Hausa Literature Debates Series 9

Tarbiyar Bahause, *Mutumin Kirki* and Hausa Prose Fiction: Towards an Analytical Framework

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Introduction

This paper is a foray into critical theory, with particular emphasis on literary criticism. The objective of the paper is to generate debate that will lead to the development, application and acceptance (for the meantime!) of an instrument that can be used as an analytical framework for Hausa prose fiction.

The first bone of contention is: why create yet another framework, when the literary critical field is replete with a series of tried and tested frameworks? In other words, we could use the existing benchmarks for valuing literature, in particular prose fiction, and apply them to Hausa literature. For instance, carefully articulated methods of literary criticism have laid by notable 20th Century European literary critics: the macabre American Edgar Allan Poe, the biographical approach of the French Charles Augustine Sainte-Beuve; the French positivist, Hippolyte Adolphe Taine; the radical Russian university drop-out, Vissarion Grigoryevich Belinsky; the British culture snob, Matthew Arnold; the British Victorian economists (a one time editor of *The Economist*), Walter Bagehot; the British Humanist, Walter Peter (advocate of "art for art's sake"); the Cambridge Psychologist Ivor Armstrong Richards[1] (founder of New Criticism); and British George Saintsbury (the *orijina* literary historian, not *gwanjo!*). Can't we simply study their critical styles and apply them to Hausa prose fiction?

I am not sure this approach will yield the desired results simply because of the lack of interface connectivity between the existing literary critical methods and Hausa prose fiction. The current and conventional methods were developed for a body of literature with a different mindset from that of Hausa, and as such while the prose fiction may share generalized format (e.g. style, character, plot, setting, narrative method, and scope) in varying degrees, the intended audience for Ango-American fiction differs from that of the Hausa writer. It is principally for this reason that I feel we need to evolve a literary critical framework rooted in the mindset of the audience of the Hausa prose fiction writer.

Historical Antecedents to Literary Criticism

Thus while it is not my intention to draw heavy artillery in the field of literary criticism, nevertheless I feel some understanding of how the Western critical method evolved, albeit briefly, provides me with a conceptual framework to argue my own analytical framework.

[1] *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923; with C.K. Ogden), a pioneer work on semantics; and *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929), companion volumes developing his critical method.

From the time of classical Greece until the present day, however, Western criticism has been dominated by two opposing theories of the literary art, which might conveniently be called the expressive and constructive theories of composition.

Almost all of the criticism ever written dates from the 20th century, although questions first posed by Plato and Aristotle are still of prime concern, and every critic who has attempted to justify the social value of literature has had to come to terms with the opposing argument made by Plato in *The Republic.*

The poet as a man and poetry as a form of statement both seemed untrustworthy to Plato, who depicted the physical world as an imperfect copy of transcendent ideas and poetry as a mere copy of the copy. Thus, literature could only mislead the seeker of truth. Plato credited the poet with divine inspiration, but this, too, was cause for worry; a man possessed by such madness would subvert the interests of a rational polity. Poets were therefore to be banished from the hypothetical republic.

In his *Poetics* — still the most respected of all discussions of literature — Aristotle countered Plato's indictment by stressing what is normal and useful about literary art. The tragic poet is not so much divinely inspired as he is motivated by a universal human need to imitate, and what he imitates is not something like a bed (Plato's example) but a noble action. Such imitation presumably has a civilizing value for those who empathize with it. Tragedy does arouse emotions of pity and terror in its audience, but these emotions are purged in the process. In this fashion Aristotle succeeded in portraying literature as satisfying and regulating human passions instead of inflaming them.

Although Plato and Aristotle are regarded as antagonists, the narrowness of their disagreement is noteworthy. Both maintain that poetry is mimetic, both treat the arousing of emotion in the perceiver, and both feel that poetry takes its justification, if any, from its service to the state. It was obvious to both men that poets wielded great power over others. Unlike many modern critics who have tried to show that poetry is more than a pastime, Aristotle had to offer reassurance that it was not socially explosive.

Aristotle's practical contribution to criticism, as opposed to his ethical defense of literature, lies in his inductive treatment of the elements and kinds of poetry. Poetic modes are identified according to their means of imitation, the actions they imitate, the manner of imitation, and its effects. These distinctions assist the critic in judging each mode according to its proper ends instead of regarding beauty as a fixed entity. The ends of tragedy, as Aristotle conceived them, are best served by the harmonious disposition of six elements: plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle, and song. Thanks to Aristotle's insight into universal aspects of audience psychology, many of his dicta have proved to be adaptable to genres developed long after his time.

Later Greek and Roman criticism offers no parallel to Aristotle's originality. Much ancient criticism, such as that of Cicero, Horace, and Quintilian in Rome, was absorbed in technical rules of exegesis and advice to aspiring rhetoricians. Horace's verse epistle *The Art of Poetry* is an urbane amplification of Aristotle's emphasis on the decorum or internal propriety of each genre, now including

lyric, pastoral, satire, elegy, and epigram, as well as Aristotle's epic, tragedy, and comedy. This work was later to be prized by Neoclassicists of the 17th century not only for its rules but also for its humor, common sense, and appeal to educated taste. *On the Sublime,* by the Roman-Greek known as "Longinus," was to become influential in the 18th century but for a contrary reason: when decorum began to lose its sway encouragement could be found in Longinus for arousing elevated and ecstatic feeling in the reader. Horace and Longinus developed, respectively, the rhetorical and the affective sides of Aristotle's thought, but Longinus effectively reversed the Aristotelian concern with regulation of the passions.

Further, *On the Sublime* deals with the question left unanswered by Aristotle — what makes great literature "great"? Its standards are almost entirely expressive. Where Aristotle is analytical and states general principles, the pseudo-Longinus is more specific and gives many quotations: even so, his critical theories are confined largely to impressionistic generalities.

Thus, at the beginning of Western literary criticism, the controversy already exists. Is the artist or writer a technician, like a cook or an engineer, who designs and constructs a sort of machine that will elicit an aesthetic response from his audience? Or is he a virtuoso who above all else expresses himself and, because he gives voice to the deepest realities of his own personality, generates a response from his readers because they admit some profound identification with him? This antithesis endures throughout western European history — Scholasticism versus Humanism, Classicism versus Romanticism, Cubism versus Expressionism — and survives to this day in the common judgment of our contemporary artists and writers. It is surprising how few critics have declared that the antithesis is unreal, that a work of literary or plastic art is at once constructive and expressive, and that it must in fact be both.

Literary Criticism in the 20th Century

The ideal of objective research — itself derived from developments in science — has continued to guide Anglo-American literary scholarship and criticism and has prompted work of unprecedented accuracy. Bibliographic procedures have been revolutionized; historical scholars, biographers, and historians of theory have placed criticism on a sounder basis of factuality. Important contributions to literary understanding have meanwhile been drawn from *anthropology*, *linguistics*, *philosophy*, and *psychoanalysis*.

The totality of Western criticism in the 20th century defies summary except in terms of its restless multiplicity and factionalism. Schools of literary practice, such as Imagism, Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism, have found no want of defenders and explicators. Ideological groupings, psychological dogmas, and philosophical trends have generated polemics and analysis, and literary materials have been taken as primary data by sociologists and historians. Literary creators themselves have continued to write illuminating commentary on their own principles and aims. In poetry, Paul Valéry, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens; in the theatre, George Bernard Shaw, Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht; and in fiction, Marcel Proust, D.H. Lawrence, and Thomas Mann have contributed to criticism in the act of justifying their art.

Most of the issues debated in 20th-century criticism appear to be strictly empirical, even technical, in nature. By what means can the most precise and complete knowledge of a literary work be arrived at? Should its social and biographical context be studied or only the words themselves as an aesthetic structure? Should the author's avowed intention be trusted, or merely taken into account, or disregarded as irrelevant? How is conscious irony to be distinguished from mere ambivalence, or allusiveness from allegory? Which among many approaches is best adapted to making full sense of a text? Would a synthesis of all these methods yield a total theory of literature?

Such questions presuppose that literature is valuable and that objective knowledge of its workings is a desirable end. These assumptions are, indeed, so deeply buried in most critical discourse that they customarily remain hidden from critics themselves, who imagine that they are merely solving problems of intrinsic interest.

Art, Literature and Morality

Now let us begin to narrow the arguments. Remember, we are on a journey towards an analytical framework for criticizing Hausa prose fiction. So far we have seen that there are various approaches — so much that a single approach has not specifically emerged in critical theory. In the quest for the "critical golden fleece", let us pick up a strand of critical theory, for no other reason than the obvious: sociological/anthropological. After all, literature deals with cultural behavior, and in Hausa prose fiction, literature is seen as a powerful potential change agent, so much that the contemporary (post 1980) prose fiction of the Hausa is labeled by literary destroyers (not critics) as a thin edge of the wedge that will lead to moral anarchy among Hausa youth. This is therefore a convenient point to explore the interface between literature and morality as stepping stones towards the development of a critical instrument.

To say that a work of art is aesthetically good or has aesthetic value is one thing; to say that it is morally good or has a capacity to influence people so as to make them morally better is another. Yet, though the two kinds of judgments differ from one another, they are not entirely unrelated. Three views on the relation of art to morality can be distinguished:

Moralism

According to this view, the primary or exclusive function of art is as a handmaiden to morality--which means, usually, whatever system of morality is adhered to by the theorist in question. Art that does not promote moral influence of the desired kind is viewed by the moralist with suspicion and sometimes with grudging tolerance of its existence. For art implants in people unorthodox ideas; it breaks the molds of provincialism in which people have been brought up; it disturbs and disquiets, since it tends to emphasize individuality rather than conformity; and works of art are often created out of rebellion or disenchantment with the established order. Thus, art may undermine beliefs and attitudes on which, it is thought, the welfare of society rests and so may be viewed with suspicion by the guardians of custom. When art does not affect people morally one way or the other (for example, much nonrepresentational painting), it is considered a harmless pleasure that can be tolerated if it does not take up too much of the viewer's time; but, when it promotes questioning and defies established attitudes, it is viewed by the moralist as insidious and subversive. It is viewed with approval only if it

promotes or reinforces the moral beliefs and attitudes adhered to by the moralist.

Aestheticism

Diametrically opposed to the moralistic view is aestheticism, the view that, instead of art (and everything else) being the handmaiden of morality, morality (and everything else) should be the handmaiden of art. The proponents of this view hold that the experience of art is the most intense and pervasive experience available in human life and that nothing should be allowed to interfere with it. If it conflicts with morality, so much the worse for morality; and, if the masses fail to appreciate it or receive the experience it has to offer, so much the worse for the masses. The vital intensity of the aesthetic experience is the paramount goal in human life. If there are morally undesirable effects of art, they do not really matter in comparison to this all-important experience which art can give. When the son-in-law of the 20th-century Italian dictator Benito Mussolini waxed lyrical in his description of the beauty of a bomb exploding in the midst of a crowd of unarmed Ethiopians, he was carrying to its fullest extent the aestheticist's view of art.

Mixed position

It would be admitted, first of all, that works of literature (which will be examined first, since of all the arts the relation of literature to morality is most obvious) can teach valuable moral lessons through explicit presentation: the genre that has this as its aim is didactic literature, as exemplified by *Pilgrim's Progress* by the English Puritan John Bunyan and *Back to Methuselah* by the Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw. But most works of literature do not exist to teach a moral lesson: possibly, Shakespeare did not write *Othello* merely to attack racial prejudice or *Macbeth* to prove that crime does not pay. Literature does teach but in a far more important way than by explicit preachment: it teaches, as John Dewey said, by being, not by express intent.

Plato is probably the first champion in the Western world of the moralistic view of art — at least in *The Republic* and *Laws.* Plato admired the poets; but, when he was founding (on paper) his ideal state, he was convinced that much art, even some passages in Homer, tended to have an evil influence upon the young and impressionable, and accordingly he decided that they must be banned. Passages that spoke ill or questioningly of their deities, passages containing excessive sexual passion (and all works that would today be described as pornographic), and even passages of music that were disturbing to the soul or the senses (he certainly would not have listened to Tina Turner or Notorious B.I.G.‼) were all condemned to the same fate. Much of what is said in the *Republic* and elsewhere reflects the belief that the vital opinions of the community could be shaped by law and that men could be penalized for saying things that offended public sensibilities, undermined common morality, or subverted the institutions of the community. And this barrage was some four hundred years *before* the birth of Isa (AS).

Plato's concern here was with the purity of soul of the men who would become members of the council of rulers of the state; he was not concerned with censorship for the masses, but, since one could not predict which young people would pass the series of examinations required for membership in the council of rulers and since it was (and is) practically impossible to restrict

access to works of art to a certain group, the censorship, he decided, would have to be universal.

Literature achieves its moral effect by presenting characters and situations (usually situations of difficult moral decision) through which the reader can deepen his own moral perspectives by reflecting on other people's problems and conflicts, which usually have a complexity that his own daily situations do not possess. *He can learn from them without himself having to undergo in his personal life the same moral conflicts or make the same moral decisions*. The reader can view such situations with a detachment that he can seldom achieve in daily life when he is immersed in the stream of action. By viewing these situations objectively and reflecting on them, he is enabled to make his own moral decisions more wisely when life calls on him in turn to make them. *Literature can be a stimulus to moral reflection* unequalled perhaps by any other, for it *presents the moral choice in its total context* with nothing of relevance omitted.

Perhaps the chief moral potency of literature lies in its unique power to stimulate and develop the faculty of the imagination. Through literature the reader is carried beyond the confines of the narrow world that most persons inhabit into a world of thought and feeling more profound and more varied than his own, a world in which he can share the experiences of human beings (real or fictitious) who are far removed from him in space and time and in attitude and way of life. Literature enables him to enter directly into the affective processes of other human beings, and, having done this, no perceptive reader can any longer condemn or dismiss en masse a large segment of humanity due to their perceived imperfections ;for a successful work of literature brings them to life as individuals, animated by the same passions as he is, facing the same conflicts, and tried in the same crucible of bitter experience.

Through such an exercise of the sympathetic imagination, literature tends to draw all men together instead of setting them apart from one another in groups or types with convenient labels for each. Far more than preaching or moralizing, more even than the descriptive and scientific discourses of psychology or sociology, literature tends to unite mankind and reveal the common human nature that exists in everyone behind the facade of divisive doctrines, political ideologies, and social mores.

This is not to say, of course, that those who read great works of literature are necessarily tolerant or sympathetic human beings. Reading literature alone is not a cure for human ills, and people who are neurotically grasping or selfish in their private lives will hardly cease to be so as a result of reading works of literature. Still, wide and serious reading of literature has an observable effect: people who do this kind of reading, no matter what their other characteristics may be, do tend to be more understanding of other people's conflicts, to have more sympathy with their problems, and to be able to emphasize more with them as human beings than do people who have never broadened their horizons by reading literature at all.

Thus in every literate society, the novelist frequently has to encounter those dragons unleashed by public morality or by the law. The struggles of Flaubert, Zola, and Joyce, denounced for attempting to advance the frontiers of literary

candor, are well known and still vicariously painful, but lesser novelists, working in a more permissive age, can record cognate agonies. Generally speaking, any Western novelist writing after the publication in the 1960s of Hubert Selby's *Last Exit to Brooklyn* or Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckenridge* can expect little objection, on the part of either publisher or public, to language or subject matter totally unacceptable, under the obscenity laws then operating, in 1922, when *Ulysses* was first published. This is certainly true of America, if not of Ireland or Malta. But many serious novelists fear an eventual reaction against literary permissiveness as a result of the exploitation by cynical obscenity mongers or hard-core pornographers of the existing liberal situation.

Hausa Prose Fiction in the 21st Century: The Millennium Generation

The last three years have seen "titanic" battles in the field of indigenous imaginative literature in Northern Nigeria. Since the emergence of a new crop of Hausa language novelists from 1980, the trickle had turned into a flood. As of last count in June 2000, there were over 600 novels written in Hausa language. This, without any doubt, must rank surely as one of the largest concentration of indigenous fiction in Nigeria.

This development has led to the development of reading culture among youth, and has also spawned off subsidiary and related areas of youth concern: the prayer genre, for instance, is also one of the fasted developing literature genres in the North, a process which sees the writing, printing, distribution and sale of hundreds of books and pamphlets on all aspects of Islam. A second genre that has been spawned by the stimulus of literary activities is among the Hausa youth is the screenplay, leading to the home video production.

All these activities were not without criticism from both government agencies and the religious establishment. Many private individuals have also expressed concern and often scorn about the emergence of the contemporary Hausa prose fiction genre. By the far the most consistent argument has been the moral arguments that these books corrupt the minds of their readers. This is a view strongly proposed by, for instance, Muhammad Mujtaba Abubakar in the privately published *Litattafan Soyayya a Ma'aunin Hankali Da Na Shari'a* (*The Rational and Islamic Legal Status of Soyayya Novels*; School of Business and Publish Administration, The Polytechnic, Kebbi, 1999). Claiming to have read 23 contemporary Hausa novels, yet the author could only cite one scene (two letters written by lovers to each other) as evidence of inducement to illicit sex (in *Idan Da So Da {auna* by Ado Ahmad Gidan Dabino). The context of the letters were never revealed by the critic.

Thus it is not clear what "corrupt" means. It is also not made clear by the critics the share of corruption these novels should acquire among the other possible corrupting influences in the society. For instance, irresponsible parenting, peer influence, lack of personal control, abuse of trust by adults to youth, joblessness, malaise, and others are all contributory factors to corrupting the youth, if by corruption we mean creating deviant behavior from standard social norms.

The Analytical Framework

To generate my analytical framework, I first ask: what constitutes "tarbiyya" in Hausa social universe? The answer is fairly obvious. I did not use variables from religion (Hadith and the Holy Qur'an) for obvious reasons. The entire religion of Islam is a blueprint for *Tarbiyya*, and is simply too concentrated as an application to Hausa prose fiction. And as will be revealed later, any source of *Tarbiyyar Bahause* will have direct link to Islam, which is the matrix of life and behavior for the Muslim Hausa.

Thus by linking the analytical framework to individual behavior traits (i.e. *Tarbiyya*), I am seeking to embed my proposed analytical framework within the *sociology matrix of literary criticism*. I therefore argue that within the mindset of the Hausa Fulani (if such variable can eventually be refined), the sociological function of imaginative literature evokes more critical reaction than other possible variables of literary critical inquiry (e.g. psychoanlaysis, anthropology, stylistics, etc).

Thus in the Hausa universe, *Tarbiyya* is coded *moral education* and *good manners*, and the expected target of alleged corruption of the Hausa contemporary novels, especially those written by youth from 1980. To further refine the analytical framework, we need to identify the elements of *tarbiyya*, and see what exactly we are corrupting when writing imaginative literature in Hausa (especially if you are a twentysomething author!).

In this regard, a good starting point for the analytical framework is provided by Anthony H.M. Kirk-Greene, in the Third Annual Hans Wolff Memorial Lecture delivered on April 11, 1973 at the University of Indiana, in the lecture which he titled *Mutumin Kirki: The Concept of the Good Man in Hausa*. In Kirk-Greene's classification, there are at least ten attributes of a classical *Mutumin Kirki* in Hausa. These are:

1. *Gaskiya* (truth)
2. *Amana* (strictly friendliness, but used to refer to trust)
3. *Karamci* (open-handed generosity)
4. *Ha[uri* (patience)
5. *Hankali* (good sense)
6. *Kunya* (bashfulness)
7. *Ladabi* (courtesy)
8. *Mutumci* (self-esteem)
9. *Hikima* (wisdom)
10. *Adalci* (scrupulous behavior)[2]

This, surely cannot be all there is to *Tarbiyyar Bahause* . so I set about looking for more variables to add to my moral shopping basket.

A second source of analytical framework is provided by Habib Alhassan, Usman Ibrahim Musa and Rabi'u Muhammad Zarru[, in their *Zaman Hausawa*

[2] Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. *Mutumin Kirki: The Concept of the Good Man in Hausa*. The Third Annual Hans Wolff Memorial Lecture, prepared by the African Studies Program, Indian university, Bloomington, Indiana, 1974. The lecture itself was delivered on April 11 1973. I acknowledge, with gratitude, Mal. Abdullahi Umar Kafin-Hausa for pointing out this reference to me.

(privately published, 1982, Zaria) who also provided further refinements of Tarbiyar Bahause where they identified about twelve behavioral characteristics of *Tarbiyar Hausawa* including:

1. *Mua'amala* (sociability: relaxed, interacts with people, friendly)
2. *Ladabi da biyayya* (respect self and respects others; also considerate of others, both older and younger)
3. *Kunya da kara (*modesty, self-deprecation, humble, acknowledges others' opinion over his own)
4. *Zumunta* (community spirit)
5. *Ri[on addini* (adhering to religious tenets and being guided by them with attributes such as truth)
6. G*askiya* (fairness)
7. *Dattako* (gentlemanliness)
8. A*dalci* (scrupulous behavior)
9. *Kawaici* (tactfulness)
10. *Rashin tsegumi* (no idle talk)
11. *Kama sana'a* (engaging one in gainful employment)
12. *Juriya da jarumta* (fortitude, courage and bravery).[3]

Zarru[et al's classification, of course, is more comprehensive than that of Kirk-Greene. Yet the variations are in the codes are merely academic for there are so many conceptual overlaps. *Ri[on Addini*, as given by Zarru[et al, for instance, encapsulates all the over 17 categories, yet this code was not acknowledged by Kirk-Greene. A summary of the two codes is given in Table 1:

Table 1: Tarbiyar Bahause Mutumin Kirki: Code 1

Kirk-Greene	**Zarru[et al**
1. Gaskiya	1. Mua'amala
2. Amana	2. Ladabi da biyayya
3. Karamci	3. Kunya da kara
4. Ha[uri	4. Zumunta
5. Hankali	5. Ri[on addini
6. Kunya	6. Gaskiya
7. Ladabi	7. Dattako
8. Mutumci	8. Kawaici
9. Hikima	9. Adalci
10. Adalci	10. Rashin tsegumi
	11. Kama sana'a
	12. Juriya da jarumta

If we can combine the two frameworks, we can perhaps come up with a unified scale of measuring *Tarbiyar Bahause* from these two secondary (their primary antecedents being Islam) sources, as in Table 2:

[3] Habib Alhassan et al, *Zaman Hausawa*. Privately published in 1982, Zaria. The book was a primer written for post-primary schools.

Table 2: Tarbiyar Bahause Mutumin Kirki: Summary

Tarbiyar Bahause Codes		
Kirk-Greene	*Zarru[et al*	*Common*
1. Amana	7. Mua'amala	15. Gaskiya
2. Karamci	8. Zumunta	16. Kunya
3. Ha[uri	9. Ri[on addini	17. Adalci
4. Hankali	10. Dattako	18. Ladabi
5. Mutumci	11. Kawaici	
6. Hikima	12. Rashin tsegumi	
	13. Kama sana'a	
	14. Juriya da jarumta	

It is interesting that at least 18 categories of behavior emerged from this loose classification. In the two categories, only Gaskiya, Kunya, Adalci and Ladabi were repeated, as indicated in the table.

I will not go into the structural, field or sociological validity of these codes, for as I said, this is meant as a *rough-and-ready guide*, rather than an exact instrument. So far, to the best of my knowledge, this seems to be the first instrument aimed at measuring the themes and contents of contemporary Hausa novels, and is therefore very much a first draft. As we use it repeatedly we may need to refine it to include other behaviors as may, although inconceivably, evolve in the Hausa social universe in the future. Indeed, it is my hope that other researchers will find faults with this scale and come up with a different one — either way, we move away from being arm-chair critics to field researchers, linking possible effects of literature on social outcomes.

However, as I pointed out, I was basically interested in creating a rough-and-ready code of behavior of a typical *mutumin kirki* with a good *tarbiyya*. And I want to use such code of behavior as a measuring scale to value the general themes of Hausa prose fiction, and at a latter stage, use the scale against specific texts in order to determine the extent of the deviance or adherence to, these codes of behavior.

By successively reading as many as possible and extracting as much of these behavioral attitudes as possible, we can be in a better position to pass judgments about Hausa prose literature.

Methodology

Having determined a map, my next target is a destination. As of last count, I have about 453 contemporary Hausa novels in my database (see list). The methodology involves categorizing the books according to their central theme, although acknowledging the multiple themes of many of novels. This is the first stage of the analysis covered in this draft instrument. At a later date, I would, insha Allah, present a more detailed study of the individually selected texts to this instrument (after the instrument has been refined, perhaps during this seminar, or at others similar to it).

The entire list of the books in the database is given in the appendix, sorted by author's name. There are about 53 novels that remained unclassified, while

some titles were obtained from various sources, but the details (such as pages and year) could not be obtained.

Results

General Trend

The results of the survey are summarized in Tables 3 which lists the number of the *most common themes* for the novels in the database.

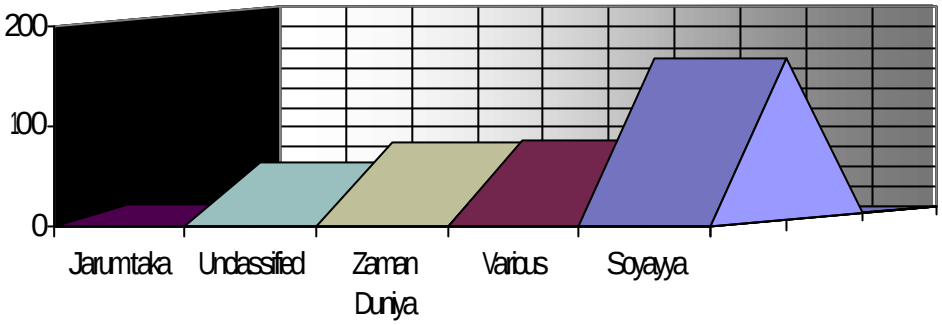
Table 3: Contemporary Hausa Prose Fiction Themes

Theme	Number
Soyayya	160
Various	79[4]
Zaman Duniya	77
Unclassified	56
Jarumtaka	17
Fa]akarwa	15
Nisha]i	8
Yaudara	7
Rikici	6
Kishi	5
{addara	4
Bin Iyaye	4
Ha[uri	4
Tsagoron Batsa	4[5]
Siyasa	3
Matsalar Aure	4

The overwhelming tilt of the books towards *soyayya* as the central theme makes many critics and observers label such books *soyayya.* Yet from the database, it is clear that *soyayya* constitutes only 35% of the books. The rest of the 75% deals with other aspects of life. The graph below visually represents the data, limited to only the first five variables to simply the effect:

[4] The various themes are given in Appendix I.

[5]The four are: *Matsayin Lover* (Alkhamees Bature Makwarari), *Wane Kare Ne Ba Bare Ba?* (Balaraba Ramat Yakubu), *Kyan }an Maciji* (Bilkisu Ahmad Funtuwa), and *}ufana* (Ashab Gamji). *Matsayin Lover* and *Kyan }an Maciji* were re-written to remove the sexual bits, while *}ufana* was banned by the Hausa section of the Association of Nigerian Authors, Kano Branch in 1999 when the book first appeared. W*ane Kare Ne Ba Bare Ba?* is completely out of print, although not specifically banned.



Since there are two categories of "unclassified" and "various", it is of course likely that more titles would fit into one or more of the other clearly defined categories. So this classification should be taken as fairly loose.

A further limitation of this categorization is that the determination of the central theme is purely personal; another researcher may place the emergence of more emphasis on one theme that the one given here. For instance, Bala Anas Babinlata's *}a Ko Jika?* is, on the surface, a *soyayya* story. Yet a closer analysis reveals it as a deeply moralizing novel that warns of the consequences of monetary greed.

Of the over 400 novels in the database, I could only detect four that have clearly sexual overtones in them. Of the four, *Matsayin Lover* is the most controversial because it deals with lesbian relationships – the first Hausa-language novel to dwell on such topic. The furor created by the novel was so loud that the author, Alkhamees Bature Makwarari (now an actor and a singer as well) was persuaded to retrieve the book and re-print it censoring the offending pages.

Perhaps the biggest accusation against the books, and which manifests itself in many of the odd 160 *soyayya* themed novels is that of empowering girls to voice out a personal choice in marriage. This is seen as *rashin kunya*, or lack of *kawaici*, and therefore outside the scope of *Tarbiyar Bahause*. In the archetypal Hausa society, girls forced to marry a man they do not love, are expected to show *ha[uri* until they eventually get used to the man (or the woman, as the case may be, since there are cases of boys being forced to marry girls they do not love).

Conclusion

It would be admitted, first of all, that works of literature can teach valuable moral lessons through explicit presentation: the genre that has this as its aim is didactic literature, as exemplified by *Gan]oki* (1933, M. Bello Kagara), *Shehu Umar* (1933, A.A. Tafawa |alewa).

But most works of literature do not exist to teach a moral lesson: the moral lessons, as it were, in *Jiki Magayi* and *Kitsen Rogo* are so completely transparent that they don't exist. J. Tafida and R. East's *Jiki Magayi* (1933) preaches intolerance and encourages the bloodthirsty appetite for revenge. Abdul[adir }angambo's *Kitsen Rogo* (1979) wants its readers to believe that anyone who leaves his environment (in this case, a village) for another, is doomed to become a murderous villain. It evokes powerful comparison with *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

Literature does teach but in a far more important way than by explicit preachment: it teaches by being, not by express intent. It achieve this moral effect by presenting characters and situations (usually situations of difficult moral decision) through which the reader can deepen his own moral perspectives by reflecting on other people's problems and conflicts, which usually have a complexity that his own daily situations do not possess. He can learn from them without himself having to undergo in his personal life the same moral conflicts or make the same moral decisions. The reader can view such situations with a detachment that he can seldom achieve in daily life when he is immersed in the stream of action. By viewing these situations objectively and reflecting on them, he is enabled to make his own moral decisions more wisely when life calls on him in turn to make them. Literature can be a stimulus to moral reflection unequalled perhaps by any other, for it presents the moral choice in its total context with nothing of relevance omitted.

Perhaps the chief moral potency of literature lies in its unique power to stimulate and develop the faculty of the imagination. Through literature the reader is carried beyond the confines of the narrow world that most persons inhabit into a world of thought and feeling more profound and more varied than his own, a world in which he can share the experiences of human beings (real or fictitious) who are far removed from him in space and time and in attitude and way of life. Literature enables him to enter directly into the affective processes of other human beings, and, having done this, no perceptive reader can any longer condemn or dismiss en masse a large segment of humanity as "foreigners" or "wastrels," for a successful work of literature brings them to life as individuals, animated by the same passions as he is, facing the same conflicts, and tried in the same crucible of bitter experience. Through such an exercise of the sympathetic imagination, literature tends to draw all men together instead of setting them apart from one another in groups or types with convenient labels for each. Far more than preaching or moralizing, more even than the descriptive and scientific discourses of psychology or sociology, literature tends to unite mankind and reveal the common human nature that exists in everyone behind the facade of divisive doctrines, political ideologies, and religious beliefs.

As I clarified, I do not intend to apply the instrument directly, but to present it to the audience for critical reaction. Once we refine it, we can then determine the next stages in creating a unique frame for criticising Hausa literature. I hope that at least a beginning has been made.

Appendix I: 'Other' Themes of Contemporary Hausa Prose Fiction Writers

1.	{abilanci	43.	Jarumtaka
2.	{arya	44.	Karatun Zamani
3.	{aryar Samari	45.	Kuskure
4.	{in Gaskiya	46.	Laifi
5.	{issar mata	47.	Lalacewa
6.	{iyayya	48.	Makirci
7.	{wa]ayi	49.	Makircin mata
8.	Abokantaka	50.	Makircin Mata
9.	Aikata Laifi	51.	Matsalar aure
10.	Aiki da hankali	52.	Miyagun Halaye
11.	Aikin yan sanda	53.	Mu'amula
12.	Al[awari	54.	Mugunta
13.	Aljanu	55.	Muhimmancin Ilimi
14.	Almara	56.	Munafunci
15.	Amfanin Ilmi	57.	Rashin Al[awari
16.	Auratayya	58.	Rashin Gaskiya
17.	Auren zamani	59.	Rashin Sani
18.	Bandariya	60.	Rashin Tunani
19.	Butulci	61.	Rayuwa
20.	Cin Amana	62.	Rayuwar 'Yanmata
21.	Dangin miji	63.	Rayuwar aure
22.	Fansa	64.	Rayuwar aure
23.	Garga]i	65.	Rayuwar Bahause
24.	Gaskiya	66.	Ruwan ido
25.	Gulma	67.	Sarauta
26.	Halin mutane	68.	Satar yara
27.	Hankalta	69.	Son Duniya
28.	Hannunka mai sanda	70.	Son Ku]i
29.	Hassada	71.	Tarbiya
30.	Hatsari	72.	Tarbiyya
31.	Iya Zance	73.	Tarihin Kano
32.	Jan girma	74.	Tauhidi
33.	Wa'azi		
34.	Wariyar Launin Fata		
35.	Wasa Da Aure		
36.	Wulakanci		
37.	Ya[in Zamani		
38.	Zaluncin Sarakuna		
39.	Tsibbu		
40.	Tsoratarwa		
41.	Wa[o[i		

Note: All the themes here deal with the consequences of the themed behavior. A careful survey of the themes will therefore reveal virtually most of the coded elements of *Tarbiyar Bahause* as the manifestation of *Mutumin Kirki*.