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Chapter 10

Toward a Metrical Analysis of Hausa Verse Prosody: Mutadaarik*

Russell G. Schuh

Most Hausa written poetry is composed in meters which derive, historically at least, from Classical Arabic models. Hausa adapts very well to the Arabic prosodic system since that system is quantitative, utilizing combinations of "long" syllables (CVC or CVV, marked by a macron (-) here) and "short" syllables (CV, marked by a breve (v) here), and these are exactly the syllable types found in Hausa. In the traditional analysis of the 8th century prosodist al-Kalil ibn Ahaad, the Arabic system comprises 16 meters, organized into 5 "circles". The individual meters are recognized as linear sequences of 3 or 4 "feet", where each foot contains a "peg" and one or two "cords". Pegs are iambic (v -) or trochaic (- v); cords are always underlyingly -. In (1) are the underlying forms of meters for Circles II, III, and V, most of which have been fairly popular among Hausa poets; the peg of each foot is boxed. See Weil (1960) and Maling (1973) for fairly complete summaries of this system in English:

(1) Some Classical Arabic meters

Circle II	WAAFIR:	$\boxed{v-}$ vv - / $\boxed{v-}$ vv - / $\boxed{v-}$ vv -
	KAAMIL:	vv - $\boxed{v-}$ / vv - $\boxed{v-}$ / vv - $\boxed{v-}$
Circle III	HAZAJ:	$\boxed{v-}$ - - / $\boxed{v-}$ - - / $\boxed{v-}$ - -
	RAJAZ:	- - $\boxed{v-}$ / - - $\boxed{v-}$ / - - $\boxed{v-}$
	RANAL:	- $\boxed{v-}$ - / - $\boxed{v-}$ - / - $\boxed{v-}$ -
Circle V	MUTAQAARIB:	$\boxed{v-}$ - / $\boxed{v-}$ - / $\boxed{v-}$ - / $\boxed{v-}$ -
	MUTADAARIK:	- $\boxed{v-}$ / - $\boxed{v-}$ / - $\boxed{v-}$ / - $\boxed{v-}$

The underlying forms in (1) may undergo modification through a complex system of "correspondence rules". For our purposes, we may summarize this system as the two correspondence rules in (2), limited by the absolute restrictions in (3); (3c) is actually a restriction on how the final syllable of a line may be scanned, since either long or short syllables may occur in this position in any meter, but they are always scanned as long.

(2) Correspondence Rules

- a. Cord Shortening: /-/ ---> v, where /-/ is a cord
 b. Peg Shortening: $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} /- v/ \\ /v -/ \end{array} \right\} \text{---> } -$, where /- v/, /v -/ are pegs

(3) Impossible sequences in Arabic meters

- a. *v v v v
 b. * - - -
 c. *v # (# = end of a line)

This system works fairly well as a framework for describing the meters of many written Hausa poems. Nevertheless, few Hausa poets have any knowledge of the system per se, and they depart from it in many ways (see Schuh (1988) for some discussion). In this paper, I will argue that true insights into Hausa prosody will come only from looking at the practice of Hausa poets. I will use the framework of metrical phonology as applied to prosodic systems in recent work such as Prince (1984) and Kiparsky (1977).

I will discuss only one meter here, the Circle V meter MUTADAARIK. Meters which arguably derive from this meter are fairly popular among Hausa poets. From (1), we would predict that at least some Hausa poems in this meter would have lines comprising feet of the type /- v -/. However, no Hausa poem whose meter might be traced historically to Arabic MUTADAARIK takes this form.¹ The most common realizations of Hausa MUTADAARIK are those in (4). To facilitate comparison with the Classical Arabic meter, I have included foot

boundaries; I will argue below they should be elsewhere (- = long syllable, v = short syllable, v = long or short, vv = two shorts or a long):

(4) Versions of MUTADAARIK found in Hausa

- a. v v - / vv - / vv - / vv -
 b. v v - / vv - / vv - / v -

The verse in (5) exemplifies (4a), that in (6) exemplifies (4b):

(5) Abubakar Ladan, "Waƙar Haƙa Kan Al'ummar Afirka" (cf. 4a)

- - / v v - / - - / - -
 a. Sun bin-ci-ka sir-rin koo-gin-mu,
 v v - / v v - / v v - / - -
 b. Da a-bin da ka boo-ye a daa-zun-mu,
 v v - / v v - / v v - / - -
 c. Da wa-fan-da ka bis-ne du-waa-tsun-mu,
 - - / v v - / v v v v / - -
 d. Can Ras su-ka gaa-ne ma-'a-di -naa-mu,
 v v - / v v - / - - / - -
 e. Ha-ka sun na-za-rin dab-boo-bin-mu.

'They investigated the secrets of our rivers,
 And what was hidden in our forests,
 And what was buried in our mountains,
 There in the ground they recognized our resources,
 Likewise they studied our animals.'

(6) Garba Ebaidi, "Waƙar Ci Uku" (cf. 4b)

- - / v v - / - - / v -
 3. a. Mun goo-de Ta-'aa-laa Waa-hi-dun,
 - v - / v v - / - - / v -
 b. Baa ka -mar ta-sa faa-din duu-ni-yaa.
 v v - / v v - / - - / v -
 4. a. Da-ŋa yaa yi wa-taa, raa-naa du-ka,
 - - / - - / - - / v -
 b. Shii yai-woo has-ken saa-fi-yaa.

3. 'We thank the Most High, the Unique,
There is none like him throughout the world.
4. 'Indeed he made the moon, the sun, all,
He it was who made the light of morning.'

These lines reveal that Hausa MUTADAARIK deviates in a number of ways from the Arabic congener. First, Hausa allows violations of both (3a) and (3b): long sequences of -'s are common in both Hausa versions of MUTADAARIK; sequences of 4 or more v's are not common, but they are not ruled out as line (5d) shows. Second, though the final foot in type (4b) could be accounted for by simultaneous Peg and Cord Shortening, Arabic practice never permits this, at least in MUTADAARIK. Thus, the final /v -/ foot in this meter must be a Hausa innovation, a fact noted by Hiskett (1975:177).

But the most interesting issue raised by Hausa MUTADAARIK is the fact that it has only two primary foot shapes, /vv -/ and /- -/ (with a third type /v -/ as the line final foot of type (4b) only). We are thus led to ask why (following the Arabic system) /- v -/ should be taken as the underlying foot shape at all, inasmuch as this foot type never appears on the surface after the first foot. Even in the first foot, many poems, such as the one illustrated in (5), allow only /vv -/; moreover, in those that do allow /- v -/ as variant in the first foot (cf. (6), line 3b), the first - is always performed v, at least in recordings of performed versions at my disposal, suggesting that the first syllable should always be scanned as v, regardless of linguistic length.

To take /- v -/ as underlying would require that every foot in every poem undergo either Cord Shortening, giving /v v -/, or Peg Shortening, giving /- -/. Moreover, these rules would be mutually exclusive for any foot except the final foot of type (4b), where they would systematically both have to

apply. Such an account would be ludicrous based on meter internal evidence from Hausa practice; indeed, the only reason for even proposing this account would be to allow us to describe this meter within an overall framework originally designed for Classical Arabic poetry, not 19th and 20th Century Hausa poetry.

Let us now examine Hausa MUTADAARIK in the light of recent work in metrical phonology. This theory views a line of poetry in terms of a series of alternating "weak" (W) and "strong" (S) "Metrical Positions" (MP). Within a line, these MP's are organized into "Feet" and the Feet into "Metrons". Consider first the analysis of a line of Hausa MUTADAARIK as a series of MP's. The schema in (7) is applied to type (4a); (4b) is identical except that it allows only v at the last W:

(7) MP: W S W S W S W S
 | | | | | | | |
 vv - vv - vv - vv -

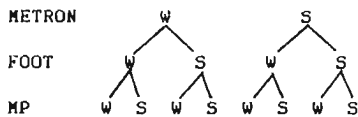
Note that this analysis does away entirely with the peg/cord distinction of the Arabic system. Indeed, in /vv -/ feet, the two short syllables are grouped as belonging to one MP, whereas in the Arabic system, the grouping would be /v v-/, the second short belonging to the peg. Grouping vv into a single MP, which can also be filled by -, is supported by both written and traditional oral Hausa poetic practice, where there is a virtual equivalence vv = -, an equivalence which does not hold, for the most part, in Arabic prosody (cf. Hiskett (1975:176-179), who notes the substitutability of vv for - by Hausa poets in a number of otherwise classical Arabic meters).

Some justification is in order for the choice of W and S MP's in (7) rather than the opposite choice. First is the virtual invariability of the S positions as -; feet like the 3rd foot in (5d), where the 2nd MP is vv rather than -, are quite rare, whereas nearly every line of a poem will realize one or more of the W's as vv. Since, more or less by definition, the S positions

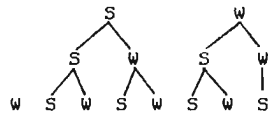
will be those that establish the rhythm of a meter, we expect these positions to be filled by syllables bearing inherent "weight". Second, in type (4b) the penultimate position is always *v*, and it seems self-evident that a single *v* would always be *W* compared to -. In order to maintain the independently justified approach to prosodic systems that utilizes alternating *W* and *S* MP's and in order to treat (4a) and (4b) as variants of a single meter, we require the labelling in (7). Finally, in the first MP, some variants of MUTADAARIK allow a single *v*, and one oral version (see (11) below) allows this position to be empty, all factors indicating the weakness of this MP.

Turning to the organization of MP's into feet, the line as presented in (7) is ambiguous. In the spirit of the Arabic scansion, which has been implicitly assumed so far, the meter has been taken to be like that in (8a), i.e. anapestic, or more correctly, "rising", since the *W* MP's can be filled by *vv* (giving anapestic feet) or by - or *v* (giving iambic feet). However, organization into a "falling" meter (with dactylic feet where *W* = *vv* or trochaic feet where *W* = - or *v*), as in (8b), is also possible. This requires that the initial *W* be extrametrical and that the final foot be truncated, leaving just the *S*, but both of these variations have precedents in falling meters of other prosodic systems. In the trees in (8) I have added not only the Foot level, but also the Metron level. I have also incorporated Prince's (1984) "Principle of Uniformity", by which a single pattern of *S*-*W* relations holds at each level of structure, i.e. *S* is always on the right branch or always on the left branch.

(8) a. Rising scansion



b. Falling scansion



Although the rising scansion of (8a) is more symmetrical than (8b) and does parallel the Arabic analysis, the preponderance of evidence supports the falling scansion in (8b). First, note that under the Principle of Uniformity, the strongest positions in (8a) are at the end of the line, whereas in (8b) they are early in the line. (Strength of a position is computed by following the path of *S*'s and *W*'s from the Metron through the Foot to the MP; the more *W*'s encountered, the weaker the position at that level of structure.) Assuming that the penultimate *v* of type (4b) signals an inherently weak MP and that truncation of an MP in a foot signals weakness of that foot, then the scansion of (8b) is supported by the fact that the final foot is the weakest and the weak penultimate MP is in the weak Metron. Data from performance cited below furthermore suggests that the stronger Metron is the first one.

Variations on the common types in (4a, b) give further support to the falling scansion of (8b). I have found one poem which scans as in (9a) and is illustrated in (10a). This meter must be a variant of the more typical MUTADAARIK types in (4a, b) inasmuch as their scansions are practically identical; (9a) simply has one fewer MP. Scanned as a Rising meter (9b), it would require us to truncate the *S* position from the final foot. As far as I know, such truncation in rising meters is universally disallowed. Scanned as a Falling meter (9c), this problem does not arise.

(9) a. *vv* - *vv* - *vv* - -b. Scanned as Rising meter: *W* *S* / *W* *S* / *W* *S* / *W*c. Scanned as Falling meter: *W* / *S* *W* / *S* *W* / *S* *W*

(10) Abubakar Ladan, "Allah Bai Kai Nasa Ja Ba" (verse 8)

v v / - *v v* / - - / - -

a. Ha-du -waa na ba -Raa-Ren faa-taa,

v v / - - / - *v v* / - -

b. Da du -kan duu-n(1)yaa ku-ka jii ta,

- / - - / - v v / - -
 c. Taa-roo nee baa-bu ka -mar-ta,
 v v / - - / - v v / - -
 d. Za-ma -nin yau har da na baa-ya.

'A gathering of black people,
 And the entire world you have heard it,
 A meeting which has had no equal,
 In modern times and even in the past.'

Somewhat troublesome in the falling meter proposal is the line initial extrametrical MP. Why should all poems in Hausa MUTADAARIK require the presence of this MP which is not, properly speaking, part of the meter? One would predict that there should be variants without it or that it should be optional. I have not found any written poems of types (4a, b) that lack this MP. However, in looking at oral Hausa song, I have found some examples of meter (4b) where the initial W is indeed optional, as in lines (11b-d) below. Note that in written poetry, the line initial variations allowed in (11), which include several others not illustrated here, would tend to obscure the meter. However, in performance with instrumental accompaniment (in the case of (11), a one-stringed, plucked *kwantigi*), the accompaniment maintains the meter, giving the performer/composer freedom in where to begin the text while not losing the rhythm of the meter.

(11) Dan Maraya Jaa, "Waƙar Auren Dole"

- / - v v / - - / - v / -
 a. In kun ma-ta au-ren soo ku -ma,
 - - / - v v / - v / -
 b. Kuu kwaa kwan a fa -rin ci -kii,
 - - / - v v / - v / -
 c. It-taa kwan a fa -rin ci -kii,
 - - / - v v / - v / -
 d. An-goo naa ta fa -rin ci -kii,

- v / - - / - v v / - v / -
 e. Har a zoo suu-naa da-da kun ji -yaa,
 v / - - / - v v / - v / -
 f. Ma -raa-ya mai mu-ku kwan-ti -gii.

'If you give her into a marriage of love,
 You you will sleep happily,
 She too will sleep happily,
 The groom will be happy,
 And people will even come to a naming ceremony, you hear,
 Maraya is the one who is playing the *kwantigi* for you.'

Though I have been concentrating on "written" poetry, this is something of a misnomer, since all Hausa poetry is composed with the intention that it be performed orally. In performance, poems such as those in (5, 6, 10) are sung *a capella*, but with a recognizable tune and, for most performers, a palpable rhythm. In Schuh (1988), I suggested that the rhythm of the performance *is* the meter. I would now modify that strong hypothesis to a weaker hypothesis that the meter of the performance must align with the meter of the text. I am not yet in a position to define with any rigor what I mean by "align with", but intuitively it must at least mean that strong rhythmic points in performance should fall at (relatively) strong MP's of the text.

With these rather vague background remarks, let us examine briefly the performance of one poem in MUTADAARIK. Example (12) is a verse from the poem in (5). For each line, I give the actual temporal length values for each syllable in "Performed rhythm"² and the linguistic length (long or short) in "Text scansion". Slashes in "Text scansion" separate feet according to the falling meter analysis of (8b), and a double slash shows the metron boundary. Alhaji Abubakar performs most syllables in direct conformity to linguistic length, i.e. he sings short syllables with exactly half the temporal value of long syllables. However, certain long syllables are given extra length,

notated by -- or -v not separated by a space. Note that these syllables are always in S positions and moreover that they are always in the first metron, i.e. the strong metron by the analysis in (8b). It is not always the S of the strongest foot (the first foot of the line) which has extra performed length, but following my suggestion above, performers have some freedom as long as there is a basic alignment of performance "strength" with text "strength"; what we would not expect and what I have not found in any examples of in performances which I have studied, is a clash whereby performance strength (as indicated by extra performed length) falls at a W MP and/or in the W metron. In the performance illustrated in (12), the effect is a "decreasing" across each line, conforming to the falling S ---> W configuration at the metron level of (8b). There is, then, a significant sense in which this is a "falling" meter not only at the foot level, but also at the line level.

(12) Abubakar Laden, "WaKar Ha'da Kan Al'ummar Afirka" (verse 1) (cf. 5)

Performed rhythm: - - - - v v - - -

Text scansion: - / - - / - v v // - - / -

a. Tuu-raa-waa sun ga A -fir-kan-mu,

Performed rhythm: v v - - - v v - - -

Text scansion: v v / - - / - v v // - - / -

b. A ma -far-kii har su-ka nee-nee mu,

Performed rhythm: v v - - - v v - - -

Text scansion: v v / - - / - v v // - - / -

c. A ya -Rii-nii yau su-ka saa-nee mu,

Performed rhythm: - -v - -v v v - - -

Text scansion: - / - - / - v v // - - / -

d. Doo-min him-maa da ya -wan il-muu,

Performed rhythm: v v - v v - - - - -

Text scansion: v v / - v v / - - // - - / -

e. Su-ka saa-du da saa-bab -bin Kau-mu.

'The Europeans saw our Africa

In a dream and then sought us out,

For certain today they have found us,

Because of effort and great learning,

They have met with new nations.'

The meter(s) which I have discussed so far could, in principle, trace their origin to the classical Arabic system. There is another meter which has no Arabic counterpart but which shares an interesting relationship to MUTADAA-RIK. I refer to this meter as "Anti-MUTADAAARIK". Its scansion is as in (13):

(13) "Anti-MUTADAAARIK"

S	W		S	W		S	W		S	W
-	vv	/	-	vv	/	-	vv	/	-	-

Comparing (13) to (7), we see that the respective positions of S and W are exactly the reverse of those for MUTADAAARIK. This is not a traditional Arabic meter nor can it be derived from one by traditional rules. Indeed of the seven examples I have found, I can trace all but one to a single oral source.³ An example of Anti-MUTADAAARIK is given in (14) and its acknowledged oral model in (15):

(14) Arilu Aliyu, "'Yar Gagara" (verses 10-11)

- - / - v v / - v v / - -
10. Mai Kar-yar da-ra -jee da mu -Kaa-mii,

- - / - v v / - - / - -
Kan taa sau-ka a baa-Ron bir-nii.

- v v / - v v / - - / - -
11. Sai ka ji taa ra-da saa-bon suu-naa,

- - / - v v / - - / - -
Baa kun-yaa ba ta -kee 'yar kaa-shii.

10. 'She who lies about rank and station,

When she alights in a strange town.

11. 'Then you hear her come up with a new name,

She has no shame, the filthy wench.'

(15) Mamma Shata, "Mata Ku Yi Aure" (refrain)

- - / - v v / - - / - -
 Don sal-laa da Sa -laa-til Faa(-tih), A

- - / - - / - v v / - -
 don Al-lah maa-taa ku yi au-ree!

'For the sake of (the five daily) prayers and the profession of faith,
 Ah, for the sake of Allah, women, get married!'

Anti-MUTADAARIK is known to have its origin in traditional Hausa song, whereas we have been assuming (quite possibly wrongly!) that Hausa MUTADAARIK has Arabic origins. Thus, one could simply say that they belong to coexisting prosodic systems which do not necessarily have anything to do with each other. However, the analysis of Hausa MUTADAARIK which I have presented here gives us a natural way to incorporate Anti-MUTADAARIK into a broader framework of Hausa prosody, viz. Anti-MUTADAARIK is simply a falling tetrameter, just as are (4a, b) by my analysis in (8b), but without the initial extrametrical W and with a non-truncated final foot. It is thus the native Hausa meter, Anti-MUTADAARIK, which has the canonical structure to which we have been relating MUTADAARIK!

We have seen a variety of meters, all of which scanned as falling trimeters or tetrameters. They can be related quite simply in terms of (a) presence or absence of a line initial extrametrical W, (b) truncation or non-truncation of a line final W, and (c) realization of the weakest non-truncated W as v in the case of type (4b). By looking at the prosodic system in terms of metrical phonology, we were led to insights and predictions not available in a system which looks at lines of poetry as linear concatenation of feet of a particular type. In particular the notion Metrical Positions (MP) alternating S and W makes predictions about how certain positions in a line may be realized rather than about syllables per se, since a given MP may be realized by more than one syllabic configuration. As we saw in the discussion of the

Arabic system applied to Hausa, it was an analysis based on syllables and syllable configurations which led to a singularly un insightful analysis. Second, the organization of a line into a hierarchical structure, combined with the Principle of Uniformity, gives a principled way of talking about relative strength of Feet and Metrons (= half-lines in the meters examined here), concepts which would at best be ad hoc accretions in a strictly linear, concatenative system. This hierarchical structure in turn gave principled ways of deciding on falling vs. rising meter and of making predictions about how a meter would be performed. Finally, the notion of "extrametricality", directly derivable from the hierarchical organization of MP's into Feet and Feet into Metrons, provides a principled explanation for the considerable variation, including complete absence, noted in line initial MP's in these meters.

NOTES

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¹There are a few poems using this foot type, but they all derive directly from traditional Hausa oral models, not from Arabic. As an example, compare (i), which is a line from Adamu Jingau's "Gargadi B", with a line from its acknowledged oral model (ii), which is from Sarkin Taushin Katsina's "WaRar Indefenda":

(i) - / - v - / - v - / - v -
 Man-zoo U-ban Faa-di-maa Ah-ma-du 'Messenger, Father of Fad'ima,
 the Most Laudable'

(ii) - / - v - / - v - / - v -
 Bab-bar Ra-sar Shee-hu dan Foo-di-yoo 'Great land of Shehu son of Fodiyo'

²In Schuh (1988) and in unpublished work, I have ascribed Western-type musical meters to performance, e.g. 4/4, 6/8, etc. For our purposes it is sufficient to look at just the performed lengths of individual syllables without concern for where musical bar lines should be or for other aspects of performance such as pitch.

³The one example where I do not know of an oral source, though one may well exist, is in Hiskett (1975:253); Hiskett suggests that this is MUTADAARIK, but there is no way that the scansion in (13) could derive from either Arabic or Hausa MUTADAARIK as it is normally realized.

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