

Mai Kudi, Sanafahna and Albashi

i

**Storyline Structure in Hausa Home Videos: An Analysis of *Mai Kudi, Sanafahna*
and *Albashi***

By

Ali Liman Abubakar

PG/02/2139

aliliman@gmail.com

aliu_cisse@yahoo.com

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Postgraduate Studies, Bayero University, Kano,
in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Award of Master of Art (MA)
Mass Communication**

August, 2007

**Storyline Structure in Hausa Home Videos: An Analysis of *Mai Kudi*, *Sanafahna*
and *Albashi***

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes storyline structure in three Hausa home videos; *Mai Kudi* (The Rich Man), *Sanafahna* (with time truth shall dawn) and *Albashi* (Salary). The study measures storyline structure in these films against a Hollywood film industry model of story writing “the Hero’s Journey”. It uses narrative analysis as its analytical tool, and narrative theory as its framework. After analyzing these videos, the study found that the major elements of storyline structure in Vogler’s model formed the framework of the storyline structure in Hausa home videos analyzed. However, in spite of the preponderance of these elements within the storyline structure, there are significant variations to Vogler’s model. Specifically, Vogler’s model has some twelve stages spread on the universal structure of storytelling, i.e. beginning, middle and end. Few of these stages were found to exist in Hausa narrative structure, perhaps due to cultural differences between Western, Indian and Hausa cultures. The study therefore recommends screenwriters and producers to be aware of the existence of standard models of scriptwriting. It also recommends more training for script writers in the Hausa film industry.

DECLARATION

I, Ali Liman Abubakar, do hereby certify that this research work is originally written by me, in partial fulfillment for the award of Master of Art (MA) Mass Communication. This work has never been submitted in any form to any department in any institution of learning either in Nigeria or elsewhere.

Sign_____

Date_____

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the Almighty Allah for all His blessings to me, which of course includes my present status. ALHAMDU LIL-LAHI RABBIL AALAMEEN WAS SALATU WAS SALAM ALA SAYYIDINA MUHAMMAD (SAW).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am first of all most grateful to Dr. Umar Faruk Jibril, my supervisor, without whose enormous contributions, this work would never have come to reality. Thank you Malam Balarabe Maikaba, second reader of this work. Your contribution equally deserves mention here. To Ishaq Sidi Ishaq, thank you for assisting with the titles of the Hausa films, some of which were eventually selected for analysis in this study. Thanks, Prof. Abdalla Uba Adamu for your constructive criticisms. They have helped a lot in shaping this work. To Dr. Umar Pate, thank you, for helping to see to the successful defence of this thesis. Isma'il Bala Garba thank you, for reading and correcting the manuscript. Dr. Abdurrahman Adam and Prof. Dandatti Abdulkadir, thank you, for the invaluable and fatherly encouragement during the program.

My deepest thanks also go to Malam Usman Ibrahim Abubakar for helping with acquisition of the computer with which this work was typed. I also thank my colleagues in the MA Mass Communication class of 2003/2004 (Yakubu, Hajara, Jameel, Lamara and Musa) for their words of advice. I equally thank all my senior colleagues in the Department of Mass Communication, Bayero University, Kano.

TABLE OF CONTENT

	Page No.
Chapter One	
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Statement of the Research Problem	1
1.2 Purpose of the Research	2
1.3 Research Questions	4
1.4 Significance of the Study	4
1.5 Scope and Limitation	4
1.6 Definition of Terms	5
Chapter Two	
2.0 Contextual Overview	6
2.1 Literature Review	11
2.2 Storyline Structure	12
2.3 Theoretical Framework	16
2.4 Narratives Models in Hausa Culture	20
Chapter Three	
3.0 Methodology	29
3.1 Narrative Analysis	29
3.2 The Hero's Journey Model	32
3.3 Justifying the Selection of Narrative Analysis an Analytical Tool	43
3.4 Justifying the Selection of the Three Videos	43

3.5 Content Categorization	44
3.6 Selection Procedure	46
3.7 Procedure of Analysis	47

Chapter Four

4.0 Analysis of the Selected Films using the Hero’s Journey Model	50
A. <i>Mai Kudi</i> (The Rich Man)	50
I. Narrative Presentation of the Story	52
II. Structure of the Film	57
III. The Hero’s Journey in <i>Mai Kudi</i>	58
IV. Observations	61
B. <i>Sanafahna</i> (with time truth shall dawn)	64
I. Narrative Presentation of the Story	65
II. Structure of the Film	69
III. The Hero’s Journey in <i>Sanafahna</i>	70
IV. Observations	74
C. <i>Albashi</i> (Salary)	77
I. Narrative Presentation of the Story	77
II. Structure of the Story	82
III. The Hero’s Journey in <i>Albashi</i>	83
IV. Observations	87

Chapter Five

5.0 Summary, Findings and Conclusions	89
5.1 Summary	89

5.2 Finding of the Study	91
5.3 Recommendations	94
5.4 Conclusion	95
References	98
Appendix	103

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Home video in Nigeria and indeed in the Hausa society, like most people have come to realize, has come to stay (Adamu, et al 2004). Hardly do you find one who holds contrary view for many reasons. First, in Nigeria and indeed in northern Nigeria, acting, singing in films, trading in home video cassettes, and providing support services, are fast becoming the rallying points of the youth working in the film industry. Secondly, many people have come to realize that film, which mirrors the life of a people (Mast, et al 1992), is a very important medium of turning around the cultural, political and overall image of a nation or society.

But for Hausa home videos to attain the level of sophistication, professionalism and international recognition, radical changes have to take place. After series of accusations and criticisms of the adaptation and copying of ideas from other cultures, which characterized the movies, and which producers are trying to redress, Hausa home videos now face more serious problems bordering on the narrative/dramatic quality of their storylines structures.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problems

One major problem facing the Hausa home video industry is its apparent neglect of some basic principles of story telling, bordering on characterization, narrative and believability in the narrative structure. Casting is often done with total disregard for suitability of the roles assigned to characters.

When directors in the Hausa film industry cast a character, an artisan for example, who resides in a lavishly furnished house, the audience definitely gets confused. The

same thing happened in a home video titled *Wata Rana*, where the main character appears too sophisticated for the role he is playing. Many audience members would not be able to reconcile his affluent background characterized by his lavish residence, expensive costume, expensive car, etc, with his being an artisan. These problems might perhaps be explained by the way the story is conceived, developed, scripted and produced. This may perhaps suggest that the storyline structure might just be the area where the problem resides.

On the narratives in Hausa home videos, Philips (1994, in Baumgartner [undated]) argues that there is always the need for narratives to be as plausible as possible. Do narratives in Hausa home videos appear plausible? Often, anachronistic mistakes as the above example are commonplace in these videos. Adamu (in Adamu, et al Eds, 2004) attributed this to the producers' inability to conduct research at the conception of the idea, prior to filming it. Some of the producers also agreed that some of their colleagues in the industry often cast people in their film on grounds of friendship or family relationship etc, irrespective of whether those people suit their given roles or not (Sabo in Adamu, et al, Eds: 2004; Kabara, *Fim*, August 2004).

1.2 Purpose of the Research

This study aimed at looking at the storyline structure of Hausa home videos, an area apparently many people overlooked. It intended to analyze three Hausa home videos, *Mai Kudi, Sanafahna and Albashi*, using the method of narrative analysis, with the aim of finding out how the storyline structure of these films conform to a story writing model by Christopher Vogler known as the Hero's Journey (Vogler, 1999). This is because of

Vogler's belief that his model, which was developed from myth can be found in all cultures.

The aim of this study was to find out how these selected Hausa video films tell their stories by looking at the structure of their storylines and measuring that structure against the standards in the Hollywood film industry (Vogler 1999: 3). Production of home video is becoming a cultural practice nowadays; and every nation or country produces films based on its cultural narratives. Turner (1988) argues that story or narrative is universal, maintaining that all cultures across the world have stories, but the manner in which stories are narrated may vary from culture to culture.

It has been observed overtime that interest in Hausa home videos is declining due to complain that the producers are mere copycats of Indian films. It is also easy to observe the interest of other people in Hollywood films, rather than the Hausa films. There is also the growing speculation among scholars and critics that skewed nature of the storyline structure of the Hausa home videos, coupled with their poor production quality might explain the reason why many people interested in film find it difficult to watch Hausa home videos.

The aim of this research was to analyze storyline structure in the three selected Hausa video films, using one of the internationally used models, the Hero's Journey, in order to bring out that structure (standard) from them (Hausa home video).

1.3 Research Questions

The following were questions which this study attempted to answer:

1. What is the nature of storyline structure of *Mai Kudi* (The Rich Man) *Sanafahna* (With time the truth shall dawn) and *Albashi* (Salary); and how do the storyline structures of these films compare with the model provided by Vogler in the Hero's Journey?
2. How does the storyline structure of the selected video films (*Mai Kudi, Sanafahna* and *Albashi*), affect their narrative style and structure?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to the body of existing knowledge in the area, in that it will add to the growing literature on Hausa video films, and thus, will provide a useful perspective to evolving discourse. It will also encourage further investigations into methods used in producing Hausa video films, as it will educate people about storyline structure and their importance in filmmaking.

The fact that the Hausa home video films copy most of their story ideas, concepts and themes, presuppose the existence of some aspects of the Hero's Journey model, which this study uses to measure stories in three selected Hausa home videos. This might have happened as a result of films original Hindi roots.

Also, several measures need to be taken to advance film production generally in the Hausa society. By bringing the knowledge of models and standards generally, to the directors and producers in the industry, this study has contributed towards the advancement of film industry in the Hausa society.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study was restricted to Hausa home videos only. It did not deal with any film produced in southern Nigeria; neither did it deal with films made in the Hollywood or

Bollywood. Any mention of films from those industries therefore, was just for purposes of reference, and/or illustration. This study also concentrated on the storyline structure in Hausa home videos with particular reference to three selected Hausa video films, which it measured against the Hero's Journey model by Christopher Vogler (1999).

1.6 Definition of Terms

The following are the key terms in this study, and hence need to be defined:

- a. **Storyline:** In this study, this means the line of action in the films, especially with emphasis on the characters; what they do how they do it, what is the result of their action, etc. It also means the particular story/narrative in the films, as it revolves around the characters from the beginning to the end.
- b. **Narrative:** This is the coherent and plotted series of event/stories in the selected films.
- c. **Home video:** This is a name that is used to refer to films produced on home video equipment and for home entertainment only. Because they are produced in this way, these films are called home videos, rather than films, which are usually produced on celluloid.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Contextual Overview

Nigeria is by far the most populated country within the continent of Africa. In fact one out of every seven Africans is a Nigerian (Encarta Premium 2006). There are several number of ethnic groups in the country, which many people believe have come together to give it a very rich culture, and to also pose serious socio-political challenges, which more often threaten national development.

The country is segmented into six geo-political zones, namely; North Central, North East, North West, South East, South South, and South West. Despite the numerous ethnic groups in the country, every Nigerian identifies with one of the three major ethnic groups in the country, namely; Hausa Igbo and Yoruba. While the Hausas (and related ethnic groups) inhabit the Northern part of the country, Yorubas and Igbos cohabit in the southern region, alongside numerous other smaller ethnic groups.

This North-South divide in Nigeria reflects the cultural, educational as well as economic and even political lopsidedness of the country (Mazrui 2000; Wikipedia Dictionary 2006; Stock [Encarta Premium 2006]). Mazrui (2000) argues that colonialism in Nigeria was the first dividing line among the different ethnic groups and regions. According to him, Lord Lugard's indirect rule ensured that Southern Nigeria became much more westernized than the North. The full-embrace of western system of education by the south, Mazrui (2000) argues, gave it an edge over the north economically, where majority of the people are farmers (Adamu undated).

This means that whatever Western type of development Nigeria as a country sees, the south is the first part to witness it before the north. Economically, Lagos, former

capital of Nigeria and still the business hub of the country, houses most manufacturing as well as service industries in the country.

Because of their contact with Arab merchants in about 14th century, northerners became the first literate people in Nigeria, and the first to have written literature (Mazrui 2000). This informed Lugard's policy of indirect rule in the country, which encouraged cultural westernization and overt Christianization in the south, and encouraged Afro-Islamic values in the North (Mazrui 2000).

But as culture is a very important variable in cultivation of skills, the culture of the people of the south quickly followed that of the colonial masters. The country's economy, which was dependent on agriculture, a major trade of the people of the north, changed in the 1950s with the discovery of oil in the south (Stock 2006).

Apart from helping in cultivation of skills, culture also gives a people their identity (Adeleke 2003). Art is an integral part of a culture, and a medium of art can be used to boost that culture (Adeleke 2003). Because of the fact that the south embraced this modernity before the north, southern Nigeria became the first to see the fusion of their culture with small media technologies, and later, new media technologies. In 1971, film, which mirrors the culture and life of a people (Mast 1992), was introduced in that part of the Nigeria, with the production and screening of Francis Oladele's *Kongi's Harvest* (Stock 2006), and much later in 1976, *Ajani Ogun*, a film by Ola Balogun (Adeleke 2003).

Nigerian film industry is inextricably linked with the country's arts (Jibril 2004 [in Adamu et al Eds, 2004], Stock 2006, Haynes 1997, Bamidele [in Ekwuazi et al Eds, 1992]). It all started with the country's travelling theatre troupes in early 1970s, which went round the major cities and towns, showing plays and performances, (Bamidele [in

Ekwuazi et al Eds 1992]), using music, dance, mime, costume, and masks to tell their stories. Stock (2006), traced the origin of Nigerian theatre to 1945, when Hubert Ogunde founded his theatrical troupe, which performed his own plays like *Tiger's Empire* (1946), a negative depiction of colonialism.

From this travelling theatre came the stage performances, where plays are performed on stage (Bamidele [in Ekwuazi et al Eds, 1992: 261]). This Bamidele added, ensured audience participation, because they shared in the arts' creation, applauded individual performers, and even heard their real voice. But the emergence of television, cinema (and much later video), from the West, changed all this.

The colonialists came into the Nigerian arts, when they built from the stage drama to produce actuality films from of documentary (Ekwuazi [in Ekwuazi et al Eds, 2001]). Films produced during this period, according to Ekwuazi, were necessitated by political and economic gains, which would foster cohesion and orientation within the colonial framework.

Before this however, Ola Balogun became the midwife of the transition from stage drama to film in Nigeria (Haynes, in Okome & Haynes 1995). Balogun made the first Yoruba film *Ajani Ogun* in 1977 together with Duro Ladipo and his troupe.

Balogun also worked with Hubert Ogunde and the other principal star of his tradition, the comic Moses Olaiya Adejumo (known as Baba Sala). All of Ogunde's films – *Aiye* (1979), *Jaiyesimi* (1980), *Aropin N'Tenia* (1982), and *Ayanmo* (1988) – began life as stage plays (though they were sometimes extensively transformed and rewritten, as *Aiye* was by Ola Balogun); so have most of Moses Olaiya's (Haynes, in Okome & Haynes 1995:5)

As soon as this began, other producers followed suit. The companies later realized the better gains in the venture. The troupes thus reduced in size to join other companies in film production. In spite of the ban placed on them to distribute film, they still went about

with their films. The national theater in Iganmu Lagos became the first film theatre. It showed Yoruba film on regular basis (Haynes, in Okome & Haynes 1995).

Government has always helped in cultural promotion and production in the country. Majigi for instance, was the earliest way of pushing government propaganda through the use of media. Larking (2004 in Adamu et al Eds) argues that Majigi was a very important means of message dissemination by the government. This was when colonialists projected plays like *Baban Larai*, which Larkin argues, has given the television drama a template after which they tailored their productions.

Again, in the north, the long standing literacy culture aided whatever development the intangible culture might have experienced (Furniss 2003; Adamu Undated). Furniss (2003) traced this development to the educational revolution brought about by the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme implemented by the then General Olushegun Obasanjo's regime. This was the time when the economy of the country was considerably good.

The earliest producers of these programmes, must of them youths then, whose educational qualifications did not surpass secondary school, embarked upon what Furniss (2003) calls Hausa popular literature. They formed some writing clubs under which umbrella many writers published and marketed their works. But three of those clubs became more prominent, they are: Raina Kama (Deceptive Appearance), Kukan Kurciya (The Cry of the Dove), and Dan Hakin da ka Raina (The Splinter you Ignore). All the three were based in Kano (Furniss 2003).

Ali (in Adamu et al Eds 2004) stresses that this literary movement metamorphosed into drama groups, before television stations could employ them to act for the screen. Due to economic recessions experienced in the country, especially during

General Babangida's regime, film production in the north done then in celluloid, could not develop fully (Furniss 2003, Adeleke 2003; Jibril, in Adamu et al Eds 2004).

Nothing contributed greatly to the development of Hausa film industry in Nigeria as the technological change that saw the shift from celluloid to video format (Jibril, in Adamu et al Eds 2004). The arrival of video cassette recorder (VCR) Jibril (2004 p. 71)) argues, was "central to the evolution and sustenance of modern visual entertainment culture, and subsequently the emergence of video production culture in Hausa society."

This was the time of a sudden sharp drop of the unit price of consumer electronics, characterized by global increase in oil prices, on which the country's economy largely depended (Boyd & Straubhaa 1985 in Jibril [in Adamu et al Eds 2004]). The VCR therefore, provided the Hausa culture with a communication vehicle of disseminating cultural narratives to the teeming population in both urban and rural areas.

Prior to the coming of VCR, most films produced then were not for commercial purposes (Larkin in Adamu et al Eds 2004). Commercial film production became widespread as soon as the film producers gathered enough skills to do so (Ali, in Adamu et al Eds 2004). From the year 2001, when Kano State Censorship Board officially started film censorship, to date, no fewer than one thousand five hundred Hausa films have been produced by different film production companies in Kano and other cities in northern Nigeria.

Because of the cheap, quick and easy nature of producing these video films by the use of the VCR, the question of technical and artistic quality of those films arose (Jibril in Adamu et al Eds 2004). This was particularly triggered by the arbitrary copying of ideas from other film industries, especially the Bollywood, by the producers, against the expectation of many people then, who anticipated the films to emulate the state-

sponsored (Majigi and television) media productions, which portrayed original Hausa culture (Larkin, Adamu, Maiwada, all in Adamu et al Eds 2004).

Larkin (1997) and Furniss (2003) have argued that the youths who started Hausa films barely had secondary school education. They were greatly motivated by their obsession with Indian films, as most of them were devoted cinema goers, where Indian films were on show almost all nights. These were the same youths who started the Hausa popular literature, Furniss (2003) argued further. Perhaps this informs the poor technical and artistic quality of the films.

But as the technology becomes more and more sophisticated, so also the producers grew to become more and more competent in their trade. Jibril (in Adamu et al Eds 2004) outlined some of the technical equipment used in the Hausa film production, which he believed are better than those used at the infancy of the film industry. What still remains to be tackled regarding Hausa film production is the artistic quality.

This is why this particular study focused on Hausa video films' storyline and their structure, so as to find out whether conventions are applied or not, and to what extent.

2.1 Literature Review

This research work attempted to explore the storyline structure of Hausa home videos, using narrative analysis as the main theoretical framework, and the Hero's Journey model as the standard analytical yardstick, as used in the Hollywood story structures for professional story writers and film producers all over the world.

There is very little literature directly dealing with the subject matter of this research, i.e. Hausa home video storyline structure. When this subject was proposed, it was clear from the beginning that this would be one of the few pioneering studies on the

structure of Hausa home video storyline. Most studies done on Hausa video films tend to dwell on cultural representation, adaptation of foreign cultures, role of women and children in the videos, and other technical issues.

2.2 Storyline Structure

The term Storyline is often used interchangeably with the term narrative. It is the primary function of any movie, video or film (Nelmes, 1996). It means the actual story around which all images are organized and made sense of by the audience.

Few scholars that have briefly touched on Hausa home video storylines include Larkin (2002, p. 1). For him, modern African films generally, to which the Hausa home videos belong, is lacking in quality compared to the earlier films, which were beautifully crafted, adding that in the films of today, the “acting is firmly rooted in the traditions of melodrama. Storylines are long, and the style and form of the horror can oscillate from simple effects to shocking violence.” He agrees with Turner (1988), that storylines are a universal phenomenon to all cultures, however, arguing that the storylines of most modern African videos are unnecessarily lengthy. This suggests the lack of adequate skills by the filmmakers/script writers to tell the stories in relatively small time and space. Perhaps he is referring to the stylish use of sequels for most videos, even when unnecessary, for financial gain.

Also on the length of African, and particularly Hausa video storyline, Okome and Haynes (1995) criticized Brendan Shehu, the director of a Hausa video drama, *Kulba Na Barna* (1992), that with all his skills in film production, yet he produced a film, which “takes two hours to tell a simple story of a school girl seduced and abandoned by a rich al

Hadji (sic), which could have been told easily in half an hour”. But they quickly reasoned that Shehu’s film was an adaptation from a play, to which the video must be faithful.

Nevertheless, the duo has corroborated Larkin’s (2002) assertion that often storylines in some African videos are lengthy. They suggested that though the book from which the story was adapted, was written for secondary school children, Shehu could still have violated the narrative conventions of prose fiction writing. This would have modified the storyline of that film to fit the cinematic narrative format, which could make the film visually attractive even to adult viewers.

Haynes (1997) suggested a strong link between African films and oral traditions in the continent. According to him, even the dialogue in those films is a replica of that of the stage drama, which is slow and elaborate. Actions therefore take longer time on the screen. He also argued that storylines in African films are laden with elements, which often do not have any relations with the real plot and narrative of the films. Examples of these elements are the singing and dance sequences used in Hausa home video films. Indeed, most critics corroborate Haynes’ position on the lack of relevance of some of these songs and dance sequences to the actual storylines of the film.

Muhammad (in Adamu, et al Eds 2003) for instance, outlined series of storyline related mistakes, which he said are a direct consequence of lack of research. He argued that these mistakes often lead to lack of interest. In his words:

Most Hausa films these days are more an action drama than real life drama. And there is lack of precision and perfection in the dramas, which makes people shun them. I think since the industry is at its infant stage, there is need for them to give more emphasis on drama with dialogue and debate, rather than action dramas. I argue that it is the absence of more dialogue and debates in our dramas that makes the whole idea absurd.

He attributes people's lack of interest in the Hausa home videos to what he termed "unprofessional conducts of the filmmakers" suggesting an adjustment in the way film production is handled.

The didactic nature of the stories in Hausa home videos, according to Mohammed (in Adamu, et al Eds 2003), makes the films boring. Stories in Hausa home videos argues Mohammed, are designed to teach the audience some lessons of life. This he finds unexciting, because "the films center on religion and morality only," and these themes are often broken into sub-themes. The suggestion here is that other issues outside religion and morality should be looked at as well.

On morality and culture, Adamu (2003, p. 91) criticizes producers/directors in the industry for direct copying of storylines from the Indian films. This is rather a common accusation against the Hausa films producers, and this act of copying may impinge on the originality, quality as well as the believability of the stories in the films, since it may culturally limit on the storylines structures of the Indian adaptations. Adamu argues that "a typical Hausa home video film is not about a [standard format for] storyline, but about a catchy song and dance" sequences.

For those stories that are adapted from Hausa tales, Ahmad (2003, p. 157) argues that since the two media have different requirements to tell their stories, there is no problem if producers extend the video version of the storyline to fit the requirements of the film medium, which tells its story through the "effective use of camera, setting, lighting, make-up on one hand, and craftily composed story" on the other. But in doing so, writers may easily fall into the pitfall of having lengthy storylines, which as detailed above, is discouraged.

Also, other critics like Tanko (2003, p. 261), believe that Hausa film producers can tell their stories within the confines of the right time and place. He argues that as a geographer, it interests him to see stories sufficiently fit the time and place it is being narrated, especially when the video is shot at a familiar place. He conjectures that:

As the film goes along, I want to keep asking myself are these streets the same today? Are these buildings new? How about that tree? Is it actually Kano, today? Or yesterday? Or is it the Kano we will like to have in the next century? I also put eyes to the trees around to see whether they are green or brown, essentially, which season of the year is the play being shot? How about the farms? Is the film taking cognizance of the changes within time: morning, afternoon, evening, night, day, dry-season, wet-season etc.

Each of these when included, can have a bearing on the storyline, and therefore research becomes crucial in having meaningful films, which fragments are interconnected and when taken as a whole, gives complete meaning.

Maiwada (2003, p. 273) on his part, looked at the way Hausa films give a far less sophisticated output, especially those aspects of the storylines, which he argues are copied from other cultures. He particularly referred to those films which copied violence from Indian or American films, but failed to do it (the act of violence) in a convincing way as done in the original film. In *Isaah*, a Hausa video, Maiwada noticed how imitation of violence almost rendered the film meaningless. He writes:

Isaah portrayed a rich man who desired a married woman, and arranged to murder her husband. The hired assassins captured him (the woman's husband) and nearly tortured him to death. This imitation of violence is less sophisticated than in the original Indian film where the actor survived the severe beating in the police cell with much courage.

When something is a direct copy from another culture, it is difficult for it to be rendered effectively in another culture. It is better not to try this direct copy, because the consequence may prove damaging to the storyline.

Most works done on Hausa home videos so far do not look deeply at the storyline or its structure. But a cursory look at the review of literature will reveal that some scholars often make generalizations about storylines in African films as one and the same. Perhaps this is one of the pioneering studies that took a closer look at a fraction of the African cinema in order to see the treatment of storyline and its structure, and how it can compare with available standards in other film industries.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study used narrative theory as its theoretical framework. Ever since Aristotle described the form of narrative in his famous book *The Poetics*, as having beginning, middle and end, scholars in social science and related fields came to the agreement that sequence in narrative is sufficient if not necessary (Riessman 1993, p. 17).

Scholars began to see the narrative as discrete units, having clear beginning, middle and ending. Labov and Weletzky (1967, in Riessman, [1993]) see stories (whether as told by the professional storyteller, in fiction writing or in film) following chronological order, “the order of events moves in a linear way through time, and the order cannot be changed without changing the inferred sequence of events in the original semantic of interpretation”.

This order according to Labov and Weletzky’s interpretation, allows others to ask the necessary question “and then what happened?” after the narratives. Narratives across cultures are accounts of past events [and also how individuals understand them or

interpret them] in whatever form they come. Whether in first or third person narration and they all have common properties. Their properties are the structure they take, which is; beginning, middle and end. It is this common property that scholars use in designing the most common structure of storyline across movie industries, known as the Three Act structure (Vogler, 1999). The Three Act structure according to Aronso (2000) is, Act One, where the characters are introduced and their problems; Act Two, where the problem gets complicated; and, Act Three, where the problem is resolved.

Narrative according to Boje (2000, p. 1) is not the same as story. Story is less than narrative; this is because “narrative requires plot as well as coherence”. A plot is the story or sequence of events in something such as a novel, play, or movie (Encarta 2006). This means that a story is a chronological sequence of events and plot is the causal and logical structure which connects events. That is why the stories in movies, which of course are plotted and coherent, are termed storyline. Encarta Dictionary (2006) defined narrative as “a story or an account of a sequence of events in the order in which they happened”. It therefore becomes pertinent to relate the concept of story with the key concept of this study, which is storyline.

Turner (1988) believes in the universality of story. Stories he argues, which are the major ingredients of feature films, are based on fiction. “Even films based on true events will fictionalize them in order to produce drama to telescope time, to avoid being filled up with too many minor characters, or simply to be more entertaining”. The above statement suggests that film has a primary function of telling a story visually.

All the images in films/videos that make up film are organized and made sense of (by the audience) around the narrativity of the story. Granted that all elements may not be of equal importance in a film, but there is a supposition that if a film draws attention to

something, it will (or at least should) have a consequence in the development of the story (Nelmes, 1996).

Narrative is built on the basis of cause and effect relationship. And this chain of events is expected to be sustained till the end of the story. Whatever happens and no matter how minor, must have a consequence to the generality of the story. The links provided for these events are supposed to be consecutive; the effect of one cause becoming the cause of the next link. Young (1987, in Riessman, [1993, p. 14]) argued for consequential sequence, saying, “One event causes another in narrative, although the link may not always be chronological”.

According to Nelmes (1996), narrative, especially in movies, does a number of things:

1. It involves the viewer in making sense of what is seen, asking questions of what we see and anticipating the answers;
2. It invites viewers to ask both what is going to happen next and when, and how it will end;
3. It operates on the tension between our participation of likely outcomes drawn from genre conventions and the capacity to surprise or frustrate our expectations.

Nowadays, every nation or country produces films based on its cultural narratives, but this should not be done outside the industry’s set standards, else, it would amount to compromising on standards. Turner’s (1988) argument recognizes that though storytelling/narrative is universal, the manner in which stories are narrated may vary from culture to culture.

There are a number of acceptable standards of storyline structures that are used especially in the Hollywood film industry. One of the standards was used as a template for measuring storyline structure of three Hausa home videos in this study.

The first storyline structure is the one advanced by Todorov (in Nelmes, 1996, p. 112) which sees storylines starting as “stable equilibrium, where everything is satisfied, calm and normal”. A disruption of some sort follows this and then sets in a state of disequilibrium, and then an action against the disruption comes in, which seeks to re-create a state of equilibrium. This is more or less like the traditional Three Act structure in Aronso (2001).

The second model or standard is one known as the Hero’s Journey by Christopher Vogler (1999). This model has twelve stages spread across the basic Three Act structure.

The stages are:

Act One: Ordinary World, Call to Adventure, Refusal of the Call (Reluctant Hero), Meeting with the Mentor, Crossing the First Threshold.

Act Two: Tests, Allies and Enemies, Approach to Inmost Cave, Ordeal, Reward.

Act Three: The Road Back, Resurrection, Return with the Elixir.

One major difference between the two above is that Todorov’s is genre specific. This means that the stages of stable equilibrium and that of disruption in the structure vary according to genres. For example, Horror films according to him are characterized by immediate disruptions. In melodramas, the initial equilibrium is particularly unstable unlike in other genres. Action genres have raids or threats at the disruption stage. Again, in romance genres, the first stage, that is the initial equilibrium, is introduced by the absence (usually of a partner) or lack of it by one.

Aronso (2001, p. 40) writes that “the classical narrative structure consists of three acts, punctuated by twists and turns, and leading to a climax and a resolution.” Everything else in the story and all other components boil down to producing a meaningful movie to the audience who are not privy to the jigsaws and rigors of production.

The explanation of the Three Act model is when we have Act one, Act two and Act three, i.e. having stages as: catalyst, problem, turning point, reversals, complications turning point and climax. The Hero’s Journey as mentioned above is spread across this traditional structure. .

2.4 Narrative Models in Hausa Culture

Perhaps a quick survey of narrative models in Hausa would reveal some semblance with models of storytelling in other cultures. It is common that no society in the whole world has the monopoly of knowledge itself. From the religious perspective, no nation or society can claim being the originator of knowledge whether in technology, philosophy, art, medicine, etc. (Abdullahi 1998). Knowledge, according to Abdullahi (1998), came about from one source. It was only passed on from one generation to another. According to Burton (1804, in Abdullahi 1998), in ancient times, hardly could people lay claim to anything they created. This he said, made it easy for anybody to claim other people’s works, until when copyright laws were founded, which gave the right of ownership of any work to its creator.

This process, according to Abdullahi (1998), ensured continuity in knowledge. People began to continue their search for knowledge from where others stopped, giving due credit to whom it is due. Two great factors that ensured quick spread of knowledge

according to Abdullahi were language and migration. Early societies witnessed influx as well as exodus of people from all places. This period was an early historical phenomenon, and was when people travelled in search of conducive environment for their trade or career. Those affected by this include intellectuals who spread knowledge across the globe. From this came the skills of translation and transmutation (Malumfashi 1989, in Abdullahi 1998).

The art of storytelling too is as old as human beings. Cooper and Dancyger (2000:11), said that any person who has never been confronted by “a kid’s searching gaze, or anyone who has never seen an infant gulp down its surroundings with its eye,” apparently trying to find answers to the questions; where am I? Who are you? And what’s going on here? will recognize that from very early in life, human beings yearn to understand the world around them, to make sense of things. They added that creating and embellishing stories are some of the ways to satisfy this need. We can therefore say that the first stories human beings shared among themselves were about how everything in the world came about. There is no society or people therefore, that do not have this need or ways to satisfy these needs.

It was Turner (1988) who once argued that the field of narratology (as the study of the stories in novels and films is referred to) was large. This largeness thus attracted interest from diverse researchers. A fierce debate about the function and nature of narrative within the primitive and modern industrialized societies was triggered. Researchers including anthropologists, semioticians, folklorists, cultural studies theorists etc (Turner 1988) took part in the debate, the reason for the breadth of interest in narrative’s universality.

Turner further argued that stories (or narratives) are told even in societies where no equivalents of novels existed. Storytelling takes the form of myths, legends, ballads, folk-tales, rituals, dance, histories, novels, jokes, drama etc (Turner 1988). Hausa society has *tatsuniya* or tale, which is mainly traditional fictional narration (Ahmad 1997). True stories in Hausa are however referred to as *labaru*. Other forms of stories in Hausa society are riddles, jokes, myths, etc.

Generally speaking Hausa narratives are categorized into two main classes; tales or traditional fictional stories narration (*tatsuniya*), and stories (*labaru*), which of course are true or can be true. The plot structure in tales according to Ahmad (1997) is composed of one or more episodes. The episodes also retain Aristotle's story structure (mentioned in his famous treatise, *the Poetics*) of beginning, middle and end. They contain statement of a problem, complication of that problem as well as its resolution (Ahmad 1997). Therefore, the preponderance of this structure in Hausa tales and stories confirms its universality.

In spite of the prohibition of *hululu* (idle talk) by the religion of Islam, the predominant religion in the Hausa land, to which both tales and stories are part, they still thrived. A great factor to this is the promotion of the culture of literacy by the colonial masters (Ahmad 1997). Before this cultural revivalism, literature in Hausa land was either oral then, or in Arabic or Ajami texts (Mukhtar 2002, Ahmad 1997).

By 1930s when the colonial masters encouraged written literature in Hausa society, some creative writers including late Abubakar Imam, late Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and a host of others had written quite a number of books. It was during that first competition by NORLA (Northern Literature Bureau), that late Abubakar Imam's

passion and flair for story writing became fully discovered by the white men (Abdullahi 1998).

They thus engaged him to write books to be used as literature in secondary schools. This led to the writing of *Magana Jari Ce* in three volumes. But it later turned out that most of the books Imam wrote, which today are regarded as classical literature, were either works of translation, like *Dare Dubu da Daya*, or transmutation of other works like *Magana Jari Ce* and *Ruwan Bagaja* (Abdullahi 1998). In spite of this, the culture portrayed in all those stories was nothing other than the Hausa culture. This is because, the source of stories Imam used were found to be compatible with the receptive language and culture, which in this case was Hausa.

Imam has taken as source of his stories, from books like *Alfu Laila Wa Laila* (an Arabic book translated in English to *A Thousand and One Night*), *Kalila Wa Dimna* (another Arabic literature book), Aesop and Shakespeare's stories, Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales, Andersen Fairy Tales etc (Abdullahi 1998). The following excerpt from the book *Alfu Laila Wa Laila*, was found by East (in Abdullahi 1998) to bear striking resemblance with a portion of Imam's book, *Ruwan Bagaja*:

Ka sani kai Hammal labarina abin sha'awa ne da mamaki don haka zan bayyana maka abin da ya faru da ni, da wuraren da na je, har na sami wannan matsayi da kuma wannan dukiya da bayi. Ka sani ban sami wannan dukiya da matsayi ba sai da na sha wahala da shiga matsanantan halaye da ba su misaltuwa. Mahaifina tajirin gaskene, ya mutu ya bar man dukiya mai yawa, tun ina yaro kankane (Mac, 1839; 3:97, in Abdullahi 1998: 117).

You should know Mr. Hammal, that my story is very interesting one, and for this, I am going to narrate it to you about all the places I visited before I acquired my wealth and slaves. You should also know that I went through some indescribable and very critical moments before I acquired this wealth. My father was a very wealthy man. When he died, he left behind plenty of wealth for me even though I was an infant then.

In Ruwan Bagaja, Imam transmuted the above to the following:

...To go be ka zo da kai da abokanka, ni kuma in ba ka labarin abubuwan da na yi a duniyan nan har Allah ya sa na samu arzikin nan da ka gani...ubana kuwa wani baban malami ne na Sarkin Sudan, sunansa Malam Na-Bakin-Kogi (Imam 1966: 2-3, in Abdullahi 1998: 117).
...You should come tomorrow with your friends, and I will narrate to you what I did in this world to earn this wealth...as for my father, he was a learned man in the palace of the Emir of Sudan, his name was Malam Na-Bakin-Kogi.

We can clearly see from the above that societies in the world share a lot of things in common. *Alfu Laila Wa Laila*, a book originally from the Arab literature, later translated (or perhaps transmuted) into English and other languages, because of the compatibility of the cultures. The above excerpt was from a story, *Sinbad the Sailor*, from the book *A Thousand and one Nights*, which was the English translation of *Alfu Laila Wa Laila*.

Both Hausa tales and stories, which are traditional and thus, exclusive to the culture, have some features that are considered universal. Their structure of beginning, middle and end is one acknowledged to be found in all stories, fictional or otherwise, universally. Again, like in the Hero's Journey model of screen and story writing by Christopher Vogler (used to measure storyline structure in this study), characters in Hausa tales and stories go through an adventure (or a journey as Vogler [1999] would rather say) and come back with the treasure for which they embarked on the journey.

Different characters in Hausa tales according to Ahmad (1997) play different roles and conversely, same characters play same roles. In some tales/stories, characters, including animals play roles of guardians. The role of a guardian (or mentor) according to Vogler (1999) in the Hero's Journey model, is vital. A hero in any story must or should have a mentor, usually an elderly person or someone more experienced than the hero, who would guide him to a certain point in the adventure.

Like the popular European fairy tales, Hausa culture too has its own Cinderella stories. The tale of ‘*Yarboroda*’ ‘*Yarmowa*’, a two-episode narrative, of two parallel characters - one loved by all, and the other hated – in which the Bora (the hated character) usually triumphs, is a clear example (Ahmad 1997).

Below is a summary of a Hausa tale, which reveals the three-Act structure of beginning, middle and end:

The Daughter of a snake and a Prince

A girl called Zina was the daughter of a snake (*Kasa*). She was born very ugly but her mother could transform her into a beautiful girl whenever she wished. The girl collected firewood and took to the Emir’s house for sale. One day, the prince saw her and ordered her out of his sight because she was so ugly. She told her mother of the Prince’s behavior and her mother told her not to worry. Then one day the Prince wanted to get married. So, all the eligible girls were asked to gather at the village square (*dandali*) for the Prince to choose a wife. Zina’s mother, the snake transformed her daughter into the most beautiful girl in town. She easily won the contest. The following day the Prince saw Zina at the palace and as usual ordered her out of his sight. As she was going out, she showed the ring he had given her the previous night. He then realized he had treated her badly and asked for forgiveness from her and her mother. He was forgiven. They got married and lived happily ever after.

Aside Hausa folk-tales and drama, Hausa performing arts, which have been in existence long before the advent of Islamic religion in the Hausa society, is another way we can look at models of storytelling in Hausa. According to Kofoworola & Lateef (1987), performing arts (including drama) in Hausa culture was due to Hausa man’s attempt to understand the power of nature and to bring it under his control. Drama and theater, these scholars argue, are the forms of social acts, and therefore, the seeds of the traditional heritage of Hausa people.

The origin of Hausa performing arts was religion (Kofoworol & Lateef 1987). It began even before the Habe dynasty as an ancient religious belief. Priest Kings like Tsumburbura in Kano’s Dala hills then used these performing arts to provide remedies

for societal tragedies and conflicts. The origin later changed to politics with the establishment of Habe dynasties in the Hausa land, when two classes of performing arts were founded; namely the aristocratic art-form, who perform for kings at traditional courts; and freelance art-form, who perform for commoners.

The form of the performances of these two classes, according to Kofoworola & Lateef (1987: 49), suggests a theatrical setting. Some of the aesthetic elements of the theatre in Hausa oral tradition in performing arts are dance, drumming, singing, dramatic display, poetic songs, musical entertainment etc.

One interesting thing about these performances is their physical context. According to Kofoworola & Lateef (1987: 50), the word “theatron”, from which theatre was found, means ‘seeing place.’ It thus, refers to such places as Emir’s palace, or court, or any group of the performing artistes, be it the aristocratic group or freelance group. It also refers to the *dandalin wasa* or stage in the traditional Hausa setting. This is because the audience members experience in real life, the performance, which is the case in any theatrical performance.

Also in addition, there are such features of aesthetics as make-ups, costumes, props etc. Again, because most performances in Hausa contain a sort of enactment, which is the basic idea of drama, it therefore justifies their reference as valid forms of drama and theatre. Furthermore, there is narrative in some performances as there are protagonists and antagonists. The performances of *‘yan gambara*, for instance, is an enactment of certain themes of Hausa folklore. This, Kofoworola & Lateef (1987: 49) argue, manifests:

...in an integrative forms with sing-song dialogue, music, dance and acting movements, mime mimicking etc. all woven in the presentation. The chorus responses to the sing-song dialogues

sometimes play the role of the antagonists as observed in its relationship to the protagonist in the Greek play and so are capable of advancing the plot of the thematic topic of presentation in a logical sequence of movement to a logical conclusion of a particular episode in the presentation.

To sum up the discussion on Vogler's the Hero's Journey and Todorov's, while the former is character based, in the sense that it focuses on the major character or the hero as he prefers to call him/her, the latter is not. Vogler's model of storyline structure follows the hero as he/she journeys through the story, making sure that he/she passes or acts in all of the twelve stages of the model.

Todorov's on the other hand is genre based. It focuses on nothing else in all the structural elements but the genre or film type. At every stage in the story, it emphasizes on the genre, bringing out the basic elements of that genre and establishing the fact that that movie/film/video clearly belongs to a particular movie category.

While treating a genre of romance for example, this model brings out any identifying element like a scene where some people are having a romantic affair, irrespective of whether those people are major or minor characters in the film. This is against the Hero's Journey model, which focuses on the hero (heroes), the character around whose life the story unfolds.

This study used narrative analysis in exploring the selected videos, and then related the outcome of the analysis of the selected videos to the structural narrative of the Hero's Journey model of storyline structure of commonly used in Hollywood film industry.

The expectation at the beginning of the study was that, at least one of the three selected videos would be found to be in conformity with the Hero's Journey model. The main reason why this model was selected was that its creator, Christopher Vogler, had insisted that it can be found in all cultures. He founded it from myths, which he said is

found in all cultures. It was therefore an interesting task to test this model on Hausa home videos.

One single weakness of the model in my opinion was its apparent suggestion of adventure in all movies. Vogler (1999) believes that heroes, who are main characters in movies, undertake a journey. By journey, people easily think of traveling from one place to another. The actual journey Vogler implies here is metaphorical one. It is a journey from one world [ordinary world and one, which heroes are familiar with] to another world, which is new and often difficult to live in. The journey can take the form of moving from one place to another, one town to another, or just doing something one is not familiar with. This journey can also be undertaken in one's bedroom, or one's house, or at best, in a small town or a big a city.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Narrative Analysis

This study used narrative analysis as its analytical tool. This is because its object of study was the storyline in three Hausa home videos, namely: *Mai Kudi* (The Rich Man) *Sanafahna* (With Time the Truth shall dawn) and *Albashi* (Salary).

Labov (1972, in Franzosi [1998]) defines narrative analysis as the choice of a specific linguistic technique to report past events. He also argues that it is “one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events, which (it is inferred) actually occurred”. This definition clearly suggests that the type of narrative analysis being referred to here is, linguistic. Rimmon-Kenen (1983, also in Franzosi [1998]), argues that, “narrative fiction is a succession of events”. Cohan & Shire (1988, in Franzosi [1998]) explained that, "the distinguishing feature of narrative is its linear organization of events". Finally, Toolan (1988, still in Franzosi [1998]), provides a definition, which says, "a minimalist definition of narrative might be: 'a perceived sequence of nonrandomly connected events'".

From the above definitions we can understand that narrative analysis takes different forms, but the widely known ones are the psychological, linguistic and biographical (Baumgartner, undated). Franzosi (1998) explains that:

Narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting (think of Carpaccio's Saint Ursula), stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news items, conversations. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is, nor has been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives . . . narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: It is simply there, like life itself...

While it is sometimes wrong to equate narrative with a story, it is useful to distinguish the two terms. Narrative is a discourse designed to represent a connected succession of happenings, while a story is an account of factual or fictional events or series of events (Encarta.com 2006). The major difference between the two therefore, is that while in narrative the events are in succession and plotted, it is not the same in a story. The stories in films fall within the rubric of narratives and therefore, can be studied using narrative analysis and the Hero's Journey model.

This study used the Hero's Journey model to measure the structure of storyline in three video films. The model; the Hero's Journey, according to its creator, Christopher Vogler (1999, p.1), is a borderline between myth and modern storytelling. Vogler argues that "all stories consist of a few common structural elements found universally in myths, fairy tales, dreams, and movies". Some of these things Vogler listed are in Fronzosi's description of narrative. The model is mythical, and as scholars argued, myths are transcultural, and by logic therefore, myths can also be found in Hausa home video narratives. This informed the choice of the model as a yardstick to measure its conformity or otherwise with the storyline structure in Hausa home videos.

But why insist on standard? Standardization the world over has become a norm. Some of the reasons why standards are applied in all industries are: to set and maintain a minimum level of quality or excellence of products and practices. This is to ensure products created in one environment for example, can work fine in another environment. Adherence to standards would guarantee recognition and acceptance for all products. Perhaps it was this adherence that earned a South African film *Tsotsi*, an Academy award in Hollywood in 2005, as best foreign film.

As a method of qualitative research, narrative analysis has a long tradition, which dates back to the time of Aristotle. It has also been a very important element of understanding human behavior (Reissman, 1993). Though the area of narrative analysis within the qualitative research is broad-base as Baumgartner (undated) argues, three approaches are the most commonly explored so far, namely: biographic, linguistic and psychological. This study used neither of these. Instead, it used an entirely different form of narrative analysis. According to Redwood (1999), scholars in this research like Mishler (1991), Kleinman (1993), Reissman (1993) and Coles (1986), have all agreed on the obligation of the method in giving voice to human feelings and experiences, but disagreed on the purpose, method and form of this research can take, because according to them, it is largely intuitive. This study therefore used the visual narrative in the three selected home videos to analyze the succession of events (as Rimmom-Kenen [1983] defined narrative analysis) in three selected Hausa home videos. The events are the twelve stages of the main character's role, outlined in the Hero's Journey model of storyline structure. This study looked at these twelve events and analyzed them as they appeared in the selected Hausa home video films.

This analysis was done in three phases; first, the narrative of each of the films was looked at, then spread on the twelve-stage model, and then the conformity of the storyline structure of all the films, was measured against the Hero's Journey model.

In narrative analysis Gunter (2000) argues that all texts are considered as stories. The stories Gunter refers to here are the plotted and coherent ones. In this method of analysis, according to Gunter (2000, p. 90), "the message is taken to be a presented or edited version of a sequence of events, of which elements are described and characterized

as to their structure”. By so doing, argued Redwood (1999, p. 1), stories are told about stories and narratives thus become a form of social interaction”.

Gunter (2000, 90) continues to describe this method of analysis, insisting that “the procedure focuses on the reconstruction and description of the narrative structure on the basis of acts, choices, difficulties and events happening to characters”. This study analyzed the storyline structure of three selected home video films, viewed as narrative and then measured against the Hero’s Journey model. The model has a twelve-stage storyline structure, of which all must appear in each of the three Hausa home video films, before a video/film is considered to be in conformity with the “standard” structure.

3.2 The Hero’s Journey Model

This study analyzed three Hausa home videos based on the Hero’s Journey model advanced by Christopher Vogler (1999), in his book, *the writer’s journey: mythic structure for storytellers and screenwriters*, using the method of narrative analysis as the main theoretical framework. The model is a mythical concept, which he developed into a set of principles of storytelling, has now become a model for scriptwriters, film producers, writers and even students all over the world. Some people even confessed to Vogler how they used the model as a travel guide (Vogler, 1999).

But the question is; how can this study merge the method of narrative analysis with the Hero’s Journey model?

Each of the selected videos was viewed as a story. This is a rule in narrative analysis (Gunter, 2000). But the objective was not to study the linguistic aspect of the narrative as is common with most studies in narrative analysis, neither was it biographical nor psychological. Rather, a different approach to narrative analysis was taken. This

study uses the visual narrative in the three home videos to measure their compliance with the model, the Hero's Journey, and to also reveal in the videos, the twelve-stage storyline structure. At the end, informed judgment was passed for the videos found to be in conformity with the model or not.

The Hero's Journey model is very popular in Hollywood, where it is increasingly being adopted by seasoned filmmakers. But some people are of the opinion that since film is an art, it should not be restricted to standards. Said Vogler (1999, p. xiii):

...for them, art is an entirely intuitive process that can never be mastered by rules of thumb and should not be reduced to formula. And they aren't wrong. At the core of every artist is a sacred place where all the rules are set aside or deliberately forgotten, and nothing matters but the instinctive choices of the heart and soul of the artist.

What Vogler (1999) is saying here is that in arts, rules are seldom accommodated, and thus to some people, subjecting storytelling to conventions is something unnecessary. But he quickly added that, that rules are not often followed in art is in itself a principle, and hardly do people reject principles and theories in their entirety. He argues that those artists who reject "all form, are themselves dependent on form", for according to him, they risk losing a sizeable proportion of their audience, this is because:

...most people can't relate to totally unconventional art. By definition, it doesn't intersect with commonly held patterns of experience. Their work might only be appreciated by other artists, a small part of the community in any time or place. A certain amount of form is necessary to reach a wide audience. People expect it and enjoy it, so long as it's varied by some innovative combination or arrangement and doesn't fall into a completely predictable formula".

Vogler (1999) tries to avoid making his model being referred to as "cultural imperialism" by some people, because of its popularity in the Hollywood, believing that

local cultures have the right to resist any importation of cultural conventions and structures to which this storytelling technique is part.

By the mere mention of hero, what comes to mind is a warrior, and thus can be put for military use. But Vogler sees a hero as someone like a “pacifist, mother, pilgrim, fool, wanderer, hermit inventor, nurse, savior, artist, lunatic, lover, clown, king, victim, slave, worker, rebel, adventurer, tragic failure, coward, saint, monster etc”. Just any character who can take a leading role in a movie, can take the name hero, according to this model.

This model is very much compatible with the popular Three Act model of analyzing film discussed by Linda Aronso (2001, p. 40), which comprises of three basic stages of:

- (1) Act One, which introduces the characters and their problem;
- (2) Act Two, which complicates the problem;
- (3) Act Three, where the problem is solved.

Vogler’s twelve stage structure provides this study with a convenient analytical tool. Each of the twelve stages provides a distinct unit of analysis of its own. The selection of Vogler’s twelve-stage structure as unit of analysis is informed by the fact that the model as presented by Vogler, provides among other things, a unique storytelling structure, which can be adapted in qualitative research dealing with content emanating from stories or events. Since the main concern in this study is the storyline structure in Hausa home video films, it becomes expedient to utilize the analytical potentials provided by this model.

As the framework of our analysis in this study, it becomes necessary for us to present a broad outline of the twelve stages of storyline structure as propounded by Vogler (1999):

The Stages of the Hero's Journey:

Act One

1. Ordinary World
2. Call to Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting with the Mentor
5. Crossing the First Threshold

Act Two

6. Test, Allies, Enemies
7. Approach to the Inmost Cave
8. Ordeal
9. Reward

Act Three

10. The Road Back
11. Resurrection
12. Return with the Reward

The detail explanation of the twelve stages according to Vogler (1999, pp.15-26) is as follows:

The Hero's Journey:

A. The Ordinary World

The ordinary world is the situation which the main hero is in at the start of the story. According to Vogler (1999), most stories open with the hero transiting from this ordinary

world into a “special” world. This transition is often called “fish out of the water.” This is because the hero encounters a strange world or situation the moment he leaves his ordinary world. The special world is laden with tests and challenges which the hero must overcome before he answers the name hero.

The best way to demonstrate a “fish out of the water” situation is to create a contrast by juxtaposing the two worlds; the ordinary and the special. Often, ordinary world of heroes is delayed in some stories or movies till probably in the middle or end, when it is shown using some techniques like flashback, to create suspense and interest on the part of the audience. However it is done, the ordinary world of a hero is one in which he is in before the story pushes him out onto another one which is strange, challenging and unfamiliar.

B. The Call to Adventure

Vogler (1999, p. 22) believes heroes go through adventures as they journey through the story. It is not necessary that this model deals with adventure films as some people would think. The events in films put together, are a sort of adventure for the main characters. A call to adventure represents a problem, challenge or adventure being assigned to the hero to undertake, and “once this is done” Vogler says, the hero “can no longer live in the comfort of the ordinary world”. The Call to Adventure sets up the stakes of the game if you like, and it states clearly the hero’s goal in the story. The goal can either be a treasure he/she intends to secure, a lover to win, a revenge mission, right a wrong, achieve a dream, confront a challenge, or change a life. All these are “assignments” to characters, commonly found in Hausa video films. “What is at stake can often be expressed as a question posed by the call” Vogler added.

C. Refusal of the Call (The Reluctant Hero)

It is common to some main characters in films to resist this sort of call to adventure. Resistance often emanates from fear of the unknown, that is, the consequence of their action or the risk contained in the adventure. Any hero, who resists or attempts to resist the call to adventure according to Vogler, is termed “A Reluctant Hero”. It takes an influence like “a change in circumstances, a further offense against the natural order of things, or the encouragement of a mentor”, before the hero agrees to answer the call.

When for example, a man is approached by a girl for an affair (in romantic films) and he turns down the offer, he is a reluctant hero provided he is the main character in that film. The same thing with the heroine in the film, who refuses to accept a similar offer.

D. Mentor, (the wise old man or woman)

All heroes need mentors according to Vogler. The role of a Mentor in films originated from mythology. The relationship that exists between hero and Mentor is rich in its symbolism. According to Vogler, “it stands for the bond between parent and child, teacher and student, doctor and patient, god and man.” The primary function of Mentors is to prepare the hero for the adventure. He specifically gives advice, guidance or magical equipment, which help the hero in his quest. This is how far they can go, because, eventually, the hero must undertake the adventure himself. Sometimes the Mentor is required to give the hero a “swift kick in the pants” to get the adventure going. This is

typical with Chinese films where mentors often engage heroes in combat in an attempt to test their might and readiness for the task ahead.

Mentoring in Hausa films comes in form of advice by elders. Mentors can hardly use canes on heroes in Hausa films. It is a value in the Hausa society that people, who are properly mentored, advised or guided, rarely make slips in life. This therefore attests to the indispensability of mentors in real life situation and indeed in the portrayal of reality in the make-believe world of film.

E. Crossing the First Threshold

This marks the hero's commitment to the adventure. A reluctant hero finally commits himself to the challenge at this stage. He vows to unravel the problem or the mystery or whatever it is at this stage. According to Vogler, "this is the moment when the story takes off and the adventure really gets going. The balloon goes up, the ship sails, the romance begins, the plane or spaceship soars off, and the wagon gets rolling".

All films are segmented into three phases. These are called ACTS. These acts represent: 1) the hero's decision to act, 2) the action itself, and 3) the consequence of the action. The first Threshold marks the turning point between Acts One and Two.

In romantic Hausa films for example, when the hero presents himself to the family of the heroine as a suitor, defying all defenses that the girl or her family put on his way, he is said to have crossed the First Threshold.

F. Test, Allies and Enemies

Crossing the First Threshold subjects the hero to various Tests, earns him Allies and Enemies. This is because by his action, he has damned whatever consequences. Test can come for the hero at whatever place, and it may pitch him against his would-be in-laws for example in a Hausa romance film. Test for example, can come in form of getting the money with which to pay for the dowry, getting the consent of the family concerning the marriage issue. A hero's co-suitor can become his Enemy. His would-be in-laws can equally be his enemies especially when they dissent from his marriage proposal.

An Ally can come for the hero in any circumstance. If for example in the course of his seeking the heroine's hand in marriage he gets the sympathy of any of her family members, that person then becomes an Ally to him, especially if that person fully identifies with the hero.

According to Vogler, the best places for a hero to encounter a Test, make Allies and Enemies, are saloons and bars. But we can take this to be metaphorical and thus, by saloon and bars, Vogler means places of relaxation and or socialization. And also, because of lack of compatibility of Hausa culture and religion with these places, we do not expect to see this happening in Hausa films, and interestingly Vogler himself acknowledges the possibility of bending the rules to suit cultural and religious needs. Therefore encountering Test, making Allies and Enemies in Hausa films can occur at such places like homes, supermarkets, public places like naming and wedding ceremonies, under a tree, at roadsides, etc.

G. Approach to the Inmost Cave

At this stage, Vogler says the hero arrives at the dangerous place, "where the object of the quest is hidden. Often it is the headquarters of the hero's greatest enemy, the most

dangerous spot in the special world, the Inmost Cave.” When the hero enters that fearful place, he will cross the second threshold. Heroes often pause at the gate to prepare, plan and outwit the villain’s guards. This is the phase of the approach. Here, heroes confront their enemies head-on, all in attempt to get to the object of quest.

Vogler sees this stage in mythology, as representing the land of the dead, where “the hero may have to descend into hell to rescue a loved one, into a cave to fight a dragon and win a treasure, or into a labyrinth to confront a monster.”

In romantic Hausa films, this may represent the hero being given some pre-conditions for his marriage with the heroine. The satisfaction of the conditions stands between him and getting his object of quest, which of course is his loved one.

H. The Ordeal

This is the most difficult stage for the hero to pass. His fortunes as Vogler says, “hit bottom in a direct confrontation with his greatest fear.” It is one obstacle which the hero must get out of his way before he reaches to his reward. He faces the possibility of death and is brought to the brink in a battle with an enemy. The Ordeal according to Vogler, is a “black moment” for the audience as they are held in suspense and tension, not knowing if the hero will live or die.

At this stage, the heroic act of the hero comes to the fore. In Hausa films, this represents the hero having a fight with a gang of thugs for example, sent to him by enemies. He may win the fight which may take place in the presence of the heroine, but he may sustain an injury which could threaten his life.

In this stage Vogler says, “The hero must die or appear to die so that he/she can be born again. It’s a major source of the magic of the heroic myth”. The hero at this stage is

likened to an initiate of a fraternity and a secret society, where he is forced to die through a terrible experience before given the chance to resurrect. This is done because according to Vogler, “every story needs such a life-or-death moment in which the hero or his goals are in mortal jeopardy.”

I. Reward (seizing the sword)

This is a moment of celebration for the hero and the audience. This is because the hero has survived death, beaten the enemy or whatever obstacle presented by the Ordeal. The hero now takes possession of whatever he/she comes seeking. This is the Reward. It might be in form of “a special weapon like a magic sword, or a token like the Grail or some elixir which can heal the wounded land” Vogler says.

The Reward can be knowledge and experience that leads to greater understanding and reconciliation with hostile forces, which the hero would meet on his way back. From now on, the hero may also become more attractive as a result of having survived the Ordeal. He/she has now earned the title “hero” by coming this far.

J. The Road Back

Act three in all stories begins here. The story never ends with the reward won by the hero. He has to go back to where he started before he can be a real hero. Here, the hero begins to encounter the consequences of his action of daring the “dark forces” of the ordeal. “If (he/) she has not yet managed to reconcile with parent, the gods, or the hostile forces, they may come raging after (him/) her” according to Vogler. The real process of reconciliation in Hausa films is done here. All the warring parties are settled at this stage. All the forces the hero may have “disturbed” in the process of seizing the sword would

come after him here. Therefore, the co-suitors of the hero in the romantic film would come seeking revenge here.

This stage marks the decision of the hero to return to the status quo ante, that is, the Ordinary World. He now realizes that it is time to leave the special world.

K. Resurrection

There is one symbolism here according to Vogler, who says that “in ancient time, hunters and warriors have to be purified before they returned to their communities, because they had blood on their hands”. Because of this, the hero who like those hunters and warriors, has been to the “realm of the dead” must also be cleaned at this stage, before he can be allowed back into the ordinary world.

In this stage, the hero encounters yet another test, but this time it is to test his knowledge of lesson he has learnt at the Ordeal stage. He becomes reborn here, with new insights, ready to be admitted into the world of the living.

L. Return with the Elixir

Like somebody who embarks on a trip to a foreign land, everybody expects the hero to come home with something; he/she too is expected back to the Ordinary World with an Elixir. The journey is meaningless unless he/she brings back something home. This Elixir can be a treasure, a lesson, knowledge and experience or anything that could be useful to the community someday.

In Hausa romantic films, the hero’s Elixir is no doubt the heroine, for whom many men were suitors, and only the hero is proved lucky enough to win her for keeps.

Anything short of this would portray lack of success on the part of the hero in the long journey and thus, he is doomed to repeat the adventure, for failing to come back with something from the Ordeal in the Inmost Cave.

3.3 Justifying the Selection of Narrative Analysis as an Analytical Tool

According to Gunter (2000) a lot of works have been done using narrative analysis, and that all kinds of media contents such as films, television series, documentaries and even news accounts can be analyzed from a narrative point of view. Some of the works done in this areas include Newcomb's (1981) analysis of an entire evening of a prime time television in America; Deming's (1985) examination of an innovative character of a well-known police series *Hill Street Blues*; and Liebes and Livingstone's (1994) examination of the correspondence between the narrative structure and the structure of family kinship in English and American soap operas. This study analyzed the storyline structure of three Hausa video films selected to find out their conformity or otherwise to Vogler's standard model as explained in the Hero's Journey using narrative analysis technique.

3.4 Justifying the Selection of the Three Videos

This is a qualitative study because it analyzed media contents as narratives (Tankard, 1991). And thus, like most qualitative studies, this research did not aim at producing generalizeable results. That is why the title itself reflects clearly the selection of the areas of focus, without which a representational sample of the entire population

would have to be adequately selected. This however, would have contradicted the needs of a qualitative research.

3.5 Content Categorization

Although this study did not set out to bequeath empirically generalizable results, it used a particular category of films during the selection of the content. It used genre as the key typology and in selecting the content. Encarta dictionary (2006) defines genre as “category of artistic works: one of the categories, based on form, style, or subject matter, into which artistic works of all kinds can be divided.”

Genre came to film industry as part of standardization process, which comes into being when Hollywood and other film industries elsewhere produced hundreds of films. Films copied from the early arts and entertainment have their early genres as Comedy, The Western, Mystery, Horror, Romance, Melodrama and the War story (Encarta Premium 2006). The hallmark of this categorization was familiarity, as filmmakers and spectators soon understood a particular genres’ convention of story, character, setting and costume.

Kaminsky (1974) recognizes the broad forms within which all discussion of genre ends. They include Western, gangster films, art films, costume drama and war films. All genres according to Kaminsky, emanate from this broad category.

Nelmes (1996) for example, has talked about genres of romance, comedy, melodrama, action, etc. In his divisions, melodrama and romance are two separate genres, while other people see them as the same. Chamo (2004) categorized Hausa home videos thematically to include love, politics, comedy, sensitization and exhortation.

For the purpose of this research, Hausa home video films have been categorized into love, comedy, politics, modernism, family feud and epic genres. Out of these genres a selection was made. Three videos from three different genres were selected. The genres are: love, comedy and modernism. The three films selected on the basis of this typology are *Maikudi* (Comedy), *Sanafahna* (Love), and *Albashi* (Modernism).

A. Love Genre

The definition of love in this research is the same as that of romance in the Hollywood industry. *Sanafahna* was selected as a film with love as its main theme. Love here means when two people of the opposite sex (man and woman, young or old), have strong emotional feeling of affection for each other, whether it leads them to marriage or not. This film was confirmed to have satisfied all requirements of love films. The aspect of love was also found to have superseded all other sub-themes.

B. Comedy Genre

Comedy videos are those that are lighthearted in nature, treating their theme in lighter mood, incorporating laughter, joke and or hilarious dialogue, characterization and action. Before *Mai Kudi* was picked as comedy, its theme was determined to be that which unequivocally depict comic, and this must superseded other themes.

C. Modernism Genre

The third category which is modernism consists of films that treat issues considered modern, different from those considered as traditional. Those issues for example, include the vogue about GSM telephony that was introduced into the country in the year 2001; the “craze” for fashion by youths; the obsession of the rich for the latest brand of automobile; and the likes. Any video film that depicts this as the main thrust of its motif

is categorized in the genre of modernism. *Albashi* as a film, was found to have treated an issue considered novel to the Hausa; matriarchy.

3.6 Selection Procedure

The justification for selecting the three genres is that first, love genre though not the oldest, is the most relentless in the Hausa home video industry. It still thrives, though we start to see producers breaking away from this tradition. The bulk of the films made in the industry have the theme of love. Most love films were either story adapted from some Hausa novels like *Ina Son Sa Haka*, (Buba & Gidan Dabino, 2003), or are stories with roots from Hindi films (Adamu, 2004).

When Hausa films started, love theme was persistent (Ali 2003, in Adamu et al eds). This was due to the singing and dancing that characterized those films, and which are a direct result of adaptation of Indian films. Producers/directors in the industry only broke away from the tradition when criticism of their action became intense. It is believed that more than half of the Hausa films produced have love as their theme. The inclusion and analysis of love films as a distinct genre in this study therefore becomes vital.

Comedy is the next important genre in Hausa home video. People like Rabilu Musa (a.k.a Dan Ibro) a famous comedian and actor-producer, Bashir Chiroki, Hankaka, Kulu, Katakore etc, have made names for appearing and/or producing comedy videos in Hausa home video industry.

Comedy is one of the oldest genres in Hausa drama. It has been on air since the creation of the Radio Television Kaduna (RKTV) in 1962, and was sustained in the 1980s, by stations like CTV-Kano. Situational comedies like *Samanja* and *Dan Wanzan* (TV) and *Duniya Gidan Kashe Ahu* (Radio) were very popular with Hausa audiences

across the length and breath of Northern Nigerian cities (Adam, 2005 & Bourgault, 1995). Later, CTV came on board with a lot more popular situational comedies like *Hankaka*, *Sabon Dan Magori*, *Hadarin Kasa*, *Kuliya* etc. Some of our present day comedians mentioned earlier, have at one time tried to copy from earlier comedians, who acted in these situational comedies. The study of this genre is therefore very important, considering the volume of films/videos produced in it.

As for modernism genre, we can say it is the order of the day now. Films treating this theme are increasingly being produced. We see films portraying western and other foreign cultures, coming out on daily basis. It is the vogue now to see all the known super stars of the industry appearing in a single movie, where each struggles to win the heart of a lady using either a latest model of a cell phone or fashion, a brand new car, a duplex house, rich family background, one plum overseas businesses or another. Sometimes, this genre contains elements of love, but the love theme is only a sub-theme, it is not the main theme, because what is clear is modernism. This is the main reason why the genre becomes prominent now and thus, palatable for study.

3.7 Procedure of Analysis

For one to review a film successfully, one has to watch that film for at least three times, after which one becomes familiar with the film's genre, characterization, setting and other necessary elements that would enrich the work. This is not a review work. Even as such, the researcher had to watch the selected Hausa home videos three times before embarking on what Vogler suggested to people interested in testing his model.

First, some twelve index cards were designed, on which the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey model were written and labeled 1-12. "If you already know some of the

major scenes and turning points, write these down where you think they match up with the twelve stages” Vogler (1999, p. 239) says. The next stage was to fill the gaps in the index cards with the turning points and the major scenes, mapping out the story with the characters in the films and what happened to them.

Initially, some questions were asked, like; what are the ordinary and special Worlds of the heroes? What is the heroes’ Call to Adventure? Has the hero showed any reluctance to the Call? Has a Mentor played any role to subdue the hero’s fear? What was the hero’s first Threshold? What was his Ordeal? What was his Reward? Where did the return Back start? What was the hero’s Elixir?

The answers to these questions helped in filling the gaps in those index cards. Though certain scenes that match certain stages did not come in the right point of the Hero’s Journey model, this did not present much problem, because Vogler (1999) says that it is not necessary they all must come in the order he listed them. “An element of the hero’s Journey can appear at any point in a story”, he explained.

The Hero’s Journey model, Vogler (1999) says, can be bended by any storyteller particularly to suit the religious, cultural and social needs of his society. The model is highly flexible as he explained. It is not compulsory that every stage in the model must be sequentially followed. Some elements may come earlier or later than they appear in the model. This is what he says about the model:

The pattern of the Hero’s Journey is universal, occurring in every culture, in every time. It is as infinitely varied as the human race itself and yet its basic form (and therefore structure) remains constant. The Hero’s Journey is an incredibly tenacious set of elements that springs endlessly from the deepest reaches of the human mind; different in its details for every culture, but fundamentally the same (Vogler 1999: 10).

The three selected Hausa home videos would be analyzed as narratives, using the above outlined model to measure the extent of their storyline's conformity or deviation to, or from the model.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Analysis of the Selected Films using the Hero's Journey Model

One major criticism faced for selecting the Hero's Journey as model of analysis was that directors in Hausa home video industry are not aware of its existence. In fact, they are ignorant of the existence of any standards in film story writing, and hence, any attempt to measure their works against any standards was going to be "inductive" as one of the observers and advisers put it.

It was argued that producers and directors in the industry are consummate "copiers" of ideas particularly from the Indian filmmakers, who in turn, copy from the Hollywood. And therefore, whatever elements of the model of the Hero's Journey that may be found in Hausa films, may not be a result of the director/producers' knowledge of the existence of the model or anything similar. It is rather the result of the knowledge of the Indians about those models, which perhaps was the benefit they enjoyed as a result of their long standing relationship with the Hollywood.

Three films were selected for this research and their selection was done not because they are a representational sample for the population of this study. No. It was stated early in the previous chapter, that the findings of this research is not meant for any generalization. Rather, it is just to test the storyline structure of Hausa home videos.

The films selected are *Mai Kudi* (Comedy), *Sanafahna* (Romance), and *Albashi* (Modernism). In this chapter, a narrative analysis of these films was presented in the above order, based on the Hero's Journey storyline structure of Christopher Vogler.

A. *Mai Kudi* (The Rich Man)

Producer: Garba Babangida

Production Company:	Babangida Movies
Director:	Ishaq Sidi Ishaq
Script Writer:	Garba Babangida
Year of Release:	2005
Running Time:	78 Minutes
Cast:	Rabilu Musa (Saleh), Saima Mohammed (Sailuba), Aminu S. Shariff (Alhaji Ibrahim), Hajara Usman (Anti), et al.

Produced by Ishaq Sidi Ishaq, *Mai Kudi* was shot in the present day Kaduna, the liberal city. Life in Kaduna is very much different from the rest of the cities of Northern Nigeria, where majority are traditional and conservative.

Why the city of Kaduna is different is that a good number of the population there were originally from the southern part of the country. Among the indigenes of Kaduna, a good number are non-Muslims and non – Hausa Fulani. As for the population from the south of the country, most of them settled in this political capital of the North a long time ago, when the country’s rail system was being constructed. Some of them were civil servants who found themselves posted mostly to the regional offices of their ministries. At retirement, these people found the environment in Kaduna very conducive and hence settled down permanently.

As discussed in the previous chapter, stages of the Hero’s Journey do not necessarily have to come in sequential order. Each stage can come in every one of the three acts. This film has two heroes around whom the story is woven. The two heroes will now be treated one after another, in accordance with the provisions of the motif of the Hero’s Journey.

I. Narrative Presentation of the Story

At Zuntu International Motors in Kaduna, Saleh (Rabilu Musa, a.k.a. Dan Ibro) sends his representatives to look for the best cars on sale, while he collects a huge amount of money sent to him. On his way to the car dealers, his motorcyclist hits a parked taxi and a heated argument ensues. Saleh offers to mediate, and together they move to the car dealers where Saleh, in possession of huge sum now, compensates the feuding *Achaba* man and the taxi driver, before he buys some of the most expensive cars in town.

Saleh later embarks on a big spending spree. He buys more cars and houses. It is an entirely new world for him! What remains? Women of course! His next move takes him to the beautiful street of the “crocodile city”, where he bumps into lady Sailuba (Saima Mohammed), one of the most eligible girls in town, who hops into the two-seater Audi posh car that bears on the plate number *Mai Kudi*. He drops off his hanger-on friend to take *Achaba* home.

The idle minds go to town with the story of Saleh’s riches, with different versions about its source and how he abandons his poor relations in abject poverty, especially his elder brother Malam Hambali.

Life goes on well for Saleh and his girlfriend Sailuba. The latter visits Saleh one afternoon along with four of her friends. Saleh showers some gifts on them, before showing Sailuba to the house he buys for her. In appreciation, Sailuba attempts to hug him, but he gives her cold shoulders. Instead, her friends come to hug and congratulate her.

The situation becomes unbearable for Malam Hambali, Saleh’s brother, who now decides to go to his younger brother to seek for assistance. At the gates, a hanger-on

scolds him for being too poor to be Mai Kudi's (Rich Man's) brother. He is allowed in later. Saleh, now answering a new name Mai Kudi, gives his girlfriend Sailuba N100,000, but hardly sacrifices N20 for his poor brother.

One afternoon, a lady friend of Sailuba comes to look for her in the house Saleh earlier bought for her. Oblivious of Sailuba's presence in the house, Saleh begins to make advances to the visitor, but unfortunately for him, Sailuba overhears all the nasty things he says about her. Saleh freezes when he notices Sailuba's presence. She simply walks out of the house, but Saleh follows her, pretending to the other girl that he will deal with Sailuba.

Outside in the street, Saleh begs Sailuba to forgive him. He literally lies flat in the sand to beg her but she warns him never to have anything to do with her again. He returns to the other lady inside, where he narrates to her how he beats up Sailuba. To make her more convinced of his love to her, Saleh gives the visiting lady a big amount of money before she leaves.

One afternoon, Saleh meets another beautiful woman at a shopping store. He immediately offers to buy her the "whole" store but the woman ignores him. He follows her outside to her car, up to her house.

(The background music intensifies here, fully describing the type of person Saleh is and the brand of love he means to every girl he courts).

Inside the premises, the woman issues an order to a soldier at the gates that no one goes in and no one goes out. Saleh is already in. The woman rushes to meet her high ranking military officer husband, and bitterly complains to him how an unknown person pursues her to the house.

Meanwhile Saleh is confused. Fear of the unknown grips him. The sight of the army officer frightens him the more. The officer asks what brings Saleh into the house, but he answers “*mutuwa!*” death. The army officer hands over Saleh to the junior officers who strip him off his cloth before locking him off. Out of the blues, Sailuba surfaces to the scene to rescue him from the hands of the soldiers. This leads to the reunion of Saleh and Sailuba.

Saleh does not learn his lesson. No sooner he escapes the soldiers than he comes out one evening to stop a young couple he sees on the street. He asks them their names and then demands to know their relationship. The young man answers that Habiba is his sister, and they live in that neighborhood.

This answer pleases Saleh who adds that he actually falls in love with Habiba that is why he stops them in the beginning. He hands out a bundle of money to the young girl, and promises to see her again.

At home, Habiba and Tijjani narrate the story to their aunty, who shows her disapproval to Tijjani’s answer that Habiba is his sister not lover. From that moment the signs become clear to Tijjani that he may not after all, marry Habiba.

Malam Hambali’s illness worsens. He sends his wife to Saleh to get some money for his treatment. Saleh gives her N80 and promises to see his brother at the hospital. It is a promise he never fulfils. Instead, he goes to collect some N3, 030,000 sent to him by someone we still do not know.

Saleh buys two sets of filled suitcases and a car for his new girlfriend Habiba. Her aunty cannot hide her joy when she receives these items as marital gift from Alhaji Mai Kudi. Habiba goes to her friend with the story, telling her how she changes her mind

about Tijjani, the poor young man, but the friend is embarrassed by Habiba's sudden change of attitude.

Meanwhile, news reaches Saleh that his elder brother Malam Hambali has passed away. He goes to the village in a convoy where before the *Janaza* (funeral) prayer, the people perform ablution with bottled water, and the old and dog-eared mat they sit on, changes to a lush Persian rug. Saleh also brings a whole bag of rice to the place to be cooked for the people around.

Soon afterward, Habiba's aunt sends for Tijjani. When he comes, she passes the message to him that, now that Habiba is getting married, they expect to see nothing of him in the house henceforth. At this moment Alhaji Mai Kudi arrives in company of Habiba. Tijjani says nothing, even when Mai Kudi gives him some money. Instead, Tijjani goes out, leaving the wad of naira lying on the floor. Alhaji Mai Kudi becomes alarmed by Tijjani's behavior and thus demands to know if all is well.

Meanwhile, at the Kaduna Airport, a plane arrives from overseas. One of the passengers asks whether his "man" knows he is coming back, but his friend, who goes to receive him at the airport, explains that he informed no one about his coming, and it is because of some things which the returnee would not understand.

Sailuba now drives her own Honda car given to her by Saleh.

At home the returnee complains that he often calls his man, but most of the time the man refuses to answer the calls. The returnee then blames his friend for not alerting him about the unhealthy developments long ago, but the friend insists he rather the returnee sees everything himself. They then agree to call their man in order to track him down.

Alhaji Mai Kudi is busy at a party he organizes for his friends at his house. Lots of his friends grace the occasion. Saleh then asks everybody around to enjoy the evening, by eating and drinking from what he provides.

Mai Kudi then answers a call in which he asks whether more money has been sent down again? He then answers with “yes, I am here”. Suddenly two strange people; the returnee and his friend, enter the living room. Seeing them, Saleh’s friends complain why should they have intruders, but Sale interrupts them and asks them to keep quite. Saleh suddenly turns visibly uncomfortable at the sight of the “intruders”.

When the returnee asks, “Is this what we agreed on?” Saleh begins to shiver. At this moment, we see a flashback. Saleh, a complete villager, bundles himself on a settee, holding a wretched flowing gown and laments that it is what he wears, when the returnee (we still do not know his name) comes in, admiring Saleh’s new outfit, saying he looks much better now.

The returnee demands to have Saleh’s torn garment, then begins to narrate why he calls Saleh. “My firm belief that you can be trusted with money”, the returnee says in the flashback, “with which you can be buying landed property, is the main reason I call you...” The flashback ends here.

The returnee then loudly says all the moneys he sends to Saleh are for trust, not for what he does with them. The people around become rather surprised. We now hear the name of the returnee as Alhaji Ibrahim, who is the owner of the money Saleh spends around extravagantly.

Alhaji Ibrahim tells Saleh that he will report him not to the police or anywhere, rather, he leaves him with God for his dishonesty. He strips Saleh of all the things he says

Saleh bought with his money, leaving him with the only torn flowing garment with which he first arrives the city. Sailuba says nothing but just watches as the “drama” unfolds.

When Habiba hears the “fall” of Saleh, she quickly runs to Tijjani’s house, her former boyfriend, to apologize to him, but Tijjani tells her that she can only be the second wife, since he is now married. To Habiba’s utter surprise and disappointment, Tijjani marries her bosom friend Khadija. The world thus comes crashing on her, just like Saleh who now returns to the original world of riding on commercial motorcyclist known as *Achaba*.

II. Structure of the Film

Like all films, the story in *Mai Kudi* too has the basic narrative structure of beginning, middle and end. The beginning as enumerated in chapter three represents Act One and is where the characters as well as their problem are introduced.

The very beginning of this film is hidden in the end or third act. We only get to see it in a flashback, and this is a method the director used to create suspense. We see Saleh (Rabilu Musa, a.k.a. Dan Ibro) introduced in the opening of the film, spending huge amount of money but we do not know the source of the money. This created a kind of suspense until when it is unraveled by the flashback that is supposed to come at the very beginning. In the flashback we see one Alhaji Ibrahim (Aminu Shariff a.k.a. Momoh) entrusting Saleh with an assignment of buying landed property for him. This indeed created suspense, and as audience, one is held captive by the story until the end, just to see the source of Saleh’s enormous wealth.

The turning point of the first act/beginning comes when Saleh abandons his family members and relatives to embrace his wayward friends. This also drives the story into its middle part or Act Two. Here, Saleh’s problems deepen. His lavish spending on

“wayward” women reaches its all time high; he buys property not for Alhaji Ibrahim but for himself and his girlfriend Sailuba.

The return of Alhaji Ibrahim from overseas marks the turning point of the second act or middle of the story. Thus, the resolution of the problem, that is the end of the story or Act Three, comes when Alhaji Ibrahim closed in on Saleh at a party scene where everybody including his girlfriends, knows the truth about his stunning wealth.

III. The Hero’s Journey in *Mai Kudi*

Mai Kudi’s ordinary world is hidden in the Third Act, and this only manifests through a flashback technique used by the director to illustrate the main hero’s Ordinary World of penury and helplessness. In this situation, one Alhaji Ibrahim, a businessman of repute, generous and philanthropist, invites and makes an offer to Saleh the hero, of taking care of the aspect of buying landed property, promising that he would be sending money to Saleh to execute this task. He does not stop there as he changes Saleh into an urban man by giving him some fine cloths and orders him to take off the rag and torn garment. It is this rag that Ibrahim uses against Saleh later in the film.

The film opens with an establishing shot of a second hand automobile company in Kaduna, where Saleh, goes to buy a fleet of cars, and one for a taxi driver, whose taxi is hit accidentally by the motorcyclist who rides him to the car merchant.

Saleh answers the Call to Adventure when an Alhaji calls him from the village, to come to the city and oversee a part of his business, which takes care of buying landed property to him. Saleh answers the Call without hesitation. By this decision not to Refuse the Call to adventure, Saleh is thus not a Reluctant Hero.

Sailuba answers the Call to Adventure, when Saleh, a complete stranger to her, offers to be her friend. She, without hesitation accepts the offer, and thus with this, she too does not Refuse the Call and therefore is not a Reluctant Heroine.

Saleh does not seem to have a clear cut Mentor in this film. He is at no time advised by anybody in the film to do one thing or another, neither does anybody teaches him how to do anything. The same happens with Sailuba.

Saleh Crosses the First Threshold when he changes completely from a stark villager who does not know how to ride on a motorcycle, to a big Alhaji, who rides in town in some of the most expensive cars. The heroine Sailuba Crosses her First Threshold when she agrees to move in with Saleh in the house he buys for her.

Saleh's Test occurs at a supermarket where he follows a fine lady around as she shops, until he follows her to her house, though she shuns him throughout. But he freezes when he realizes that the husband is actually a military man. Some junior army officers maltreat him later for daring the wife of their boss. His Ally Sailuba, emerges from nowhere to rescues him out of this situation.

Another Test for Saleh occurs at the very beginning of the story, when the motorcyclist he rides on, owing to Saleh' wrong posture, hits a parked taxi, whose owner comes to fight the *Achabaman*, and when Saleh attempts to reconcile them, the heat turned on him. The taxi driver thus becomes Saleh's first Enemy.

Sailuba's Test occurs when she overhears Saleh making a pass to her friend who comes home to visit her. She attempts to tell Saleh that all he tells her friend is wrong, and in the process, Saleh hitherto her Ally since they are friend and even go out together, becomes her Enemy.

The main hero Saleh Approaches the Inmost Cave when he comes face-to-face with “death”. At an army officer’s house where he desperately follows a woman, meets her stern looking husband, who hands him over to his boys, before Sailuba rescues him.

Sailuba Approaches the Inmost Cave when she becomes financially broke. She remembers her goldmine Saleh, but at that moment they have fallen apart. She quickly devises a plot on how to win him back. She goes to his house in a very seductive manner to demand if he is in or out. Her approach pays, as Saleh declares he is definitely in.

Saleh’s persistent fear remains the return of Alhaji Ibrahim, the owner of the money, from his overseas sojourn, and thus his Ordeal begins when he receives unidentified international telephone calls. He cunningly reveals to his friends that it must be some scammers who are out to swindle him of some money.

If Sailuba has any moment of Ordeal, it must be when Saleh becomes demystified at the end of the film. This is because, from this moment, she should be facing the trauma of losing a friend, a rich friend and generous friend indeed, whose replacement will be difficult to find.

Next come Reward. Saleh’s Reward is his luck to snatch Habiba from young Tijjani. Why this becomes his reward is because, he emerges the “highest bidder” who gets the hands of this young girl in marriage. Her hitherto fiancé Tijjani and also her cousin, makes a slip in his attempt to win Habiba for keeps when he tells Saleh that she is his sister rather than lover. On Sailuba’s part, her Reward comes when she gets Saleh to buy her a car with which she cruises around town. This happens after the fence mending between them.

Saleh’s world comes crashing in the tenth stage of the Hero’s Journey, The Road Back. Alhaji Ibrahim, the real owner of the wealth he squanders, returns and descends on

him in the middle of a party he organizes for his friends. Immediately, Saleh knows that the end is here. Sailuba's Road Back also comes at this moment when she realizes that Saleh is after all an impostor and dishonest.

All the times that Saleh spends as *Mai Kudi* now become a dream, and thus the Resurrection is when Ibrahim strips him of his "possession," including the very cloth he has on, at that moment. This is also the Resurrection time for Sailuba who from this moment loses her benefactor friend.

Return with the Elixir in this film is when Saleh resumes riding on motorcyclist, popularly known as *Achaba*. His Elixir is therefore the experience he acquires as an Alhaji, and also the lesson of honesty and trustworthiness as best attributes for a man. When used or applied in the later stages of his life, these lessons would be of tremendous advantage to him. The good thing about this is that Saleh's elixir is also an elixir for the audience who should equally apply these lessons in their lives.

Sailuba the heroine does not seem to have any Elixir in this film. We hardly know what becomes of her. Instead, we see the end of Habiba's materialistic tendency, as well as the patient lover, Tijjani. Though, neither is a major character in the film.

IV. Observations

In just 78 minutes, *Mai Kudi* has succeeded in illustrating a story of treachery and betrayal of trust, with excellent use of background music. It is one of few Hausa films that defied the twin alien tradition of singing and dancing, characteristic of Indian films. It has kept to the incessant calls for "real" films devoid of singing and dancing. The only song in the film is the background music, which goes a long way to help the audiences

understand the story, because it covers some grounds, which the movie ignored. Perhaps this is a strategy of time and space management.

The song for example tells more about the hero Saleh and his real character of having affairs with women without necessarily falling in love or even making love to any. Saleh *dan hutu* (spoilt child, silver spoon kid, or *Ajebota* in pidgin), knows only how to spend money but not how to work and earn a penny. He knows just about any “big time” lady in town, and tries to woo and pamper her, in order to win her, and the charm he uses to achieve this is money.

Stories in Hausa home videos do not usually come with a single hero, perhaps because they are mostly an imitation of stories in the Hindi films, majority of which also are based on the motif of boy meet girl, boy falls in love with a girl, boy marries girl.... In these types of stories, we seldom encounter single heroes. The tradition is that of a double hero; boy and girl, or man and woman, or even two or more men or women. This does not happen in Bollywood only, as Vogler (1999; 247) examines under the heading; Looking Back on the Journey, the treatment of two heroes in Hollywood’s blockbuster romance; Titanic. Jack and Rose were referred to as protagonists in the popular movie. This is what happens in *Mai Kudi*, where Saleh pairs with Sailuba as hero and heroine.

Because the usual occurrence in the Hero’s Journey is that heroes are portrayed as positive figures, whom the society can copy, we may say that Saleh as a hero, in *Mai Kudi* is not portrayed positively. This is what qualifies him as an anti-hero. Vogler (1999) says that an anti-hero does not mean a direct opposite of a hero, but a specialized kind of hero, “one may be an outlaw or a villain from the point of view of society, but with whom, the audience is basically in sympathy”.

Saleh's character is rather villainous for the reason that Hausa society frowns at such characters. No one would consider his behavior acceptable. The society pities these kinds of people and it frowns against such attitudes. That is why Saleh's only elixir as the hero, is the bitter lesson, which should help him later in life, by preventing him from falling into such societal traps again. The expectation is that he is now experienced as to how he should conduct himself, should he be caught in the same situation again.

As heroes in the film, Saleh and Sailuba must both pass through the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey. They must be affected by all of the stages before we can say that the storyline structure of *Mai Kudi* is indeed in conformity with the standard model of analysis in this study, which is the Hero's Journey.

Looking at applying the model on the film, we see Saleh getting affected by all the twelve stages of the model but one, which is Mentor. Saleh as hero in the film *Mai Kudi* does not have a mentor.

But who is a Mentor? According to Vogler a mentor is a wise old man or woman. This is clearly metaphorical. A mentor does not have to be literally an old man or woman. Though a mentor may be older than the hero, or at least more experienced in a particular trade or profession than the hero, he/she may not necessarily be an old person.

The task of a mentor in any film is judged by the kind of relationship between him and the hero. This relationship manifests in the bond that exists between parents and their child, a teacher and his student, a doctor and his patient, and a god and a man. The major function of mentors in any film according to Vogler is to prepare the hero for the unknown life. This suggests that mentors must be more experienced than the hero. They may have tested the unknown situation for which they prepare the heroes, themselves. Not having a mentor according to Vogler, amounts to 'structural' defects, at least as far

as the Hero's Journey model is concerned. This however, does not render our analysis as defective, since the model as Vogler suggests, can be modified to suit culture and tradition.

As for the second character or heroine, Sailuba, the director failed to assign her a mentor, an ordeal and elixir. It seems character development in this film is not given the right attention it deserves. Sailuba has shaped this story from the beginning, but suddenly, the director drops her for other characters, which have not been regular. This informs the reason why we do not see how she ended in the story. The director would rather give us two new characters; Tijjani and Habiba, at the tail end of the story.

The general opinion about this film's conformity with the Hero's Journey model is: After this film *Mai Kudi*, is analyzed using the above model, it is found to be not in conformity with this (international standard) model of storyline structure, because, while the two heroes passed through some stages of the model, they have not been visible in some other vital stages.

B. *Sanafahna* (with time, truth shall dawn)

Producer:	Kumbo Production
Production Company:	Kumbo Production
Director:	Nura Shariff
Script Writer:	Nasir S. Gwangwazo
Running Time:	101 Minutes
Year of Release:	2006

Cast: Aminu S. Shariff (Aminu), Sa'adiyya Mohammed (Bilksu),
Umme Ibrahim (Fati), Hafsat Sharada (Baba), Mahmude
Booth (Doctor) et al.

This film was shot in Kano (Nigeria), Niamey and outskirts (Niger Republic). It is a story of two different cultures; one, Hausa and modern, the other, Zabarma (A tribe in Niger Republic) and rural or nomadic, but both are Islamic. Another common characteristic between the cultures in this story is their strict adherence to cultural and religious rites and injunctions.

Directed by Nura Sheriff, the word *Sanafahna*, from which the film derived its name, is a corruption of an Arabic expression, *Sa-nafham*, which means, with time, we would understand. It was later changed by Mudassir Kassim (a playback singer of the main song in the film, *Sanafahna dini*), to *Sanafahna*, (with time truth shall dawn), through poetic license. The film has English subtitle, and carries four “hit” songs (two merged), and none appeared in the First Act of the film.

I. Narrative Presentation of the Story

This is a story of love and cover-ups, and it has two main characters/heroes; Aminu (Aminu A. Sheriff) and Sanafahna, later Bilkisu (Sa'adiyya Mohammed). Aminu chats with his housemaid in the kitchen when his wife Fati comes with the frightening news that she has not seen their son Sagir. Together with Baba (Hafsat Sharada), they all go in search of Sagir.

At the guardsman's station, Sagir enjoys himself, telling the guardsman how envious he is of his work, and sipping *Ataye* (Zabarma tea). The family finds him here. It

is rather a surprise to Baba how a kid from an affluent family can aspire to become a guardsman.

Aminu one day comes into the house to give Bilki a small gift in secret, but it is late, as their son Sagir catches the action live. Aminu asks him not to tell his mother, and even induces him with a gift to keep his mouth shut.

Sagir's tantrums persist one afternoon. He discloses to his busy mother that he is hungry. As she gives no attention to his needs, Bilki, the housemaid makes some local food for him (*fura*), but Fati, the mother is livid when she sees it. Baba comes to the scene to reveal that as Fati too cannot give birth in the house, (we now know that Fati is not Sagir's biological mother), she should allow peace to reign. This hurts Fati seriously. In the kitchen where Bilki works, Baba comes and gives her a hand, and also apologizes for Fati's antics. Fati is livid the more when she sees them getting along well.

One afternoon Aminu comes into the kitchen to find Bilki with the dirty dishes again. He raises his arms to hug her when a thunderous sound of broken glasses stops him. He pauses to look at his wife Fati, standing before the broken glasses. "So it is not you!?" he said shivering, "I thought it is you".

Fati meanwhile thinks of how to get rid of the maid Bilki. She brings her brother into the house to marry Bilki, but Bilki refuses the offer, insisting that she is married. Fati counters that Bilki's marriage is by now null and void, and thus, she can have another marriage. This provokes Aminu anger, who calls Fati and Baba to the living room, where he warns that henceforth, no man should come into the house to talk to Bilki since she is a married woman.

As Fati insists Bilki must marry, Aminu insists she will not and she must stay. Fati then insinuates that perhaps he is having an affair with her that is why he wants to keep her in the house. This statement hurts Aminu who slaps Fati. But Fati draws the battle line, asking Aminu to choose between her and the maid. She also suggests treachery on the part of Aminu, whom she said she stands by, though he is diagnosed to be incapable of bearing children.

This comment provokes a very lengthy answer, and thus the film delves into a lengthy flashback. It begins one day as the married couple meets Baba sitting all alone by the poolside. Baba flares up about their inability to give her a grandson. She reasons that time nears for her and she still cannot see her grandchildren. She suggests they see a doctor, insinuating that she knows some barren women among Fati's lineage.

The couple agrees to go for a test. The result shows Fati has a problem, but Aminu asks the doctor to document him as having the problem. This is because Aminu does not want to separate with his wife, and having anything like that result in the house can cause serious family problem. The doctor agrees to the proposal. Aminu discloses to Fati the reverse of the diagnosis and said he is ready to allow her to marry another man.

At home, Baba faints because of the sad news. Doctor says she is depressed and advises on how she should be treated. When she gets better, Aminu consoles and sermons her, and assures her that he believes God would not allow him die childless. He then proceeds on a business trip to Niamey, Niger Republic.

After he rests in Niamey, a friend takes Aminu out into the town to attend a Zabarma cultural event at the outskirts of city. The event is an annual ceremony where

young girls of marriage age choose husbands from the many men around. Aminu does not know this.

A certain young girl, Sanafahna by name, is the one whose turn is it to choose a husband. She becomes attracted to the one in European dress, and so she chooses him. All this is captured within an ambience of traditional music and young women dancing to the tune. Later Aminu gets to know fully about the event and its cultural importance to the Zabarma people.

After the event, Sanafahna goes to Aminu's house but he rejects her. She comes back crying, but her parents and the traditional rulers begin preparing to throw her in the bush, as the tradition provides for such girls who fail in their selection. Aminu arrives just when she is being taken out. His arrival changes their intention, and a moment later, Sanafahna's name is changed to Bilksu before she gets married to Aminu. The marriage is consummated before Aminu returns to Kano. Meanwhile, Baba and Fati are now very friendly in Kano. Baba even informs Aminu how good Fati is now, and orders him never to take a second wife for Fati no matter the situation. It is too late!

After just three months of Aminu's return from Niamey, Bilksu calls just when he prepares to go out. Fati answers the call but the mention of Bilki prompts Aminu to retrieve the telephone from Fati. Bilki has conceived! Fati's suggestion of adoption is thus belated.

Back in Niamey, Aminu seeks the consent of Bilksu to take whatever she delivers to Kano. But her self-discipline, respect and good manner of approach change

his decision, as he resolves to take her to Kano. They mark this occasion with a song *Sanafahna dini*.

In Kano, Aminu keeps Bilkisu in the hospital where she receives adequate medical attention until she delivers a baby boy. He now moves to get the child adopted by his family. He thus informs his mother Baba that the child's mother has died, and before that, the husband of the dead woman had abandoned her. This encourages the family members to go ahead with the adoption.

At the hospital, a mother whose baby dies and whose husband also abandons her, cries by the side. When Aminu's mother notices this, she proposes that the young mother be taken along to breastfeed the adopted baby. The difficulty of the situation Bilkisu finds herself in, now dawns on her. She thus cries ...and hopes she is free of this, or so she says in a song that depicts her job as a nanny for some four years, until Sagir grows to school age (this is a technique the director borrows obviously from the Hindi films). End of flashback.

The truth is finally out now. The cat is out of the bag. Baba sums it up; "little wonder how the kid admires the Buzaye people". Fati at this moment faints. She is revived and consoled. Bilkisu on her part promises that if she is the obstacle, she is ready to go back to her country. Fati finally seeks to keep Sagir and Bilkisu grants her this one single request.

II. Structure of the Film

The structure of this film is shrouded by its lengthy flashback. The opening of the film is not the beginning of the story. The Act One is hidden in the flashback. At the

beginning, Aminu (Aminu Shariff a.k.a. Momoh) and his beloved wife Fati are a rich couple who are seeing their fourth year as husband and wife without an issue. And this becomes their problem, especially when in the turning point of Act Two; Aminu's mother reveals her discomfort over the couple's protracted barrenness.

In the middle/Act Two, Aminu and Fati go for a test to ascertain the reason for their barrenness, and thus, the problem becomes complicated the more especially when Baba, Aminu's mother, becomes critically ill by the news that her only child Aminu is after all a sterile.

The Second Act turning point comes when Aminu succeeds in bringing Bilkisu and her child into his house under the guise that they are a nanny and an adopted child respectively. The Third Act and also the end of the story, where a resolution is achieved is where the flashback ends, and the truth after Aminu and Bilkisu's cover-up becomes known to all.

There is a great measure of suspense in this story, which is particularly instigated by the flashback. First, why should a kid with a rich family background aspire to be a guardsman? Another question likely to be asked by the audience members regarding the suspense is; who is Sagir's mother if not Fati? Watching the film till the end will be the only solution to unraveling the mystery. This structure has indeed affected the narrative.

III. The Hero's Journey in *Sanafahna*

A lengthy flashback technique occupies the best part of this film, and we get to see the first stage, the Ordinary World of the heroes tucked deep inside. Aminu's Ordinary World is a world of affluence. Everything goes well for this young businessman

except that he cannot have children. This is a great source of concern for Aminu's mother whose patience of seeing her grandson is fast fading.

In her Ordinary World, Sanafahna or Bilkisu is a village girl of marriage age, whose only wish is to get married to a man of her choice, and therefore when she receives her Call to Adventure at an annual gathering where young girls of her age pick husbands, she takes the chance. With this, she cannot be termed a reluctant heroine.

Aminu's Call to Adventure is when it appears to him that a girl's life is on the line for his inability to go with her tradition. And thus out of compassion, and after a mentor's advice, that is, his friend in Niamey, he agrees to take Sanafahna as wife. He can then be termed a reluctant hero, because it has taken a Mentor's advice before he gives in.

Aminu's first Mentor is the doctor, without whom all the cover-ups would not have been possible. It is the doctor who helps him first swap results to show that it is Aminu who is barren not Fati. The doctor later advises Aminu against informing his mother about his new wife and son, because of her condition of health. Finally, without the doctor, the plan of adopting Bilkisu's son Sagir, and later taking Bilkisu herself as nanny, would not have been possible. His second Mentor is his mother, who is always at his neck to do one thing or another. Later, his friend in Niamey becomes his other Mentor. The second heroine Bilkisu or Sanafahna does not seem to have a Mentor in this story. It is therefore a big shortcoming on the part of this film not to have a mentor for a hero.

When Aminu realizes Bilkisu is pregnant for him, he becomes overwhelmed and especially when she vows to do anything for him. He thus suddenly decides to take her to

Kano, close to his family. This marks his Crossing of the First Threshold. On her part, Bilkisu Crosses the First Threshold when after picking Aminu as husband; she storms his place even before the wedding *fatiha* takes place.

Aminu's Test comes just when he makes up his mind to break the news of his new wedding to his mother, but the old woman, having now understands who her first daughter-in-law is, warns him never to marry again. The warning comes to him as a big shock, for he has done it already. His first Ally is his friend in Niger who takes him around town. His Enemy is his awesome mother, for whom he has so much fear and respect. She becomes his enemy the moment she reveals her dislike to his darling wife, Fati.

Bilkisu meets her first Test when Aminu tells her he does not love her, after all he is a married man. The news shocks her because of its grievous consequence. She has an Ally in Aminu's mother who often shows sympathy to her than Aminu's wife, Fati. It even angers Fati as to why this should be the case. Her other Ally is Sagir, her son, whose real identity they (Bilkisu and Aminu) try to hide. Her Enemy is her "mistress" Fati, who often scorns and scolds her. At a point in time she (Fati) threatens Bilkisu with dismissal from the house because she suspects Aminu and Bilkisu do have an affair.

Aminu Approaches the Inmost Cave when his cover-up plan goes through. At the hospital where Bilkisu gives birth to a baby boy, he comes along with his family to the hospital to "adopt" a new born baby boy, whose mother dies, leaving it all alone. At the side, is a Nigerien young mother whose new born baby boy dies immediately after safe delivery. With this story, Aminu takes home the Nigerien mother (Bilkisu) and the orphaned infant.

Bilkisu's Inmost Cave is the rejection she faces in the hands of her family when it appears she has gone contrary to the tradition, and the certainty of her facing the fatal penalty of being dumped out. This makes her become seriously sick.

Aminu's Ordeal is when his wife answers his call and hears a female voice. It thus marks the beginning of her suspicion of him having extra-marital affairs, though he is apparently skillful enough to dispel her suspicion at that moment. She however suggests they should adopt a child, probably as a way of keeping him away from other women.

Bilkisu's Ordeal is the moment she is being prepared to be thrown away as the tradition stipulates for any body in the society who commits the same offence as hers (selects a husband who will turn out not to be in love with her).

Aminu's Reward comes when his wife agrees they can adopt and Bilkisu also agrees to his proposal to take the child with him. It solves his problem of the promise he makes to his mother of bringing her a child before she dies, and it also gives him a sense of joy to bring his own biological son into his home. Bilkisu's Reward comes when suddenly Aminu asks her to follow him to Kano where she can receive good medical care. It at least takes her close to getting her object of quest.

At the peak of the cover-ups, Fati claims she has done a lot not to deserve the treatment she is receiving from Aminu. She reveals that after her resolve to stay with him even though doctors certify him sterile, he should treat her with much respect and love. This initiates the Road Back for Aminu, as he now appears ready to blow off the cover that binds them together.

All along, Bilkisu thinks it is easy to part with the whole world, all in the name of love. But she is proved wrong when right in her presence; her own son is declared orphaned by another woman and she is employed to be his nanny, and she cannot do a thing. This is her Road Back.

Resurrection in this video is the end of the long flashback, which sees the whole truth being narrated by Aminu. Fati, Aminu's wife quickly sees how foolish she has been made, and so she faints, she makes peace with everybody when she regains consciousness.

The heroes have returned now, and with their elixir. Aminu's Elixir is the fulfillment he has now for having his love Fati, and of course, his new love Bilkisu. But above all, he has a son now, and is even sure of having more and more children since he now has a fertile woman in Bilkisu.

As for Bilkisu, the Elixir is a husband, which has been her object of quest right from the beginning. More importantly, she has an equal status with her hitherto mistress, Fati, for whom she now gifts Sagir, the child, which has been at the center of the quarrel and cover-ups.

IV. Observations

One cannot take either Aminu or Bilkisu as the hero alone in this film. The story is woven around the two characters, and without either of them, the story will never have been complete. Like *Mai Kudi, Sanafahna* too, has a hero (Aminu) and a heroine (Bilkisu).

Aminu as a hero in this film has satisfied all the requirements set by Vogler. All the twelve stages have been found in Aminu's journey in this film, from beginning to the end. But for the other heroine Bilkisu, this film would have been in perfect conformity with Vogler's the Hero's Journey. Bilkisu, like Sailuba in *Mai Kudi*, does not have a mentor, and this single slip, renders this film to be not in conformity with one of the most used storyline structure models in the world, that is the Hero's Journey.

Lack of a mentor for Bilkisu for example, makes her appear too lonely and lacking in a close confidant. Somebody who faces that situation at least needs someone to help him out of it, or share in someone else's experiences. For example, juxtaposing her situation with past attempts at defying the rigid tradition; how the situation was dealt with when it happened in the past; whether somebody has in the past got away with similar offences, and where is he/she now and why. These would have enriched the character of Bilkisu as well as the Zabarma tradition.

Bilkisu is so lonely that even her parents do not show sympathy to her predicament. By so doing, I think the director has undermined the enormity of the death punishment. He denies the audience an opportunity of looking into an alien culture by touching it on the surface. A big contradiction in this is that the people who practice such harsh culture are Muslims. This practice I believe, even if it exists at all, has ceased to exist now. This structure clearly affects the value of the narrative. The film therefore is not in conformity with Vogler's the Hero's Journey.

One major criticism is; how long does Aminu intend to keep the truth away from his wife and mother? Perhaps till eternity, because at no time does he pause to think over the series of cover-ups he keeps to himself. When he conspires with the doctor to cover

up Fati's sterility from her and from his mother, little does he know that time will soon come when he will be forced to cough out the truth. Or does he think Fati may one day betray his love, and thus, he can pay her back in an equal measure with the truth? Is it pre-determined that he set out to impregnate one girl so as to establish his good health? Everything seems to be unreal.

Other observations made in these films are that, it is clear the director has made maximum use of the "white" doctors in the film. The scenes that featured these two doctors (male and female) are lengthy and too detailed. The directors of this film should also have borrowed from the Hollywood film, *The Clash of the Titans*, to enrich the issue of the dumping of Bilkisu. By de-emphasizing it, they have proved to be unskilled in that respect. Aminu should have made up his mind to accept Bilkisu when perhaps she is on the verge of being dumped, say for example, in a wild bush with wild animals already threatening to swoop on her. The director should have allowed Bilkisu (or Sanafahna as she is being referred to at that point) to see *halaka* or destruction, even if swiftly, before she is rescued by Aminu's offer of marriage. In this way, audience's attention could be fully aroused. More so, as the heroine, her popularity among the audience members could best be tested in this difficult moment.

Looking critically at Bilkisu's performance during the Zabarma song, one gets to see a misfit character. She does not seem to be fully prepared for that role. Her dance steps are not rhythmic with the others. She claps and dances after them instead of doing it together with them.

The way they line up for the music session (in a particular ascending order, tallest in the middle, taller people by their side, and the tall ones at the flanks), Bilkisu contradicts that order. She is supposed to swap position with the girl on her left.

Also, we know that it is characteristic of a new mother and her new born child to sleep or rest, specifically because of what the mother went through during the labor period. But directors of this video would rather have us see Bilkisu sitting on the bed, calming down her baby, who is also suppose to be in its cot sleeping. This is unreal. Even the baby doesn't look like a new born. It looks like a month's old baby or so.

C. Albashi (Salary)

Producer:	Zainab Idris
Production Company:	Crown Studio Kano
Director:	Abbas Sadiq
Script Writer:	Abbas Sadiq
Running Time:	102 Minutes
Year of Release:	2006
Cast:	Abbas Sadiq (Umar), Zainab Idris (Binta), Sani Danja (Sani), Hajara Usman (Anti), et al.

I. Narrative Presentation of the Story

Binta, Bilkisu Ibrahim, Zuwaira, Hannatu and Umar are contemporaries at the Time University in the heart of a big city. During an inter-faculty basketball competition, a quarrelsome Umar (Abbas Sadiq), the major character in this film, and a mere supporter during the game, leads to the calling off of the match in which another player rough-

handles his brother. The umpire settles the quarrel and the students celebrate their union with a strongly worded song and western-styled dance.

Soon, a group of students, apparently angered by Umar's character in the school, storms the room of Umar's girlfriend Binta, where they register their disagreement against the union. Umar later appears to the scene to shout them off. This in turn angers Binta who reports Umar to his half brother Ibrahim. Here again, Umar appears to show his disapproval of what they discuss. Soon nobody can stand Umar's character.

It is graduation time, and all other students successfully make it, except of course Umar, who receives lots and lots of scolding from his colleagues, with whom he regularly quarrels, for failing to graduate. It irks Umar that he alone cannot graduate. He attempts to get things turned around for him but to no avail. He accepts his fate and moves on with life, giving the wrong impression to his parents that he is a graduate and even undertakes his national service.

His half brother Ibrahim reveals the truth to their mother one day when the three meet in her office. The mother also scolds Umar and showers praises on the good boy Ibrahim, to the annoyance of Umar who abandons the family with the curse of his deeply offended mother trailing him.

Umar returns to his girl friend, Binta, whom he approaches with marriage proposals. It surprises him when Binta accepts his proposals despite his being jobless. She takes him to her uncle who gives him the condition that he will join in the search for Binta's brother after the wedding. The marriage goes on even without the participation of Umar's parents.

Umar however is warned by his mentor and man-Friday, Malam Kallamu, about his marriage to Binta, whom he sees dominating Umar because she is "above him" and

because Binta is rich and gainfully employed. Kallamu therefore advises Umar to stop Binta from working (she works as a doctor) after the marriage or else, she becomes the husband.

Umar indeed finds this advice worthwhile, and thus when one day, a couple comes into the house, needing emergency medical attention for the wife who apparently is in labour, Umar finds the situation disgusting and immediately decides to put to practice Kallamu's evil advice. He rushes to the hospital to see Binta who is now in a maternity ward, attending to some emergency cases. He asks to see her but to no avail. When Binta later joins him at home, he reveals to her how uncomfortable her job makes him.

It seems all the more confusing to Binta who sees no reason in Umar's complain. She also finds no answer to Umar's suggestion that she should choose between her job and marriage. This infuriates Umar who instantly issues a divorce. It deeply saddens Binta who storms her uncles' house. After showing deep regret, the uncle urges her to return to the house for her *Iddah* period, in compliance with the provisions of the religion of Islam, and warns her never to show any sign to Umar that she is the bread winner.

It is a moment of jubilation at Kallamu's place, where Umar goes to up-date him about the situation. The people around quickly leave, a sign of their disapproval to Umar's "folly". Kallamu then advises that Umar takes another wife; an action he believes will make Binta jealous the more.

Meanwhile, Umar's brother, Ibrahim, visits Binta with a picture of his beautiful fiancée. Umar appears on the scene as Binta and Ibrahim discuss the divorce issue. He shows Ibrahim the way out of the house and warns Binta to keep away from people like him. Binta gets up to leave, but slips the picture of Ibrahim's fiancée and some

documents at the back of a photograph in the living room, in full glare of Umar, who, after she leaves, checks to see for himself. The sight of the picture of the beautiful lady he overhears them talking about, takes him by surprise. He thus catches his breath.

Binta meanwhile continues her search for her soldier brother with whom she schooled together. They arrange to meet at a place with the help of a junior army officer. Umar becomes suspicious, and tails Binta to the appointed place, thinking that all along Binta may have been cheating on him. At the appointed place on Zoo Road, Umar snatches Binta's phone to talk to the man he suspects his wife to be having extra-marital affair with, Binta's brother appears from behind in his army uniform, beats up Umar silly before leaving.

After recuperating, Umar takes out the picture and the documents his brother Ibrahim gives to Binta, to look for job elsewhere. He also traces the house of the beautiful lady where he lies to her that he is employed and single, and thus wants to marry her. She accepts him as a suitor.

Meanwhile, Umar's attempt to get a job with his brother's documents proves a wrong step, as some of his colleagues at the Time University recognize him and the documents as not belonging to him but to his brother. He is reported to the police who put him on the look out before finally picking him up at a place he regularly visits.

Still during the *Iddah* period, Umar, one day asks to use Binta's cell phone to call his girl friend. Binta gives it to him with out hesitation, and he calls the beautiful (Ibrahim's fiancée) lady who asks him to come over for an immediate discussion. At the entrance to the girl's house, the lady in company of her police orderlies, stops Umar and narrates to him how her investigations reveal the whole truth about him. She thus sends

him away, warning him never to step his feet again in the compound or she gets him arrested.

Just a day after the expiration of the *Iddah* period, Umar makes his way into Binta's bedroom at night where he attempts to consummate the marriage again even without her assent. Binta wakes up when she feels being touched. She rejects him. At this moment Binta receives a telephone call from an anonymous caller who identifies himself as her lover, telling her to try him and see how reliable he is. Umar interrupts the call but receives a bout of insults.

Binta is now energized by the offer of the anonymous lover as well as another one from her friend's brother. She thus, can very much do without Umar. Early next morning, Binta wakes up Umar from the settee that now serves as his bed. She demands that he packs his belongings and leaves. Umar is visibly surprised. He pleads with her to allow him clean up and dress properly but she insists he must leave at that moment or she shout he is a thief.

It beats him that Binta now calls him a thief, but she reveals to him her knowledge about his attempt to get a job with Ibrahim's documents he "steals" in the house. He begs her but she shouts *Oh people help! I have a thief in my house...people help... I have a thief in my house...!* Disheveled and haggard, Umar leaves the house.

Out on the street, and nowhere to go, Umar receives a call from an unknown person who throws to him the challenge that if he is man enough, he should go back and reclaim his family. Umar retreats to the house and finds it locked. He calls the unknown person, whom he now believes can perform miracle regarding his predicament. He dozes up at the entrance of the house, where Binta comes back to throw him out again.

The unknown person finally appears to beg Binta to spare Umar but she stands her ground. They agree that Umar should leave. At a separate place, the unknown person, now known to Umar as Binta's lost brother, advises him how to go about winning back his wife.

Binta for the moment relaxes at home, talking on phone; saying how she no longer loves Umar. She suddenly sees Umar, behaving like a lunatic, coming into the room. She gets up when she becomes convinced that Umar has changed to something sort of a lunatic. She rushes to his brother Ibrahim, a psychiatric doctor, to plead with him to come and treat Umar.

It takes long before Binta convinces Ibrahim who comes along to find Umar talking to himself and playing with a dolly which he calls Binta. Umar runs to hide at the back of a settee when he sees them, but Ibrahim nears him to confirm the situation. Umar now reveals how his confidant Kallamu encourages them to take drugs. It all looks pathetic to Binta who stands aside to look with misty eyes. Ibrahim brings out some tranquilizing drugs but Umar says they resemble the ones Kallamu gives them. Soon the drugs take effect and Umar falls asleep.

Binta and Ibrahim take Umar to their mother when he regains consciousness. She forgives him after much pleading. Umar and Binta now return home where Binta discloses that though she commits herself to return to him in the presence of his mother, she does that to please the mother so as to secure him her forgiveness, not for any other reasons.

II. Structure of the Story

There is no flashback in this film and thus the narrative is straight. The Beginning of the story and the first Act occurs at the Time University, where a basketball

competition goes on. The First Act turning point comes during a graduation ceremony of the University. All the finalist students graduated, except a certain cantankerous student, Umar.

The Middle of the film or Act Two comes, when it appears to Umar (Abbas Sadiq) that the future is uncertain. He thus resorts to telling lies to his parents and other people, which eventually get him separated with his parents. The second Act turning point comes when Umar turns mad. In this situation, his brother Ibrahim, who trains as a psychiatric doctor and with whom he falls apart, comes to treat him.

The third Act and the end of the story comes when Umar, now a sane man again, gets pardoned by his mother, with the help of his wife Binta and brother Ibrahim, and thus, making his chances of reuniting with his divorced wife Binta very bright.

One thing about the structure of this story is that the film has a sequel. Apparently, the film has reached its conclusive ending. The story of the film will continue with a second part according to the producers/directors. There are also some characters whose role is not clearly defined in the structure. Sani (Sani Danja) for example, with whom the second part will clearly continue, does not seem to be given a definite role in this film.

III. The Hero's Journey in *Albashi*

The Ordinary World of Umar is that of a quarrelsome young man, very notorious, who frequently fights with everybody on the campus. His peers at a point in time cannot stand him. Even his girlfriend Binta, finds his attitude unbearable.

Binta the heroine has an Ordinary World of a quite and sociable female student, who conscientiously pursues her educational career. She achieves her objective when she successfully graduates along with other serious students in the university.

Umar receives his Call to Adventure when he finds out that he is not among the successful students at the end of his study period at Time University. This Umar finds humiliating and portraying bleak future. Thus his effort to have this situation reversed qualifies him as a reluctant hero, who Refuses the Call to Adventure.

Binta on her part receives her Call to Adventure when she takes the “hard” decision to marry a jobless, quarrelsome and a university drop-out, who is unbecoming of her new status. As career woman, her firm resolve to take the bull by its horn, regarding this call to adventure, disqualifies her from being a reluctant heroine, because by so doing, she does not refuse the call.

Umar’s Mentor in this story is his confidant Malam Kallamu, with whom he spends his idle time and discusses issues. We do not see how and where Kallamu and Umar meet, we only see them being portrayed as best friends. By far, Kallamu is the elder; this may perhaps inform why he exercises such huge influence over Umar.

Binta’s Mentor is her elder brother with whom she studies at Time University. Her brother always advises Binta against associating with Umar right from the school up to when they marry. At a point in time Binta’s brother has to beat Umar silly for being too much an intruder. Her other Mentor is her uncle who is very supportive to her throughout.

At the Crossing the First Threshold stage, Umar throws out a couple from his house that comes to seek emergency medical attention from Binta. He does not stop there as he goes to the hospital to talk to her. This eventually leads to the break up of the union.

Binta Crosses the First Threshold when she gets divorced by the very man she thinks she supports wholly. Even with this, she becomes resolute about the adventure, for the fact that for all the period she performs her *Iddah*, she does nothing to harm Umar, despite all the bad treatment he metes out to her.

Umar's Test comes when an unknown caller throws him the challenge that if he is man enough, he should win his family back. As hero, Umar must pass this test. Another Test Umar encounters is his fight against Binta's brother. Though he marries Binta, which is contrary to the wish of the brother, he definitely loses the fight as he fails to return a single punch during their fight.

His Ally in this story is his mentor Kallamu. Umar has no any other Ally apart from Kallamu, not a single male or female friend. His first Enemy is his brother Ibrahim, then Binta's brother, who beats him up at a public place.

Binta's major Test remains the divorce. It almost shatters her dream but for the support she receives from her allies. Binta's first Ally is her uncle. As an orphan, she finds parents in her supportive uncle. Her elder brother is her other Ally, though they rarely meet after their graduation together. Her only Enemy in the story is her husband Umar, who metes out to her all manner of ill treatment.

Umar's Approach to the Inmost Cave is when he tries some dishonest behaviors. He steals his brother's documents to look for a job, and steals the address of his brother's fiancée to ask for her hand in marriage. Both efforts end in disgrace for him.

Binta's Approach to Inmost Cave is her decisive "red card" to Umar one morning. It marks her boldness to confront the enemy head-on. Without mincing words, she tells Umar to leave the house or she shouts thief.

At the Ordeal stage, Umar finds himself thrown out in the street by his wife, at a time when the knots of the marriage should be tightened again. He makes an attempt to re-consummate the marriage at night, but Binta resists his attempt and, very early the next morning, throws him out.

On her part, Binta meets with her Ordeal when, basking in the euphoria of doing away with the enemy, finds herself stuck with him again. Umar comes into the house behaving mad. This situation becomes her ordeal, as she goes out looking for a way to change Umar back to his former self.

Umar's Reward comes the moment when, to everybody's surprise, Ibrahim reveals Binta's resolve never to return to Umar, as long as his mother does not forgive him. Binta affirms this herself, apparently attempting to secure forgiveness for Umar. It gives Umar the courage he deserves, and it facilitates his reunion with his mother. Finally, the object of quest is in hand, or so he thinks.

Binta's Reward comes in the middle of the night when after she resists Umar's attempt at getting her back, she receives a call from an unknown person disclosing to her his readiness to go all the way to marry her if she should give him the chance. She even thanks Allah for giving her a lover at last.

The Road Back to Umar and Binta is when the couple decides to go and seek for forgiveness especially from Umar's mother. This period marks the beginning of the return to normal of things, for both Umar and Binta.

The period of Resurrection begins when Umar re-unites with all members of his family. It is also the Resurrection period for Binta, who by now begins to feel that the happiness that she yearns for herself in getting married to someone she loves may at last come to reality.

Neither of the heroes returns with the Elixir in this film. Why because it has a sequel. But clearly, people who watch this film would agree that it needs no sequel. Whatever the producers/directors would want to achieve is achievable even by terminating the story at this point. This is a melodrama, and it has a happy ending when the heroes, Umar and Binta, reunite as man and wife, nothing more. What remains is for the audience to imagine them living happily ever after.

IV. Observations

Of all the selected films, only *Albashi* comes close to being in conformity with the Hero's Journey. It is not totally in conformity, because of the fact that the heroes do not have Elixirs. That means they have not returned. This emanates from the fact that *Albashi* has a sequel. That is, the story though appears conclusive to many people who watched it, it indeed has a second part or so the directors/producers make us to believe.

The single reason why the film does not conform to the template of this study the Hero' Journey, is the lack of an elixir for the heroes. This is because; heroes deserve to come back with something that is the object of their quest, or its equivalent. No one can simply embark on a long journey and return with empty hands. This is why Vogler believes that even an experience is an elixir, because it will help shape the character of the hero or the generality of the audience in the future. The experience may be in form of lessons of life, a method of doing something, a knowledge about how to get something etc.

The structure of this film's storyline has certainly affected the value of the narrative structure in this film. Take for example, where the hero Umar is conditioned that after he marries Binta, he should get ready to join in the search for Binta's lost

brother. From the beginning, we see that Kumurci (we don't know his name in the film) is Binta's only brother. Again on a night after the wedding, Binta presents to Umar, Sani's (Sani Danja) picture as her brother. Umar is particularly shocked with this and thus doubts Binta's story. Later in the night, Umar dreams seeing Sani making a telephone call. In the dream, he asks Sani the person he calls. Later in the film when Sani finally makes his appearance, we are made to understand that Sani is actually not Binta's brother, but a brother to her friend. We are thus forced to ask these questions: Could Sani be the late night anonymous caller, who tells Binta of his love for her? What is Binta hiding by telling Umar that Sani is her brother? Who is Kumurci to Binta? Her brother? If he is, why her uncle never mentions him to us?

Sani's role in the film is that of a mentor. He facilitates Umar's reunion with Binta, and so his role should not be more than that, lest, the film's narrative becomes affected negatively. We also do not know whether it is Sani's idea for Umar to appear lunatic to Binta. At the beginning, it appears he is pretending. We were not educated as to whether Umar actually feigns this condition in an effort to win Binta back. From the way it is put, it is easy for one to guess that Sani must have sold the idea to Umar to feign lunacy. This is the impression the audience gets first. Later we see that Umar is actually mad, perhaps because of the drugs he says Malam Kallamu often gives to him.

The solution to this film's structural defect is *The Hero's Journey*. If this film can be re-structured, it would be far more meaningful and short, not the lengthy story the director is preparing us to have, when he finally releases the sequel. As stressed earlier, the Hero's Journey model would have limited Sani's role to that of a mentor, who settles dispute like the one between Binta and Umar. But the present structure creates chaos and misunderstanding to the audience.

Chapter Five

5.0 Summary, Findings and Conclusions

5.1 Summary

The inspiration for selecting this research area came as a result of a strong desire to see a radical change in the way Hausa video films are scripted and produced. This informed the selection of a key element of video film production procedure; story writing and storyline structure.

This study selected three Hausa video films, namely; *Mai Kudi* (the Rich man), *Sanafahna* (with time, truth shall prevail) and *Albashi* (Salary), and analyzed them, using a story writing model developed by Vogler (1999); the Hero's Journey. This model outlines a step-by-step procedure for effective plot structure and characterization in story writing. The selection of this model was informed by the desire to see improvements in plotted stories in Hausa video films.

Hausa video films are now seen as alternatives to Indian, Chinese and American films (Ali, in Adamu et al Eds 2004). This is because they use the same language and portray the culture of the target audience. Though oftentimes, people complain of producers copying other people's culture, and thus, not portraying the reality of Hausa society. This is perhaps informs why the films do not get the attention of the entire members of the society.

Vogler has evaluated over 10, 000 screenplays for major motion picture studios in the Hollywood including Walt Disney, Warner Bros, Twentieth Century Fox, United Artists, Touchstone and Hollywood Pictures. His pedigree therefore, says it all regarding his competence to fashion out something like the Hero's Journey, which is a model that

revolves around the major character in any story. The hero according to Vogler (1999) is one who learns or grows the most in the course of the story.

This study used narrative analysis as its methodology. It also used narrative research as its analytical framework. In the second chapter of this research work, it has been noted that there is very little literature dealing directly with structure of storyline in Hausa video films. This study therefore, could be one of the pioneering works in that area. The study had two research questions which it answered in the finding segment of this chapter.

The selection of narrative analysis as analytical tool has been justified with the definition of narrative analysis by Gunter (2000), who explained that all media content can be analyzed from narrative point of view, using the said method. Works of some scholars in which narrative analysis was used, were cited to further justify the use of narrative analysis.

The genres of the films which were selected for this study were Love, Comedy and Modernism. Love as argued in the third chapter, has been the predominant theme in Hausa home videos ever since they started. Comedy on the other hand, has been in existence since the times of sitcoms on several television stations in northern Nigeria. The genre of modernism is the vogue of the day now. The bulk of films produced nowadays portray a culture that is modern to Hausa society.

The three films were analyzed based on the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey as provided by Vogler. These twelve stages were spread across the traditional Three Act structure of film narrative structure, which comprises of Act One (which introduces the characters and their problem); Act Two (which complicates the problem); and Act Three (which solves the problem).

In chapter four, narrative presentation of each story in all the three films was brought first, followed by the structure of the films, and then, the application of the Hero's Journey model in each of the three films. This was later followed by the observations made in each of the selected films.

5.2 Findings of the Study

One of the findings in this research study is that the narratives in the films studied have been found to have the traditional Three Act structure of beginning, middle and end. Aristotle was the first to suggest in *the Poetics*, that all narratives must have this structure. This three part structure was later redesigned to become the famous three act structure of: Act One (where the characters and their problems are introduced), Act Two (where the problems of the characters become complicated) and Act Three (where solutions to the problems are found). Both these are found in the three films studied here.

As surveyed in chapter two of this study, narratives in Hausa culture too have the structure of beginning, middle and end. This suggests a strong link between models of storytelling in Hausa and those available elsewhere. The assertion therefore, that the Hero's Journey model of story writing, developed by Christopher Vogler (of the Hollywood film industry), used in this study to measure narratives/storylines in some three Hausa home video films, as cultural imperialism, is untenable.

It therefore suffices to take these few examples of models of storytelling in Hausa as enough examples that would guide us in understanding the relationship between the nature of storytelling and writing in Hausa culture and other cultures, which today are considered as imperialists, dominating all cultures across the globe. This however is not denying the existence of this imperialist culture, as Mazrui (1997) argued, that the world

now tilts towards homogenization and hegemonization of cultures, with America leading the fray. This perhaps is one area where, though technology has almost unified film/video production globally, some traditional narrative elements still manifest, though their manifestation may vary from culture to culture.

Both Hausa narrative style and European/American (or Western) narrative styles are based on Aristotle's structure of beginning, middle and end. The distinguishing element between the two is that Vogler's the Hero's Journey, though still an upshot of the popular model, is structured into twelve stages, through which all heroes must pass. In fact, Vogler merely spread these twelve stages on the popular three act structure.

As shown in the survey under chapter two, the Hausa narrative model still retain some of Vogler's twelve stages. Some of the stages that are found in both narrative models include Ordinary World. All heroes in Hausa tales stories are introduced from an ordinary world, from which they proceed to a strange world, which Vogler terms Call to Adventure. Heroes also often refuse this call or answer the call right away. As for heroes having mentors, a Mentor in Hausa culture is a vital ingredient in one's life. Mentors advise, guide and shape a person's life. A person who seeks advises from people, it is believed in Hausa culture; rarely makes slip ups in life. A mentor can be one's parents or relations, benefactors, and other well-wishers.

The conformity of the narrative style in the selected films to the Hero's Journey model by Vogler (1999) as revealed in this study, though clearly some elements of the model were found in all the three films, none of the films was found to be in full conformity with the model. Vogler's model has twelve stages through which all heroes must travel. According to Vogler the originator of the model, all heroes must pass through the stages before they can become heroes. Since none of the three films was

found to treat its heroes in accordance with the full provisions of the model, the films therefore, do not conform to the model. Two heroes (a man and a woman) were found in each of the three films, the journeys of whom were measured on the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey model.

One of the reasons for selecting the Hero's Journey model as yardstick in this research work was Vogler's firm belief that his creation has a lot to do with myth, and myths are found in all cultures. Since there are different cultures in Hausa society, myth can therefore be found in it. True to Vogler's belief, most of the elements of his model have been found to exist in the three selected Hausa video films. The only problem was that no single film was found to be in full compliance, that is to say, by their failure to maintain full compliance to the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey, the films' narratives do not conform to the model.

Do we now agree that the elements of the Hero's Journey found in the three selected films are either as a result of universality of storytelling models (as the quick survey in Chapter Two shows), or perhaps, because of the long standing transmutation of Hollywood to Bollywood to Hausa films? The Bollywood as a film industry has long been accused of copying from the Hollywood, where standard procedures are laid down, and models like the Hero's Journey are constantly employed. Do we then agree that the use of these elements at least in these three selected Hausa films is not premeditated? Granted that none of these selected films is traditional in nature, that is to say, all the films studied here portrayed new things to Hausa culture. What then would have happened if real traditional films like *Alhaki Kwuikwuyo* for example, have been selected? Could we have seen full compliance to Vogler's the Hero's Journey model?

As Vogler himself agreed, the use of models in film production is not a necessity, but clearly this study shows that the storyline structure of a film affects the film's narrative style and structure. When a film for example is laden with lengthy flashbacks, it affects audience's understanding of that film. Even the motive of suspense that often spurs directors to do that can be defeated. The same thing with character development, if not handled properly, can negatively affect narrative style and structure.

5.3 Recommendations

It is pertinent to make some recommendations generally to the Hausa film industry and all stakeholders in film production, especially after going through such a rich experience of analyzing Hausa films, using an entirely a foreign model, one which majority of the film producers and directors are not aware of.

The recommendations are, that:

1. Film producers and directors in the Hausa film industry should try as much as they can to standardize and model their storyline structures on any of the various storyline structures available worldwide. This does not mean copying stories from the Hollywood or Bollywood, or from anywhere else. Rather, it would help earn their products recognition and acceptance worldwide. Recognition can come in form of getting awards at film ceremonies, showing of the films at various international film festivals, etc.
2. Storywriters and script writers in the Hausa film industry should be encouraged to train and retrain in their profession. This would make story development and script writing attractive and more professionalized, and those who are professionally trained would always have jobs to do, since the industry know their

- value. It would now become the responsibility of these professional writers to know the various story writing and storyline structure models, which they can employ in their profession.
3. Academics and other highly professional people in film studies should evaluate film before the films are taken for censorship. The job of the academics is to relate the films' narrative as well as the storyline structure to its rightful theory, identify the models used in developing the story, or if no model is used, give a deserved verdict to the film as regards its artistic value. The work of the academics and the professionals should more or less be final review of the film. From the narrative structure, these people can know if a film's story is borrowed or is actually original.
 4. The findings in this research suggests that stories in Hausa video films should henceforth be originated from the rich Hausa myth, legend, fable, tale, epic history, tragedy, comedy, news items, drama, conversations and many more. Most successful films in the Hollywood have been tailored on at least one of these. This is often what gives them the so-called originality and genuineness that is lacking in most Hausa video films.

5.4 Conclusion

One of the objectives of this study as it addressed one area of Hausa film production; story writing and storyline structure, was to bring to the knowledge of film producers and directors the various options available to them on story writing and models of storyline structure. It is hoped that this work will reach the people it is intended for, especially the stakeholders in the Hausa film industry.

However, it is important for producers and directors in the industry to know that adhering to rules and standards in film production does not always guarantee better outputs. If rules can be avoided in film production and yet those films touch universal human emotion, then that film can be said to be good (Vogler, 1999). Good stories are those stories that can make one feel that one has been through a satisfying, complete experience. One may cry, laugh or both. One may finish the story feeling one has learned something about life or about oneself. Perhaps one has picked up a new awareness, a new character or attitude or model with which one can shape one's own life. Any story in any film that does not guarantee the above results for audiences is definitely not a good one. The problem with the story could be from its conception, how it was developed and finally structured into complete film.

Ensuring audio or video quality of films alone does not make them successful. Granted that these add to films' aesthetic value, but nothing sells films as a good story, one that is carefully plotted. It is hoped that this study would make a mark in the minds of script writers, producers and directors by changing some of their weaknesses to strength.

It is important to conclude with what Vogler says about films conforming to approved standards as their storyline structure. Vogler argues:

The ultimate measure of a story's success or excellence is not its compliance with any established patterns, but its lasting popularity and effect on the audience. To force a story to conform to a structural model is putting the cart before the horse. It is possible to write good stories that don't exhibit every feature of the hero's journey; in fact it is better if they don't. People love to see familiar conventions and expectations defied creatively. A story can break all the "rules" and yet still touch universal human emotions.

If stories in films turn out to be successful to the audience for whom everything is done, the objective Vogler says is achieved, even when no particular model is used in

designing the story. The measure of judging this of course is the acceptance of the film by the audience through box office success, and other sales and rentals of VCD/DVD, or in the case of Hausa home videos, VHS cassettes, and VCDs and most recently DVDs. Another way of judging success of stories/films especially with Hausa home videos is how the people talk about it and even review it through all the means available. Finafinan_Hausa@yahoo.com, for instance, has over time proved to be one reliable medium of reviewing the successes of Hausa films, Hausa films' directors and even Hausa film stars themselves.

Therefore, as long as a storyline structure is “tight enough”, that is, never giving room for suspecting that it is not representational enough of the reality, or one that does not reveal any defect in portraying the representation of life, the directors should be rest assured of huge success for their products.

References

- Abdullahi, A. (1998). "Abubakar Imam: Nazarin Tubali Da Ginuwar Ayyukansa Na Adabi." Unpublished PhD Thesis. BUK. Nigeria.
- Adam, A. (2005). *Socio-cultural and political Communication; A study of Sallah festivals in Kano*. Kano; Munawwara Books International.
- Adamu, A., Admu, Y., & Faruk, J. (Eds) (2004). *Hausa Home Video: technology, Economy and Society*. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Hausa Films, Organized by the *Center for Hausa Cultural Studies*, Kano, Nigeria, from 4 – 7 August, 2003 at the Murtala Muhammad Library Complex Kano State, Nigeria.
- Adamu, A. (2005). 'Enter the Dragon: Shari'a, Popular Culture and Film Censorship in Northern Nigeria'. A paper presented at the Department of Mass Communication, Bayero University, Kano, on Monday 15th November, 2004.
- Adeleke, D. (2003). "Culture, Art and Film in an African Society: An Evaluation." *Nordic Journal of African Studies*; No. 12. Vol. 1. Pp. 49-56.
- Ahmad, S. (1997). *Narrator as Interpreter*. Koln: Rudiger Koppe Verlag
- Alvarez, R. (2001). "There is more to the story: using narrative analysis to examine requirements engineering as a social process". Database: USA: University of Massachusetts.
- Anderson, J. & Poole M. (2001). *Assignment and Thesis Writing*. Australia: National Library.
- Aronso, L. (2001). *Screenwriting Updated: New (and Conventional) Way of Writing for the Screen*. Los Angeles: Silman-James Press.

Baumgartner, L. (No date). "Narrative Analysis: Uncovering the truth of stories". USA: University of Georgia.

Boje, D. (2000). "Narrative Methods for Organizational and Communication Research".

Bourgault, L. (1996). "Television Drama in Hausaland: The Search for a New aesthetic and a New Ethic". *Journal of Critical Arts*: Vol. 10. No 1. USA.

Braidt, A. (2002). "Gender, Genre, Film: Methodological Problems and Theoretical Approaches. Vortrag am 8. Internationalen Kongress der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Empirische Literaturtheorie: in Pecs, Ungarn, 21 – 24 August 2002.

Chamo, I. (2005). "Sako a Fina-finan Hausa: Nazarin Da Tsokaci akan Jigo da Rabe-Rabensa". Unpublished Masters Thesis, Bayero University, Kano.

Cooper, P. & Dancyger, K. (2000). *Writing the Short Film*. USA: Focal Press

Ekwuazi, H. & Nasidi, Y. (1992). *Operative Principles of the Film Industry: Towards a Film Policy for Nigeria*. Jos (Nigeria): Nigerian Film Corporation.

Film & Video Directory in Nigeria (2002). Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board.

Furniss, G. (2003). "Hausa popular literature and video film: the rapid rise of cultural production in times of economic decline." The working papers; University of Department of Anthropology and African Studies, University of Johannes Gutenberg, Mainz, Germany.

Franzosi, R. (1998). "Narrative Analysis - or Why (and How) Sociologists Should Be Interested in Narrative". *Annual Review of Sociology*: Vol. 24.

Gunther, B. (2000). *Media Research Method*. UK: Sage Publications.

Ishaq, S. (Director) (2005) *Mai Kudi* (Film). Kano: Babangida Movies.

Kabara, U. & Mohammed, S. (2004 August) arewa da Kudu Sun Hade. Fim, 15 – 20.

Kaminsky, S. (1974). *American Film Genres: approaches to a critical theory of popular film*. USA: Pflaum Publishing.

Kofoworola, Z. & Lateef, Y. (1987). *Hausa Performing Arts and Music*. Gaskiya Corporation Limited, Zaria. Nigeria.

Labov, W. (1997). “Some Further Steps in Narrative Analysis”. USA: University of Pennsylvania.

Labov, W. & Waletzky, J. (1997). “Narrative Analysis: Oral versions of personal experience”. *Special Volume of A Journal of Narrative and Life History: Volume 7,*

Larkin, B. (2002). “Video Awudjo! Popular Video Film in AFF/NY 2001 Festival”. Available on <http://www.africanfilmny.org/network/news/Rlarkin.html>. {March 20, 2002}.

Larkin, B. (1997). “Indian Films and Nigerian Lovers: Media and the Creation of Parallel Modernities”. *Africa*, Vol. 67. No. 3. pp 604 – 439.

Laurillard, D., Stratfold, M., Luckin, R., Plowman, L. & Taylor, J. (2000). “Affordances for Learning in a Non-Linear Narrative Medium.” *Journal of Interactive Media in Education*, 2000 (2) www-jime.open.ac.uk/00/2

Mast, G. et al (1992). *Film Theory and Criticism: An Introductory Reading*. UK: Oxford University Press.

- Mazrui, A. (2000). "Nigeria Between Lord Lugard and the Digital Divide: Political Culture and the Skill Revolution." Africa Resource (Electronic Journal); Generated from <http://www.africaresource.com> on 31-01-2007, at 11.02 P.M.
- Mazrui, A. (1997). "Globalization, Islam and the West: Between Homogenization and Hegemonization." The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences. Vol. 15; No. 3.USA.
- Monaco, J. (1977). *How to Read a Film*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Morehouse, R. & Maykut, P. (2000). *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. London: Falmer Press Teachers' Library.
- Morris, C. (2006). "Narrative Theory: A Culturally Sensitive Counseling and research framework". USA: VISTAS 2006 Online.
- Muktar, I. (2004). *Jagoran Nazarin Kagaggun Labari*. Kano (Nigeria): Benchmark Publishers.
- Nelmes, J. (1996). *An Introduction to Film Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Neuman, C. (2000). *Social Research Method: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. USA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Okome, O. & Haynes, J. (1995). *Cinema and Social Change in West Africa*. Jos, (Nigeria): Nigerian Film Corporation.
- Opubor, A. & Nwuneli, O. (1979). *The development and Growth of the Film Industry in Nigeria*. Lagos: National Council of Arts and Culture.
- Redwood, R. (1999). "Information Point: Narrative and Narrative analysis". Blackwell Science Limited::Journal of Clinical Nursing: No. 8; pp 663 – 674.
- Riesmann, C. (1993). *Narrative Analysis*. London: Sage Publication.
- Sadiq, Abbas (Director) (2006). *Albashi* (Film). Crown Studio.

- Shariff, N. (Director) (2006). *Sanafahna* (Film). Kumbo Production.
- Stock, R. (2005). "Nigeria." *Microsoft® Encarta® 2006* [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.
- Turner, G. (1998). *Film as Social Practice*. UK: Hope Services.
- Vogler, C. (1999). *The writer's journey: mythic structure for storytellers and screenwriters*. London: Pan MacMillan.
- Wimmer, D. & Dominick J (2003). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. Australia: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Zettle, H. (1990). *Sight and Sound Motion: Applied media Aesthetics*. California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Appendix

The Hero's Journey

1. THE ORDINARY WORLD

Most stories take the hero out of the ordinary, mundane world and into a special world, new and alien. This is the familiar “fish out of the water” idea which has spawned countless films and TV shows (“The Fugitive”, “The Beverly Hillbillies”, *Mr. Smith goes to Washington*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Witness*, *48 Hours*, *Trading Places*, *Beverly Hills Cop*, etc).

If you're going to show a fish out of his customary element, you first have to show him in that Ordinary World to create a vivid contrast with the strange new world he is about to enter.

In *Witness* you see both the city policeman and the Amish mother and son in their normal worlds before they are thrust into totally alien environments: the Amish being overwhelmed by the city, and the city cop encountering the 19th-century world of the Amish. You first see Luke Skywalker, hero of *Star Wars*, being bored to death as a farm boy before he sets out to tackle the universe.

Likewise in *The Wizard of Oz*, considerable time is spent to establish Dorothy's drab normal life in Kansas before she is blown to the wonder world of Oz. Here the contrast is heightened by shooting the Kansas scenes in stern black and white while the Oz scenes are shot in vibrant Technicolor.

An officer and a Gentleman sketches a vivid contrast between the Ordinary World of the hero – that of a tough Navy brat with a drunken, whore-chasing father – and the special World of the spit-and-polish Navy flight school which the hero enters.

2. THE CALL TO ADVENTURE

In this stage, the hero is presented with a problem, challenge or adventure to undertake. Once presented with a Call to Adventure, she can no longer remain indefinitely in the comfort of the Ordinary World. Perhaps the land is dying, as in the King Arthur stories of the search for Grail, the only treasure that can heal the wounded land. In Star Wars, the Call to Adventure is princess Leia's desperate holographic message to wise old Obi Wan Kenobi, who asks Luke to join in the quest. Leia has been snatched by evil Darth Vader, like the Greek springtime goddess Persephone, who was kidnapped to the underworld by Pluto, lord of the dead. Her rescue is vital to restoring the normal balance of the universe.

In many detective stories, the Call to Adventure is the private eye being asked to take on a new case and solve a crime which has upset the order of things. A good detective should right wrongs as well as solve crimes.

In revenge plots, the Call to Adventure is often a wrong which must be set right, an offense against the natural order of things. In *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Edmond Dantes is unjustly imprisoned and is driven to escape by his desire to revenge. The plot of *Beverly Hills Cop* is set in motion by the murder of the hero's best friend. In *First Blood* Rambo is motivated by his unfair treatment at the hands of an intolerant sheriff.

In romantic comedies, the Call to Adventure might be the first encounter with the special but annoying someone the hero or heroine will be pursuing and sparring with.

The Call to Adventure establishes the stakes of the game, and it makes clear the hero's goal: whether to win the treasure, or the lover, to get revenge or right a wrong, to achieve a dream, confront a challenge, or change a life.

What is at stake can often be expressed as a question posed by the call. Will E.T. or Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* get home again? Will Luke rescue princess Leia and defeat Darth Vader? In *Officer and a Gentleman*, will the hero be driven out of Navy flight school by his own selfishness and the needling of a fierce Marine drill instructor, or will he earn the right to be called an officer and a gentleman? Boy meets girl, but does boy get girl?

3. REFUSAL OF THE CALL (THE RELUCTANT HERO)

This is about fear. Often at this stage the hero balks at the threshold of adventure, **Refusing the Call** or expressing reluctance. After all, she is facing the greatest of all fears, terror of the unknown. The hero has not yet at this point, fully committed to the journey and may still be thinking of turning back. Some other influence – a change in circumstances, a further offense against the natural order of things, or the encouragement of a mentor – is required to get her past this turning point of fear.

In romantic comedies, the hero may express reluctance to get involved (maybe because of the pain of a previous relationship). In a detective story, the private eye may at first turn down the case, only to take it on later against his better judgment.

At this point in *Star Wars*, Luke refuses Obi Wan's Call to Adventure and returns to his aunt and uncle's farmhouse, only to find they have been barbecued by the Emperor's stormtroopers. Suddenly Luke is no longer reluctant and is eager to undertake the quest. The evil of the Empire has become personal to him. He is motivated.

4. MENTOR, (THE WISE OLD MAN OR WOMAN)

By this time stories will have introduced a Merlin-like character who is the hero's **Mentor**. The relationship between hero and Mentor is one of the most common themes in mythology, and one of the richest in its symbolic value. It stands for the bond between parent and child, teacher and student, doctor and patient, god and man.

The Mentor may appear as wise old wizard (*Star Wars*), a tough drill sergeant (*An Officer and a Gentleman*), or a grizzled old boxing coach (*Rocky*). In the mythology of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show", it was Lou Grant. In *Jaws* it's the crusty Robert Shaw character who knows all about sharks.

The function of Mentors is to prepare the hero to face the unknown. They may give advice, guidance or magical equipment. Obi Wan in Star Wars gives Luke his father's light-saber, which he will need in his battles with the dark side of the Force. In *The Wizard of Oz*, Glinda the Good Witch gives Dorothy guidance and the ruby slippers that will eventually get her home again.

However, the Mentor can only go so far with the hero. Eventually the hero must face the unknown alone. Sometimes the Mentor is required to give the hero a swift kick in the pants to get the adventure going.

5. CROSSING THE FIRST THRESHOLD

Now the hero finally commits to the adventure and fully enters the Special World of the story for the first time by **Crossing the First Threshold**. He agrees to face the consequences of dealing with the problem or challenge posed in the Call to Adventure. This is the moment when the story takes off and the adventure really gets going. The balloon goes up, the ship sails, the romance begins, the plane or spaceship soars off, and the wagon gets rolling.

Movies are often built on three acts which can be regarded as representing 1) the hero's decision to act, 2) the action itself, and 3) the consequence of the action. The first Threshold marks the turning point between Acts One and Two. The hero, having overcome fear, has decided to confront the problem and take action. She is now committed to the journey and there is no turning back.

This is the moment when Dorothy sets out on the Yellow Brick Road. The hero of *Beverly Hills Cop*, Axel Foley, decides to defy his boss's order, leaving his Ordinary World of the Detroit streets to investigate his friend's murder in the Special World of Beverly Hills.

6. TEST, ALLIES AND ENEMIES

Once across the First Threshold, the hero naturally encounters new challenges and **Tests**, makes **Allies and Enemies**, and begins to learn the rules of the special world.

Saloons and seedy bars seem to be good places for these transactions. Countless Westerns take the hero to a saloon where his manhood and determination are tested, and where friends and villains are introduced. Bars are also useful to the hero for obtaining information, for learning the new rules that apply to the Special World.

In *Casablanca*, Rick's Café is the den of intrigue in which alliances and enmities are forged, and in which the hero's moral character is constantly tested. In *Star Wars*, the cantina is the setting for the creation of a major alliance with Han Solo and the making of an important enmity with Jabba the Hutt, which pays off two movies later in *Return of the Jedi*. Here in the giddy surreal, violent atmosphere of the cantina swarming with bizarre aliens, Luke also gets a taste of the exciting and dangerous Special World he has just entered.

Scenes like these allow for character development as we watch the hero and his companions react under stress. In *Star Wars* cantina, Luke gets to see Han Solo's way of handling a tight situation, and learns that Obi Wan is a warrior wizard of great power.

There are similar sequences in *An Officer and a Gentleman* at about this point, in which the hero makes allies and enemies and meets his 'love interest'. Several aspects of the hero's character – aggressiveness and hostility, knowledge of streets fighting, attitudes about women – are revealed under pressure in these scenes, and sure enough, one of them takes place in a bar.

Of course not all Tests, Alliances and enmities are confronted in bars. In many stories, such as *The Wizard of Oz*, these are simply encountered on the road. At this stage on the Yellow Brick Road, Dorothy acquires her companions the Scarecrow, Tin Woodsman and Cowardly Lion, and makes enemies such as an orchard full of grumpy talking tress. She passes a number of Tests such as getting scarecrow off the nail, oiling the Tin Woodsman, and helping the Cowardly Lion deal with his fear.

In *Star Wars* the Tests continue after the cantina scene. Obi Wan teaches Luke about the force by making him fight blindfolded. The early laser battles with the Imperial fighters are another Test which Luke successfully passes.

7. APPROACH TO THE INMOST CAVE

The hero comes at last to the edge of a dangerous place, sometimes deep underground where the object of the quest is hidden. Often it is the headquarters of the hero's greatest enemy, the most dangerous spot in the Special World, the **Inmost Cave**. When the hero enters that fearful place, he will cross the second threshold. Heroes often pause at the gate to prepare, plan and outwit the villain's guards. This is the phase of the **Approach**.

In mythology the Inmost Cave may represent the land of the dead. The hero may have to descend into hell to rescue a loved one (Orpheus), into a cave to fight a dragon and win a treasure (Sigurd in Norse myth), or into a labyrinth to confront a monster (Theseus and the Minotaur).

In the Arthurian stories the Inmost Cave is the Chapel Perious, the dangerous chamber where the seeker may find the Grail.

In the modern mythology of Star Wars the Approach to the Inmost Cave is Luke Skywalker and company being sucked into the Death Star where they will face Darth Vader and rescue Princess Leia. In The Wizard of Oz, it's Dorothy being kidnapped to the Wicked Witch's baleful castle, and her companions slipping in to save her. The title of Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom reveals the Inmost Cave of that film. Approach covers all the preparations for entering the Inmost Cave and confronting death or supreme danger.

8. THE ORDEAL

Here the fortunes of the hero hit bottom in a direct confrontation with his greatest fear. He faces the possibility of death and is brought to the brink in a battle with a hostile force. **The Ordeal** is a "black moment" for the audience as we are held in suspense and tension, not knowing if he will live or die. The hero like Jonah is "in the belly of the beast".

In *Star Wars* it's the harrowing moment in the bowels of the Death Star when Luke, Leia, and company are trapped in the giant trashmasher. Luke is pulled under by the tentacled monster

that lives in the sewage and is held down so long that the audience begins to wonder if he's dead. In *ET.* the lovable alien momentarily appears to die on the operating table. In *The Wizard of Oz* Dorothy and her friends are trapped by the Wicked Witch, and it looks like there's no way out. At this point in *Beverly Hill Cop* Axel Foley is in the clutches of the villain's men with a gun to his head.

In *An Officer and a Gentleman*, Zack Mayo endures an Ordeal when his Marine drill instructor launches an all-out drive to torment and humiliate him into quitting the program. It's a psychological life-or-death moment, for if he gives in, his chances of becoming an officer and a gentleman will be dead. He survives the Ordeal by refusing to quit, and the Ordeal changes him. The drill sergeant, a foxy Wise Old Man, has forced him to admit his dependency on others, and from this moment on he is more cooperative and less selfish.

In romantic comedies, the death faced by the hero may simply be the temporary death of the relationship, as in the second movement of the old standard plot, "Boy meet girl, loses girl, boy gets girl." The hero's chances of connecting with the object of affection look their bleakest.

This is a critical moment in any story, an Ordeal in which the hero must die or appear to die so that she can be born again. It's a major source of the magic of the heroic myth. The experiences of the preceding stages have led us, the audience, to identify with the hero and her fate. What happens to the hero happens to us. We are encouraged to experience the brink-of-the-death moment with her. Our emotions are temporarily depressed so that they can be revived by the hero's return from death. The result of the revival is a feeling of elation and exhilaration.

The designers of amusement park thrill rides know how to use this principle. Roller coasters make their passengers feel as if they're going to die, and there's a great thrill that comes from brushing up against death and surviving it. You're never more alive than when you're looking death in the face.

This is also the key element in rites of passage or rituals of initiation into fraternities and secret societies. The initiate is forced to taste death in some terrible experience, and then is allowed to

experience resurrection as he is reborn as a new member of the group. The hero of every story is an initiate being introduced to the mysteries of life and death.

Every story needs such a life-or-death moment in which the hero or his goals are in mortal jeopardy.

9. REWARD (SEIZING THE SWORD)

Having survived death, beaten the dragon, or slain the Minotaur, hero and audience have cause to celebrate. The hero now takes possession of the treasure he/she has come seeking, his/her Reward. It might be a special weapon like a magic sword, or a token like the Grail or some elixir which can heal the wounded land.

Sometimes the “sword” is knowledge and experience that leads to greater understanding and reconciliation with hostile forces. In *Star Wars*, Luke rescues Princess Leia and captures the plans the Death Star, keys to defeating Darth Vader.

Dorothy escapes from the Wicked Witch’s castle with the Witch’s broomstick and the ruby slippers, keys to getting back home.

At this point the hero may also settle a conflict with a parent. In *Return of the Jedi*, Luke is reconciled with Darth Vader, who turns out to be his father and not such a bad guy after all.

The hero may also be reconciled with the opposite sex, as in romantic comedies. In many stories the loved one is the treasure the hero has come to win or rescue, and there is often a love scene at this point to celebrate the victory.

From the hero’s point of view, members of the opposite sex may appear to be Shapeshifters, an archetype of change. They seem to shift constantly in form or age, reflecting the confusing and constantly changing aspects of the opposite sex. Tales of vampires, werewolves and other shapechangers are symbolic echoes of this shifting quality which men and women see in each other.

The hero's Ordeal may grant a better understanding of the opposite sex, an ability to see beyond the shifting outer appearance, leading to a reconciliation.

The hero may also become more attractive as a result of having survived the Ordeal. He/she has earned the title "hero" by having taken the supreme risk of the community.

10. THE ROAD BACK

The hero is not out of the woods yet. We are crossing into Act Three now as the hero begins to deal with the consequences of confronting the dark forces of the Ordeal. If she has not yet managed to reconcile with parent, the gods, or the hostile forces, they may come raging after her. Some of the best chase scenes spring up at this point as the hero is pursued on The Road Back by vengeful forces she has disturbed by seizing the sword, the elixir, or the treasure.

Thus Luke and Leia are furiously pursued by Darth Vader as they escape the Death Star. The Road Back in *E.T.* is the moonlight bicycle flight of Elliot and E. T. as they escape from "Keys" (Peter Coyote), who represents repressive governmental authority.

This stage marks the decision to return to the Ordinary World. The hero realizes that the Special World must eventually be left behind, and there are still dangers, temptation, and tests ahead.

11. RESURRECTION

In ancient times, hunters and warriors had to be purified before they returned to their communities, because they had blood on their hands. The hero who has been to the realm of the dead must be reborn and cleansed in one last Ordeal of death and **Resurrection** before returning to the Ordinary World of the living.

This is often a second life-and-death moment, almost a replay of the death and rebirth of the Ordeal. Death and darkness get in one last desperate shot before being finally defeated. It's a kind

of final exam for the hero, who must be tested once more to see if he/she has really learned the lessons of the Ordeal.

The hero is transformed by these moments of death-and-rebirth, and is able to return to ordinary life reborn as a new being with new insights.

The Star Wars films play with this element constantly. All three of the films to date feature a final battle scene in which Luke is almost killed, appears to be dead for a moment, and then miraculously survives. Each Ordeal wins him new knowledge and command over the force. He is transformed into a new being by his experience.

Alex Foley in the climactic sequence of *Beverly Hills Cop* once again faces death at the hands of the villain, but is rescued by the intervention of the Beverly Hills force. He emerges from the experience with a greater respect for cooperation, and is a more complete human being.

An Officer and a Gentleman offers a more complex series of final ordeals, as the hero faces death in a number of ways, Zack's selfishness dies as he gives up the chance for a personal athletic trophy in favor of helping another cadet over an obstacle. His relationship with his girlfriend seems to be dead, and he must survive the crushing blow of his best friend's suicide. As if that weren't enough, he also endures a final hand-to-hand, life-or-death battle with his drill instructor, but survives it all and is transformed into the gallant "officer and gentleman" of the title.

12. RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR

The hero Returns to the Ordinary World, but the journey is meaningless unless she brings back some Elixir, treasure, or lesson from the Special World. The Elixir is a magic potion with the power to heal. It may be a great treasure like the Grail that magically heals the wounded land, or it simply might be knowledge or experience that could be useful to the community someday.

Dorothy returns to Kansas with the knowledge that she is loved, and that “There’s no place like home.” E.T returns home with the experience of friendship with humans. Luke Skywalker defeats Darth Vader (for the time being) and restores peace and order to the galaxy.

Zack Mayo wins his commission and leaves the Special World of the training base with a new perspective. In the sparkling new uniform of an officer (with a new attitude to match) he literally sweeps his girlfriend off her feet and carries her away.

Sometimes the Elixir is treasure won on the quest, but it may be love, freedom, wisdom, or the knowledge that the Special World exists and can be survived. Sometimes it is just coming home with a good story to tell. Unless something is brought back from the Ordeal in the Inmost Cave, the hero is doomed to repeat the adventure. Many comedies use this ending as a foolish character refuses to learn his lesson and embarks on the same folly that got him in trouble in the first place.