Transgressing Transethnic Boundaries in African Cinema: The Appropriation of Nollywood Christian Video Films by Muslim Hausa Filmmakers in Northern Nigeria

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Introduction

The cultural differences between the predominantly Muslim northern Nigeria and equally predominantly Christian southern Nigeria are so vast as to make the two regions separate countries. 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. In Muslim northern Nigeria the main dominant ethnic group are the Hausa. The cinematic influences of filmmakers from the Muslim northern Nigeria tended to be from South Asian Bollywood film culture in which Hindi films are usually appropriated and domesticated by Hausa filmmakers for local consumption. The aversion to the Christian religious culture of southern Nigeria created a chasm where southern Nigerian films, referred to as "Nigerian films" (because they are predominantly made in English, the official Nigerian language) are virtually avoided on a mass scale in northern Nigeria, and often used as examples of decadence in African cinema.

The booming Hausa video film industry in Nigeria attracted southern Nigerian filmmakers to collaborate with non-Hausa but Muslim video filmmakers based in Kano, the commercial hub of northern Nigeria. These collaborations were short-lived, having been curtailed due to radically different mindsets that exist between northern and southern Nigerian filmmakers, particularly on the issues of cultural and religious identities. Southern Nigerian films that portray southern filmmaker's understanding of Muslim culture and identity were not received well in northern Nigeria.

However, with the increasingly popularity of Nigerian films not only in Nigeria but also in Africa and Caribbean, as well as Black diaspora across the world, more experimental Hausa filmmakers started toying with the idea of appropriating and re-working southern Nigerian films to make them more "palatable" for Muslim audiences in northern Nigeria. In so doing, they transgress the ethnic and religious boundaries that separate the two areas of northern Nigeria.

In this paper I look at how Muslim Hausa video filmmakers in northern Nigeria overcome their cultural and religious prejudices and rework southern Nigerian video films for their client Muslim audience. In particular, I look at the appropriation styles used and analyze the selectivity in the appropriation methodology adopted, and what informs the selective process within the context of transnational styles of cultural appropriation in popular culture.

I first look at how the distinctive Eastern character of Muslim Hausa films evolved over the years, paying particular attention to British colonial influence on the

development of antecedent Hausa literature. In the second section I look at the relationship between northern and southern Nigerian film cultures and how Nollywood made inroads into the Hausa video film industry, and how a bridge is created between the Eastern focus of Hausa entertainment mindset and the Nigerian/African focus of Nollywood. Within this tradition of difference, I then analyze how a Hausa filmmaker, Baba Karami, appropriated a Nollywood film, *Dangerous Twins* as Hausa *Auduga* (Cotton). In this, and based on extensive interview and discussions with the producer (who in Hausa video film industry is considered the creative focus, rather than the director), I examine his technique in the appropriation process and how this technique reflects the religious and cultural divide between northern and southern Nigerian filming mindsets.

In my methodology, I chose to concur with the strategy adopted by Ganti (2002) in her analysis of "(H)indianization" (sic) of Hollywood *On the Water Front* as Hindi film, *Ghulam*, in which more emphasis was laid on the relationship between the filmmaker as a marketer and thus his audience; rather than focusing on issues of intertextuality, narrative or genre in the appropriation of the Nollywood film by Hausa filmmakers.

The Eastern Focus in Hausa Literature

The modern literary antecedents in Muslim northern Nigeria were established by the British colonial administration which openly encouraged appropriation of literature from the Middle East. The rationale behind this literary strategy is informed by the view that there is a cultural resonance between Middle Eastern Islamic social norms and those of the Muslim Hausa. In the absence of any non-religious literary reading materials, the British needed to create a bases for encouraging the few Muslim Hausa intellectuals schooled in the Western tradition to translate selected Middle Eastern folktales into Hausa for school curricula.

Thus in 1929 the British colonial administration set up a Translation Bureau initially in Kano, but later moved to Zaria in 1931 and becoming the Literature Bureau in 1935 (Hayatu 1991). The first Director of the Bureau was Mr. Whiting, although he was replaced later by Dr. Rupert East. The main objectives of the Bureau were to translate books and materials from Arabic and English, write books in Hausa, produce textbooks for schools, and to encourage indigenous authors.

Mr. Whiting's tenure saw the Hausanized (Roman script) versions of local histories in Arabic texts, notably *Tarikh Arbab Hadha al-balad al-Musamma Kano*, Anon, the oft quoted *Kano Chronicles* as translated by H. R. Palmer and published in the *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol 38 (1908) pp. 59-98 and re-published in his *Sudanese Memoirs* (3 volumes: London, 1928), 3: 92-132. The Hausa translation was *Hausawa Da Makwabtansu* (East 1932).

The establishment of the Translation Bureau ensured, through a literary competition in 1933, that a whole new set of reading materials, and consequently literary style, was created for the Muslim Hausa. This yielded the first clutch of now Hausa *boko* (modern writing in Roman alphabet) literature written in classical Hausa (*Ruwan Bagaja*, *Shehu Umar*, *Gandoki*, *Idon Matambayi, Jiki Magayi*) published in 1935. Since the scholastic tradition of the Hausa has always been the preserve of the *mallam* (teacher, scholar) class; consequently even in popular literature the fountainheads,

being carved out of that class, reflect their antecedent scholastic traditions. Consequently, these novels were written mainly by scholars, some, like Abubakar Imam who wrote *Ruwan Bagaja*, were young (he was 22 when he wrote the novel), with deep Islamic roots (who actually took some convincing to even agree to write in the *boko*—Romanized—scripts in the first place, considering such activity as dilution of their Islamic scholarship). As Dr. Rupert East, the arch-Svengali of the Hausa classical literature, exasperatedly noted,

> The first difficulty was to persuade these *Malamai* (Islamic scholars) that the thing was worth doing. The influence of Islam, superimposed on the Hamitic strain in the blood of the Northern Nigerian, produces an extremely serious-minded type of person. The art of writing, moreover, being intimately connected in his mind with his religion, is not to be treated lightly. Since the religious revival at the beginning of the last (19th) century, nearly all the original work produced by Northern Nigerian authors has been either purely religious or written with a strong religious motive (East 1936:351-352).

The main focus of the Translation Bureau was just that—translation of literary materials works using the sparkling brand new Hausanized Roman script. It was only when Dr. Rupert East took over in 1932 that it acquired the persona of what Nikolai Dobronravine (2002) refers to as *Istanci* and became devoted to wholesale translation of works from far and near (although the further, the better because nearer literary communities, both geographically and culturally such as The Sudan and Egypt were ignored) into Hausa in order to generate reading material, more essentially to enable colonial officers to polish their practice of Hausa language for communication, than to empower the "natives" with enriched literary heritage. As Yahaya (1989:80) apologetically argued,

> The decision to set up a translation Bureau was probably informed by the general belief that translating from other languages into a given language enriches the lexicon of the language, its literature and culture.

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

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

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

It is this book, *Magana Jari Ce* that became the unalloyed classic of Hausa literature, despite the heavy dosage of foreign elements it contained from books as diverse as

Alfu Layla wa Laylatun, *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, *Bahrul Adab*, *Hans Andersen Fairy Tales*, *Aesop Fables*, *The Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales*, *Tales from Shakespeare*, and *Raudhul Jinan* (Abdallah 1998).

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

Thus the Eastern focus on Hausa literature created ready template for the adsorption of media influences from the East. Consequently when resident Lebanese merchants in Muslim northern Nigeria established cinemas, they eventually started to import predominantly Hindi films and screen them, especially from 1960, after independence from Britain. The local audiences immediately accepted these films because of what they see as cultural similarities between the domestic spaces shown in the films and their own cultural realities. Both Indian and Hausa societies share common elements of either inherited or adopted Islamic social behaviors, especially in inter-personal relationships. Women in Hindi films are shown covered in *mayafi* (hijab), with lots of jewellery. Men are shown in long dresses, and in some of the earlier historical films, in turbans – cultural icons readily identifiable among the Muslims of northern Nigeria. As Larkin (1997b:407) therefore argues,

> 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.

Thus Indian films are popular with the Muslim Hausa because they provide 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.

The Hausa Video Film Industry

Commercial Hausa video film production started in 1990 with the production of *Turmin Danya* in Kano by a group of Hausa TV soap-opera stars. From 1990 to 1997 about 53 video dramas were produced by both amateurs (with no focus on selling their production, rather showing them at video parlors or corner shops) and semi-professionals who had some organized system of marketing through drama clubs. From 1996 the Nigerian Film and Censorships Board started recording the volume of production of video films in Nigeria. Figure 1 shows the volume output of Hausa video films from 1998 to 2008, based on data from both the National Film and Video Censors Board, Abuja (1998-2003), and the Kano State Censorships Board (2004-2008).

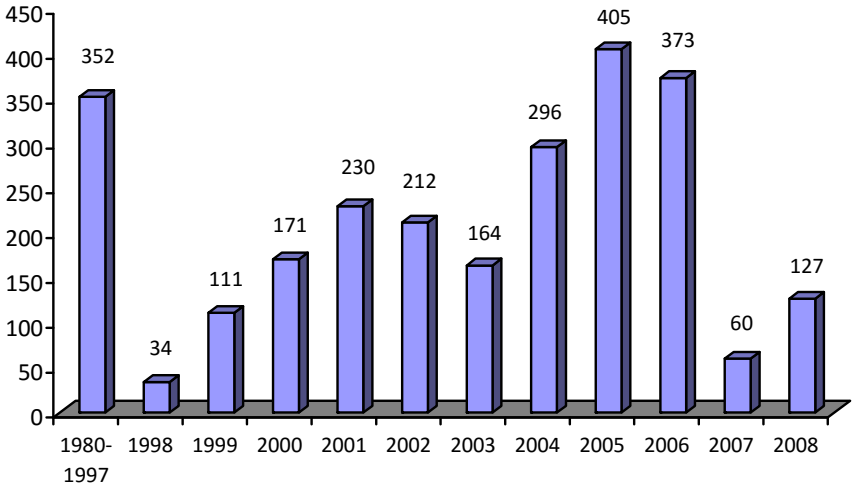


Fig 1: Volume of Hausa Video Films, 1998-2008

Between 1980 to 1997 a total of 352 Hausa video films were allegedly produced, although many of them were not listed anywhere except with the producers who announced their production in interviews in *Tauraruwa*, *Fim*, *Mumtaz*, and *Garkuwa* magazines—the main Hausa-language popular culture magazines in northern Nigeria. However, the popularly of the genre is reflected by the fact that in 2005 only a total of 405 Hausa video films were released – eclipsing the 352 produced in the 16 years from 1980 to 1997.

The Kano State Government re-introduced the Shari'a penal code in 2000, but its implication for the film industry was only felt in 2001 when the Kano State government established a Censorship Board—the first of its kind at the State level in Nigeria—and actually banned filmmaking in Kano for about six months to "sanitize" the industry. This was considered necessary the State government in view of the increasing reactions from the culturalist establishments about the non-representativeness of Hausa culture and Islam in the Hausa video films of the period that had started taking the form of Westernized Hindi films.

The ban is reflected therefore in a drop in production up to 2003. However, when it became clear that the enforcement of the censorship rules was less strict than expected, production shot up from 2004, reaching its highest in 2005, although dipping slightly in 2006. In July 2007 a privately shot phone-porn video clip featuring a prominent Hausa video film actress in a raw penetrative sex act reignited the censorship specter in Muslim Hausa popular culture in Kano State. Both the industry and the State Government became worried about the image of filmmakers in a Muslim polity, especially the women who were seen as little more than prostitutes due to the tight-fitting clothes they wear during the song and dance routines that have become iconic in Hausa video films. As such new regulations were introduced that saw the banning of the entire filmmaking in the State for a year – which is reflected in the low volume of films produced in 2007. By the middle of 2008 the Kano State government had produced a series of tough guidelines on film production in the State which very few filmmakers could meet, even though there was a rise in production

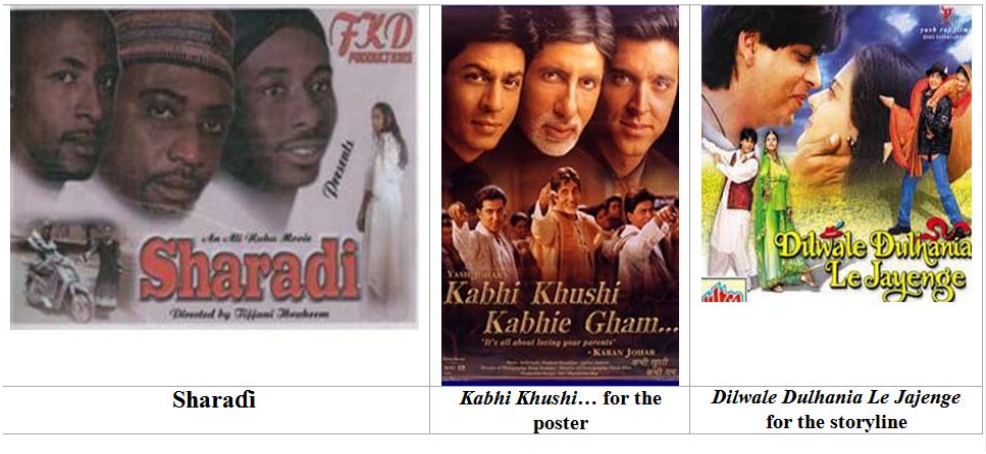
from the previous year.

The first commercial Hausa video film, *Turmin Danya* (1990, dir. Salisu Galadanci) relates the story of a prince kidnapped as a baby and dumped in a far away forest. He is found by a hunter who adopts him as a son, not knowing his royal heritage. When he grows up, the prince falls in love with the local princess – whose parents oppose the idea of their marriage thinking that he is from a commoner stock. The entire film revolves around the intrigues of identity and class differences in a traditional society. Combining such factors as *sarauta* (traditional Hausa emiral authority) and traditional settings, *Turmin Danya* became an instant cult hit in the history of Hausa video film industry, and spawned off many boy-meets-girl-parents-object imitations.

The success of this first video film was more on its portrayal of daily realities of many Muslim Hausa women in forced marriage situations, than its cinematic techniques. It, however, opened the floodgates for imitation themes. Thus the Hausa video film became essentially a love story in many dimensions—because that is what the Hausa film audience, mainly women, crave for.

In 1998 a Hausa language magazine, *Tauraruwa* (Star—and modeled after the Bollywood magazine, *Stardust*) was established in Kano city to provide news and information about the new emergent stars. In 1999 the magazine in its 3rd edition (August 1998, page 20) created a column labeled 'Kanywood' which discusses the goings on in the Kano film industry – thus creating a label for an African film industry three years before Norimitsu Onishi created the term 'Nollywood' for the southern Nigerian film industry in the heading of an article published in *The New York Times* of 16th September, 2002.

Thus by 1998 a Hausa video film industry had been formed with three main storyline characteristics – *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 the single husband), and song and dance (over 98% of Hausa video films must contain at least two to three song and dance routines). All these elements were directly copied from Hindi cinema which the Hausa had been exposed to through Television stations in cosmopolitan cities of Kano, Kaduna and Jos, and also cinema theater releases of Hindi commercial cinema directly imported by Lebanese residents in northern Nigeria. So much do Hindi films provide inspirational template for Hausa video films that at least 120 Hindi films were appropriated in one way or other into Hausa video film (Adamu 2006). Even the artwork—posters and CD or VHS tape package design is often structured to copy either an Hindi equivalent of the film, or a visual closeness to another Hindi film. This is illustrated in Plate 1, which shows the Hausa video film, *Sharadi*, with a poster work taken from *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*, although the storyline is from *Dilwale Dulhainia Le Jajenge*.



Sharadi	*Kabhi Khushi…* for the poster	*Dilwale Dulhania Le Jajenge* for the storyline

Plate 1. Hindi-to-Hausa Film posters

By mid 1990s the Hindi cinema changed and departing from its cultural roots, adopted a more globalized blend of Hindu religion and Americanization. As Jyotika (2003:2) observes:

> Despite its permeating Indian culture, Hindi cinema's stylistic conventions are paradoxically in complete disjunction from everyday reality: the films use dialogues instead of speech, costumes rather than clothes, sets and exotic settings, and lavish song and dance routines—hardly everyday familiar surroundings. Within the mise-enscène, this nonspecificity of address distances Hindi films from "authentic" portrayals of Indian life. Regional markers of costume, dress, and culture are either erased or deployed arbitrarily, and elements from different regions are mixed to figure as signs of cosmopolitan culture that account for a particular type of kitsch, the insignia of Hindi films. Even though they abide by other realist conventions, such as cause-and effect linear narratives, continuity editing, and spatial/temporal unity, the films show scant regard for looking "authentic" or bearing a similitude to realism.

Commenting further on the production values and styles of Hindi films, Ganti (2002:48) points out that

> The dominant tone about the Bombay film industry and filmmaking in general is that most films produced in India are escapist, frivolous, formulaic; for "mere entertainment" and not "meaningful" or "artistic" enough.

When the Hausa video film became a huge commercial success from 2000, Hausa video filmmakers attributed the success to their tilt towards the same direction as Hindi filmmakers. Thus Hausa video film industry merely echoes the new Hindi film production values—targeting themselves at non-cerebral part of the market with a strong dosage of surrealism spiced with lots of mixed gender song and dance which often include structured choreography. Subsequently, in Hausa video films, the song and dance are also central to the story, not the plot elements, as for instance in *Soyayya*, *Gyale*, and *Tutar So*, which had more than four songs each. *Taurari* became the first Hausa video film with almost 10 songs. Thus in Hausa videos, as in Hindi films, songs are,

> part of an elaborate system of allusions to, rather than explicit portrayals of, sexuality and physical intimacy in Hindi films as filmmakers navigate the perceived moral conservatism of their audiences, a swell as the representational boundaries set by the Indian state through its

> censorship codes. Songs are the primary vehicles for representing fantasy, desire, and passion, so any form of sexual activity in a Hollywood film would most likely be transformed into a song sequence in Hindi film (ibid).

The predominance of song and dance routines in Hausa video films is shown in Fig. 2 which indicate the numbers of Hausa video films with song and dance routines as a main element in officially registered Hausa video films from 1998 to 2000.

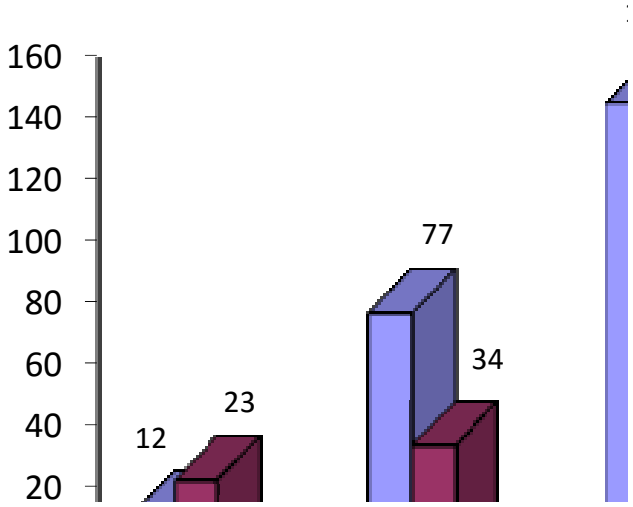


Fig. 2: Song and dance occurrences in Hausa video films

Thus to it is necessary to understand the antecedent literary inspirations of the Hausa video film before we can begin to understand whether a transethnic collaboration and appropriation can work effectively.

Transethnic Carpetbaggers in the Hausa Video Film Industry

Right from the start, it seemed to have been agreed that "Nigerian films" representation would be made by Yoruba and Igbo language video films — to the exclusion of the Hausa video film which was not seen as a serious affair, even after it had become the *second* largest indigenous language video industry in Nigeria in 2002. The NFVCB for instance, approved 616 Hausa videos for showing in 2002, after Yoruba which had 1,189, and far ahead of Igbo with 44 (NFVCB 2002:166). As Krings (2008:64) 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.

Of the various researchers (e.g. Haynes and Okome, 1998, Adejunmobi, 2002; McCall, 2004) and journalists (e.g. Steinglass, 2002; Onishi, 2002) who covered early Nollywood phenomena, only Brian Larkin (1997a) and to some extent Dhul Johnson (1997) paid attention to the development of the video film industry in the north of Nigeria. Indeed Johnson went on to say that between 1990-1997 "the Kano-Kaduna axis has produced a total of not more than fifty" (Johnson 1997:101) video films. As pointed out by Haynes (2006:514),

> …the level of production of Nigerian videos is so high that it is nearly impossible to have a comprehensive view of the whole rapidly changing phenomenon, and inevitably many important films and filmmakers will be left out of the discussion. A particularly glaring omission (in this essay) is any mention of the numerous Hausa films made in northern Nigeria, which are routinely excluded from discussions of 'Nigerian' videos, by which is normally meant those produced by the southern Nigerian video industry in English, Yoruba, and to a lesser extent Igbo, Pidgin, and other languages.

By 2007 Onookome Okome has popularized the term "Nollywood" to refer to "West African Cinema" in a special edition of *Post Colonial Text* (Vol 3, No 2), as well as selling the idea at the African Films Conference, held in November 2007 at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champagne, U.S.

Thus far the video film industry in Nigeria has clearly defined turf and territory. Both the northern and southern parts of the country (covering the three major languages of Yoruba and Igbo in the south, and Hausa in the north) were actively engaged. However, they were mutually non-legible to each other. This was essentially because they operate on virtually opposing cultural mindsets—making the emergence of a truly "Nigerian cultural film" almost impossible. While the Hausa video film can be stereotyped as essentially a love triangle tied together by a religious theme of acceptance of fate (*kaddara*), the southern Nigerian video film has a more eclectic focus. According to Nosa Owens-Ibie (1998:1):

> the storylines of popular videos are indicators of a trend which affects films by Igbo and Yoruba producers alike, or use either language with or without English sub-titles. Popular themes which recur are sex, infidelity, fraud, violence, intrigue, conflict and other such subjects which are designed to entertain, excite, provide escapism and appeal to the emotions. The bottom line is commercial appeal and profit.

It is these themes that make the Nollywood film anathema to Muslim Hausa of northern Nigeria—even while accepting the *same* themes in Hollywood films. Thus to the general and average Muslim Hausa, Nigerian films, referred to as *Finafinan 'Yan Kudu* (southern Nigerian films) are basically southern Nigerian and Christian—and thus to be avoided as they contain embedded cultural icons that run counter to his own cultural norms and values.

Although ignored by critics and commentators, the Hausa video film industry nevertheless attracted the attention of Nollywood producers with either northern roots (for instance having studied in the north, or just based in the north) or interests in creating a hybrid northern film for at least northern markets. Thus when it became clear that there is a need to "reach out across the river" to the north, three specific strategies were adopted to ensure a Nollywood presence in northern Nigeria. First was the inclusion of "internal outsiders" in collaborative filmmaking as well as thematic focus of Nollywood films with or without northern-based actors; secondly, southern Nigerian film investment in Hausa films with clearly northern, rather than southern audiences in mind, through using the same motifs northern audiences are used to, but blended with southern ethos; third was the appropriation of Nollywood films as Hausa films and I will focus on the appropriation of *Dangerous Twins* (2004, dir. Tade Ogidan) as Hausa *Auduga* (2004, dir. El-Mustapha Abba).

Internal Outsiders and Internal Dangers

The first involved casting northern actors in some Nollywood films with northern audiences in view. These northern actors usually have some southern roots—principally parentage. Indeed, it is these elements that provided for the radical transformation of the Hausa video film industry from 2000 when they took over and changed its focus from the staid cultural focus of earlier Hausa video films (1990-1998) to Bollywood templates relying on song and dance routines. As analyzed by *Mumtaz* magazine:

> "Whenever you mention Hausa video film 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 video film are true ethnic Hausa. The ethnic tribes that overrun the Hausa video film industry include Kanuri, Igbos and most significant of all, the Yoruba. In a table we drew, about 42% of the Hausa video film 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." *Mumtaz*, April 2001:12.

These actors have, to all intents and purposes, become Hausa, having been born in cosmopolitan cities of Kano, Jos and Kaduna, speak the language with the fluency of natives, are Muslims and rarely use their own native language—except in close family settings. According to Ahmad Al-Kanawy (2005), one of the early founders of the Hausa video film industry, the ethnic profiling of 24 of the more famous Hausa video film actresses, shows the following patterns according to their predominant ethnic background as:

> *Yoruba* (Hauwa Ali Dodo, Mansura Isa, Fati Sulaiman, Aina'u Ade, Wasila Isma'il, Zuwaira Abdussalam, Muhibbat Abdussalam, Zainab Abubakar, Bilkisu Jibrin, Zainab (Zahiyya) Umar, A'isha Ibrahim), *Igbo* (Hajara Abubakar, Fati Abubakar, no relation), *Igbira* (Hafsatu Shehu, Hannatu Umar), *Babur-Maiduguri* (Saima Muhammad, Safiyya Musa, Hauwa Maina); *Kanuri* (Rukayya Umar Santa, Rahama Isa, Halisa Muhammad), *Tuareg* (Tamachek) Maryam Umar (Mushaqqa), *Zuru* (A'isha B. Umar), *Auchi-Benin* (Hadiza Kabara).

These non-Hausa elements strive vary hard to hide their actual ethnic identities and invariably accept roles of modernized Hausa urban youth in the video films, rather than appearing in traditional Hausa or religious character portrayals. Even their dialogs were restricted to urban Hausa lexicon, devoid of any references to classical Hausa vocabulary typical of rural dwellers that might cause problems in pronunciation.

The few Hausa-speaking video actors who appeared in Nollywood films were Hindatu Bashir (*Showdown*, *Eleventh Hour*), Ali Nuhu (*Showdown*, *Holy Law, Unchained*, *Sitanda*, *The Seat of the Caliphate*, *My Brother and Death*, *Beautiful Soul*), Sani Danja (*Eleventh Hour*), and Kabiru Mohammed Suleja (*Battle for Princes*). No notable Nollywood actor actually featured in any Hausa video film, although northern director Sani Mu'azu and cameraman Umar Gotip, of northern origin, within the southern video industry.

Yet even cases where northern Nigerian Muslim Hausa appeared in Nollywood films it was claimed they were used to portray Muslim Hausa negatively—either as stark illiterates, corrupt officials or vicious military dictators, or playing the roles of *maigadi* (house security guard). As analyzed by Koki (2003:22):

> In *The Senator*, a Hausa government official is portrayed as a corrupt crook. *The Stubborn Grasshopper* and *The World Is Mine* are bad portrayals of the former Head of State, late Gen. Sani Abaca. In *The Police Officer*, the hand of a Sokoto butcher was chopped off on allegations of stealing a goat, and there was expectation that the other will be chopped off the following Christmas because he will still again. (Koki 2003:22).

Further, as recorded by a Muslim Hausa viewer of Nollywood films in the north:

> "I am saddened by the way some Igbo filmmakers come to our town and insult us – and yet viewers would even say they are better than our own Kano filmmakers. Unpatriotic (to Hausa culture) people such as Ciroki, Dan Ibro and Sani S.K. betrayed Hausa people because of financial gains. They are not patriotic to northern Nigeria. I am reminding them that northerners should not be doing this. This is because to the Igbos the Hausaman is illiterate, that is why they always portray him in their films as illiterate." Salisu Suleiman, *Fim* Magazine letter's page, *Fim*, January 2001:12.

In *Jamila* (2001, dir. Izu Ojukwu) the reviewer observed that in the film, the Hausa person is portrayed as

> Simpleton, illiterate and still living in dark-ages. For instance, in the film (*Jamila*) it is shown that a father and a son vying for the love of the same girl, very well aware of each one's affection for the girl. And showing a (Hausa) character reading a newspaper upside down and wrongly reporting what he read until corrected by a white man who appeared as a character in the film. Even though this scene was added for amusement, it never less reveals a hidden agenda against the Hausa in Nigerian (Nollywood) films". (Yahaya 2001:41).

However, nowhere is the north-south divide clearly apparent in Nigerian film industry than in three Nollywood films—*Holy Law (Shari'a)*, *National Anthem* and *Osama bin La*.

Holy Law (2001, dir. Ejike Asiegbu) drew such a barrage of criticism among Muslim Hausa due to its portrayal of Shari'a laws then being implemented in northern Nigeria that it caused credibility problems for the Hausa and Hausa-speaking video film stars who appeared in it. It was released just a couple of years after most northern Nigerian states had re-introduced the Shari'a penal code from 1999—a process which drew a lot of controversy in Nigeria. According to a review of the *Holy Law (Shari'a)* by Yahuza (2001:40), the film created problems for the interpretation of Shari'a in two ways:

> First, a thief is caught and instead of being taken to *Alkali* (Shari'a judge), he is taken to the *Sarki* (chief) who adjudicated that the thief's hand should be cut off. A panga is used to cut off the hand. It was not indicated the theft done, nor were witnesses brought to attest to his guilt.
>
> Secondly, a character is caught drinking alcohol. From his dress and name it is clear he is a Christian, since he even has a cross on a chain around his neck. He is taken to the chief for "Shari'a" punishment – where he is lashed. During the beatings he starts raining abuse on the chief and his courtiers – as well as the Shari'a itself, saying, "Fuck you, man, fuck your Shari'a thing, fuck you" (Yahuza 2001:40).

He concluded his review by stating that:

> "Mandawari and Ali Nuhu (the Muslims who represented northern Nigeria in the film) should repent because whether they know it or not, *Holy Law*: *Shari'a* has used them to disgrace Islam and Muslims. And they should stop appearing in Nigerian (Nollywood) films" (ibid).

Another correspondent in the letters page of *Fim* shares similar opinions on the participation of the two northern Nigerian Muslim actors in *Holy Law*:

> As Muslims and actors (referring to the two northern Muslims who appeared in the film) who claim that their films are to educate, sermonize and entertain, they have made a big mistake in the film (*Holy Law*), because they were unfair to the entire Muslim community. Here they are (as Muslims) allowing a scene where someone's hand is cut off with a machete in public. This is a big mistake. Those who don't know Shari'a will assume that this is how justice under the Shari'a is dispensed. Thus this particular film has not achieved the function of educating. Those who don't know (Shari'a) will assume our religion is that of madmen. This is injurious to our religion because this is not how it said we should dispense this particular punishment – and our Muslim actors have betrayed us (by appearing in the film, thus agreeing to the scene); after all it is not compulsory for them to do the film, and if they tell the producers they don't agree to the scene, they will not probably have done it. Mohammed Salisu, *Fim* Magazine Letter's page, *Fim*, May 2001:12.

Almara (2000, dir. I. Nwanko) shared similar fate to *Holy Law* in its depiction of Shari'a laws of northern Nigeria. *Almara* is an attempt to correct the judicial errors in *Holy Law*—by taking the case to the judge (Alkali), rather than the Chief, as done in *Holy Law*. It uses northern Muslim actors, and narrates the story of a rich *Alhaji* (powerful person in Nollywood parlance)

> "…who impregnated his wife's junior sister. When they reported him to the *Alkali* (the Shari'a judge), he denied it—and accused them of attempting to spoil his name. They were punished with 80 lashes for concocting a lie against him ('kazafi'), while he got away scot-free…This seems to be showing that the Shari'a being implemented in northern Nigerian courts is false, since it does not seem to apply to rich and powerful—only to the poor. But then we should not be surprised at this turn of events in the film since the producer is not a Muslim." Malama Gambo Dauda, Letters Page, *Bidiyo*, August 2002:2.

The appearance of *Holy Law* in northern Nigeria prompted the production of a spate of Hausa video films aimed at countering what was perceived as "anti-Shari'a" messages in the Nollywood films. The video films that attempted these included *Du'ai*, *Maraba Da Shari'a* and *Tafarki*.

The second Nollywood film to ruffle Muslim Hausa sensibilities was *National Anthem* (2005, dir. Prince Emeka Ani). It does not have any northern or Muslim actor, but deals with the desirable ideal of national unity of the various religious and ethnic groups in Nigeria. It also drew a lot of flak in northern Nigeria because of its depiction of cultural and religious stereotyping of Muslim Hausa and Islamic religious practices as interpreted by non-Muslim actors. A particularly acerbic review of the video film was posted at an Internet discussion forum on Hausa video films on 22nd December 2005. The reviewer first took exception to the cover of the video film which shows one of the actors holding a copy of what seemed to be the Qur'an. Plate 2 shows the video film cover.

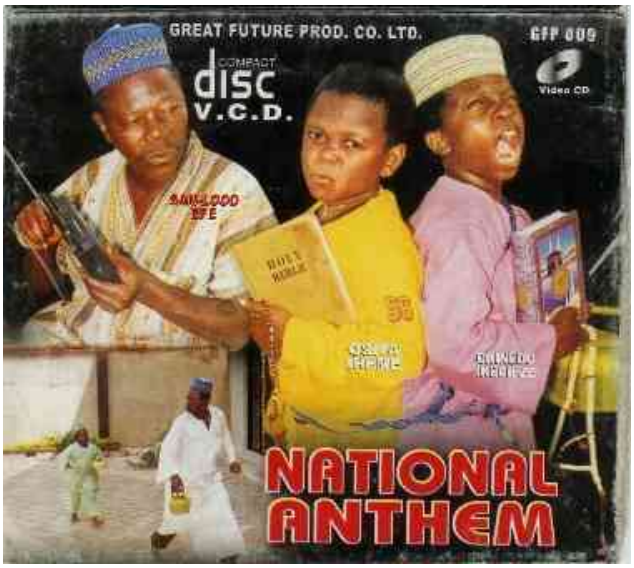


Plate 2: *National Anthem*

As the reviewer wrote:

> The Qur'an is a holy book, and none should touch it except those purified, even among Muslims, let alone a pagan who hates Islam and Muslims in totality.
> http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/Finafinan_Hausa/message/15778?source=1&var=1&l=1

The reviewer also claimed that the video film portrayed Muslim Hausa as being only good as security guards ("Maigadi") and shoe-shiners, plus a liberal dose of alleged abuses of Islamic ritual prayers as depicted by the Christian actors.

The third Nollywood film to also create misunderstanding with Hausa Muslim audiences in the north of Nigeria was *Osama bin La* (2002, dir. MacCollins Chidebe). On 7th October 2001, a rally was held in Kano to support Osama bin Laden—alleged mastermind behind the 11th September 2001 terror attacks in the United States—and protest American raids on Afghanistan as a result of the attacks. The issue of Osama bin Laden in Kano was therefore taken extremely seriously by government officials and security agencies. Thus there was a great unease when in 2002 *Osama bin La* was released and sold in Kano. It was in Igbo language and created furor in Kano over its portrayal of Osama bin Laden as a crook and fraudster. Plate 3 shows the video's poster.

Plate 3: *Osama Bin Laden*…Nollywood version (2002)

Kano State Government security agencies were horrified that the video found itself into Kano markets. The concern in Kano over *Osama bin La* was that it could generate riots – in a polity where Osama bin Laden was seen as an Islamic jihadist and a hero, with stickers bearing his picture plastered over public transport systems. The video was quickly banned by the government (not even the Censorship Board, which was not aware of the film in the first place), and Hausa cassette dealers throughout northern Nigeria refused to stock it (Interview with Dan Sakkwato, cassette dealer, Kano, 15th October 2004). It is interesting that *Osama bin La* was not even about Hausa culture; but because it was on a Muslim, and made by a Christian, the Muslim Hausa perceived it as an insult to their cultural sensibilities.

Cashing on Culture – Nollywood Investors in Kanywood

Thus when it became clear that all that is needed to engage in the Hausa video film industry was capital—very much like other crafts and occupations—the industry attracted a legion of non-Hausa who invested in the system. This, to a very large extent, was due to the success of the Hausa language itself. Being a lingua franca across entire West African sub-region, it confers on the language a transborder credibility which makes it easier to communicate spoken words than literature. Non-Hausa residents in Hausa cities with southern roots did not engage in the more burgeoning Hausa indigenous literature, finding the visual medium of dialogues a more attractive option to their forays in the language. Further, for many non-Hausa in northern Nigeria, the Hausa language provides a ready substitute for English as a means of communication. Thus any entertainment medium in Hausa was acceptable to both Hausa and non-Hausa.

Consequently, the second transcultural border interactions between Nollywood and Kanywood was by investors—as producers mainly—who employ Hausa-speaking actors and produce a film with a broad appeal to the Hausa-speaking audience. These investors were mainly Igbo and Yoruba media businessmen with some degree of professional involvement in the film industry in southern Nigeria. Despite the ethnic and religious differences and flashpoints of conflict, northern Nigeria has been host to millions of people of southern Nigerian extraction, many of whom where actually born in the north, and had no other home but there. Although living in closeted

communities (in "Sabon Gari" non-indigene settler urban arrangements and segregated—more by choice than policy—from the predominant Muslim host community), they speak the Hausa language passably and had excellent commercial links with the Hausa host communities.

However, while some had a working knowledge of the Hausa language, many could not speak the language and see the Hausa video film as merely another investment opportunity. When they realized that money could be made out of the Hausa video film industry, a few of the Nollywood producers used their capital, expertise and superior technical skills and equipment to start producing Hausa language video films, using as many Hausa-speaking actors as they could. Table 1 shows some of the Hausa video films produced by non-Hausa, from 1999 to 2002.

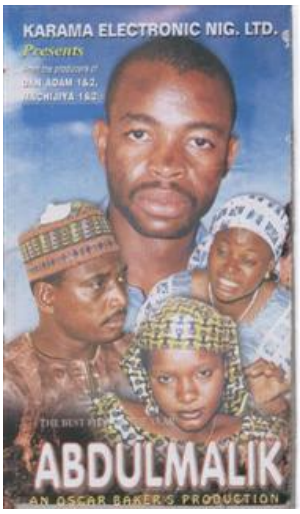
Table 1— Non-Hausa Produced Hausa video films, 1999-2002

S/N	Video film	Producer	Year
1.	Zuwaira	Matt Dadzie	1999
2.	Dan Adam Butulu	Oskar Baker	1999
3.	Halin Kishiya	Tunji Agesin	1999
4.	Kowa Ya Sami Rana	Aminu Dele	1999
5.	Makiyi	Yemi Laniyan	1999
6.	Yaudara	T. Agesin	1999
7.	Jamila	O. B. Anoruo	2000
8.	Har A Bada	James Ajik	2000
9.	Mai Arziki	Yemi Laniyan	2000
10.	Makuji	Yemi Laniyan	2000
11.	Uwar Gida	Yemi Laniyan	2000
12.	Janwuya	E. Umeasai (Ghanaian)	2001
13.	AbdulMalik	Oskar Baker	2001
14.	Alamara	I. Nwankwo	2001
15.	Albarka	Yemi Laniyan	2001
16.	Almara	I. Nwankwo	2001
17.	Alwashi	G. Harynd	2001
18.	Azaba	Prince Daniel	2001
19.	Kwankiro	Alhaji Y. Ouna	2001
20.	Macijiya	I. Nwankwo	2001
21.	Matsatsi	Taye Ukubardejo	2001
22.	Uwar Gida	Yemi Laniyan	2001
23.	Jan Kunne	USAID/Sani Danja	2002
24.	Masoyiyta:Titanic	Ashu Brown	2003

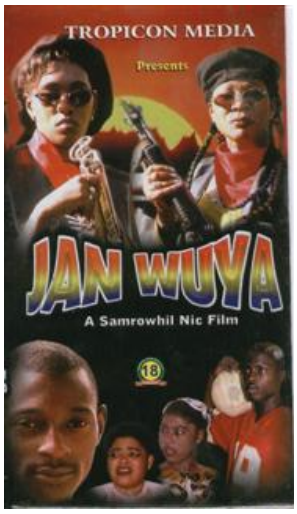
Source: National Film and Video Censors Board, 2002, Abuja, Nigeria.

The year in which there more non-Hausa, specifically southern Nigerian elements, in the Hausa video film industry was 2001, when 11 video films were produced, as against six each in 1999 and 2000. By 2002 interest had waned, with only USAID being the non-Hausa outfit producing a HIV/AID awareness video, *Jan Kunne*, although using non-Hausa producer, Sani Danja. Plate 4 shows the posters of some of these acculturated and cultural crossovers. It was clear, therefore that these producers found the industry worth taking a closer look at.

Uwargida (2000)
(Yemi Laniyan, Yoruba)



AbdulMalik (2001)
(Oskar Baker, Igbo)



Jan Wuya (2001)
(E.Umeasai, Ghanaian)

Plate 4: Cashing on Culture: Posters of Hausa Video Films by non-Hausa

Transethnic Transgressions—Kanywood Appropriating Nollywood

The third level of engagement between Nollywood and Kanywood happened when some Hausa video filmmakers decided to appropriate Nollywood films to make them more palatable to Hausa audiences.

Despite the mutual exclusivity between northern Nigerian Hausa language video films and those of southern Nigeria, yet "Nigerian film" English language, Igbo and Yoruba videos also started to also provide inspiration for Hausa video film producers looking for variety and diversity. Indeed some producers I talked to argued that the appearance of violence in Hausa video film (e.g. *Ukuba*, *Tausayi*, *Hawaye*, *Dafa'i*, *Taqidi*, *Mushkila*) was more to copy southern Nigerian video films styles, where such events are common. Some of the southern Nigerian videos ripped-off by Hausa video producers are shown in Table 2

Table.2: Ripping the neighborhood – Nigerian films as Hausa films

S/N	Nollywood Film	Kanywood Version
1.	Dangerous Twins	Auduga
2.	Never Come Back	Tattali
3.	Suicide Mission	Tsumagiya
4.	The Glamour Girls	Tsumagiya
5.	Contractor	Mujaza
6.	Yours Faithfully	Kaska
7.	Jealousy	Lura
8.	The Price	Gaskiya
9.	My Love	Raina
10.	Ungrateful	Akushi
11.	Break Up	Kallabi
12.	Snake Girl	Macijiya
13.	Bank Manager	Mafiya
14.	My Love	Rayuwata
15.	Oracle	Tarzomar Shahada

The appropriation of *Suicide Mission* was not without its critics. For instance, according to a viewer:

> I am truly impressed by Hausa films. I am chagrined, however, at the way they copy Hollywood or Lagos (Nollywood) films in our films. For instance, *Tsumagiya* is clearly appropriated from a Lagos (Nollywood) film, although I will not reveal which one. How you think the producers of the original Nollywood film would feel if they see this? It is shameful…Haj. Hajara Zam-Zam, *Fim* Magazine letters page, Fim, January 2001:7.

However, it is not all blames. Although extremely rare, there are northern viewers who appreciated the collaborative efforts between Nollywood and Kanywood in films produced by southern Nigerian producers. An example is this comment about *Dan Adamu Butulu* ("Ungratefully Human", 1999, dir. Oskar Baker):

> I want you to convey to the producer of *Dan Adam Butulu*, Prince Oscar Baker my happiness on his expertise and excellent films that are attractive and meaningful. All his films are good, especially Dan Adam Butulu which really displays Hausa culture. I am impressed. Oscar, I salute your efforts in making films that educate and entertain, and at the same time fill one with a sense of wonder. May Allah destroy your detractors. Salisu Sa'idu Dallatu Hunkuyi, Fim Magazine letter's page, *Fim*, March 2001:10-11.

Case Study: Appropriation and Islamization of Nollywood—*Dangerous Twins* to *Auduga*

Baba Karami is a 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" (OPC member; OPC being Odu'a Peoples Congress, a pan-Yoruba militant organization based in Lagos) because of his fluency in the Yoruba language and familiarity with Yoruba language and culture. He is an avid fan of Nollywood films since the beginning of the industry in Lagos. By 2004 when Nollywood released *Dangerous Twins* (dir. Tade Ogidan), he had "become addicted to the industry". Indeed he expressed that when watching a Nollywood film he becomes so carried away that he gets immersed in the Church rituals that are often iconic to most of their storylines. Being a Muslim, he felt uneasy in developing any affinity to Christian symbolism. He therefore decided to join the Hausa film industry to vent his cinematic desires – but in a more Islamic way. In effect, he was trying to exorcize the Christian imagery of Nollywood by substituting it with Islamic symbolism in transcribed Hausa remakes. His Lagos residency gave him an edge over other Kano-based producers in the sense of having access to superior filming facilities as well as familiarity with some notable Nollywood stars, particularly his favorite, Ramsey Noah, who starred in *Dangerous Twins*.

Since appropriation of films from Hollywood and Bollywood was the common cinematic template of Kano-based video film producers, Karami decided to join the bandwagon by appropriating from a source he knows best – Nollywood. His first film, *Auduga* (2004) is directly based on *Dangerous Twins*, whose poster artworks is shown in Plate 5.

Nollywood original
Source: www.africultures.com

Kanywood Appropriation
Source: Screenshot from the video

Plate 5: Double Trouble – Appropriating Nollywood

Dangerous Twins tells the story of twin brothers separated by distance and family problems. One, calm, level-headed and progressive, but without children he desperately wants, is based in London and married to a British wife. The other, rapscallion to the core, with a wife and children is based in Lagos. Somehow they switched places so that the Lagos twin will go to London pretending to be the husband of the British wife so that they can have a child. The idea being they can later switch back to their normal lives.

Baba Karami calls the remake *Auduga*, a Hausa word meaning cotton. He used the term to refer to the London twin – weightless (childless) as it is the attractions of the lifestyle of the London Twin that became the fulcrum of the story. While a core factor in the *Dangerous Twins* storyline is the issue of the Lagos twin making the wife of the London twin pregnant, *Auduga* also pursues the same theme, but couches it in the Islamic jurisprudence of inheritance rights of the resultant child.

Auduga also narrates the story of twins (played in dual role by Abba El-Mustapha, who also directs the video, although the real production clout was with Baba Karami) separated by distance – one being good and other being bad to the bone. However, the roles are reversed. In the Hausa remake the London based twin is the bad one, while the Kano based twin is the good one. The London Twin is taken to London by his mother who raises him as a typical British boy—and a lapsed Muslim. In Lagos, their wealthy father builds up an commercial enterprise with a first wife who has a son for him, Shariff and is the elder brother to the twins.

The London Twin returns to Lagos after the death of their wealthy father. He comes with serious attitude—drugs, liquor and women are his primary concerns. The family were perplexed at his behavior, but attribute it to living in a foreign land and mingling with "abysmal cultures" as narrated by one of the characters (actually the London Twin's mother in a remorseful scene).

The Lagos Twin is a serious, pious person. The twins elder brother, Sheriff (played by Baba Karami) serves as a beacon of rationality when the London Twin tries to get out of control. The elder brother's wife has a pretty sister, Aisha, and the London Twin,

despite a bevy of girls bewitched by his hip-hop generation attitude, desperately wants Aisha. The elder brother does not approve. This annoys the London Twin, and in some filial bondage, the twins join forces and demand that their share of their father's estate should be given to each of them. The elder brother agrees to this, and calls their uncle, the senior brother to the deceased Alhaji to oversee the issue of sharing the wealth according to Islamic principles.

The uncle, basing his arguments on Islamic jurisprudence, insisted that the London Twin, having forsaken Islam and its way of life, has become a heretic and therefore could not be given the share of his Muslim father's inheritance. Right in the middle of attempts to sort out who should get what, a woman walks in and declares that over 22 years ago some armed robbers had forced her to be raped by a fellow traveler. It turns out that the traveler is the same father to the twins and Sheriff. She becomes pregnant and eventually gives birth to a boy, Khalid, whom the Alhaji does not know about because Khalid's mother could not have access to him due to his high position and wealth. The Alhaji has also made several attempts to trace the lady, but could not. Even before revelation, Khalid is already London Twin's friend and his alter ego, trying to slow down his excesses—without knowing they are blood brothers.

It also seemed that the deceased Alhaji had told the fact of his being forced to rape an unknown woman by armed robbers to his senior brother and made a written will of a house for the woman he does not know and could not trace and any child she might have—the said will being witnessed by the senior brother and kept in his custody.

The London Twin's London-based mother—who also suddenly popped up during the inheritance hearings and demanded that her son's inheritance should be given to him—blames herself for taking him to London to an "abysmal culture" that corrupts him and asks him for forgiveness for having led him astray. The London Twin also blames his mother for not properly training him in Islamic ways while in London, such that he is raised as a Godless person. The mother urges him to change his life, embrace re-discover Islam (in effect, become "born again") and have a future. He forgives her, repents and re-discovers Islam. But it is all a ploy. He has no intention of becoming a Muslim—rather he pretended to be a Muslim so he can have his inheritance.

The Lagos Twin in the meantime has married, but could get his bride to allow him to sleep with her. Apparently she was undergoing her menstrual period—and in Islam such women are sexually forbidden until after the period is over. While ruminating over the issue, he is kidnapped by armed robbers and taken to their hideout—and it turns out that they are hired by London Twin who intends keeping his brother locked up until he is given his inheritance. When the Lagos Twin asks about his marital responsibilities, the London Twin states that he will replace him as bride's husband—thus returning to the original plot element of *Dangerous Twins*. Masquerading as Lagos Twin, the London Twin sleeps with the bride, making her pregnant in the process, and also embezzled a lot of money from the elder brother's company, the latter of course not aware of the switch.

Somehow the imprisoned Lagos Twin escapes and confronts his wife with the story of what happened. She is thunderstruck and informs her husband that she is pregnant with London Twin's baby. They wait for London Twin to return and in a

confrontation the Lagos Twin shoots the London Twin dead.

Thus *Auduga* appreciates the cinematic qualities of *Dangerous Twins*, pays homage to its plot elements of flashy cars, big houses and urbanism. But its main technique lies in the way two images of same actor (El-Mustapha Abba) are juxtaposed as being two individuals in a dialogue, as with Ramsey Noah character in *Dangerous Twins*.

In a plot departure, however, the "abysmal culture" of London, responsible for 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 had to resort to the underground to sort problems. Thus Lagos corrupts the neat and orderly life of the London Twin. Again both the two video films ended violently—with one twin killing the other.

Hollywood-Bollywood-Kanywood Appropriation Styles

The producers of *Auduga* would seem to follow the same appropriation strategies narrated by Tejaswini Ganti (2002) in her analysis of the "(H)Indianization" of On *the Waterfront* (1954, dir. Elia Kazan) as *Ghulam* (1998, dir. Vikram Bhatt). Tejaswini analyzes that Indian filmmakers must identify with a film before they can appropriate it. In the same way, Baba Karami, as the producer of *Auduga*, felt a significant connection not with the plot elements of *Dangerous Twins*, but with the main actor Ramsey Noah, "whom I admire greatly and watched all his films" (Interview 2009). Baba Karami, however, is uneasy with what he sees as "too much Christianity in Nollywood films", and in assuaging this feeling, he decides to "Islamize" *Dangerous Twins* in the Hausa remake. As Ganti (2002:289) argues for "(H)Indianization of 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.

In a similar way, *Auduga* seeks to "Hausanize" *Dangerous Twins* by using Islam to create the "metonymic" association between filmmaking and Islamic values. The central message of *Auduga* is parental responsibility—especially the mother. The London Twin is raised as a lapsed Muslim. It was not indicated 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 a half-Hausa and half-Scottish actress, Zainab Booth) did not bother to set him on the correct Islamic path. To emphasize the Islamicity of the plot element—and emphasize the total difference with the appropriated Nollywood film, *Dangerous Twins*, *Auduga* introduces the elements of sharing of inheritance. Under Shari'a laws a non-Muslim (London Twin) cannot inherit property from a Muslim. In the plot of *Auduga*, he refuses to accept this Islamic ruling. The plot then revolves around his attempt to wrest back what he felt is his right by biological birth.

In Indian remakes of Hollywood originals, Indian filmmakers feel the need to expand the original to include addition of "emotions," the expansion of the narrative, and the inclusion of songs, which are explained by filmmakers in terms of audience

expectations as well as cultural antecedents (Ganti 2002:290). The expansion of the narrative usually comes in the form of sub-plots. This strategy was employed in *Auduga* with the sub-plot of Khalid's mother suddenly appearing during inheritance hearings to declare that her only male child is the 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 in Islamic law, no matter the circumstances of their birth. Thus in this case, adding the sub-plot which is an attachment to the original plot is about "making narratives more moral" (Ganti, 292)—and thus "educating the audience" (Interview, 2009)—the avowed main objective of Hausa video films for their Muslim audiences.

Further, like Hollywood films Indian producers and directors appropriate, Hausa video filmmakers also feel need to connect with their audience. In Tejaswini Ganti's study (2002:287), Vikram Bhatt, *Ghulam*'s director, explains how he judges whether a film is capable of being 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 then a set of circumstances.

In a similar way Baba Karami, as the producer who also dictated the screenplay of *Auduga*, felt unable to directly translate *Dangerous Twins* as a Hausa story—aware that his audience of Muslims would not relate to what he perceives as un-Islamic plot elements in the Nollywood original, particularly Lagos Twin sleeping with London Twin's wife (Interview 2009). Yet although Baba Karami displayed aversion to this scene, seeing it as un-Islamic, he retained it in *Auduga* where the Lagos Twin is kidnapped and locked up by the London Twin who takes his place and indeed makes the wife of the Lagos Twin pregnant. This process, which I refer to as "selective exclusion" is typical of Indian filmic appropriations. As Ganti (2002:289) analyzes for 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.

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 issue of the pregnancy of the Lagos Twin's wife—who was made pregnant by the London Twin in a substitute situation. It is clear therefore that there is a limit to the "Islamization" process of adapting a Nollywood film for Muslim Hausa audiences —due to "selective exclusion" principle—because of this commercial lucre—for the pregnancy scenes could have been removed, and still the core issue of maternal responsibility and Islamic inheritance maintained in *Auduga*.

The role of song and dance routines ("rawa da waka") in Hausa video films serves 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 storyline—and 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 appeared briefly in a sitting room and started arguing about a male actor, who also has no role in the film. In the next scene, all the three were shown singing happily to each other! Baba Karami defends this as a necessary marketing strategy to attract the audience—a Hausa video film without song and dance routines is a sure recipe for commercial failure (Interview, 2009).

In emphasizing the role of religion in its reworked storyline, *Auduga* acknowledges its audience and communicates a particular partisan perspective without hurting 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; for the behaviors of the London Twin were not necessarily condonable in any religious doctrine. But *Auduga* weaves around religious themes by not pointing accusing fingers at Christianity for the London Twin's behavior. It becomes a critique of Westernization of indigenous individuals.

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

First was the marketing structure of Hausa video films 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. Tapes that are unsold are removed from the jackets which are returned to the producer. The tapes are then erased and overwritten with another film!

The Nollywood marketers operate on a radically different principle. They usually bring their finished product to the markets to be sold. The Hausa distributers usually refuse to accept these, and as such Nollywood-produced films are usually found only with southern Nigerian distributers (mainly Igbo merchants)—thus taking them away from Hausa audiences, who only seek for films with Hausa merchants. In any event, Hausa marketers rarely distribute films belonging to producers who are not part of their marketing cartel—and the Igbo merchants are almost always not part of such system.

Further, to regulate the volume of video films being released, especially from 2000, the Hausa video film industry evolved a strategy of queuing up video releases weekly—and since the Nollywood producers are not part of this system, they felt frustrated (see, for instance interview with Oscar Baker on this in *Fim*, July 2002 p. 28). This led to strongest supporters of the Nollywood-Kanywood hybrid film strategy such as Oskar Baker and Iyke Moore to withdraw from further investments in Hausa video film industry.

Secondly, dealing with sensitive issues such as religion, particularly Shari'a and other cultural norms of northern Nigerian Muslim Hausa that are grafted into the storylines of hybrid Nollywood-Kanywood productions (e.g. *Dan Adamu Butulu* with his focus on shamanism, *Holy Law* and *National Anthem* with their focus on Islam) had the uncomfortable effect of generating more vitriol against southern Nigerian film producers. Consequently, many of the promoters of the hybrid strategies simply decided to cut their loses and quit the system. The hybridity continues on a limited scale—but controlled from Lagos, which saw, for instance, the involvement of Ali Nuhu in *Sitanda* (2006, dir. Izu Ojukwu).

Conclusion

While Hausa audiences understand 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 1997b: 16), both the audience and the Hausa filmmakers do not see such parallelism 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 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.

Regional studies of media influences indicates that a cultural resonance is often created from a media-rich country to another country sharing *similar* norms and values. For instance, according to Jane O. Vinculado (2006:234),

> The phenomenal Taiwanese soap opera hit Meteor Garden in 2003 has transformed the face of Philippine programming. It paved the way for the influx of Asian dramas from Taiwan, Korea and very soon, Japan. Dubbed in Filipino (the local language), these chinovelas (a play of words from the words Chino meaning Chinese and telenovela, derived from the soap opera format of Latin American countries) is common fare on Philippine television, with about one or two of them occupying the primetime schedules of the top networks and some appearing in non-prime time slots like daytime and weekend timeslots.

However, "cultural affinity" soon translates into "cultural proximity" in explaining the inter-regional spread of Korean media products especially to China and Taiwan. Dong Hwan Kwon (2006) quotes studies that analyzed the contents of widely accepted Korean television dramas among East Asian countries for commonalities of acceptance. The analysis revealed that "Korean dramas that have been widely accepted in Asia contain the Confucian values that are close to Chinese culture" (p. 262). This was premised on common culture and value systems between Korean and Chinese.

Thus countries sharing common cultural proximity find it easer to provide "oppositional resistance" to media programming from non-proximity sources. This is further facilitated, as Joseph D. Straubhaar (1991) suggests, by the inclusion of linguistic commonalities even within linguistic clusters and groups. This, in the case of north-south video film divide in Nigeria, translates to the individual level. This may possibly help to explain why southern Nigerian programs—both TV dramas and

video films, which are characterized by a central engine of Christian ethos and ethnic peculiarities of the producers—are less palatable to northern Nigerian Muslim audiences. As Krings (2005:163) 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.

The years of inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts between northern and southern Nigeria (see Agi, 1998 for a comprehensive treatment of this) are further clear testimonies to cultural hostilities that makes within-country media acceptability difficult (unless as done in Nigeria, enforced by a federal legislation—for although National Television Authority networks carry a dosage of programs from all the regions, in the north they are predominantly ignored increasingly in favor of ArabSat scheduling that broadcast a lot of American programs). And yet Hindi films from across the world would seem to be more acceptable in that despite religious and linguistic non-proximity, yet they carry enough cultural motifs that approximate the cultural spaces of Muslim northern Nigerians in the form of love triangles and forced marriage issues—in essence, sharing similar cultural mindsets. As indicated in an editorial in *The Hindu*:

> Bollywood's distributors explain that the growing acceptability as also resistance against Indian cinema emanate from the same fact: the cultural revival of Afro-Asian societies after they overthrew European imperialism. The Indian Masala film is closer to the emotional grammar of the Asians and Africans than the Hollywood box office bonanzas. Hollywood's story of American divorcees does not touch the emotional chord of Afro-Asian families. Their emotional ambience is closer to something like Hum Aapke Hain Kaun. The interaction between the characters in a Hindi film family drama is recognisable, therefore it holds their attention. Besides, song and dance play a pivotal role in the social life of Afro-Asian societies. M. Shamim, "Bollywood films make waves around the world", *The Hindu*, Sunday, February 25, 2001.

As Krings (2008:64) concluded 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." However, such inter-connectedness would have to negotiate the myriad of cultural, ethnic and religious barriers that have characterized the Nigerian nation. Thus "cultural resonance" and shared "emotional grammar" explain why young Hausa filmmakers, spoon-fed on Hindi film fare from birth openly embrace the Hindi film motif, even if aware that the cultural and religious realities of their society is totally different from that of India. And why they rejected the much geographically closer southern Nigerian film influences.

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