Yoruba Adagba or Hausa Riga depending on cut, Nigeria, Handspun and imported cotton
Early 20th century
h. 91 inches, w. 41 inches

*Sanyan* is natural beige wild silk spun from the cocoons of moths of the *Anaphe* family

Left: *covered gourd*, Yoruba, Oyo, before 1951. American Museum of Natural History, Washington DC, 90.1/9666 AB

*Adiré* alábáré, Yoruba, Nigeria, 20th century. Two alternating patterns on resist-dyed indigo cotton, 70.5" x 65.5”.

Wise men’s knot,
Carved calabash, Yoruba, Oyo State.

Malam Sa’adu, Qu’ranic Board (*alo*), Hausa culture, Zaria, Nigeria, 1970. Wood, ink, 50 x 20.5 cm. British museum, Af2000,13.1

“zayyana” (beautiful)
The Hausa are a Chadic speaking group in Northern Nigeria and Southern Niger. They established fortified kingdoms, such as Kano, Zaria, and Katsina. They have long traded with the kingdom of Bornu and the Songhai Empire. They adopted Islam as the religion of the royal courts largely due to their involvement with Mande traders in the 15th century. One does find some non-Muslim Hausa populations in Bauchi and the Jos plateau (8-9 on map).

In the early 18th century, the Hausa were conquered by Fulani leader Ousman dan Fodio and the Fulani and Hausa histories have been intertwined ever since. Fulani emirs replaced Hausa kings and purchased regalia and specialized goods from Hausa artists. This Hausa/Fulani group eventually formed the Sokoto Caliphate, the largest political entity in the Western and Central Sudanic regions of Africa.
Gourd in Hausa Proverbs:

“The bitter gourd jibes at the mahogany tree (the pot calls the kettle black)”

“Where the gourd is found, there it is scooped (wherever you meet him, he will be ready to oblige you).”

“Like a loaned calabash, whoever breaks you must mend you. (you are the apple of my eye).”

“A gourd cup isn’t a seed.” People can be molded/trained in various professions, whether or not it is in their family background.”

“The matter is covered by a gourd” (it is a mystery)

Gourd as metaphor for the cosmos:

The Hausa associate the lidded gourd with the landscape. The lid = the sky, the bowl = the earth, and the line in between = horizon (Parrinder 1967: 42).

Hausa vessel, 1990s, popular amongst Fulani clients. 17” diameter. Collection Abu Nasara.

Zaure Façade, Zaria, Nigeria, Adobe.
Examples of Hausa vessels, Fowler Museum, Los Angeles.

- Gauging
- White calabash

Hausa dagger blade - aska

Calabash vessel with reddish stain, Hausa, Kano, Nigeria. Common part of bride payment for Fulani women.
- Pyro-engraving
- Mystic Squares

Calabash vessel, Hausa, Nigeria, 1980s. Private Collection.

Sani pyro-engraving a Hausa gourd vessel with the tip of knife, Kano, Nigeria (photo: Judith Perani). The knife is heated in a ceramic kiln. Shading can be added by positioning the knife at a certain angle. Sometimes hatching is added to provide texture.

Sani, calabash vessel, Hausa, Kode village, Kano, Nigeria.

Amadou, calabash vessel, Hausa, Kode village, Kano, Nigeria.

Musa, calabash vessel, Hausa, Kode village, Kano, Nigeria.

Innovations in Design
Fulani artist, Nigeria, Milk Vessel, early 20th century, Gourd, pigment, 33.3cm x 36.2cm. Fowler Museum at UCLA, gift of Barbara Rubin-Hudson, X83.785 (Photo: Don Cole).

Heirloom calabash vessels put on display at new camp, Fulani Pastoralists (Wodaabe), Niger, 1989 (Photo: Véronique Scott). Musée du Quai Branly, PF0175995.
Yaguna
“little blossom cheeks”

Buli-tattoos from forehead to nose

Legbule-tattoos on corner of mouth

Maizane – Hausa tattoo artist and ritual specialist

Pulaaku – self mastery
a) Shell of a tortoise, usually left blank
b) Muslim Prayer Board (allo)

c) Beans on a board
d) Bows
e) House lizard
f) Man of small stature
g) Bulli
h) Yaguna
i) Akolo ("tears" on either side of eyes)

Designed for more hidden regions of the body – arms and chest
Peul Woman pouring milk in calabash, Burkina Faso, *Fulani Art and Life*, 2014 (Film: Chris Roy).
Settled Fulani: Pokerwork preference
Complex staining and resist-dye strategies
A little more freedom with spatial layout
Pagubsa on Diterra Hill

Gubo (pl. gubsa)—leader/priest, pagubsa serve underneath him

Wiiso (Anthropomorphic Spirit Vessels)
Nigeria, Gongola Valley, Diterra site
Group: Yungur (Adamawa language group)
19th-20th century
Blackened terra cotta
H.: 58 cm
Barbier Mueller Collection, Geneva.

• Shrines are constructed for the wiiso of male members of special lineages, chiefs, qubsa, and male members of ruling lineages.

• There is also a shrine for skulls of exhumed gubsa and a shrine for the ritual artifacts brought over from the homeland of the Yungur, a hill to the North called Mukan.
Yungur, Gongola Valley, Calabash Vessel

Yungur, Gongola Valley, diviner with plain calabash vessel
That he taps as a musical instrument
Hleeta – completed in six stages, starting at the age of 5