TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: A GUIDE TO DUNDUN TECHNOLOGY

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Introduction

Dundun technology encompasses all the processes that are involved in the construction, repairs and maintenance of *dundun* drums. Dundun technology was used as an example of the numerous instruments that are found in Nigeria. This paper seeks to do an overview of this *dundun* technology with emphasis on its contributions to the development of music education in Nigeria. Theory of traditionalism that was propounded by Copland (1989) was adopted to drive home the salient points that were raised in the study. Participant observation, interview and review of literatures were used to gather the different pieces of information for the study. The study discovered that emphasis needs be laid on the African musical practices if the music educational programmes will be a balanced one that is developmental oriented. The paper suggested the following; need to incorporate some of the indigenous technologists into the formal educational setting as artistes in residence should be worked out to tap into their knowledge; and that there should be collaborative studies between music technology and other related fields of discipline s such as physics and Engineering.

Background to the Study

Dùndún is a double headed tension drum that has an hourglass shaped shell which serves as its resonator. The *dùndún* family which consists of '*ìyá ìlù dùndún'* (mother drum), '*ke□ríke□rì' or 'kalangu' or 'aguda'* (father), *'isiwaju'* (male), '*ìké□hìn*' (female) and '*gudugudu'* (twin drum), are popularly referred to as the *Dùndún* ensemble. It has a very wide distribution in the different parts of Africa, Nigeria inclusive. *Dùndún* drum is available in most of the towns that represent the western part of Nigeria. Euba (1990:29) observes that *dùndún* ensemble exists practically in all parts of Yorubaland. The *dùndún* drum has gained a reputable

recognition, due to its regular use in the day to day socio-cultural activities of the Yoruba. *Dùndún* is widely employed in sacred functions, such as the worship of local deities. It is also used in occasions like traditional festivals. An example of such is the *O bàtálá* festival. It can also be used in the secular ceremonies, such as naming, burial of the aged, house warming, wedding, installation of traditional rulers and chiefs, birthdays and remembrance services. Apart from the aforementioned, *dùndún* is also widely used in entertainment or recreational functions in the society.

Dùndún is one of the instruments that are special to the Yorubas. The reason for this may not be unconnected with the fact that it can perform a multi-functional role, such as the role of accompanying music in festival, performance in ceremonies and performance for relaxations. It may also be because it can execute verbalisation of the Yoruba language (speech surrogate). Generally speaking, *dùndún* drums can be used in many of the daily activities of the people. All the aforementioned factors are what make this instrument so significant and thereby deserving more critical appraisals and technological attention. This study is therefore interested in looking at the technology behind this musical instrument in the light of the development of music education in Nigeria. It will examine the origin and the development of this instrument, the technology behind its construction and sound production and the prospects of it in the music education and development in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This work is hinged upon is the theory of traditionalism that is seen as an established structure of creativity that represents the immanence of the past in the present, linking modes of musical communication to the forces that have shaped them and revealing the intervention of expressive culture in popular consciousness (Copland, 1989). Against this theoretical background it could therefore be argued that traditionalism is most appropriate for this study. The theory is adopted to express the use of *dùndún* technology as an intervention of expressive culture in the present day Music Teducation. What was learnt as part of cultural way of fabricating musical instruments should not be discarded but rather form the basis for the musical instrument technology in this present dispensation. This should be with the view of development in terms of upgrading it to a standard level so as to

form lessons for today and the future as the theory proposes. Some scholars have used this theory to drive home points at one time or the other. Among such scholars is Adeogun (2006:108) when he advocated for the use of traditional African musical practices as a foundation for performance and composition, for intensive study of its theoretical and contextual features, for the development of perception reasoning and reflective skills. Omibiyi (1975:513) supported this theory when she postulated the need for the integration of the old and the new musical practices to cater for the musical needs in the contemporary times.

Dùndún Technology

Dùndún technology is a combination of two key words namely; '*dùndún*' and 'technology'. *Dùndún* has being discussed extensively before now and the other word technology will have to be discussed. Technology according to Oxford Advanced learners Dictionary (7th edition) is the conceptualised use of tools and materials, hardware and software or scientific knowledge used in practical ways in industry. Dundun technology therefore encompasses all the processes that are involved in the construction, repairs and maintenance of *dùndún* drums. The overview of *dùndún* will be done under the following sub-headings; origin and development, constructional processes, technology, maintainance and repairs in *dùndún* technology.

Origin and Development of Dùndún

The origin of *dùndún* according to oral traditions is of different versions and they vary slightly from one another from one region to another in the Yorubaland. According to Olawole Fadipe, a master *dùndún* drummer and a music technologist, he was able to establish the part of *odu ifa* (ifa chant) that establishes Yoruba traditional membranophones which includes '*dùndún,' 'bata' and 'bembe'* to mention just a few. He narrated how Oluweri (a water goddess) was asked to make sacrifices of three skinned goat kids and some other items to appease gods against the death of her children (fishes) that the *ode orun* (the hunter from heaven) and *ode aye* (the hunter from the earth) are planning to come and kill. The goddess yielded to the terms given her for the sacrifice and she did all the dictates of the oracle to specification. On the arrival of the duo; hunter from the heaven and the one from the earth at different times, the sacrifice that they saw got them confused and they thought that the other party has betrayed one another

and left in anger. After this incident that saved the goddess children, she was so happy and she used the pilled skin of the three goats to make the so to speak first set of three drums that she named; '*iyailu',* '*asomogbe'* and '*omele kekere'*, This according to the narrator was how drums construction started generally in Yorubaland.

Another version was gathered from Mr Salawu Ayankunle, a chief drummer in Isokun area of Oyo town. It is also based on oral tradition and it has it that *Ayanagalu,* a deity that the traditional drummers worshiped was the one that invented the first drum and at the same time gave drummers the power to carve drums and to play it well. The invented drum was brought with him from Mecca when he came with his friend, *Oduduwa* who establishes the Yorubaland. He was playing the drum on his way to Ile- Ife, the place that was believed to have been established first in the Yorubaland, in the company of his friend *Oduduwa* who brought him along with himself on a journey. According to Mr Ayankunle's naration, the traditional drummers sacrifice to this deity '*Ayanagalu*' who they believed invented drums.

Another version according to Salami Ladokun was reported by Euba (1990), it was believed that:

> *Alaafin of Oyo, Alaafin Atiba introduced dùndún to Oyo and apparently to other Yoruba towns. The Oyo people were dissatisfied with the music being played for them and Atiba instructed his messengers to go and look for dùndún "which exist over there, where we used to live, and with which I used to amuse myself in days gone by (P.39).*

Another version of the origin of dùndún was the one that the researchers received at Igbo-Ora. It was narrated by Mr Lasisi Ojetunde and it corroborates one of the reports that Euba (1990) received from Oba Laoye 1, during a personal interview. This has it that *dùndún* was introduced to Yorubas by the Ibaribas when they were relocating from their former land of settlement and they passed through the Ibariba territories, on their way to Ile- Ife, which was where they landed and settled before spreading to other Yoruba lands. All the versions about the origin of

dundun pointed to the fact that it existed somehow and that is started from somewhere.

Constructional Processes in Dùndún Technology

Dùndún has an ensemble and the different member of this ensemble is constructed the same way except that they vary in sizes of the shell, the circumference of the membrane and the general outlook of each of them. Some are slightly bigger than the other in size, some are slightly longer in shell than the other and some have membranes that are noticeably wider than the other. The number of tension thongs used on each *dùndún* depends on the size of that particular drum. The construction of *iya ilu* will represent the construction of *dùndún* in this study and it will be presented in steps.

Step one: The following will be prepared first, *Osan* (tension strings made from antelope leather), *odo ilu* (drum shell that is carved from *omo* wood.) and *awo* (membrane of a kid goat skin). The antelope leather is cut into strands of known length and this is called *Osan* for further use. The *odo ilu* is prepared for the construction by smoothening it first with sand paper and after that *ori* (shear butter) is rubbed on and inside it to prevent it from breaking and cracking during and after construction. The *awo* (membrane) is soaked wet in water for some minutes to make it easy to spread over the shell after *tagiiri* (traditional ointment) must have been rubbed on it to remove the fur on the skin of the animal used.

Photo 1: Picture showing the membrane to be used.

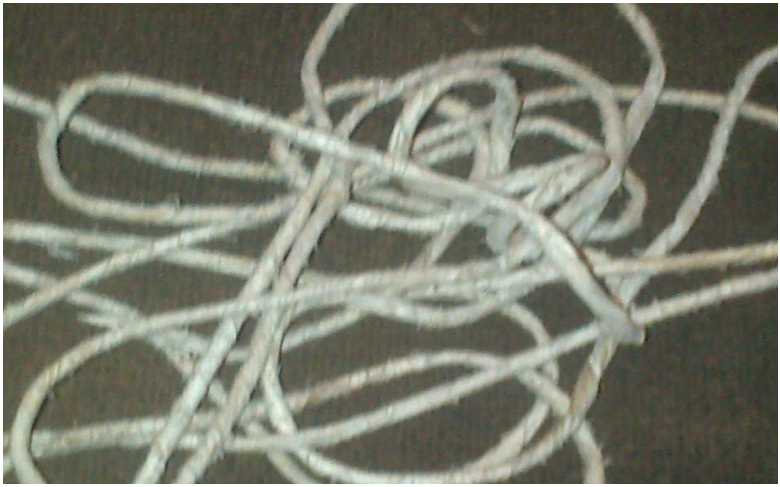

Photo 2: Picture showing the tension strings (osan)

Photo 3: Picture showing *Odo iya ilu* (drum shell)

Step two: The membrane is spread on the prepared shell and *egi* (antelope leather that is woven together to form a ring like shape) is put round the edge of the membrane. This *egi* and *ileke* (woven used cloth that is placed on top of the leather edges) are now tightly fitted and sown to the membrane, using long needle and tiny threads (strands that is made from goat or antelope leather), to connect *osan* (the tension strings) together.

Photo 4: Picture showing the shell that has been covered with the membrane.

Step three: The membrane held tightly to the shell with the fore mentioned is now put in the sun to dry for some hours.

Photo 5: Picture showing the shell that has been covered with the membrane and the tension strings.

Step four: It is removed from sun after some hours and the other face is worked upon like the first face.

Step five: The *igbaja* or *agbeko* (this is made of very thick woven cloth that is sown together with leather) is attached to the side of the drum for easy carriage on the shoulder during performance and for hanging the drum on the wall when not in use.

Photo 6: Picture showing the Igbaja or Agbeko.

Step six: The drum at this step is decorated with *saworo* (small metal bells) and *aso oke* (Yoruba traditional attire) to give it a traditional beauty.

Photo 7: Picture showing the decorations; *aso oke* and *saworo.*

Step seven: The drum is put in the sun to dry for a day or two before it is now tuned and ready for use.

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