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International African Institute

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Author(s): Murray Last

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 70, No. 3 (2000), pp. 359-393

Published by: [Cambridge University Press](#) on behalf of the [International African Institute](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1161066>

Accessed: 02/08/2012 06:19

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CHILDREN AND THE EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE: CONTRASTING CULTURES OF PUNISHMENT IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

Murray Last

When, in 1992, the Norwegian Centre for Child Research held an interdisciplinary conference on 'children at risk', a central issue was how to identify which children within a community might be 'at risk'. In discussions, however, it emerged that an equally central problem was identifying which communities or cultures put their children 'at risk', and why (Stephens, 1995: 3–48). Hence the question: what, cross-culturally, constituted a 'risk'? Given both the movement for recognising governmentally the Rights of the Child and the campaign to eliminate from Europe all physical punishment of children whether at home or at school, 'physical punishment' (along with 'child labour') was a conveniently current theme to use as shorthand for a range of issues when discussing the risks and dangers to which children are exposed in various societies. Among these issues was the further question of how societies outside Europe and north America view physical punishment and the broader risks, personal and social, entailed in its use (or non-use). The problem was not whether 'all children should (or should never) be beaten', but why it was that some communities tolerate its (occasional) use as an ultimate sanction while others find all physical punishment of children wholly unacceptable. There is, of course, a third category of people who consider severe physical punishment essential to the upbringing of children (or did so in the past; cf. Greven, 1991); here it seems there was a consensus that in this case punishment was liable to be excessive and that children might indeed be classified as 'at risk'.

This article was originally conceived as part of these debates, since it offers an example, from outside industrialised Euro-America, of how a single large society is split over whether or not to tolerate the physical punishment of children. It examines why there are two contrasting traditions of child rearing there and how, at a particular period in its recent history, one segment of this society tolerated the increased exposure of boys to physical violence at the hands of adults. This example has a wider resonance in the way it suggests that the beating of boys—or discipline through threats of physical pain—became associated with 'modernity', in particular with schooling, and, conversely, that the refusal to beat a child was associated with backward, 'bush' behaviour and with potentially undisciplined, 'wild' children; civilised, urbane (and in this case Muslim) children were brought up differently.

My hypothesis is that the difference in attitude to the beating of children is symptomatic of a much wider divergence—in attitudes to childhood, to violence, to the way the world is experienced and understood. The reluctance to adopt (or adapt to) new styles of child punishment can thus be seen in this case as part of people's wider doubts about the modern, urban-centred world and some of its ways. The fact that I will be discussing here a long-established Muslim culture means I will offer a perspective on discipline and punishment different from that given by Michel Foucault (1975) for a Europe that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was becoming organised for capitalist industrialisation.

Ethnographic discussion of physical punishment (or its absence) in Africa is surprisingly sparse. Even modern monographs that specifically focus on 'growing up', for example by anthropologists such as Christine Oppong (1973: 51), Marida Hollos and Philip Leis (1989: 87; the companion volume on Morocco, by Susan and Douglas Davis, 1989: 79, is no fuller), Simon Ottenberg (1989: 119), Ann Schlyter (1999: 89) or by educationalists such as Ngwobia Uka (1966: 65) or James Hake (1972: 40, 91; he does include beating in his questionnaire, however) mention it in one paragraph at most if at all. Nor is there any mention of it in a monograph like Suzette Heald's (1989) that focuses on an East African community (the Gisu) with a high level of social violence, including even parricide and filicide; near by, in East Africa, Sarah and Robert LeVine (1981: 41) tell of Gusii men beating wives and sons only when drunk (but cf. LeVine and LeVine, 1966: 193). A recent exception is Paul Riesman's study, published posthumously in 1992, of Fulbe childhood in northern Burkina Faso; though he reports witnessing no incident of beating, he does discuss at some length the practice and its implications for children (pp. 134–8). Similarly, Caroline Bledsoe's essay (1990: 70–88) on the value of hardship only implies that at the back of Mende foster-children's minds in Sierra Leone there is a real threat of beatings by adults as well as insults and other forms of maltreatment. Barrington Kaye's study of bringing up children in Ghana, for which significantly he is using a series of local studies by various students of the Institute of Education at Legon, is richer in detail than most, with (possibly first-hand) accounts of punishments other than beating (1962: 140–6). Of the specialist monographs of an earlier generation, such as those by Meyer Fortes ([1938] 1970: 228, 234), Otto Raum (1940: 225–31), Hamed Ammar (1954: 137–9, 209–11) and Margaret Read (1959: 43–4), only Ammar and Raum treated physical punishment as a significant topic, while other classic ethnographies such as those by Monica Hunter (1936: 164, or her Wilson 1951 study of the Nyakyusa, cf. 88, 138–9, 142, 152), S. F. Nadel (1942: ch. XXII) or Kenneth Little ([1951] 1967: ch. VI) are no more detailed than their modern equivalents. It was left to surveys first by Pierre Erny in 1972 and then by Sarah and Robert LeVine in 1981 briefly to draw conclusions from such references as they could find.

There are three possible reasons for this: first, that such punishments simply did not ever occur in the communities studied; or, second, that, if they did occur, such domestic violence (whether against children or indeed wives) was of no theoretical or empirical significance at the time—it was simply taken for granted by Western observers unless it was ritualised. Or, thirdly, that the researcher was simply never made aware of such punishments either because they occurred too rarely or because they were carried out precisely when he or she, as a visitor, would be absent. Whichever is the reason, such domestic violence is given little emphasis amid all the other details of daily life that have been put on record by ethnographers.

It has nonetheless been argued that, as a gross generalisation, in 'traditional' Africa adults did not commonly beat their own children, either in punishment or in anger (cf. Erny, 1972: 128–35; LeVine and LeVine, 1981: 37–8, 51).¹ Beatings did of course happen, but often it was other family members who did the beating; or else it was done ritually, as part of harsh rites of initiation into adulthood (La Fontaine, 1986: 98, 114; cf. Zahan, [1970] 1979: 112; Turnbull 1961: 203): the experience of pain or hurt was certainly not absent from childhood and adolescence. Tears (and attempts to suppress them) were not rare; bullying occurred. That the threat of physical violence from others (including step-parents) is ancient and seemed real enough is suggested too by the folk stereotypes and jokes that alluded to the characters most likely to abuse a child, and warned children to be on their guard (for Hausaland cf. Furniss, 1996: 56–69); I have heard women tell such terrifying tales, and listened to children worrying over them, at least for a while. Similarly with witches: there was much to scare a child with, the threatened violence being expressed in very physical terms.

Purely verbal violence—scolding and swearing at an erring child—is by contrast reportedly commonplace. Its aim is to cause maximum shame and to humiliate through scorn and through making others laugh at the victim's expense. The story could be retold, the phrases teasingly called out, by young and old alike. But the worst form of such verbal violence was a parent's curse, and it was not inflicted lightly. It was oral, not corporal, punishment, then, that promised lasting pain; no strength was needed to inflict it, and it was much harder to run away from.

Oral 'punishment' is considered within a wider study by Beatrice Whiting, Carolyn Edwards and their colleagues (1988) in which they

¹ There is a tendency, especially in the literature opposed to corporal punishment, to contrast stereotypically the great gentleness towards children among such 'primitive' cultures as the Australian Aborigines and the Kalahari Bushmen with the harshness of more 'civilised' societies. For example, in an early anthropological comparison of punishment worldwide by Sebald Rudolf Steinmetz in 1892 and 1898 (quoted by Durkheim, [1925] 1961: 184), only thirteen of the 104 societies surveyed inflicted corporal punishment on their children; and those thirteen had 'relatively advanced' cultures. In this context, twentieth-century observations have to be treated with caution in places where ideology and colonial practice have been influential. What actually happened in the domestic life of children in any part of, say, fourteenth-century sub-Saharan Africa is simply unknown.

compare the socialisation of children in rural Africa, India, South East Asia and the Americas. They are more concerned with 'reprimands' and 'negative control' than with an act as specific as beating; indeed, they make no mention of physical punishment occurring in the Kenyan cultures they studied. They postulate that 'pro-social training' is typical of African cultures, in contrast to the 'controlling' they found common in north India: that children in Africa are more often encouraged, by mothers and sisters alike, to behave in conformity with the social expectations of those around them whereas children in India are restrained, if necessary through threats of violence (especially for boys), from acting against adults' needs or demands. In his survey of the literature on Africa Pierre Erny had earlier come to a rather similar conclusion: an adult rarely beats his or her child. Instead, Erny suggests, it is elder children who control and socialise younger children, and punish them as they think fit—and such punishment can be violent (and merge into bullying). The exceptions are, firstly, Muslim society, in which physical punishment of children by adults antedates colonial rule; and, secondly, Christian schooling (whether mission- or state-run), which became *the* site for making the physical punishment of children culturally acceptable both in the colonial period and thereafter. Both Muslim and Christian schooling was (and still is) associated with social advancement as well as with a superior religious ethic; school practice gave beating a moral legitimacy it did not have before. Further legitimacy accrued to beating by virtue of it being a particularly European practice. In what is now Namibia the missionary Alfred Unterkötter as early as 1937 recorded the Bushman convert, Xkoougoa Xob, pointing out that it was from whites (who even beat adult Bushmen) that they learnt to beat their children (Westermann, 1938: 18). The same, however, could not be said of Muslim cultures of punishment, which of course stem historically from the same eastern Mediterranean traditions as do the cultures of Europe. Then, as now, the state's use of flogging as punishment in a number of institutions, Muslim or Christian, is surely as much a model for schoolmasters (*in loco parentis* though they are) as parental beating in the home.

It is really only in the autobiographies and (semi-)fictional accounts of African childhoods that something is conveyed of the violence or the threat of violence as it is (or was) experienced by children.² Given that such accounts are mostly the product of an educated elite, it is not surprising that their schooling has a central place in their experience of being beaten. In these recollections Muslim teachers are depicted as

² Most autobiographical accounts of childhood are by men, especially where schooling is described. The major exception is the account dictated to Mary Smith in 1949–50 by Baba, a Muslim Hausa woman who was a young child in the Kano-Zaria borderland in the 1890s before the British conquest (Smith, 1954 [1991]). She describes the fighting and beatings that young girls experienced, as well as the Qur'anic school that one husband of hers ran during the colonial period and the pre-trial prison beatings administered to suspects by another husband (pp. 47–8, 78, 131–4, 181–3).

notoriously hard on their pupils, albeit in the name of religion: children simply had to learn to obey (and fear) God; they simply had to internalise His word by memorising the Qur'an (e.g. Kane, [1961] 1972: 3–7; Sanneh, 1975: 168–86). But what children experienced was sometimes less than religious: abuse, physical and sexual, is very occasionally hinted at (e.g. Tafawa Balewa, 1934: 54, 58; Beita Yusuf, 1978). Memories of growing up in Christian schools are more mundane: here it is pranks that are punished by beatings, not failures of piety, and it is this-worldly morality and obedience that are backed up by threats of physical punishment (e.g. Nzioki, 1967: 112–18; Soyinka, 1981: 165–7); bullying by older boys was also a problem (e.g. Laye, 1954: 63–78). Not surprisingly, few autobiographers admit to being sexually abused as children or to seriously shaming experiences, let alone to bullying others; the few incidents of abuse I know were all recounted to me privately and hesitantly, yet at the same time were not thought to be particularly unusual.

There remains, however, the question whether the absence of ethnographic references to physical punishment also reflects the difficulty for an outsider of even setting eyes on 'children at risk'. The chronic invisibility of child abuse in Europe and America is now well recognised, despite the dispute over particular cases (La Fontaine, 1990). Could there be a similar invisibility elsewhere? Paradoxically, an underlying assumption has to be that it is often in apparently peaceable, well ordered communities that children can be particularly at risk because they are unseen and unheard. The very 'ordering' hides all but the most blatant disorder. To see an incident requires living behind the facade of order, to hear of it requires people to speak—more often about others than about themselves because there is so much shame involved. The field material on children and violence may have to be obtained using less conventional academic methods, and hypotheses may have to rely on evidence that is in parts more anecdotal than systematic.

With generalisations about a 'traditional Africa' so often being artefacts of our own not-knowing, we surely need now to ask more systematically whether beating has indeed extended back home from school, whether a new culture of punishment is developing even in deeply rural areas of Africa. We need to know, too, whether some communities have always, unknown to us, advocated the physical punishment of children by adults at home as a means of enforcing discipline, and why. Only then can there be both seriously informed discussions about 'children at risk' from this form of hurt in Africa and practical suggestions of what to do about them. This article lays out, then, not just a set of data about a particular part of Africa but suggests one, admittedly imperfect, way of acquiring and analysing information on a subject potentially very sensitive for both individuals and communities.

ON METHODS

A note first, then, on the methods and materials used here. The data on which this article is based were collected in Nigeria over the period 1961–99, starting from when I went as a full-time student to University College, Ibadan. The core evidence, however, comes from my two years living in a Maguzawa farmstead in southern Katsina (1970–72, with almost annual visits subsequently) and from a five-year collaborative project on youth health in urban Kano (1988–93; a second project is in progress, 1998–). During the nearly forty years of living in or visiting northern Nigeria I have always been a guest in the houses or flats of Nigerian friends (apart from two years when I had a household of my own) and have always been part of an academic department, either teaching or being taught. In this context I do not ‘interview’ my hosts or their children, I do not run a tape-recorder during supper or in class. Conversations are ‘off the record’, though I admit to a habit of making notes afterwards on points of particular interest. The formal research I have done on pre-colonial history, on Islamic scholarship, on health, agriculture and related matters has been systematic, but much of the material in this article has *not* arisen from a similarly focused research project on, say, ‘children and violence’. The areas where I have worked range from Sokoto to Adamawa, from Katsina to Nupe, from strictly Muslim quarters in the old cities of Sokoto, Kano and Zaria to a deeply rural ‘pagan’ farmstead, a pastoral Fulani camp and a sectarian commune. The range has been deliberately wide, in an attempt to understand in some depth the diversity within a complex society like that of northern Nigeria.

I would defend the value of the material offered here against any claim that short-term, interview-oriented research by visiting scholars was the only form of valid data-gathering. Indeed, my experience as the editor of this journal suggests that what is sometimes to be published as a (translated) quotation from an interview is not always the sure evidence it purports to be. This article, then, is offered as a synthesis, at a time when not only is long-term, first-hand field research becoming more rare but when fewer young foreigners, as I was, enjoy the privilege of being a full-time student or teacher in a Nigerian university as well as being a frequent guest in the homes of Nigerians. The understanding gained this way, however, has nonetheless an academic value, I suggest, to put alongside the evidence more conventionally collected by others.

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The Hausa-speaking cultures of northern Nigeria occupy the huge savanna plains that in the early nineteenth century were unified as a single political unit known in the literature (since *c.* 1965) as the Sokoto Caliphate; at its height in the pre-colonial period, the state’s size was measured as a four months’ journey from east to west, and two months’ north to south—it was the largest polity in Africa (Last, 1967). Now overwhelmingly Muslim and numbering some 40 million, the peoples

on these plains have developed over some five centuries a *lingua franca*, Hausa, and a common culture which has, nonetheless, distinct local cultural 'dialects' many of which are identified with one or other of the major emirates that constituted the Caliphate.

There is a settlement pattern common to many of these emirates. A great walled city stands at the emirate's core, surrounded by an extensive hinterland of continuous farmed parkland in which have been built towns and villages, with their rural markets and craft work, the whole linked with the city by a network of roads and tracks. Beyond this hinterland is an area that is a frontier zone between emirates, occupying the higher land between river basins and therefore constituting 'bush', with forest land and hills. Communities in this 'deep rural' area were marginal in both the pre-colonial and the colonial periods: hunters and pastoralists, miners and charcoal burners, sectarian communes and 'pagan' Maguzawa farmsteads lived or camped in this zone, while traders hurriedly passed through it, fearing both brigands and evil spirits (that might inflict illness on them). The Maguzawa are considered by Muslim Hausa as representing the original, pre-Islamic element of their own culture, and therefore have a particular significance for how contemporary Hausa conceptualise their society. They represent what Hausa society once was, and therefore serve as a yardstick by which Muslims measure the progress of Muslim Hausaland (Krusius, 1915; Reuke, 1969; Barkow, 1973; Last, 1985, 1993c).

There remains an element of this old frontier culture even today that is quite different from more bourgeois village life in the hinterland. The three elements of Hausa society—the city, the hinterland and the deep countryside—offer distinct social, religious and economic niches for individuals (or families) to move between, either seasonally or, when young, as migrants in search of a new career. In recent years the better roads and buses, the radios and the new schools, the market traders and the fundamentalist preachers have all extended the 'hinterland' into areas that were once deemed 'bush'. People adapt their habits to the new style of living, while others move away, to be further from government, or to open up new farmland. The situation I am analysing, then, is fluid, hence the importance, I think, of understanding trends over time as well as regional variation.

Nigeria's general statistical data relevant to the ethnography of children in Hausaland are not reliable; censuses are politically far too important to be left to statisticians. My own detailed studies of mortality over twenty years in the southern Katsina farmstead showed that half the children born in that farmstead (66 out of 131) had died within the first five years of life. But what was particularly striking was the way one wife might have almost 90 per cent of her children alive while a co-wife in exactly the same environment had 90 per cent of hers dead (Last, 1992). The extreme variation underlies some of the cultural meanings attached to children and the way to rear them, just as the high mortality rate remains for people a matter of anxiety even when the number of deaths actually declines. HIV and AIDS, at least in the areas where I have been working recently, have yet to make an impact in the

way the epidemic has decimated eastern and southern Africa. Other epidemics, such as measles, cerebro-spinal meningitis and cholera, recur at regular intervals, with measles being lethal to young children as it is not in Europe. Sick-cell anaemia is another cause of early death, with no sicklers living beyond about puberty in this area, unlike coastal Nigeria or Ghana (Molineaux and Gramiccia, 1980), but guinea worm, which used to be a scourge of children (and even babies) in the early 1970s, has now effectively been eradicated. Children, then, remain 'at risk' and require adults' moral and ritual protection against illness: the high rates of morbidity and mortality do not result in a passive fatalism.

The rituals of growing up in Hausaland are not elaborate. Contrary to the practice of Muslims in north-eastern Africa, young Hausa girls, whether Muslim or not, are subjected to neither clitoral excision nor infibulation. Instead, within the first month of life, a baby will have the uvula (*beli*, *belu*) nicked with a special hooked tool and in addition, on a girl, nicks are made on one or both of her hypertrophied hymeneal tags. The latter are spoken of as if they were the clitoris (*belu*; *belun gindi*) and are thus symbolically the genital equivalent of the uvula in the throat, but whenever I have observed it the operation does not in fact touch the clitoris, which at that age has not developed (Last, 1976; cf. Smith, 1954: 141–2 [1991: 38]). If not cut, both *beli* and *belu* are expected to grow and block entry to the throat and vagina. The operation is therefore not phrased as a measure facilitating later control over women's sexuality (not least since conception is thought to require orgasm) but is explicitly designed to facilitate the linked processes of eating/drinking and reproduction. (I have known cases of tonsillitis and a chronic sore throat in adult women be attributed to failure to excise the *beli* adequately when young. These cases only confirmed to people the purely practical necessity of excision.) Symbolically, though, 'circumcision' of girls is considered to have indeed taken place, but it has only social, not physical, consequences. Otherwise during childhood the only occasions marked by a certain festivity for girls are those, such as courtship or the decoration by a barber of their neck and upper chest, that gradually lead to the major ritual of marriage once they have reached menarche.

For Muslim boys, however, the experience of circumcision is markedly different, both physically and socially. It is seen as religiously required (as it is not for girls), and is carried out when they are around 7 years old; it marks the transition from childhood, when they may be sent away from home to be educated by a professional Qur'anic teacher. Non-Muslim boys are circumcised much later, at around 13 years; for them it is simply a matter of tradition (*gado*), and its pain a necessary part of the process of becoming eligible to court girls. For both, the operation is a public test of their self-control in the face of pain; it makes them almost-men, in the way marriage transforms a girl into an almost-woman. For both, it is the addition of a dependant—for a woman, her first child; for a man, his first wife—that marks entry into full adulthood (Last, 1979).

Finally, a brief comment on the Hausa terms for beating (*duka*) and striking (*buga*) someone, since they cover a much wider spectrum of acts than is indicated by the English words normally used to translate them. For example, in my experience a blow can refer in Hausa to little more than a prod or poke with the fingers on another's face or body: such unsolicited touching is itself seen as highly aggressive and humiliating. People of either sex do not in the normal course of life openly hold another's hands, for example, or squeeze an arm or rest a hand upon a shoulder—so that I have, when absentmindedly tapping a neighbour on the arm to get his attention, caused him to start suddenly instead. In this context, where an 'ordinary' gentle touch is invasive, an angry poke feels like a punch. It is therefore not necessary always to feel acute physical pain to be seriously hurt by a 'blow'. But this is true only of one end of the spectrum of violence. At the other end of the spectrum is a beating with a stick or a whip. It is reserved for those who are clearly subordinate, like slaves and animals; youths who have seriously misbehaved fall into this category. It is formalised, too: the number of lashes on the back varies according to the crime, the exact number and method being prescribed in Islamic, colonial and now national law codes, though actual practice, official and unofficial, I understand, is more idiosyncratic. The pain is known to be too severe to bear—so severe that, in Kano city in 1959, for example, Muslims have been known to declare themselves in court to be non-Muslims after all—and the judge has accepted it rather than inflict the flogging then required by law.

The 'beating' of children which I will be discussing in what follows lies between these two extremes on the spectrum of violence.³ Yet it too varies widely in severity. Again, it is not so much the pain that is feared as the humiliation, and it is often the adult that is feared, not the punishment itself (as Riesman, 1992:138, also suggested). So too with the rejection of beating as a means of discipline: it is the social implications that are considered wrong, not the suffering itself.

ONE SOCIETY, TWO SYSTEMS OF DISCIPLINE

The questions I raised at the start were, firstly, how do two segments of

³ My use of the word 'beating' in this article covers in English a wider range of terms. Flogging refers usually to the use of a special instrument, the 'cat o' nine tails' (a 'lash' being one strike with this instrument); it was commonly used for official punishments. Whipping refers mainly to the use of the horsewhip commonly found in many households before the advent of the car; it therefore seems to be used often in domestic punishment, but was applied more widely in official, public punishment. Beating implies the use of a (semi-flexible) stick, rod or cane—which was typical of a schoolmaster's punishment. Terms like 'smack' or 'slap' relate to the instant reprimand of very young children. In countries where English is a second language, English terms like 'beat' and 'flog' may be applied to the full range of acts covered by such English words as 'smack', 'slap', 'strike', 'hit'. Both in books and in conversation, it is easy not to know exactly what form or degree of punishment is being described. A biblical usage like 'chastise' or 'chasten' remains ambiguous in current English.

a single society, while sharing broadly similar cultural values and norms, nonetheless articulate their sharply differing attitudes towards the physical punishment of children; and, secondly, under what circumstances might a culture over time adopt a more, rather than a less, violent stance towards disciplining its young. I present my material in the form of two contrasting childhoods, to emphasise both the range of experience and the kinds of choices parents and children make within one, rather fluid, society. I start with childhood in a non-Muslim (i.e. 'pagan') farmstead, deep in the northern countryside, where I lived for two years in the early 1970s. I follow it with a brief sketch of Muslim childhood, with its discipline and its schooling—and its alternatives—which my Nigerian colleagues and I have been chronicling over five years in the Youth Health Project funded by the British Academy at Bayero University, Kano (Last, 1991a).

The children of non-Muslims: the rejection of physical punishment

'We don't beat our children—the Muslims do, though.' I was taken aback when I heard this, since I knew well the reputation of West Africans and West Indians for disciplining their children, and had seen over many years the way Muslim Hausa like to maintain control at home and in school. We were discussing a troublesome boy with a reputation for thieving. No one would punish him, I was firmly told (almost as a rebuke), and certainly not with a beating. The only people who are ever beaten are those whom you want to go away—like perhaps an adulterer, a witch or an aggressive lunatic, and then the beating is better done collectively. Indeed, in the market place the 'market' might beat a thief to death, but then it is best to clear off as soon as a shout of 'Thief!' goes up; better never to get involved. Such rare violence is the community's way of policing itself, in an area where courts are somewhat alien institutions and there is no rural police force.

Why, when everyone else seems to beat their children, should these, the most traditional element of Hausa-speaking society, the non-Muslim farmers called Maguzawa, not only not use corporal punishment on their children (though they know well that others more 'progressive' and of higher status than themselves do) but actually reject the *idea* of beating? Indeed, these farmers so dislike the way Muslim-run schools are known to beat children that they initially refused to send any of their children there—and this in the face of contempt and criticism from Muslims that 'pagan' children were worthless because they were undisciplined. Furthermore 'pagans' do not threaten their wives with a beating, as Muslims may—and are despised for that too. Certainly, no wife or child was beaten in the two years I was there, and I heard no tales of a beating. So why this rejection of physical violence?

The answer, I suggest, can be found on two levels. First, at the practical level, the men of these farmsteads need their children. Having both extensive farmland and livestock, they are always short of labour: they need not only to keep their sons and their wives to work with them on the fields, but also to attract others—childless women who want to start a new life, and young men who want to escape the status-bound

conventions of village or town life. Strangers are thus made welcome as potential recruits—or as potential allies. There is no way a father can keep a son or a wife in his household against their will; there are no agencies to insist on and enforce their return home if they totally refuse to, and few sanctions of real value that parents or kin can threaten them with. Finally, there are always other places to go to where there will be opportunities and a welcome—places which potentially offer a way to move up in society. It would be absurd, then, to alienate one's own children. Indeed, the only children whom a father or mother might be expected to beat or neglect are those thought to be changelings (*'yan wabi*), where the aim is to ensure that the spirit possessing the child never wants to take on human form again (Last, 1992). In practice the one child I knew well who certainly did have the symptoms of a changeling was never beaten or neglected.

Young children instead are treated as a kind of 'visitor': they have to be won over into staying in the hope that they will not die (as up to half the children do); a death can be reframed as a guest departing. In ritual terms, for example, a child is considered a full member of the house as soon as it is weaned, and has to have its share of any sacrifice or offering. From an early age children are given parcels of land to farm for themselves, and provided with miniature hoes and scaled-down water pots; they are often given livestock of their own to care for, and encouraged to make money for themselves; and, of course, both boys and girls have to carry around and care for their younger siblings. But the farm work is hard and repetitive, the herding uncomfortable and tedious. In this way children learn to farm, they learn crafts, they learn the skills and the various technical and social expertises that are required or that particularly interest them; they collect firewood, they herd their mothers' small livestock; they play and watch and gossip—and listen to the radio.

Children are thus drawn gradually through work into the adult world. Adults remark how grown-up a child is by whether or not he or she has got the 'common sense' or intelligence (*wayo*) that in effect makes the child useful as a helper and companion around the house; smaller children, livestock, errands can then all be entrusted safely to him or her. Becoming adult is not marked by a single formal ritual of initiation. For a girl, marriage is only the first part of an initiation whose second part is her first childbirth: thereafter she is fully adult. For a boy, the transition is similarly protracted, starting with the practice of circumcision at about puberty—an occasion not especially marked by ceremony—and ending with his marriage perhaps four years on. Indeed, growing up is a process, not a stage marked off simply by a ritual occasion or a biological change (Last, 1979). For example, it is not even the menarche *per se* but rather the physical size and strength of a girl that determines, for her parents, whether she is ready for marriage. In short, there is not here even the ritual violence that so often accompanies initiation into adulthood. (It is not uncommon for communities which do not physically punish their children in everyday life to be ready nonetheless in initiation rituals to inflict pain and terror

violent enough that some of the initiates actually die; La Fontaine, 1986: 98, 114).

It is a relatively stable adult world that children enter. By Muslim Hausa standards there is an extremely low rate of divorce. Over half the women, for example, in the farmstead where I lived had been there for over twenty years, and together the women formed a cohesive social group, in all some forty strong. Consequently almost none of the sixty children in the farmstead was without both parents; they were growing up amid a large array of children and adults they had known all their lives. Even were some child to be picked on or neglected, or should one prove particularly difficult or handicapped, there were plenty of adults to help or to stop any excessive act of discipline. Indeed, it was the father (rather than the mother, as she told me later) who was closest to the one abnormal child in the farmstead—a boy who never spoke; his bossed head was symptomatic of the sickling trait. Stepchildren who came to the farmstead with their mothers on marriage might not get land of their own (instead they had their mother's share of fields), yet one such stepson has grown up to become the richest man in the farmstead. Only one baby, an orphan from a neighbouring house (whom for a year I tried to feed), died, I think, of insufficient care; a motherless baby, I was told at the time, will die anyway—my intervention was inappropriate and the meddling (*karambani*) typical of a stranger. Children deaf from infancy continued to be cared for. (There were over six deaf adults in the neighbourhood.) Certainly none of the sixty or more children I got to know well was uncared for or showed signs of trouble—nor, in their endless gossiping and bringing of news, did any express concern to me over one of their number.

Secondly, on a more abstract level, the rejection of violence reflects people's recognition that they are fundamentally powerless both in the face of a harsh environment and within the wider society. It is others who have the monopoly of force. Since these farmsteads are at the bottom of the social and political scale, they have no clout as a political constituency for an ambitious patron, nor do they have any means of avoiding official extortion except by winning officials over through preemptive generosity or, as a last resort, by emigrating to an area where the local headman is better disposed. The same attitude of appeasement applies to spirits and the illnesses they can cause: the purpose of healing rituals is to please and win over the troublesome spirit, for it makes no sense to try and drive the spirit off forcibly (Last, 1991c, 1981). Whereas Muslims and Christians, as servants of God, consider themselves empowered to drive off the dead or to exorcise demons, 'pagans' such as these Maguzawa conceive of no such all-powerful divine patron of their own who gives them such power. The spiritual mastery they are reckoned to have over the forces of evil has been achieved, like their material prosperity, through either hard work or negotiation.

Finally just as there are in the farmstead few marked social divisions (in the past, people purchased as slaves became part of the household, some choosing to stay even after emancipation) and there is little by

way of hierarchy beyond deference due to age, so too the symbols of demarcation are few. The internal architecture of a farmstead is open, and entry to its centre is easy. Clothing is informal for both sexes; much of the body can be left exposed without embarrassment. Men drink alcohol but are rarely violent when drunk; indeed, anyone important seldom drinks enough to become drunk. While there is a division of labour, for example in the preparation of food, and men and women eat separately, and every adult has their own room, nonetheless both living space and work are shared in a way not usually found in Muslim households. There are thus few symbolic 'boundaries' to police, few rules whose transgression could conceivably require punishing with severity.

In short, signs of overt control, let alone control through force, are kept to the minimum. The problem is not how to master people but how to *attract* them; and people (including Muslims) since well before the colonial period have indeed been choosing to join them, as their genealogical histories prove. In such a context, corporal punishment of children is simply out of the question. And should there be any danger of violence occurring, it can quickly be stifled by other adults present.

The question remains, though, how do adults socialise their children and discipline them? The answer lies, at least in part, in the size of the household. In the farmstead I lived in there were, as I have said, some sixty children and forty adult women. There were no barriers between sections of the farmstead: children were like a tide that flowed in and out of adults' living quarters. An incident in one part of the house was rapidly known by all; the shaming of one child attracted the others—all came to see, and some to laugh at, his discomfiture. Humiliation could not be hidden—someone hurt might have to run out of the farmstead just to get away. A child who offended the other children by his bad behaviour or short temper suffered ostracism: to be abused, teased or even openly shunned by some twenty to thirty children was a significant sanction. In short, socialisation came through adults' verbal reprimands magnified through twenty or more 'loudspeakers'. Disapproval among the adult women was usually less overt but no less punitive. A large house exerted considerable moral pressure on all its residents, not just children. Lack of generosity, shirking of work, lack of cleanliness, excessive grief attracted from other women comment that was hard to resist; thus children grew up in a moral milieu that was deemed by neighbours to be both happy and well ordered. Muslims in the neighbourhood recognised that Maguzawa for all their faults nonetheless knew how to run a contented community. It was a puzzle to the Muslims why this was so. Some said Maguzawa were more God-fearing than Muslims, others simply emphasised the strong sexuality for which 'pagans' are well known. I suggest that the Maguzawa rejection of violence also played a part.

Not all deep-rural households have this policy of opposition to physical punishment. Local Muslims, whether pastoralists or villagers, are recognised as ready to punish their children and their wives physically for doing wrong. For one thing, as small-scale farmers their

domestic economies are usually less dependent on abundant labour. The traditional authorities indeed are possibly harsher in these areas than in the peri-urban hinterland. Local officials are liable to be especially ruthless towards peasants who cross them. (One notorious District Head burnt the houses of his critics. During party politics, in one village I lived in, a lorryload of villagers 'disappeared'.) Similarly, pastoral Fulani took revenge on farmers who had driven livestock off their crops by badly beating up each farmer when he was alone in his fields. Nonetheless I suggest it is only in the relative isolation of the deeply rural countryside that a general policy of rejecting violence is both socially feasible and economically rational as one cultural option among many for bringing up children in Hausaland. In the economy and society of the city and its urban-oriented, 'bourgeois' hinterland, a very different situation prevails.

The children of Muslims: the importance of social discipline

Urban Muslim Hausa society, by contrast, is premised upon maintaining strict controls, and those controls, as in any large-scale state, are in turn premised ultimately on the sanctioned use of force. Control is expressed, on the domestic level, most noticeably by the requirement that wives and daughters remain, ideally, in purdah; when of child-bearing age they should not leave the house by day, or go out unescorted after dark. So internalised is this rule that, in Kano city, it is a locally well recognised symptom of incipient mental breakdown if a woman cannot resist the urge to go out of the house, or if she just stands for long periods by the door of the house, looking out (Ilyasu, 1991). Houses, then, have to be walled and kept private; the street is a world away. Children, who can pass in and out of houses freely, mediate between the two worlds and act as messengers and agents for adults, selling their mothers' foods or other items—but their very freedom from supervision in the street can be a cause of parental anxiety. Seclusion has its advantages. Indeed, for many non-Muslim women the purdah enjoyed by Muslim women is attractive, offering as it does freedom from the hard grind of farming. Seclusion also adds status, as it implies the husband is prosperous enough to sustain the household without financial help from his wives (for whatever women earn by trading from within the house is their own) (Schildkrout, 1979, 1981; Callaway, 1987; Coles and Mack, 1991).

The emphasis on privacy and propriety extends beyond architecture. For both men and women, clothing has to ensure modesty, and the body must be kept clean and shaved. Anything that brings on loss of control—alcohol, drugs, gambling—is banned (though the ban is sometimes broken by the young). In addition to the deference due to age, there is socially and politically a strong sense of status that has persisted, albeit in altered form, from the days of powerful aristocrats with their great houses, large retinues and extensive slave estates. In those days responsibility for training the innumerable children (the Caliph Muhammad Bello had seventy-three, his father thirty-seven, his brother-in-law forty-eight, for example) was often left in such houses to

the servants, just as public order was maintained by the rulers' armed retainers (*dogarai; yara*). Today teachers and police have taken their place.

Domestically, a beating is the chief sanction a householder has against disobedience on the part of a wife, child or servant. The Holy Qur'an (IV.34) specifically enjoins a 'beating' as the last resort for a wife who persistently disobeys: 'As for those [women] from whom you fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them, [then] refuse to share their bed, [then] beat them' (interpolations as in the Hausa version of Gumi, 1982; the Arabic *daraba*, 'beat', is usually translated in Hausa as *doka* or *duka*, and implies the use of a stick or whip). And this verse, by analogy, applies to the rest of a man's household. The Qur'an also specifies flogging, *al-jald*, with a lash for certain categories of offence (the *hadd* offences: 80 or 100 lashes), flogging being rated a more serious punishment than imprisonment, *al-habs* (El-Awa, 1982). But with imprisonment not a sentence a judge would often have imposed traditionally in Hausaland, pre-colonially the gaol was normally used for holding prisoners only until their trial. For those found guilty, punishment was then immediate (cf. Christelow, 1994). (Significantly for the religious meaning of punishment, slaves were liable to only half the lashes due to freeborn men.) The presence of these verses in the Qur'an made corporal punishment religiously legitimate for a Muslim—just as similar religious texts had done for a Jew or Christian (e.g. Proverbs 13:24, 23:13–14; cf. Deuteronomy 21:18–21). During the colonial regime a British official in Nigeria might order a beating (instead of a flogging) as an 'instant' punishment which did not have to be notified to higher authority.⁴ A beating, then, was treated as a local, almost domestic punishment, quickly over and of no great seriousness, for those regarded as having behaved more foolishly than criminally.

A senior adult would rarely employ such violence himself (that would be demeaning) but would have juniors to inflict the punishment for him: the violence, the 'foolishness' of the young is controlled by the young—and inflicted on the young by the young. Demarcated from responsible society, such violence is tolerated or ignored, and its casualties are apt to be taken for granted. But it is only one kind of violence among many: the road is particularly the province of the young, as teenage drivers and still younger 'motor dogs' (*karen mota*, drivers' mates) dominate public transport, and horrific road accidents are common. Rumour has it that young girls are kidnapped off the streets by such young drivers (*'yan hiace*) and whisked away for a weekend. There are also ancient feuds between the young of rival wards that result in violent clashes and vendettas. Come election time, senior

⁴ Colonial procedures required, as part of prison regulations, that every occasion a person was flogged with a cat o' nine tails had to be logged and included in the regular prison returns made to the Colonial Office. If he used a stick, and not the 'cat', the District Officer need not log the incident (Jones, 1989: 520).

politicians hired young 'party supporters', arming them as bodyguards ('*yan banga*) and to intimidate the opposition (Dan Asabe, 1991). Violence among the young is seen as scarcely abnormal.

In this context, then, beating is not about driving someone off (as I suggested it was among Maguzawa) but about controlling subordinates—whether within the house or at school or in the courts of justice. Today, for example, the juvenile courts in Kano regularly sentence young offenders to a flogging, just as the colonial courts or the District Officer did, with prison or a reformatory being seen as the more severe punishment. Given the conditions in the reformatory—the intimidation by other inmates and the lack of food, for example—the assessment was considered accurate by most of the boys who spoke to us (Kazaure, 1991).

Control, however, is more than a matter of punishment; it is exercised through the application of discipline (*horo*). In this context children are seen not as 'visitors' but rather as beings who require disciplining in order to become human. Undisciplined children, I was told, are 'like animals: they simply sleep, eat and drink'. Disciplining therefore requires making sure children neither sleep too much nor eat too much. Dozing off by day is actively prevented, and children are often woken up early in the morning. (Pre-dawn schooling around a street-corner bonfire starts about four o'clock.) Sleep is not seen as in itself good or healthy for a child; and sleeping in public by anyone is discouraged. No one suggests a child should go off to bed early; only if during the evening a child falls asleep on a mat outside will an adult brusquely wake him up and tell him to go inside. Similarly, a certain degree of hunger is considered good for a child; and, should a child try to circumvent it by asking for food from a neighbour's house, he will be in trouble. In short, a good sleep, a large stomach are the privilege and sign of the 'big man'.

'Eating' has a central role in the metaphors of power. By being allowed to go hungry, boys are also learning 'not to eat'. Not to eat is to experience what it is to lack power; for to eat (*ci*) is to have power—'eating' being the metaphor used to describe capturing a town, winning a victory, penetrating a woman, getting a promotion (Gouffé, 1966). Hence the image of supreme power is the lion (*zaki*), which not only eats (and kills) when it wills but does not have to eat all the time as a farm animal does. (Conversely, 'to drink', *sha*, is the metaphor for suffering passively, as a woman does; to 'drink water' is a euphemism for taking a husband.) Learning not to eat, then, is as much a part of education as learning to obtain food; so too with learning to control thirst. Similarly, aggressiveness has to be contained; violence is defined as a 'loss of control' or loss of mind (*tashin hankali*), a foolishness characteristic of the young that has to be disciplined out. *En masse*, however, *tashin hankali* constitutes a riot by the young who set out, usually with the connivance of the politically powerful, to target opponents and their property; in this form it is argued to be a way of collectively 'disciplining' a pariah group. Once within the anonymity of the crowd, the supposed hotheadedness of the young is used by adults,

and excused. Even overt disorder may thus have an element of control to it.

Finally, a child has to learn to control his mouth, this time as a source of sound, at least in public. For it is by the way he talks that an adult tells whether a child is spoilt (*shagwaba; sagarta*). Speech is meant to be taut; a spoilt child has a 'loose mouth' (*shikan baki*). Not only wheedling (*kyankyanta*) but also chatter (*surutu*) are strongly discouraged, with silence the proper response to hurt. A toddler who cries out of fear is laughed at and teased by other children until he learns to express fear silently. Adults may hesitate to coddle a child, as it is synonymous with spoiling him (*dan lele*) and preventing him from having to behave in public as a human being properly should.

THE ISLAMIC SCHOOL AND ITS DISCIPLINE

The crucial site, however, for the disciplining of Muslim children is, I think, not the home but the school. Schooling is certainly the crucial difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim childhood. Every Muslim child should be sent to school; to acquire knowledge is a religious duty, and knowledge can begin only with Arabic (the sacred language of prayer and scripture) and the Holy Qur'an. Ideally everyone should internalise the Qur'an, by learning it all, when a child, off by heart. The traditional Islamic school starts that process of learning (Hassan, 1980; Hiskett, 1975; Last, 1993b; McIntyre, 1982, 1983; cf. Bledsoe and Robey, 1986, for Sierra Leone).

Although the old-style private Islamic school has been largely superseded by government primary schools (which include religious instruction), the conventions of school discipline and some of the traditional school culture persist. That most parents today went through the Islamic school system—and survived it—has made its style of discipline not only familiar but appropriate. Many children, especially small girls, are still sent to traditional Islamic schools for this reason, though government controls now make certain kinds of schooling more difficult.

Islamic schools are of many kinds. There are, for example, those run by the local resident teacher who takes in young boys and girls from the households near by for set periods of classwork in the traditional manner each day. Then there are others, run by teachers for boys only, with pupils drawn from villages far off. These schools are broadly of two kinds: one has a permanent site in the countryside, where pupils spend the whole year round with the teacher and work land lent to him by local farmers (cf. Koki, 1977). The other kind is itinerant, where the teacher goes on tour round a series of villages or towns, usually just for the dry season (cf. Smith, 1954). The school stays only as long as the local villages can afford to support it, since the younger boys have to feed themselves by begging for left-overs from the residents of the village or town where their master has set up his school. (Older boys have to work for their food). In practice, towns offer more scope for begging (Abba, 1984). In some, there are women who run what amount

to hostels for these children, giving them shelter and food in return for work on various household or other chores. Such hostels, children say, vary greatly in the sympathy with which the children are treated (Muazzam, 1993). For some children, it is home from home.

In the latter kind of school, where the children are not local, the day starts very early, since the main working period may have to be devoted to farm or other work; wood and water have to be collected, and time found for going round the houses begging for food. Living conditions in these schools can be harsh—but the harshness is, I think, seen by its supporters as an intrinsic part of the education. I have already mentioned the deliberate reduction in the amount of sleep young children are allowed, the hardships of the cold in the early morning, the thin mat on a hard floor; of being far from home and short of food; the humiliation too of having to beg for food and eat scraps. Schooling thus has the hardship, even the violence, that in more traditional societies marks the process of initiation—yet schooling, unlike those initiation rituals, is very long-drawn-out and not always predictable. For intimately associated with education (or so I understand from children) is the fear of physical punishment—punishment of a sort that has brought the itinerant schools particularly into disrepute and (along with charges of neglect and poor teaching) has led to the governmental restrictions on them.

Traditionally, when a child is handed over to the teacher (*mallam*), the symbolic gifts the father gives the teacher are money for the leg irons or shackles (*mar*) to be used on the child if necessary, and a cane. A Hausa saying goes, ‘An ear does not listen as well as the body’ (*jiki ya fi kunne ji*: Whitting, 1940). Nor are the shackles mere symbols. A boy who plays truant or gets involved in crime may well find himself in shackles even today. One urban reformatory has perhaps forty pairs of boys shackled together, the leg irons welded on for a period of several weeks, until the children graduate to each having a leg iron of his own. Apart from the restriction on movement (talking is wholly banned), there is all the discomfort of sleeping, washing, even defecating together, with shackles on. None of the boys I inspected, however, had ulcerated ankles. In ordinary, smaller schools shackles are meant to humiliate too. Though saved the problem of finding food (which is brought to him), the victim is the butt of his fellow pupils; and he stays alone all night on the school premises. The threat of being shackled is often enough.

That the long-term effectiveness of this kind of punishment is limited is well recognised, and explained by the saying ‘A person’s character is like a vein in a rock’ (*hali zanen dutse*). The image is, I think, that of a grindstone that needs careful shaping before use. Discipline is the external shaping of a child. Without such shaping, without discipline imposed from outside and internalised (like the memorising of the Qur’an), a child is scarcely human, and certainly not a proper Muslim—hence the contempt for non-Muslim children and others (such as slaves, formerly) excluded from an Islamic education and its disciplining. A child who was resistant to this process of shaping was

worthless. Yet no parent could afford not to try. Parents therefore handed their children over to a professional teacher despite the reservations they may have had about the methods used.

The methods of discipline that teachers use are not unique to them. Similar shackles (or simply leg chains attached to a large log) are used by traditional healers to restrain the violent or to prevent the confused from wandering off. The two professional rationales overlap: enforced discomfort, on one hand, can be therapeutic by ensuring that the madman's body is too unpleasant for the possessing spirit, while on the other 'madness' serves as a metaphor for ordinary misbehaviour—hence the saying 'A green stick, tamer of a boy's madness' (*danyen kara maibida haukan yaro*; Whitting, 1940). Indeed, in common speech madness and doing wrong are juxtaposed: people would rather claim (and exaggeratedly feign) madness than admit to a shameful *faux pas* consciously committed. Furthermore the spirits that cause madness are themselves considered as childish, playful and liking dirt; they are mischievous companions of children. (For it is not the real 'you' that is mad; it is just your body, temporarily possessed by a spirit, that is behaving as a spirit might—'madly'.) The mad are thus treated as a kind of child; the misbehaved child suffers from a kind of madness—and physical disciplining becomes an appropriate treatment for both.

Punishment and restraints are not the only form of school discipline. As elsewhere, there is the notion that learning, or at least concentration, is effectively maintained through pain or the threat of pain. Just as a goad is used to keep oxen pulling on the plough, so teachers and their assistants have sticks to police their pupils' concentration and aid their learning. A tap on the head or back is not necessarily meant as punishment—it is not hard. Though it instils a certain fear of being struck and, because of the apparent randomness of who gets hit, causes children worry (at least initially, as I understand from children), one effect is simply to socialise children to adult violence against them.

Given the basic level of hardship deemed appropriate for children, punishment for actual misdeeds can be quite severe, the flogging being intended both as a deterrent and as retribution. Although there is a recognition culturally that pain can be cathartic, in that depictions of hell and its torments, and the role of purgatory (*barzawo*), all suggest that pain is an expiation for crimes against God, I have not heard it said explicitly that a refusal to learn is itself a 'crime against God' that needs to be expiated through pain. Nonetheless education is a religious act, and in consequence a certain self-righteousness is involved when the recalcitrant are punished. This righteousness seems to make excess easier, and ensures parental compliance. One of the few novels about childhood in Kano, *The Reckless Climber* by Ahmed Beita Yusuf (1978), suggests that teachers may indeed exceed proper bounds (cf. Tahir, 1984; Nasr, 1982). Similarly, teachers (at least in folklore if not explicitly in children's own accounts) are shown as ready to favour some boys, taking advantage of their dependence, with homosexuality a covert theme.

Clearly, given the demands and constraints of Muslim life, it is to be expected that some individuals will rebel and, in challenging authority, either provoke severe punishment or else escape out of the control of parents and husbands. And the opportunities for confrontation with authority, and consequently the expectation of punishment, are much higher among Muslims than among non-Muslims, not least because of the village or urban environment in which Muslims prefer to live. Not only may the pupils, like any gang of lads, get up to mischief (boys tell of the tricks they resort to in order to inveigle more food from people) but the schoolmaster is himself very vulnerable as he tries to control them on his own. His ability to get his pupils to concentrate on their studies inevitably depends a great deal upon the older boys policing the younger ones. He is responsible for the children in his charge, and since news of any serious problems could eventually filter back to the parents, his reputation as a successful teacher is always at risk. In such a situation, in order to maintain his authority, a teacher may come to depend on the severity of the punishment he metes out. Inevitably there is opportunity for abuse, from the older boys and from the master.

The question remains why parents ensure it is others who mainly discipline their sons by entrusting them to teachers. First there is the understanding that anyone can, and should, correct a child seen doing something wrong, and that parents should not object or interfere (though in practice they do). A child, in a moral sense, belongs to the community. Second, there is a strong tradition of public restraint or emotional reserve (*kunya*, 'embarrassment') between a child (especially the firstborn) and both mother and father. This reserve can last a lifetime. A mother I know spoke to her son in public for first time only within hours of dying—by this token the son realised that his mother knew she was close to death. The reserve is, if anything, stronger between father and son. Later children, especially daughters, are treated with less reserve, but only the last-born (*auta*) avoids the restraint altogether. Such reserve reflects the strength of emotions between parent and child, and how such deep affection can lead to the child being spoiled, a son by his mother in particular; for it is the mother who throughout her life is the son's strongest advocate. In this context, I have heard a mother argue that it is necessary for others to discipline her sons strictly in order that her own unconditional support should not spoil them. Despite the *kunya* involved, a father too may favour one child—usually a boy, but I know one case of a girl having been so chosen. He picks him out for training, and from a very early age sits the boy down, for example, on the mat beside him as he eats or works. The boy is both companion and, in a personal sense, his chosen heir. His other children, especially the firstborn, may seek out an uncle or close friend of the family who will treat them specially too. Parents, in short, are seldom a child's sole source of either discipline or love. Nonetheless, from the child's perspective the system may not in practice always work well, and a particular situation may prove intolerable. Escape or moving away (*tashi; yaji*), rather than confrontation, is a recognised last resort.

RUNNING AWAY FROM HOME OR SCHOOL

A problem, for both teacher and parent, is that boys may run away if they can. For this reason parents prefer to send their children away to teachers in an area so distant that there is little chance of the children being tempted to return home. To limit the danger and prevent homesickness, the teacher usually has with him other children from the same village, so that a tradition became established of giving him, on his annual visit to the village, the children who have newly reached school age. The children therefore can support each other, restrain perhaps any excesses or report them eventually to home.

Nonetheless some boys do, of course, run away and seek shelter in the big towns. Just as young women, wanting to desert their husband and end a frustrating marriage, are able (with road transport so widespread) to get to a town's motor park (*tasha*) and from there quickly find lodging, so too young boys can always slip into the network of brothel keepers and traders who need extra labour. They may even join a gang at its 'lair' (*daba*) in a derelict building or market site and act as skivvy to the older members (Dan Asabe, 1991). If nothing else, itinerant schooling at least provides children with the street-wisdom—and the toughness—needed to survive on their own.

The bigger cities, then, catered for a transient population that was keen to hide. Although, in addition to the local police force, there used always to be an intelligence network—the local government officials at the motor park, the ward heads and other minor officials and messengers whose duty was to report daily on the movement of people in and out of their area and take note of anything unusual—children might still slip unnoticed through the system. For example, since *purdah* prevented adult males from entering and easily inspecting households (such police work is not a woman's job), women and children, at least in some households, were all but beyond the intelligence network's scrutiny. (This also applied to thieves' 'fences' and to stolen property.) Not surprisingly, there are tales of men or boys disguising themselves as women to escape detection, particularly at night (cf. Maiden, n.d.). Furthermore the ease of mobility made escape simple. Boys on the run might find temporary work as porters or even as conductors on the lorries and buses. Given that the big cities were usually the sites of daily markets and large towns the venue for a major market at least once a week, the daily traffic in and out of towns was considerable, especially in the dry season. Traditionally markets had always been the cover for infiltrating spies and for gaining intelligence, or simply for meeting people and hearing news. Indeed, it is striking how quickly in the past individuals who had been kidnapped or taken off by slave raiders were traced by their kin (Smith, 1954 [1991]). Even now there seem to be few places where it is impossible, given time, to find someone through the informal networks of a town. In short, ease of escape was matched by the ability to trace, which thus enabled parent and child to renegotiate a link. Today, however, both the formal and the informal intelligence networks have largely broken down, not least

because of the growth of the population, which in urban Kano is some six times larger than when I first stayed there in 1961. The search may take much longer now.

Yet children do disappear without trace, and not all refugees are safe. It is a recurrent theme—a parents' nightmare—that individuals from other groups want to kidnap their children and take them off as servants or sell them for sacrificial use. That children do disappear, that children are approached by strangers in markets, is not in question—but one instance or two can create local panic. Similarly some religious groups (such as the notorious 'Yantatsine) recruit young people newly come to town by offering much-needed hospitality. Again, popular fears magnify the scale and the danger involved; and rumours that sorcery can rob a victim of his memory or sense of self are rife, reflecting people's anxiety about the way individuals become 'lost', their identity irretrievable. In the past, facial or body marks identified a child indelibly but these are no longer fashionable, leaving one less clue. Another problem is the way a person normally accumulates several names or nicknames, only one or two of which may be known to people in any one place. How many children are 'lost' in this way we do not know. Parents assume their children have only gone to the 'motorpark communities' and been sucked into the young migrants' culture; they hope that one day they will return, or a message will reach home.

Thus Muslim Hausa society tolerates a segment of the community (in towns, a quarter usually near a market or a motor park, the *bariki*) that is culturally and morally almost independent of the rest. Here is found the urban version of the deep-rural 'pagan' farmstead, in that it offers, to the young especially, an alternative life style of very low status but considerable freedom. Running away thus has two rather different meanings—for a 'pagan' it can be a route out and up, whereas for a Muslim village lad it is often only a way down.

THE POPULARISATION OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLS AND DISCIPLINE IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Given the problems associated with the itinerant schools and the dangers of running away, given too all the alternative, apparently less drastic, ways of bringing up children in Hausa society, it is perhaps surprising that Islamic schooling of this kind ever became so popular. Why should parents wish to send their children away and subject them to such harsh conditions? The answer lies, I think, in the peculiar circumstances of the early twentieth century, when a sudden demand for Islamic schooling in outlying villages gave the educated (and not so educated) an opportunity to try and earn a living through teaching. The demand sprang from the fact that the importance of schooling, from the perspective of the poor farmer, goes well beyond providing children with religious knowledge. First, such an education is a symbol of being a free Muslim. In the early decades of the twentieth century, when colonialism set in motion the gradual ending of slavery (up to half the

population may have been slaves), there was considerable social pressure on men to try and distance themselves from slave status. Hence symbols of clear Muslim identity—*purdah*, formal clothing and headgear, village life, attendance at religious ceremonies and the observance of the necessary rituals—became more or less obligatory. Though hard physical farm work—the archetypal task of slaves, whether men and women—was inescapable, alternative sources of money, from trade or craft work, reduced servile dependence on the farm income.

The economics of this new, demonstrably Muslim life style were stringent. Ex-slaves had few resources to draw upon, lacking as they did extensive kin networks. Their former owners might act as patrons, but with their slaves becoming independent they found their income much reduced and could offer little help beyond giving away some of their land (cf. Lovejoy and Hogendorn, 1993). So too the smaller free farmers lost such surpluses as their few slaves might have produced. By dispensing, if possible, with the labour of their wives, free Muslim men had not the means to farm extensively; there was no new supply of farm servants to help them, nor (yet) a ready pool of hireable labour. In practice the acreages to be worked were relatively small, which made village-based residence practicable, since fields need not be too distant. But it also meant that the volume of grain produced might be inadequate to feed everyone until the next harvest. In order to save grain the response was, first, for the adult men to go as migrant labour to work on farms farther south, once their own northern harvest was in, and, second, to send their sons out for education with a teacher, just for the dry season or for several years (cf. Khalid, 1998).

Whereas in the nineteenth century Islamic learning had been relatively restricted, in the twentieth it was perhaps the most prestigious avenue to high status that an ex-slave could take. Many descendants of slaves became teachers, particularly in the countryside, where there was both increased demand and little competition. Today, with Qur'anic education part of the ordinary primary school curriculum, and with new voluntarily funded 'Islamiyya' schools being established to teach Islamic subjects in a more modern manner, Islamic teachers can find work in conventional schools and the old-style itinerant schoolmaster is increasingly a rarity (cf. Bray, 1981). Nonetheless the tradition of corporal punishment survives in the new setting, at least as a threat. The association of learning with hardship and pain continues.

Seen in the broader context, the expansion in the number of the schools provided, I suggest, a form of fostering out of children who could not be supported at home. It was a way of spreading the cost and putting the burden of feeding 'surplus' or 'excess'—but not necessarily unwanted—children on to the wider Muslim community. Religious schooling provided the institutional framework for this 'fostering' and made it right—as a pious act—both for parents and for the community. Sons could safely be sent away in this manner, making it more feasible to care properly for daughters. Girls had to be kept at home anyway, but if they were to be strong enough to marry relatively early (and thus

become dependent on their husband's granaries) they could not be kept short of food. For the poor Muslim farmer, then, sending sons away to school, even if it cost the teacher's fees, was an economic as well as a religious strategy of real importance. But above all it gave him and his family a route out of the stigma of slave origin and opened up opportunities of status in a very status-conscious community. If the costs included a rather tough childhood for his sons, it was worth it, not least because it was the way of the ruling classes; and I think there will have been few boys who were not willing to take the risk. But, given the way Hausa families at all levels try to place their children in different niches and encourage each to have his own speciality, in my experience a child that really could not cope with such an ordeal was seldom forced. Overall, then, this kind of Islamic schooling met a specific need at a specific time; it served its purpose, but continues to leave its mark.

The reason for this lies partly in the way people understand political misfortune and how to reverse it. Colonial conquest of their Muslim state by Christians *c.* 1900 could have occurred, people have told me, only through Allah's will. If Muslims, so the argument goes, practised Islam properly again, he might rescind the conquest—hence the growth of the Tijaniyya since the 1920s and the popular resurgence of piety that finally led to Independence in 1960. Similarly, in recent years, when military government has given rise to unprecedented hardship, people have once more turned to the proper practice of Islam, with extra fasting and greater attention to the Qur'an; the proper ordering of society, including disciplining the young at a time when drug use was expanding, became a major public priority. Outsiders may refer to it as fundamentalism, but the political implications of this new piety and the inspiration behind it are more basic. A return to old methods associated with traditional Islam (such as discipline by beating) serves to instil the Holy Qur'an into recalcitrant boys and, above all, to show Allah the community's concern to reform itself and thereby earn His blessing (and hence, people pray, political change).

IN CONCLUSION

In his lectures on *l'éducation morale* at the Sorbonne in 1902–03 Emile Durkheim argued that the beating of children in school was a product of the very system of schooling itself. The close daily contact between those of superior culture (teachers, prefects) and those of an inferior one (new intakes of schoolchildren) could of itself give rise to abuse, and he suggested a parallel in the way Europeans in the colonies could angrily and impatiently beat 'natives' ([1925] 1961: 191–6). It is true that beating is not associated with any particular religion, though in France at least religiously run schools (like those imitating military academies) practised beating more strictly than did secular schools (especially where the children were working-class), and went on doing

so for longer (Perrot, 1990: 209–11).⁵ Beating occurred in both Catholic and Protestant countries, as well as in Muslim and, for example, Japanese societies (Gil'adi, 1992: 61–6; Schoolland, 1996). It is, of course, older than colonialism. Indeed, the earliest written reference in Africa to learning through beating, to children having 'ears on their backs', dates from Egypt *c.* 2000 BC, while it was only during the Augustan period that Romans started giving their children out to (often Greek) schoolmasters who proceeded to beat them—to the protests of contemporaries: previously Roman children were not beaten, apparently (Marrou, 1948: 22, 221–1, 367).⁶ The broad argument is that once society develops systems of knowledge that require specialists to teach elements of such knowledge systematically to all or most of the young (whether as schoolchildren, apprentices or initiates), formal schooling away from home inevitably develops; such schooling creates a subculture of its own, largely independent of control by parents or the wider community. Hence the persistence of beating.

Two ideas about pain overlap here. Firstly that pain is one item in the technique of memory, and secondly that it is retribution for a mistake. Both elements are regularly involved in the slow transformation of children into adults. Michel Foucault (1975) examined these ideas to show how the new habits of mind and behaviour necessary for industrial capitalism in nineteenth-century Europe were developed and enforced through systems of discipline, surveillance and punishment: how, in short, Europeans were further 'schooled' even when adults (for the military dimension see McNeill, 1995). The two Hausa communities I have described, though for nearly sixty years under colonial rule (1903–60), were not directly involved in industrial capitalism, nor were they concerned with the particular kinds of 'modernity' that troubled Durkheim and Foucault. Indeed, their cultures drew on ideas that antedate European control. The surveillance and punishment that colonising Europeans instituted in Nigeria, in collaboration with the local authorities they appointed, focused more on maintaining the semblance of colonial power (or 'peace') over the conquered population than on transforming a work force.

Nonetheless, the disciplining established in the European-style schooling (*boko*), introduced to create a colonial elite, also created a particular pattern of modern school culture in which pain was associated primarily with punishment. It is surely significant that in

⁵ Durkheim's interest in corporal punishment reflects the way it was a politically contentious issue in France throughout the nineteenth century, with the state repeatedly trying to abolish its use in primary schools. School discipline was only part of a much wider set of *pédagogies du corps* which sought to modernise the population of rural France (Weber, 1977; Zeldin, 1980).

⁶ Marrou, citing Papyrus Anastasi V.3.9 and IV.8.7, translates the Egyptian text as *les oreilles du jeune homme sont placées sur son dos: il écoute quand on le bat*. In Hebrew apparently *mīsar* meant both instruction and chastisement. Marrou also refers (p. 222) to Aristotle (*Politics* VIII.1339a) saying, *meta lupēs gar hē mathēsis*, and points out (p. 367) that when Romans spoke of 'studying' the idiom they later used was *manum ferulae subducere*.

Africa generally this pattern was set not only by Europeans who had a well established practice of beating schoolchildren in their own countries but also by missionaries who could make a theological virtue out of beating the young: pain could also be redemptive.⁷ Furthermore the first African who returned to become 'the Teacher' had so high a standing in his village that when in turn he started beating children (as he had been taught to do) it was accepted as in some sense 'good'. No one in government, in the missions or locally had a well tried alternative that was as cheap, fast and dramatic. Though just as public, tying miscreants up or shackling them as an emblem of punishment never became quite as widespread. As authorities found in Europe, once entrenched in schools beating is a convention remarkably difficult to stop.⁸ Given how the colonial culture of punishment, established as it was by men who often had experienced (threats of) similar treatment in their own youth, took corporal punishment for granted, it is scarcely surprising that tolerance of beating (or the threat of it) now permeates the social system of several states in Africa.

Punishment, however, is seldom just a private matter between two individuals; there is usually an audience. Indeed, a heightened dramatic element was often crucial to what was thought of as an effective performance of ritual public punishment. Until the nineteenth century the spectacle of a flogging or a hanging was an important feature of the way the state, in Europe as elsewhere, demonstrated before a large, almost festive, crowd its right to hurt or kill its citizens as well as its enemies (Linebaugh, 1991; Gatrell, 1994; Evans, 1996). So too in schools, even in the twentieth century a beating was a highly dramatic performance, as it had always been in closed communities such as those on board ship or in barracks. But recently some African states (such as Liberia, Nigeria and Cameroon) have experimented with staging executions as a public warning (especially to armed robbers), advertising the place and time and carrying them out before a large if undisciplined audience, even televising the event complete with interviews with those condemned to die. But an execution, however strongly ritualised, is nonetheless for real; dying is not mere drama. Thus (as in Europe earlier) the event seems sometimes to arouse sympathy, even respect, for the victims as their dignity in the face of

⁷ A question remains about how far missionary teaching about the redemptive power of pain (as in the crucifixion of Jesus and the martyrdom of saints) caused converts to revise their previous concepts of the meaning of both ritualised suffering and more commonplace pain. Images of hell, in both Islam and Christianity, featured prominently in sermons and religious literature (such as poetry), with vivid descriptions of the prolonged awfulness of the punishments suffered by the damned. Whatever their impact on behaviour, these images meant that people became accustomed to imagining torture (and terror of it) as *the* ultimate divine deterrent.

⁸ Where corporal punishment is made illegal, schoolteachers troubled by very 'difficult' children can resort to sending them home or permanently excluding them from the school, thus transferring the problem of discipline back to the parent(s). Being expelled from school has consequences beyond the scope of this article (cf. Parker-Jenkins, 1999).

death belittles the state's claim to complete power. An audience, then, has its own response to a punishment and (especially with children) offers a degree of protection against excess, against the hubris of the otherwise all-powerful.

What this case study also suggests is that the 'right to beat' reflects a claim, usually before an audience, to a kind of 'ownership' (or simply power) over who or what is to be beaten, whether it is, for example, a wife, a young boy, a slave or a domestic animal; it makes it clear that for them their autonomy is limited. The right is assimilated into the wider right to do (potential) harm to what is considered your own. The claim can be asserted by just a plausible threat of beating; how seldom a beating takes place is scarcely relevant. While a community that tolerates the concept of a right to beat is recognising a degree of 'ownership' of one human being by another, it is not the most extreme degree of 'ownership' conceivable, which would be the right to kill the person you 'own'. That degree of 'ownership' is commonly attributed primarily to God and Allah (who 'own' everyone), but some cultures (as, for example, in Pakistan) extend a similar degree of 'ownership' over a wife or daughter if she commits a crime that dishonours the family. It is also a matter of social status. The person being beaten recognises an 'owner's' right over him and the superior status of whoever orders the beating (and his own diminished autonomy, his own lower status): he or she does not fight back as, for example, would someone who disputed another's right to beat him with impunity; at most the person to be beaten can run away. Such a right to beat (and the acceptance of being beaten as legitimate) seems to occur, as I have said, in societies where status is more marked; the right not to be beaten can be a sign of citizenship (as in the Roman empire). But it can also define age as well as status. The very young, who have as yet no 'sense', are not often formally beaten by their father. Beyond a certain age young men cease to be beaten by their fathers, and are flogged instead by officials appointed by the state to flog anyone it convicts. The right to beat is potentially transferable from a parent to a guardian or foster-parent—and, most commonly, to a schoolmaster. Similarly, the state's right to flog adults can be delegated, for example, to a ship's captain or the commander of an army; lowly young District Officers, under colonial regulations, had an equally official authority to order a flogging or, more informally, a whipping.

The refusal to tolerate beating, then, reflects a community's denial that a person is 'ownable' to that degree, and goes with reluctance to let others claim such 'ownership', at least over one's children. So too the refusal to beat a wife (and a wife's refusal to tolerate a blow from her husband) symbolises a real difference in notions of 'ownership' and personal autonomy; here the status pyramid is kept relatively flat. In the Maguzawa context, then, where such 'ownership' of people is rejected, it is not surprising that a person bought on the slave market tended to be absorbed into the household, not just in the second generation (in Hausa, *ba-cucane*, from the Coptic *shushan*) but in the first as a 'son' or junior wife (not as a concubine). Here animals could be owned in a way

humans could never be. Furthermore, though Allah is now recognised as all-powerful, the traditional Hausa religion of the Maguzawa did not (and still does not) involve worship of any kind of Being that 'owns' humans in the way Allah 'owns' Muslims; nor do ancestors 'own' their descendants in that way.

Notions of 'ownership' and power apart, a second conclusion can be offered. Beating is associated with a specific notion of 'modernity' (*na zamani*), whether the modernity is defined culturally as conversion to Islam from paganism or as entry into a colonial school. Indeed it has been pointed out that the more educated, the more 'modern', parents are apt to beat their children the hardest (Uka, 1966: 65). In continuing to resist beating, even today, Maguzawa are not just being anti-modern but are offering an alternative style of social relations within their farmsteads; they are also taking a political stance against certain forms of power in practice. Muslims who decide to join such a farmstead are not necessarily going back to paganism but are taking up a life style that rejects 'ownership' of people. Hence the deep-rural zone, with its different communities, can offer variant kinds of social culture. The popularity of some of these variants makes them problematic in the eyes of visitors: reformers from the mainstream seek to proselytise them, some to promote development, others in the name of religion. The latter seek to make Muslims recognise the 'ownership' only of Allah and reject the attempts of local human rulers to usurp that 'ownership'. Like claims to personal autonomy, then, claims by some to 'own' others remain a real issue, even after the end of a slavery that took beating as one of its key symbols.⁹

A third conclusion is that the acquisition of certain kinds of knowledge can be associated with pain or the fear of pain. This is as true of modern schooling as of traditional initiation in 'bush schools'. It is as if such schooling requires memory and memorisation of important facts, which are best retained by being linked with pain, experienced or threatened. Through pain, truths are seared into the long-term memories of the young—an extension of the folk observation that it is through the pain of making mistakes that all creatures tend to learn what not to do: in school you learn, instead, what you *should* do, and it is *failure* that brings on the pain. All learning, whether negative or positive, thus comes to be acquired by a child in the same manner. It may not be education but it is training.

As a consequence the extension, in twentieth-century Africa, of schooling with its laudable goal of universal primary education involves for all children the potentially novel experience of either being beaten or being threatened with a beating. While such an experience may harm only a very small fraction of schoolgoers, the community's tolerance of

⁹ Baba of Karo, speaking of her childhood and the children of the slaves her Muslim farming family owned in the late nineteenth century, says, 'We didn't play with them much. If they did something wrong we hit them [*mu dudduke su*]' (Smith, 1954: 51 [1991:4]).

beating lends a wider legitimacy to violence against children, to violence more generally against the unresisting and defenceless (which is what beating is, as distinct from fighting). Is it too far-fetched to ask whether some of the atrocities committed against children and women attained a degree of sanction from the conventional acceptability of physical punishment for young children in school and also at home? Such violence then masquerades as 'punishment', whether it is for opposing the attackers or for simply being, in their eyes, in the wrong place. The nation, in this scenario, is a school writ large, with the nation's leaders as teachers and their use of violence within it labelled as discipline. The metaphor makes sense, especially in countries where education is of such paramount importance that it takes 20 per cent of the budget and is idealised as the only way forward; where the village's teacher has high status and where young rebels justify their rebellion as a quest for the education they were deprived of (Peters and Richards, 1998: 187). Thus it is sometimes reported from Sierra Leone that people—like children in class—were asked to 'raise their hands' if they supported the government, with the result that the leadership of the rebel RUF, like teachers (or school bullies?), in their turn told people their answer was wrong—and ordered their soldiers to cut the arms off anyone, young or old, as 'punishment' (cf. Shawcross, 2000: 169–82).

Finally, I am suggesting that cultural tolerance of the beating of children is significant if only as a surrogate indicator of other processes at work in society. The image that people have of the world beyond the farmstead is that it is a place of violence, especially against the less strong, and therefore self-control in the face of that violence has to be learnt by the young before they enter everyday life in the towns and cities. It is also a place where violence is *meant* to intimidate and invoke fear, and where such fear is coded as 'healthy respect'. Schools, seen as places sited half way into that world, prepare children for it. But it has so far proved neither a welcoming nor a rewarding world for the young: education (even up to university) has been a road to riches for not one of the young men from the farmstead I lived in who twenty years ago chose schooling instead of farming. The struggle for work in the cities has bred among the educated young a degree of frustration, not to mention anger at the humiliation of having no income (and therefore no future, no wife), that violence or the threat of violence lies close to the surface of urban life; and there are drugs to tempt the desperate. The adult world responds with its violence; military regimes, which once found some popular legitimacy in offering a 'war against indiscipline', proved themselves neither a good example nor a solution.

In short, while the wider 'culture of punishment' may not appear to have changed much over the last forty years, I think there is now a vein of social anger to it that is different from people's earlier wrath at the vicious party-political thuggery of the 1960s, and under the anger is an element of fear—fear of the young. In part it is due to a loosening of central control after colonial rule and to massive urban growth, in part also to the visibly greater prosperity of some and the higher expectations of everyone else. As a result, despite a rhetoric that still recognises

'indiscipline' as a normal fact of youth, it seems that more of the young than ever before experience physical punishment as repression, even revenge; the moral frame that once lent it legitimacy has cracked.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the journal *Childhood*, in particular its editor, Dr Karin Ekberg, and her editorial board, as well as their two anonymous readers for their invaluable, critical comments on the initially much shorter version of this article. To meet their proper demands I had to go too far over-length and in doing so missed a crucial deadline of theirs. I apologise for any inconvenience I caused them. The early version was also read by my colleagues in the Youth Health Project in Kano: my thanks to them, too. I am also grateful to Professor Philip Burnham and Dr Barrie Sharpe for their reading and assessment of a near-final draft. More broadly, I am deeply indebted to the very many Nigerians—men, women and children—who have taught me what I know of their complex culture and its several variants. I am indebted, too, to the various institutions—too many to detail here—which have funded my education in Nigeria, my research there and all the different opportunities for working with Nigerians that I have had over the last forty years.

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ABSTRACT

Arising out of debates over 'children at risk' and the 'rights of the child', the article compares two contrasting childhoods within a single large society—the Hausa-speaking peoples of northern Nigeria. One segment of this society—the non-Muslim Maguzawa—refuse to allow their children to be beaten; the other segment, the Muslim Hausa, tolerate corporal punishment both at home and especially in Qur'anic schools. Why the difference? Economic as well as political reasons are offered as reasons for the rejection of corporal punishment while it is argued that, in the eyes of Muslim society in the cities, the threat of punishment is essential for both educating and 'civilising' the young by imposing the necessary degree of discipline and self-control that are considered the hallmark of a good Muslim. In short, 'cultures of punishment' arise out of specific historical conditions, with wide variations in the degree and frequency with which children actually suffer punishment, and at whose hands. Finally the question is raised whether the violence experienced in schooling has sanctioned in the community at large a greater tolerance of violence-as-'punishment'.

RÉSUMÉ

Faisant suite aux débats menés sur les thèmes des enfants menacés de violence et des droits de l'enfant, cet article compare deux enfances très différentes au sein d'une vaste société, à savoir les populations de langue Haoussa du Nord du Nigeria. Un segment de cette société, les Maguzawa non musulmans, s'opposent à que leurs enfants soient battus; l'autre segment, les Haoussa musulmans, tolérant les châtements corporels chez eux mais aussi et surtout dans les écoles coraniques. Pourquoi cette différence? L'article avance des raisons économiques ainsi que politiques au rejet du châtement corporel, tout en indiquant qu'aux yeux de la société musulmane citadine, la menace d'un tel châtement est essentielle pour éduquer et «civiliser» les jeunes en imposant le niveau nécessaire de discipline et de maîtrise de soi, qualités considérées comme le marque d'un bon musulman. En bref, les «cultures du châtement» résultent de conditions historiques spécifiques et varient considérablement quant à la sévérité et à la fréquence des châtements subis par les enfants, mais aussi quant à la personne qui les exécute. L'article soulève enfin la question de savoir si la violence subie à l'école a sanctionné une plus grande tolérance à l'égard de la violence en tant que «punition» au sein de la communauté dans son ensemble.