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Instrumental Technology of *Dùndún* Drum of the Yorùbá

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Abstract

This paper is a documentation of the systematic process of constructing *dùndún* - the most common drum in Yorubaland. Using interview and participant-observer methods, a collection of data through the aid of audio tape recorder and digital/still camera was embarked upon during a fieldwork carried out in Ilora, Oyo state. After examining the numerous stages in the design and construction of the *dùndún*, the paper went on to describe its playing position. It also stressed the cruciality of providing incontrovertible evidences to challenge the continuous reliance on Western European concepts in the teaching of courses on instrumental technology at the expense of authentic indigenous knowledge systems found in African continent. Finally, the paper posited that the time is ripe for African musicologists to engage in meaningful researches into various aspects of African traditional musical instruments including their technology with a view to documenting, preserving and promoting the rich and invaluable indigenous knowledge systems of Africa.

Introduction

The *dùndún* is a clear example of West African pattern of double membrane pressure drums. These are drums with bodies curved in the general shape of hourglass, equal membranes on either end side of the drum, secured to tensioning thongs which run longitudinally the whole length of the drum, circling the body. They can be found in a broad area of West Africa stretching from Senegal to as far as Cameroun Republic southwards. Examples of parallel specimens of drums which share resemblance with *dùndún* are *donno*¹, *tamba*², *hara*³, and *ajo*⁴ amongst others. *Dùndún* is the generic name for various hourglass shaped pressure drums of the Yorùbá. Thieme (1969) unequivocally declared that any discussion of Yorùbá traditional musical instruments should logically begin with the *dùndún* drum family. Not only does *dùndún* enjoy widespread popularity of all instruments, its ensemble are also readily accessible and utilized in music making at various religious, ceremonial and social events. The presence of *dùndún* ensemble at any occasion requiring the use of drum is

most certain in Yorubaland (Ọlaniyan; 2007). Even though certain religious music may require the use of specific ensemble associated with a particular deity, but where tradition allows the usage of another instrument or mixed ensembles, the *dùndún* is a ready choice. For example *dùndún* could adequately serve as substitute in the absence of *àgèrè* drum during *Ògún*⁵ festival or *isipà ọdè*⁶. In the same vein, it is not uncommon to find *dùndún* drums obtrusively and effectively combine with the *bàtá* ensemble during *Sàngó*⁷ festival. Although earlier scholars such as Thieme (1969), Euba (1974 and 1990) as well Ọlaniyan (1984) have extensively discussed the nature, structural design and forms of change in the making of *dùndún* drum, there is dearth of information on the process of its instrumental technology especially as practised by contemporary drum makers as well as *dùndún* drummers themselves. This is the gap in knowledge that this paper attempts to fill. Information was obtained during interview sessions held with a drum maker/player in *Ìlọra* and *dùndún* players found in *Oyo*, *Ede*, *Ọgbómọsọ*, and *Ọsogbo*⁸. The findings from the fieldwork supported the submissions of scholars and concluded that the technology of *dùndún* drum by and large has relatively remained the same. However, a few modern tools are now being used by carvers and this is aimed at fast tracking construction process. In terms of the layout, the paper, after attempting a discourse of the origin of *dùndún* drum, briefly examines the place of *dùndún* in Yorùbá culture. Thereafter, it explained the numerous stages in the design and construction of the drum. In addition, it examined the playing position of the various instruments in a typical *dùndún* ensemble. In the end, the paper makes some suggestions aimed at promoting African indigenous knowledge system and its integration into Nigerian musical arts education, particularly in the area which involves the teaching of music / instrumental technology at the higher institution level.

Origin of *dùndún* drum

There is no gainsaying that *dùndún* is central to the Yorùbá society. The task of asserting a date to the introduction of *dùndún* into Yorùbá culture is almost impossible. Evidence is lacking and there is no conclusion that can be drawn with any degree of certainty. Johnson (1921: 121), while listing Yorùbá musical instruments included the *dùndún* as one of the seven instruments referred to as "ancient drums". The question which arises then is how old is ancient? Various writers have extensively examined the numerous myths of origin of *dùndún* in Yorubaland. The author will not belabour himself with the various lines of divide, but can only conclude that a silver thread that runs through all the various

traditions regarding the possible origin of the *dùndún* is the conspicuous reference to the name "Àyàn". Indeed, a few historians claimed the name referred to a specific person, who was later deified as having borne that name originally. Whatever is the case, the notable fact is that Àyàn Agalú is historically believed to be the father of the art of drumming. Laoye (1959: 10) submitted that he was venerated and is today still worshipped as the god of drumming by traditional *dùndún* drummers who are generally known and addressed as Àyàn. Bankole *et al* (1975) agree with this view when they submitted that Àyàn is the Yorùbá drum deity whose name the members of his families usually use as prefix to their own names, such as Àyànniyi, Àyánwùmí and Àyàndòkun amongst others.

Classes of *dùndún*

There is a consensus of opinion among my informants that *dùndún* is a broad term covering a number of drums. In other words, what constitute *dùndún* can be further broken into categories. Structure-wise, there are four sub-families of *dùndún* drum. These are:

- a) the *iyáàlù* sub family, which consists of *iyáàlù*, *isáájú*, *ikehin* and *kerikeri*
- b) *gangan* sub-family, consisting of *gangan*, *kànàngó* and *àdámò*
- c) *kósó* sub-family
- d) *gúdúgúdú* family

Both the *iyáàlù* and *gangan* sub-families look alike in many respects, but they are clearly differentiated from each other by virtue of the shape and size of their shells, and in most cases, the colour of their *osán* (tensioning thongs). Apart from the fact that the *iyáàlù* is larger in size than *gangan*, it is also visibly differentiated from the other double-headed tension drums by the attachment of *sawcro* (jingles) to the lower half of each end of the drum. The shell of *gangan* is characterized by an elongated trunk, whereas the *iyáàlù* is considerably shorter. In addition, the tensioning thongs of *iyáàlù* have an off-white colour, while those of *gangan* sub-family (with the exception of *kànàngó*), all have brown colour tensioning thongs. These two sub-families are much different from the *kósó* and *gúdúgúdú* sub-families because they are double-headed hourglass tension drums. While *kósó* is single-headed open-ended hourglass drum, the *gúdúgúdú* on the other hand is neither a tension drum, nor a hourglass shaped drum. Using the Sachs/Hornbostel's taxonomic classification system, its physical features categorizes it as kettledrum. It is referred to as the progenitor of all drums that make up *dùndún* and it is usually combined with the *iyáàlù* sub family.

It is important to note that Yorùbá traditional musical instruments most especially membranophones are generally grouped into families. The Yorùbá favours combining drums according to their families. It is rare for them to adopt drums singly. Hence, there is the *dùndún* family, *bàtá* family, *igbin* family and so forth. A careful examination of drums associated with different deities would attest to this assertion. For example, the standard number of *bàtá* set of drums used during Sàngó festival, consists of four members namely *iyáàlù bàtá*, *omele-abo*, *omele-akọ* and *kúdí*; so also is the *igbin* drum set used for the worship of Obàtálá consists of four members namely *iyá nlá*, *iyá ágan*, *afere* and *keke*.

The notion of family as a vital unit within the entire societal set up is very paramount to the Yorùbá. Each family of these ensembles has a principal instrument often referred to as *iyá* (mother) played by the leader of the ensemble. This explains the position of the *iyáàlù* (mother drum) as the principal drum in most Yorùbá sets of drums such as *dùndún*, *bàtá*, *kete* and *bembe*. With regards to the *dùndún* ensemble, *gúdúgúdú* is referred to as the father, while the children in the family are *omele isáájú*, (supportive forerunner) and *omele àtelé* or *ikehin* (supportive follower). In the same vein, the *bàtá* set has *omele akọ* (secondary male) and *omele abo* (secondary female) drums. The conventional Western European household unit known as the nuclear family comprises the father, mother, and children. It is essential to note that this is however not the case in African culture. Specifically, the traditional Yorùbá family system favours the extended family set up, wherein membership is not restricted to the aforementioned numbers, but extends to uncles, aunties, nephews, nieces and cousins as well as close relations who are all part and parcel of the family and are generally referred to as brothers and sisters. It is in the light of above that there are other supportive members of a drum ensemble or a mixture of two or more distinct instruments combined together. For example, it is very common to find *dùndún* and *sekere* instruments combined to form what is known as *dùndún-sekere* ensemble. In some instances, the ensemble could also include *aro*. At other times, one can find a mixture of distinct ensembles combined as accompaniment on special occasions especially at traditional festivals. This practice is not limited to drumming or instrumentation alone, it seems to permeate the entire Yorùbá cultural fibre and governed by what is known as 'the spirit of togetherness' or collective responsibility. This is well embedded and articulated in the following Yorùbá sayings:

SAYING

*Kí á rin,
kí á pọ,
Yíyẹ ní
ny'eni,*

*Ká f'owọ
wẹ ọwọ,
f'owọ fi
nmo,*

*Àjèjè ọwọ
kan kò
gbẹ igbá
d'óri,*

*Àgbájo
ọwọ lá fi
nsọ'ya,*

TRANSLATION

To walk together is always befitting

To use all hands in cleaning one another, the hands get completely Cleaned

A lonely hand will never be able to lift a calabash up to the head

We only use an assembly of hands to beat the chest

All these can be summarized as "United we stand, Divided we fall". The basis for mutual co-existence among members of any family therefore is governed by the concept of division of labour and leadership-followership operating within the spirit of team work.

Component parts of the *dùndún* set

The *dùndún* consists of an hourglass-shaped wooden shell known as *igi*, which acts as the resonator for the instrument. It is often firmly fixed by *ọsán* (tensioning thongs) to the drum heads consisting of *awọ* (animal skin). They are firmly fastened in such a way that when pressure is exerted on the strings, both heads are stretched simultaneously to raise the pitch of the drum. On the other hand, a relaxation or release of the strings lowers its pitch. The outer circumference of each drum head is defined by a stiff black leather tube known as *égi*, acting as a protective binding for the edges of the drum. The *ọsán* are made to lie beneath the *égi* and are both fastened to the *awọ* by a thin leather

string known as *ogan*. Its threading is made visible over the *égi* as parallel continuous line. *Àpá* - a shoulder strap is then attached to the *égi* at both ends of the drum by means *okùn àpá* which are leather strings. *Ìdélù* is a twisted leather string secured to the trunk of the shell and is used to tie or bend the *osán*, more or less acting as tuning material, or used to fix the drum's pitch as desired by its player. The *dùndún* drum is played with a curved stick known as *opá* or *kongo*. It has a flattened tip, whose end is sometimes enclosed in animal skin of the same thickness as the *awo*, while the end of the stick, held by the drummer is bound with either a small wrapped piece of cloth or leather depending on player's preference. This is used to cover the base of the stick in order to prevent any form of irritation on the drummer's hand as well as enhance its firm grip.

Construction of *dùndún*

IGÌ: The shell is made from the wood of either *àpá* (mahogany bean - *Azelia Africana*), *omọ* or *ayúnre* (*Albizzia Mimosaceae*). However, *irókò* or timber trees can sometimes be used in the absence of the three aforementioned trees. Scholars are not fully agreed as to which of these trees is most preferred by Yorùbá carvers. While Abraham (1958) suggested that *ayúnre* is carvers' favourite because it is 'soft and easily carved into spoons, images etc', Laoye's (1959) submission is diametrically opposed to this view. For him, the *omọ* tree (and in its absence, the *àpá* or *irókò* tree) is usually the carvers' preferred choice and considered the best because of its ability to resist harsh weather conditions such as high temperature due to excessive sunlight and heat and also low temperature due to rainfall. Akpabot (1986) in support of this view made reference to a Yorùbá legend which states that *omọ* tree is usually found by the wayside and it is able to "hear" the conversations of passers-by. As a result, it is able to reflect correctly the Yorùbá tones as well as "talk" most eloquently than others. All my informants confirmed that *omọ* tree is best for the construction of *dùndún*. The carver, known as *Gbenàgbenà* usually obtains the unprocessed wood by felling an appropriate tree from the forest or bush as the case may be. This is often preceded by a ritual especially if the tree is discovered to be an *ako* (male). It is, however, not compulsory to perform any ritual if the tree is an *abo* (female). Some of the ways to recognize that a tree is an *ako* are the existence of a hole within a tree or shedding of water by a tree on the ground as if it had rained, and in some cases, the tree is translucent at night. The traditional belief is that an *ako* tree is inhabited by a spirit and it is essential to propitiate the vengeance of the indwelling spirit with necessary sacrifice before the tree could

be felled. Failure to do so might have dire consequences on the carver. Euba (1990) gave an example of a ritual exercise that the carver must perform at the foot of the tree before felling an *akọ* tree. The procedure for offering the sacrifice according to him includes bringing of an animal, usually a goat, to the foot of the tree. The blood of the animal is offered along with *ékuru*⁹ and *kolanuts*. The carver thereafter addresses the tree as follows:

ADDRESS

A fẹ gẹ iwọ igi yí
Bí orọ bá nbe, kó
kùrò

Kó má pa wá l'ára
Kó má sì p'omọ wa
l'ára

Ètùtù rẹ la mú wá
yí o

TRANSLATION

We wish to cut you, O tree
If there is a spirit inside, let
it depart

May it not harm us
Or our children

Here is your offering of
pacification, we bring

It is essential for the carver to wait for another two or three days before returning to fell the tree. The prayer and offerings both serve as quit notice to the spirit, and the 2-3 days given is to allow total evacuation by the indwelling spirit who would have to seek a new place of abode. The next stage is for the carver to divide the felled tree into several portions. The trunk is reserved for making the big drums, while its branches are used for small drums, for example *kàràngó*. Each of these portions is thereafter carried to the carver's workshop for other necessary processes as soon as possible. This is because the best time to shell the drums is when they are still wet. With the aid of different tools, including axes of different sizes, blades and end points, the carver first constructs the shell of the drum (*orú*) according to desired shape and length. After this, the line of circumference of the bell known as *agogo* is marked out. *Agogo* serves as the connecting joint of each half of the drum shells. Each *orú* has two chambers consisting of *kúnrrín* and *kèkè*. These are the inner and outer chambers respectively. The *kèkè* is the widest of the three (*kèkè*, *kúnrrín* and *agogo*), which according to the carvers is the low tone of the drum. It is followed by *kúnrrín*, the middle tone, while *agogo* happens to be the shortest, and is the high tone. It is evident from the foregoing that the carvers are quite knowledgeable in the law governing its acoustic, which establishes a relationship

between the level of pitch and the length or size of the vibrating columns, without any mathematical calculation of the *orù*. At our key informant's workshop¹⁰, there were some drum shells under construction, while some others were freshly completed with the following measurements:

<i>Ìyáàlù:</i>	diameter:	8"
	length:	20"
	<i>orù:</i>	7.6"
<i>Ìsáájú:</i>	diameter:	4½ "
	length:	14"
<i>orù:</i>		7"

It is customary for a carver to inscribe his family's insignia at two points on the *orù*. These are often placed on the *kúnrúrl's* joints with *agogo*. The carver's symbol represents the house of *Àyàn* and it is the point where libation is poured during the worship of *Àyàn*.

Procedure for assembling the parts of *dùndún* drum

Multifarious stages are involved in the process of constructing the *dùndún*. It often turns out to be a division of labour because it involves different specialists at every stage. After the *Gbenàgbenà* (carver) has carved the wood to the right shape (See plate 1 - appendix - showing the picture of Emmanuel Ayantanreti with half completed shells in his workshop at Ilora), *Àyàn* who is the drummer buys the already carved shell of the drum and assembles them himself. Tradition demands that the drum shell which the drummer buys must be covered with a piece of cloth and must never be exposed to public view when it is being transported from the carvers' workshop to *Àyàn's* home. This is because the wood is seen and treated as a newly born and a sacred entity, which must be especially cared for. It is to be 'sanctified' for the spirit of *Àyàn* to possess. As a result, it must be 'pure'. Other materials used include the skin (*osán, awo, ogán* and *idélù*), which are sometimes bought from a leather worker, although the drummer could make them himself. It is also the leather worker who has the responsibility of sewing the *igbàjú, ègi* and *ápá* together. Custom also demands that a ritual must be performed before a drum is constructed from an entirely new shell. According to Ayantanreti, the drummer buys about twelve (12") yards of a piece of white cloth and a pigeon in addition to *ékuru* and some drinks, which he provides for members of his (*Àyàn*) household. A sacrifice is thus made to *Àyàn Agalú*. Assemblage of the parts then begins with the drummer using

water to soften the already dry and processed *awo* (skin) meant for both heads of the drum. The *awo* is placed across two openings of the shell and sewed with *ogán* to the *ègì* and *osán* in such a way that it overlaps the edge of the shell. This is folded back and pasted down. The drummer would require between six to eight (6-8) lengths of leather for the *osán* before it could cover the entire face. However, about 40 lines of *osán* would be needed to sufficiently complete this process. *Ìkekere* (thin bamboo sticks) are then inserted between the *osán* (usually a stick per 6 lines of *osán*) in order to twist the *osán* and also to exert a little pressure on the drum heads. Each head is fixed in this way and exposed to the sun one after the other until they are both dry.

The drummer then, carefully takes off the *ìkekere* one after the other and tightly pulls the twisted lines of *osán*. This way, he binds the *osán* slightly in the middle with *idèlù* and again leaves it in the sun for about a day or two. The next day after the *osán* is unbound, the drummer rubs them with a hard stone to produce a whitish colour if it is the *iyáàlù*. They are now tightly tied and again placed in the sun for another whole day, after which it is then ready for playing. Before playing the drum for the first time, an elder, usually from the Àyàn family is called upon to pray over it. He invokes the spirit of Àyàn Àgalú to 'possess' the drum in order to bring good fortune and not bad luck to its owner/player. He further supplicates that the professional tool would be utilized for the well being of the player in order to elicit favourable response from listeners especially patrons who would in turn show deep appreciation to the player. Libation is thereafter poured and prayers said in respect of the just constructed drum.

Tuning the *dùndún*

Even though the *dùndún* drummer may not have a definite prescribed mode for determining the exact pitches to tune each of the drums, he, nevertheless, relies on his long standing experience to tune each instrument of a given ensemble in relative order of lowness or highness to one another. Tuning is done by ear. In practical terms, the secondary drums - *isáájú*, *àtélé* and *kerikeri* are all tightly bound in the middle with each of them tuned to a fixed pitch. The *iyáàlù*, being the real 'talking drum' is not tied as others to allow its player who is the leader to freely make use of all the pitches through the tightening and releasing of the tensioning thongs (*osán*). For the *iyáàlù*, looseness of the *osán* is an advantage especially for talking. The drummer usually ties its strings and leaves it in the sun for about an hour or two, after which it is untied in order to achieve desired lowest pitch from which graduation to higher tones could then be made.

Playing position and technique of performance

The normal thing is to carry tension drum on the left shoulder by means of the shoulder strap in a suspended manner. The *konga*, held on the right hand is used to strike the surface of the drum on the thinner side. The smaller tension drums such as *kàńàngó* are usually made to rest under the player's armpit, while the bigger drums such as *iyáàlù* and *kerikeri* are made to rest against the hip-bone of the player. The head-to-head line of the tension drum is roughly parallel with the ground incline upwards at about angle 45 degree. As mentioned earlier, the drummer raises the pitch of the drum by pulling the thongs (tightening it), while its relaxation (releasing the thongs) causes the lowering of pitches to be produced (See plates 2 and 3 of the appendix for illustrations).

a) *Iyáàlù dùndún*:

Of all the Yorùbá drums, the *iyáàlù dùndún* is the most "talkative". Indeed, numerous scholars have reported that the Yorùbá hourglass shaped drum is most notably used as speech surrogate because of its wide range of pitches. First, it acts as the leader of the ensemble. Indeed, it is seen as the overall head of the *dùndún*. The *iyáàlù* player in traditional ensemble is thus the leader and coordinator of the performance. Secondly, it has more variety in its patterns than other instruments in the ensemble. Through appropriate manipulation of the tension thongs, the drum is made to imitate the pitch inflections and accents as well as slides and glissandi. It is clearly distinguished from other members of the ensemble in terms of size and most importantly because of *saworo* (decorative bells) attached to it. Generally speaking, the *iyáàlù dùndún* is traditionally used to recite praise poetry of individuals, make proverbial and philosophical statements like the one illustrated in example 1 below:

Musical Example 1:

iyáàlù

O ni le ni o ni gba fun (O) ni le ni

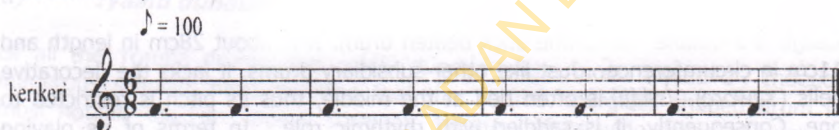
o ni gba fun a gba ra o

jo, ko lo un o ni le wo, (O) ni le ni

c) *Kerikeri*

Kerikeri is the largest of the double membrane pressure drums in *dùndún*. In some cases however, it could be about the same size with the *iyáàlù*. *Kerikeri*, also known as *Aguda* is about 35cm long and about 15cm in diameter. Its leather thongs are tied at the middle and its role in the ensemble is often to punctuate the accents. Below is an example:

Musical example 4:



d) *Gúdúgúdú*

Gúdúgúdú, also known as *opon* is a single headed bowl-like framed membrane drum, hung around the neck in front of the player. Its component parts are as follows: (a) *igi*, (b) *egi*, (c) *osán*, (d) *kúsanrín*, (e) *ékàn*, (f) *awo*, (g) *ida*, (h) *ojá*, (i) *mojáwéré ojá*, (j) *ogán*, and (k) *ilagbà*. The *igi* is the wood from which the drum shell is made. *Egi* is the overlapping portion of the *gúdúgúdú*'s head that is folded back over a string to stiffen its head. Instead of using goat's skin as in the case of *iyáàlù* and others, the practice in the case of *gúdúgúdú* is to use the skin of *etú* (Maxwell's Duicker - *Philantomba Monticolor Maxwellii*) because it is thicker, tougher and more durable. The *osán* with which *gúdúgúdú* is made is obtained from *ésúrò* (*Cephalophys Rufilatus* or Redflanked Duicker), while *ékàn* are the tuning pegs carved from the wood known as *ijan*. An iron ring manufactured by a blacksmith known as *kúsanrín* is used to hold the tuning pegs to the base of the shell. One notable part of *gúdúgúdú* is the *ida*. It is a black paste placed on the surface of the membrane for tone variation. *Dùndún* players usually buy *ida* from *bàtá* players who normally have it in large quantities. All *bàtá* drums have *ida* on their surfaces. *Ìda* is also one major feature which an instrument in *dùndún* ensemble shares with the *bàtá*. In fact, *Àyàntánretí* used the presence of *ida* to justify his proposed theory of *dùndún*'s evolution as being traceable to *bàtá*, more so that *gúdúgúdú* is regarded as the genesis and progenitor of all *dùndún* drums. *Ojá* (a strip of woven cloth) used to hang *gúdúgúdú* around the neck in front of the player, *mojáwéré ojá* and *ogán* are

common to the *iyáàlù* and others, the *ilagbà* also known as *bilálà* is the last part. It is cut into two and used to play the *gúdúgúdú*.

Construction and playing position of *gúdúgúdú*

After the carver had shaped the wood to desired dimension, the drummer softens the processed skin for the drum head in water and thereafter attaches it to the shell in such a way that it is slightly wider than the shell's circumference. In doing so, he carefully allows the overlapped portion to be folded back to form the *ẹgi* before sewing it on to the *ọsán*, which had been arranged in groups of 4 - 6 around the body of the drum. All these are looped together at the *kúsanrín* which is at the base. Each strand of *ọsán* is tightly pulled as they are put in place after which the drum is put in the sun to dry. The following day, the *ọsán* are re-tightened before the tuning pegs are installed to achieve desired tone. The drummer taps the surface of the membrane to check the sound, and if need be, makes necessary adjustments until he is satisfied. Next, the *ida*, which can last four years, is then fixed on the centre of the head. Finally, the *ọjá* and *ilagbà* are attached and construction is completed. In the case of *gúdúgúdú*, the player wears the *ọjá* (neck strap) around his neck in a manner that the drum rests on the player's stomach with the head facing outwards. *gúdúgúdú* player alternatively uses a pair of *bilálà* or *ọsán* held on both hands to play the instrument. To produce a low pitch, the surface of the *ida* is beaten, while the membrane surface is played to produce a high pitch. All drummers stated that the repeated text of *gúdúgúdú* part is '*bó tán, mà tún r'okó*', and also '*Baba má j'íyán táń*' as illustrated in example 4 below:

Musical example 4:

gúdúgúdú

$\text{♩} = 100$

gúdúgúdú

$\text{♩} = 100$

Je gu du je gu du, je gu du, je gu du; gu du gu du ye ge. gu du gu du, ye ge

All the drummers interviewed agreed that during the annual worship of Àyàn, *gúdúgúdú* takes the centre stage and signifies the object of worship.

Repairs and maintenance of *dùndún*

The durability of any instrument is, by and large, subject to its maintenance. A well built and well maintained *dùndún* could last up to four years or more before it would need major overhauling. With the exception of the heads of the tension drum, which are replaced from time to time, most other component parts of the *dùndún* such as the *osán* (skin) and *igi* (shell) do not wear out easily as they are known to be able to withstand serious pressure from incessant playing. Indeed, it is generally agreed among most *dùndún* drummers that the durability of the instrument is subject to the frequency of its utility. In other words, it is made to be long-lasting, if it is played frequently.

Recommendations and Conclusion

In the face of increasingly global domination of Western technological advancement with its threatening effects of relegating indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) of Africa to the background, the time is now when all well meaning African musicologists would rise to defend their heritage by engaging in intensive research projects. These efforts should be aimed at providing sound theoretical foundation upon which the teaching of courses in music technology in Nigeria's higher institutions would be based. Proper and systematic

documentation of instrumental technology of African traditional musical instruments would not only serve as useful advocacy tools for adoption of authentic IKS into Nigeria's music programme, but also provide incontrovertible evidences to critically argue against continued domination of western form of music education with its attendant inconsequential effect of disorienting the African young learner and its unjustifiable demeaning position. The potentials of indigenous instrument makers could be better harnessed by musicologists through collaboration and on partnership basis especially where grants and fundings are made available. The advantages of this in the efforts towards standardization of indigenous instruments in order to break through the current cultural barriers and make them internationally acceptable cannot be overemphasized. When success is finally achieved in this area, mass production of these instruments would enhance higher productivity and invariably boost Nigeria's national economy as the nation navigates through turbulent seas to become self sufficient in many areas. In the end, the country and its citizens stand to benefit from their hard earned labour.

Endnotes

- ¹ a Ghanaian pressure drum as noted by Nketia (1963: 14-19)
- ² a pressure drum found in Guinea as pointed out by Schaeffner (1951: 62)
- ³ a Dahomean drum of Republic of Benin
- ⁴ found in the Tiv area of Nigeria according to Lane (1954: 13)
- ⁵ Yorùbá god of iron
- ⁶ a special burial rite performed by members of hunters' guild for a departed colleague
- ⁷ Yorùbá god of thunder and lightening
- ⁸ These are incontrovertibly prominent Yorùbá towns where *dùndún* drumming tradition is widely preserved to date.
- ⁹ a type of food made from cowpea
- ¹⁰ in Ilorà

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Appendix

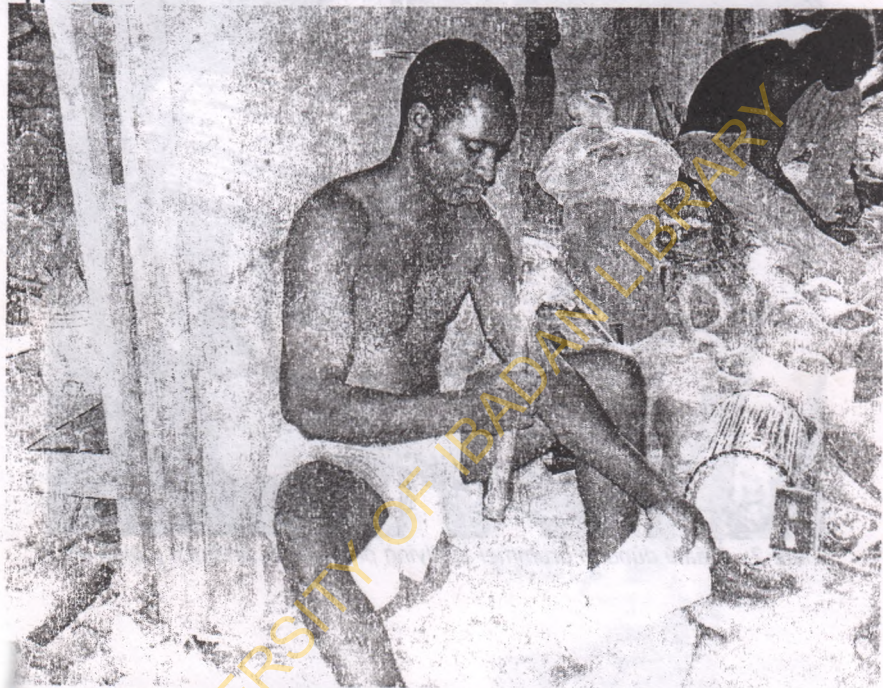


Plate 1: Emmanuel Ayantanreti in action at his workshop in Ilora

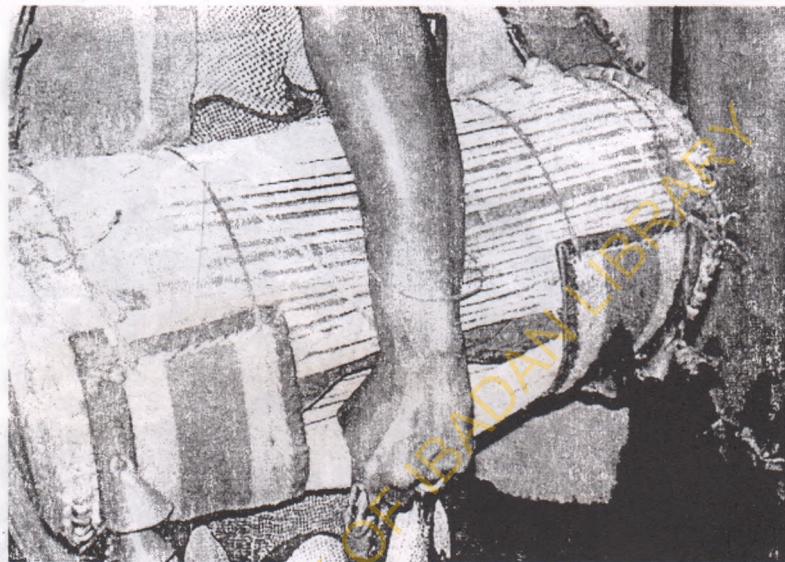


Plate 2: Iyààlù dundún drummer applying pressure to produce a high pitch

ArtReflections



Plate 3: Ìyáàlù dùndún drummer relaxes pressure to produce a low pitch