



A Ceremonial Rattle Drum

A rattle-drum made of a bent-wood skeleton completely enclosed in a finely tanned cream-colored hide stitched all around with cotton string and iron nails. Possibly Cheyenne, North Western Plains Indians, USA. C; 1890. 45 x 31 cm.

In the 1830s, George Catlin described how one language referred to the most common of the Plains rattles as she-she-quois. Made of rawhide and containing pebbles, it produced “a shrill noise to mark the time” and could also be used as a drum-beater (1844/1965: 242).

Eastern Anishinaabeg communities and other First Nations in Canada’s central north-western regions had a flat disc rattle. It was made of a flat stick looped back upon itself with the loop covered with rawhide. In the Plains, people preferred to cover the disc with buffalo pericardium. The Tłicho (Dogribs) made this form of rattle, but used caribou skin parchment and filled it with shot.

Literature:

Pub. : MYTHOS WILD WEST, Die Sammlung Bründl – The Bründl Collection. Deutsches Jagd- und Fischereimuseum München, 1999/2000, Exhibition catalogue, WINONA GMBH 1999, p. 71, N° 232

(described as : Rassel / Trommel – Drum / Rattle, North west Plains Indians c. 1890.)