

ALÓRE

Nº 1 Vol. 10, 1999

**ILORIN
JOURNAL
OF THE
HUMANITIES**

ISSN 0794-455

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ILORIN JOURNAL OF THE HUMANITIES

Nº 1. Vol. 10, 1999

ISSN 0794-445

Typesetting by
Ore Yusuf,
Department of Linguistics
University of Ilorin.

Printed by
OBVEN PRESS
A division of OBVEN Nig. Ltd.
Ilorin, Kwara. State.

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THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DÀDÀKÚÀDÀ MUSIC

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Introduction

A lot has been said and written on Yoruba music generally. However, there are still many more areas that are yet to be researched extensively into, especially on specific Yoruba musical genres. A research into the various musical types that have not been studied is therefore necessary.

Dàdàkúàdà is one of such musical types. Existing literature on *Dàdàkúàdà* is relatively scanty in spite of the fact that the genre has been in existence for a long time as a traditional music for entertainment mainly among the people of Ilorin and its environs few people have written about it. Na'Allah¹, Olajubu² and Olátúnbòsún³ have variously written on this musical type. Na'Allah discussed the stages of *Dàdàkúàdà* development as a traditional oral art, while Olájubù discussed as a folklorist, the nature of *Dàdàkúàdà* as a Yoruba poetry, the techniques and process of composition and the composer.

This paper shall discuss the historical development of *Dàdàkúàdà* music. *Dàdàkúàdà* has gone through various phases of development. These changes were caused as a result of factors such as cultural cross-fertilization and technological advancement. According to Nettl: "Among the many things which cause musical style to change is the movement of population which is one cause of such

contact.⁴ this paper is concerned with the origin and change as they affect *Dàdàkiàdà*. The historical development of *Dàdàkiàdà* is therefore discussed under two sub-headings, namely: the origin and the stages of *Dàdàkiàdà* development which I have divided into the early stage, the middle or developmental stage and the present day or matured stage. Materials for this paper were gathered mainly through interviews with *Dàdàkiàdà* artists and other individuals within Ilorin town.

Name and Origin

The origin of music, as well as of individual musical phenomena, has usually been explained by reference to three possible processes. It may be a coincidence based on the structure of a related phenomenon, it may be motivated by a non-musical need, or it may be inevitable through some process of evolution (Nettl 1964)⁵

Tracing the origin of *dàdàkiàdà* could be problematic due to a number of factors. One of such is the fact that *dàdàkiàdà* like most traditional African musical genres is orally based. Until very recently, there are no written documents to which one can readily refer as the origin of *dàdàkiàdà*. It is passed orally from one generation of musicians to another within Ilorin community.

Thus, in tracing the origin of *dàdàkiàdà* one is faced with the problem of accuracy of facts and figures. It is not impossible for example that some vital points may be left out or some added to it in the cause of passing the information by words of mouth. The word *dàdàkiàdà* has no clear-cut etymological meaning since it is neither Yorùbá, Hausa, Nupe, Fulani nor any other language spoken within or around Ilorin town. There are however, suggestions to how the name came to be. The name *dàdàkiàdà* could have come from a kind of popular saying at the period when the musical type was developed. This is possible because people do tag a new

development with slangs that are in vogue at the time of such developments.

Alhaji Jáígbadé Aló, a *dàdàkúàdà* artist based in Ilorin says that *dàdàkúàdà* took its name from the opening performance of a musician known as Abenumo who is believed to be the inventor of the word *dàdàkúàdà*. Abenumo was said to be known for opening every one of his performance with a song that goes thus:

Dàdà dàdà dídà kúàdà
 Oré mi dákui rìn rìn ká padà
 N ó ló lóla èdè wá sìn mí ò
 Dada dada dídà kúàdà o.

(Dada dada dáda kuada
 My friend please walk and let us meet
 I will be leaving tomorrow, crowd,
 Come and seume off
 Dada dada dáda kuada o)

Alhaji Sàká Kolobo who is also a *dàdàkúàdà* artist confirms the derivation of the word *dàdàkúàdà* from the opening performance of the early artist, Abenumo. He said that originally, the opening performance of this music was usually without instrumental accompaniment. The opening part of the songs is usually characterized by the use of the word *dàdàkúàdà*⁷. Examine the following lines of *dàdàkúàdà*:

Mo ti rí ọ pẹ à e
 Ntó báyé ló bá wa láyé o
Dàdàkúàdà, ó bá wa láyé dàdàkúàdà

(Its been long I saw you
 What meets the world meets us in the world
dàdàkúàdà, it has met us in the world dàdàkúàdà)

Alhaji Amàó Dògbajárí⁸ however, claimed that the word *dàdàkiàdà* came into existence as a result of the attempt by the musicians to produce, vocally, the rhythmic pattern of the drums. The Yoruba concern for sound is reflected in their penchant for naming objects merely by listening to how they sound. They are known for naming musical instruments according to the sound they produce (Olániyan 1993)⁹. It will be seen from the above discussion that the word *dàdàkiàdà* could be regarded as onomatopoeic.

There are various schools of thought about the possible origin of *dàdàkiàdà*. This in itself is a problem about the origin. Almost all of my informants had different stories to tell about the origin of *dàdàkiàdà* and they all claim to be right. I have grouped all of these thoughts into three.

- (1) Those who hold that *dàdàkiàdà* is an offshoot of an already existing musical type
- (2) Those who hold that *dàdàkiàdà* started on its own as a new musical type without any influence (but can something develop out of nothing?)
- (3) Those who claim that *dàdàkiàdà* is only a re-naming of an old musical type.

The origin of *dàdàkiàdà* was traced by Alhaji Jáígbadé Alàó to a man called Abenumo from Ejio, a village under the Ilorin emirate¹⁰. Abenumo was a musician whose opening rendition was said to have brought about the name *dàdàkiàdà*. The opening performance was a kind of introduction to start off the day's entertainment. It is said that as soon as the drum starts playing Abenumo would start certain vocables among other things as mentioned earlier. Thus the name *dàdàkiàdà* is attributed to Abenumo.

This assertion suggests that *dàdàkiàdà* evolved from Abenumo though it may not be ruled out that some musical type of a similar format existed prior to Abenumo's improvisatory capability.

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musicians came with a *gangan* drum, which they played and tried to reproduce the drum sound with their voices. Prior to this time the instrument in use in Ilorin was *kólóbó* used to accompany a musical type known as *móló*. Thereafter *gangan* was introduced to *móló* and it replaced *kólóbó*, as a result, *móló* was given a new name---*dàdàkiàdà*.

Olatubosun Babalola (1988) traced the origin of *Egúngún* and *Agbe* dance, which were already in existence before the inception of *dàdàkiàdà*¹³. According to him people, used the same music that was used for the *egúngún* and *agbe* dances during the day for entertainment in the evening. It was the evening entertainment that was later changed into *dàdàkiàdà*. The music and those that made it remained the same, but the context of performance and the text of the music were different.

Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah (1992) asserts that *dàdàkiàdà* originated from the *Iwì egúngún*. He claims that the name *dàdàkiàdà* is taken from the opening incantations at performance¹⁴. This according to him was before 1823 when Islam came.

Ilorin, whose inhabitants are now mainly Muslims, have tried to wipe out all practices that are not Islamic. Thus, many of the *dàdàkiàdà* artists will not link the origin of *dàdàkiàdà* to *egúngún*. Na'Allah however, notes that the performance techniques adopted in *dàdàkiàdà* today are very similar to the techniques of *iwì* performance.

It is quite possible that *dàdàkiàdà* originated from *iwì egúngún* or *agbe* dance. It is to be noted that *iwì egúngún* deals with *oríkà orílẹ̀* (genealogical praise) which is a prominent feature of *dàdàkiàdà*.

I observe that *dàdàkiàdà* is the most popular non-religious musical genre in Ilorin town, hence, Ilorin people and the *dàdàkiàdà* artists lay claim to *dàdàkiàdà* as their own musical invention. However, Ilorin being a Muslim town

does not subscribe to linking the origin of *dàdàkúàdà* to *egúngún* because it is not Islamic. It is therefore problematic to trace *dàdàkúàdà* origin back to *egúngún* because the assertion is rejected by the people and even the artists who themselves try to be as religious as possible with a strong inclination towards Islam.

My own conclusion considering the views expressed above is that Ilorin town could not have been the origin of *dàdàkúàdà* though there is enough evidence to believe that it was introduced to Ilorin town from neighbouring villages under Ilorin emirate. Ilorin being the headquarters has always taken the glory of whatever emanates from her subordinate villages. It should be noted that the villages that surrounded Ilorin before the advent of Islam and even after, were purely *egúngún* worshippers. It is therefore not possible to completely reject the fact that *dàdàkúàdà* has a link with *egúngún* though it may not necessarily be *iwè egúngún* as suggested by Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah. *Iwè egúngún* is more relevant to the Yoruba of Òyó, Ògùn, and Òṣun. A study of *dàdàkúàdà* and the language used for performance, which is "Ilorin Yorùbá" is more influenced by the Fulani and Tapa than Òyó Yorùbá. The possibility of the original language of the Ilorin people to have been influenced by that spoken in the west and developing gradually into Ilorin Yoruba is remote because there exists within Ilorin the Afonjá descendants whose language slightly varies from the "Ilorin Yorùbá" used in *dàdàkúàdà* performance.

Stages of *Dàdàkúàdà* Development

The stages of *dàdàkúàdà* development could be likened to the growth of a child. At a time he is born, at some other time he crawls, walks, matures and becomes an adult.

There are three stages of *dàdàkúàdà* development, namely, the early stage, the developmental or middle stage

and the present day or matured stage. My 'division of *dàdàkúàdà* historical development into stages is based on the following musical instruments, performance practices, group organization, societal influence and technological advancement. The division of the various stages into years is inferred from information gathered from the informants as indicated by special events at the various stages and the age range of the artists who lived and performed at the various stages.

The Early Stage

It is difficult to pin the time of a particular year since there was no written record to that effect. However, Alhaji Bàbá Milíkì claims that *dàdàkúàdà* started in 1831 at the installation of the first Emir of Ilorin¹², while Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào claims that it started at a time when they were using "Inabere" that is a time when there was no electricity in Ilorin town. These two periods fall between 1825 and 1910. The concern of this writer however, is not the time in terms of specification of year but the factors that characterized *dàdàkúàdà* at this early stage.

The early stages of *dàdàkúàdà* was characterized by the use of very few instruments and people. One of the stories about the origin of *dàdàkúàdà* as narrated by Bàbá Milíkì shows that *dàdàkúàdà* started with two people, Awudi Onímóló and Ajàgbé Monre. One-man performance was also a common feature at this stage in which a man plays his drum and also sings. When it featured two people, one man usually plays the drum while the second man does the singing. At this stage of *dàdàkúàdà* only one gáangan drum was used as the accompanying instrument, no other instrument was used¹⁵. As evident in the story by Alhaji Bàbá Milíkì, the musicians at this stage moved about without invitation to occasions to play and entertain people and as

such were looked down upon as beggars. This impression was carried on in the society for a very long time.

Na'Allah (1988) identifies "dialogue" as the main feature of *dàdàkiàdà* performance at this stage of development¹⁶.

Performance at this time according to Alhaji Jáígbadé was more in the towns especially Ilorin than in the neighbouring villages. This was because there were more people in the towns and social events were more. This however, does not rule out performance in villages. The artists were based mainly in the neighbouring villages as in the case of Abenumo who lived at Eji and Awodi Onímóló and Ajàgbé Monre who stayed at Monre. The artists according to Alhaji Jaigbade usually moved from villages to towns for performance and return to the villages after performance which usually lasts for one or two days.

Performance at this stage was basically entertainment. This is because these artists were concerned mainly about the money they will realize from the performance for their living. Hence, the song text was basically praise singing.

Prominent artists at this state included Awodi Onímóló, Ajàgbé Monre and Abenumo who also featured prominently at the beginning of the developmental or middle stage of *dàdàkiàdà*.

Developmental Stage

This state (also called the Middle Stage) marked the beginning of advancement, innovation and introduction of new ideas into *dàdàkiàdà* both in terms of instruments and personnel. This stage marked the increase in the number of people and instruments. It started with Abenumo who increased the number of people who performed from just one or two to three and the number of instruments to four¹⁷. At this stage, new instruments known as pàkeke drum was introduced. Pakeke later became a name with which

dàdàkíàdà was called because the instrument became a major instrument used in *dàdàkíàdà* performance.

Dialogue technique identified at the early stage by Na'Allah was still a feature at this stage especially at the beginning, though it later gave way to simultaneous singing technique in which there is no separate chorus groups, they all sing together. The number of instruments later increased from four to about six while the singers increased to four. A new member known as *Bótò* was also added to the band. The *bótò* according to Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào played a number of roles such as making humorous statements during performance. He also moved into the audience to collect money for the band from those who may not want to rise up to dance and he was usually a good dancer. The *bótò* danced throughout the performance if he had no other thing to attend to.

The performance at this stage became more elaborately organized and popular than in the early stage. At this stage the performance arena or stage had a format with the drummers on one side (usually the left), the singers at the right side of the stage and the leader of the group in the middle, a little to the front..

The *bótò* usually stayed behind the leader. The introduction of the *boto* at this stage marked the introduction of jesting on stage. This was one major role the *bótò* performed in addition to giving information to the leader.

Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào also claims that Ajíbáyé was particularly noted for his efforts in the development of *dàdàkíàdà* at this stage. He was said to have introduced *pàkenke* drum. He also introduced the idea of *ògá* and *omòmọsẹ́*, that is the use of a separate chorus group. Other performers at this stage were Laoye, Akanbi Eri, Mánléwá and Àkàno Ọ̀gò who was known for his virtuosity on the drums.

Song text at this stage started moving away from being purely entertainment to commenting on social issues and educating people. Artists started moving from the neighbouring villages to settle down in the big towns. They were still looked down upon as those who were not well to do. Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlàó says that it was not as bad as in the early stage because at this stage performers started having invitations to perform at social gatherings for a fee.

Present Day (Mature) Stage

The third stage of *dàdàkúàdà* is the present day or matured stage, which is believed to have started since 1965 or thereabout to date. This state of *dàdàkúàdà* performance is characterized by constant innovation, which has raised the musical type to a level, which enables it to conveniently compete with other traditional popular non-religious musical genres in Ilorin and its environs.

I have classified this stage as matured because it represents the period in which *dàdàkúàdà* witnessed the greatest input towards its growth and it could be said that important heights in *Dàdàkúàdà* development is reached at this period. The maturity in this stage is seen more in the consistency of the musical type despite the constant innovations and the wave of modernism which has also influenced the music. It has not lost the traditional touch unlike some other traditional genres. One is still able to recognize it with ease when the performance is on. This is particularly evident in the melodic and rhythmic structure employed in the music. *Dàdàkúàdà* at this state became very popular due to a number of factors, principal of which is modernism and technological advancement.

People's ways of life and orientation changed due to their exposure to the western education the social life of the people was particularly changed and they began to have more love

for entertainment than it was before technological advancement has brought about the waxing of records which makes it possible for the music to be transported out of its immediate environment.

Ilorin also became a commercial centre. People who came around for trade purposes usually spent some days in the town and thereby got to know about *dàdàkiàdà* music.

Another area worthy of note as per the modern influence on *dàdàkiàdà* is the use of modern equipment. Equipment such as the microphone, and the speaker came on the scene at this stage. This new idea according to Alhaji Jáígbadé Àláo was first rejected by the society who believed then that it was an insult talking to them through a box instead of the natural human voice. It gradually became acceptable to the society such that every *dàdàkiàdà* artist strove hard to obtain one.

Dàdàkiàdà also witnessed a number of new innovations at this stage of its development. These were in the area of instruments, personnel and performance.

A number of new instruments were introduced. Instruments like *àkúibà*, *ṣẹkẹrẹ* and two small drums called *terela* were introduced at this stage.

In 1970, late Omoékeé Amòó introduced standing on stage into *dàdàkiàdà*²⁰. Previously the artists performed from a sitting position. The leader used to sit on a mortar while the others sit on a mat. The introduction of standing on stage also brought about dancing.

The number of drums and singers increased enormously. An average *dàdàkiàdà* group now consists of about eight singers apart from the leader and about ten drummers playing various drums. The number of *bótò* also increased depending on the size of the group. Some have as much as five *bóts*²¹.

Dàdàkiàdà artists at this stage became more respected and regarded for what they are as performers. This respect is born out of the fact that the artist could now fend for

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themselves. Some of them can now afford cars and buses for their group and also build houses for themselves.

At this stage it is no more a common thing to see *dàdàkúàdà* artists moving round without invitation. *Dàdàkúàdà* groups have become organized. The artists are part of the performing musicians association of Nigeria. This association, as they claim, has fostered unity among the artists, bringing to an end the enmity that existed between artists which previously had degenerated to a level of using "jùjú" against themselves.

It is also at this stage that they introduced a kind of graduation ceremony for a trainee who has mastered the art of *dàdàkúàdà* performance. This is usually done with wining and dining and has reduced situations in which an apprentice just cut off from his master as soon as he thinks he can stand on his own.

The matured stage also witnessed a great increase in term of artists. Many more people became interested in the art and formed their own groups.

Notable among artists in this stage are Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào who is currently the *Oba Olórín* of Ilorin (the Chief of Musicians). He is actually believed by people within Ilorin to be the leader of this stage, but another artist, Alhaji Odòlayé Àrẹ̀mú is more popular among other Yoruba areas of Nigeria. He in fact is believed to have given *dàdàkúàdà* a national recognition through the records he has waxed and his regular performance outside Ilorin. Both Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào and Odòlayé Àrẹ̀mú have records to their credit. Other artists at this stage of *dàdàkúàdà* development are Àlhaṣi Àrẹ̀mú Ose, Sàkà Kólóbó, late Omoékeé Àmàó, Ehin Oke Àjàgbé, Àmòrí and many others.

The song text at this stage centers on various issues ranging from social, political, and economic to entertainment, criticism and education. Artists at this stage now go for

performance strictly on invitation usually at a price fixed by the group manager.

Dàdàkiàdà could be said to have reached the peak of this development at this stage. It is to be observed that the matured stage of *dàdàkiàdà* featured the reign of various artists at particular periods of the stage. At each of these periods, particular artists dominated the performance scene as follows:

1965-1975	Late Àlhaji Odòlayé Àrèmu
1975-1980	Late Ọmọ́kéé Àmòó
1980-to date	Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào

It is particularly noted that since 1985 to date there has not been any major new input, except for the introduction of the western set of drums popularly called "jazz" by Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlào in one of his records in 1994, and the use of western keyboard by Alhaji Aremu Ose Ayobami in 1995 in his recording titled "Asiwájú Èdà làgbà". There has been an elimination of some of the musical instruments which were introduced at the earlier part of the matured stage. For example *ṣẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀* and *agogo* have been dropped by many of the artists and are not replaced by new instruments.

Conclusion

Attempts has been made in this write-up to discuss the origin and development of *dàdàkiàdà* music in three stages namely, early, middle and present day.

Dàdàkiàdà whose origin poses a problem because of the divergent stories about it is more likely to have evolved from an already existing musical type. The possibility of its linkage with *egúngún* may not be ruled out, although the artists and the people of Ilorin reject this assertion because of their Islamic religious inclination. It may also have emanated from a neighbouring or subordinate village to Ilorin. However, Ilorin being the headquarter and economic centre

usually takes the glory of what evolves from a village under it.

This development of *dàdàkiàdà* has been a progressive one since its inception. It has since gone through a series of expansion and development in terms of personnel, musical instruments, song repertoire and indeed the popularity of the genre. The changes at every one of its three developmental stages from the earliest to the latest has however not distorted the originality of the music but has instead maintained a continuity in the changes. There is a clear blending of past with the present with a constant improvement on the past.

The present day stage of *dàdàkiàdà* in particular have since about 1965 been witnessing a lot of innovation but from 1980 to date, it rather got to a halt in terms of innovations.

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5. *Ibid* p. 228
6. Interview with Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlàó, a *dàdàkiàdà* artist based in Ilorin. He is an elderly man and a chieftaincy title holder in Ilorin. The title *Oba Olórin* (King of Singers) was conferred on him as a leading musician in Ilorin. He was my main informant in the course of conducting this research.

7. Interview with Alhaji Saka Kolobo, a young *dàdàkiàdà* artist in his early thirties as at the time of this research.
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10. Personal interview with Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlàó.
11. Personal interview with Alhaji Amaó
12. Alhaji Bàbá Mílíkí is a prominent *Fẚfẚ* artist in Ilorin. He was 42 years old as at the time of this research. He claims that the story about the installation of the first traditional ruler of Ilorin in 1831 and the use of two *gáangan* drums was an oral tradition passed on from his own father.
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15. Personal interview with Alhaji Dógbajárí.
16. Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah (1988) "*Dàdàkiàdà*, the Trend in the Development of Ilorin Traditional Oral Poetry". B.A. (Ed.) Long Essay, Department of Modern European Languages, University of Ilorin.
17. Personal interview with Alhaji Jáígbadé Àlàó.
18. Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah (1988).
19. Personal interview with Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah. He is a native of Ilorin who has also conducted research into the development of *dàdàkiàdà*.
20. Personal interview with Alhaji Bàbá Mílíkí.
21. This conclusion is reached after a close observation of various *dàdàkiàdà* group performance especially in Ilorin Town.