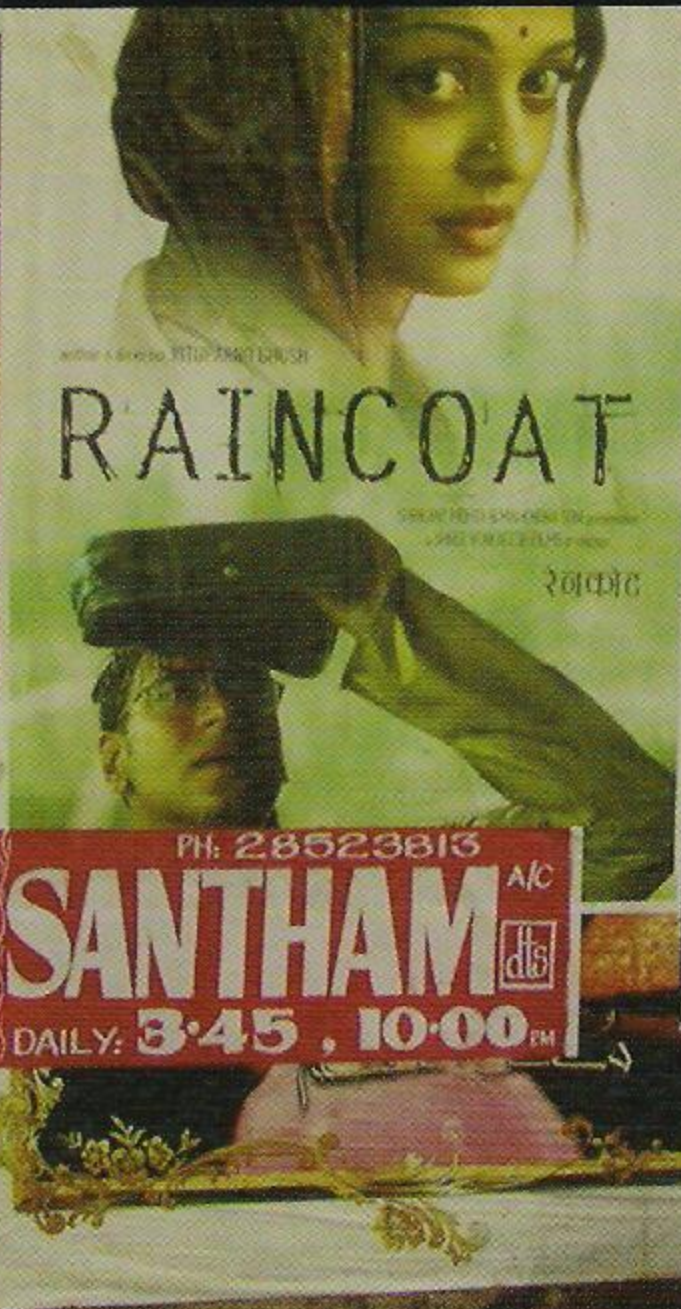


# GLOBAL

*Edited by Mark Slobin*

# SOUNDTRACKS

## WORLDS OF FILM MUSIC



ABDALLA UBA ADAMU

# *The Influence of Hindi Film Music on Hausa Videofilm Soundtrack Music*



## *Introduction*

This chapter analyzes the emergence of Hausa film music in terms of both its technology and its sociology. It pays homage to the structural characteristics of Hausa traditional music in order to provide a template for understanding how radically different the Hausa videofilm soundtrack is from the Hausa entertainment mindset. The chapter hopes to provide insights into the emergence of altered Hausa entertainment identities, which was caused by media influences, as distinct from traditional entertainment.

As Blakely (2001) points out, academic responses to various facets of global entertainment have changed drastically over the last forty years, reflecting for the most part huge changes in technology, media infrastructure, and entertainment content. This naturally led to the development of theories of imitation—with the view that availability of new communication technologies would enable developing countries to imitate the West in a process of modernization.

Additionally, Curran (2000) argues that two contrasting attitudes toward globalization can be found. The first is expressed by cultural theorists who welcome globalization as a means for reinforcing 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 agree upon a certain degree of weakness in adopting systems as a result of the transnational flow of influences. What needs to be determined is the extent to which the recipient systems are transformed.

Indeed Media and Cultural Studies' theories of globalization tend to focus attention on the role of mass media in the society (e.g., Beck,

Sznaider, and Rainer 2003, Appadurai 1996), how they are communicated and preserved in transnational context. Another focus is on how people appropriate media, and which identities they create with the newly transformed media (see particularly Sreberny-Mohammadi 1996, Schiller 1976, and Boyd-Barrett 1977).

Thus as Patterson (1994) argues, industrialization and modernization both entail the spread of common sets of behaviors and attitudes within the context of economic change. However, the globalization of culture also takes place independent of whatever economic changes are occurring in a particular region or society. Traditionally, the transmission of culture across societies was facilitated by two main media: migration and literacy. People learned about other cultures either through traveling themselves or from travelers, or by reading about other cultures and adopting or adapting what they learned. These traditional media could be effective in the transmission of cultures across the globe, under certain circumstances.

An additional source of learning is media bombardment, which, in the case of northern Nigeria, created spaces for the continuous broadcast of foreign media cultures, especially from India—introduced by local Lebanese merchants—in the form of Hindi films. This deluge often comes in the way of cross-border free flow of packaged media products that enable communities to absorb (but not export) media re-enactment of popular cultural forms of other societies. In this way, Hindi film-music culture found its way into Hausa popular-musical culture and eventually supplanted it.

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 working class. Music, in all its forms, belong to this class.

Hausa society, being structured on specific occupational hierarchies, often considers music a low-art commercial form. Musical appreciation, however, can 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 the Hausa concept of a 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 taken up almost immediately by "low-brow" 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), who popularized not just the soundtracks, but also the adaptive process they introduced.

However, the most pervasive influence of Hindi film soundtrack on the Hausa musical genre was the emergence of Hausa videofilms from 1990 on. These are video dramas shot with a VHS camera (although filmmakers are increasingly using digital camcorders) to record a three-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 percent of the Hausa video dramas are appropriated directly from Hindi films in one form or another, including the music soundtrack, which is Hausanized.

### *The Genre of Hausa Music*

The Hausa are a predominantly Muslim group in northern Nigeria and form the largest ethnic group in the country. The Hausa language itself is spread widely from northern Nigeria to the 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 1320, the Hausa have acquired a considerable Arabic vocabulary in their language, such that at least one-fifth of Hausa words, from 1750 to 1960, are directly Arabic in origin (Abubakar 1972). Despite this linguistic affinity, however, Arab popular culture, in the form of classical or contemporary music, theater, and literature has never had wide appeal among the Muslim Hausa. Consequently, Arab sources generally were not seen as a basis for inspirational adaptation for Hausa popular culture. An exception to this was the adaptation of various Middle Eastern folklore into the Hausa language under the tutelage of the British colonial authorities in the early 1930s, which saw the emergence of what has remained the most quintessential Hausa literary reference point, *Magana Jari Ce*, published in 1938. This was actually the beginning of a process that saw Hausa literati preference for Arab and Middle Eastern entertainment templates over "African," a preference strongly encouraged by the British colonial administration.<sup>1</sup>

According to Michael 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 status level is the client-focused nature of Hausa music. With its main preoccupation of appeasing specific clients, it thus becomes a non-art form—art for art’s sake—but tailored toward a specific paying client. A song composed for one client, for instance, will not be performed for another client. What further entrenches the lower status of musicians is the *maroki* (praise-singer) status of most Hausa traditional musicians—praising their clients for money or other material goods. A mean client gets the short end of the musician’s stick, often with sarcastic barbs thrown in for good measure. Naturally, a very generous patron gets the full-blown poetic powers of the musician.<sup>2</sup>

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.

Thus, about three distinct structures typify Hausa music. In the first instance, even if it has no specific instruments, but relies 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, as 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 that segregates the sexes. 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, even in a duet form. This is essentially because the female voice in Islam has a diminished aural presence, especially in a mixed gender setting.

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*, or *kukuma* (fiddles) leading the orchestra, or as in the case of *koroso* music, a combination of flute, drums, and *lalaje*—calabash discs pierced by 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 genres, is often a solo instrument used on its own, or accompanied by voice. *Sarewa* often was used in TV drama-series soundtracks. However, all this changed with the appearance on the popular culture scene of Hausa videofilms.

### *The Genre of Hausa Videofilm*

The main cinematic interest of the Muslim Hausa of northern Nigeria before the advent of home video was the Hindi cinema that was brought to northern Nigeria by Lebanese distributors after independence from Britain in 1960. From 1937, when the first cinema was opened in Kano, to 1960, film distribution was controlled exclusively 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 (that is, Muslim Hausa) might be interested in the new entertainment medium, and as such special days were kept aside for the Hausa audience in the three theaters then available. The British, however, were not keen to see 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, no attempt was made to develop any local film industry, or even to provide African-themed entertainment for the locals (Adamu 2004).

After the 1960s, there were a few attempts to show cinema from the Arab world, as well as Pakistan, due to what the distributors believed to be a common religious culture between the peoples of the Middle East and Muslim northern Nigeria.<sup>3</sup> However, these were not popular with the Hausa audience, since they were not religious dramas, but reflected the culture of the Arabs. And although the Hausa share quite a lot with the Arabs (especially in terms of dress, food, and language—see Adamu 1968, 1998; Abubakar 1972), nevertheless they had different entertainment mindsets, so these Arab films did not go down well.

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

However, the biggest boom for Hindi cinema in Northern Nigeria came in the 1970s, when state television houses began operating and became the outlet for readily available Hindi films on videotapes targeted at home viewers. The NTA Kano alone screened 1,176 Hindi films on its television network from October 2, 1977, when the first Hindi film (*Aan Bann*) was shown, to June 6, 2003.<sup>4</sup> At the time that Hindi film appeared in Hausa television houses, young schoolboys and girls aged seven and under became avid watchers of the films and gradually absorbed templates of behavior from screen heroes who they thought shared similar patterns of behavior as themselves.

The entire commercial Hausa videofilm industry started in Kano, in northern Nigeria, in 1990 with a videofilm titled *Turmin Danya*, a traditional boy-meets-girl drama. By 2004, the industry had grown and spawned more than 1,500 videofilms, with most production and distribution facilities located in Kano, an ancient Islamic and commercial entrepot in the north of Nigeria, whose videofilm industry came to be referred to as *Kanywood*.<sup>5</sup> This is to distinguish it from *Nollywood*, the Nigerian videofilm industry, dominated by Christian southern Nigerian filmmakers. Besides religion, the two “woods” differ radically to the extent that they are mutually exclusive culturally and aesthetically, and could conveniently be thought of as representing two totally different countries. The main focus of Nigerian Nollywood films is on tribal rituals, political corruption in the polity, Christianity, social problems such as armed robbery, and political issues such as resource control.<sup>6</sup>

### *Basic Characteristics of the Hausa Videofilm*

Over the last sixteen years (1990–2006), Hausa videofilms evolved three main characteristics, all borrowed heavily from and inspired by Hindi cinema.<sup>7</sup>

The first motif in Hausa videofilm is *auren dole*, or forced marriage. In these scenarios—reflecting outdated customs in a contemporary society, but nevertheless providing a tapestry for a good story—a girl (or in a few of the films, a boy) is forced to marry a partner other than her choice.

The second characteristic of Hausa videofilms is the love triangle, with or without the forced marriage motif. It is inevitable that a narrative conflict indicating rivalry between two suitors (whether two boys after the same girl, or two girls after the same boy) be created in which antagonists are given the opportunity to wax lyrical about their undying love for each other and the extent they are willing to go to cross the Rubicon—whether cultural (parental, religious), economic (rich-poor divide), political (parents belonging to different political ideologies), or even geographical (separated by different countries) that separates their love.

Thus the third characteristic of the Hausa videofilm is the song-and-dance routine—again echoing Hindi cinema style—which is buried within the matrix of the love triangle. The fierce rivalry between suitors is best expressed through long song-and-dance routines, which indeed often tell the story more completely than the dialogue. These are used to embellish the story and provide what the filmmakers insist is “entertainment.” This entertainment is also a marketing strategy aimed at capturing an audience and masking weak storylines in a creative process that sees repetitions of the same narrative in almost all the films. Indeed, in some of the videofilms, the songs themselves become subplots of the main story in which poetic barbs are thrown at each other by the antagonists.

The song-and-dance sequences do not necessarily have a cohesive relationship to the storylines, as they often are pasted directly on the story and not tied to the narrative. This does not bother either the producers or the audience; what matters is the lyrical power of the song, its tunes, and the costumes the singers (especially the girls) wear. Further, in Hausa videos, as in Hindi films, songs are

part of an elaborate system of allusions to, rather than explicit portrayals of, sexuality and physical intimacy in Hindi films as filmmakers navigate the perceived moral conservatism of their audiences, as well as the representational boundaries set by the Indian state through its censorship codes. Songs are the primary vehicles for representing fantasy, desire, and passion, so any form of sexual activity in a Hollywood film would most likely be transformed into a song sequence in Hindi film. (Ganti 2002: 294)

Indeed, the most commercially successful Hausa videofilms of all time (*Sangaya*, *Taskar Rayuwa*, *Salsala*, *Kansakali*, *Ibro Awilo*, *Mujadala*) succeeded precisely because of their song-and-dance routines, rather than because of the strength of their storylines or their messages.

The predominance of song-and-dance routines in Hausa videofilms is shown in Figure 1, which indicates the numbers of officially registered Hausa videofilms from 1997 to 2001 with song-and-dance routines as a



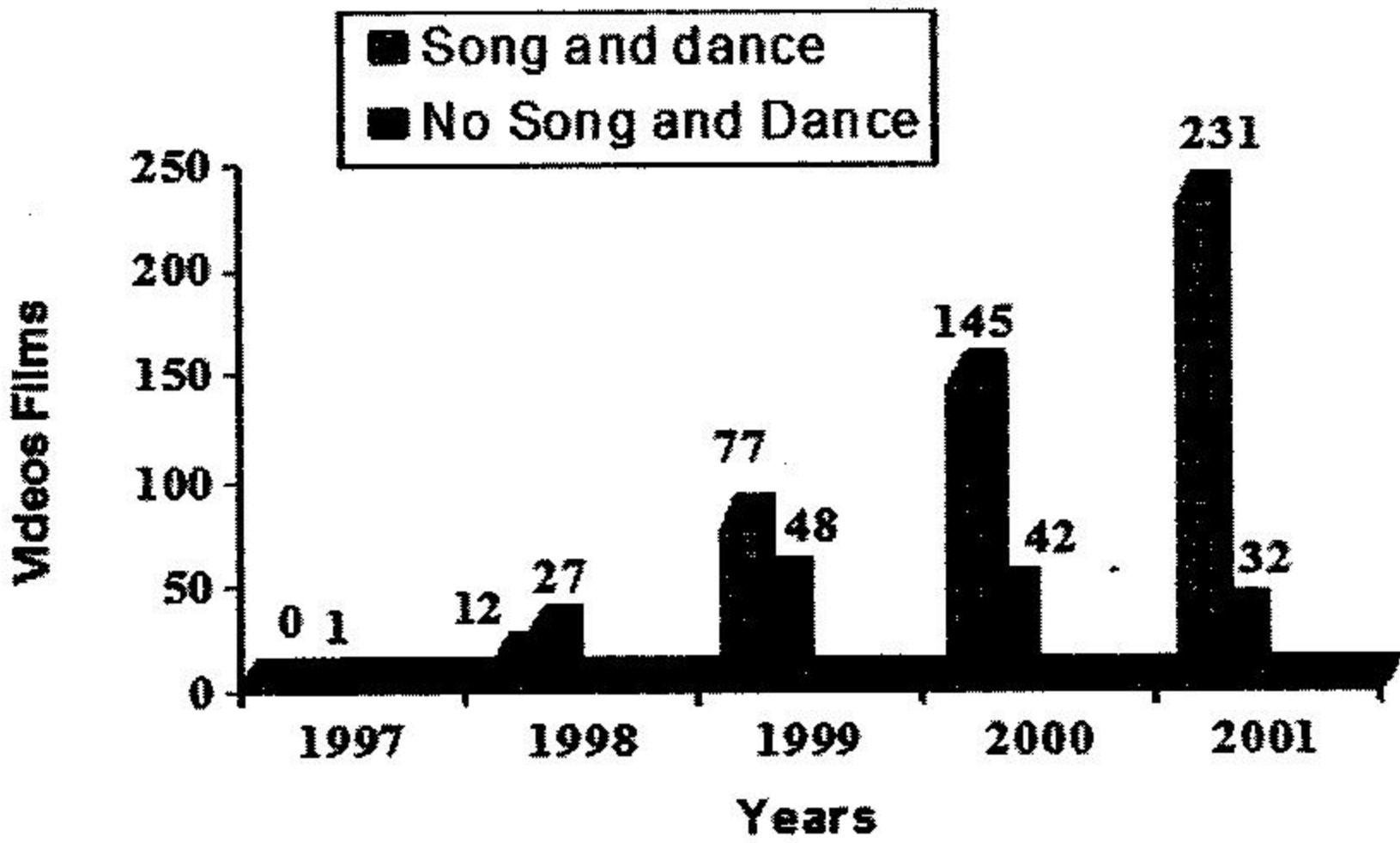


Figure 1: Song and dance occurrences in Hausa videofilms.

main element. There was a general decline in the number of videos without song and dance. The figures rose from 1998 (27) to 1999, but peaked at 48 in 1999, and declined to 42 in 2000, before going down further to 32 in 2001. The number of video titles with song-and-dance routines, however, showed ascendancy right from the beginning, with 12 titles in 1998 moving to 77 in 1999, 145 in 2000, and 231 in 2001 (figures provided by NFVCB 2002, 2003).

Overriding these structural elements, a typical Hausa videofilm also directly appropriates Hindi film in style (as in above characteristics) or in text, which is translated. The reasons for doing this, as Brian Larkin observes, is that

Hausa fans of Indian movies argue that Indian culture is “just like” Hausa culture. Instead of focusing on the differences between the two societies, when they watch Indian movies what they see are similarities, especially when compared with American or English movies. Men in Hindi films, for instance, are often dressed in long kaftans, similar to the Hausa *doguwar riga*, over which they wear long waistcoats, much like the Hausa *falmaran*. The wearing of turbans; the presence of animals in markets; porters carrying large bundles on their heads, chewing sugar cane; youths riding Bajaj motor scooters; wedding celebrations and so on: in these and a thousand other ways the visual subjects of Indian movies reflect back to Hausa viewers aspects of everyday life. (Larkin 1997b; see also Larkin 1997a)

As a result of this perceived similarity, the most commercially successful Hausa filmmakers prefer simply to convert a Hindi film into Hausa, or to borrow elements from various Hindi films, rather than go to the trouble

of acquiring or completely writing a script. The route followed in this conversion differs remarkably from that followed by creative remakes of other films by producers in other film settings. As Leonardo Quaresima points out:

In the case of the remake, we might adopt the definition that Umberto Eco proposes in his “Tipologia della Ripetizione” whereby the remake is seen as a variant of the tracing “to reformulate a popular story without the consumer being made aware of it.” The tracing, together with the revival, the series, the saga and the phenomena around dialogism, make up a part of the system of seriality. The remake, in this view, is seen as an “explicit and declared tracing.” (Quaresima 2002:76–77)

A typical film remake often pays homage to the creative qualities of the original, and indeed can be seen as an artistic commentary on the original. However, this is different for Hausa videofilms. As explained by Abubakar “Baballe” Hayatu, the main script writer for FKD Studios based in Kano in an interview with *Fim* in November 2002:

if you notice, our culture (Muslim Hausa) is similar to Indian culture, the difference being in fashion and make-up only. I am not the only one who watches the Indian films (during screenplay adaptation). We used to watch the films with Ali Nuhu and note the things we should change such that a typical Hausa person can relate to it as his culture, rather than shunning it. Thus we adapt what we can to suit our culture and religion. If any scene is neutral on these two issues, we leave it as it is. (Hayatu 2000:47)

Thus Hausa videofilm remakes deliberately set out to draw attention to the original and indeed were passed as more socially acceptable versions of the originals that might contain elements inimical to the religious and social culture of the Muslim Hausa. They were thus substitutes, rather than remakes. This is further evidenced by the fact that in some cases female artistes with faint resemblance to Indian actresses, in appearance as well as in costume are preferred in commercial Hausa videofilms.

Even poster artwork is often designed to replicate the Hindi film being appropriated, as shown in Figure 2. The producers’ argument for the appropriation was that even if they do create a story, it is likely to have a Hindi cinema motif, so it is easier simply to copy a popular Hindi film directly into Hausa. As further advanced by a leading proponent of this practice, Ali Nuhu, the Hausa videofilm megastar (nicknamed Shah Ruh Khan since high school days in the 1980s):

people are accusing our company, FKD, of solely relying on copying Hindi films, and not being original. This is rubbish! We did many original films, but they were not commercially successful. For instance, *Kudira* and *Sabani* were all original stories, yet they were not as commercially successful as *Mujadala*, *So* and *Zubaida* (which were all based on Hindi films) . . . We are sticking to our methods and will continue copying Hindi films into Hausa!” (Nuhu 2003:24)

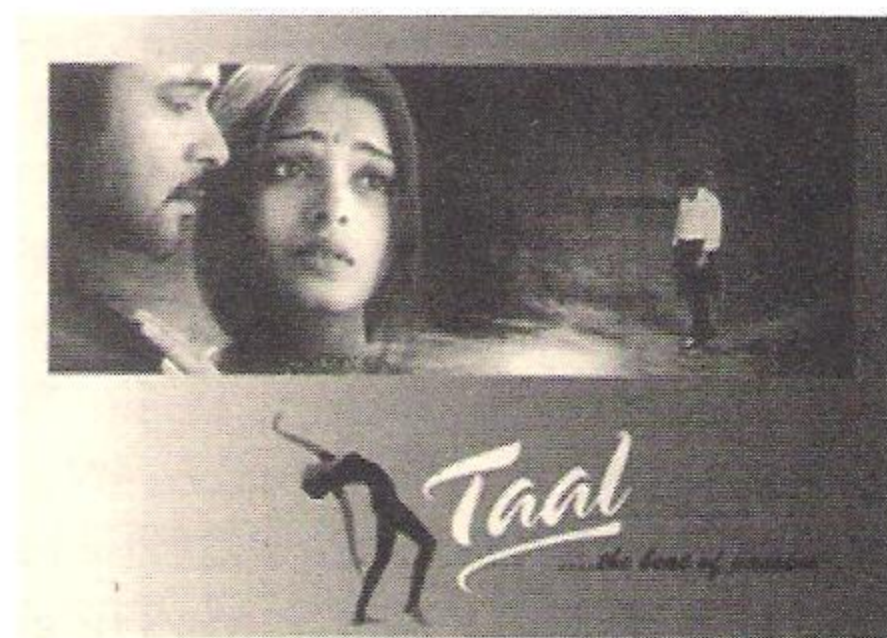
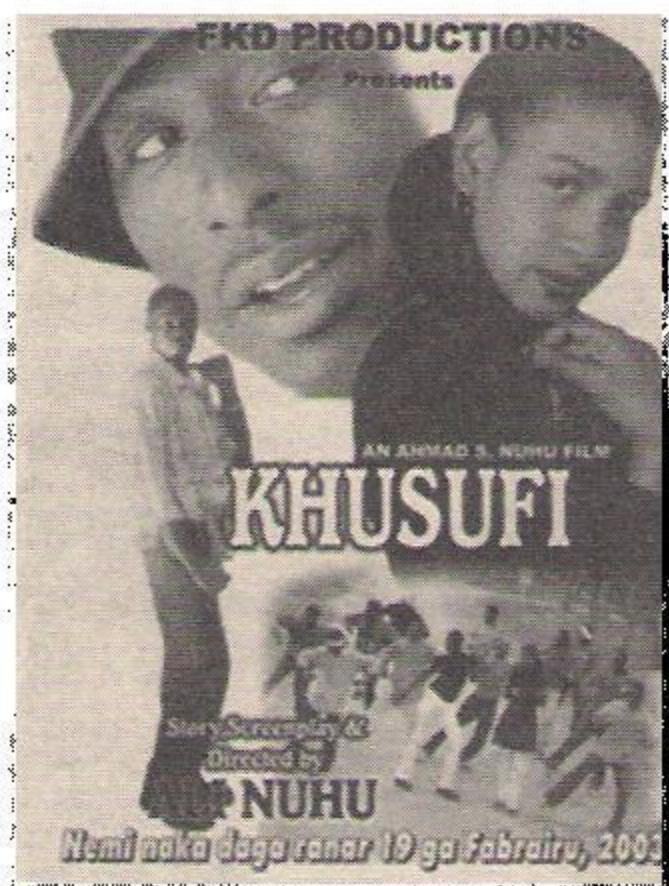


Figure 2: Hindi-to-Hausa videofilms: Khusufi as Taal.

The first Hausa videofilm to copy a Hindi film was *Akasi* (2000), based on the Hindi film *Sanam Bewafa* (1991). When the Hindi film *Dillagi* was released in 1999, it immediately was appropriated and converted into one of the most appealing Hausa videofilms, *Mujadala*, in 2000 and this conferred commercial legitimacy on the Hindi film-conversion strategy among the more commercially oriented Hausa filmmakers. It was at this point that the Indian cinema influence came to the fore in full force and the new crop of Hausa videofilm producers introduced *Bollywoodanci*—appropriating Hindi films into Hausa—as a creative norm among the vast majority of Hausa videofilms film producers from 2000 to 2004.

### *Screen to Street: Hausa Adaptations of Popular Hindi Film Music*

As indicated earlier, Hindi films became popular simply because of what urbanized young Muslim Hausa saw as cultural similarities between Hausa social behavior and mores (e.g., coyness, forced marriage, gender stratification, obedience to parents and authority) 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 that 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 and the song-and-dance routines, which do not have ready equivalents in the Hausa traditional entertainment ethos. Soon enough, moviegoers 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 Hausa prose for the “gibberish” Hindi words. Four of the most popular Hindi films in northern Nigeria in the 1960s that provided the model 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).

The second leap from screen to street was mediated by popular folk musicians in the late 1960s and early 1970s, led by Abdu Yaron Goge, a resident *goge* (fiddle) player in Jos. 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*) as indicated in his Hausa adaptation of “Raati Suhani” from the film *Rani Rupmati*.

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.

### *Transition from Big Screen to Small Screen: The Hausa Videofilm Soundtrack*

The first Hausa videofilms 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 was itself embedded in the music, for instance during the ceremonies that seem to feature in every drama film. The Hausa videofilm to pioneer a change over to electronic music (in the sense of Yamaha keyboard melodies) was *In Da So Da Kauna* in 1994. The video was an adaptation of 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 was featured in the film when it was shown throughout cinema houses in northern Nigeria, as was the practice then.

However, when the video was screened at the Dawud Cinema in Maiduguri, Borno State, it was pirated, and soon enough a bootleg of the tape was making the rounds in various markets in northern Nigeria. Ado

Ahmed Gidan Dabino, the producer (and also director) was upset, but since there was little he could do, he decided to release his own official version of the home video in 1995, and also decided to include deleted scenes and other changes, as well as compose a different soundtrack, in order to make the second version as different from the bootleg version as possible. It was in the process of seeking a new sound for the home video that he came across Nasir Usman Ishaq Gwale, an artist with a residency at the Kano State History and Culture Bureau.

Nasir earlier had been given a toy, but fairly functional, Casio keyboard in 1985—when he was still in high school—by his brother, Bello Usman Ishaq, a resident graphic artist with the HCB. In the same year, an African-American researcher, Richard Donald Smith, a flutist and then a lecturer at the United Nations International School in New York, visited the HCB and was captivated by the enthusiasm with which Nasir used his Casio keyboard. The following year, in 1986, he brought a gift of a Casiotone MT-140 to the bureau.

Nasir immediately started playing around with it and soon enough perfected it to further enrich his informal musical repertoire. When Nasir finished high school in 1986, he honed his skills in music by forming a smallish ensemble that revolved around the Casio organ, providing an alternative form of “modern” (as opposed to traditional) entertainment for youth in and around the Kano metropolis, mainly at functions, ceremonies, and other social events. In 1988, he was employed as a resident artist at the HCB’s Performing Arts division and became resident musician and artist for the HCB. He attracted other young members of the HCB, such as Alee Baba Yakasai, Shu’aibu “Lilisco” Idris (a former champion disco dancer), and Muktar Kwanzuma.

The HCB also played host to other ensembles, particularly one formed by a school teacher who was trained in Sudan and formed a band based on Sudanese music styles, with a strong emphasis on the accordion. One of their greatest hits was *Halimatu Sadiya*—an ode to a girl of the same name—which in the late 1980s changed the pattern of popular entertainment in Kano and made it clear that the future lay with organs and synthesizers, rather than traditional Hausa instruments, especially among the youth. All these contributed to enrich Nasir’s musical set pieces. Under the tutelage of his teacher at the Bureau, Musa Ahmed, and with help from his friends Muktar Kwanzuma and Shu’aibu “Lilisco” Idris, also of the performing arts division, a more or less official ensemble was formed by 1993.

By the time Ado Ahmad Gidan Dabino was looking for a new sound to accompany the video release of *In Da So Da Kauna*, Nasir Usman Ishaq Gwale had become a sought-after keyboardist. He was commissioned to

compose the soundtrack. It was this soundtrack that was used in the “official” video release of *In Da So Da Kauna* in 1995. It was the first Hausa videofilm with a modern music soundtrack. Clearly seeing the future in keyboard music, Hamisu Lamido Iyan-Tama, an entrepreneur who was to become an actor and producer, decided to invest in a music studio, and in 1996 a music and videofilm studio, Iyan-Tama Multimedia, was formed in Kano. Its first purchase was the Yamaha soft synthesizer series, starting with a PSR-220. The studio then employed Nasir as a consultant resident musician in the studio.

The Yamaha PSR-220 provided an instant appeal to a Hausa musician seeking ways to explore combinations of sounds without being hampered by the inability to play real traditional Hausa music 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 gave Hausa videofilm composers the opportunity to approximate the creative space of Hindi film music, which they copied avidly. This was made possible because Yamaha took actual instruments and digitally recorded them, 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 ninety-nine voices to choose from (plus a drum kit).

In the same year, 1996, Dan Azumi Baba, a novelist and also a *bandiri* musician and singer, wrote a love song for two girls. The song was called *Badakala*. Dan Azumi Baba said he was inspired not by Hindi films (to which he admitted being an avid fan), but by Middle Eastern folklore heroes such as Antar who, it seemed, also sang love serenades. In an innovative move, he decided to create a soundtrack for the song “Badakala” with handclaps, hands beating a wooden bench, and eventually empty plastic storage jars (“jerrycans”). When he heard Ado Ahmad Gidan Dabino’s modernized soundtrack for *In Da So Da Kauna*, he immediately got the musician, Nasir, to set music to the words of “Badakala.” The resultant audiotape was meant to be sold in the markets as an independent new music production, and it signaled the emergence of a new youth Hausa pop music (as contrasted to the traditional “classical” music). The tape, however, was rejected by marketers in Kano. The main reasons were two. First, it contained *kidan fiyano* (or piano music), an instrument associated with the church in northern Nigeria, and therefore avoided by Muslims. Secondly, Allah was mentioned in the lyrics to the song. To the marketers, this was akin to blasphemy—to utter the name of the creator with piano music! Afraid of the possible backlash from society, which could even lead to a full-scale religious riot, they rejected the tape. In the Hausa society of

northern Nigeria in the 1980s to 1990s, even the use of widespread *bandiri* in religious poetry by Sufi adherents, especially the Qadiriyyah, was frowned upon and often considered controversial, with opposing camps of Muslim scholars constantly debating the issue. A “piano” sound in an almost-religious context simply muddled the issue further. This was because the sound of the piano is normally associated with Christian religious music in Muslim northern Nigeria. Combining what seemed to be a Christian sound with Islamic lyrics was perceived by the marketers as asking for trouble. In order to cut his losses, the producer of “Badakala” took the further innovative and historic move of converting the song into a screenplay for a videofilm of the same name. It marked the first time a song formed the basis of a videofilm and was to become a common pattern by 2004.

By 2004, the main selling points for Hausa videofilms were the songs, not the storylines. While the song-and-dance routines are separate elements—and often not even related to the narrative—nevertheless they constitute what the Hausa videofilmakers consider a “film soundtrack.” This is recorded separately on compact cassette tapes and CDs and sold alongside the videotape releases. The music between the scenes—in effect, the actual soundtrack—is relegated to the background, often in the form of a single tune repeated throughout the film (such as in *Awarwaro*).

The Hausa videofilm had metamorphosed into a musical film, with song taking the most prominent position throughout. A videofilm without song-and-dance sequences may sell, depending on the reputation of the stars and the director, but one with production numbers sells more. The more sexually suggestive the dances performed, especially by the girls, the higher the sales potential of the videofilm (examples include *Numfashi*, *Bakar Ashana*, *Rukuni*, and *Guda*). In a sense, the videofilmakers use the medium to fantasize the sexuality of essentially urban Hausa youth closeted by the values of a traditional society that enforces the segregation of sexes due to adherence to Islamic social values.

The expectation of the entertainment value of the song and dance over the storyline is reflected in, for instance, the trailer for *Buki Buduri* (2004), which generated a lot of audience excitement and anticipation precisely because of a routine featuring old Hausa actresses seriously getting down during a wedding ceremony party. However, that particular sequence was cut off by the Kano State Censorship Board for the commercially available tape. This created a lot of angry feedback to the producer from clients who bought the tape expecting to see the dance sequence. Reactions included returning the tape to the shops and phone calls to the producer to curse him for “cheating.” Word-of-mouth criticism of the film brought down sales dramatically.

Similarly, *Bakar Ashana* (2004) generated a lot of controversy and anticipation over a song-and-dance sequence performed by a troupe composed of normal actresses and female commercial sex workers drafted specifically for the scene. The producer, learning from the lessons of *Buki Buduri*, took the bold step of refusing to submit the video for censorship in Kano, after it had been censored by the National Film and Video Censors Board in Abuja. The videofilm was a massive underground cult hit, at the same time drawing sharp criticism over the lewd dance scenes (which, if anything, boosted sales). The Kano State Censorship Board banned the tape, seized all copies from the shops, and ordered the arrest of the producer. Although convicted and ordered to pay a fine of N20,000 (about \$143), he was happy because he sold at least 20,000 copies of the tape at N40 (29 cents) to the dealers (who sell it at N250 to buyers), earning him about N800,000 (\$5,417) plus CD rights, which he sold for additional N300,000 (\$2,142). The total of over one million naira in sales was an enormous amount in just two weeks of the film's release before it was banned.<sup>8</sup>

### *The Process of Composing a Hausa Videofilm Soundtrack*

The process of composing a song-and-dance routine for a Hausa videofilm, which is considered the "soundtrack" by the videofilm industry, includes two stages. In the first stage, an independent lyricist composes a song (or series of songs) and takes it to a studio session musician. The latter would ask the lyricist to sing the words. From the style of the singing, the musician constructs an accompanying melody, usually using a Yamaha PSR synthesizer.<sup>9</sup> Music scores are not written; every note is picked up from a database of stored musical samples of many different instruments. The lyricist often has no specific input into the type of music to be composed, leaving all such creative decisions to the studio session keyboardist.

The second stage involves taking the finished product to a producer who then incorporates it at any stage in a film. There does not have to be any link between the videofilm and the particular song. Indeed, the titles of some of the films are based on the fact that a song has been created first with that title (e.g., *Rukuni*, *Guguwa*).

A frequent source of inspiration for the composition of the lyrics is most commonly a Hindi film source, but increasingly, other sources are used, such as African-American rap music, as in *Kallabi*, which adapts various rap songs. Whatever the creative source of the song, it *must* be a duet, with a boy/man and a girl/woman singing, either to each other, or accompanied by a chorus, and all dressed in pretty costumes that, for the girls,



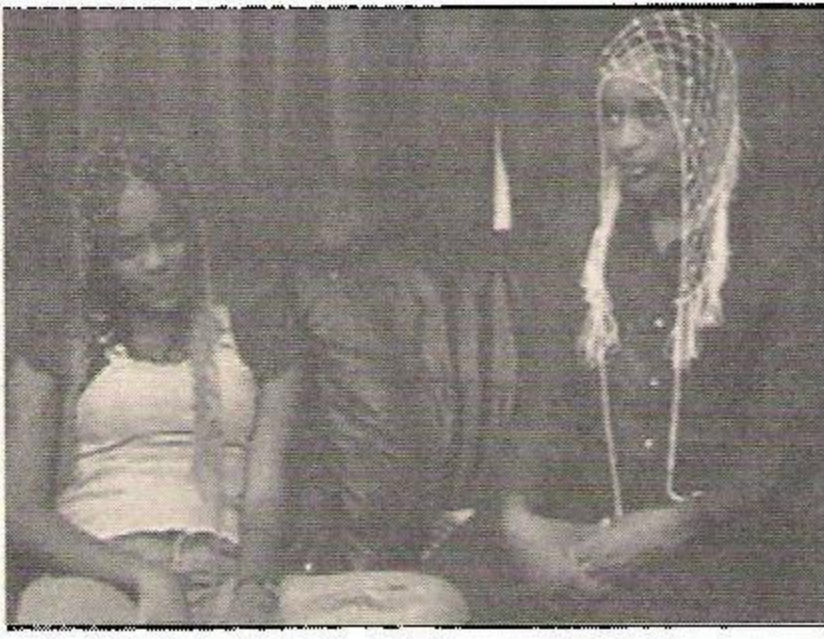


Figure 3: Hausanized and Globalized Hausa female videofilm stars: *Gidauniya* (2004) [left] and *Yari* (2004).

must reveal their shapes. Examples include *Gidauniya* and *Yari*, as stills from the two videofilms show in Figure 3.

The singing and dancing is done not only by teens (as in *Mujadala*, *Rawani*, and *Awarwaro*), but also by married couples (such as in *Dami A Kala*, *Nagari*, *Hakuri*, *Makamashi*, *Guda*, and *Dabi'a*) to appeal to a mature audience, although such people, for the most part, consider singing and dance among adults ridiculous.

Noticing the demand for soundtrack music for Hausa videofilms, many studio session musicians started developing a repertoire of songs that they have set to catchy music and marketing them to executive producers. If a deal is struck, the song is used in a film, whether or not its words are related to the theme of the film. Its main selling point is not the meanings of the words, but the resonance between the lyrics and the music. A very important element in this process is the close imitation of the usually soprano voices of Hindi film soundtrack female playback singers by their Hausa equivalents. Since the idea is to imitate Hindi cinema as much as possible, the male playback singers also attempt to adopt the voice patterns of popular Hindi film.

Nollywood videofilms (from southern Nigeria) also use synthesizers and computer programs to generate soundtrack music; however, they are remarkable in the professionalism of their soundtracks. Music generally has been accepted as an art form in Christian southern Nigeria, and over the years, world-class musicians such as Victor Uwaifo, King Sunny Ade, Lagbaja, and the late Afrobeat founder Fela Anikulapo-Kuti indicate the excellence and quality of what conveniently can be termed “Nigerian” music, despite representing an extremely tiny proportion of the country’s musical heritage. Southern Nigerian film makers have a seriously professional musical pool to draw from, and this is reflected in the quality of the soundtracks of films such as *The World Is Mine*, *Love Boat*, *Evas River*, *Real Love*,

*Missing Angel, My Love, and Christ in Me.* Further, the use of the Fruity Loops software program ensures the professionalization of Nollywood soundtrack music and enhances its international appeal.

The flexibility given by the PSR-220 synthesizer thus enabled Hausa studio session musicians to create complex scores that would not have been possible with Hausa traditional orchestras. Significantly, the PSR-220 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 such as *bandiri* (tambourine), *sarewa* (flute), *ganga* (drum), *goge* (fiddle), and others. It is interesting to note that the actual purpose of the synthesizer—to generate artificial sounds—is not utilized fully in the Hausa soundtrack music. Synthesized music often is limited to small sketches that are used to provide aural accompaniment between scenes, or during actual scenes, which often makes it difficult to hear the actors' voices (e.g. in *Aliyu*). Hausa videofilm soundtrack musicians focus their creative energy on using the synthesizer's digital samples to imitate real-life instruments since they cannot play these instruments.

Another turning point for the Hausa videofilm soundtrack came in 1999, when Iyan-Tama studios bought a Yamaha PSR-730 keyboard. With a vastly expanded range of country, jazz, dance, Latin, rock, soul, and waltz sounds, the PSR-730 opened the doors to revolutionizing Hausa videofilm music. The first playback song to benefit from its superior range of sound samples was *Sangaya*, from a video of the same title. The song was composed in October 1999 and attached to a trailer of the videofilm, which was released in 2000. Trailers of the home video, with the lead song, "Sangaya," being performed in the background—complete with choreography—immediately captured the imagination of the 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 videofilms, and it became one of the most successful Hausa films of all time.<sup>10</sup> Four years after its release, it still remained the definitive reference point for the emergence of Hausa videofilm music. The synthesizer business in Kano blossomed. Iyan-Tama Multimedia studios purchased an even higher level Yamaha, a 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 a Yamaha PSR-2100, also use Cakewalk Pro music software to compose Hausa videofilm soundtrack music.

The availability of these modern studios opened up a whole new range of services for individuals interested in music—not just videofilm producers. Islamiyya school pupils, who hitherto had remained in vocal groups, joined in the act, and started using the Yamaha sound for their recordings, which are sold in the markets, generating a modest revenue. 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 videofilm soundtracks. Soundtracks from popular Hausa films such as *Sangaya*, *Wasila*, *Nagari*, and *Khusufi* were adapted by Islamiyya pupils, often with Arabic lyrics.

It is significant that in almost all Hausa videofilm soundtracks, the songs are duets, with a boy and a girl singing. Yet the “Islamized” versions use only one voice, either a male or a female voice. The Islamic etiquette of not allowing mixed-gender formations effectively prevents a reproduction of the Hindi film soundtrack format in the Islamized versions.

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 videofilms producers, 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, 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 many of the songs in the Hausa videofilms were original to the films, quite a sizeable number are direct copies of the Hindi film soundtracks, even if the Hausa main film is not based on a Hindi film. This, in effect, means that a Hausa videofilm can have two sources of Hindi film “creative inspiration”: a film for the storyline (and fight sequences), and songs from a different film. The song-and-dance routines in Hausa videofilms, by and large, are appropriated directly from the songs (although due to obvious acrobatic and choreographic limitations, not the dances) of major Hindi films.

Besides providing templates for storylines, Hindi films provide Hausa videofilmakers with similar models for the songs that they use in their videos. The technique often involves picking up the thematic elements of the main Hindi film song and then substituting Hausa lyrics. Consequently, anyone familiar with the Hindi film song element will easily discern the film from the Hausa equivalent. Although this process of adaptation is extremely successful because the 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? (Asarani 1999:10)

Interestingly, other musical sources, borrowed from a totally different source, often are used as templates. *Ibro Dan Indiya*, which had an adaptation of a song from *Mohabbat*, also appropriates "Ah Ndiya," a composition by Oumou Sangare, the Malian *wassolou* diva, which was redone as "Malama Dumbaru" in the Hausa videofilm.

### Conclusions

In this essay, I have looked at the structural transformation of Hausa videofilm soundtrack music, and in the process I have traced how such transformation leads to what I prefer to call "opportunistic transformation" of a music genre. As we have seen, the direct inspiration for Hausa videofilm soundtrack music is the Hindi film. Sound in Hausa videofilms differs remarkably from its classic use in film genres. Filmmakers have always understood the power that sound and music have to enhance storytelling. However, in the Hausa videofilms, the "soundtrack," as it were, is basically a song-and-dance sketch lasting anything from five to ten minutes in which an operetta is enacted, often in total contrast to the actual plot of the videofilm. Hausa videofilms also have what the producers refer to as "background music," but such incidental music rarely has any direct artistic connection to the actual film. The choice of the incidental music to be used as more or less background "muzak" is made randomly by the producer and tacked onto the film.

In Hausa popular culture, the most significant effect of media flow of influences—whether from the West or from the East—is the radical transformation of Hausa music. A push and pull factor is at play in the process. Hausa traditional music seemed to have outlived its client focus in a depressed economy where the patrons cannot afford the praise singing that kept the traditional musicians working. Further, quite a few of the musicians have declared that they do not wish their progeny to succeed them in the business. A typical example is this answer by Alhaji Sani Dan-Indo, a *kuntigi* musician who responded to the 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 (Hausa) 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-singing 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 a 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. (Dan-Indo 2001:48)

With the reluctance of the traditional musicians to pass on their skills to their own children, or even to open music "schools" to train others, and with the legendary ones dying (such as Mamman Shata, Haruna Oje, and Musa Dankwairo), the Hausa traditional musical genre has become wide open to influences that follow the path of least resistance.<sup>11</sup> Hindi film culture provided this roadmap, and the Yamaha soft synthesizer enabled younger Hausa "musicians" to follow that path to a transnational flow of influences. In effect, what the Hausa videofilm soundtrack musicians are doing is to fill the teen entertainment vacuum created by the departure of the traditional Hausa musicians. In so doing, they have altered radically the landscape of Hausa music and its status in the Hausa society, in addition to creating a specific unique Hausa videofilm soundtrack genre.

First, they have introduced the multi-instrumental mode to Hausa music. Besides the film soundtrack, the new technique is now used widely in radio jingles to advertise products and services. Advertisers became aware of the strong pull of soundtrack music and quickly adapted its structure to selling their products and services, constantly reinforcing the social relevance of the new form of music. It has become legitimized in the Hausa public sphere, in contrast to its position in 1996, when dealers refused to stock the tape of *Badakala* because it contained *kidan fiyano* (piano music). Even Hausa traditional musicians now often go to the studios (such as 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 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 gone over to Yamaha. Incidentally, Abdu Boda also became a filmmaker, producing *Tauraron Bisa Hanya*, *Nasir*, and *Sarauniya*, in which he composed his own soundtrack music (not using traditional drums but the Yamaha sound). He became the first traditional Hausa musician to cross over to the film soundtrack medium using the new technology. He was also the "star" in all three videofilms!

Perhaps surprisingly, one finds almost total acceptance of the Yamaha synthesizer sound by the *bandiri* musicians who use the instrument in Sufi religious poetry. Many, such as Rabi'u Usman Baba and Bashir Dandago, have abandoned the *bandiri* and have gone for the synthesized version in the Yamaha. The best-selling Muslim evangelical pop hit of 2004 in northern Nigeria was a poem composed for Fatima, the Prophet Muhammad's daughter, titled "Fadimatu." 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 a younger audience to religious poetry. Another appeal of the song is that it has a backing chorus of girls, answering the refrain in the standard female Hindi high-pitched voice.

Secondly, the new technology and its purveyors have created what I call "mixed-space" interfaces in Hausa music by providing templates for male and female interaction. Hausa music evolved as a single-sex, single-voice process. The Hindi film cinema created a dialogic state that overlaps male and female spaces, during which terms of endearment are intensified with a background symphony of sounds. Religious groups who 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 advertising music, which in almost every case is a reflection of the Hausa videofilm soundtrack.

Thirdly and finally, the Hausa film soundtrack genre has led to a redefinition of the musician, at least in the youth culture of Hausa society. The keyboardists and playback singers of the Hausa videofilm soundtrack genre have become megastars, attracting hordes of gawping young boys. By 2004 the image of the musician as a praise-singer has been altered by a new social reclassification made possible by the popularity of using the new media to express music, even in an artificially 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 videofilms. With MP3 players virtually glued to Snoop Dogg, Eminem, 50 Cents, Coldplay, and Beyoncé, the "international sound" of the Hausa film soundtrack thus finds a nice niche among this category of users. And with the traditionalist migrating to the synthesizer, a new voice for Hausa traditional music is certainly in the offing.

What is 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 reproduced easily by the Yamaha synthesizer. Since the Yamaha synthesizer became available to the Hausa video-film industry, only one Hausa film director, Shu'aibu "Lilisco" Idris, has experimented with creating a videofilm soundtrack using traditional instruments, abandoning the synthesizer. This was done in his 2004 videofilm, *Gamji*, which used *sarewa*, *duman girke*, *kuntigi*, *lalaje*, and *duma*. It was the first and only Hausa videofilm to be shown on an overseas cable channel (South Africa's M-Net).

As this narrative indicates, the very concept of global entertainment seems to be changing due to the increasing availability of the infrastructure of media technologies. In traditional societies such as northern Nigeria, opening up to media globalization often comes in the form of pirated American music and films from Asia, such that the audience in Kano often see American blockbusters even before they are shown in Europe. Internet access merely accelerates the process by providing download sites for pirated music and film in almost all cities of northern Nigeria. For youth in Kano and other cities of northern Nigeria, American rap artists and their often-pirated clothing merchandizing—50 Cent, Eminem, Jay Z, DMX, Kanye West, The Game, D12, and Snoop Dogg—are the standard musical fare. African artists, even those sharing the same cultural and often linguistic space as Muslim Hausa northern Nigerians, such as Ali Farka Toure, Yusuf N'Dour, Baaba Maal, Saadou Bori, Oumou Sangare, Pope Skinnie, Lakal Kaney, and Aichata Sidibe are barely known, although their music is available in the local markets.

Of greater significance, however, is the availability of NileSat and Arab-Sat cable facilities that see the continuous piping of Arab and Middle Eastern entertainers to the audience in northern Nigeria. These Arab alternatives were tolerated by the local hardcore religious establishment as preferable alternatives to the influences of American or American-inspired (for instance, southern Nigerian rap music) popular culture, particularly post-9/11, when the American political response to the terrorist incident created an image in northern Nigeria that anything American is evil. These cable companies are often cited as examples of barely acceptable entertainment within a religious setting, despite the explicit attempts by the Arab entertainers to clone as much of MTV and other American music ethos as possible, including dressing and the sexuality of body language.<sup>12</sup>

Arab pop musicians such as Khaled, Nancy, Ruby Arjam, Ragheb Alama, Hussain El Jasmi, and Jad Choueiri increasingly are providing alternative models for young Hausa listeners and soundtrack musicians, if only to sidetrack the constant criticisms of the religious establishment about the links between their art and "decadent" American music. What

needs to be addressed further is the issue of whether the end product can be exportable, that is, if it would have an appeal beyond its immediate audience. The media barrage suggests that this is merely a matter of time and market. It seems that the battle lines for “globalization” of the Hausa videofilm soundtrack have been drawn.

### Notes

1. For a historical development of the Middle Eastern antecedents to Hausa popular culture, especially literature, see Adamu 2003.
2. For detailed studies of Hausa *maroka* (griots), see Smith 1957; Besmer 1971; and Podstavsky 1992.
3. In Kano, the first “Indian” film screened was *Ghenghis Khan*, shown in the Palace cinema in Kano City in December 1960. It is interesting to note that the film was not “Indian,” but was seen as such. Before independence, films shown in northern Nigerian cinemas were American cowboy, war, and feature films.
4. Figures were obtained from the daily program listings of NTA Kano library, June 2003.
5. Data from National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), 2002, 2003.
6. For details of the Nigerian home video themes, see Owens-Ibie 1998 and Servant 2001.
7. Prior to the commercialization of Hausa videofilms, there were extremely popular television dramas. Indeed the home videofilm industry was initiated by television soap opera stars. For a detailed analysis of Hausa television dramas, see Bourgault 1995, 1996.
8. Information about *Bakar Ashana* obtained from an interview and discussions with the producer, Amin “Mugu” Bala, in Kano, February 2005.
9. The Yamaha series of soft synthesizers is the only range used by Hausa videofilm soundtrack musicians. To non-musicians in the Hausa society, the Yamaha is simply a “fiyano” (piano).
10. The Hausa videofilm tape was sold for N250 (\$1.80). *Sangaya* then sold for about \$107,914 (at N139 to USD in 2000). The sales figures were revealed by Alhaji Auwal Mohammed Sabo, the producer of the videofilm (Kano, July 2003).
11. The son of the late *kukuma* player, Garba Supa, picked up his father’s plectrum, as it were, and sustained his repertoire.
12. The appeal of Arab musicians to Muslim Hausa listeners is not based on religion—for many of the Arab entertainers are not even Muslim—but language. The Arabic language, being the language of the Qur’an, is held in high esteem, and many Hausa youth latch on to Arab popular music to learn the language. Interestingly, such educational functions of media and popular music are not extended to Western music, especially rap, whose English lyrics often are considered obscene (“batsa”) and therefore not “copyable” English for learning purposes.

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### *Filmography*

The Hausa videofilms referred to in this chapter can be obtained only in northern Nigeria. Even then, videofilms more than six months after release are assumed to have "expired" by the marketers (who do the distribution) and new releases often are recorded on the unsold tapes. The taped and often CD soundtrack music for the films, however, have longer shelf-lives. Further, Hausa videofilm producers do not have an international outlet for their videofilms, in contrast to southern Nigerian filmmakers, who have websites and outlets in major American and European cities.