

# Global Nollywood

THE TRANSNATIONAL DIMENSIONS  
OF AN AFRICAN VIDEO FILM INDUSTRY



EDITED BY **Matthias Krings** AND **Onookome Okome**

*This book is a publication of*

INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Office of Scholarly Publishing  
Herman B Wells Library 350  
1320 East 10th Street  
Bloomington, Indiana 47405 USA

iupress.indiana.edu

*Telephone orders* 800-842-6796  
*Fax orders* 812-855-7931

© 2013 by Indiana University Press

*All rights reserved*

No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. The Association of American University Presses' Resolution on Permissions constitutes the only exception to this prohibition.

© The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48–1992.

*Manufactured in the  
United States of America*

*Library of Congress  
Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Global Nollywood : the transnational dimensions of an African video film industry / edited by Matthias Krings and Onookome Okome.  
pages cm – (African expressive cultures)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-253-00923-4 (cloth : alk. paper) – ISBN 978-0-253-00935-7 (pbk. : alk. paper) – ISBN 978-0-253-00942-5 (electronic book) 1. Motion picture industry – Nigeria. 2. Video recordings industry – Nigeria. I. Krings, Matthias, [date], editor of compilation. II. Okome, Onookome, editor of compilation.

PN1993.5.N55G58 2013  
791.4309669 – dc23  
2012051539

1 2 3 4 5 18 17 16 15 14 13

7. Nollywood and Postcolonial Predicaments:  
Transnationalism, Gender, and the Commoditization  
of Desire in *Glamour Girls* · Paul Ugor · 158

PART 3. NOLLYWOOD AND ITS AUDIENCES

8. Nollywood in Urban Southern Africa: Nigerian  
Video Films and Their Audiences in Cape Town  
and Windhoek · Heike Becker · 179

9. Religion, Migration, and Media Aesthetics: Notes on the  
Circulation and Reception of Nigerian Films in Kinshasa  
Katrien Pype · 199

10. “African Movies” in Barbados: Proximate Experiences  
of Fear and Desire · Jane Bryce · 223

11. Consuming Nollywood in Turin, Italy  
Giovanna Santanera · 245

12. Nigerian Videos and Their Imagined Western Audiences:  
The Limits of Nollywood’s Transnationality · Babson Ajibade · 264

PART 4. APPROPRIATIONS OF NOLLYWOOD

13. Transgressing Boundaries: Reinterpretation of Nollywood Films  
in Muslim Northern Nigeria · Abdalla Uba Adamu · 287

14. *Karishika* with Kiswahili Flavor: A Nollywood Film  
Retold by a Tanzanian Video Narrator · Matthias Krings · 306

15. Bloody Bricolages: Traces of Nollywood in  
Tanzanian Video Films · Claudia Böhme · 327

*List of Contributors* · 347

*General Index* · 353

*Film Title Index* · 369

## Transgressing Boundaries: Reinterpretation of Nollywood Films in Muslim Northern Nigeria

ABDALLA UBA ADAMU

THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PREDOMINANTLY MUSLIM northern Nigeria and mostly Christian southern Nigeria reflect the different perceptions of the secular state. These differences are reflected not only in matters of state and policy, but also in how members of each region relate to the outside world. The differences are even more vivid in the popular culture industries. While they share common interfaces in terms of Western cultural products, the regional differences emerge when visually representative popular culture products are taken into consideration. In this way, and due to the British colonial precedent of encouraging mass translation of Middle Eastern folklore into the local Hausa language, the popular culture industries of northern Nigeria tends to have Middle Eastern and Asian “flavors.” Consequently, northern Nigerians tend to make films the content of which is highly influenced by Indian (Hindi) films. The latter were imported by Lebanese merchants and shown in their own cinemas.

Films from other African countries are extremely rare on northern Nigerian television and in video stores. When the Nigerian film industry, Nollywood, became transnational, the Hausa were curious to see how it would develop, although Nollywood movies have never been as popular as Hindi films, particularly among the nonurban viewers of visual culture. However, with the increasing popularity of Nigerian films at home, elsewhere in Africa, and among Africans worldwide, more experimental Hausa filmmakers started toying with the idea of appropriating and reworking southern Nigerian films to make them more appealing to Muslim audiences in northern Nigeria. This was based on the fact that Nollywood films, which are referred to as Igbo films in the North, depict

women in a more Westernized way. This applies to on-screen sexuality, social interaction, and dress.

In this chapter, I examine how Muslim Hausa video filmmakers in northern Nigeria overcome their cultural and religious prejudices and rework southern Nigerian video films for their Muslim audience. In particular, I examine the style of appropriation, which is marked by a selective choice of plot elements, and compare it to a similar style of appropriation practiced by the Indian film industry. As a case study, I analyze how a Muslim Hausa filmmaker, Baba Karami, appropriated and remade a Nollywood film, *Dangerous Twins*, as Hausa *Auduga* (Cotton). Based on interviews and discussions with the producer, who is considered the creative influence in the Hausa film industry instead of the director, as well as a close reading of *Auduga*, I examine his appropriation technique and how it reflects the religious and cultural divide between northern and southern Nigeria.

#### THE HAUSA VIDEO FILM INDUSTRY

Commercial Hausa video film production started in March 1990 with the production of *Turmin Danya* in Kano by a group of Hausa TV soap-opera stars. In 1997, the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) in Abuja began storing official records. By 2008, a total of 2,183 official Hausa video films had been censored for public release.

In 1998, a Hausa-language magazine, *Tauraruwa* (Star, modeled on the Bollywood magazine *Stardust*), was established in Kano city to report on emerging stars. In 1999, the third edition of the magazine (August 1998) created a column called “Kanywood,” which discusses events in the Kano film industry (20). This created a label for an African film industry three years before Norimitsu Onishi coined the term *Nollywood* for the southern Nigerian film industry in his article in the *New York Times* on September 16, 2002. By 1998, a Hausa video film industry had been formed with its main creative and marketing nucleus in Kano – thus, Kanywood. However, nearby Kaduna and Jos were also centers of Hausa video film production, although the main market was in Kano.

Many Hausa video films follow three main story lines: *auren dole* (forced marriage, where a girl or boy is forced to marry someone not of their choice), love triangle (where two boys court the same girl or

two wives fight over a single husband), and song and dance (more than 98 percent of Hausa video films have at least two to three song-and-dance routines; these song-and-dance routines are not part of the story line, but the filmmakers include them to boost the entertainment). All these elements were inspired by Hindi cinema, which Hausa had been exposed to via television stations in Kano, Kaduna, and Jos, as well as in Lebanese-owned cinemas. Films from Hollywood are rarely used as remake templates, because Hausa film producers perceive them as being the complete opposite of Islamic values. Nevertheless, a few American films served as templates, too, such as *Predator*, which was remade as *Tarzomar Shahada*; the TV series *Friend of the Family* inspired *Jalli*; the movie *What Lies Beneath* became *Salma Salma Duduf*; the Hausa video *Kauna* was adapted from the television series *Silent Witness*; and John Woo's made-for-TV film *Blackjack* was remade as *Tsaro*.

#### HAUSA FILM INDUSTRY AND NOLLYWOOD

From the start, it seems that debates about Nigerian films would center on English-, Yoruba-, and Igbo-language video films, but not Hausa video movies. The latter were not taken seriously, although Kanywood had become the second-largest indigenous-language video industry in Nigeria in 2002. This is reflected by the amount of column inches devoted to Nigerian films in Nigerian media, on the Internet, in books published, as well as at domestic and international conferences. More notable examples of such focus include foreign newspapers (for example, Jenkins; Kiefer), journals (Ebewo; Omoera), books (Haynes; Hugo; Barrot) and dissertations (Offord; Uchenna) and a foreign foundation, the Nollywood Foundation, in Los Angeles. To date, the only comprehensive study assessing the impact of Hausa video films in Nigeria is *Hausa Home Videos* by Adamu, Adamu, and Jibrin, while only two conferences were held on the Hausa video film (2003 in Kano and 2009 in Zaria). By 2007, the Hausa video film industry had undergone radical changes as a result of a new Islamic censorship regime that hampers the industry's development and ability to compete.

Yet the NFVCB approved 616 Hausa videos for screening in 2002, followed by Yoruba videos with 1,189 and far ahead of Igbo with 44 (166). As Krings pointed out: "At the moment, researchers in Nigerian video

films seem to be stuck in regional compartments, and this state of affairs mirrors discourse within the respective industries in Nigeria itself, discourse that tends to ignore the interconnectedness of the regional industries” (“Conversion on Screen” 64). Of the various researchers (for example, Haynes and Okome; Adejunmobi; McCall) and journalists (for example, Steinglass; Onishi) who covered the early Nollywood phenomena, only Brian Larkin, Matthias Krings, and to some extent Johnson, Ekwuazi, Noy, and Behrend focused on the development of the video film industry in northern Nigeria. Indeed, Johnson added that between 1990 and 1997, “the Kano-Kaduna axis has produced a total of not more than fifty” (101) video films – contrary to the more than 300 unreleased, uncensored Hausa video films at the time.

By 2007, Onookome Okome had popularized the term *Nollywood* to refer to West African cinema in a special edition of *Postcolonial Text*, as well as selling the idea at the African Film Conference in November 2007 at the University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign. Yet no debate on the development of popular culture in Nigeria can ignore Kanywood and how distinct it is from Nollywood. Kanywood films are gaining popularity in countries where there is a large concentration of either native Hausa speakers (for example, in Niger) or of second-language speakers (as in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo, and parts of Senegal). To these Hausa speakers abroad, Nigerian film is essentially Hausa, simply because many of them do not understand English and the cultural transmission of mainstream Nollywood. The term *Nollywood*, therefore, cannot be applied across the board to popular African cinema. A further attestation to this, for instance, is the increasing use of the term *Ghana-wood* in reference to Ghana’s video film industry.

From 1999 to 2001, Nollywood and Kanywood collaborated, and the National Film and Video Censors Board in Abuja officially recorded a total of 24 films from such collaborations – not including other productions. The few Hausa-speaking actors who appeared in Nollywood films were Hindatu Bashir, Ali Nuhu, Sani Danja, Ibrahim Mandawari, and Kabiru Mohammed Suleja. No notable Nollywood actor featured in any Hausa video film, although northern director Sani Mu’azu and cameraman Umar Gotip often worked with Nollywood producers.

Yet despite the mutual exclusivity of northern Nigerian Hausa-language video films and those in southern Nigeria, Hausa producers

were inspired by Nigerian films, that is, English-language video films and Igbo and Yoruba videos. Indeed, some producers I talked to argued that violence in Hausa video film – for example, as depicted in *Takidi* and in *Mushkila* – was used to imitate southern Nigerian video film styles in which it is common. One of the southern Nigerian videos appropriated by Hausa video producers was *Dangerous Twins*, which was remade as the Hausa *Auduga*. Hereinafter, I will analyze how this film was remade and the passage of culture that this process entailed. Data for the analysis are from three sources: textual analysis of the *Auduga* video film; a review of *Dangerous Twins*, published online on IMDB.com (Sherazade); and a structured interview with the producer of *Auduga*, Baba Karami, who also doubled as the assistant director.

#### TAKES ON REMAKES

Imitation may be considered the sincerest form of flattery, but apparently not when it comes to artistic reinterpretation of creative works by others. The very practice of film remakes by major film production clusters around the world has caused ambivalence toward remakes as the production of “a new version of an older film that was commercially exhibited” (Forrest and Koos 3).

The very concept of the remake embeds two additional transpositional practices. These are *adaptation*, which is basically “cinematic versions of canonical plays and novels” (Sanders 23), and *appropriation*, a literary process that “frequently affects a more decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain” (26). In all three strategies, an organic relationship with the original (source text) must exist. However, for the remake to achieve its artistic objectives, the audience must be aware of the original (source text) and its offspring, that is, the remake.

In his discussion of the remake, Thomas Leitch identifies “four possible stances a remake can adopt, each with its own characteristic means of resolving its contradictory intertextual claims” (142). These are the readaptation, update, homage, and the true remake. These stances actually refer to the intertextual relationship between the remake and the source text, rather than the general approach that motivates the *need* for the remake.



*Readaptation* is a twice-removed adaptation of a well-known literary work whose earlier cinematic adaptations the remake “ignores or treats as inconsequential” (ibid.). *Update* revises a well-known classic and relocates it to another setting, retaining its generic characteristics – in short, it is a more modernist interpretation of an earlier source text. The *homage* treats its cinematic precursor as a classic “in danger of being ignored or forgotten” (144). Finally, “*true remakes* depend on a triangular notion of intertextuality, since their rhetorical strategy depends on ascribing their value to a classic earlier text and protecting that value by invoking a second earlier text as betraying it” (147).

The remake itself is motivated by a series of factors that include technical, artistic, social, economic, and political reasons that warrant reworking the core messages of a particular film into a new one, either for the initial audiences or for another set of audiences. These factors actually provide a loose framework for generating models of remakes of which there are at least five: those based on technology, economic competition, genre switching, artistic, and cultural flows.

At what point does a remake become plagiarism? Forrest and Koos quote André Bazin, who speaks of plagiarism when the remake “has absolutely nothing to do with the updating of an old picture and everything to do with geography” (8). Thus, the fifth model of film remake, which deals with cultural flows, looks particularly at the inward and outward flows of filmic ideas between societies. Bazin’s comments were made in the light of flows of filmic ideas mainly from European cinema to Hollywood, a direction he finds irritating. In Bazin’s analysis, European films, particularly French, were considered more artistic than Hollywood movies. Remaking them in Hollywood constitutes crass cultural plagiarism. Bazin is not the only critic of the remake’s cultural repercussions. Film critics such as Sharon Waxman, Vincent Canby, and Terence Rafferty see the remake, particularly when it crosses borders, as cultural piracy.

Culture plays a strong role in the remake process. An internal remake that amounts to circulating a new version of a film within the same cultural environment creates less tension than an external remake across cultural boundaries. Obviously, for transcultural remakes, the second version has to cater to the audience’s sensibility. It is the remake producers’ consideration for the target audience that has made French film critics such as Andre Bazin disdainful of American remakes of European

films. Unlike Bazin, however, I am less interested in defending particular films against their alleged artistic degradation caused by the remaking process. Nor am I concerned with the violation of intellectual property so often at stake when films are remade. In my analysis of *Auduga*, a Muslim Hausa remake of the Nollywood video film *Dangerous Twins*, I focus on how its producer adapted the story line to cater to the cultural sensibilities of his northern Nigerian Muslim audience. Hence, I wish to highlight the very phenomenon Bazin and more recent film critics look down upon. As will become apparent, once cultural boundaries are crossed, the process is no longer a mere remaking; it becomes an appropriation. The translocated film *Dangerous Twins* is thus recast in a whole new “cultural product and domain” – to borrow a phrase from Sanders (26). Culturally, *Auduga* sells Islam, despite the absence of Christian iconography in its source text, *Dangerous Twins*. Islamic scholarship in *Auduga* (whose diegetic legal advice was even dispensed by an Islamic scholar) operates in a totally different domain than the high-octane urban lifestyle of *Dangerous Twins*.

#### BORN AGAIN: APPROPRIATION AND ISLAMIZATION OF NOLLYWOOD

Baba Karami is a video film producer in Kanywood. Although an indigene of Kano State, he was born and raised in Agege, a virtual Hausa community in Lagos. His nickname is “Dan OPC” (“Follower of Odu’a Peoples’ Congress,” a pan-Yoruba militant organization based in Lagos) because of his fluency in the Yoruba language and familiarity with Yoruba people and culture. He has been an avid fan of Nollywood films since the industry began in Lagos. By 2004, when Nollywood released *Dangerous Twins*, he had “become addicted to the industry.” Indeed, he said that when watching a Nollywood film, he becomes carried away in the church rituals iconic to most of their story lines. As he is a Muslim, he felt uneasy about any affinity to Christian symbolism. He decided to join the Hausa film industry to give it a more Islamic slant. In effect, he was trying to rid Nollywood of Christian imagery by substituting it with Islamic symbolism in transcribed Hausa remakes. As he lived in Lagos, he had access to superior filming facilities, and he also knew some famous Nollywood stars. His favorite, Ramsey Nouah, starred in

*Dangerous Twins*. These combined factors gave him an edge over Kano-based Hausa video film producers.

Appropriation of films from Bollywood and Hollywood is common but by no means the norm among Kano-based video film producers. Karami decided to jump on the bandwagon by appropriating from a source he knows best – Nollywood. *Auduga*, the remake of *Dangerous Twins*, is his first film.

*Dangerous Twins* tells the story of twin brothers separated by distance and family problems. One is calm, levelheaded, progressive, and childless. He desperately wants children, is based in London, and is married to a British woman. The other is a pure rascal and lives in Lagos with his wife and children. Somehow the twins switch places – the Lagos twin goes to London and pretends to be the husband of the British wife so that they can have a child. The twins plot to return to their normal lives later (see Haynes, this volume, 93–94).

Baba Karami calls the remake *Auduga*, a Hausa word for “cotton.” He used this term in reference to the London twin – weightless (childless) – as the attractions of his London lifestyle are crucial to the story. In *Dangerous Twins*, the story line revolves around the Lagos twin’s efforts to impregnate the London twin’s wife. *Auduga* highlights the same theme, but places the issue in the Islamic jurisprudence of inheritance rights of the child born from this sexual liaison.

*Auduga* narrates the story of twins (played in dual roles by Abba El-Mustapha, who is also codirector) separated by distance – one good, and the other evil to the core. However, the roles are reversed. In the Hausa remake, the London-based twin is bad and the Lagos-based twin is good. Their mother takes the London twin to Britain, where she raises him as a typical Briton. He is a lapsed Muslim. In Lagos, their wealthy father builds up a commercial enterprise with a first wife and their son Sheriff, the elder brother to the twins.

The London twin returns to Lagos when their father dies. But he is keen on drugs, liquor, and women. The family is puzzled by his conduct, but attribute it to living in a foreign land and mingling with abysmal cultures, as the London-based mother of the twins says in a remorseful scene.

The Lagos twin is a serious, devout person. The elder brother, Sheriff, played by Baba Karami, takes the reins when the London twin is out of

control. Sheriff's wife has a pretty sister, Aisha, and the London twin desperately wants her, even though he has no shortage of female admirers. However, Sheriff does not approve, much to the annoyance of the London twin. In a spirit of fraternity, the twins demand that their share of their father's estate should be handed out to them. Sheriff agrees and calls their uncle to oversee the distribution of the wealth according to Islamic principles.

Basing his arguments on Islamic jurisprudence, the uncle insists that the London twin is a heretic, as he has forsaken Islam and its way of life. Therefore, he has no right to any part of his Muslim father's inheritance. In the middle of all this, a woman walks in and declares that more than twenty-two years previously, armed robbers had allowed her to be raped by a fellow traveler. It turns out that the traveler is Alhaji, the father of the twins and Sheriff. She became pregnant and eventually gave birth to a boy, Khalid, but unknown to Alhaji. Khalid's mother had no access to him due to his high position and wealth. Alhaji had tried unsuccessfully to trace her many times. Even before this revelation, Khalid has already made friends with the London twin and was trying to get him to slow down his excesses, but without knowing they are blood brothers.

The twins' London-based mother, who also pops up during the inheritance hearings and demands that her son's inheritance is handed out, blames herself for leading him astray. London's "abysmal culture" had corrupted him, and she asks him for forgiveness. The London twin accuses his mother of not teaching him Islamic ways and of rearing him as a godless person. The mother urges him to mend his ways, to effectively become a born-again Muslim. He forgives her, repents, and rediscovers Islam. But it is all a ploy to get his inheritance. In reality, he has no intention of becoming a proper Muslim.

Meanwhile, the Lagos twin has married, but his bride will not sleep with him. Apparently, she was having her period. Islam forbids women to have sexual intercourse until it is over. While ruminating over the issue, he is kidnapped by armed robbers hired by the London twin who intends to keep him locked up until his inheritance is handed over. When the Lagos twin asks about his marital responsibilities, the London twin offers to replace him as the husband – thus returning to the original plot of *Dangerous Twins*. Masquerading as the Lagos twin, the London twin sleeps with the bride and gets her pregnant. He also embezzles a lot of

money from the elder brother's company. Sheriff has not noticed the switch.

Somehow the imprisoned Lagos twin escapes and confronts his wife. She is thunderstruck and informs her husband that she is pregnant with the London twin's baby. They wait for the London twin to return. Eventually, the Lagos twin shoots the London twin dead.

*Auduga*, as a remake of *Dangerous Twins*, appreciates the cinematic narrative of *Dangerous Twins* and pays homage to its plot elements of flashy cars, big houses, and an urban lifestyle. But its main technique is in the way two images of the same actor (Abba El-Mustapha) are juxtaposed in a dialogue like Ramsey Nouah's character in *Dangerous Twins*.

In a plot departure, however, the "abysmal culture" of London, the main cause of corrupting the London twin in *Auduga*, is transferred as the same abysmal culture of Lagos in *Dangerous Twins* – thus offering a devastating critique of Lagos as a chaotic den of immorality (perhaps Baba Karami, having been born and raised in Lagos, is trying to convey a particular message). This is because in *Dangerous Twins*, the London twin becomes trapped in Lagos and turns to the underground to sort out his problems. Thus, Lagos corrupts the neat and orderly life of the London twin. Again both video films end violently – with one twin killing the other.

#### HOLLYWOOD-BOLLYWOOD-KANYWOOD APPROPRIATION STYLES

The producers of *Auduga* seem to follow the same appropriation strategies narrated by Tejaswini Ganti in her analysis of the "(H)Indianization" of the American movie *On the Waterfront* as *Ghulam*. Ganti argues that Indian filmmakers must identify with a film before they can appropriate it. Indian screenwriter Sutanu Gupta, who argues that adapting an American film to an Indian audience must be along Indian cultural norms, explains this. In his conversations with Ganti about the need to "Indianize" Hollywood, "Gupta uses a series of what may be regarded as social taboos and symbols of deviance to contrast what he sees as the lack of a moral universe in a Hollywood film with the implicitly moral one of the Hindi film, as well as to posit a metonymic association between cinema and society" (289).

In a similar way, *Auduga* seeks to Hausanize and Islamicize *Dangerous Twins* by using Islam to create the “metonymic” association between filmmaking and Islamic values. The central message of *Auduga* is parental responsibility and focuses on the role of the mother. The London twin is raised as a lapsed Muslim. It is not indicated that he is Christian – but it is suggested that merely living in London is enough to make him bad to the bone. His mother, a Muslim, played with great aplomb by the Hausa-Scottish actress Zainab Booth, did not bother to set him on the correct Islamic path. To emphasize the Islamicity of the plot element and to distinguish itself from the appropriated Nollywood film, *Auduga* introduces the laws of Islamic inheritance. Under sharia law, a non-Muslim (the London twin) cannot inherit property from a Muslim. In the plot of *Auduga*, the London twin refuses to accept this Islamic ruling. The plot then revolves around his attempt to wrest back what he feels is rightfully his by birth.

The producer Baba Karami had a special connection not with the plot elements of *Dangerous Twins*, but with the lead actor, Ramsey Nouah, “whom I admire greatly and watched all his films.” Baba Karami, however, is uneasy with “too much Christianity in Nollywood films,” and in a bid to diminish this, he decides to “Islamize” *Dangerous Twins* in the Hausa remake.

In Indian remakes of Hollywood originals, Indian filmmakers expand the original by adding emotions, extending the narrative, and including songs. They explain this with the need to meet audience expectations and in terms of artistic antecedents (Ganti 290). Subplots usually expand the narrative. This strategy was employed in *Auduga* with the subplot of Khalid’s mother suddenly appearing during inheritance hearings to declare that her child is yet another son of the twin’s father. Again in this expansion process, *Auduga* invokes Islamic jurisprudence to emphasize that illegitimate children have no right to inherit any of their father’s property no matter the circumstances of their birth. Hence, in this case, adding the subplot is about “making narratives more moral” (ibid. 292) – and thus “educating the audience” (Karami) – the avowed main objective of Hausa video films for their Muslim audiences.

Furthermore, like Indian producers and directors who appropriate Hollywood films, Hausa video filmmakers feel the need to connect with their audience. In Tejaswini Ganti’s study, Vikram Bhatt, *Ghulam*’s di-

rector, explains how he determines whether a film can be “Indianized” and what constitutes universal appeal: “A Hollywood film has to have its relevance with our audiences. For me the film has to be that of a universal appeal, by which I mean that a film needs to be centered around a human emotion more than a set of circumstances” (287). Similarly, producer Baba Karami, who also wrote the screenplay for *Auduga*, felt unable to translate *Dangerous Twins* as a Hausa story. He knew that his Muslim audience could not connect with un-Islamic plot elements in the Nollywood original, particularly when the Lagos twin sleeps with London twin’s wife (Karami). Although Baba Karami loathed this scene, he kept it in *Auduga* – out of economic considerations. This process that I call selective inclusion is also typical of Indian filmic appropriations. As Ganti says about a similar process in India, “What must be stressed is that filmmakers’ ideas about what constitutes acceptable representations are not fixed but fluid, and they are highly dependent upon commercial success or failure” (289). Thus, while *Auduga* uses Islam to address the issues of inheritance and promote Islam as a more desirable way of life (adroitly avoiding comparison with another religion), it fails to resolve the pregnancy of the Lagos twin’s wife, who was made pregnant by the London twin. Clearly, there is a limit to the “Islamization” process of adapting a Nollywood film for Muslim Hausa audiences due to the selective-inclusion principle. If not for commercial reasons, the pregnancy scenes could have been removed and the core issue of maternal responsibility and Islamic inheritance maintained in *Auduga*.

Song-and-dance routines (*rawa da waka*) in Hausa video films serve the same purpose as in Hindi films. For instance: “The most common emotion expressed musically in Hindi films is love, and in films like *Ghulam* where a love story is not the main focus of the plot, a ‘romantic track’ is developed primarily through songs between the hero and the heroine” (Ganti 294). *Auduga* also pays homage to its Bollywood inspirations by including about four song-and-dance routines, none of which has any direct bearing on the story. As in Ganti’s analysis of *Ghulam*, the love story is not central to *Auduga*, and the song-and-dance routines are used to embellish the story line. They introduce the love theme in the songs between the hero and heroines. Indeed, in one of the songs, two female actors who have nothing to do with the film suddenly appear briefly in a sitting room and start arguing about a male actor who does

not star in the movie at all. In the next scene, all three are shown singing happily together. Baba Karami defends this as a means to attract bigger audiences, as a Hausa video film without song-and-dance routines is a sure recipe for commercial failure.

By emphasizing the role of religion in its reworked story line, *Auduga* acknowledges its audience and communicates a particular partisan perspective without insulting religious sensibilities. Its supportive argument of raising a child in an “abysmal culture” communicates a universal message of how cultural disjunctions can create culturally displaced individuals – regardless of their religion. Many religious doctrines would take exception to the London twin’s conduct. After all, there are many strict, even fundamentalist, Muslims living in London who did not turn abysmal. But *Auduga* weaves around religious themes and does not blame the London twin’s behavior on Christianity. It thus criticizes the Westernization of indigenous individuals originally without liberal Western values.

By 2002, the few collaborative efforts between Nollywood and Kanywood had dwindled, with only producers like Baba Karami attempting to generate interest in Nollywood by appropriating Nollywood films into Hausa. Two factors seem to have been responsible for stopping the collaborations.

The first was how Hausa video films were marketed in northern Nigeria. When a producer finishes a film, usually sponsored by a marketer, he sells a copy of the original master tape and a negotiated number of jackets (VHS cassette covers) to the marketer, who then makes duplicate copies and slots them in the jackets he has purchased. When the first batch is finished, he buys more jackets. Unsold tapes are removed from the jackets and returned to the producer. The tapes are then erased and overwritten with another film.

Nollywood marketers operate on a radically different principle. They usually bring their finished product to the markets to be sold. The Hausa distributors usually do not accept these, and as a result Nollywood-produced films are usually found only with southern Nigerian distributors, mainly Igbo merchants. This removes them from Hausa audiences, who go to Hausa merchants only for films. In any event, Hausa marketers rarely distribute films by producers who are not part of their marketing cartel – and Igbo merchants are rarely part of such a system.



In addition, to regulate the volume of video films being released, especially from 2000, the Hausa video film industry began lining up video releases on a weekly basis. As Nollywood producers are not part of this system, they felt frustrated (Baker). This led two of the strongest supporters of the Nollywood-Kanywood hybrid film strategy, Oskar Baker and Iyke Moore, to withdraw from further investments in Hausa video films.

Second, some of the early Nollywood-Kanywood hybrid video films attempted to create themes of national unity that were not well received by the Muslim Hausa. Some of the video films affected this way were *Almara*, *Dan Adam Butulu*, *Holy Law*, and *National Anthem*. They all deal with issues such as Islam, particularly sharia, and other cultural norms of northern Nigerian Muslim Hausa that are grafted into their story lines and local audiences felt unhappy with. This led to harsh criticism and angry reviews in local-language mass media (for example, *Yahuza*; *Yahaya*). Thus, Nollywood-Kanywood hybrid films that focused on Islam and cultural mediations often generated vitriol against southern Nigerian film producers, at least in northern Nigerian mass media (such as *Fim*, *Bidiyo*, *Duniyar*, and others). Consequently, many of the promoters of the hybrid strategies decided to cut their losses and quit the system. The hybridity continues on a limited scale, but controlled from Lagos, which saw, for instance, the involvement of northern Nigerian actor Ali Nuhu in *Sitanda*.

The cultural disjuncture between art and commercial film remakes, as reflected by French or general art films remade into Hollywood equivalents, provides a framework for understanding such disconnection between northern and southern Nigerian filmmaking. The remake of the southern Nigerian film *Dangerous Twins* as the northern Nigerian Islamic film *Auduga* exemplifies this. Yet *Auduga* is not, strictly speaking, a remake. As it has no literary antecedent, it is not a variation of adaptation. *Auduga* is an appropriation, for in its translocation of both text and context from the southern Nigerian *Dangerous Twins*, it recasts the original story line and its plot elements in a new cultural milieu – a similar cinematic strategy adopted by Hindi filmmakers appropriating Hollywood – and serves as a creative inspiration to Hausa filmmakers. This is similar to American remakes of French films, which tend

to reveal differences “through film endings, with the former providing a comforting resolution altogether absent in their European counterparts” (Forrester and Koos 8).

Thus, *Dangerous Twins* serves as a cosmopolitan tale of treachery and betrayal and targeted a general urban audience. Its remake, *Auduga*, is more didactic in its portrayal of Islamic values as guiding principles of Muslim life. This is because *Auduga* is not just a discourse about inheritance rights, but also a reaffirmation of Islamic identity. The film portrays the man who leaves Islam as being without identity. In this respect, *Auduga* is almost evangelical—a subtle attempt to exorcize the Christian imagery of Nollywood films as perceived by Baba Karami. Clearly, Muslim producers, who have more clout than the director, could not simply remake a Nollywood film in northern Nigeria. Considering the differences in social, cultural, and religious mind-sets and beliefs that divide Muslim and Christian video film producers in Nigeria, a Nollywood film can only be *redirected* rather than remade by Muslim producers. That way, it is not just remade, but “born again” for a different audience.

While Hausa audiences perceive Hindi films as representing a “parallel modernity, a way of imaginatively engaging with the changing social basis of contemporary life that is an alternative to the pervasive influence of a secular West” (Larkin, “Indian Films” 16), both the audience and the Hausa filmmakers do not see this parallel with southern Nigerian video films. Indeed, it is this identification with Hindi film ethos that seems to unite both the Hausa filmmakers and their audience against Western influences in Hollywood films and, subsequently, Nollywood video films. Both Nollywood and Hollywood films are seen by the Muslim Hausa as decadent and un-Islamic. The colonial antecedent preference for Middle Eastern and Asian popular culture among the Hausa merely provided a ready template for this parallel modernity and subsequent condemnation of any Western filmic influence. As Krings discovered in his ethnographic study of Hausa filmmakers in the city of Kano: “Although Hausa videos share a great deal with their southern equivalents, and some may even be called transcripts of southern video films, northern filmmakers were reluctant to support my suggestion of commonalities between the regional video cultures of Nigeria. Against the overall discursive backdrop of cultural exclusion and critical debates

about the cultural authenticity of Hausa videos, it is only too comprehensible that my interlocutors had to argue in favor of sharp differences between their own productions and those of their southern colleagues” (“Muslim Martyrs” 163).

The years of interethnic and interreligious conflicts between northern and southern Nigeria are further clear testimonies to cultural hostilities that make it hard for domestic media to accept, unless, as done in Nigeria, enforced by federal legislation.<sup>1</sup> Although National Television Authority networks carry a dose of programs from all the regions, in the North they are ignored increasingly in favor of ArabSat scheduling that broadcasts a lot of American programs via free-to-air channels. Yet worldwide Hindi films seem to be more acceptable. Despite religious and linguistic divides, they have enough cultural motifs to approximate the cultural spaces of Muslim northern Nigerians – for example, love triangles and forced marriage issues. Essentially, they share similar cultural mind-sets.

As Krings concludes in his study of Hausa video filmmakers, “exploring the inter-connectedness of the regional video industries of Nigeria might be a fruitful direction for further research” (“Conversion on Screen” 64). However, such interconnectedness would have to negotiate the myriad of cultural, ethnic, and religious barriers that have characterized the Nigerian nation. Thus, cultural resonance and a shared emotional grammar explain why young Hausa filmmakers, spoon-fed Hindi film fare from birth, openly embrace the Hindi film motif, even if aware that the cultural and religious realities of their society are totally different from those of India and why they reject the much geographically closer southern Nigerian film influences.

#### NOTE

1. See Agi for a comprehensive treatment of interethnic and interreligious conflicts in Nigeria.

#### WORKS CITED

- Adamu, Abdalla Uba, Yusuf Adamu, and Umar Faruk Jibril, eds. *Hausa Home Videos: Technology, Economy, and Society*. Kano, Nigeria: Center for Hausa Cultural Studies, 2004.
- Adejunmobi, Moradewun. “English and

- the Audience of an African Popular Culture: The Case of Nigerian Video Film." *Cultural Critique* 50 (Winter 2002): 74–103.
- Agi, S. P. I. *Political History of Religious Violence in Nigeria*. Calabar, Nigeria: Pigiassiann & Grace International, 1998.
- Baker, Oscar. Interview. *Fim Magazine* (July 2002): 28.
- Barrot, Pierre, ed. *Nollywood: The Video Phenomenon in Nigeria*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008.
- Behrend, Heike. "The Titanic in Northern Nigeria: Transnational Image Flows and Local Interventions." *Transmission Image: Visual Translation and Cultural Agency*. Ed. Birgit Mersmann and Alexandra Schneider. New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009. 224–39.
- Canby, Vincent. "Movies Lost in Translation." *New York Times*, February 12, 1989, B1+.
- Ebewo, Patrick J. "The Emerging Video Film Industry in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects." *Journal of Film and Video* 59.3 (2007): 46–57.
- Ekwuazi, Hyginus. "The Hausa Video Film: The Call of the Muezzin." *Film International* 5.4 (2007): 64–70.
- Forrest, Jennifer, and Leonard R. Koos. "Reviewing Remakes: An Introduction." *Dead Ringers: The Remake in Theory and Practice*. Ed. Jennifer Forrest and Leonard R. Koos. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002. 1–36.
- Ganti, Tejaswini. "'And Yet My Heart Is Still Indian': The Bombay Film Industry and the (H)Indianization of Hollywood." *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*. Ed. Faye D. Ginsburg, Lila Abu-Lughod, and Brian Larkin. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002. 281–300.
- Haynes, Jonathan, ed. *Nigerian Video Films*. Rev. ed. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000.
- Haynes, Jonathan, and Onookome Okome. "Evolving Popular Media: Nigerian Video Films." *Research in African Literatures* 29.3 (1998): 106–28.
- Hugo, Pieter. *Nollywood*. Munich: Prestel, 2009.
- Jenkins, Mark. "Hooray for Nollywood! A Showcase of New Nigerian Video Films." *Washington City Paper*, February 4, 2005. Web.
- Johnson, Dul. "Culture and Art in Hausa Video Film." *Nigerian Video Films*. Ed. Jonathan Haynes. Jos: Nigerian Film Corporation, 1997. 99–104.
- Karami, Baba. Personal interview. Kano, Nigeria, March 22, 2009.
- Kiefer, Jonathan. "Hooked on Nollywood." *Utne Reader* 139 (January–February 2007): 32–34.
- Krings, Matthias. "Conversion on Screen: A Glimpse at Popular Islamic Imaginations in Northern Nigeria." *Africa Today* 54 (2008): 45–68.
- . "Muslim Martyrs and Pagan Vampires: Popular Video Films and the Propagation of Religion in Northern Nigeria." *Postscripts* 1.2–3 (2005): 183–205.
- Larkin, Brian. "Hausa Dramas and the Rise of Video Culture in Nigeria." *Nigerian Video Film*. Ed. Jonathan Haynes. Jos: Nigerian Film Corporation, 1997. 105–25.
- . "Indian Films and Nigerian Lovers: Media and the Creation of Parallel Modernities." *Africa* 67.3 (1997): 406–40.
- Leitch, Thomas M. "Twice-Told Tales: The Rhetoric of the Remake." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 18.3 (1990): 138–49.
- McCall, John C. "Nollywood Confidential: The Unlikely Rise of Nigerian Video Film." *Transition Magazine* 13.1 (2004): 98–109.
- National Film and Video Censors Board. *Film and Video Directory in Nigeria*. Abuja, Nigeria: National Film and Video Censors Board, 2002.
- Noy, Frederick. "Hausa Video & Sharia Law." *Nollywood: The Video Phenomenon*

- in Nigeria*. Ed. Pierre Barrot. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. 78–89.
- Offord, Lydia D. "Straight Outta Nigeria: Nollywood and the Emergence of Nigerian Video Film (Theory); Lost and Turned Out (Production)." Master's thesis, Long Island University, 2009.
- Okome, Onookome. "Introducing the Special Issue on West African Cinema: Africa at the Movies." *Postcolonial Text* 3.2 (2007): n. pag. Web.
- Omoera, Osakue Stevenson. "Video Film and African Social Reality: A Consideration of Nigeria-Ghana Block of West Africa." *Journal of Human Ecology* 25.3 (2009): 193–99.
- Onishi, Norimitsu. "Step Aside, L.A. and Bombay, for Nollywood." *New York Times*, September 16, 2002. Web.
- Rafferty, Terence. "Sisters and Brothers: 'Diabolique' Redux, and 'A Family Thing.'" *New Yorker*, April 1, 1996, 102–3.
- Sanders, Julie. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Sherazade. "Excellent Nollywood Extravaganza by the Well Lauded Tade Ogidan." Review. *Internet Movie Database*. April 2006. Web.
- Steinglass, Matt. "Film: When There's Too Much of a Not-Very-Good Thing." *New York Times*, May 26, 2002.
- Uchenna, Onuzulike. "Nollywood: The Emergence of the Nigerian Video Film Industry and Its Representation of Nigerian Culture." Master's thesis, Clark University, 2007.
- Waxman, Sharon. "A Matter of Deja View: French Cry Faux over U.S. Film Remakes." *Washington Post*, July 15, 1993, C1+.
- Yahaya, Halima Adamu. "Jamila. Ba Al'adunmu Kenan Ba." *Fim Magazine* (May 2001): 41.
- Yahuza, Bashir. "Holy Law: Da Dan Gari Kan Ci Gari!" *Fim Magazine* (May 2001): 40.

#### FILMOGRAPHY

- Almara*. Dir. I. Nwanko. Iyke More Investments (Nigeria). 2000.
- Auduga*. Dir. Abba El-Mustapha. Baba Karami Movies (Nigeria). 2004.
- Blackjack*. Dir. John Woo. WCG Entertainment Productions (United States). 1998.
- Dan Adam Butulu I*. Dir. Abdulkareem Mohammed. Iyke More Investments (Nigeria). 2001.
- Dangerous Twins*. Dir. Tade Ogidan. OGD Pictures (Nigeria). 2003.
- Friend of the Family*, 2. Dir. Fred Olen Ray. Andrew Stevens Entertainment and Royal Oaks Entertainment (United States). 1996.
- Ghulam*. Dir. Vikram Bhatt. Vishesh Films (India). 1998.
- Holy Law*. Dir. Ejike Asiegbu. Kingstream Productions (Nigeria). 2001.
- Jalli*. Dir. Hafizu Bello. Kainuwa Motion Image (Nigeria). 2002.
- Kauna*. Dir. M. Balarabe. Movie World (Nigeria). 2001.
- Mushkila*. Dir. Aminu Bala. Bright Star Entertainment (Nigeria). 2001.
- National Anthem*. Dir. Prince Emeka Ani. Great Movies (Nigeria). 2004.
- On the Waterfront*. Dir. Elia Kazan. Columbia Pictures Corporation (United States). 1954.
- Predator*. Dir. John McTierman. 20th Century Fox (United States). 1987.
- Salma Salma Duduf*. Dir. Bala Anas Babinlata. Mazari Film Mirage (Nigeria). 2001.

- Silent Witness*. Dir. Mike Barker and Ben Bolt. BBC (UK). 1996.
- Sitanda*. Dir. Izu Ojukwu. Amstel Malta Box Office (Nigeria). 2006.
- Takidi*. Dir. A. A. Sheriff. Ibrahimawa Productions (Nigeria). 2001.
- Tarzomar Shahada*. Dir. A. Amge. Amge Video Treasury (Nigeria). 2002.
- Tsaro*. Dir. M. L. Jalingo. Kaja Productions (Nigeria). 2001.
- Turmin Danya*. Dir. Salisu Galadanci. Tumbin Giwa Film Productions (Nigeria). 1990.
- What Lies Beneath*. Dir. Robert Zemeckis. DreamWorks Pictures (United States). 2000.