OFFPRINT

Blnch, R.M. 1983. Social determinants of differential responses to Westernization in two Nigerian Societies. *Cambridge Anthropology*, 8,3:34-53.

DIFFERENTIAL PATTERNS OF RESPONSE TO WESTERN INFLUENCE ON TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN NIGERIA

Roger Blench

1. Introduction

This paper explores in a comparative framework the responses of two Nigerian peoples to Western influence and the changes this has evoked in their traditional music. Accounts by ethnomusicologists of changes in music and its organization in Africa are necessarily rare, because opportunities for those few scholars who complete synchronic studies to return after a period of time and restudy are limited. Ethnomusicologists have tended to regard 'isolated folk and primitive music' as resistant to change. Wachsmann (1951:141) wrote '..continuity and stability appear more significant to interpretation than the facts of change and diversity'. Nettl (1958:525) tentatively observed that 'there is evidence that at least in some cases, music changes less rapidly than do other aspects of culture'.

One scholar who has studied such change is Alan Merriam (1977), who revisited the Songyo people of Zaire after an absence of thirteen years. Although Merriam makes some useful observations on the transformation of the instrumental and vocal repertoire, in relation in part to the growing influence of Christianity and national culture in the area, he is not immediately concerned to tie these findings to wider changes in the society. Obviously, my own fieldwork[1] was conducted within a single limited timespan. However, in Nigeria, change has been sufficiently rapid for me to obtain very full data about past styles of performance and their social context, and in certain cases to set up 'historical' recordings of music no longer performed but very much alive in the memories of the players.

This paper deals with the Nupe and Kana peoples of Central and Southern Nigeria, respectively.[2] After a sketch of their ethnography, the more common musical forms are surveyed, with an impression of the relative stability of these forms in the face of recent social

change. I then suggest an interpretation of the very different attitudes of these two societies to their own music in terms of their internal social structure.

Before entering this discussion, it is necessary to define the term 'traditional' as used here. To avoid such loaded epithets as 'folk', 'popular', 'primitive', or 'ethnic', the term 'traditional' has recently become fashionable. This is a useful term, as long as it is realised that it has no absolute definition. It is sometimes used for any institution present within a society for three generations. By this reckoning baseball is part of traditional Japanese culture. Such reasoning may lead to counter-intuitive results, and it is more useful to define as 'traditional' a practice, artefact or institution recognised by a people as an organic part of their culture. The Nupe regard *kpanganagi*, a type of drumming introduced in the 1950s, as integral to their culture, and thus traditional. The music for the shawm, *aligeta*, brought in the early nineteenth century, is regarded as alien and categorized as 'not Nupe', even though the players are Nupe-speakers, and audiences have been exposed to the instrument for a century and a half. This is because *kpanganagi*, despite its apparent novelty, grows out of a traditional repertoire of instrumental practice, evolved over a long period, whereas the *aligeta*, brought in from outside, is regarded as intrusive and does not participate in that tradition.

2. The Nupe

2.1 The ethnographic background

The Nupe are well known to anthropologists from ethnographic work by Temple (1922), Meek (1925) and Nadel (1942 & 1954). Their original habitat was probably along the banks of the Niger and Kaduna rivers, above the confluence at Lokoja. Before the nineteenth century their internal communications and economy were focused on the waterways, but the last two hundred years have seen a steady shift northwards into the drier savannah zones East of the Kanuna river. This reflects another change in Nupe society, its gradual Islamization during this period. Before the nineteenth century, the Nupe were divided into a number of loosely linked kingdoms, scattered along

the banks of the river between the towns of Egan and Jebba. As part of the Jehad initiated by Usman dan Fodio from Sokoto in 1804, Nupe was conquered by Fulani cavalry in about 1817. The capital was first sited at Raba in the West, but later moved to Bida, a more central site, after the middle of the century.

The new rulers organized the state along traditional Islamic lines, taking their models from the long-established Hausa and Kanuri Emirates of the North. Mallams and Qu'ranic scholars were encouraged to settle in Bida, and the Nupe rapidly became known for their learning. At the same time craftsmen came from the North, and new crafts, such as leatherwork and coil-basketry were introduced, while traditional ones, such as brass-working were reorganized to meet the military and ceremonial needs of the new state. Herbalists, drummers and embroiderers were all organized into guilde, and these in turn were locked into a much elaborated court system, dispensing patronage to clients through a number of important families. A significant feature of the economy of this period was the incessant raiding of the hinterland for slaves by the Muslim elites in the town, and the consequent move of many villages to inaccessible hill-top sites. This was responsible for the final collapse of the river-trade and the break-down of numerous smaller economic networks that had permeated the rural areas.

Today Nupe society conserves these different elements of its past in geographic zones. A number of fortified towns and their outlying *tunga*, hamlets, lie in a countryside of small villages unwilling to accept their political authority. The relation between the two is ambiguous, combining a distrust dating from the era of slave-raiding with an admiration for the wealth and ceremony of the urban Nupe. The villages are in practice acephalous, despite a system of rotating titles, and have a justified suspicion of centralised state-systems.

With the colonial period, the end of slaving, and the descent of the interior villages to the plain, the trading of rural produce to the towns has significantly increased. The expanding wealth of the new middle-class in Nigeria has meant that staples such as rice, palm-oil and palm-wine find a ready market. The school system now reaches out to many rural areas, and as a result children from

villages have improved access to jobs in the bureaucracy.

Traditional Nupe religion has been described in a monograph by Nadel (1954) and it may be characterised by its diversity. A rich repertoire of masquerades is supplemented by the *gunnu* fertility cult, and a variety of sacrifices forming part of a rather miscellaneous magical technology. It differs from many other West African traditional religions, in lacking any coherent cosmology, and is thus without an agreed ritual hierarchy, to mediate with the supernatural forces expressed by such a belief-system. One expression of the independence of the villages is their widespread adoption of Christianity. Bida is now ringed with notionally Christian settlements, and since demands on Christians are less radical than on those who convert to Islam, this has acted to conserve practices and ceremonies linked to traditional belief.

2.2. Traditional Musical Forms

2.21 General

The repertoire of musical forms among the Nupe reflects closely this historical 'layering'. Subsistence activities prominent in a past acephalous phase in the evolution of Nupe society - hunting, farming and housebuilding - are associated with more archaic ensembles. Similarly, people characterize as ancient[3] music associated with local cults, whether masquerades or ceremonies concerned with death, recalcitrant weather or supernatural enemies. On the other hand, music for life-crisis rituals, particularly marriage, naming-ceremonies and funerals, is more subject to changes of fashion, as it must be more responsive to the more fluid internal structures of society

2.22 Music of the Local Community

An example of such 'subsistence' music is *enya dunguru* (literally 'the beating of the Lute'), an ensemble used to accompany the ceremonies of hunters. The *dunguru* is a two-stringed lute widely associated with hunters throughout the Middle Belt of Nigeria. Other instruments used are the struck hoe-blade, the pot-drum and the gourd-rattle. Songs were performed for mortuary ceremonies, celebrations for the killing of a sizeable animal, and the making

of medicine to assist hunters in the coming year. The texts of these songs consist of proverb-like sentences, with obscure reference - often oblique satires on weak men or unsuccessful hunters, that can only be unravelled by the specific community that performs the songs. *Enya bapa* is another functional music, accompanying the beating down of a newly laid pot-sherd floor. The woman whose floor is being laid calls a collective work party, and provides food and drink for the participants. The women all bring their wooden beaters and strike the floor rhythmically, while singing a number of chorus-response songs, associated with this particular type of work. Most widespread is the ensemble of flute and drums used to encourage farmers taking part in collective work in the fields.

The most prestigious ritual music was that associated with the *gunnu* cult. Nadel (1937) describes the ceremonies as he observed them in Doko, South of Bida, but diverse meanings are attached to them in other parts of Nupeland. In some areas, it was thought to bring fertility, in others to 'smell out' witches, while there are overtones of hunting rituals as well as the air of an attenuated initiation ceremony. In this case, however, it is music that unites the cult, for in nearly all areas, the instrumental ensemble is the same, consisting of a large spheroidal pot-drum, a pair of gourd net-rattles, a piece of struck iron, and a male cantor and chorus. This ensemble is also found, virtually unchanged, among many of the immediate neighbours of the Nupe. The texts of *gunnu* songs are difficult to interpret for in many cases people claimed they were incomprehensible, or else consisted of threats against those who infringed the laws of the *gunnu*.

Life-crisis rituals, birth, marriage and death also have appropriate music. The sex of the performers reflects the sex of the person who is the focus of the ceremony. Thus when a girl about to be married is in her own compound, the women will sing songs accompanied by their particular instruments, the *epun* and *bumbum*, both types of struck gourd. When the bride moves to her husband's compound, the ensemble consists of the drums *enya* and *kalangu*, both male preserves. A similar disjunction is observed between the mortuary sequences for the death of senior men and women.

Each group makes music for their own sex.

Widespread, but evidently more subject to change and the whims of fashion are the entertainment dances without ritual significance. These spread from village to village by personal contact and were normally considered too lowly for the traditional state to incorporate them. In 1982, the two most popular dances were '*angale*' and '*kpanganagi*', both accompanied by drum ensembles, and often seen at weddings and naming ceremonies. Neither of these are more than thirty years old, and both in Bida and the rural areas, people could describe other ensembles and dances that had previously been in fashion. The instrumental and vocal material of these now vanished dances was similar enough to those in use today for *angale* and *kpanganagi* to have evolved without a sense of discontinuity on the part of the audiences.

2.23 Music for patrons and clients

Opposed to these widespread and popular forms are the types of music associated with the Fulani conquest and the subsequent Islamization of Nupe. The Sala processions held for feasts of Id-el-Fitri and Id-el-Kebir, after the end of Ramadan act as a focus for their performance. The Etsu Nupe, the ruler of Bida, rides on horseback through the streets of the capital, accompanied by members of the court and leading representatives of the other aristocratic families. The custom derives from processions held in all the major fortified towns of Northern Nigeria, but is everywhere given a local flavour, as it is the principal occasion for influential individuals to display publicly the extent of their wealth and power. Aristocrats are preceded by their client musicians, beating drums or playing wind instruments, and shouting praises of their patron. Further status is gained by the variety of musicians performing for an individual, the trappings of the horses whereon he and his clients sit and the richness of the livery he can provide for them. Although in some cases, individuals may claim to be patrons of hunters, and they are preceded by ranks of liveried hunters firing blank charges into the air, significantly, none of the music associated with rural hunting ceremonies is heard, but instead common formulaic praises, with Hausa epithets for hunters inserted in the appropriate 'gaps'.

Indeed it is characteristic of the Sala processions that no 'traditional' Nupe music is performed. Although Nupe instruments are used, such as the two headed barrel-drum, *enya*, and the notch-flute, *kpansanagi*, they have been adapted to the needs of Islamic praise-singing, while others, such as the shawm, *aligeta*, the hourglass drum, *kalangu*, and the conical drum *banga* are of Hausa origin, and the praise-songs performed to their accompaniment are often sung in Hausa. Similarly, patrons may incorporate somewhat incongruous itinerant performers, such as the Hausa strongmen, *'van-karfe*, or Fulani players of the end-blown flute, *sarewa*, in their desire for novelty.

Apart from this, there are some originally urban forms characteristic of the Islamized elite, that have spread along the roads to the principal Nupe towns. One of these is *domba*, Islamic devotional singing performed by men at night during Ramadan. The ensemble consists of a male cantor and chorus striking the blades of hoes with a short stick. They will go from quarter to quarter in the town, or from village to village in rural areas where there are Muslims resident, chanting devotional songs after the manner of carol-singers, until people reward them and they move on.

A secular music favoured by the urban elites is *'enyako'* (literally 'the big drum). A female singer is accompanied by a male chorus and a group of musicians playing cylindrical snare-drums. The chorus has a short refrain repeated indefinitely, while the singer improvises praises of influential men and potential donors, using proverbs and stock formulae. Mattei (1890:92) noted with dismay how praise-singers would move from one patron to another altering the political sentiments of their texts to suit each viewpoint.

If the singer has used appropriate texts, the audience will rsward her by 'spraying', placing money on her forehead as she continues to sing. She will count the money and then incorporate the amount in her song. Both *domba* and *enyako* are homogeneous in text and performance style through a broad area of Nupe. This is partly a reflection of their shallow historical time-depth, that has not

allowed the tradition to develop divergent forms in different areas, and partly also related to the greater mobility of singers.

This 'functional' approach to music has interesting ramifications for the ideology of composition. Nupe deny the possibility of original composition, precisely because the aim of performance is not to surprise the audience with originality and ingenuity, but to marry pre-existing texts with the perceived social ambience. Unlike the Tiv (Keil, 1979) where residence and lineage units compete in the dance arena to outdo one another, Nupe value musicians for their ability to assess a social situation accurately and to then provide an accompaniment appropriate to it. This is related to the economic individualism of Nupe drummers -- they have usually made a personal choice to follow their profession and thus represent the interests of their immediate family group. Although composition does occur, for texts mention recent events or the particular foibles of individuals, the very possibility is denied, either by claiming that the singer learnt it from someone else, or that the text was passed down from 'the forefathers'.

2.3 The Evolution of Nupe musical forms in recent times

This account synthesizes the pattern of traditional music until about thirty years ago. Since that date, changes have been rather dramatic. The most significant is the virtual abandonment of all types of traditional rural music. The '*gunnu*' has vanished as a religious festival, although the songs are still remembered. Masquerades such as *elo*, *mama*, and ceremonies for the birth of twins have disappeared. Hunters' songs are almost gone except in remote areas. This partly reflects the denuding of the Nupe countryside of any animal larger than a rat but relates also to more fundamental structural changes. Even the choral songs performed by women to accompany the beating of earth floors, *enya bapa*, have been dropped, despite the fact that development has by no means eliminated the need to pound floors.

Of the 'entertainment' music, many types have disappeared, and others transformed to conform to 'modern' standards. In villages, young people no longer dance for their own amusement outside the formal context of a marriage or naming-ceremony. In the

past, forms such as '*gbangbaragi*', '*kpati*', and '*edza*' were sung or danced on moonlit nights. Instead, people listen to the radio, or if they have no radio, simply talk. In the towns, the radio and cassette-recorder have almost replaced live music, with two exceptions.

The first is the '*enyako*' - far from disappearing this goes from strength to strength, as the dominant, and today, almost the only, Nupe urban musical form. The reason is that it provides a personalized praise-service to individuals that ties in with the parallel status systems concurrently operating in Nupe society. The ability to become a patron to musicians is one of the formal ways of announcing upgraded status within the traditional Nupe power-structure. As the personal wealth of individuals increases as a result of the development of Nigeria, this will entail the evolution of an agreed medium for the validation of a newly acquired rank. Nupe society permits only a limited number of 'channels' for such an announcement, and the services of praise-singers is one of them.

The guild of women praise-singers, whose presence is indispensible at any major social occasion in Nupe, has become increasingly expensive in recent years, and this has been furthered by elite access to radio and television. This type of praise-singing is the only type of Nupe music to appear on the radio and television, and it does so with a regularity that could please only the object of its attentions and their clients. The dominance of this form has produced an ethic among musicians to either adapt or go under, with the result that some curious hybrid forms have evolved. For example, one player of the lute, '*dunguru*', has assumed the role of a praise-singer, using the same texts as the drummers, and slapping on the body of his non-functional instrument. Most musicians respond to change, however, by simply hanging up their instruments to rot in the rafters.

In the villages, the traditional instrument used for making announcements, calling people to collective work etc. was the transverse horn, '*kafo*'. This has been entirely dropped in favour of the '*enya*' drum, not because there is any less need to call people together than formerly, but simply because the horn is 'not modern'. This is a term of condemnation for the Nupe, the standard by which all cultural practices may be judged. Its application of course is patchy - there are no objective grounds for supposing that '*enyako*' is 'modern' while '*zaworo*' (a dance form popular

forty years ago) is not. This categorization is the Nupe version of classic functionalist analysis. 'Not modern' may be translated as 'no longer functionally significant' within the terms of Nupe society.

2.4 Interpretation of this change

In attempting to understand why these changes have occurred a partial explanation may be found in the obsessive correlation of power with its physical, external symbols. An outsider coming to Nupe society cannot help but be struck by the way material concomitants are assigned to all social roles. Anyone assumes a particular role or position of influence should wear certain clothes, give away certain amounts of money at ceremonies, drive a certain car, and provide meat in appropriate quantities for his relatives. These expectations are in practice frequently confounded, but as ever, an explanation is at hand. Frequently, a man who 'ought to be rich' but in fact only drives a motor-bike instead of a car is thought to have expended too much wealth on medicines designed to attract women. Individuals who do not conform to these patterns are gently but persistently chided until they make some concession, preferably in the purchase of new clothes and the like. The rapid growth of national income in Nigeria from 1974 to 1982, derived from oil, has had the effect of accelerating these processes. Although the 'trickle-down' effect has not been of the order regularly predicted in World Bank reports, there is no doubt that a great many people are considerably wealthier, and that all types of material possession have been freely available on a scale unmatched by any other country in sub-Saharan Africa.

Of necessity, the rising generation must spend a great deal of time trying to decode the presently much elaborated and unstable system of material signs of status. This is important for them, because it has become true that 'you are what you wear'. For a Nupe to succeed the most important skill is deploying various status symbols as effectively as possible. The external imitation of those in the positions they aspire to obtain, can have real consequences in terms of access to places at Universities, jobs in the bureaucracy and so on.

Although the first missionaries reached Nupe in 1860, there was no direct European impact until after the conquest of Nigeria by Lugard's troops in 1902. Nupeland formed part of the old Northern Nigeria, and for some time after the British conquest remained under the system of indirect rule pioneered by Lugard. The real consequences of this was that traditional rulers retained a great deal more of the substance of their power than in the South, although final decisions in political or economic matters still lay with the colonial authorities. For the Nupe, this created a duel physical image of authority, robes and Western clothes, both seeming to coincide with power. In order to mimic the bureaucracy and the traditional rulers it became necessary to be able to adopt a dual life-style. After Independence, the position hardly changed, for the Southerners who now represented the Nigerian Federal government were by this time wearing very passable facsimiles of colonial dress.

Younger Nupe are able to switch between two contradictory personae with considerable ease. From the gown-wearing scholar, discussing Qu'ranic texts and muttering about the immorality of dancing and alcohol consumption they rapidly pass to betrousered, spirits-drinking disco-dancers without any sense of incongruity. In the time since Independence, they have seen power flow away from the traditional and towards the Western mode, a trend fuelled by massive migration into Bida of skilled workers from the South that one estimate (Theis, 1981), puts as high as 33% of the total population of the town. Certainly the motorbikes and canned music characteristic of these groups have made an immense impression on life in the town. The Nupe correctly identify the South as the source of wealth and power in the new Nigeria, and they listen to its canned music, for the same reason they drink Coca-cola, in order to attract some of its undoubted significance to themselves. Anything associated with traditional religion, entertainment, or rural life in general is non-functional in terms of society as it is perceived today - the representation of a dying or dead culture. Like Margaret Mead's Manus, they would be prepared to throw it into the sea to get rid of it.

A classical anthropological metaphor would refer this to the distinction between specific and generalised exchange. Because it cannot express the precise status and power relationships among its listeners, canned music represents only generalised social realities, and this is appropriate to the unstable, heterogeneous community that listens to it. In a relatively fixed community, exchange networks must take more subtle interactions into account, so a form must develop that is responsive to these needs. In traditional Nupe society, the distinction between town and country-side was expressed in geographical versus hierarchical sensitivity. In rural areas, all types of musical event were conceptually at the same level, in that they answered the needs of a specific community. However, they varied from area to area, and were thus 'tuned' to regional differences. In the towns, each type of music was fitted to particular rungs of the social ladder and were particularly reflective of the political authority validated by Islam.

In Nigeria today, the 'other pole' of authority, Islam, has retained its power in the face of the challenge of 'Federal culture' from the South. Although its political role receded in colonial times, its real influence undoubtedly spread. Conversion proceeded apace, assisted by the use of Hausa informants and administrators in large areas of the country not traditionally Hausa-speaking. The strong, centralising tendencies of Islam, and its coherent organizational networks allowed it to gather strength in the years after Independence. Its most significant success has been the election victory in 1979 of the NPN, a party broadly representing Muslim Hausa/Fulani interest in the North. In Nupe society, significant social advancement can only be achieved by Muslims. Indeed, this has led to a diaspora of well-educated Nupe Christians to other parts of the country, where attitudes to religion are more ambivalent.

A sign of the consolidation of political power by the Islamized elites of Nupe society is their designation of an unambiguous music to represent their interests. Multi-faceted musical forms, with oblique texts and ambivalent functions are being eliminated, and

what remains has crystallized into agreed styles used on the media and performed throughout Nupeland, without significant regional stylistic differences. Thus *envako* has become the principal channel for the diffusion of the ideology of the ruling class in Nupeland, and its domain has expanded, while other types of musical experience continue to disappear.

3. The Kana

3.1 The ethnographic background

The Nupe then show the rejection of diversity in favour of uniformity, the rejection of a hierarchy of music aimed at the various levels of society, in favour of a 'one'to'many' form, and the elimination of all musical types conceived of as irrelevant to present reality. The Kana present an appropriate contrast in this respect, for their response to Western culture is almost the inverse of the Nupe. The Kana, a small group living in the Eastern Niger Delta, have remained virtual strangers to the ethnographic literature. Although mentioned in passing in one of the standard reference works on Southern Nigeria (Talbot, 1926:216-7)[4] there has been no anthropological work of any significance. What follows is based on my somewhat restricted fieldwork in the area, and should thus be taken with a measure of caution. Kana is one of the Ogoni group of languages, together with Gokana, Eleme and Ogoi, and these are part of the Cross-River group of the Benue-Congo family. Its speakers live just East of Port Harcourt on the boundary of the present Rivers and Cross-River states, in an area of some 1700 km bounded by the Imo and Bonny rivers. They are subdivided into four localised clans, the Babe, Tai and Northern and Southern Kana,[5] and these correspond to dialect differences. Kana is a tonal language with three level tones and downstep.

At risk of offending Kana speakers, their society may be characterised by saying that it is of 'Igbo' type. That is to say, there is no centralised authority at any level larger than the village, and there are no bars to upward social mobility as a result of birth (except formerly in the case of slaves). The clans are endogamous and patrilineal, normally patrilocal also, although a double descent system may operate in some areas.

The economy is mixed, combining farming, fishing and hunting although individuals are not normally specialized in any of these occupations to the exclusion of others. The coastal strip below Kana is controlled by the Obolo people, so Kana is without direct access to the sea. Nevertheless, fishing increases its significance for the Kana, with proximity to the coast. Decisions affecting the community are normally taken by a council of elders, consisting principally of titled men. Accession to various titles is normally by providing sufficient funds for the appropriate ceremony to take place. Christianity is widespread, but this seems not to have seriously inhibited practices associated with traditional religion. Like the Idoma and Igede to the North, traditional religion is organised around a number of secret societies controlled by men.

The most important of these was the '*Enwanikpo*', restricted to the senior men of the village. This was the 'government' in pre-colonial times. The '*Enwanikpo*' controlled a number of masquerades and a puppet theatre (evidently related to the secular puppet theatre of the Tiv, the '*Kwagh-hir*'). Edicts and decisions of the society were propagated by means of puppets or masquerades speaking through voice-diguisers. These decisions dealt with the sort of business common enough in local councils: land, farming, fishing-rights, inheritance etc.

Less powerful than the '*Enwanikpo*' was the '*kuɣtɛm*' or Lepoard society, whose 'voice' was produced by a bullroarer. The function of of the Leopard society was to discipline the community. Whenever 'bad behaviour' was becoming intolerable (in this context, mostly sexual misdemeanours, I gather), the masquerade would appear and chase members of the village who had earned its disapproval. A variety of other societies ran the gamut from masquerades aimed at controlling aspects of social behaviour within the local group, to dance-clubs aimed at nothing more than the distraction of their members. In every case these were characterized by an essentially co-operative ideology, although the age stratification of society as well as the dichotomy between the sexes provided a certain limiting factor.

3.2 Kana music today

The Kana have a remarkable variety of music, undoubtedly reflecting a variety of influences, both from the Igbo and Ijo in the West and from their Efik-related neighbours to the East. The most culturally significant musical forms are those designed to accompany masquerades, particularly those produced by male secret societies. When the puppet theatre was performed the 'drama' was punctuated by an orchestra of slit-gongs, open conical drums, iron clapperless bells and woodblocks. This orchestra was hidden behind a cloth screen and the audience was told that the sound was of other puppets playing instruments.

Apart from the societies, there are many types of music, dances and masquerades intended to accompany secular occasions such as weddings, title-taking ceremonies, wrestling etc. Players are organized as co-operative societies rather like the '*adowa*' ensembles formed by Ga women in Ghana (Hampton, 1976) or the Igede associations described by Ranung (1973).

The most complex of these is the '*Ekɔni*', an ensemble of tuned drums played by three players, used together with several larger drums, to accompany the dancing of unmarried girls. Another important ensemble is the '*Kpogio*', consisting of a large bottle gourd struck on the mouth with the palm, accompanied by three large iron bells of graduated sizes. This is used to praise important men at title-taking. October, after the harvest has been gathered, is the season of traditional wrestling, '*Ekpobe*', accompanied by a large open drum '*gbɛnɛkere*' and several small woodblocks, '*ekere*'. Finally there are ensembles connected with the fattening room, a custom widespread in this part of Nigeria. Girls about to be married are kept in a special house, away from the community. Inside they are dressed in expensive clothes and fed well so that they become plump. A parallel ceremony practised by the Ibibio, *Mbopo*, is described in detail in Akpabot (1975:48 ff). At a certain point they are taken on an 'outing' to show the community how beautiful they have become. This is the occasion for a dance of celebration done by the women, with an ensemble of large xylophone, drums, slit-gongs and struck tuned water-pots.

The Kana have a number of solo instruments such as the sansa, and the musical bow, played by men for their personal entertainment. A feature of Kana music that contrasts very sharply with Nupe is the emphasis on individual composition. This tradition is fostered by the solo instruments, as performers often are an important source of new songs. Like the Tiv, described by Keil (1979) as always anxious to hear newly composed songs, the Kana value new composition as much as traditional tunes. There are a number of well-known virtuosi among the Kana, playing instruments such as the sansa, xylophone and the *ek ni* tuned drums. Their compositions for these instruments are attached to their name for as much as a generation, although presumably they are eventually absorbed into the large body of 'traditional' tunes.

In Summar, then the Kana clearly have as rich and varied a music as the Nupe, responsive to both aspects of social structure and also seasonal aspects of material life. The difference, however, is that among the Kana all these forms of music are flourishing. Young and old seem to participate in performance arts with equal enthusiasm and there is some evidence that the variety of musical forms may actually have expanded in recent times. A title-making ceremony of a senior man may attract as many as fifteen different performance groups, something inconceivable among the Nupe both because such variety no longer exists and because such a broad spectrum would include musicians from every level of society, something that would not be seen as an appropriate index of upgraded status. The secret societies do not have the authority they had in the past, but the 'secularization' of a number of sound-producers has inspired the creation of new musical types by younger players.

A similar phenomenon has been reported from Rumanian villages in the Padureni region (Lloyd 1976:66-67). Originally investigated by Bartok in 1913, they were restudied by a group of scholars in the early fifties. In this period of forty years, the villages, traditionally isolated, had been exposed to the twentieth century in a rather dramatic fashion. Their offspring had gone to both World Wars, and roads had made this region accessible, yet far from etiolating the repertoire of folk-song, it had acted to enrich it, presumably to take in and account for the cluster of new experiences suddenly available to people. Melody, texts and ensemble had changed considerably in this period, but without signs of decreasing in

variety, or frequency of performance. Further work would have to be undertaken to determine whether such a flowering was a merely temporary phenomenon, before the homogenizing force of international culture again eliminated this tradition.

Whatever the reason for this it is not that the Kana have not been exposed to Western culture. Living in the Delta has meant that the Kana have had sporadic contact with Europeans and their goods for over three hundred years. Although the first colonial patrol to the Ogoni area was in 1907 (Talbot,I:216) and the Ogoni came into conflict with the authorities in 1913-14 in the wake of riots about taxes, Europeans have been familiar from their presence at the river-mouths of the Bonny and the Opobo. Neither does it reflect the relative poverty of the area. A particularly elaborate title-taking ceremony I witnessed took place in a large, entirely modern European house, in a small village. At present, Kana society abounds in such material contradictions - unlike Nupe, where the exotic external aspect of the West has rapidly been adapted to traditional categories.

4. Conclusion

The explanation of this contrast may lie in the acephalous structure of a society that does permit major disparities of wealth and status. In the pre-colonial era the Nupe had already evolved a highly elaborated conceptualization of power, and it therefore came as a considerable shock when the British removed it from them so swiftly and completely. Their response to this was to look closely at their conquerors to try and determine what had made this momentous event possible. The Kana, however, may have felt less threatened, because with no authority to remove and subjugate, the administration interfered less dramatically with their way of life.[6]

Significant also is the economic contrast between Kana and Nupe. The means to wealth among the Kana was through farming, recruitment of labour was through kinship ties, so individuals could thus be only marginally richer than others in their community. Among Nupe, the source of surplus income was trade (particularly the sale of slaves in the nineteenth century) and this permitted great disparities of wealth, with correspondingly large gaps between expectation and possession. The stratification of their society permitted a related

hierarchy of musical forms to evolve, associated with its various levels and changes in that pattern led to the rapid elimination or promotion of particular forms.

Dichotomies in Kana society, however, were only between the sexes and the generations. Although recent rises in income in Nigeria associated with oil-wealth have now made it possible for some Kana to earn substantially more than others, this does not give them access to the sort of authority it would confer on a Nupe. They have only the opportunity to spend ever-increasing amounts on the feasts provided at their title-taking ceremonies. The increase in disposable income has probably then acted to expand patronage for musical forms and thereby stimulate diversity. By contrast, among the Nupe, it has crushed them, because the expansion of personal wealth implies the evolution of limited channels for expressing authority structures within society. For the Kana, as wealth is not the key to authority, a diversity of forms is positively encouraged.

The argument of this paper has been that the survival of a variety of musical forms within a society is closely linked with that society's perception of the attitude of those who hold power toward these musics. Because the internal structure of Kana society was little affected by the colonial regime, it had few consequences for their traditional music. The lack of urban/rural and peasant/trader dichotomies all contributed to the persistence of a diverse and yet highly integrated music. By contrast, the coming of the British sent shock-waves through Nupe society, leading to the disappearance of the majority of musical forms associated with traditional religious and social institutions, as well as the crystallization and consolidation of the few forms that were retained.

Footnotes

[1]Fieldwork was conducted in Nigeria 1979-82 on an SSRC grant no.S78 21285 SA. My work in Nigeria was sponsored by the Federal Department of Antiquities and the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ibadan.

[2]Nupe words in the text were transcribed by myself on the basis of the orthography established by Banfield (1914). Kana terms were transcribed by Mr. Nwinee Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt, in an orthography devised by Professor Kay Williamson of the same University. Geographical names, however, retain their administrative forms, even if these conflict with the canons of modern linguistics.

[3]The Nupe expression corresponding to this is *enya ezhi panyi*, literally, 'the music of the people of long ago'.

[4]Talbot incorrectly treats the Ogoni as a 'sub-tribe' of the Ibibio. There is no justification for this beyond the fact that the Ogoni languages belong to the same family as Ibibio.

[5]Recently renamed Khana and Kenkhana (Kpone-Torwe, 1983:1).

[6]Not the least because the humidity of the arsa probably discouraged frequent visits.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Mr. Nwinee Williamson of the University of Port Harcourt for taking time to help me understand the Kana people, and also for the transcription of Kana terms in the text. Thanks also to Carole Pegg for discussion of some of the definitions I have adopted.

Bibliography

Akpabot, S.E. (1975) *Ibibio Music in Nigerian Culture*. Michigan State University Press.

Banfield, A.W. (1914) *Nupe-English Dictionary*. The Niger Press, Shonga.

Hampton, B. (1978) *Music of the Ga people of Ghana*. (Disc) Ethnic Folkways FE 429.

Keil, C. (1979) *Tiv Song*. University of Chicago Press.

Kpone-Torwe, S. (1983) *People and migrations; the case of the settlement of the Akan in Southern Nigeria as the Ogoni of the Eastern Niger Delta*, mimeo. Project paper, 26/1/83. African History Seminar, SOAS.

Lloyd, A.L. (1967) *Folk-song in England*. Lawrence and Wishart.

Mattei, Le Commandant (1890) *Bas-Niger, Benoue, Dahomey*. Baratier, Paris.

Meek, C.K. (1925) *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria*. OUP, London.

Merriam, A.P. (1977) 'Music Change in a Basongye village (Zaire)', *Anthropos*, 72:806-846.

Nettl, B. (1958) 'Historical aspects of Ethnomusicology', *American Anthropologist*, 60:518-532.

Nadel, S.F. (1937) 'Gunnu - a fertility cult of the Nupe of northern Nigeria', *JRAI*, XLVII:91-130.

Nadel, S.F. (1942) *A Black Byzantium*, OUP for IAI, London.

Nadel, S.F. (1954) *Nupe Religion*, Routledge, Kegan Paul, London.

Ranung, B. (1973) 'Music of dawn and day; music and dance associations among the Igede of Nigeria. *Ethos*, 1-4:24-42.

Talbot, A. (1926) *Southern Nigeria*, Government Printer, Lagos.

Temple, C. (1922 second ed.) *Notes on the Tribes of Northern Nigeria*. C.M.S. Lagos.

Theis, M. (1981) *Bida master plan*. Max Lock Group, Nigeria.

Wachsmann, K. (1961) 'Criteria for acculturation' in J. LaRue (ed.) *Report of the Eighth Congress of the International Musicological Society*. New York, pp.139-149. Barenreiter, Kassel.