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## **A critical analysis of *Baubawan burmi*, *kassasabarmu ce kan zaɓar jagora* by Aminu Ladan Abubakar (ALA)**

### **Abstract**

This paper explores understanding of literature as a medium through which poets address issues in order to reach their audience with a message, thereby rendering service to the community or the society on more broad scale. Poets engage the society through their literary composition by using the language that pleases them and, through entertainment, they try to put across ideas of bringing change. The analysis offered here focuses on the 21<sup>st</sup> century Hausa poetry of Aminu Ladan Abubakar (ALA) and explains how his poem, *Baubawan burmi*, *kassasabarmu ce kan zaɓar jagora* 'Our mistake in choosing a leader' entertains, enlightens, and educates electorates from Northern Nigeria and beyond about the nature of leadership and the mistakes committed when electing public office holders.

**Keywords:** Hausa poetry, Aminu Ladan Abubakar, *Baubawan burmi*, Nigerian election

### **1. Introduction**

Literature is a body of oral or written works that portray a society in an artistic manner. The portrayal is done in a language that is appealing, pleasurable, and pleasing to the mind. The sound – rhythm and melody – is blended with words to give that pleasure. The language of the literary genre is beautiful and skilfully crafted to attract the readers. As to the meaning of literature, Skinner (1980: 1)

says: "literature is the expression of the best and worst in a culture through the medium of language". "The best and the worst" may mean positive and negative sides of the society that literary writers depict in their works of art.

Literature generally, and poetry in particular, stimulates the imagination and confronts the reader, or the audience, with a unique vision of life. It demonstrates craft and artistry and has the power to raise questions, provide fresh points of view, expand the understanding of self and the world, and renew the spirit. It is also seen as instilling conscience in readers which eventually serves humanity. Its service to humanity takes various forms: cultural, historical, economic, religious, and political.

Literature is about society, whether factual or imaginative. It is about people and what they have done, believed, created, or are willing to create. It aims at portraying not only the positive side of human activities but also their negative consequences, with the view to command a reversal for the better. It is an expression of culture because it documents human knowledge, belief, and behaviour (Eyong et al. 2004). Based on that, late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the First President of Nigeria said:

Literature is the soul of any nation. Just as visionless nations are doomed to perish, so too are nations without literature, doomed to be imposed upon by the literary vandals of their contemporary society. After all, the mode of thinking and actions of the African are, to an extent, dictated according to the type of literature they consume. [...] If they read books which portray them as inferior, their minds are conditioned to such a reflex. Hence it is this type of propaganda that should fire the African with a view to creative scholarship (Azikiwe 1937: 137).

McDonald, with his *Death of the critic* (2007: vii) opines that the work of criticism is now shifted from university experts to journalists, bloggers, discussion groups, and the public outside academia. He says that "the critic [...] has often been regarded as a parasite, strangely ineffectual in his inability to create art himself but inappropriately powerful in his capacity to ruin reputations with the stroke of a poison pen".

Whether McDonald succeeded in killing the critic or not, the area is still vibrant in academia. To critically analyse any literary genre, one has to take into cognisance the thematic thrust, the style, the form, and, of course, the characters and the characterization of the work one is critiquing. Thus, this paper examines this poem in order to describe what the poet puts across to the Northern Nigerians as regards the type of leadership and politicking in the current democratic dispensation.

According to Abrams's pragmatic theories (1953: 14), all works of art revolve around relationship of the work and the audience. He maintains that the three cheap functions of poetry are to teach, to please, and to move. To Sidney, says Abrams (1953: 14), "poetry [...] has a purpose to achieve certain effects in an audience". Abrams further states that "work of art is chiefly [considered] as a means to an end, an instrument for getting something done, and tends to judge its value according to its success in achieving that aim" (Abrams, 1953: 15). Based on this, poetry is seen as humanity: something that teaches us to be human, in ways both bad and good. It is something that presents us numerous alternatives for behaviour and the basis for choosing among them, which at the end should make us more truly human in the best sense of the word. This concept of humanity takes advantage of our ability to dance, sing, sculpt, draw or paint, and to use language in order to show us both what we have been, what we are, and what we can be. And all these are done through the dimension of enjoyment (Steinberg 2017).

Literature generally has diverse effects on the audiences' social, economic, cultural, and political lives. At times society depends for its betterment on writers and poets, who comment as social critics. Commenting on such effects during difficulties, Brooks (1941) writes:

We live in a very unhappy world at present [...] and the public has a right to expect from its poets and thinkers some light on the causes of our problems and the ways to a better future. Few writers at present are living up to these expectations. But still the belief in literature persists, because so many writers in the past have performed their true public function.

This shows that what shapes the production and receptions of literature is the political, social and cultural development of societies, and as such it leaves its traces in such socio-political and cultural events in the form of fiction.

## 2. The Hausa poetry

The genre of Hausa poetry can be divided into two categories, just like that of the poetry of other African cultures that have either double or triple heritage: the traditional, Arabic, and Western civilizations. The cultures that have contacts with only Western civilization can be said to have double heritage: their traditional culture plus the Western culture, while those which came into contact with the Arabic and Western civilizations, like Hausa, Fulfulde, Kanuri, Swahili, and others, have triple heritage: traditional, Arabic, and Western civilizations. Traditional poetry is oral in nature, while the Arab and the Western poetries are written. In the

Yoruba society, for example, there are oral poets and literate poets (Olatunji 1979). As for Hausa, Skinner (1980: 3) also reports that “*waka*, the poetic genre, [...] may be either oral or written”.

However, in the recent time, specifically towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Hausas have developed another category of *waka* “poetry” which has certain features alien to the written poetry. These features include regular stanza and rhyme forms, and their literary performance includes rhythmic mimicry of piano and other foreign musical instruments accompanying it (Amin, 2015: 146). Amin further says:

Indeed, this category of song dominates the Hausa music industry in spite of the rich cultural heritage the people are blessed with. Its wide acceptability can be attributed to the prevalence of romantic/love themes, as well as the synchronized order of the free-for-all mixture of sexes in the course of the performance of such songs, most especially taking cognizance of the fact that the youth are their forceful audience.

Further discussion on the Hausa poetry is related to the work of the poet and singer Aminu Ladan Abubakar, known for his artistic name ALA (or Ala). Being a Hausa, he has not escaped from this modern phenomenon as he uses female choruses, piano, and his poems are sung and recorded at studio. He is known for the themes of his poems in which he comments, propagates, enlightens, and educates his audience in order they knew the type of leaders to elect during elections at all levels. One of such poems is *Baubawan burmi, kasassabarmu ce kan zaɓar agora* ‘Our mistake in choosing a leader’.

## 2.1. The poet

Aminu Ladan Abubakar (henceforth ALA) was born in Yakasai ward, Kano city, on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1973. He attended Qur’anic school and later was enrolled into Tudun Murtala primary school which he attended from 1980 to 1986. From there he proceeded to Dakata secondary school which he completed in 1992. For his tertiary education, ALA went to Kano Polytechnic where he was a student from 2004 to 2007 and obtained a diploma in fine art.

ALA started as a novelist before delving into poetry. He authored about eight novels before he changed his direction into poetry. His novels include: *Jirgi Daya* ‘Same train’ (1999), *Bakar aniya* ‘Bad intent’ (2000), *Cin zarafi* ‘Humiliation’ (2001), *Kawazuci* ‘Fatal desire’ (2003), *Tarzoma* ‘Anarchy’ (2003), *Sawaba* ‘Freedom’ (2003), *Jirwaye* ‘Half done’ (2003), and *Jagoranci* ‘Leadership’ (2004). ALA started singing songs when he was a pupil at Islamiyya school, especially during the

*maulud* (birthday) of the Prophet of Islam. ALA takes poetry as a craft, he composes and sings his poems and makes them available on CDs.

## 2.2. The poem

Literally, *Baubawan burmi* means a mismatch of an item or event. Bargery (1934) and Newman (2007) define the term *Baubawa* as 'a pagan'. The phrase can be used for instance when describing things of not Hausa origin, such as in *baubawan wata*, which refers to European months (consisting of 30-31 days), instead of *balaraban wata* meaning Arabic months (consisting of 29 or 30 days). The phrase *baubawan burmi* is a paradox that connotes a statement that is seemingly contradictory and opposes common sense but seems to be true. In this poem it can also be seen as a metaphor of a bad choice. *Baubawa* is something absurd or deviant, while *burmi* 'associate' is supposed to go with *abokin burmi* 'an associate' in Hausa sense. It is used metaphorically to refer to two opposing figures put together to give a sense in terms of personification, description or as a hyperbole (Dangambo 2007: 50-51). In this poem, electorates are said to have elected ignorantly public office holders who are unable to lead people because of their corrupt and lackadaisical attitudes. So, the title states that the leaders and the masses do not match. They are opposed to each other. The masses are badly looking for a saviour, while the leaders who pretend to be saviours, ended up looting the resources of the country and eventually pushed the masses into abject poverty and want. The poem has been transcribed from a CD for the purpose of this article.

The central theme of this poem is a lamentation and lampoon for the type of leadership Northern Nigeria has been experiencing since the inception of democracy. The refrain, which serves as the title of the poem, is a message of regrets for the wrong choice: *Baubawan burmi, kasassabarmu ce kan zaɓar jagora* 'Our mistake in choosing a leader'.

Poems concerning this subject became popular in Northern Nigeria when poets started reacting by showing their resistance to the corrupt attitudes of especially Northern Nigerian politicians. For instance, in 2007 Haruna Aliyu Ningi composed two poems on the negative attitudes of the then ruling party, PDP, and the then President Olusegun Obasanjo's attempt for tenure elongation beyond 2007. The two poems are *Waƙar shegiyar uwa: PDP* 'The song of bastard mother: PDP' and *Mu ba mu yarda ya zarce ba* 'We oppose to tenure elongation'. There is also Jibrin Jallatu with his *Mafarkin mulki* 'The dream of power'. This is a caricature of bad politicians who aspire to power only to enrich themselves and their families. On this note, Amin (2006: 235) affirms that "although Hausa

poetry has continued to flourish as a vehicle for conveying religious, political, and to some extent, secular ideas", this practice in fact started during colonial and postcolonial era. He further says: "A quick glance at politically oriented poems during the colonial and post-colonial era down to recent times will show that they are more aimed at propagating party ideals or government programmes". (Amin 2006: 235). But unlike those composed by the above mentioned poets, ALA's poem can be judged and valued as a poem putting across a message of regret over mistakes committed during the election, choosing wrong leaders who ended up enriching themselves and their cronies instead of working for the betterment of the region and the country at large.

### 3. Analysis of the poem

The form of this poem is structured not like the normal Hausa literate poetry borrowed from Arabic verse, which has fixed stanzaic formulae of single, double, triple, quadruple, and quintuple lines, and where each line has a metre and rhyme, with a specific melody which is quantifiable. The contemporary Hausa poets violate this strict rule and thus compose their poems adopting oral rendition of formula. It is worth mentioning that the *kwar-biyu* (couplet) and *kwar-biyar* (quintuplet) poems are the most frequent. *Kwar-hudu* (quadruplet) is very rare. Stanzas are marked by rhymes. It is also important at this point to add that rhyme scheme is an important if not essential phenomenon in Hausa classical poetry (Junaidu 1988).

#### 3.1. The structure and form

The poem has about 36 unstructured stanzas. Some of them, the 'tercet stanza' (*kwaruku*), have 3 lines each, some have 4 lines ('quatrain stanza', *kwarhudu*), and there are some with 6 lines ('sestet stanza'), which in Hausa are considered as deviant stanzas (*takadarinbaiti*) that is not recognisable in Hausa verse.

<i>Dole in koka da tsuwawa,</i>	I must cry loudly,
<i>Dubi kasar nan Arewa,</i>	Imagine this land, North,
<i>Ba ilimi talakawa,</i>	No education, the masses,
<i>Ba mu da aikin tabawa,</i>	We don't have a job (to do),
<i>Mun zama jujin zubawa,</i>	We became refuse dump (for dumping),
<i>Tarkace tarkatawa.</i>	Scraps to get rid of.

This is an example of internal rhyme which Hausa verse borrowed from classic Arabic verse metre. And it is this **-wa** rhyme the poet maintains in all the stanzas. Another example with the same **-wa** rhyme is:

<i>Sassaucin tausayawa,</i>	Compassionate change,
<i>ALA mai fadakarwa,</i>	ALA one who enlightens,
<i>Daina kukan kokawa,</i>	You should stop crying,
<i>Allah ne ke sakawa</i>	It is Allah who causes (things to happen)
<i>Sannan she ke cirewa,</i>	And He removes,
<i>In ya so zai canjawa,</i>	If He wants, He causes the change,
<i>Ba mai ikon hanawa,</i>	Nobody stops (Him),
<i>Sauyin sauyi muke sowa,</i>	What we need is real change,
<i>Sassaucin tausayawa.</i>	Compassionate change.

The poet employs some stylistic devices to add colour to his poem in order to entertain his audience. In the first place, he uses a lot of Arabic words in the process of opening and closing doxology. ALA started composing panegyric poems at a younger age when he was a pupil at Islamic school. In the aspect of style, words such as *Allah* 'God', *adala* 'justice', *alfarma* 'favour', *Malikulmulk* 'the Ruler of all rulers', *alkuki* 'a hole-like place in traditional room for putting lamp', *jahlilci* 'illiteracy', *hikima* 'wisdom' are all borrowed from Arabic.

As a tradition, poets make use of figurative language which Akinmade (2009: 120) calls "expression in language that gives beauty; graphic and clear meaning to what is said or written". ALA applies figures of speech like proverbs, simile, symbolism, allegory as a style. For instance, he uses a common Hausa proverb which says that one day, no matter how high one reaches in position, one will go back to his original home or position. This is normally said after one assumed power and forgot his past. Hausa person uses this proverb to caution an arrogant common man:

<i>Ungulu za dai fa a koma,</i>	The vulture will come back one day,
<i>Gidanki dai na tsamiya daina gadara.</i>	To your house on the top of tamarind tree.

According to Hausa belief, vulture resides on branches of tamarind tree. So, if it changed its home to a better place, it is believed that one day the condition will worsen and it will move to its natural home (nest), which is at the top of the tamarind tree. The same situation may apply to a leader in a democratic system of government. The leader may be a member of either state or federal house or a legislature, but one day the leader may lose an election and return home. And after some time he may run out of the amassed money and he will have to go back to the people with no money, power, and influence. Another proverb used in this poem is a sort of symbolism. The system of the leadership is symbolized by the habit of Hausa potato traders who put big potatoes over the smaller ones in order to deceive the buyer. In this sense, the leaders are on top, trampling the masses:

*Allah wanga kashin mulki,  
Ya yi kama guda da kashin dankali.  
Na sama ya danne na kasa,  
Idan ya so numfashi babu dalili.*

Allah, this portion of rule,  
That resembles the portion pile of sweet potato.  
One on top step on one at the bottom,  
If he tries to breath cannot.

This proverb symbolises segregation of power and people in a society. The symbolism demonstrates how sweet potato retailers pile up their potatoes when retailing. They put the smaller ones at the bottom and the biggest on the top. By this, it shows that the bigger ones are always on top, suppressing the smaller or weaker ones. This symbolism also looks like an allegory of the type of leadership practiced in Nigeria. The masses are suppressed, subjected to all hardships and eventually left in abject poverty.

*Kararkuka da tsuwwa,  
Munshagaltu da yunwa,  
Munbishe da kishirwa,  
Munmakance da sowwa,  
Allah kai kesauyawa.*

Seeking for redress loudly,  
We are confused because of hunger,  
We are dried out of taste,  
Blinded out of love,  
Allah, you are the one who brings any change.

The poet is now seeking divine intervention because of hunger and lack of potable water. This, according to the poet, is caused by bad leadership and resulted from illiteracy, blind followership, ethnicity, religious bigotry, and regionalism. The masses blindly, and out of ignorance, elect the leaders who do not care much about their problems and those of the society. These factors finally dragged the region into all the problems it is facing now, from a low level of literacy to abject poverty and unemployment among the teeming youth population.

Alliteration as a figure of speech is also used in the poem. Alliteration is a repetition of words or sounds that are somehow similar to the ear of the hearer. Here an instance is cited from the poem:

*Sauyin sauyi muke so,  
Sassaucin tausayawa.*

What we need is real change,  
Compassionate change.

The sound [s] is repeatedly used three times in the first line, and four times in the second line. This is not for any emphasis or for bringing out any meaningful message, this is a stylistic device – an alliteration.

We can see that the poet uses figures of speech as style. He borrows a lot of words from Arabic. Also, proverbs and alliteration are used, which gives it the aesthetic qualities needed in literary composition.

The poem retains the common norm and convention of Arabic verse – the opening and closing doxology where the Almighty Creator is thanked for the bounties He gives us and for His power over all people. Also, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, is praised.

### 3.2. Performance

Using musical accompaniment has become a norm in performance of the contemporary Hausa poems. Piano, guitar, and other modern instruments are used by poets at studios. These give extraordinary melody to the poems because voice can be manipulated. The poem *Baubawan burmi, kasassabarmu ce kan zaɓar jagora* 'Our mistake in choosing a leader', is not an exception, as it is sung at the studio, instead of open theatre before the audience, and the poet uses modern techniques. ALA records his songs in different studios, such as Lafazi Studio, Castic Studio, Central Hotel Studio, Taskar ALA Global, Taskar ALA Kaduna, etc. *Baubawan burmi* was composed in 2007 and recorded at Dehood Studio in Kano. The music was handled by Ibrahim (Ibro) and the chorus was Fati Nijar. Apart from instruments, the poet has introduced some compositional elements into the poem, such as refrain and chorus, also not being associated with Hausa classical poetry borrowed from Arabic verse composed mostly by *Malams* clerics. In fact, Hausa Islamic clerics detest the innovation of any form of music in poetry. They differentiate between song and poetry. To them, songs are oral and performed with musical instruments, while poetry is composed by literates without any form of musical accompaniment.

### 3.3. The content

As a tradition, Hausa literate poets introduce their poems with doxology. So, this poet also starts with supplication in which he thanks the Almighty Creator who is omnipotent, omnipresent. Then he describes how the situation is:

*Allah mun yi zaman dirshan,  
Tamkar fittila a lokon alkuki.*

Allah, we sat down for long,  
Just like a lamp in a hole (of a room).

The poet describes the future of the socio-political situation as uncertain, thus people came out and sat for a long-time demanding change. The poet then supplicates to Allah, saying that "we sat for a long time, like lamp in its permanent hole in a room", perhaps suffering or anticipating for change. The situation resembles the Arab Spring, when Egyptians took to the streets, protested for a long period time at Tahrir Square, demanding for the then president, late Hosni

Mubarak, to leave the office. Then he goes on to explain the reasons of the supplication:

<i>Allah Ka san kukana,</i>	Allah, you know my pain,
<i>Ka san hujjar zubar da hawayena.</i>	You know why I am shedding tears.
<i>Yau bauta ce ta canza,</i>	Today slavery has taken a new form,
<i>Ta dauko salo da tsari mummuna.</i>	It has taken a new bad style and shape.
<i>Mun bar mulkin mallaka,</i>	We are far from colonialism,
<i>Kama-karya a yau shi muka dora.</i>	But dictatorship replaces it.

Here the poet laments and agonises over the manner people are treated by the current type of leadership. He says that the whole thing looks like slavery. The leaders are ruling with an iron fist, like dictators.

The refrain somehow consoles the poet and makes him stop crying because God hears His servants in a time of difficulties and will intervene if He pleases:

<i>Sauyin sauyi muke so,</i>	Real change we demand,
<i>Sassaucin tausayawa.</i>	Compassionate change.
<i>ALA mai fadakarwa,</i>	ALA one who enlightens,
<i>Daina kukan kokawa,</i>	You should stop crying,
<i>Allah ne ke sakawa,</i>	It is Allah who cause (things to happen),
<i>Sannan she ke cirewa,</i>	And He removes,
<i>In ya so zai canjawa,</i>	If He wants, He changes (things),
<i>Ba mai ikon hanawa,</i>	Nobody stops (Him),
<i>Sauyin sauyi muke sowa,</i>	What we need is real change,
<i>Sassaucin tausayawa.</i>	Compassionate change.

It is argued that the politicians and the leaders in Northern Nigeria have not done enough or even have done nothing at all towards uplifting the educational and economic status of the community. The majority are unemployed, and remain in abject poverty. The literacy level is low. The poet rightly captures this and laments over it:

<i>Dole in koka da tsiwa,</i>	I must cry with all force,
<i>Dubi kasar nan Arewa,</i>	Look at this region North,
<i>Ba ilimi talakawa,</i>	People are illiterate,
<i>Ba mu da aikin tabawa,</i>	No work to do,
<i>Mun zama jujin zubawa,</i>	We are like heap of dump,
<i>Tarkace tarkatawa.</i>	Useless heap of dump.

In the traditional Hausa set-up the poets, especially those presenting their poetry orally, are largely non-literate, they hardly have the courage to criticise an estab-

lished authority: traditional, military or modern (democratic). The authority is praised to earn the worldly gain but is not criticised in order to correct any wrongdoing. On the contrary, the modern contemporary Hausa poets, such as the poet under discussion, do openly criticise the government. This can be ascribed to the freedom of expression, enshrined in the Nigerian constitution. But that notwithstanding, poets, filmmakers, and novelists are subject to censorship in some Northern Nigerian states. For instance, in the years 2003-2011 the Kano State government under Ibrahim Shekarau banned some artists from performing in the state. Along the same line, Olatunji (1979: 198) describes the Yoruba poets who are now not seen, unless in the hands of the aristocrats, advertisers of government programmes, and those who valorise the status quo. They now come out boldly and criticise the government policies, the politicians, and their unpopular programmes.

The next issue criticised in this poem is how the politicians drug and arm the youth in order to push them into all sorts of crimes:

<i>Suke tarkata yaranmu,</i>	They gathered our youth,
<i>Da makamai suna ta saran junansu,</i>	With weapons wounding each other,
<i>In da alamar adalci,</i>	If there is justice,
<i>To me zai hana su caku da 'ya'yansu.</i>	Why don't they involved their sons.
<i>Kayan maye suka ba su,</i>	They are given drugs,
<i>Su hau gidan mutum su fada shi da sara,</i>	They climb houses and start hurting people,
<i>Kudin abinci ake ba ku,</i>	They are giving chicken feed,
<i>An maishe ku sai ka ce dabbar kiwo.</i>	As if they are fattening animals.

Vendetta and thuggery are common in our politics. The youth as thugs are engaged to attack and hurt the political opponents. This is common during the campaigns and elections and leads to rigging the elections. The thugs, armed with dangerous weapons by the politicians, come and disrupt the election process.

After the election, the young men, drugged and armed, turn into something different. They become a menace to the society and the system. They become hooligans and beggars, going from one office holder to another looking for money, instead of engaging in businesses. The poet goes on to describe the situation after the election:

<i>Mun dore da tumasanci,</i>	We remain as slanders,
<i>Ma bara ta muke a hannun jagora.</i>	We are beggars at the hands of the rulers.

This form of life portrayed by the poet in the above stanza leads to abject poverty and want. The severity of poverty, according to the poet, is harder than being bitten by a stick:

<i>Yanzu kuwa gadonmu talauci,</i>	Now what we inherited is poverty,
<i>Ai kudarsa ta fi dukan ka da gora.</i>	Its hardship is more than being bitten by a stick.
<i>Talauci shi muka gadowa,</i>	Poverty is what we inherited,
<i>Jahilci kuwa ya zamanto rigarmu.</i>	And illiteracy has become (like) our garment.

Comments by the economic experts on the level of poverty and illiteracy in Northern Nigeria need not be cited here. This, by implication, is caused by the lackadaisical attitudes of the politicians towards moving the region forward to socio-economic development, as portrayed by the poet.

The artificial poverty created by bad politics and bad leadership turns the masses into scavengers and beggars in the midst of plenty. The poet thus laments that the rulers splash out money and the masses struggle to collect it. In the process of the struggle some suffer from injuries:

<i>Kudi a dumtse su a watsa,</i>	They splash out money,
<i>Ku bi kuna ta wawaso har ku ji ciwo.</i>	You followed struggling and got wounded.

The poet frowns at the shameless habit and character of the politicians. After ruining the economy and the society, at the end of their tenure they shamelessly come back to the voters seeking for re-election. They use various forms of deceit:

<i>Sannan ba sa alkunya,</i>	Besides, they are shameless,
<i>Daga an doka tamburan nan na siyasa,</i>	Once the drums of politics are bitten,
<i>Kunya ba tsoron Allah,</i>	Shamelessly without fear of Allah,
<i>Su iyo oda ta atamfar nan sosa,</i>	They order for sosa material,
<i>Su mammanna gumakansu,</i>	They printed their pictures,
<i>Su rarraba a mu dauke su mu daura.</i>	They share for us and we wear.

This sort of deceit is common in our politics. The politicians order food items, detergents, or clothing materials such as sosa brand of women's wrapper. They distribute them house by house during the campaign. And when they are doing this, they still make other juicy promises and commit themselves to correct any wrongdoing perpetrated during the last tenure. They ask for forgiveness and promise better future. This poem captures this well.

Pragmatically, one can notice the relationship of this text to the audience through the messages put across to the Northern Nigerians. It is about politics, about awareness and enlightenment. And it enlightens.

To turn our attention to the mimetic nature of the poem, we can say that whatever is in the poem has a direct or indirect bearing to the situation of politics and leadership in Northern Nigeria. The poet describes critically his world – Northern Nigeria – and thus represents it by the political scenarios to his audience. The poet is able to portray the actual or fictitious political scenarios of his society. This portrayal of the poet's cultural world is best explained in terms of what Abrams refers to as mimetic theory. The poets represent experiences they acquired in their cultural world.

ALA demonstrates how Northern Nigerian politicians manoeuvre their way to get elected into political offices and manage or mismanage the offices. The poet reveals the negative attitude of the system of governance in which the politicians' inaction brought negative consequences to the Northern Nigerian society. In so doing, ALA acts in line with Levi's (1976: 48) view on the role of literature and the critics: Poetry may have many subsidiary "functions": to speak the truth, to persuade us to change the social order, to urge upon us the poet's individual sense of life.

#### 4. Conclusion

The contemporary Hausa poets, unlike the traditional ones – Hausa oral poets – engage in politics to critique their society. They lament, lampoon, and at times praise the incumbent government when things go contrary to what they expected. Aminu Ladan Abubakar laments the political situation in Northern Nigeria in this poem titled *Baubawan burmi, kasasabarmu ce kan zaɓar jagora*. ALA is telling the Northern Nigerians in particular, and the Nigerians in general, that we should blame ourselves for the wrong choice. The poem laments the leadership situation, the state, and the condition of the subjects. The poet aspires to achieve the change of the status quo and hopes that the common man realises his mistakes and will act differently in the future. We have also seen how the form and style of the poem conform well with the type of Hausa contemporary, modern form of poetry which mixes composition with modern musical instruments, contrary to the borrowed Arabic verse which is only sung without any musical accompaniment.

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