

Paper Presented At the Symposium In Honour Of
Professor Akin Euba

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**Performance Style, Rhythmic Organization in Yoruba Dùndún
drumming: A Study of Dùndún performance in Òkèmèsí
Èkìtì**



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Assumption

There are some towns outside the areas classified as strong in Dùndún tradition that are well endowed in the drumming of dùndún.

Statement to Interrogate

- To this extent, Euba (1990) writes ‘Dùndún tradition is at its strongest in the central and Northern parts of Yoruba land, an area roughly coincident with that of the Oyo-Yoruba. (29)
- By this submission, towns like Ìkòròdú, Iléṣà, Ijebu, Lagos Ekiti and others in the eastern axis of the Yoruba are adjudged to be weak in the practice of dùndún tradition. (Euba 1990, 20)

ABSTRACT

- Dùndún is a prominent drum ensemble and a form of dance in Yorùbá land.
- It is one of the Yorùbá ensembles that caught the ingenious attention of Akin Euba.
- Professor Euba did an extensive research work on this drums and its essential features.
- Other scholars
- Oláníyan, Adégbìte Samuel, et al

Issues this paper Interrogate

1. Area of strong and weak Dùndún tradition Euba, 1990; 30
 - a) Dùndún is an active element of cultural life
 - b) Dùndún is practiced in its most classical idiom
 - c) there is proliferations of Dùndún drummers
 - 4) Dùndún is used in secular as well as religious Ceremonies

2. Area of Weak Dùndún tradition
 - a) Tendency to import Dùndún drummers from outside
 - b) There is preference for local instrument types for kingship and fro religious purposes
 - c) Modern Popularised idioms of Dùndún are more predominant

OBJECTIVES

- Examine the suitability of the segmentation of Yoruba towns as either weak or strong in Dùndún tradition
- Present an overview of Dùndún tradition in Yoruba land
- Elucidate on those factors that are responsible for the spread of musical traditions in Yoruba land
- Examine the performance and practice of Dùndún music in Okemesi Ekiti

Introduction

- Dùndún drumming and the Yoruba people
- Okemesi Ekiti, the place and the people

Dùndún in Okemesi Ekiti

1. The practice/The ensemble
2. The usages
3. The Philosophy/Taboos
4. The instrument
5. The Knowledge transfer

1. The Practice/The Ensemble

Iya Ilu



Iya Ilu showing the features



Isaaju



Atele



Gudugudu Side view



Gudugudu Front view



Aro



Dundun Performance Position

Drum Making and Symbolism in drums



1. The usages



- Concert
- Educative
- Ceremonial
- War
- Games
- Religious

Rhythm Organization

Musical score for Egbò. The score is in 12/8 time. It features five staves: Iya Ilu 1, Iya Ilu 11, Isaaju, Atele, and Gudugudu. Iya Ilu 1 is marked with 'Improvisation' and contains rests. Iya Ilu 11 plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Isaaju plays a steady quarter-note pattern. Atele plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Gudugudu plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Aro is not explicitly shown but implied to be the drum accompaniment.

Egbò

Musical score for Àárín (Àlùbánsí). The score is in 12/8 time. It features five staves: Iya Ilu 1, Iya Ilu 11, Isaaju, Atele, and Gudugudu. Iya Ilu 1 is marked with 'Improvisation' and contains rests. Iya Ilu 11 plays a steady eighth-note pattern with 'x' marks above the notes. Isaaju plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Atele plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Gudugudu plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Aro is not explicitly shown but implied to be the drum accompaniment.

Àárín (Àlùbánsí)

Musical score for Àlùbánsí. The score is in 4/4 time. It features five staves: Iya Ilu 1, Iya Ilu 11, Isaaju, Atele, and Gudugudu. Iya Ilu 1 is marked with 'Improvisation' and contains rests. Iya Ilu 11 plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Isaaju plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Atele plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Gudugudu is split into High and Low parts, both playing a steady eighth-note pattern. Aro is not explicitly shown but implied to be the drum accompaniment.

Àlùbánsí

Musical score for Èle (Àlùbánsí). The score is in 12/8 time. It features five staves: Iya Ilu 1, Iya Ilu 11, Isaaju High, Atele low, and Gudugudu. Iya Ilu 1 is marked with 'Improvisation' and contains rests. Iya Ilu 11 plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Isaaju High plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Atele low plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Gudugudu is split into High and Low parts, both playing a steady eighth-note pattern. Aro is not explicitly shown but implied to be the drum accompaniment.

Èle (Àlùbánsí)

The image shows a musical score for an ensemble. The instruments and their parts are:

- Iya Ilu 1:** A staff with a whole rest and the word "Improvisation" written above it.
- Iya Ilu 11:** A staff with a melodic line consisting of eighth and quarter notes.
- Isaaju_{Low}:** A staff with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, marked with a tilde (~).
- Atele_{High}:** A staff with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests, marked with a tilde (~).
- Gudugudu_{High/Low}:** A staff with a melodic line consisting of eighth notes, with some notes beamed together.
- Aro:** A staff with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, with groups of three notes beamed together and marked with a "3" (triplets).

Agere

NOTES

- Talking drum is Melo Rhythmic, Basically improvisational, and instant CREATIVITY (extemporizational)
- **Ìyá Ilu 2** is
I have decided not to notate **Ìyá Ilu** because the notes of **Ìyá Ilu** are not fixed

In interval, (Aurally taken) between **Ìsáájú** and **Àtèlé** is approximately a min 3rd



Aro is not categorized as a generic instrument in the ensemble but always brought in occasionally

Philosophy and Taboos

1. Making of the drums
2. Maintenance of the drums

- Birth in a drummer's family
- Life of a drummer
- Burial of a drummer

Training and Transfer of Knowledge

- Training of drummer is orally conducted by experienced drummer to the younger ones.
- Knowledge is also transferred by observation and imitation from one generation of drummer to the other.



Findings

- Dùndún is in an Ekiti town, having a history and tradition.
- The tradition of Dùndún in the town under reviewed is of a strong presence
- Internecine wars has been a major factor in the spread and distribution of Music Musical instruments and musicians.

Conclusion

1. Having examined the characteristics of Dùndùn performance tradition in an area that falls into the ones termed 'weak' based on the yardsticks Prof Euba (and so many other scholars have implied) for such submission to capture the intention, I opined that exceptions must be created.
2. There are some isolated cases which must be so recognized in order to properly situate history. the influence of war in the spread of music, musical instruments
3. 3. Because of some factors, herein analyzed as long years of inter, it is practically difficult to categorize Yoruba music using geographical spread as the basis

Recommendation

I have instigated discussion on this topic and recommend a further research in this respect. I also recommend comparative study to determine.

Thank You