Philippine Ethnic Musical Instruments
Aerophone

• is any musical instrument which produces sound primarily by
  – causing a body of air to vibrate
  – without the use of strings or membranes
  – and without the vibration of the instrument itself adding considerably to the sound.
Bansiq

**Ethnic group:** Hanunoo  
**Location:** Mindoro  
**Classification:** Aerophone, chip-on-ledge flute:

**Description**
Slightly curved bamboo tube, closed on one side by a node and cut off under an angle. On the cut off surface an extra piece of bamboo is tied.  
Dimensions: length: 31.5 cm., diameter: 1.5 cm.
Kalleleng

**Description**
Long bamboo tubes, closed at one end by the node in which the blowing hole is burnt. The flute has three finger holes. The blowing hole is placed under an angle against the nose and the player gently blows into the tube.

Dimensions (from top to bottom):
- flute 1: length: 71 cm., diameter: 2 cm.
- flute 2: length: 51.5 cm., diameter: 2 cm.

The end of the tubes with the blowing hole burnt in the node.
On the right: the **Tongali** from the Kalingga

**Ethnic group:** Bontoc  
**Location:** North Luzon (Cordillera)  
**Classification:** Aerophone, vertical flute, nose flute
The kalleleng is held against the nostril; the other nostril is plugged.
**Lantuy**

**Ethnic group:** Hanunoo  
**Location:** Mindoro  
**Classification**  
Aerophone, horizontal flute

**Description**  
Bamboo tube, closed at one end by a node (on the right on the picture). Dimensions: length: 31.5 cm., diameter: 1.5 cm.
Palandag

Ethnic group: Bagobo
Location: SE Mindanao

**Classification**
Aerophone, lip valley flute (notch flute)

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**Description**
Two by two fingerholes. Protruding mouthpiece with a hole. The instrument is decorated with carvings blackened by burning. For playing technique: see *Pulalu*
Dimensions: length: 18.6 cm, diameter 1.2 cm.
Local name: unknown
Group: Bontoc
Location: North Luzon (Cordillera)
Classification: Aerophone, vertical flute

Description
Short bamboo tube, cut off on the node and closed with a piece of wood, lower part of the hole half covered, with a burnt in hole.
Dimensions: length: 14,7 cm., dimater: 1,6 cm.
**Paldong**

**Ethnic group:** Kalingga  
**Location:** North Luzon (Cordillera)  
**Classification**  
Aerophone, lip valley flute (notch flute)

**Description**  
Open bamboo pipe, top end cut at an angle (see pictures). Three by one fingerholes. For playing technique: see [Pulalu](#)  
Dimensions: length: 69,2 cm, diameter 1,6 cm.

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*The mouthpiece, the one on the left is the Paldong*
Pulalu

**Ethnic group:** Mansaka  
**Location:** SE Mindanao  

**Classification**  
Lip valley flute (notch flute), aerophone

**Description**  
Open bamboo pipe, top end cut at an angle (see pictures). Two by two fingerholes.

Dimensions: length: 48.7 cm, diameter 1.4 cm

*The mouthpiece, the one on the right is the Pulalu*
Ethnic group: Kalingga
Location: North Luzon (Cordillera)

Classification
Aerophone, vertical flute. nose flute

Description
Long bamboo tubes, closed at one end by the node in which the blowing hole is burnt. The flute has three finger holes. The blowing hole is placed under an angle against the nose and the player gently blows into the tube.
Dimensions: length: 57.5 cm., diameter 2 cm.

It is held against the nostril; the other nostril is plugged
Sahunay

**Ethnic group:** Taosug  
**Location:** Sulu archipelago (muslim south)

**Classification**  
Pipe with reed (clarinet): aerophone

**Description**  
Tube with six fingerholes; mouth piece of bamboo with cut out reed; mouth shield made of coconut shell; bell made of leaf (probably bamboo) and blue plastic ribbon.  
Dimensions:  
Total length: 28.4 cm. diam. tube with fingerholes: 0.65 cm. widest diam bell: 3.7 cm
The piece of bamboo with the cut out reed was lost during storage in the depots of the museum. The reed's blade is on the lower side.
Chordophone

• A chordophone is any musical instrument
• which makes sound by way of a vibrating string
• or strings stretched between two points
Kudlung

Ethnic group: Bagobo
Location: SE Mindanao

Classification
Chordophone, two stringed boat lute

Description
Two stringed lute made of wood, one string for the melody, one for the drone. Eight frets are glued on the neck of the lute. The body of the instrument is carved with geometric patterns. The neck and the head are adorned with horse hair; the tail has two (originally three) pieces of carabao skin; the strap is adorned with bead work.

Dimensions: length: 98 cm., width: 8.5 cm., height: 5.5 cm.

The head, adorned with horse hair
**Kudlung**

**Ethnic group:** Bagobo  
**Location:** SE Mindanao  
**Classification**  
Chordophone, two stringed boat lute

**Description**  
Two stringed lute made of wood, one string for the melody, one for the drone. Eight frets are glued on the neck of the lute. The body of the instrument is carved with geometric patterns. The neck and the head are adorned with horse hair; the tail has two (originally three) pieces of carabao skin; the strap is adorned with beadwork.  
Dimensions: length: 98 cm., width: 8,5 cm., height: 5,5 cm.
**Kudlung**

**Ethnic group:** B'laan  
**Location:** SE Mindanao  
(christian / animist part)  

**Classification**  
Chordophone, two stringed boat lute
Kudlung

**Description**
Two stringed lute made of wood, one string for the melody, one for the drone. Eight frets originally held in place placed on the neck of the lute by a sticky rubbery substance, called *sicoco*. The lute has a mechanism for fine tuning consisting of a wooden comb tied against the outer part of the lute's neck and the melody string. Dimensions: length: 118 cm., width: 20 cm., height: 10.5 cm.

The lower part of the body, with the plectre (akbit) stuck into a hole
The head, decorated with floral motives, 'okiran'

The tail, decorated with the 'crocodile' motive
Ethnic group: Marano
Location: West Central Mindanao (Muslim south)
Classification
Chordophone, two stringed boat lute

Description
Two stringed lute made of wood, one string for the melody, one for the drone. Eight frets originally held in place placed on the neck of the lute by a sticky rubbery substance. The lute is decorated with floral motives; the tail is carved to represent a stylised crocodile head.
Dimensions: length: 152 cm., width: 11,5 cm.
Serongagandi

Ethnic group: Maranaw
Location: Central-west Mindanao (Muslim south)

**Classification**
Cither: chordophone

**Description**
Decorated bamboo tube, closed by a node at both ends. Two strings cut free and lifted by bamboo sticks and connected by a wooden bridge (or 'platform'). The bridge is situated over a hole which makes the tube a resonator.

Length: 41 cm, diameter: 9 cm.
Ethnic group: T'boli
Location: South east Mindanao

Classification
Bamboo cither: chordophone, idiochord

Description
Tube cither made of bamboo; five strings cut from the tube; the tube is cut open with one full length crack and held together by bamboo strips at both ends. In this way the tube forms the resonating body of the instrument. Usually a piece of dried leaf is placed in the top end of the tube of which the function is not clear.

Dimensions: length: 80 cm., diameter 11.5 cm.
A T'boli woman plays the sludoy, the woman in the background plays a hegelung.
Kolitong

Ethnic group: Kalingga
Location: North Luzon, Cordillera

**Classification**
Chordophone, idiochord tube zither

**Description**
Bamboo tube, closed at both end by a node. In both nodes a star shaped opening is cut. Five strings are cut loose from the skin, and lifted and tuned with small pieces of wood. The tube is cracked and slightly opened to improve resonance.

Dimensions: length: 80 cm. diameter: 11.5 cm.
Idiophone

• An idiophone is any musical instrument
• which creates sound primarily
  – by way of the instrument's vibrating,
  – without the use of strings or membranes
• Most percussion instruments which are not drums are idiophones.
Afiw

Description
Made of brass; the instrument is held horizontally with the metal tongue in front of the opened mouth. The left end is either hit by the thumb of the right hand or plucked (see photograph below). This makes the metal tongue vibrate which causes a sound. The mouth serves as a resonator and by changing the shape and size of the mouth opening, the overtones can be changed, thus creating a melody. By strongly breathing in or out the volume can be changed as well. The string is made of wool. Dimensions: length: 11.5 cm., width: 1.3 cm.

Group: Bontoc
Classification: Idiophone, jaw harp

Ethnic group: Bontoc
Location: North Luzon (Cordillera)

The Afiw is held before the opened mouth
**Kinaban**

**Ethnic group:** Hanunoo  
**Location:** Mindoro  
**Classification:** Idiophone, jaw harp

**Description**  
Made of bamboo; the instrument is held horizontally with the bamboo tongue in front of the opened mouth. The left end is hit by the thumb of the right hand. This makes the bamboo tongue vibrate which causes a sound. The mouth serves as a resonator and by changing the shape and size of the mouth opening, the overtones can be changed, thus creating a melody. By strongly breathing in or out the volume can be changed as well. For a picture of the instrument in use: see the Kubing from the Atta.  
Dimensions: length: 14,9 cm., width: 0,8 cm.
Kubing

Ethnic group: Atta
Location: SE Mindanao
Classification: Idiophone, jaw harp

**Description**
Made of bamboo; the instrument is held horizontally with the bamboo tongue in front of the opened mouth. The left end is hit by the thumb of the right hand. This makes the bamboo tongue vibrate which causes a sound. The mouth serves as a resonator and by changing the shape and size of the mouth opening, the overtones can be changed, thus creating a melody. By strongly breathing in or out the volume can be changed as well.

Dimensions: length: 20,8 cm., width: 1 cm.
**Description**
Made of bamboo; the instrument is held horizontally with the bamboo tongue in front of the opened mouth. The left end is hit by the thumb of the right hand. This makes the bamboo tongue vibrate which causes a sound. The mouth serves as a resonator and by changing the shape and size of the mouth opening, the overtones can be changed, thus creating a melody. By strongly breathing in or out the volume can be changed as well. For a picture of the instrument in use: see the Kubing from the Atta.

A thin piece of bamboo of appr. 2 cm. length on the left side, for hitting and causing the tongue to vibrate, is broken off.

**Dimensions:** length: 23,6 cm. (or. appr. 26 cm.). , width (widest): 2,4 cm, (smallest) 1,2 cm.
**Kumbing**

**Ethnic group:** Manobo  
**Location:** Central Mindanao  
**Classification:** Idiophone, jaw harp

**Description**
Made of bamboo; the instrument is held before the opened mouth with the cut out tongue in front of the mouth opening. The left end is hit by the right hand. This makes the metal tongue vibrate which causes a sound. The mouth serves as a resonator and by changing the shape and size of the mouth opening, the overtones can be changed, thus creating a melody. By strongly breathing in or out the volume can be changed as well.  
Dimensions: length: 14.9 cm., width: 0.9 cm.
**Balingbing**

**Group:** Kalingga  
**Location:** North Luzon (Cordillera)  
**Classification**  
Idiophone, bamboo buzzer

**Description**
Bamboo tube, one side closed. Two tongues and a crack up to the node; hole. The instrument is played by beating one of the tongues against the arm or wrist; sound can be changed by closing and opening the hole. Usually played by at least seven individuals, each with one buzzer. Player play their own rhythmic pattern, all patterns fit together ("interlocking"). Players can form long rows while dancing in an open space (such as a central meadow).  
Dimensions: vary from 30 to 50 cm. depending on desired tonal height.
Palipal

Ethnic group: Ifugao
Location: North Luzon (Cordillera)

Classification
Idiophone, bamboo clapper

Description
Bamboo tube, one end open; cut open in the middle; upper part cut into two halves. The instrument is played by shaking: one half swings up and down and in the down swing hits the lower half. For playing technique: see Balingbing
Tagutok

Ethnic group: Maranaw
Location: Central-west Mindanao (muslim south)

Classification
Idiophone

Description
Decorated bamboo scraper, length: 46 cm., diameter: 9 cm.
Bangibang

**Group:** Ifugao  
**Location:** North Luzon (Cordillera)  
**Classification**  
Idiophone, percussion bar

**Description**  
Set of at least seven wooden bars made of hard wood. Each bar has its own pitch and is hit by the player with a short stick of hard wood. Players have one stick each and play their own rhythmic pattern, which fall together ('interlocking').  
See also: [Balingbing](#).  
Dimensions: length: 47.5 cm., height: 5 cm., diameter: 2.6 cm.
Gabbang

Ethnic group: Taosug
Location: Jolo (muslim south)

Classification
Idiophone, xylophone

Description
Xylophone with 17 keys made of bamboo, separated by metal nails. The resonating case is decorated with floral motives. At the sides are two mirrors. The beaters are made of wood with a piece of tube rubber

Dimensions: length: 102 cm., width: 51 cm. height: 37 cm.
A Taosug woman plays the gabbang.

The Gabbang can be played as a solo instrument. Sometimes a duo is formed with a 'biula', a local violin.

The resonating case, decorated with floral motives.
Kulintang (small)

Ethnic group: Maranao
Location: Central-west Mindanao (Muslim south)

Classification
Idiophone, metal xylophone

Description
A set of eight iron plates with boss on a wooden frame. The plates are tuned and played as a kulintang. The set is considered to be a practice set for children, although adults also play the instrument.

Dimensions: length: 95 cm., width: 14 cm. height: 9 cm.
Kulintang ensemble

Ethnic group: Maranao
Location: Central-west Mindanao (Muslim south)

Classification
Idiophones: gong chime and large gong
Membranophones: conical drum and cylindrical drum

Local names
Set of eight gongs: Kulintang
Large gong: Agung
Cylindrical drum: Gandang
Conical drum: Dadabuan
**Description**

Set of eight gongs made of bronze, on a wooden stand in the shape of a *Sarimanok* (mythical bird, divine messenger). Accompanied by one larger gong (here made of iron, but usually also made of bronze) and two drums. The eight small gongs differ in pitch but the height of the tone is not fixed and can differ per set. The number of large gongs can vary from one to several gongs of different pitch and size. The small gongs are struck with two sticks of appr. 30 cm. length and made of a soft kind of wood, probably of the papaya tree. The large gong is struck with a special beater. The conical drum is struck with a thin piece of bamboo of appr. 40 c.m. length. The cylindrical drum is struck with either the hands or two short wooden sticks.

To indicate the dimensions of the whole set, the length of the *Sarimanok*-shaped stand is 2,60 mtr, from head to tail. For other dimensions, see the pages of the other instruments of the ensemble (see above).
Two gongs on the stand

Kulintang ensemble

Remarks
The drums, the stand and the frame are all quite roughly made but elaborately decorated with colourfully painted wood carvings, called 'okiran'. The stand for the large gong is a copy based on photographs of a stand used by a Maranaw cultural group. The stand was made for the exhibiton 'Ugnayan, music in the Philippines', in 1977 in the The Hague Municipal Museum and in 1978 in the Rotterdam Ethnographic Museum.
**Group:** Maranao  
**Classification:** Idiophone, bossed gong  
**Location:** West Central Mindanao (Muslim south)

**Description:**  
Gong with boss, made of iron. The gong is part of the *Kulintang ensemble*.  
Dimensions: diameter: 45 cm. depth: 21 cm.
Tanggunggu

**Ethnic groups:** Kalagan, B’laan, Manuvu, Bagobo, a.o.
**Location:** South east Mindanao

**Classification**
Gong chime: idiophones

**Local names**
Set of eight gongs: *Tanggunggu*
Largest gong: *Unsaranan* (lit. mother)
The other gongs (rising in pitch): *Bandilanan, Tubaganan, Litokanan*
The highest gong: *Tulus*
The ostinato: *Patawaganan*
Beater: *Tinkulai*
Tanggunggu

**Description**
Set of eight small gongs made of iron, usually hanging on a rest of rope. The lower right gong is played as an ostinato while the melody is played on the other gongs, around the ostinato.
The large Tanggunggu, (Kaloagan, Mount Tandawanan, SE Mindanao)
Tongkaling

Ethnic group: B’laan
Location: SE Mindanao

Classification
Idiophones, pellet bells or crotal bells

Local names
Tongkaling: larger brass pellet bells
Gurung-gurung: smaller brass pellet bells

Description
Brass bells, used as an amulet or as a musical instrument. In the picture fourteen brass bells is fixed to a metal girdle. Nine of these bells have a particular design (a tiger's face). The girdle is used during a particular dance. For an extensive explanation of this particular type of bells and its use, see the pages on tiger bells.
Membranophone

• A membranophone is any musical instrument
• which produces sound primarily
• by way of a vibrating stretched membrane.
• Most membranophones are drums
**Dadabuan**

Ethnic group: Maranao  
Location: West central Mindanao (Muslim south)

**Classification**  
Membranophone, hour glass shaped drum

**Description**  
Hour glass shaped drum made of wood; the membrane is made of carabao skin. Decorated with carvings and painted. The drum is part of the *Kulintang ensemble.*  
Dimensions: height: 59 cm. diameter (membrane): 19 cm.
Gandang

Ethnic group: Maranao
Location: West central Mindabao (Muslim south)

Classification
Membranophone, double headed cylindrical drum

Description
Cylindrical drum, made of wood with a membrane made of carabo skin on each side. Decorated with 'okiran' motives and painted. The drum is part of the Kulintang ensemble.

Dimensions: height: 34 cm., diameter: 17 cm.
Prepared by: JC de Egurrola
Source: Kipas Gallery: Home of traditional art and music
Url: http://www.kipas.nl/