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According to Auyo and Mohammed (2009:4), the above defines the stance of Northern Nigeria. Northern Nigeria was an autonomous division within Nigeria, distinctly different from the southern part of the country; it had independent customs, foreign relations and security structures. Ibrahim (2010:11) notes that in 1962, the region acquired the territory of the British Northern Cameroons, which voted to become a Province within Northern Nigeria. The pre-history of Northern Nigeria can be traced to the era of the Nok culture. The Nok culture, an ancient culture dominated most of what is now Northern Nigeria in pre-historic times, its legacy in the form of terracotta statues and megaliths have been discovered in Sokoto, Kano, Birnin Kudu, Nok and Zaria. The Kwatarkwashi culture, a variant of the Nok culture centred mostly around Zamfara in Sokoto Province is thought by some to be the same or an offshoot of the Nok.

Ibrahim (2010:11) chronicles that the Fourteen Kingdoms unify the diverse lore and heritage of Northern Nigeria into a cohesive ethno-historical system. Seven of these Kingdoms developed from the Kabara legacy of the Hausa people. In the 9th century as vibrant trading centres competing with Kanem-Bornu and Mali slowly developed in the Central Sudan, a set Kingdoms merged dominating the great savannah plains of Hausa land, their primary exports were leather, gold, cloth, salt, kola nuts, animal hides, and henna. The online Encyclopaedia Britannica (20115:17) gives the names of the Seven Hausa states as: Daura ? – 1806, Kano 998 – 1807, Katsina C. 1400 – 1805, Zazzau (Zaria) C. 1200 – 1808, Gobir ? – 1808, Rano, and Biram C. 1100 – 1805. The growth and conquest of the Hausa Bakwai resulted in the founding of additional states with rulers tracing their lineage to a concubine of the Hausa founding father, Bayajidda. Thus they are called the 'Banza Bakwai' meaning Bastard Seven. The Banza Bakwai adopted many of the customs and institutions of the Hausa Bakwai but were considered unsanctioned or copy-cat kingdoms by non-Hausa people. These states include: Zamfara, Kebbi, Yauri (also called Yawuri), Gwari (also called Gwari land), Kwararafa (a Jukun state), Nupe (of the Nupe people), Ilorin (a Yoruba state), Hausa States.

According to the Kano Chronicle (2014:9), between 500 CE and 700 CE, Hausa people who are thought to have slowly moved from Nubia and mixing in with the local Northern and Middle Belt population, established a number of strong states in what is now Northern Nigeria and Eastern Niger. With the decline of the Nok and Sokoto, which had previously controlled Central and Northern Nigeria between 800 BCE and 200 CE, the Hausa were able to emerge as the new power in the region. They are closely linked with the Kanuri people of Kanem-Bornu (Lake Chad), the Birom, Gwari, Nupe and Jukun. The Hausa aristocracy, under influence from the Mali Empire adopted Islam in the 11th century CE. Auyo (2009:7) notes that by the 12th century CE the Hausas were becoming one of Africa's major powers. The architecture of the Hausa is perhaps one of the least known but most beautiful of the medieval age. Many of their early mosques and palaces are bright and colourful and often include intricate engraving or elaborate symbols designed into the facade. By 1500 CE, the Hausa utilized a modified Arabic script known as Ajami to record their own language; the Hausa compiled several written histories, the most popular being the Kano Chronicle.

Usman dan Fodio led a jihad against the Hausa States and finally united them into the Sokoto Caliphate. The Sokoto Caliphate was under the overall authority of the Commander of the Faithful. Under Dan Fodio, the Empire was bicephalous and divided into two territories each controlled by an appointed vizier. Each of the territories was further divided into autonomous Emirates under mainly hereditary local Emirs. The Bornu Empire was initially absorbed into the Sokoto Caliphate of Usman dan Fodio, but broke away after a few years later.

The Kano Chronicle (2014:9) notes that initially the British involvement in Northern Nigeria was predominantly trade-related, and revolved around the expansion of the Royal Niger Company, whose interior territories spread north from about where the Niger River and Benue River joined at Lokoja. The Royal Niger Company's territory did not represent a direct threat to much of the Sokoto Caliphate or the numerous states of Northern Nigeria. This changed, when Frederick Lugard and Taubman Goldie laid down an ambitious plan to pacify the Niger interior and unite it with the rest of the British Empire.

Auyo (2009:7) states that the protectorate of Northern Nigeria was proclaimed at Ibadan by Frederick Lugard on January 1, 1897. The basis of the colony was the 1885 Treaty of Berlin which broadly granted Northern Nigeria to Britain, on the basis of their protectorates in Southern Nigeria. Hostilities with the powerful Sokoto Caliphate soon followed. The Emirates of Kabba, Kontogora and Ilorin were the first to be conquered by the British. In February 1903, the great fort of Kano, seat of the Kano Emirate was captured, Sokoto and much of the rest of its Caliphate soon catapulted. On March 13, 1903, the Grand Shura of Caliphate finally conceded to Lugard's demands and proclaimed Queen Victoria, Queen and sovereign of the Caliphate and all its lands.

The Governor, Frederick Lugard, with limited resources, ruled with the consent of local rulers through a policy of indirect rule which he developed into a sophisticated political theory. Lugard left the protectorate after some years, serving in Hong Kong, but was eventually returned to work in Nigeria where he decided on the merger of the Northern Nigeria Protectorate with Southern Nigeria in 1914. Agitation for independence from the radically different Southern Protectorate however led to a formidable split in the 1940s. The Richards constitution proclaimed in 1945 gave overwhelming autonomy to the North including eventually in the areas of foreign relations and customs policy.

According to the Kano Chronicle (2014:11), Northern Nigeria was granted independence on the 15th of March 1957 with Sir Ahmadu Bello as its first premier. The Northern Peoples Congress under Sir Ahmadu Bello dominated parliament while the Northern Elements Progressive Union became the main opposition party. Northern Nigeria was divided into 13 provinces namely: Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Ilorin, Kano, Katsina, Plateau, Zaria, Niger, Adamawa, Kabba, Sokoto, Sardauna Kano, the largest of the provinces in terms of population and economy is in the North-Central part of the country. The Kano Native Authority, an offshoot of the Fula Kano Emirate inherited the ancient trade industries that fuelled the trans-Saharan trade with North Africa. The Province of Zaria is home to the City of Kaduna, an autonomous capital city that serves as the nation's capital and home to its national institutions.

Groundnut and cotton industries in the province of Kano provide the main source of revenue for Northern Nigeria. Tin mining in the Province of Plateau, Steel mining in the Province of Benue and other metal industries in the Province of Sokoto; build up the diverse mining industry of the Country. Cement industries in Sokoto and Bauchi and leather processing industries in Kano constitute the main manufacturing sector. Auyo (2009:11) observes that Northern Nigeria is an ethnically and religiously diverse state. The Hausa, Fula and Birom peoples dominate much of the North Western and Central parts of the Country. While the Hausa and Fula are chiefly Muslims, they have a very rich Christian history, the Ancient Hausa Kings of Gobir 'Masu Sakandami' - the Cross Bearers were Christians long before the coming of European evangelists and a large Christian Hausa and Fula minority thrives in many of the North Western Provinces. A substantial part of the Hausa population also adheres to ancient religion of Hausa Animism. The culture of Northern Nigeria is mostly dominated by the culture of the Fourteen Kingdoms that dominated the region in

prehistoric times, but these cultures are also deeply influenced by the culture of the over one hundred ethnic groups that still live in the region.

### **2.3 Northern Nigeria and Popular Culture**

Auyo (2009:11) states that Northern Nigeria inherited much of the literary legacy of the old Sudanic states. The Hausa Sultanates from the 9th to the 18th century produced numerous literary works. Thousands of such works mostly in Ajami, Hausa and Arabic still remain uncatalogued throughout Northern Nigeria. Since the colonisation by the British Empire, English and the Latin script has superseded the Ajami script. Ali (2014:5) notes that Abubakr Imam Kagara is regarded as one of the fathers of modern Northern Nigerian literature, his works such as *Ruwan Bagaja* and *Magana Jari Ce* published in the 1930s served as a bridge between the old sudanic literary tradition and western ways. Others like Yabo Lari and Muhammed Sule-author of the *Undesirable Elements* made equally important contributions in the 1960s. In the 1980s popular authors like Abubakar Gimba and Zainab Alkali served to keep the North's literary tradition alive and distinct from the Nigerian south. The 1990s saw the emergence of authors from Abubakar Othman, Ismail Bala and Ahmed Maiwada in poetry to Maria Ajima and Victor Dugga in drama. Contemporary Northern Nigerian literature is mostly produced in Kano, Kaduna, Jos and Minna. Writers like B. M. Dzukogi, Ismail Bala, Yusuf Adamu, Musa Okpanachi, Razinat Mohammed and E. E. Sule are still active.

According to Yusuf (2014:6), Northern Nigeria's movie industry known as Kannywood was one of the first commercial film industries in sub Saharan Africa. The industry was created by veteran journalists and actors from Radio Kaduna and RTV Kaduna in the 1950s. As at 2012, there are over 2000 Cinema companies operating in Northern Nigeria. Today actors like Ali Nuhu, Adam A. Zango, Sani Danja, Ibrahim Maishukku are popular within the region. Since the 1990s the slow rise of Islamic fundamentalism through the proselyte campaigns of the Izala Society, Northern Nigerian cinema has witnessed considerable setbacks and has now been dwarfed by its Southern Nigerian counterpart more commonly known as Nollywood.

Adah and Chiama (2014:3) observe that while the old Sudanic tradition mostly concentrated on poetry and sung poetry, from the 1950s influx of British influence served to fertilise Northern Nigerian Music. Music and dance are an integral part of Nigeria's rich cultural heritage. The diverse cultures, each with its techniques and instruments, have different kinds of music, ranging from folk to popular music, some of which are known worldwide. Adah and Chiama also note that the period of the late 1960s through the '70s and '80s was an extremely fertile era for music in Nigeria, as indeed it was around the world. While Afro-juju music was making waves in the Southwest with musicians the likes of Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey and Fela Anikulapo Kuti as its proponents and in the Southeast, Oliver de Coque, Osita Osadebe and Bright Chimezie were institutionalising Highlife music, Northern Nigeria was bubbling with the functional and entertaining songs of the local Folk music genre. Some notable names in Northern Nigerian music include the likes of Dan Maraya Jos, Mamman Shata, Barmani Choge, Aliyu Dan Kwairo and a host of others who are regarded as the founders of the distinct Northern Nigerian stylistic musical genre. Others like Fatima Uji continue to be popular. The profiles of some of these are discussed below according to Adah and Chiama (2014):

**Mamman Shata Katsina** (1923-1999) was a Katsina-born Nigerian, well known as an accomplished griot among the Hausa people of West and Northeast Africa. His vocals, which were often accompanied by talking drums known as kalangu, provided a formidable source of entertainment for the people of Northern Nigeria for more than half a century. Shata built his long career in entertainment against his father's wish for him to become an established farmer. Shata was involved in petty trading in Kola nuts and sweets (alewa)

before he dumped that to embrace music full time. Many who had the privilege of encountering Shata in his day usually had the best of entertainment and relaxation times with him. This great folklorist was one of the bestselling Polygram artistes from Northern Nigeria in the '80s. Shata also delved a bit into politics, especially at the grassroots, serving his people in the '70s as a councillor in Kankia Local Government Area of Katsina State. In the Third Republic, he served as the chairman of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in Funtua Local Government.

**Dan Maraya Jos** (born Adamu Wayya in 1946 in Bukuru near Jos in Plateau State of Nigeria) is a Hausa griot (folklore custodian/singer) best known for playing the Kuntigi, a stringed lute-like instrument used in Nigerian Hausa music. He is a living legend in the Hausa music world until just recently. His songs are mainly about life and living. How did he come about the name Dan Maraya Jos, which literally means “the little orphan of Jos”? Well, his father, who was from Sokoto, died shortly after his birth and his mother also died while he was still an infant. So he became an orphan at a very tender age, hence the name “Dan Maraya Jos”, by which everybody knows him. His choosing a career in folk music was not an accident. His father was a court musician for the Emir of Bukuru, who took Dan Maraya into his care following the death of his parents. Dan Maraya showed interest in the art of music at a very early age and came under the influence of local professional musicians. “I had to start music at the age of seven” was his response to a question asked him by journalists some years ago. During a trip to Maiduguri as a preteen, he was impressed by musicians there and he made a Kuntigi, an instrument he has used as accompaniment ever since. In his active days, he composed over 500 songs. The mainstay of Dan Maraya’s repertoire is praise singing, addressing his own heroes who are usually not the rich and famous. His first and perhaps still his topmost hit song is “Wak’ar Karen Mota” (Song of the Driver’s Mate), a song in praise of young men who are bus conductors and do the dirty work of changing the tyres, pushing the buses when they break down, etc. He was taken to the battlefield during the Nigerian Civil War, to boost the morale of the men of the Federal Army with songs in which he vividly incorporated scenarios from the war.

**Barmani Choge** was a renowned Hausa female singer whose birth name was Sa’adatu Aliyu. She spent 52 years of her life composing and singing the Amada genre of Hausa folk music, accompanied by a water-filled calabash instrument beaten lightly like a drum. Her all-female group usually entertained women. Her themes dealt with issues like women’s empowerment and education. She also scolded jealous and lazy women, among other family issues she addressed in her songs. The name “Barmani Choge” was only a nickname, the first courtesy of her being the only surviving child of her parents and the other because of the way she would mimic a cripple’s walk in the early days of her career. When once asked, she explained, “Choge, as I use it, is a particular dance step attached to Amada music. It was in vogue a long time ago. The name was later appended to my real name by my fans.” Born in 1945 in what is now Katsina State, Choge died at 80 in Funtua town in 2013.

**Bongos Ikwue** was one of the most popular singers in the Nigerian music scene back in the day, whose personalised style of music made him a unique artiste. The music maestro, who is from Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State, North-Central Nigeria, could be viewed as an intimate, earthy singer-songwriter, who delivered home truths with soulful, unpretentious vocals. Bongos was one of the very few Africans whose album hit platinum under PolyGram records in Europe. His career peaked in the 1970s through '80s, a period when most of his hit tracks were released. Bongos’ light, however, could not shine on through the 1990s, but his numerous fans, who he won for himself through the rich messages of his folk-

soul songs, still miss his stage performances. He is most remembered as the voice in the signature tune of famous television series “Cock Crow at Dawn”, as well as for numerous hits including Mariama, Teardrops, Still Searching, What’s Gonna Be and his vernacular tracks Eche w’ Une (Life is a Swing) and Ihotu (Love), among others.

**Alhaji Abubakar Ladan**, A famous poet well known for his songs and music on African unity, was born in 1935 at Kwarbai in Zaria City, Kaduna State in Northern Nigeria. After graduating from Alhudahuda Middle School (now Alhudahuda College) in the 1950s, Ladan started working as a veterinary officer in Malunfashi (now in Katsina State). He was inspired into music by reading the songs of other Hausa singers like Sa’adu Zungur, Muazu Hadija and a singer from Sudan called Abubakar Al-Kabirun. Abubakar Ladan has travelled widely across the African continent, visiting countries like Sudan, Morocco, Ethiopia, Somalia, Congo, Niger and Eritrea, among others. The honour of the Order of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (OFR) was conferred on him by Shehu Shagari’s government.

**Alhaji Musa Dankwairo** is another famous classical Hausa folklore singer in modern times. Dankwairo’s career in music was inherited; his father, Usman Dankwanda, served as a singer for the Emir of Maradun. Dankwairo grew up to know his father as a singer and at the age of seven, he began to accompany his father as he went around singing. After his father’s death, Dankwairo continued to go with and assist his brother, Aliyu Kurna, who directly inherited the father’s possessions. He got the name “Dankwairo” from a man by that name who happened to be a boy with lovely vocals in his father’s ensemble. The then young Dankwairo began to imitate him and gradually picked up in the art and rose to fame, and people began to call him Dankwairo. He served as a personal singer for the Sardauna of Sokoto. The first song he sang for the Sardauna was Mai Dubun Nasara.

**Sanni Aliyu Dandawo**, born about 67 years ago in Argungu in Kebbi State, is one northern musician who has touched the lives of many through his music. Dandawo’s father, the late Alhaji Aliyu Dandawo, was also a popular musician. Dandawo began his musical career in 1964. His praise music concentrates on traditional rulers, whom he eulogises in his songs. In traditional Hausa culture, he belongs to the class of singers known as Mawakinfada (singers for traditional rulers). As time went on, he also sang for politicians and the wealthy in society. He sang many songs for the late premier of the Northern Region and Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello. Despite the advent of modern musical instruments, Dandawo still clings to his old traditional instruments, because according to him, they are what he inherited from his forefathers. His songs include Manir Jafaru, Sarkin Sudan Kontagora, Shehu Kangiwa, Ahmadu Aruwa, among others.

**Alhaji Haruna Uji** is a popular Hausa musician, who endeared himself to the hearts of the rich and the poor alike, as well as the young and the old through his music. Uji was born in Unguwar Gandun Quarters in Hadejia, present day Jigawa State in 1946. His father was an Islamic cleric. At the age of six, Uji was enrolled into a Qur’anic school and graduated five years later. A highly intelligent student, while in school, he would take charge and teach the class whenever the teacher was absent. Before his debut in music, he was a hunter, a farmer and also a driver. He gave up driving entirely when he became prominent as a musician. Uji was inspired into music after meeting a musician named Dan Mato in Kano, who played the Gurmi (a traditional instrument) that Uji also played. He went into music for the love of it and not for money, as he often rejected financial offers.

**Hajiya Fatima Lolo** was one of the traditional singers from Northern Nigeria. She was a Nupe folklorist from Niger State. Hajiya Lolo was reputed to have brought Nupe music to national and international recognition.

Lolo was a delight to watch, a sonorous vocalist to listen to. She, no doubt, brought beauty and glamour into Nupe music with her spectacular performances at various national and international festivals. Some of the events at which she performed include the Kaduna Durbar and Festac '77 cultural and arts exhibition. This great and admirable folksong icon is late and will continue to be greatly missed by the world, especially music lovers in Northern Nigeria and her admirers in particular. Since the 1990s influence of pop culture has led to rise of Northern Nigerian R&B singers. Northern Nigerian Singers like Adam Zango, Ice Prince Zamani and Idris Abdulkareem etc. are popular throughout Africa.

## **2.4 Poetry and Social Commentary**

In his introduction, Shija (2008) observes that contemporary Nigerian poetry produced in the last three decades of the 20th century is often viewed as mere social and political propaganda. These new generation poets, unlike those in the earlier generation of Wole Soyinka and Christopher Okigbo, are often said to be too anxious to communicate their message of social advocacy and thus employ ordinary language. Hence, they are brushed aside as not worthy of serious academic study. Viewed through the prism of poetry, colonialist philosophy, Shija argues, with references to the poetry of Tanure Ojaide and Niyi Osundare, that these allegations are merely political and therefore misplaced. Contemporary Nigerian poets according to him question the assumptions of superiority ascribed to Western standards of poetry as they positively deploy their indigenous African techniques of musicality, ritual imagery and local Idiom to fight social ills on their countries. (152)

Poetry has been one of the literary tools used for enforcing social change. The compressed and pregnant language of poetry necessarily makes it a strong tool for influencing the society through its paintings of facts and figures in symbolic and picturesque languages. The Post colonialism is a late 20th century concept used variously to depict a historical or political movement, a literary genre or indeed a cultural theory that spans the gamut of life of colonized people. As a historical or political movement, it is a fact that European nations colonized and shared out African territories at the Berlin conference of 1884-85 in tandem with their economic and strategic interests. These colonies were later granted independence in the second half of the 20th century (Shija: 152).

However, as a general rule, the semantic basis of the use "post" does not limit the concept only to activities after independence but indeed it covers the state of being of the colonized people from onset of colonialism. Bill Ascroft et al (1989) in Shija (2008) explain further that, "We use the term "post-colonial" however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the movement of colonization to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of Pre-occupations throughout the historical Process initiated by European imperial aggression" (2).

As a literary genre, critics say all the literatures of the colonized people all over the world written right from the point of contact with the so-called superior cultures are post-colonial literature since they exhibit the same tendencies of resistance, ambivalence or sometimes subservience. As Shija puts it, it is estimated that about three quarters of all the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism (153). Hans Bartens (2001) in Shija (2008) unjustifiably calls post-colonial criticism, racial in spite of the fact that the colonial experience sometimes takes place within the same race (80). Modern African poetry, like those of other post-colonial societies, is a product of conflict- the conflict of the mind arising from the denigration of colonialism and slavery, social inequalities, political conflict and neo-colonialism. According to Shija, so far there are three broad categories of modern poets that can be

identified in Nigeria or even Africa today. The first generation of African poets includes writers who wrote their poetry before independence. They were mainly politicians. Examples are Sir Dennis Osadebey and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe; D.I.E Dhlomo, Benedict Wallet Vilakazi of South Africa; Kwame Nanquah, Micheal Dei Anang and Gladys Casley Hayford of Ghana. These poets were not really concerned about techniques but were concerned with themes of race, nationalist struggles, Christianity and heroism (155). Shija further says that the second generation comprises among others, outstanding writers like Wole Soyinka, Gabriel Okara, J.P Clark, Christopher Okigbo, Dennis Brutus, Okot P. Bitek, Kwesi Brew, Kofi Awoonor and Lenrie Peters of Anglophone Africa. From the French speaking countries were poets like Leopold Sedar Senghor, Tchicaya U' Tansi, Birago Diop and David Diop. The Lusophone countries had poets like Agostinho Neto, Antonio Jacinto, Vasco Cabral and Noemiade Gousa while the Arabic speaking countries boasted of the likes of Salah Abdul Sabr, Ahmed Hijazi and Mohammed Al-Faituri. This generation of poets, as observed by Ojaide and Sallah in "*The African Poetry*" is critical of colonialism and its members express their unease at the cultural crossroads as well as deploy political satire to criticize corruption in government, (156). The third generation, according to Shija (2008), has embraced and developed in various directions, more elements of written poetic traditions than their literary predecessors brought to global attention. They borrow techniques from both older poets and their local traditional art and setting. Since most of the poets have a populist approach towards poetry, the medium of dissemination of poetry has been democratized to involve all media of mass communications like the television, radio and newspaper.

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