

Review Article

Seeing is believing: Identifying A True Hausa Man

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Abstract: Hausa people are among the popular communities in Africa due to their eminence in trade, scholarship, military service such as the world wars, leadership, and politics in media/journalism, in academics, etc. These factors, however, influenced the acceptability of the Hausa Language as a good area of study in many Nigerian Universities. Hausa is also studied in American, German, Asian, and Universities. This paper concentrated more on trying to use some factors to identify who is a Hausa man? Where is he located? What are his features and behaviors? The factors used by this paper include: Place identified as Hausaland, his facial marks, his clothes or dress, his dietary habits, his physical features, his body gestures, and his uniqueness of specializing in a dangerous occupation.

Keywords: Hausa, Hausa Man, Hausa People, Hausa Community.

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INTRODUCTION

God the Almighty, in His compassionate and exceptional attribute of *will*, created mankind in two pairs, man and woman, and made them live together and assist one another as partners in life. God created Adam and his wife, Eve in paradise, but was later sent down on earth because they committed an offense. Their generation continued to multiply in diversity all over the world in different colors, languages, shapes, and environments. This transformed to what today is regarded as the human world population contained in four geographical global continents: Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. God the Almighty gave his reason for creating mankind in diversity and with differences as indicated in the Glorious Qur'an.

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female. And we made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (Not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)”. (49:13)

It, therefore, went down to tribes like Hausa communities as part and parcel of hundreds of thousands of other world communities. Each of these communities has a language that possessed some unique features that can be identifiable by its native

speakers and other people. This paper discussed issues that can be used in identifying Hausa man.

Hausa communities were among the popular tribes in the African ethnic groups, especially in Sub-Saharan communities identified as hardworking, honest, and frank. They were people found in West Africa and have a strong belief in search. The search could be for wealth, education (either Islamic or Western), medicine or professional skills and that is why Hausa communities can be found in different parts of the world.

The word “**Hausa**” connotes language which refers to the spoken language or area of studies or geographical location in Northern Nigeria in West Africa. Linguistically, it is classified as one of the Chadic family language members. The other Chadic language family includes; Kare-kare, Ngizim, Miya, Bolanci, Bade, Tera, Margi, Mandara, Bura, Angas, Kanakuru, Bacama and so on [1].

This interpretation is commonly perceived and propagated by Hausa oral singers e.g. in Ahmadu Bello's song by Musa Dankwairo, he used the term Hausa:

¹. Bunza, A.M. (1989) Hayaki Fid da na Kogo. M.A. Dissertation, Department of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University Kano (p. 3-4).

*Amadu [2] ya zo Hausa [3]
Za shi gidanai rannan,
'Yan doka, 'yan Sanda,
Da Ministocin Gohe [4],
Duka jama'a sun taru
Suna yi mai ban kwana,
Suna ta rokon Allah,
Wada kaz zo da lafiya,
Allah kai ka lafiya,
Ka sauka zak kyawo domin girman Manzo.
(Musa Dankwairo: Waƙar Maidubun Nasara)*

Translation

Amadu came to Hausaland,
He was returning home,
Policemen and other guards,
Including Gohe's ministers,
The rest of his people gathered,
They were giving him a farewell,
They were praying to God,
As you arrived home fine,
May Almighty God take you back safely
And get back home safe for the sake of the noble
Messenger (Muhammad).

In another song for the Emir of Isa, in Sokoto State, Nigeria composed by a popular singer in Hausa land Ibrahim Narambada, he also used the term Hausa center to refer to Sokoto state in Nigeria.

*Ai dagga Kaduna 5har Gusau 6karewa Hausa, 7
Yau kowace shawara ta zamanin Turawa,
Amadu ba a yin ta sai ya sa hannunai
Zan kau, kokari garai da sauki hujjoji.
(Ibrahim Narambaxa- Waƙar Gwarzon Shamaki)*

Translation

From Kaduna up to Gusau the end of Hausa land
Every decision taken during colonial rulers
Could not be implemented without his approval
Because he is good in bringing constructive ideas

Identifying A Hausa Man

The paper used some factors to analyze the physical appearance of the Hausa man. The factors used by this paper to identify Hausa man are largely placed on three categories as follows:

1. Hausa in primitive life (*Maguzanci* life)
2. Referring to Sir. Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, The first Premier of the defunct Northern region in Nigeria.
3. Hausa here refers to Sokoto, seat of the caliphate in Northern Nigeria.
4. Gohe is nick name of the Ahmadu Bello.
5. Kaduna was the headquarters of the defunct Northern Region of Nigeria
6. Gusau was the last most popular city under Sokoto.
7. Hausa refers to Sokoto, one of the Northern states in Nigeria.

2. After his contact with Arab (Islam)
3. After his contact with colonial rulers (White man)

3.1 Hausa Man in His Primitive Life

In Hausa land, hunting was recognized as the first source of livelihood. Later Hausa man initiated and embarked on farming (Gusau, 1983: 6-8). Before his contact with other communities from other parts of the world, Hausa man worshiped objects like stones, caves, rivers, sun and moon, and mountains. He presented rituals under specifications to special places and trees especially tamarind, baobab trees. The Hausa man has the belief that any one of the above-mentioned trees could attract the gathering of spirits, and the worship was channeled through introduction and imitation into the flat form of *Bori* cults. The Hausa man has believed in the existence of God but is ignorant of how to worship Him [8]. Therefore he has to be initiated to a particular *Bori* cult through "*Girka*" i.e. initiation and continue to practice and rituals from time to time to maintain the relationship with the spirit, who was an intermediate between him and god and continue to provide his needs through God.

Bori practice used to be rampant in Hausa land, it was classified based on the classification of the spirits as follows: A) The White spirits such as Sarkin Makaxa Dafau da Sarkin Aljan da Sarkin Rafi da Uban Dawaki Da Inna Bafillata da Xangaladima da Malam Alhaji. B) The Black spirits comprises Uwar Gonad a Baqo da Kure da Gajimare da Danko da Duna da Kakare (Bunza,1989:35). One can identify Hausa man or Hausa land by these practices. *Bori* cult still exists in some places, especially in Nigeria and the Niger Republic.

Hausa In Contact with Islam

The Hausa contact with Islam can be traced far back to 622-666 [9], While Clark, [10] maintained that it started from 610 and 632AD and Islam has since then continued to spread in not only Africa or West Africa but to all parts of the world. Islamic reformers and revivalists continued to emerge. An example was Shehu Usman Danfodiyo waged jihad against Hausa kings in 1804.

With this development, the spread of Islam in the Hausa land revolutionized the mode of worship, dressing, conducts, and many other aspects of the Hausa people. These have not prevented Hausas from maintaining their unique features and behaviors that

8. Bunza, A.M. (1989). "Hayaqi Fid da na Kogo" M.A. Dissertation, Department of Nigerian Languages Bayero University, Kano (p. 30-42).
9. Jinju, M.H (2001) *Muslunci A Afirka: Nazari ta hanyoyin tarihi da falsafa game da matsalolin yau*, Ahmad Bello University Press (p. 48).
10. Clark, P..B. (1982) *West Africa and Islam*, Ward Arnold, Scotland (p.1).

now conform with principles of Islam. In addition, there still exist in some parts of Hausa land *Maguzawa* that did not accept Islam, for example in Sumaila, Kainafara, and Bichi in Kano and Katsina states of Nigeria.

Hausa In Contact with Colonial Rulers

The European contact with Hausa land started in the early period of 1843 shortly after the end of the First World War. The white men came to Hausa land with multiple interests, but for most colonial rule, Newman, (1991) indicated that: "It was the period of exploration, commercial, religious and political involvement in West Africa by the English, French, and Germany leading up to the establishment of colonial rule"^[11].

The impact of colonialism on Hausa man has involved countries that were colonies of British and French e.g. Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, and others. The impact on attitudes, taste, dress and other lifestyles did not make Hausa man abandon the original or local attitudes that make him easier to be identified.

Identifying Hausa Man

This identification can be made by using specific factors in measuring the uniqueness of the people. Therefore, this paper uses marks, clothes or dress behaviors, dietary and beliefs as a tool for identifying Hausa man. There can be other factors such as architectural style, musicals, musical instruments, festivals, professional occupations, defense system, physical structure, folklore, etc but we will use the ones mentioned earlier above.

Facial Marks (*Tsagar Gado*)

Facial marks are regarded as one of the symbols through which one can identify Hausa man very easily. Although facial marks are used by many tribes that are not only Hausas in Nigeria. Even though Hausa marks are different from one sub-division of Hausa to another and can never be mixed up no matter how closeness, e.g. The *Kabawa*, *Arawa* facial marks in the Kebbi state of Nigeria are very similar to that of *Gobirawa* in the Sokoto state of Nigeria. One of the prominent artists in Hausa land Bawa 'Dan'anace has used marks to assist anybody who wants to identify people from Gobir area of Sokoto state in one of his songs as follows:

Mai tsaga garin da duk yake x2
Hat taz zama nan shidda nan bakwai
To Alhaji murna yakai
A ce mishi Sabon birni"
(Bawa 'Dan'anace Wakar Nadelu)

Translation

Wherever you find a person with facial marks
And it becomes one side six and the other side seven
He is a pride to be and held
To be of Sabon Birni origin

Besides, the Hausa who have popular facial marks are Gobirawa in Sokoto state Kabawa and Arawa in Kebbi state, there is "Zamfarawa" in Zamfara state, there are also Daurawa and Katsinawa in Katsina state in Nigeria. The marks are done by local barbers on the faces of the native people depending on the peculiarities of the nature and position of the marks. Some marks are closely similar to others, e.g. Kabanci marks are closely similar to Gobarci and Arewanci is closely similar to that of Dauranci marks. This may be connected to the historical relationship. These classifications also involved Hausa native speakers living in Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Ghana, etc. The emergence of western civilization is becoming a threat to tribal facial marks of not only Hausa but other Nigerian tribes in general.

4.2.1 Identifying Hausa Man by his dress

The popular name of Hausa man's common wear is riga (gown), *tagguwa* (long and short slip), *wando* (trousers of different types), *rawani* (turban), and *hula* (cap). The history of *tagguwa* is related to an oral tradition which says: during the primitive period of Hausa man when there were no clothes, they used skins of animals to cover their private parts. There was a man called Guwa. When he got skins of animal which was used to cover the private parts he instead tore the skin in the center and made a shirt. People closer to Guwa realized the wisdom behind this and changed the style of the way they wore the animal skin. Whoever got his skin, resolved to do "Taguwa" style i.e "similar to that of Guwa". Gradually the name transformed to "Tagguwa" today. This dress has become popular in Hausa land.

Apart from *tagguwa*, other Hausa dresses can help to identify a true Hausa man, especially when we look upon the saying of Hausa traditional singers. Among Hausa traditional singers was Abubakar Akwara Sabon Birni who sang for his master Sarkin Gobir Umaru Shawai in a song named *Bahagon Gulbi* where he pointed out two types of Hausa gowns in his song. He said:

Mai dubun doki sarki
Kai ad da dubun barare
Kowane da kayan ado
Girken Kano da sace
Alkyabba ta kwarai
Wurin makadanai
Wanda duk ka gano
Kayan Kano tasala
(Abubakar Akwara Sabon Birni- Waqar Bahagon Gulbi)

¹¹ . Newman, P.N. (1991). "A Century and a half of Hausa languages Studies" *Nigerian Languages*, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. (p.1).

Translation

The owner of thousand horses
You have thousand gallant warriors
Each of them properly dressed
Kano style gown 'sace'
With 'Alkyabba' and its regalia
To his court musicians
Anyone you see
Is wearing the popular gown 'tasala'

Another poet Aliyu Dandawo also came out with the name of typical Hausa dresses that can be used in identifying Hausa man in the song of Sarkin Kabi Muhammadu named *Danhassan Madogara* where he said:

*Yac ce ga abin kashin huri,
Kuma ga girken Bid̄da ga takardun kuddi,
An ka basuwa gaba dai*
(Aliyu Dandawo- *Danhassan Madogara*)

Translation

He said take this to go and solve your problems
With *girken Bid̄da* and mint paper money
He gave me all these.
Ibrahim Narambada, in Sarkin Kiyawa Abubakar Kaura Namoda's song, mentioned

Hausa dresses as follows

*Ka san Malam ya yi sarauta
Da niz zaka im masa murna
Riga yab ba ni da kuddi.*
(Ibrahim Narambada: Sarkin Kiyawan Kaura Namoda, Abubakar)

Translation

When a scholar was appointed a king
When I went to his palace to congratulate him
He gave me a gown and money.

In addition, Idi Dangiwa Zuru also mentioned Hausa dresses in the song of Iyan Zazzau where he said:

*Kowaz zo Zariya ya ishe Sarki
Kwaz zo Zariya ya' ishe Sarki
Yaz zarce Sabongari gun Iya
In ka roki doki ya kawo ma,
In kac ce tuhwahi ya kwaso ma,
In ka roki kuddi ya kwaso
In ka zo da yaki ya koro ka
Ko kai ad dan wa ko!*

(Idi Dangiwa Zuru: Wakar Iyan Zazzau)

Translation

Whoever goes to Zariya and meet the king
Proceeded to Sabongari, Iya's palace
If you requested a horse, he will give you
If you demanded clothes, he gives you
If you beg for money, he will give you
If you go to war, he will defeat you
Whoever are your parents

Identifying Hausa Man By His Dietary

Another means of identifying Hausa man is by what he eats as food. There is common and universal food for Hausa communities, i.e. *tuwo*, mostly made up of mashed guinea corn or mashed maize flour or mashed boiled rice with either kuka soup, vegetable soup or *yakuwa* soup. The commonest light food and snacks one can find in Hausa land, include *waina*, *dankwake*, *dangabda* and *fura da nono*, *koko da qosai da kunu*, *nakiya*, *dakkuwa* etc are popularly identified in Hausa land

Another aspect of diet in Hausa land is the use of tobacco powder by some people among Hausas. This habit is considered an addiction^[12]. Some parts of Hausa land that use the powder include- Sokoto, Kebbi, Gwandu, Zamfara, and other neighboring towns. Some Hausa women in these areas also use tobacco flowers with the use of cola nut to color their tooth red as fashion called *fure*. The coloring may last for about four to five days, this socially adds to their makeup fashion.

Cola nut even though not food is another popular aspect consumed by most Hausa people, particularly the old aged. Cola nut has become very important in the life of not only Hausa communities but also their Yoruba and Igbo counterparts in Nigeria e.g. invitations for naming, wedding ceremonies, special gifts, community or family meetings, or even exchange between royal families, important meetings, and other special gatherings are done and complemented with the distribution of cola nut in Hausa land. A Hausa proverb indicates the importance of cola nut thus:

"Karamin goro, ya fi babban dutse"
A piece of cola nut is better than a big stone.

Another popular Hausa artist Ibrahim Narambada indicated the importance of cola nut when saying that:

*Ai Amadu Zamaninka mun sutura mun ci tuwo
Aljihunmu ga sulalla ga goro¹³swahe dut.*
(Ibrahim Narambada : Wakar Gwarzon Shamaki)

Translation

Oh Amadu during your regime we were well clothed and fed
Our pockets are full of shillings and cola nut every day.

Another Hausa artist Aliyu Dandawo noted similar things mentioned earlier in his Popular song *Gagara maq iya jikan Abarshi* as follows:

Gagagara maqiya jikan Abarshi, Allah ya yi ma gambun tsari,
Ga kowa ko ga wane zamani, hab bisa mahdi tare da muwa.

12 . Those who use it usually put it in between lower lip and lower tooth and seek it gently.

13 . The word *Goro* is mentioned to show satisfaction in life. Because he is close to Emir.

Da gorommu da tabammu koyaushe Bagudu ya dauke muna suwa.

(Aliyu Dandawo: Waƙar Gagara Maƙiya)

Translation

Resister to enemies grandson of Abarshi may God protect you

From all enemies all the time until the end of the world along with us

Our cola nut and tobacco powder we chew was taken care of by Bagudu.

Physical Features

There are certain features of Hausa man that are mostly found among Hausa. Typical Hausa man is tall, dark in complexion, their back head in bolder than the forehead. Hausa man is peace-loving people but revengeful. Bunza, (2015) has identified their land and some of their physical features as follows:

“Hausawa su ne mutanen da suka tsira kasar Hausa. Tarihinu, da na kakanninsu, bai tsallake farfajiyar kasar Hausa ba. Ba su harshen gado face Hausa. Al’adunsu da dabi’unsu Hausantattu ne gaba da baya. Bugun gaba da harshe, da al’adun Hausawa, da kasar Hausa, babbar hujja ce, ta Hausanta da Hausawa. Samunsu bakake ko wankan darza, da matsakaicin zati, da bakin gashi wulik! Mai kauri, gajere, kakkaura, da faɗi da kaurin hanci wani cikon sunna ne makaho da waiwaya. Idan sun yi magana lafazin yi canja rassa da daya daga cikin kare-karen lafuzan harshen Hausa. An yi tangam mai zuwa hajji ya gamu da Annabi. Mai wadannan sifofi shi ne Bahausha, zuriyar da tsiro a ciki su ne Hausawa. Huldarsu ta cudedeniyarsu da makwabtansu ta haifar da birgimar hankaka da barbarar yanyawa, da Bahausha ya raɗa wa rawani “Kaka-gida”.

Translation

Hausa people were the people that originates in Hausa land, they have no other language other than Hausa their history and history of their decedents remained within Hausa land. Their mother tongue is Hausa. Their cultural heritage was Hausanized. Their black color and moderate light complexity, black and coiled hair, wide face, hooked nose, and heavy lips have indicated the typical nature of Hausa man. Their speeches complemented the representations of different dialects in the Hausa language. Anybody who possessed these physical features can be regarded as a Hausa man. His people can be regarded as Hausa people. Interaction of Hausa people with their neighbors and other races has facilitated rampant changes in their physical features.

God, The Almighty in his wisdom created human beings in different locations, different sizes, different colors due to reasons that could be, geographical, economic, cultural, environmental, or even spiritual, this knowledge remained within the limit of God. It is within this God bounties that Hausa man is

placed in his location and created with his features as mentioned earlier.

Identifying Hausa Man by His Body Gestures

There are certain body signs and gestures that are uniquely identified to Hausa people, the gestures can be done through the use of parts of their bodies, as communication to another person, they are by use of hands, head, shoulders, fingers, eyes, or faces.

Some gestures are done by Hausa to indicate “No” by shaking a finger or head, but nodding the head means ‘yes’. Hausa man can use his hand to abuse [14] or show respect by using either one or two hands [15] together in fast. Hausa man also reacts when something terrible happened by using his two hands to hold his head. Hausa woman can indicate her love or acceptance show sign of marriage to a man by using her eyes [16]. Eyes can also be used to show a treat to a child or indicate a warning to him [17]. All these actions can be used to identify unique behaviors of a Hausa man.

Dangerous Occupations

Hausa man is however identified with certain professions that could be risky to human life, or health. That is why in Hausa land is common for one to see people playing with dangerous creatures like hyenas, cobra, chimpanzees, or playing with sharp objects like knives, swords, or daggers on their stomachs and necks to impress people as a source of earning money in the society.

CONCLUSION

The tools which this paper used in identifying Hausa man is an opinion of the authors and someone may have a better way of doing it, but it is important to note that Hausa man today can be known for many things around the world, especially in the area of education, both Islamic and western education considering the prominent leaders like Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Sir Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto, Malam Aminu Kano, a prominent politician of international repute. Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gummi for his international recognition and King Faisal award winner in Islamic scholarship. General Murtala Ramat Muhammad, was a brave soldier who fought on many war fronts and he influenced freedom for Zimbabwe when he was Nigerian head of state in the 70s before he was assassinated in 1976. Another president of Nigerian for the first republic, Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari, seasoned educationist and politician, and lastly is General Muhammadu Buhari, a brave soldier who was later converted to politics and for his popular performance as a military former head of state earned

14 . Call it “Aya” or “Daƙƙuwa” to signify abuse.

15 . “Jinjina” which stands as salutation.

16 . “Marmadi” or “fari” indicates sweet test or joyful

17 . “Harara” reflects threat or intimidation.

him another ticket recently as a new president of Nigeria 2015. The Hausa people are known all over the world for their transparency, honesty, justice, brave, and ability to lead fellow Nigerians with competence and confidence.

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