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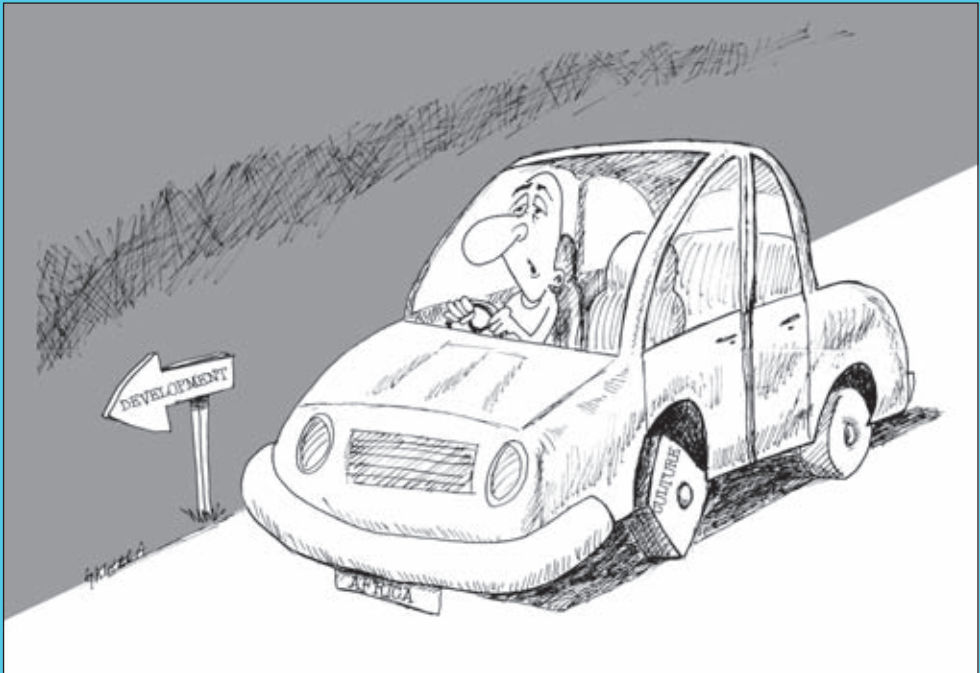
**INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN SEMINARS**

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*editors*

**KIMANI NJOGU AND JOHN MIDDLETON**

# **MEDIA AND IDENTITY IN AFRICA**



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## **MEDIA PARENTING AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEDIA IDENTITIES IN NORTHERN NIGERIAN MUSLIM HAUSA VIDEO FILMS**

In analyzing Muslim Hausa film viewing habits and the apparent preference for Hindi cinema, Brian Larkin (1997a) has coined the term 'parallel modernities' to refer to the coexistence in space and time of multiple economic, religious and cultural flows that are often subsumed within the term 'modernity'. He builds upon the concept of 'alternative modernities', introduced by Arjun Appadurai (1991). As he further argues:

This formulation resonates with the term 'alternative modernities' . . . but with a key difference. Appadurai links the emergence of alternative modernities with the increased deterritorialisation of the globe and the movement of people, capital and political movements across cultural and national boundaries. While deterritorialisation is important, the experience of parallel modernities is not necessarily linked with the needs of relocated populations for contact with their homelands . . . My concern, by contrast, is with an Indian film-watching Hausa populace who are not involved in nostalgic imaginings of a partly invented native land but who participate in the imagined realities of other cultures as part of their daily lives. (1997a: 407)

Concurrent modernities may also contribute to explaining the behaviour of Muslim Hausa video film producers in their use of Hindi film motifs in their video films. Neither the parallel nor the alternative conceptions of modernities, as applied to the cinematic development of young urban Hausa film makers, takes into consideration the violent intrusion of small media technologies that help to create media identities, as opposed to social identities that are divorced from the religious, political and economic transnational flows alluded to by both Larkin and Appadurai.

In Larkin's theoretical framework of parallel modernities, the concept was used to argue for the emergence of 'imagined realities' of the Other as part of the Observer's daily lives. It may be argued, however, that these imagined realities of the Other help in constructing media identity, left in the realm of fantasy, and not 'downloaded' to the realm of daily life, at least in the social setting of Hausa Muslim societies of northern Nigeria. With

extremely few exceptions, Hausa cinema is basically an adaptation of Hindi media reality. But whereas Hindi cinema reflects the cultural and moral spaces of the society depicted, the cloned media construct among the Hausa can be seen essentially as pure entertainment, and not a medium for supplanting an entrenched identity.

The rapidly changing pattern of transnational communication and the subsequent emergence of the new media and information revolution are often assumed to have a powerful impact on identities and cultures worldwide; but there is little agreement about how information flows actually interact with social processes, or even about methods for studying this interaction. Cultural and territorial boundaries have become much less coterminous, and new transnational identities are being created as a result of improved international travel and information technologies which no government can control. However, this does not mean the end for older identities which may also be strengthened by the opportunities provided by the communications revolution. It is within this context that the emergence of Muslim Hausa video films and their relation to Muslim Hausa cultural identity can profitably be analyzed.

#### MUSLIM HAUSA CULTURAL IDENTITY AND MEDIA DELUGE

Anthony H. M. Kirk-Greene (1973) has argued that the typical Muslim Hausa cultural mindset is characterized by about ten behavioural attributes. These include *amana* (strictly friendliness, but used to refer to trust), *karamci* (open-handed generosity), *hakuri* (patience), *hankali* (good sense), *mutunci* (self-esteem), *hikima* (wisdom), *adalci* (fairness), *gaskiya* (truthfulness), *kunya* (modesty, self-deprecation, humility, acknowledging others' opinion over one's own), and *ladabi* (respecting self and respecting others; also consideration for others, both older and younger).

In their 1982 study, Habib Alhassan, Usman Ibrahim Musa, and Rabi'u Muhammad Zarruk identified additional attributes, which included *zumunta* (community spirit), *rikon addini* (adhering to religious tenets and being guided by them with attributes such as truth), *dattako* (gentlemanliness), *kawaici* (tactfulness), *rashin tsegumi* (no idle talk), *kama sana'a* (engaging one in gainful employment), and *juriya da jarumta* (fortitude, courage and bravery). When Hausa drama evolved in the 1950s, these qualities became the main focus of the storylines, which also often reflected a bucolic or simplified urban lifestyle. These values became the standards which any new media attempting to re-mould Hausa society have to satisfy.

From 1937, when the first cinema was opened in Kano, to 1960, film distribution was exclusively controlled by a cabal of resident Lebanese merchants. These entrepreneurs sought to entertain the few British colonials

and other, essentially Christian, workers in northern Nigeria by showing principally American and British films. There was no attempt either to develop any local film industry, or even to provide African-themed entertainment for the local people. After the 1960s there were a few attempts to show films from the Arab world and Pakistan. These were not popular with the audiences, despite their Islamic themes. However, the experimental Hindi films shown from November 1960 (after Nigeria became independent in October of that year) proved massively popular, and the Lebanese thus found a perfect formula for entertaining Hausa audiences. Throughout the urban clusters of northern Nigeria – Kano, Jos, Kaduna, Bauchi, Azare, Maiduguri and Sokoto – Lebanese film distribution of Hindi films in principally Lebanese-controlled theatres ensured the massive parenting of the Hindi film genre and storylines, and most especially the song and dance routines, on urban Hausa audiences.

From the 1960s to the 1990s, Hindi cinema enjoyed significant exposure and patronage among Muslim Hausa youth. Thus, films such as *Raaste Ka Patthar* (1972), *Waqt* (1965), *Rani Rupmati* (1957), *Dost* (1974), *Nagin* (1976), *Hercules* (1964), *Jaal* (1952), *Sangeeta* (1950), *Charas* (1976), *Kranti* (1979), *Dharmatama* (1975), *Loafer* (1974), *Amar Deep* (1958), *Dharam Karam* (1975) and countless others became the staple entertainment diet of Hausa urban youth, and were equally popular in the cinemas. However, the biggest boom for Indian films in northern Nigeria was in the 1970s, when state television houses were opened and became the outlet for readily available Hindi films on video tapes targeted at home viewers. For instance, the national television house in Kano presented 1,176 Hindi films on its television network from 2 October 1977, when the first Hindi film (*Aan Bann*) was shown, to 6 June 2003. At the time that Hindi films began to appear on Hausa television, children aged four to six and their youngish mothers (who were in their twenties) became avid watchers of these films. By 2000 the children had grown up. Many became film makers, and they used their Hindi cinema impressionistic conditioning as the defining template for artistic visual media.

Although the media outlets – both in the government-owned television stations and popular markets – had a large dose of traditional entertainment content, the barrage of Indian films on television, and the almost daily broadcast of Hindi film soundtracks on the radio, overshadowed the indigenous content. On television, for instance, indigenous theatre was restricted to thirty-minute dramatic sketches, while a full-blown Hindi, American or Chinese film lasted two or even three hours. Soundtrack music from the Hindi films was often played on the radio in rotation with indigenous music. This gave the impression of an absorbed, globalized Other by equating Hindi film music with Hausa music, because they shared the same cultural spaces. There was a comparative absence of indigenous traditional

entertainment aimed at youth that could counter these foreign media influences, and little effort on the part of the government in northern Nigeria to promote traditional theatre and musical forms. Instead, indigenous genres were relegated to performances at quaint bucolic festivals or government functions.

After independence (in 1960), northern cities became open to an influx of other ethnic identities. As a result, the closeted Hausa society of the 1950s, which prided itself on its cultural homogeneity, was quickly opened up by the influx of other ethnic groups into predominantly Hausa and Fulani urban settlements. This created a category of settlers who did not share the same mindset as the Hausa, but who acquired the Hausa language and were ready to boldly experiment with new media technologies in Hausa entertainment. Unencumbered by the traditional mindset of the 'typical' Hausa, these incoming ethnic groups embraced the contemporary entertainment ethos, using 'modern' media instruments (guitars, drums, pianos and saxophones), and shunning traditional Hausa instruments such as the *kalangu*, *kukuma*, *goge*, *garaya* and *kuntigi*. Further, they used the vehicle of the Hausa language to spread their popular appeal.

These elements rapidly entered into the Hausa home video film industry, and in re-inventing entertainment, not necessarily targeted at Hausa groups only but at the Hausa-speaking audience, the Hindi film motif became the most digestible template for them. With religious and ethnic tensions leading to constant clashes in northern Nigeria, any video-film motif in a religiously mixed community had to balance between satisfying the religious conditions of Muslims, and at the same time remaining appealing to non-Muslims. Adopting a neutral song-and-dance, bubble-gum style, as performed by non-ethnic Hausa, would seem to provide an easy way out without ruffling any feathers.

Surprisingly, these linguistic minorities made no attempt to develop a new media-technology film culture in their native languages. When mainstream Hausa saw the success of the Hindi-style films, and the ease of their production (by simply appropriating a Hindi film rather than creating a fresh storyline), they also jumped on the bandwagon, and the line between non-ethnic and ethnic Hausa in terms of the quality of Hausa video film production disappeared. What caused the clash between these cosmopolitan acculturated Hausa and the mainstream Hausa culturalists was the assumptions of the latter that any Hausa-language medium entertainment targeted at a Hausa audience must essentially be Islamic and distinctly culturally Hausa. Neither the new entertainers (referred to as '*Yan Kwalisa*', or 'young dudes') nor the culturalists understood the reasons for this tension between the wider appeal of entertainment beyond mainstream societies and the more monocultural Hausa communities.

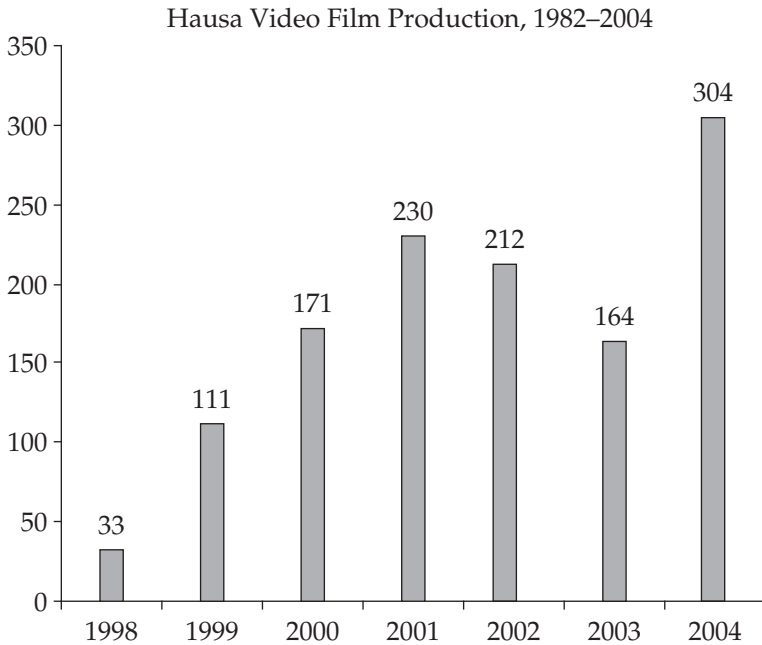


Figure 15.1 Official volume of Hausa home video output, 1998–2004.

National Film and Video Censors Board, *Directory of Video Films in Nigeria*. Abuja, 2002. The 2003 figures were obtained from press releases from the Board; 1990–7 figures were compiled in Kano, and not all were listed by the directory.

#### BOLLYWOODANCI' AND THE NEW WAVE OF HAUSA HOME VIDEO

The first commercial Hausa home video was *Turmin Danya*, released in 1990 by a drama group in Kano. From 1998 to 2004 the Nigerian Film and Censorships Board recorded the volume of production of home videos in Nigeria at about 1,180, as shown in Figure 15.1.

Three distinct characteristics have shaped the Hausa video film. The first motif in Hausa home video is *auren dole*, or forced marriage. In this scenario, which reflects outdated customs in a contemporary society, but nevertheless provides a good storyline, a girl (or, more rarely, a boy) is forced to marry a partner other than the one she (or he) would choose. Hausa film makers use this theme to challenge traditional authority, and simultaneously provide templates for youth rebellion against a system most youth see as unfair.

The second motif is the love triangle, with or without the additional theme of forced marriage. It is inevitable that in a narrative conflict indicating rivalry between two suitors (whether two boys after the same girl, or two girls after the same boy), antagonists will be given the opportunity to wax

lyrical about their undying love for each other. This is actually a reflection of *kishi* – co-wife jealousy in a polygamous Muslim Hausa household – which the filmmakers use to attract housewives in particular to their films. Although a unique characteristic of a typical Hausa Muslim household, the love triangle is also a central feature of Hindi films, which makes it easier for Hausa audiences to identify with them.

The third characteristic of the Hausa home video is the song-and-dance routine, again echoing Hindi cinema style. These are used to embellish the story and provide what the film makers insist is ‘entertainment’. Indeed in many of the videos, the songs themselves became sub-plots of the main story.

The early producers of Hausa video films were young and sassy, called ‘*Yan Kwalisa*’, or ‘young Turks’. They soon proved themselves to be the products of an acculturative media confluence, a mishmash of cultural influences including American disco, rap and ‘gangsta’ culture that is applied to the new-age, Bollywood ethos. The most successful of these producers were acculturated, Hausanized Muslims and non-Muslim, non-ethnic Hausa. In the main, they were originally Yoruba, Igbira, Beni, Nigeriène, Tuareg, Yemeni, Kanuri and other ‘minor’ northern Nigerian groups whose parents settled in the large, urban Hausa centres. They were born among the Hausa, and most spoke the language fluently with only a trace of an accent. They also attended school among the Hausa and perhaps, except for linguistic difference and often mode of dress, would not be distinguishable from the Hausa. According to Hausa industry insiders, these elements constituted as much as 60 per cent of the Hausa home-video story content. In the April 2001 issue of *Mumtaz* magazine, published in Kano, it is revealed:

whenever you mention Hausa home video it is assumed these are videos made by true ethnic Hausa. Surprisingly and annoyingly, in an investigation, we discovered this was not true; only few of those involved in production of Hausa home video are true ethnic Hausa. The ethnic tribes that overrun the Hausa home video industry include Kanuri, Igbos, and most significant of all, the Yoruba. In a table we drew, about 42% of the Hausa home video producers and artistes were of Yoruba extraction, 10% were Kanuri, 8% were Igbos. Thus only about 40% are true ethnic Hausa, and yet these videos are called Hausa videos . . . There is a dearth of true ethnic Hausa in Hausa home videos. (p. 12)

Many of the insiders (producers and directors) have argued that most of the bold and experimental home videos, and especially the dance routines, had to be performed by non-ethnic Hausa because they were not restricted by the Hausa cultural and religious mindset that disapproves of such displays of exuberance. These non-ethnic Hausa performers worked hard to hide their actual ethnic identities, and invariably accepted roles of modernized Hausa urban youth in the home videos, rather than appearing in traditional Hausa or religious character portrayals. Even their dialogue was restricted



to urban Hausa lexicon, devoid of any references to the classical Hausa vocabulary typical of rural dwellers, for that might cause problems in pronunciation.

A second category of involvement of non-ethnic Hausa in Hausa video film production was exemplified by the participation of two of the larger ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Yoruba and Igbo, who had developed an extensive video film process far more advanced than the Hausa. Despite its ethnic and religious differences and flashpoints of conflict, northern Nigeria has been host to millions of people of southern Nigerian descent, many of whom were actually born in the north and had no other home but there. Although living in communities that are segregated from the predominant Muslim host community (often more by choice than by policy), they speak the Hausa language passably well and have excellent commercial links with the Hausa host communities. However, while some have a working knowledge of the Hausa language, many cannot speak the language and see the Hausa home video as merely another investment opportunity. Some of these businessmen have had prior experience of the Nigerian home video processes in Lagos and Onitsha.

When they realized that money could be made out of the Hausa home video industry, a few of these producers used their capital, expertise and superior technical skills and equipment to start producing Hausa-language home videos, using as many Hausa actors as they could. Interestingly, they seemed to prefer to feature the non-ethnic, Hausa-aculturated, Hausa artistes in their home videos. Examples of these videos include *Dan Adamu Butulu* (produced by Oscar Baker), *Halin Kishiya* (Tunji Agesin), *Zuwaira* (Matt Dadzie), *Almara* (I. Nwankwo) and *Matsatsi* (Taye Ukubardejo).

The production values of most of the new video moguls were not informed by the household dramas, rustic settings or moralizing sermons that appealed to the traditionalist establishment characterized by the old Hausa TV dramas such as *Hadarin Kasa*, *Hankaka*, *Dan Mogori*, *Zaman Duniya* and *Kuliya*. Rather, their main creative mechanism has been to 'rip-off' Hindi *masala* films and remake them into Hausa clones, complete with the original storylines, songs and choreography. About twenty of the 150-plus Hindi films so cloned into Hausa video films are shown in Table 15.1.

In this new age of Hausa home video, the genres of the industry's founding fathers disappeared, and a spicy *masala* mixture of videos appeared which combined several genres in one video and attempted to copy as many Hindi films as they could. This new genre can be called 'Bollywoodanci' ('Bollywood adaptation') to reflect the main mechanism used by this cluster of young and essentially urban film makers.

Table 15.1 Inspirations from the East – Hausa Hindi Video Films

S/N	Hausa video film	Hindi original	Element ripped off
1.	<i>Abin Sirri Ne</i>	<i>Judwa</i> (1997)	Storyline
2.	<i>Akasi</i>	<i>Sanam Bewafa</i> (1991)	Scenes
3.	<i>Al'ajabi</i>	<i>Ram Balram</i> (1980)	Song
4.	<i>Alaqa</i>	<i>Suhaag</i> (1940), Mann (1999)	Songs
5.	<i>Aljanmar Mace</i>	<i>Gunda Raj</i> (1995)	Songs
6.	<i>Allura Da Zare</i>	<i>Sultanat</i> (1986)	Scenes
7.	<i>Almuru</i>	<i>Bhoot</i> (2003)	Storyline
8.	<i>Amira</i>	<i>Jodi No 1</i> (1999) <i>Khoobsurat</i> (1999)	Storyline
9.	<i>Aniya</i>	<i>Josh</i> (2000)	Song
10.	<i>Auwalu, Sani, Salisu</i>	<i>Oh, Jeh, Jagadish</i> (2002)	Storyline
11.	<i>Ayaah</i>	<i>Chandni</i> (1989)	Storyline
12.	<i>Badali</i>	<i>Hum Hai Rahi Pyar Ki</i> (1993)	Storyline
13.	<i>Bunkasa</i>	<i>Anmol</i> (1993)	Storyline
14.	<i>Burin Zuciya</i>	<i>Raazia Sultaan</i> (1961)	Storyline
15.	<i>Ciwon Ido</i>	<i>Devdas</i> (2002)	Storyline
16.	<i>Cuta</i>	<i>Qurbani</i> (1998)	Song
17.	<i>Da Wa Zan Kuka</i>	<i>Dil To Pagal Hai</i> (1997)	Song
18.	<i>Dafa'i</i>	<i>Ghayal</i> (1990)	Storyline
19.	<i>Danshi</i>	<i>Bazigar</i> (1993)	Storyline
20.	<i>Darasi</i>	<i>Hogi Pyar Ki Jeet</i> (1999), Mann (1999)	Song

#### RATIONALE OF MEDIA CHILDREN

The main reason advanced by Hausa home video makers – both those of the old school and those making up the new wave – for their strong focus on the love-triangle storylines and song-and-dance routines in their videos was that the ‘Indian society’ as shown in Hindi films is just like the Hausa society, at least in its approach to marriage, the main obsession of young Hausa home video producers. Hausa home video makers who seek their inspiration from Hindi commercial film sources focus on the visual similarities between Hausa culture and what they perceive as Hindi culture, rather than their divergences. As Brian Larkin has observed:

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 . . . 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. (1997: 12)

Ironically, the convergence of cultures, as perceived by Hausa video film makers, between Muslim Hausa society and 'Indian' society further accentuates the divergence of cultures between Muslim Hausa and other, Christian, Nigerians. Nigerian films were often used as templates by Hausa film makers – for example, *Dangerous Twins* (re-made in Hausa as *Auduga*), *Suicide Mission* (*Tsumagiya*), *Ungrateful* (*Akushi*) and *Break-Up* (*Kallabi*). However, the Christian-themed nature of Nigerian films are by and large avoided by Hausa film makers.

Public reaction to the Hindi film focus of Hausa video films has not always been favourable. A representative sample of this reaction can be seen in the comment made by Yusuf Muhammad Shitu, of the Kaduna Polytechnic in Zaria, quoted in the August 2001 issue of *Annur*:

How can a person, claiming to be Hausa, producing a film for Hausa people, copy Indian and European cultural norms, and claim they are his culture? Film production (among Muslims) is good because it an easy medium for delivering social messages, but the way they are doing it now is mistake. (p. 24)

Hausa filmmakers whose techniques are entrenched in copying Hindi films insist that they will not stop copying Hindi films, even though it is against the Nigerian National Film and Censorship Board Enabling Law. They have good reason, because such conversions make money. In addition, they note that efforts to present Hausa culture in video films have met with little or no commercial success.

#### CONCURRENT MODERNITIES AND HAUSA HOME VIDEOS

There is no doubt that most Hausa youth cinema, especially from 2000 to 2003 – the 'golden age' of the industry – draws its creative inspiration and media identity from Hindi cinema. In drawing from such creative sources, young Hausa film makers rarely considered the disjointed interface between Hindu and Muslim Hausa cultures, especially as depicted in entertainment settings. As Brian Larkin points out:

The iconography of Indian 'tradition', such as marriage celebrations, food, village life and so on, even when different from Hausa culture, provides a similar cultural background that is frequently in opposition to the spread of 'westemisation'. Indian films place family and kinship at the centre of narrative tension as a key stimulus for characters' motivations to a degree that rarely occurs in Western films. They are based on strict division between the sexes, and love songs and sexual relations, while sensuous, are kept within firm boundaries. Kissing is rare and nudity absent. These generic conventions provide a marked difference from Hollywood films, and many Hausa viewers argue that Indian films 'have culture' in a way that American films seem to lack. (1997a: 413)

Supplanting Hollywood for Bollywood, as done by young Hausa film makers – and certainly motivated by profit, rather than politics of nationalism

or cultural imperialism – merely substitutes one imperial, and in this case religiously contrasting, mindset with another. As further pointed out by Larkin:

the narrative structure of Indian films . . . is borrowed from the Indian religious epics the Mahabarata and Ramayana . . . The dependence upon the epics means that there is usually a fixed range of plots with clear moral contrasts that make the outlines of Indian films familiar to their viewers. The regularity of character types whose actions fall within a limited range of behaviour such as the hero, the mother, the comedic friend or the evil boss, with many of the lesser roles (such as boss or the mother) played by the same people in film after film, further aids the fixed parameters of plot structure within which the spectacle unfolds. (1997a: 412)

Thus, young Hausa film makers gloss over the religious disparities between Hindu and Muslim cultures and focus on the ceremonies embedded in the tradition of the two religions, extracting the basic entertainment elements they can adapt.

Yet Hausa Muslim communities have had a traditional structure infused with Islamic traditions since the twelfth century, hundreds of years before the advent of Hindi cinema in Hausaland in the late twentieth century. Consequently, the traditional Hausa lifestyle alone is thematically strong enough to inspire the exploration of *auren dole*, family values and love triangles, which obsess young Hausa filmmakers. Hausa traditional theatre and folktales were rarely considered for adaptation by Hausa home video producers; indeed only *Kogin Bagaja* and *Daskin Da Ridi* – both folktales (*tatsuniyoyi*) were made into home videos out of a repertoire of thousands of Hausa folktales. Even traditional Hausa songs, especially those of the *tashe* variety (games and street drama played from the tenth day of Ramadan fasting), were relegated to the background in favour of the urban glamour and glitz of Hindi-style entertainment.

The barrage of Hindi films shown in cinema houses and on government television stations ensured a high degree of acculturative bombardment of Hindi film messages, directed at the youth and at Hausa housewives. Further, it created the desire for Hausa-ized versions of these films, which the film makers were happy to provide, to the exclusion of any local entertainment traditions or creative inspirations. This entertainment strategy, informed by market-driven, supply and demand situations, rather than by the aesthetics of art and culture in dramatic representations, offers Brian Larkin an alternative interpretation of the role of media in mediating changes in social life. As he has stated:

Just as I, growing up in London in a cinematic world dominated by American stars, incorporated American media as part of English popular culture, so it is for Hausa audiences. Indian films have been reworked and incorporated to form an integral part of contemporary Hausa social life. (1997a: 433)

This point is insufficiently defended by Larkin. The scale of similarities between American and British cultures – which makes it possible for a

British youth to be influenced by American popular culture – is not of the same magnitude as the scale of differences between Hindu culture as depicted in Hindi films and Muslim Hausa home videos. The flowing saris and long caftans of Hindi actresses and actors; the forced marriage scenarios; even the song-and-dance routines were integral icons of Hausa social life, with traditional equivalents, long before the widespread popularity of Hindi films in urban Hausa societies. Hausa home video producers – most of them acculturatively non-ethnic Hausa – merely ‘modernize’ these according to Hindi film templates.

Further, ‘social life’ has a wider scope of meaning than merely watching a clutch of Hindi films that have been translated into Hausa versions. The Hindinization of the Hausa home video cannot be equated with the Hindinization of Hausa culture. Such Hindinization of the home video, and creation of media identity, is essentially a stylistic entertainment strategy, and even at that, it is restricted to the urban clusters within the larger Hausa society. A total of about 1,180 home videos (from 1990 to 2004), no matter how much they copy Hindu motifs, cannot be a template for changing the ‘social life’ of more than 20 million people. It cannot be seen as a social pattern in which Hindi popular culture has become integral to Hausa social life. Hausa social life has remained Hausa. Indeed, the home video phenomena is essentially an urban process, unfelt and unaffecting in the rural communities of northern Nigeria, which are still wired to traditional festivals as a form of entertainment. Even in urban centres where Hausa home videos are watched, Hausa food, custom, mores and other indices of social life remain Hausa, perhaps borrowing, especially among the younger population, the fashion sense and musical tastes of the Western world. This borrowing is certainly not from India, no matter how many Hindi films the people watch.

In cases where there is a closer affinity between Hindi films and their audiences outside India, there is a relatively strong cultural link between the audience and the actors. This may be enough for the audience to feel a certain empathy for Hindu culture, and perhaps integrate it as part of their social life. For instance, in a fascinating application of Larkin’s parallel modernities, we see correlations between the Hausa youth fascination for Hindi films and a similar addiction among Indonesian youth, who share the same media parents. This is because media parenting is a strong factor in Indonesian attachment to Hindi films. Cinemas in Indonesia have a long history of showing Hindi films, just as they do in northern Nigeria’s major cities like Jos, Kaduna and Kano.

These developments in Indonesia have echoed the media parenting that northern Nigeria went through in order to entrench Hindi films in the entertainment mindsets of Muslim Hausa. But how is it that, in a mainly Islamic community, people are so enthusiastic about Hindi film? According to N. Samirah Khan (2003), writing on the subject online:

Indonesia is called an Islamic country simply because the majority of population here is Muslim . . . However, Indonesians are much closer to Indians, not just geographically but also religiously and ethnically. For instance, most Indonesians . . . have a Hindu background. Their culture, dances, language (based on Sanskrit), philosophy, and their traditional ceremonies, all reflect this Hindu influence in their lives which has come to be a mix between Hinduism and Islam (Sufism).

Thus, if Indonesian youth seem affected by Hindu culture as depicted in Hindi films, one can say they share the same spiritual space. This is not the case with the Muslim Hausa youth of northern Nigeria, and therefore cannot be used to explain their fascination with the Hindi film. Instead, concurrent modernity may serve as a sociological model to describe the behaviour of Indonesian and Muslim Hausa youth in their imitation of Hindi cinema identity precisely, because of the convergence of cultural spaces (Hindu to Indonesian) or incidence of shared identity (Hindi to Hausa, via Islamic veneer in Hindi).

#### CONCLUSION

The 'Indianization', 'Indonesianization' and 'Hausanization' of media influences and the emergence of media identities are incidences of concurrent modernities, available via media technologies that have simply blurred the religious, cultural, economic and political divides and created a new techno-based entertainment culture. This is essentially because the flow is truly transnational, giving echoes and feedback in all directions. Larkin offers further insights into his parallel modernities theory as applicable to Hausa cinema viewing audiences, stating that: 'Indian films offer Hausa viewers a way of imaginatively engaging with forms of tradition different from their own at the same time as conceiving of a modernity that comes without the political and ideological significance of that of the West (1997a: 407)'. Yet much of the Hausa home video storylines, music, dance and style that was ripped off from Hindi films was itself stolen from Hollywood films. Thus *Fatal Attraction* was first copied by Hindi film makers as *Pyar Tune Kya Kiya*, which became the Hausa version in *Kudiri*. Also, *What Lies Beneath* became *Raaz*, before leap-frogging to Kano as *Salma Salma Duf*. Similarly, *Dead Poets Society* first became *Mohabbatein*, and then became *So* in Hausa, while *Sleeping with the Enemy* was remade into three Bollywood films (*Yaarana*, *Agni Sakshi* and *Darrar*) and subsequently into the Kano equivalents of *Hakuri*, *Izaya* and *Huznee*. The Hausa film makers who produced *So* have admitted that they were not even aware of Robin William's *Dead Poets Society*, and that their influence was *Mohabbatein*. In this case, where could the source of the media identity be housed for the Hausa audience – Hollywood or Mumbai? The Hausa Muslim conservative critical reaction to

Hausa home videos is certainly more to do with the singular obsession of the Hausa home video producers with love themes than a reaction against entertainment in a traditional Muslim culture, just as the same establishment reacted against Hausa novelists who focused virtually exclusively on *soyayya* (love) themes from 1980 to 2000.

Hausa television series drama such *Kuliya*, *Zaman Duniya*, *Mai Daki*, *Kwaryar Alawa*, *Taskira*, *Gajimarai*, *Hantsi*, *Sarauta Gado*, and others, were revered as a truer reflection of Hausa traditional theatre than the current crop of home videos produced by young Hausa and Hausanized film makers. As it is, the vast majority of contemporary Hausa home video can be called Hausa only because the dialogues are in Hausa language. In content, however, they do but increasingly reflect an urbanized Hausa worldview and mindset.

With the saturation of the Hausa home video market in 2003, when sales and production dropped drastically, many of the producers were squeezed out of the market. At that time, the Hausa home video genre started looking for an alternative to love stories for their thematic focus. Videos such as *Ruhi*, *Farar Aniya*, *Mahandama*, *Qarni*, *Kazar Sayen Baki*, *Kin Gaskiya*, *Ibtila'i* and *Judah* led the way towards the transformation of the genre into a more mature visual canvas. All that is required is the professionalization of the producers in order that they might take advantage of the rich Hausa literary heritage to create a truly Hausa cinema which reflects quintessential Hausa social and cultural identity.

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