 3: Early Hindi inspiration in Hausa novels

Other Hindi films that lend their creative inspiration in the novel's dancing scene included *Hatimahai* (1947) and *Hawwa Mahal* (1962) with their elaborate fairytale-ish stories of mythology and adventure.¹⁴

¹⁴ I acknowledge, with gratitude the help offered by Sani Lamma who identified the scene in *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya* and suggested that it seemed to be a collage from these three Hindi film. Kano, April 10, 2004.

Screen to Street – Hausa Adaptations of Popular Hindi Film Music

Hindi films became popular simply because of what urbanized young Hausa—as well as their Lebanese importers—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.

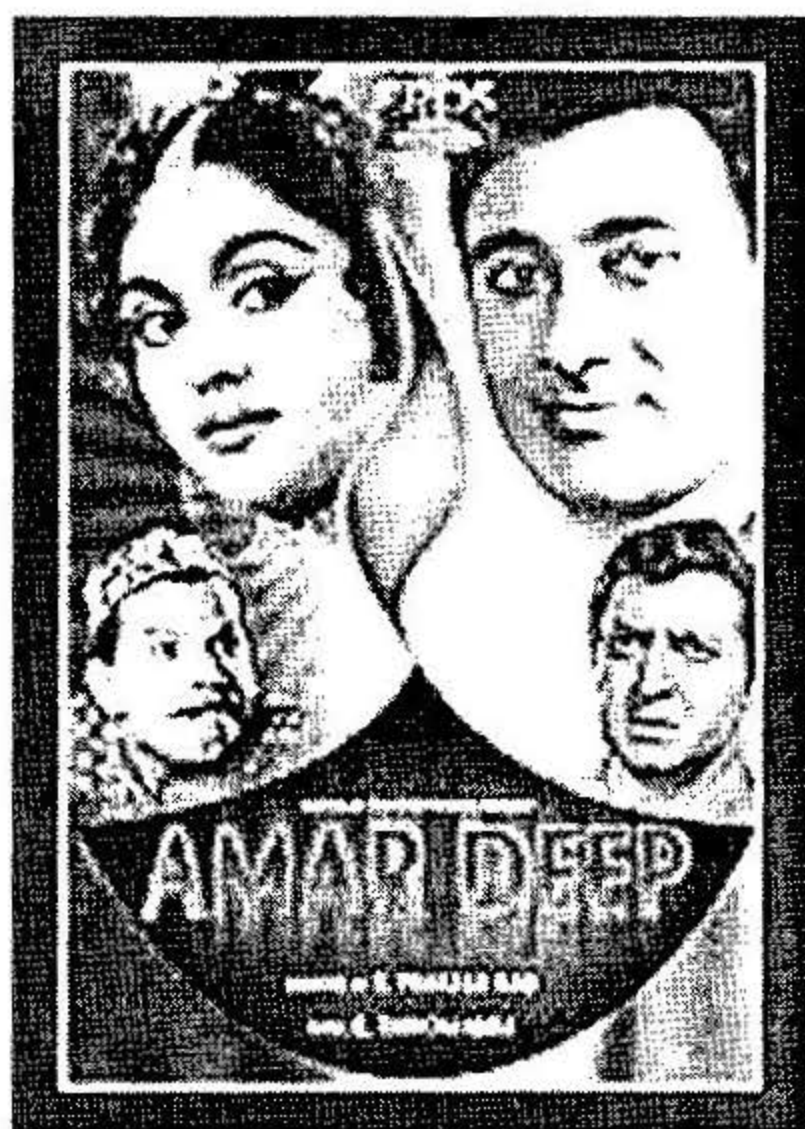
The first audience for this entertainment to make the cultural leap from screen to street were predominantly young boys who, incapable of understanding Hindi film language, but captivated by the songs in the films they saw, started to use the meter of the playback songs, but substituted the “gibberish” Hindi words with Hausa prose. Four of the most popular Hindi films in northern Nigeria in the 1960s which provided the meter for adaptation of the tunes and lyrics to Hausa street and popular music were *Chori Chori* (1956), *Rani Rupmati* (1957), *Amar Deep* (1958) and *Khabie Khabie* (1975) whose posters, as sold in markets across northern Nigeria in the 1970s and 1980s, are shown in Plate 4, with the stand-out songs from the films in italics.



Rani Rupmati (1957)
(Raati Suhani, Phool Baghiya)



Chori Chori (1956)
(Hillorii)



Amar Deep (1958)
(Chaliloo)



Kabhi Kabhie (1975)
(Kabhi Kabie)

Plate 4: Creative Inspirations for Hausa filmmakers

A fairly typical example of street adaptation of the lyrics was from Rani Rupmati (1957), as shown below:

Itihaas Agar... (Rani Rupmati)	Hausa playground version
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) Itihaas agar likhana chaho	Mun samu sandan girma
Azaadi ke majmoon se	Ina su cibayyo in sarki
To seen khoo upne Dharti ko	Ina su wazirin abin banza
Veroo tum upne khom se	
Har har har mahdev	Har har har Mahadi
Allaho Akubar	Allahu Akbar
Har har har mahdev	Har har har Mahadi
Allaho Akubar...	Allahu Akbar...

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 mimer of the song in the film was a woman, as well as 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.

Further, the Hindu religious refrain *Har Har Har Mahdev*, juxtaposed with its Islamic equivalent, *Allahu Akbar*, was the main selling point for the song, even if the Hausa audience did not understand the dialogues, they did identify with Mahdi (a reformer, although the Hindi word in this context was *Mahdev*, another reference to Lord Shiva, a Hindu god-form) 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.

Consequently, 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 male and female 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 lowbrow status on his music. The most famous set piece was the bar-dance, *Bansuwai*, with its suggestive moves – with *female* 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* ("talking drum") often made to sound like *tabla*, an Indian drum. A fairly typical example, again from the film *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

Rukh hai natili
Mousam java
Rukh hai natili
Mousam java
Jugni laagi hai
Chandi hawaa
Jugni laagi hai
Chandi hawaa

Chupke ziyaada
Dilmain tum aaja
Chupke ziyaada
Dilmain tum aaja
Dilahi deevana hai

Hausa adaptation (Abdu Yaron Goge)

Music interlude, with tabla simulation, goge, voice:

Mu gode Allah, taro
Mu gode Allah, taro
Duniya da dadi
Lahira da dadi
In da gaskiyar ka,
Lahira da dadi
In babu gaskiyar ka,
Lahira da zafi

Duniya da dadi
Lahira da dadi
In da gaskiyar ka,
Lahira da dadi
In babu gaskiyar ka,
Lahira da zafi
Duniya da dadi
Lahira da dadi

Duniya da dadi
Lahira da dadi
In da gaskiyar ka,
Lahira da dadi
In babu gaskiyar ka,

Tereliye
Tereliye

Lahira da zafi
Duniya da dadi
Lahira da dadi
In da gaskiyar ka,
Lahira da dadi

The Hausa lyrics were 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, again the film *Rani Rupmati*, 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

Pyar to he salwa rukhi
har rukhi
Pyar ki mushkil he kaliya
Pyar mera daaba bari
bangaye
Raat ke raat ke savaliya

Hausa adaptation (Ali Makaho)

Za ni Kano, za ni Kaduna (to rhyme wit
Pyar karo...)
Mu je Katsina lau za ni Ilori
Na je Anacha
Hitoho hotiho

Hotiho hotiho
Ni ban san kin zo ba
Da na san kin zo ne
Da na saya miki farfesu
Ni ban san ka zo ba

Da na san ka zo ne
Da na saya maka funkaso

Za ni Wudil,

Hojiho, hojiho, hojiho	Za ni Makole
Hojiho, hojiho, hojiho	Na zarce Gogel,
	Za ni Hadeja
	Na kwan a Gumel

The Hausa musician was, perhaps not unexpectedly, aware of the meaning of the wording to some of the lyrics, particularly the first line of the second stanza which pays home to Lord Salwa's beautiful gardens—the said lord being another Hindu god-form.

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. An 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) Literary Adaptations

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 suyi noma su yi
huda
Sai kaga an barsu wajen bare
takanda

The same soundtrack 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, Ilori¹⁵

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 effect 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

¹⁵ Ilori, or Ilorin, is a large city in Kwara State, northern Nigeria.

(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 instigation 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 Macecina
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.¹⁶ This

¹⁶ 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

is an irony, considering that a lot of the Hindi songs they were adapting were tied to the Hindu religion, with its multiplicity of gods, as opposed to the monotheism of Islam. These adaptations, which were purely vocal, without any instrumental accompaniment, emerged principally in the 1980s during a particularly religious resurgence in northern Nigeria after the 1979 Iranian Islamic revolution, which provided a template for many Muslim clusters to reorient 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 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 the multiplicity of gods characteristic Hindu religion, in contrast to the monotheism of Islam.

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 were usually lead by poets and singers.¹⁷ 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*

flown up by the more orthodox Islamic establishment scholars who do not see any role of Music in Islam.

¹⁷ 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.

(1988), Ahawul Nabiyyi (1989), Ahababu Rasulillah (1989), Mahabbatu Rasul (1989), Ashiratu Nabiyyi (1990) and Zumratul Madahun Nabiyyi (1990). All these were lead by mainstream Islamic poets and rely on conventional methods of composition for their works, often done in mosques or community plazas.¹⁸ Most were vocal groups, although a few started to use the *bandiri* (tambourine) as an instrument during their performances. 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 focused their attention on adapting Hindi film soundtracks to Hausa lyrics, singing the praises of the Prophet Muhammad.¹⁹ Some members of these groups migrated into the home video production. They included Dan Azimi Baba, Mudassir Kassim, and Sani Garba S.K.

¹⁸ For a textual analysis of the songs, see Aminu Isma'ila (1994), "Rubatattun 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.

¹⁹ 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>

They became midwives to the use of Hindi film soundtracks in Hausa video films.

Read to Reel—Novelists as Video Filmmakers

By 1980, the Northern Nigerian Publishing Company, NNPC, the main media publishing house in Northern Nigeria, had virtually stopped publishing prose fiction works, restricting itself to recycling of the old classics as well as more educational materials. The process of publishing became a cash-and-carry affair with authors being charged for printing of their works (e.g. Balaraba Ramat Yakubu's *Wa Zai Auri Jahila?*). Most of the prospective new authors did not have the funds to get their works printed by the major publishing houses.

With media parenting in the form of increasing deluge of television and radio programs imported from Asia, it was only a matter of time before the template provided by *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya* started providing a basis for writing stories with Hindi cinema themes of love and romance from early 1980s. Thus emerged the genre of popular Hausa literature contemptuously labeled *Labaran Soyayya* and Kano Market Literature, which by 2000 had produced more than 700 titles – thanks to the increasing availability of cheap printing presses.²⁰

A new crop of authors then emerged from 1980 with the appearance of *So Aljannar Duniya* by Hafsat AbdulWahid, the first

²⁰ Malumfashi, Ibrahim., "Adabin Kasuwar Kano", *Nasiha* 3 & 29 July 1994. The first (?) vernacular article in which Ibrahim Malumfashi created the term *Adabin Kasuwar Kano* (Kano Market Literature), a contemptuous comparison between the booming vernacular prose fiction industry, based around Kano State (with *Center of Commerce* as its State apothegm) and the defunct Onitsha Market Literature which flourished around Onitsha market in Anambra State in the 1960s. In 2005 Graham Furniss, on the basis of various interactions with Abdalla Uba Adamu and Yusuf Adamu created the term *Hausa Popular Literature* (HPL) to describe the genre.

Hausa speaking Fulani female novelist. Other young writers, full of ballistic anger about job insecurity, lack of further education to proceed to and general malaise and social insecurity followed suite, with stories of the heart, and later (in the 1990s) interlaced with copious love songs, sung by two lovers (always separated by a chasm of parental or societal disapproval which they have to overcome in the course of the novel – thus echoing Hindi cinema-style storylines) to each other. Pioneers in the genre included Ibrahim Saleh Gumel's *Wasiyar Baba Kere* (1983); *Inda Rai Da Rabo* (1984) by Idris S. Imam, and *Rabin Raina I* (1984) by Talatu Wada Ahmad.

When in the early to mid 1990s the VHS camera became affordable, a whole new visual literature was created by the first crop of contemporary Hausa novelists. As Graham Furniss (2003 p. 12) noted,

One of the most remarkable cultural transitions in recent years has been this move from books into video film. Many of the stories in the books now known as Kano Market Literature or Hausa Popular Literature are built around dialogue and action, a characteristic that was also present in earlier prose writing of the 1940s and 1950s. Such a writing style made it relatively easy to work from a story to a TV drama, and a number of the Hausa TV drama series (*Magana Jari Ce*, for example) derived their story lines from texts. With the experience of staging comedies and social commentaries that had been accumulating in the TV stations and in the drama department of ABU, for example, it was not difficult conceptually to move into video film.

Yusuf Adamu was able to link a number of the new wave of Hausa novels with their transition to the visual medium, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Hausa novels adapted into Home Videos

S/N	Author	Novel to Video
1.	Abba Bature	Auren Jari
2.	Abdul Aziz M/Gini	Idaniyar Ruwa
3.	Abubakar Ishaq	Da {yar Na Sha
4.	Adamu Mohammed	Kwabon Masoyi
5.	Ado Ahmad G/Dabino	In Da So Da {auna
6.	Aminu Aliyu Argungu	Haukar Mutum
7.	Auwalu Yusufu Hamza	Gidan Haya
8.	Bala Anas Babinlata	Tsuntsu Mai Wayo
9.	Balaraba Ramat	Alhaki Kwikwiyo
10.	Balaraba Ramat Yakubu	Ina Sonsa Haka
11.	Bashir Sanda Gusau	Auren Zamani
12.	Bashir Sanda Gusau	Babu Maraya
13.	Bilkisu Funtua	Ki Yarda Da Ni
14.	Bilkisu Funtua	Sa'adatu Sa'ar Mata
15.	[an Azumi Baba	Na San A Rina
16.	[an Azumi Baba	Idan Jera da Sata
17.	[an Azumi Baba	(Bakandamiyar) Rikicin Duniya
18.	[an Azumi Baba	Kyan Al}awari
19.	Halima B.H. Aliyu	Muguwar Kishiya
20.	Ibrahim M. K/Nassarawa	Soyayya Cikon Rayuwa
21.	Ibrahim Mu'azzam Indabawa	Joyayyiyar Gaskiya (Ja'iba)
22.	Kabiru Ibrahim Yakasai	Suda
23.	Kabiru Ibrahim Yakasai	Turmi Sha Daka

S/N	Author	Novel to Video
24.	Kabiru Kasim	Tudun Mahassada
25.	Kamil Tahir	Rabia ²¹
26.	M.B. Zakari	Komai Nisan Dare
27.	Maje El-Hajeej	Sirrinsu
28.	Maje El-Hajeej	Al'ajab (Ruhi)
29.	Muhammad Usman	Zama Lafiya
30.	Nazir Adamu Salihu	Naira da Kwabo
31.	Nura Azara	{arshen {iyayya
32.	Zilkifilu Mohammed	Su Ma 'Ya'ya Ne
33.	Zuwaira Isa	{addara Ta Riga Fata
34.	Zuwaira Isa	Kara Da Kiyashi

After Adamu (2003)²²

When the new wave of Hausa writers started producing, in massive quantities, prose fiction interlaced with love stories and emotional themes, literary and textual critics started comparing their storylines with Hindi films, with accusations that they rip-off such films.²³ Thus the Hindi film *Romance* was claimed to be ripped-off as *Al}awarin Allah* by Aminu Adamu.²⁴ Similarly, it was

²¹ This was different from *Rabiat* by Aishatu Gi}a}o Idris who abandoned the project of converting her novel into a home video.

²² Yusuf Adamu, "Between the Word and the Screen: A Historical Perspective on Hausa Literary Movement & the Home Video Invasion." Adapted from a paper presented at the 20th Annual Convention of the Association of Nigerian Authors, Jos, 15-19th, November, 2000. The paper was also published as Yusuf M. Adamu "Between the word and the screen: a historical perspective on the Hausa Literary Movement and the home video invasion". *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, Volume 15, Number 2, December 2002, pp. 203-213.

²³ Halima Abbas, "New Trends in Hausa Fiction", *New Nigerian Literary Supplement — The Write Stuff*, 11, 18, July; 1 August, 1998. This was a post-graduate seminar presentation of the Department of Nigerian and African Languages, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria held on June 3, 1998 towards an M.A. degree.

²⁴ Muhammad Kabir Assada, "Ramin {arya {urarre Ne", *Nasiha*, 16-22 September 1994, p. 4.

argued by Ibrahim Malumfashi that the transition to visuality was first through prose fiction of the more prominent writers with passing nods to Hindi cinema. Citing an example, he claimed that

Bala Anas Babinlata's (novel) *Sara Da Sassa}a* is an adaptation of the Indian film *Iqlik De Khaliya* (sic) while his *Rashin Sani* is another transmutation of another Indian film, *Dostana*, etc.²⁵

And yet he contradicted his textuality when in 2002 he wrote:

Complaints against the Kano Market Literature in its halcyon days focused on how mindsets alien to Hausa culture were reflected in the novels, most especially direct borrowing of ideas that included Indian, European and Arabic media sources. For instance, *Sara da Sassa}a* by Bala Anas Babinlata is an adapted Indian film, *Dostana*; *In So Ya Yi So* by Badamasi Burji, was from *Iqlik De Khaliya* (sic), while *Farar Tumfafiya* by Zuwaira Machika was *Kabhie Kabhie*.²⁶

It is not clear here which of Bala Anas Babinlata's novels is adapted from an Hindi film: *Sara da Sassa}a* (which Malumfashi claimed in 1999 to be *Dostana*) or *Rashin Sani* (claimed in 2002 to be *Dostana*). Indeed, in a surprising turn of polemics, Ibrahim Malumfashi, a writer and literary critic, was accused of adapting

²⁵ Ibrahim Malumfashi, "Dancing Naked in the Market Place", *New Nigerian Weekly Literary Supplement — The Write Stuff*, July 10, 1999 p. 14-15. I confronted Bala Anas Babinlata with this observation after it was published, and like all Hausa authors, he strenuously objected to the insinuation that they adapted Hindu cinema for their novels. Interview, Kano, August, 1999.

²⁶ Ibrahim A.M. Malumfashi, *Adabi Da Bidiyon Kasuwar Kano A Bisa Fai-fai: Takaitaccen Tsokaci*. Paper presented at a Seminar on New Methods of Hausa Literature, and organized by the Center for the Study of Hausa Languages, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 8-9th July, 2002.

an Hindi film in his first novel, *Wankan Wuta* by A.S. Malumfashi, another writer, who argued:

"...Since the demise of the legendary Alhaji Imam, many writers....have been trying to step into the shoes he bequeathed, but none of them has succeeded. Such contemporary writers are legion; the indefatigable Ibrahim SHEME, the writer of *The Malam's Potion, Kifin Rijiya*...Dr. Ibrahim Malumfashi, who intended to continue with Imam's famous *Magana Jari Ce* but ended up wasting his time writing the serialized *Wankan Wuta*: a book that questions the creativity of the writer as it appears to be a hopeless plagiarism of an Indian film, *Khudgarz*, and Jeffrey Archer's *Kane and Abel*. Though they have through their various works been preserving Hausa literature as well as promoting the reading habit among the Hausa people more than during the Imam era, unfortunately none of them has matched Imam's great genius and wisdom..." (A. S. Malumfashi, *New Nigerian Weekly*, May 22, 1999, p. 15).²⁷

Brian Larkin also provides arguments that seem to link Hausa novels of the 1990s with Hindi cinema, although he does not provide a specific textual analysis that links a specific novel with a specific Hindi film.²⁸ His basic textual analysis, however, relies on similarities in plot elements and stock characters between the stories in Hausa novels and general Hindi film characteristics.

²⁷ See also Muhammad Qaseem, "Wankan Wuta ko Wankar Littafi?" *Nasiha*, Friday 11-17 November, 1994.

²⁸ Larkin, Brian., "Modern Lovers: Indian Films, Hausa Dramas and Love Novels Among Hausa Youth", *New Nigerian Literary Supplement — The Write Stuff*, February 21, 26, 1997. This paper was initially presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting at Orlando, Florida, U.S., November 3-6 1995; Also published as "Indian Films and Nigerian Lovers: Media and the Creation of Parallel Modernities." *Africa*, Vol 67, No 3, 1997, pp. 406-439

Those brave (or foolhardy) enough to venture into the Hausa video film production from 1990 to 2000 rapidly established themselves as pioneering superstars (and reverently called "dattijawan industiri", or industry elders) — and earned significant fame and modest fortune from the sales of their videos, which by now are considered classics in Hausa video film. Even at this "primitive" stage of the industry, acculturative media influences on the video films tended to be tame. There was still the remnant of the disco and rap fever and this appears in some videos of this era (e.g. *Daskin Da Riƙi*, a folktale modernized, and *Bada}ala*, the first to feature traditionally adapted disco dancing). The main themes of the videos were either comedy (*Tantiri*, *Gagare*, both patterned on Hollywood's *Problem Child* and the antics of Macaulay Culkin in *Home Alone*), political dramas (*Tsuntsu Mai Wayo*, *Gaskiya Dokin }arfe*), historical epics (*Gimbiya Fatima*), forced marriage scenarios (*In Da So Da }auna*), or family conflicts, especially among co-wives (*Ki Yarda Da Ni*, *Alhaki Kwikwiyo*). These video films were, in effect, extended series dramas providing a safe and clearly identified family entertainment. Thus there were clearly defined genres and producers strove to maintain these genres. Again, significantly, the producers of these early video films considered themselves stock Fulani or Hausa and reflect these cultural and ethnic identities and mindsets in their video films. This was to change from 2000.

The transformation of the Hausa video film to a Hindi film clone started from 1996 with Mr. USA Galadima's *Soyayya }unar Zuci*, produced under the auspices of the Nigerian Film Corporation. The video film was based on the Hindi film, *Mujhe Insaaf Chahiye*.²⁹ Before its cinema release, it was premiered to a select

1. ²⁹ Jos has a long tradition of Indian cinema — indeed almost all the Indian video imports in the 2002 NFVCB *Directory* were by Plateau (Jos) Cinemas

private audience in a video store in Kano in 1995, 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 its non-release on video film since it was restricted to cinema showings only. However, in 1999 Sarauniya Films in Kano released the trailer of a new video, *Sangaya*. 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.

This particular video film, *Sangaya*, signaled the departure to literary sources for film inspiration among the Hausa. It attracted many filmmakers whose focus was on commercialization, rather than artistic re-enactment of the Hausa novel or traditional life. In particular, the viability of the home video film as a substitute for literary canvas created a further chance for direct copying of Hindi films into Hausa language. Table 3 shows some of the more

— and differs from Kano in one fundamental respect: it offered matinee shows due to its numerous in-door cinemas, whereas Kano cinemas screen films only at night. The constant barrage of Indian films in Jos metropolis thus created a new wave of video makers with Indian filming mindset. The city proved a training ground for the main Hindi to Hausa actor, and later producer and director Ali Nuhu, variously nicknamed Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan due to his intense devotion to Hindi cinema. His studies at the University of Jos provided him with the opportunity to get fully engaged in Hindi cinema. During his studies in Jos he got a protégé in the form of Ahmed S. Nuhu, another Hindi to Hausa actor, and in 1997 after Ali Nuhu's graduation, they relocated to Kano and set up FKD Studios which became the main Hindi to Hausa video studio in Kano. Some elders I talked to in Jos were not happy with this Indianization of Hausa cinema. These included Alhaji [an Maraya Jos (a notable folk (*kuntigi*) singer of international repute) and Waziri Zayyanu, a film producer (*'Yancin 'Dan Adam, Babban Gida*). Interview, Jos, Nigeria, April 22, 2003.

notable Hausa home videos that had been "inspired" by Indian films.³⁰

Table 3: Hausa Home Video Indian Film Inspirations/ Rip-offs

S/N	Hindi Film Original³¹	Hausa Video Rip-off
1.	Benaten Sai Wata/Yarana	Hakuri
2.	Chandni	Ayaah
3.	Chorrin Chupke	Furuci
4.	Dil Haiken Manta Nahi	Hanzari
5.	Hum Bade Main	Dijangala
6.	Hum Hai Raki Pyar Ki	Badali
7.	Judwa	Abin Sirri Ne
8.	Mohabbatein	Halacci
9.	Raazia Sultaan	Burin Zuciya
10.	Sultanate	Allura Da Zare

³⁰ There was a howl of protest when this table was passed around to the affected video producers for comments. Their main concern was that they do not wish to be seen as lacking creativity. Thus most of them refused to directly acknowledge that they ripped-off Indian films. Some breathed a sigh of relief when I showed them this table – happy to see that their videos were not listed as rip-offs. One script writer swore he had never seen an Indian film with a remarkable similarity with his first Hausa home video, although the *director* of the film did admit having seen the Indian original. Some admit to being "inspired" by "an Indian film or two". This table is based on the entire gamut of similarities between Indian films and the corresponding Hausa home videos; some were shot-by-shot remakes, others borrowed scenes here and there; yet others used artwork (poster and editing techniques), and finally, some use similar special effects to create similar scenes from Indian films. I am also grateful to Sari Lamma for helping to identify the rip-offs in Hausa home videos.

³¹ Based on fieldwork in Kano in which a group of 10 paid research assistants compared Hausa home videos and identified the Indian film equivalents as indicated in the footnote above.

This practice of preferring to copy Hindi films into Hausa—and promoted by Hausanized non-ethnic Hausa filmmakers—bypasses the literary pool of Hausa writers that exist in Kano, Katsina, Minna, Kaduna, Sakkwato, Zariya and other places in northern Nigeria. It creates an essential tension between Hausa creative writers and filmmakers, and even lead to the establishment of an online Scriptwriters Forum. However, the financial clout of the filmmakers sustains their ability to bypass Hausa writers and prefer the Hindi film as a source for their films.

Conclusion

It is clear therefore that Hausa writers, musicians and video drama producers are *glocalized experts*, adept at adapting other media sources, to their entertainment mindset, starting from 1934 with Abubakar Imam's *Ruwan Bagaja* before making a transition to the cinematic medium via the novel *Tauraruwa Mai Wutsiya* through the first Bollywood copied home video, *Soyayya Kunin Zuci* (Jos, 1995). Throughout the glocalization of the Hausa performance arts, inspiration from the East, more specifically, India, has been the main creative catalyst for Hausa globalization.

As Pierre Cyril Pahlavi (2003) argued, new information and communication technologies collapse distance and time, allowing virtually all local cultures to flow freely and massively across national borders, affecting states domestically. In contracting the distance between societies, technoglobalization is creating a world in which it is increasingly difficult to be protected from external cultural influence. The phenomenon of cultural globalization will continue to affect public opinion and populations' perception and preferences until we devise a method for creating self-contained, societal bubbles, capable of isolating one society from all others.

While Hausa conservative audience does express appreciation of performance arts; but it either has to be traditional Hausa, reflecting Hausa mindset, or if foreign, must approximate Hausa mindset and cultural space. That explains why stories, films and often music from Asia had more appeal and served as a template for glocalization among the Hausa, than arts from either southern Nigeria, or other parts of Africa. Curiously, Arabic performance arts, especially from Sudan, where the Sudanese, despite claims of being linguistic Arabs, share racial characteristics with the Hausa, were often completely shunned by Hausa performance artistes as entertainment templates. An even greater irony is that the purveyors of the glocalization of Hausa performing arts were not ethnic Hausa, but provide entertainment for mainstream ethnic Hausa audience.

While the various aspects of Hausa performance arts had at one stage or other been subject to public criticism, interestingly it is the video film that drew the greatest ire of the critical civil society—leading in fact to the establishment of a censorship board in Kano that pays only a lip-service to music and literature, while focusing its full legal weight on the video film. The main criticism against the video films—from the various “Letters to the Editor” to *Fim* magazine, it is clear that the increasing aping of Hindi cinema’s attempt at global acceptance, and reproduced in Hausa clones, was the main focus of the criticisms.

Globalization of entertainment has been an ongoing process since the very concept of globalization itself, perhaps erroneously, came to be associated with American economic policies. As a result, the globalization process poses a challenge as well to the ethnic culture contained within each nation. As Nobutaka Inoue (1997) argued, it frequently invades and transforms the forms of indigenous culture which were established by ethnic groups and nations. When successful, the cultural contact of

internationalization promotes mutual understanding among discrete nation-states and ethnic groups, and while certain transformations in each culture might coincidentally result, the process of internationalization itself is possible without such transformations. The process of globalization, however, tends to be incompatible with the maintenance of indigenous cultures. This side of the globalization process might be best expressed as a "stateless condition." Stateless culture means the process whereby cultures are mixed on a global scale.

Globalization is a common phenomenon in the areas of technology and business. New technologies are instantly shared by multiple companies and nations. The emergence of multinational companies promotes complex production processes wherein almost no one knows what nation or people are involved in the making of a new car, computer, or other product. At the same time, it is commonly considered that phenomena related to ethnic culture are much more conservative than those related to technology or business, since an orderly way of life becomes difficult when the language, characteristics, religions, ethics, families and value systems of a society are subject to incessant change. Despite this fact, the globalization process can now be seen advancing even in those areas deeply concerned with ethnic culture. The challenge for the Hausa society is in coping with this inevitable encroachment and still retaining its own identity. The role of Islam and Islamic identity in this process then is extremely critical.



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