

## Beating Tambourine in Social and Religious Occasions Till the End of Greco-Roman Period

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### Abstract

Tambourine was a favorite musical instrument, known in ancient Egypt since the Old Kingdom and still used till now. This study deals with various terminologies of tambourine in the Egyptian language, and the two kinds of tambourine both circular and rectangular which played on sacred and festive occasion, and by professional musician and ordinary people. This paper traces using tambourine by men, women alike since the Old Kingdom. Highlighting also the meaning behind this act of joy, pleasure and appease, and the role of gods/goddesses with certain emphasize on Bes, as the most Egyptian god represented beating tambourine, and both Hathor and Anubis.

**Keywords:** tambourine, rhythm, beating, drum, dancing, Hathor, Bes, Anubis.

### Previous studies

A useful study conducted by (Fischer, 2002) who focused on the title of *Rwty* as a drummer and its ramification in the Egyptian language, which covered most of his study, rather than the tambourine as a musical instrument, although he highlighted the tambourine as a percussion tool used by the drummer or *Rwty*. Other studies addresses tambourine as an instrument among other musical tools (Maniche, L. 1973) and (Gadalla, 2004), while (Wilkinson, 1878) dedicated part of his study to music tools as general. This study is trying to portray tambourine as an important musical percussion instrument with certain emphasize on circle and rectangular tambourine, and its role in social and religious occasion played by male/female and god/goddesses.

### Introduction

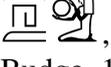
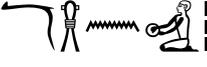
Ancient Egypt had a wealth and variety of drums of different shapes (Gadalla, 2004: 60; Birch, (n. d): 460-461). It is known that playing music for the gods was as important as making food, offerings and burning incense to them, (Peck, 2013: 181), and it was an integral part of everyday life. Women were involved in ritual music and dance as early as the Old Kingdom and in the Middle Kingdom titles of musicians, including both male and female forms (Robins, G. 1998: 120). In the New Kingdom, similar activities are shown in conjunction with festivals (Teeter; Johnson, 2009: 42), and Nubian dancers were involved in these activities in the tomb of Horemheb (Kinney L. 2000: 198; Malek, 2000: 205). Goddesses also are observed playing tambourine in honor of Hathor, as represented on a frieze at Dendera (Wilkinson, 1878: 492), and on the walls of the Hathor temple on the island of Philae (Hart, 2005: 50). In Ptolemaic times the representations of women playing the round tambourine are almost identical, as may be seen in the temple of Mut at Karnak, in the temples at Dendera and Edfu, and in the temples at Athribis and Armant at Upper Egypt (Manniche, 1975: 4).

The most common tambourines known in ancient Egypt were circular and square or oblong, they all beaten by the hand (Wilkinson, 1878: 191). A rectangular tambourine with concave sides was briefly popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty for use at banquets. The more usual shape was a round tambourine of various sizes featured in banquet scenes in tombs, and was shown in the hands of Bes (Bard, 1999: 659; Gadalla, 2004: 60). The frame of tambourine is mounted with pieces of metal are cut out of the frame in a symmetrical arrangement (Gadalla, 2004: 60). It is difficult to say whether the Egyptian tambourine had the same movable pieces of metal, let into its wooden frame, as in that of the present day (Wilkinson, 1878: 492). E. Beiberg suggested that due to the absence of the metal shakers

found around the edge of a modern tambourine makes the term "frame drum" more suitable than "tambourine" (Bleiberg, 2005: 175). The tambourists were supplied the rhythm for singing in religious ceremonies (Fischer, 2002: 38). Sometimes the tambourine was introduced and was accompanied the mournful song by its monotonous sound, during the period of seventy days, while the body was in the hands of the embalmers, mourners (Wilknsn, 1878: 451)

### The Terminology

While There are a number of words that were used for the verb "dance," the most common being *ib3*  (Spencer, P. 2003: 111; Faulkner, R. O. 1964: 15),  (Erman, and Grapow, 1971a: 62), or *ibw*  (Sethe, 1906: 308/12), there are several words referring to tambourine as a percussion tool, *dbn* , which means "be round" (Budge, 1977: 313), *dbnw* "the circular" (Erman, and Grapow, 1971c: 436), and *tbn* means "play the drum" (Erman and Grapow, 1950: 262; Helck, and Otto, 1986: 768-769), words like *sr* , , or  referring to tambourine or drum (Budge, E.A.W. 1920: 610; Erman, and Grapow, 1971b: 191/6-7; Helck and Otto, 1986: 768-769). The word  *Smayt*, accompanied with hand-beaten tambourine (Teeter, E. & Johnson, J.H. 2009: 42; Vandier, J. 1954: pl. 18, Fig. 205), which may refer to the tambourists as one who makes music with rhythm, while singing with a chorus. Shemayet was employed as a title by large numbers of elite women, from the wives and daughters of the highest officials to those of the workmen at Dier el-Medina, and it was regularly served as musician both male and female deities (Robins, G. 1998: 145).

In the temple of Edfu *nhm*  (Ritner, 1985: 149 note 6), was translated by Faulkner as "dance for joy" (Faulkner, 1946:135). The other variant of *nhm* , , , bears multiply meaning, like to rejoice, to praise, to beat a drum or tambourine (Budge, 1920: 381), and was also connected in the late Middle Kingdom, with *xnw*, *xnwt* (musicians – female musicians) who sometimes was written with an ideograph that represents a tambourine player (Fischer, H.G. 2002: 36-37; Faulkner, 1962:192; Erman, and Grapow, 1950:286/2-12). As for *xn* it means "beat rhythm" as a Figure who gives the beat to the soldiers pulling a colossal statue,  "giving the rhythm to the army" the best translation by Fischer is "percussionist," and this includes clappers as well as tambourine and sistrum (Fischer, 1997: 66/1127; Newberry, n. d: pl. XXII). During the late middle kingdom at Assuit, a stela belongs to a man called "etresew" bear the title  or  *Hry-xnwt*, (Mahfouz, 2013: 196), which means "master of Tambourine players." (Ranke, W.A. 1982: 119:1001). There are also two titles belongs to different men from the Middle Kingdom, the first called  *imy-r xnw* "overseer of tambourine player" and the second  *imy-r sA n xnw* "overseer of a troupe of tambourine players" (Ward, W.A. 1982: 296/43,331/43).

At Meir the wife of Ny-ankh-Pepy is a "percussionist" of the goddess, and bear the title *xnwt*, meaning "she who beats the rhythm". A male *xnw* of Hathor is also known (Fischer,

H.G. 2000: 24), while  hnw is known by Faulkner as "praise of god" (Faulkner, 1962: 159). During the Ptolemaic period, the same word  hnw is read as "dance," (Mariette, A. 1871: pl.76), although the determinative of the word representing a woman beating tambourine. The terminology itself for drum instruments also changed (Helck and Otto, 1986: 768).

Budge assigns the two determinatives ,  to refer to the occupation of women beating tambourine in his list of hieroglyphic characters (Budge, 1920: CII). Other terminology has been observed in ancient Egyptian language referring specifically to this percussion tool cited by Bugde, such as:   ipn (w) which means "women play tambourine" and   nfr mA "tambourine girl" (Budge 1920: 42,371), with its precise and clear meaning to the occupation of women. Generally, a number of words had multiple meaning like chanting, dancing, rejoice, or beating for making rhythm beside tambourine, while few of them referring precisely to it.

### Round tambourine beating by male/female

Women were involved in ritual music and dance as early as the Old Kingdom (Erman, 1894: 249), and in the Middle Kingdom, mostly played by women (Ruiz, 2001: 61). One tomb at Hamamiya (5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty), had a scene of a husband and wife in two separate boats. A female steward is beating a tambourine to amuse the couple and encourage the rowing men (Fig. 1) (Fischer, 2000: 15, 64. Fig, 13).

The market scene in the mastaba of Ty (TT.60) at Saqqara (5<sup>th</sup> dynasty), depicted a man labeled *rwtj* holds two objects, one of which may well be a tambourine. The other object he carries may equally well be a cylindrical drum followed by a man holding another two drums one of them a tambourine (Fig. 2) (Fischer, 2002: 36, Fig. 5; Steindorff, 1913: tafel 133). Dances of the New Kingdom were more like those of present time. The girls are dressed in long transparent clothes, with tambourine or castanets in their hands (Erman, 1894: 249). The tomb of Kheruef (TT. 192) at Assasif (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty), and during the third Jubilee of Amenhotep III, a line of women beat a tambourine and clap to the music in the ceremony of the erection of the *djed* pillar (Fig. 3) (Teeter and Johnson, 2009: 42, Fig,33; Vandier, 1954:pl.18, Fig,205). In response to a sound of a tambourine, an illustration of bas-relief made of limestone found in the tomb of Khai at Saqqara now in the Egyptian Museum (Nr. 562), where all the women are practically naked in their long transparent robes. Two young girls, quite nude, seem to regulate the time with castanets. The artistic style may be ascribed to the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty (Fig. 4) (Malek, 1999: Fig, 205; Perrot, and Chipez, 1883: 249, Fig, 217; Erman, 1894: 249; Mbokazi, 2002: Fig, 63; el-Shahawy, 2005: Fig, 63). A limestone relief now in Brooklyn Museum (No. 60.197.3) in sunk relief, dates back to El- Amarna period, at left women with round tambourines and shouting boy before a tree, apparently engaged in driving off a flight of birds (Fig.5). (<http://www.brooklynmuseum.org>). The tomb of Amenemhat (TT. 53) at Shiekh abd el-Qurna (19<sup>th</sup> dynasty), shows various musical instruments are played by women taking part in a procession of religious ceremonies among them a tambourine (Fig. 6) (Koen, 2008: 49, fig2.2.8).

Another typical festive scene of the inauguration of a high official like that one in the tomb of Amenemhat, this time from the tomb of Userhat (TT. 51, 56) at Shiekh abd el-Qurna (19<sup>th</sup> dynasty), shows a female receive Userhat with chants accompanied with tambourine (Davies, 1927: Pl. XIII). Men were represented beating tambourine in the presence of gods, like this scene from the tomb of Aby (TT. 217) at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna (19<sup>th</sup>

dynasty), where two men scarcely depicted with a thick hair each of them holding a round tambourine, behind each of them the goddess Taurt, and a Jackel in front and the two men had the same attitude (Fig. 7) (Davies, 1927: Pl. XXXVII; Wilkinson and Hill, 1983: 48, Fig. 45).

A remarkable round-topped stela from Deir el-Madina, owned by a woman called Bukhanefptah, shows members of her family including her husband. This stela was dedicated to Nebethetepet, a god closely associated with Hathor. The bottom two registers contain the family members celebrate, three of them held a tambourine in the first register while only one member in the second register (Fig.8) (Robins, 1998: 159, Fig. 50). A sunken relief displayed at Brooklyn Museum portrays a number of female musicians

performing at feast. The text above mentions  iart n nwb "uraeus of gold". This may be an extract of a hymn being sung by the performers. On the right, a libation is being poured, while the women in the middle playing tambourine, which was often used at scenes depicting, or linked to birth and fertility. The relief can probably be attributed to a late Ramesside tomb at Saqqara (Fig. 9) (Koen, 2008: 50, Fig. 2.2.10; Manniche, 1987: 65; Bleiberg, 2005: 167). At the temple of Rameses III at Karnak, a river procession of the Feast of Opet, was depicted in the west wall at the open court, where chanters of Amun were seen with papyrus-branches, tambourines, and sistra (Fig. 10). (The Epigraphic Survey, 1936: Pl. 84, Porter and Moss, 1972: II, P.34). At the temple of Madinet Habou, tower, Second Storey, room III, a scene of Princess holding tambourine and fans before the king (Porter and Moss, 1972: II, Pp. 486-487). The same temple also had ladies of the house of Ptah and Hathor of the house Atum are in a festival, their hearts rejoicing, and

their hands holding or playing tambourine  awy.sn srw wpw (Edgerton, and Wilson, 1936: p. 121, Pl. 105-6, note 7b). Another scene of playing tambourine by a girl in the boat of Re-Harakhty in the Chapel of Re-Harakhti (north wall) in the temple of Seti I at Abydos (fig. 11) (Calverley, et. al, 1953: Pl.15).

Scenes of women beating tambourine repeated in many other temple, like the temple of Mut At Karnak where King Ptolemy II holding sistra and two priestesses with tambourine and harp before Mut and Sekhmet (Porter and Moss, 1972: II, Pp. 255-256), and a scene of offering in the temple of Auletes (western doorway) at Athribis during the Roman period, where Claudius is figured as presenting a bull and a mass of offerings to Sokar, Horus, and Reptyt; while behind the king are two musicians with tambourines (fig.12) (Petrie, 1908: p.10, Pl. XXVIII)

### The big-round tambourine

A fragment from the sun-temple of Neuserre, showing a man who holds a tambourine with one hand while striking it with the other. The caption above this describes his activity as *sqr (in) rwty* "beating (by) the *rwty* (Fig. 13) (Fischer, 2002: 35, Fig. 2).

The scene indicates that the singer and a drum-beaten tambourine were called at the same

time  Smayt (Epigraphic Survey, 1980: pl. 47). A scene from the tomb of Kheruef (TT. 192) at Assasif (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty), shows dancers and musicians performing jubilee ceremonies before the enthroned Amenhotep III, where one of them holding a tambourine on her shoulder, and two clapping girls behind her following the rhythm (Fig.14) (Epigraphic Survey, 1980: pl. 40).

A fragment from the Twenty-second Dynasty temple at Bubastis, shows a very large tambourine carried by one man, while another supports it with one hand and beats it with the other. The first caption read: "beating on the tambourine"  *sqr m srw*.

Another caption say:  *Sspt nt dxn* is attached to a group of men with arms extended in the gesture of clappers who are “giving the rhythm” (Fig. 15) (Naville, E. 1892: PL. XI; Fischer, 2002:35; Blades, J. 2005, 158), or representing chorus (*Sspt dxn*) (Faukner, 1962:272; UK IV, 178,12). The men in front are shouting  *Dd mdw r tA r tA* "On the ground, on the ground" (Naville, 1892: PL.XI). The second scene, nearly repeats the same subject with *sqr* as “beatings”, inscribed before the man bearing a large tambourine above his shoulder. (Fig. 16) (Naville, 1892: PL. XVI, XXVIII; Fischer, 2002: 35, Fig, 3). Similarly, a fragment shows four women, the second from left holding a tambourine while the other three women seem that they are singing or shouting (Fig. 17). (Naville, 1892: PL. XIV).

### The two tambourines in one occasion

During the reign of Akhenaten a celebration was conducted to cheer Meryre (TT.4) (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty) at El-Amarna. It includes fan bearers and a band of professional female dancers. The leader uplifts a bouquet, and, behind her, numbers of women beat tambourines. Two kinds of tambourine appeared in this scene; the circular and rectangular or oblong (Fig.18) (Davies, 1903: 22, PL.XIII; Wilkinson, 1878:438,413). Sometimes small children participate at these festivals. One of these scenes commemorates the inauguration of Nefer-Hotep in his tomb (TT. 49) at el-Khokha (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty ?), where the dancing women have gone out to meet him with tambourines both round and square, accompanied by dancing children. (Fig. 19-20) (Davies, 1933: Pl. XVII, XVIII; Mbokazi, J.T. 2002: 44, Fig, 37; Wilknsn, 1878: note 22, Porter and Moss, 1970: p. 92) The same themes were repeated with minor changes in several tombs, like the tomb of Meryra II (TT.4), Panehesy (TT.6) (Davies, 1905a: Pls. XXIII, XXVI, XI, XVIII), Huya (TT.1) (Davies, 1905b: PL. XV), and Tutu (TT. 8) at El Amarna (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty) (Davies, N. De. G. 1908: PLs. XVIII, XX).

### Rectangular tambourine

A rectangular tambourine of red-stained leather stretched over a wood frame had been found in front of Hatnofer's tomb entrance now in the Egyptian Museum (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty). Since she was probably not a professional musician and had no title connecting her with a divine cult, Hatnofer probably played this tambourine in her own home or at the homes of friends (Fig. 21) (Roehring, 2002: 27, Fig. 43). The rectangular tambourine with concave sides was briefly popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty for use at banquets (Bard, 1999: 659). Picture of a female musicians dressed in tight white linen gowns, adorns the walls of the Vizier Rekhmere's tomb (TT 100), at Sh. Abd el-Qurna (18<sup>th</sup> dynasty). Here, a kneeling woman playing a harp while another plays a lute; the third woman plays a rectangular tambourine (Fig. 22) (Davies, 1943:Pl. LXVI; Ruiz, 2001: 62; Roehring, 2002: Fig. 45).

Similarly, from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, a fragment of painted limestone (No.1985.328.11), dates back to Amarna Period, shows female dancers with Instruments, flute and rectangular tambourine (Fig.23) (<http://www.metMuseum.org>). Dancing with tambourine also decorated food tools, where a wooden spoon carved in the shape of female dancer playing her square tambourine between two tall lotus flowers, (Fig. 24) (Ruiz, 2001: 57).

A stela from Dakhla Oasis belongs to the government official Wayhes and maybe dates back to the reign of Sheshonq I. It represents a religious occasion, where he and a priest accompanied with two women, in front of what may be the place where the oracle of Seth was given. The lower portion of the stela displaying women playing rectangular

tambourine appear at the bottom right (Fig. 25) (Teeter and Johnson, 2009: 89, Fig. 53). During the Roman period, a relief shows women beating tambourines to scare birds out of the plants. Such scenes suggest possibilities for the use of music in hunting that cannot be fully confirmed with the present state of the evidence (Bleiberg, E. 2005: 167).

### **Beating tambourine by Bes**

Round tambourine was the only instrument percussion displayed in the hands of gods/goddesses. From the New Kingdom period, the round tambourine is played by female and Bes-Figures in the contexts related to birth, especially in birth-houses (Dasen, V. 2013: 155). In the minds of people, Bes was equally important as protector of a woman giving birth and safe childbirth (Manniche, 1973: 32). Bes and Beset were depicted dancing while playing tambourine and other instruments. Priests and priestesses played the role of the gods in rituals. For example, in the Osirian liturgy, two young women were chosen to personify Isis and Nephthys and play tambourine for the god (Faulkner, R. O. 1933: 1.1/2-4). Bes may also be seated on the shoulders of musicians, male or female, who play the double-flute or beat tambourine, mentioning the celebration of childbirth (Dasen, 2013: 73). Bes dancing while beating his tambourine is a motive already known from some small faience at Thebes, and in the town of Akhenaten at Tell el Amarna. The attitude and liveliness of these Figs are unlike anything else that known of upper Egyptian art and suggests a delta or perhaps a foreign influence (Davis and Maspero, 1907:40).

Representations of Bes-image playing a round tambourine are known since the time of Hatshepsut. Amulets depicting the Bes-image in this attitude are quite common at El Amarna. During the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Bes-image has a more human profile (James, 1989: 320,420). A painted wooden statuette from the New Kingdom at the British Museum (EA20865) representing Bes shaking a round tambourine with black frame and red membrane (Fig. 26) (Manniche, 1957: 3; Pinch, 1994: 43).

The best-known piece of furniture is the chair of Sit-Amun now in the Egyptian Museum, the eldest daughter of Queen Tiy and Amenhotep III. On the arms of the chair, Bes is shown in a lively dance, raising their feet and beating their tambourines (Bosse-Griffiths, 1977: 100). Bes dancing round Taurt, goddess of birth with knife, where the other dancing while beaten a tambourine. Bes-representing facing right, with upraised arms holding circular tambourine in front of his face (Fig. 27) (Romano, 1989: cat. 90; Murray, M. A. 1963: Fig. 2; Davis, and Maspero, 1907: Fig. 2). The other scene represented two Figures of Bes standing back to back playing tambourine, while the third one dancing with knives (Fig. 28) (Davis and Maspero, 1907: Fig. 2.3; Quibell, J. E. 1908: Pls. XLI-XLII). These strange short skirts with tail suggest that the Figs should be understood as dancers with masks over their faces who are acting as Bes-gods (Bosse-Griffiths, 1977: 100).

At El-Amarna, perhaps the most popular Bes-amulet was the one which shows the naked dwarf god, in side view, dancing and beating a circular tambourine. A number of these amulets were found attached to a small necklace which was discovered in the city of Akhenaten. They all have lion-ears, a lion-tail, and a bearded face, and dates back to the reign of Akhenaten to Tutankhamun (Fig. 29). (Bosse-Griffiths, 1977: 99; James, 1989: cat. 104-105).

At TT. 217 of Ipuy at Deir el Medineh (19<sup>th</sup> dynasty), a detail of a wall painting showing hippopotamus goddess standing next to Bes-image who standing facing right, arms upraised striking round tambourine held in front of him (James, 1989: cat.142). Dancing Bes also appear on 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty painted jar from this village (Fig. 30) (Smith, 1981: 299, Fig. 288B). These strange short skirts with tail suggest that the Figs of Bes should be understood as dancers with masks over their faces who are acting as Bes-gods (Kate Bosse-Griffiths, 1997: 100). The Egyptians believed that his dancing and music would

drive away evil spirits and offer protection to his charges (Spencer, S. 2003: 112, Fig, 43), so both men and women seem to have dressed up in Bes masks to perform protective dances (Pinch, G. 1994: 44, Fig, 43). On the walls of Hathor temple on the island of Philae, Bes plays the tambourine and the harp as well (G. Hart, 2000: 61; Manniche, 1975: 118).

The two round membranes in Cairo Museum show the same theme, but with dancers on two different levels, divine and human; the dwarf and Bes seem to be interchangeable. On one membrane, a female musician beats a round tambourine before Isis (a), between these Figs, a female dwarf in a dress dances. On the second membrane (b), a Bes-god, clad in a short kilt, substitutes for the dwarf. (Fig. 31 a-b) (Dasen, 2013: 152-153, Fig, 9.28). Similar motifs are found on the Ashmolean tambourine, where the second and third registers depict rows of Figures playing the round tambourine (Dasen, 2013: 154). The style of the decoration of the Ashmolean tambourine, would fit the latter part of the New Kingdom as well as a later date, while The Cairo membranes are well dated to the Ptolemaic period, having been found in a Ptolemaic cemetery at Akhmim (Manniche, 1973: 32; Bard, 1999: 660). A close study of the Ashmolean and the Cairo membranes reveals that several parts of the decoration can be associated with the idea of birth (Manniche, 1973: 31).

### Beating tambourine by Hathor and Anubis

Anubis also is shown at Deir el-Medina wearing a long garb and beating tambourine (Fig. 32) (Ritner, R. K. 1985: 149). The presence of round tambourine in the hands of Anubis and Bes can be explained by the relation of these gods to the world of women (Manniche, L. 1975: 5), where Anubis was shown playing the tambourine in the Ramesside Tomb TT. 26 of Khnumemhab at El-Assasif (Ritner, 1985: note 9). The round tambourine was associated with both women and religion; new kingdom illustration suggests a link between this tambourine and the cults of both Hathor and Isis (Tyldesley, 1995: 129).

At Edfu temple, a scene shows Anubis strikes a tambourine to please Hathor/Isis and her son (Fig. 33) (Chassinat, 1939: pl. XIII), and a similar scene found in the Mammisi at Dendera. In one text Anubis states: "I offer you the sound of the tambourine "*rdi(i) n.k nhm*". (Ritner, 1985: 149, note 6, Fig, 3; Manniche, L. 1975: 4), and "announces the way before everyone who comes to the necropolis" (Gaballa, and Kitchen, 1969: 70). An inscription from the temple of Dendera, show Hathor beating a tambourine, The Seven Hathors in the inscriptions, are forms of Het-Heru. They were represented as young women beating tambourines and were regarded also as a positive form of energy, predicting the fate of newborns. (Mariette, A. 1871: pl. 59 n; Ruiz, A. 2001: 163; Blackman, A. M. 2011: Fig, 4). Tambourine performed a part in the services of the temple; and two goddesses in the frieze at Dendera are represented playing the harp and tambourine in honor of Hathor (Wilkinson, 2005: 129).

The temple of Edfu, had a scene shows the goddess Hathor (on the right), lady of Dendera, is breastfeeding her son. Each year, his birth was celebrated as the birth of a new year. One of the seven Hathors stands before them, beating her tambourine in joy, and speaks an invocation to the New Year (Fig. 34) (Chassinat, 1939: PL.XXIV.4). Another scene from the temple of Edfu, representing the seven Hathor beating a tambourine, in celebration before Hathor while was sitting breastfeeding the young Horus (Fig. 35). (Chassinat, 1939: PL.XV.3; Chassinat, 1897: pl. XXXIV). On a Ptolemaic-Roman lintel inscription in

Dendara, one of seven Hathors was called  "Mistress of Dance,". The determinative of hnw here shown a young woman beating a round tambourine. In the temple of Mut at Karnak, Ptolemy II offers sistras to Mut and to the lion goddess Sekhmet.

Behind the king stand a female harpist and a tambourine player. Music may have been intended to appease the goddess Mut and avert her dangerous side (Fig. 36) (Ayad. 2009: pp.46-47, fig.2.4)

### Conclusion

Few terminologies like *ibn(w)*, referring directly to a woman playing tambourine, while some words like *nhm*, *hnw*, *xnwt* although had a determinative of a woman or a man beating a tambourine, bearing multiple meaning like dance, rejoice, praise and beating tambourine. Other words like *Tbn*, *dbn* and *sr* referring to the meaning of playing drum, drum and tambourine. Generally, a number of words had multiple meaning like chanting, dancing, rejoice, or beating for making rhythm beside tambourine, while few words referring precisely to tambourine as a percussion tool. (Table: 1).

Tambourine was the most common drum instrument in ancient Egypt both round and square. The round tambourine was the most widespread instrument among them. Men and women beating a tambourine, while they were taking part in the parade of dancing accompanied by their children, whom they were seen dancing in the procession. This percussion tool was played by professional musician and by ordinary people especially women, at home or at the home of friends.

More than one can participate beating tambourine, especially the big (Figs.13, 15-16). Big tambourine was played by men and women alike. It also appeared throughout ages, during 5<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> dynasties, with rare mentions in the Middle Kingdom, while the rectangular tambourine became popular during the New Kingdom. Each of the round and rectangular tambourine was played solo or accompanied by other musical instruments (figs. 19-20, 22), like the harp and the flute (Figs. 22, 6, 25). The round and rectangular tambourine can be seen beating on occasions, the ancient Egyptian avoided the two sexes to be mingled and seen on one occasion. All kind of celebration; festive or religious using different kinds of tambourine. Rowing, bulling, clapping, chanting, and dancing, all these activities accompanied by the rhythm of tambourine, as a mean of motivation and celebration. The ancient Egyptian rarely depicted two different tambourine in one occasion.

Both round and square tambourine were playing together and sharing other musical instruments on different occasions. The position of tambourine while beating was differing. It was seen placed before the face of the drummer, or the tambourinist held it up by one hand. A large tambourine always placed on the shoulder of the drummer, while the person behind beating it. In rare cases, one can place and play tambourine while it was on his shoulder supported it with one hand and played by the other. As for rectangular tambourine sometimes one can see it leaning before the breast of the drummer who was indulging beating it. The rectangular tambourine appeared beating only by women and represented less than the round tambourine. (Table: 2). the purpose of beating tambourine in civil occasions was varied. In some case striking tambourine was to encourage the rowing men and pleased the couple. It was also used to encourage the soldier pulling a colossal statue, or giving the rhythm to the army. Scenes also commemorated the inauguration of officials, or during a celebration held to cheer or hailed a high official. In rare cases women beating tambourine to scare birds out of the plants. The vitality and vigor can be seen in the movements of women than men, and in the festive occasion than in the religious ceremonies (Figs 4, 19, 20).

From the New Kingdom on, the scenes and sculptures of gods/goddesses beating tambourine were on the rise. The round tambourine was considered the only favorite percussion instrument was seen in the hands of gods/goddesses, beating it on different occasions (Table: 3).Beating tambourine supplied the rhythm for singing in religious

ceremonies, and it was also accompanied by mournful song, taking part in a procession of religious ceremonies in the presence of gods. Goddesses also are observed playing tambourine in honor of Hathor. It was linked to birth and fertility. Bes beating tambourine was seen as a protector of a woman giving birth and safe childbirth. Some cases show men and women seem to have dressed up in Bes masks to perform a protective dance. Bes was also seen beating tambourine while he was dancing accompanied rhythm of tambourine. Only Bes between gods who represented doing this action, while other gods represented in ancient Egyptian conservative manner (Figs.27-30).

Table 1: Terminology referring to tambourine

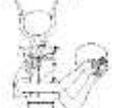
Word	Transliterate	Refer to
	Dbn	Round
	Tbn	Play the drum
	sr	Tambourine - drum
	sr	Tambourine - drum
	SmAyt	Tambourists or one who make music with rhythm
	nhm	Dance for joy, to rejoice, to praise, to beat a drum or tambourine
	Xn, xnw	Giving the rhythm, tambourine, percussionist, sistrum
	Hry xnw.t imy-r xnw	Master of Tambourine overseer of tambourine player
	hnw	Dance- tambourine
	xnw	Tambourine players
	ibn (w)	women play tambourine
	ibn (w)	Tambourine girl

Table 2: Position of tambourine in the hands of male/female

5 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	5 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty
18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty

			
Late Ramesside	22 <sup>nd</sup> dynasty	22 <sup>nd</sup> dynasty	

Table 3: Postion of Tambourine in the hands of gods

		
18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty	18 <sup>th</sup> dynasty
		
Ptolemaic period	Ptolemaic period	Ptolemaic period

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**Figures**

Fig 1: Female steward is beating Tambourine to amuse the couple



Fischer, 2000: Fig. 13

Fig. 4: Bas-relief from the tomb of Khai

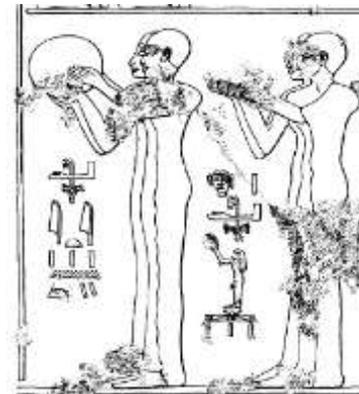
Fig 2: A man from a market scene holding two drums



Fischer, 2002: Fig.5

Fig. 5 driving off birds by tambourine

Fig 3: Third jubilee of Amenhotep III



Teeter and Johnson, 2009: Fig. 33



Erman, 1894: p.249

Fig.6: Procession of religious ceremony



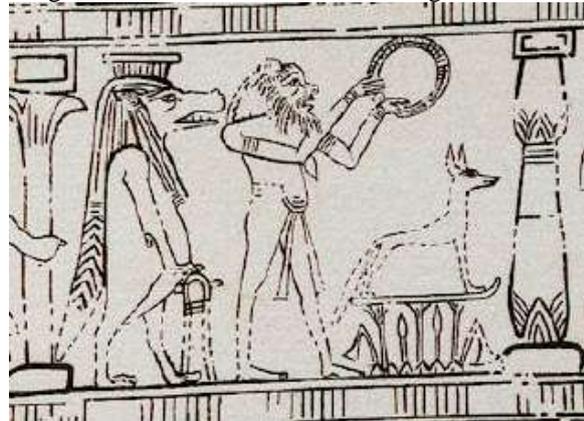
<https://www.brooklynmuseum.org>

Fig. 7: A man with a thick hair beating tambourine



Koen, 2008: Fig. 2.2.8

Fig. 8: A stela from Deir el-Medina



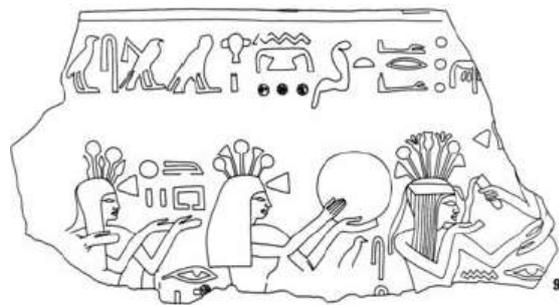
Davies, 1927: pl. xxxvii

Fig 9: Sunken relief at Brooklyn Museum with female musician



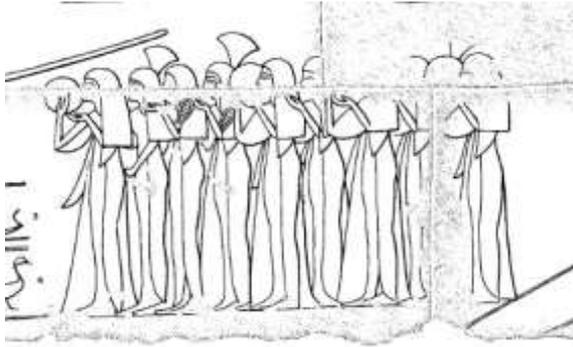
Robins, 1998: Fig. 50

Fig.10 the River procession of the Feast of Opet

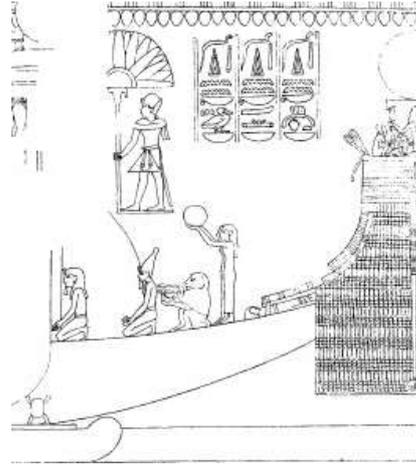


Koen, 2008: Fig. 2.2.10

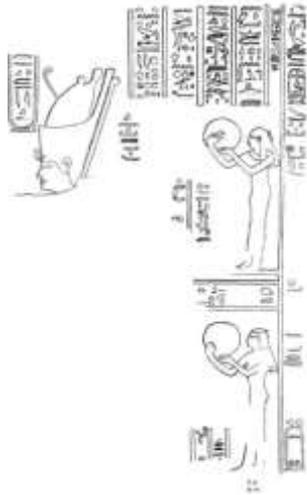
Fig.11 a girl strike tambourine in the boat of Re-Harakhty



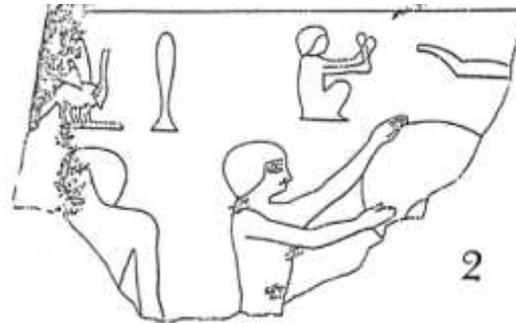
The Epigraphic Survey, 1936: Pl.84  
 Fig. 12 two musicians with tambourines behind the king Claudius



Caverly, et al., 1935: pl.15  
 Fig. 13: A block from the sun temple of Neuserre



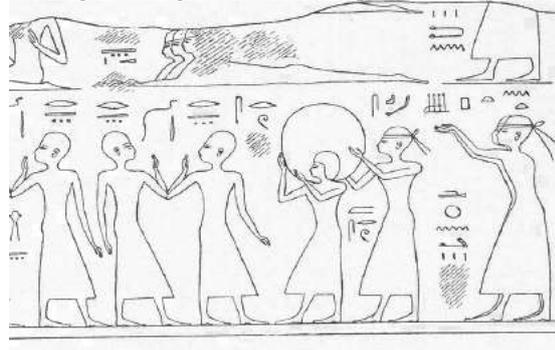
Petrie, 1908: pl. xxviii  
 Fig.14: Jubilee ceremony of Amenhotep



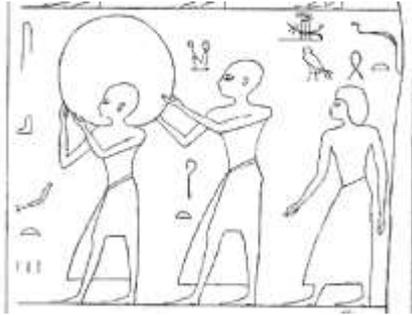
Fischer, 2002: Fig.2  
 Fig. 15: fragment of the temple of Bubastis



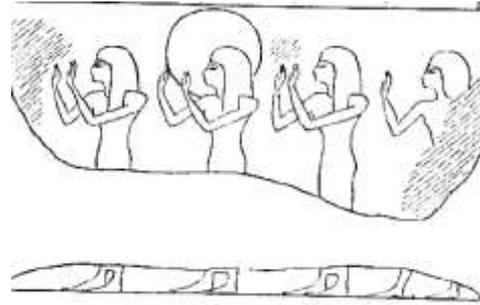
Epigraphic Survey, 1980: pl.40  
 Fig 16: A man bearing a large tambourine



Naville, 1892: pl. xi  
 Fig. 17: A woman with a large Tambourine



Naville, 1892: pl. xvi



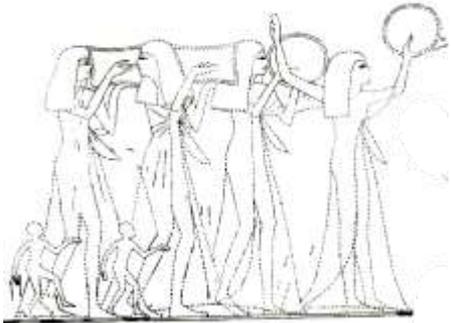
Naville, 1892: pl. xiv

Fig. 18: Circular and rectangular tambourine



Davies, 1903: pl. xiii

Fig 19-20 Inauguration of Nefer-Hotep in his tomb at Thebes



Davies, 1933: pls. xvii, xviii

Fig. 21: A rectangular tambourine- Hatnofer's tomb

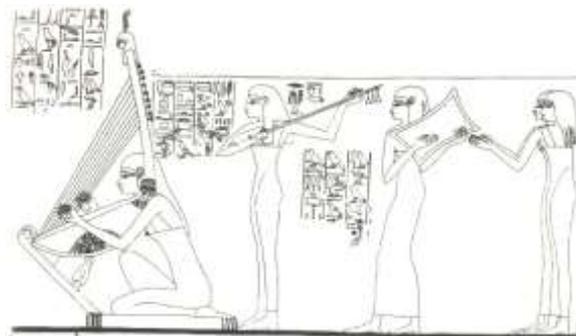


Fig. 22: Rekhmere's female musicians



Roehring, 2002: Fig. 42

Fig.23 women beating rectangular tambourine



Davies, 1943: pl. lxvi

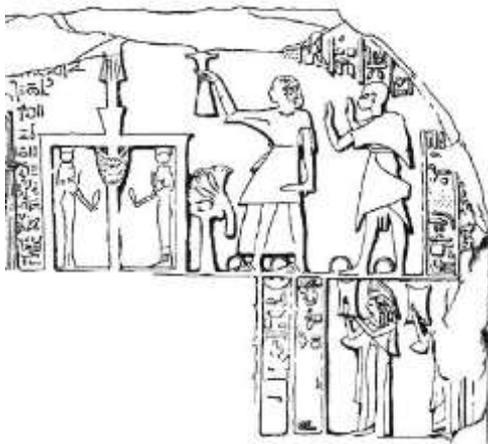
Fig 24: A decorated spoon with a female drummer



<http://www.metMuseum.org>  
 Fig 25: A stela from Dakhla Oasis with rectangular Tambourine



Ruiz, 2001: P.57  
 Fig 26: A painted wooden statuette

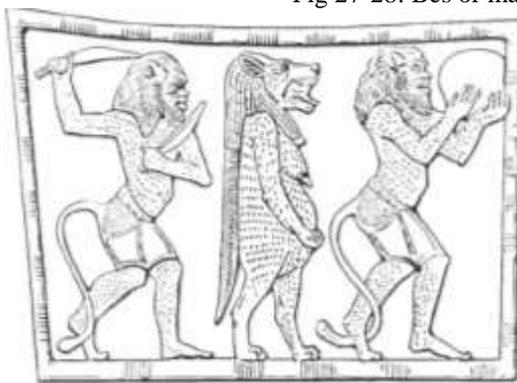


Teeter and Johnson, 2009: Fig, 53

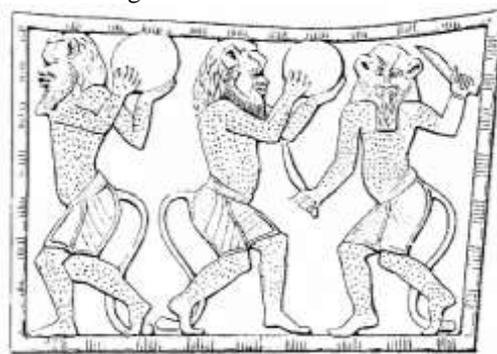


Pinch, 1994: Fig, 43

Fig 27-28: Bes or man-like Bes beating tambourine



Davis, and Maspero, 1907: Fig. 2  
 Fig 29: Bes amulet from El-Amarna



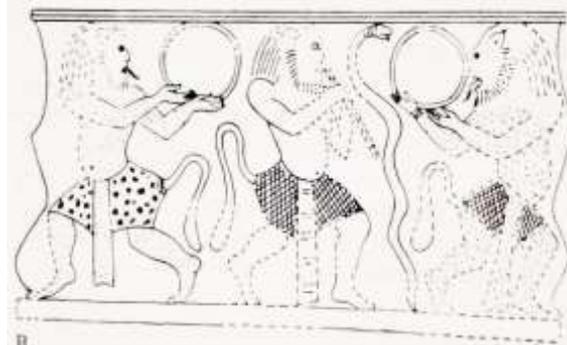
Davis, and Maspero, 1907: Fig. 2.3

Fig. 30: Painted Jar from Deir El-Medina

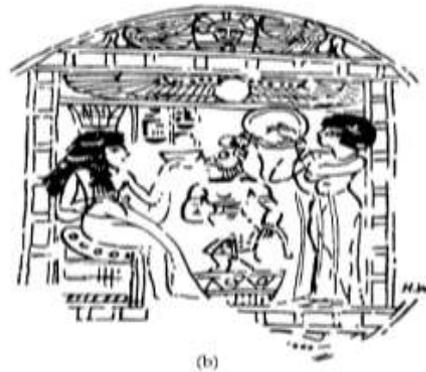


James, F. R (1989), cat. 104-105

Fig. 31: Two round membranes in Cairo Museum



Smith, 1981: Fig. 288B



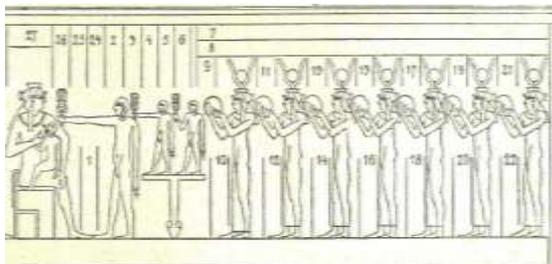
Dasen, 2013: Fig. 9.28

Fig.32: Anubis playing Tambourine with long garb



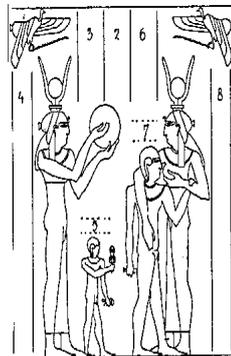
[www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

Fig. 35: The seven Hathor incelebration before Hathor



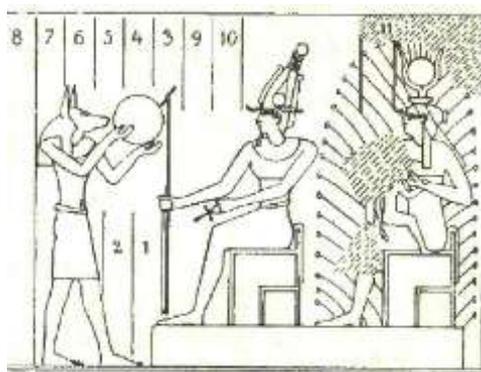
Chassinat, 1939: PL.XV.3

Fig 33: Anubis strike Tambourine



Chassinat, 1939: pl. XIII

Fig 34: One of the Seven Hathor pleases goddess Hathor



Chassinat, 1939: PL.XXIV.4

Fig. 36: Tambourine player appease the goddess Mut



Ayad, 2009: Fig. 2.4