

Konden

WAP-pages / Paul Nas / Last updated on 20 October 2014

There are different explanations about the cultural background of the Malinke rhythm *Konden* (*Konen*, *Konde*, *Kunde*, *Konding*). Some people claim it's a mask-dance, others say it's a dounoumba (this is not necessarily conflicting). The typical dounoumba-kenkeni-pattern is not there, but the kenkeni-part of *Konden* II could be seen as a 'half-speed' kenkeni of a dounoumba. Because some of the great drummers have a different idea's about the meaning / background you will find some of their interpretations here:

I. *Konden* is a (Malinke) mask which walks fast and dances. *Konden* is a mask-dance staged for young men between the age of fifteen en twenty years. *Konden* runs after the guys, and when he catches them hits them with a rod. In earlier times the dance was only accompanied by singing and clapping. The mask-dancer holds twigs with leaves in his hands. The mask looks truly frightening and the little children get scared, their fear intensified further because of threats made by the adults. 'If you are not nice the *Konden* will come and get you!'. Each region has changed the rhythm somewhat, especially the dounoun. (from 'Mamady Keita; a life for the djembé')

II. *Konden* is the mask that protects the older bilankoro in the days leading up to their circumcision. Very handsome, he is also a fine dancer, which accounts for his popularity amongst the young. The best *Konden* are to be found in the current prefecture Siguiri (upper Guinea) and the village of Banfeleh in particular. There is a reputation of inventing the finest dance movements, but also of being quick to strike out with his riping crop to punish naughty children. He is somewhat like the 'bogeyman'. (part from text from Mogobalu-CD from Mamady Keita)

III. *Konden* (*Konding*) is a Dounoumba rhythm (sais Koungban Konde Master Drummer and Leader of Percussionist De Guinee according to Baba Aidoo)

IV. *Konden* is most definitely *not* a Dounoumba rhythm, It is a mask dance, and was performed as part of traditional end-of-Ramadan festivities. (according Jim Banks who asked Famoudou Konaté).

V. Mamoudou 'Delmundo' Keita, who taught in the Hamana-style from Upper Guinea, has made one CD 'House of Roots/'. Track 3, 'Yaya' (*Doundoun gbe*, *Konden*, *Bandogialli*, *Bolokonondo*) is dedicated to his father Fa Daman Keita: ".....He was also renown as a great dancer of the traditional dance of the strong men / warriors. Here it's brought together in four different dounoumba-rhythms...." Delmundo also sais: "*Konden* is the only Dounoumba that is played fast".

VI. Serge Blanc's book, 'Le Tambour Djembe' lists *Konde* as a member of the Dounoumba group from Kouroussa.

VII. Youssouf Koumbassa on his video 'Wongai' also states in the introduction to the Dounoumba that it is called *Konde*.

VIII. In the book Traditional West African Rhythms from Åge Delbanco, the rhythm *Konde* is annotated. Sources are different members of the Konaté-family. It sais : "Dounoumba from Guinea (Malinke).

*Banfeleh, Banfeleh, Konden de wa banfeleh,
Konden Fadima djiy karo bada böö, Konden de wa Banfeleh*

Banfeleh, banfeleh, the *Konden* will go to Banfeleh
the time has come for the circumcision of Fadima *Konden*
the *Konden* will go to Banfeleh.

Konden I

This *Konden*-I is from the Wassolon-region in Guinea

Call	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	
	f	r	l	l	r	r	l	

Kenkeni		●		●		●		■
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Sangban	●	●	●	○	○		
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Doundoun	●			●	●			■
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Konden II

Deze *Konden* comes from Kouroussa

Call	S:S S	T T T	S:s
	2: r l r	2: r r l r	
doundoun			■●

Kenkeni	●	●●	
	x x	x x	x

Sangban	●	●	○ ○
	x x	x x	x x

Doundoun	●●	●●	■●
	x x	x x	x x

Djembé 1	S T S	S T S
	r l r	r l r

Djembé 2	S T S	S T S
	r r l	r r l

Djembé 3	T T	T B	B
	r l	r r	r

Sangban	●	●	○ ○		●●	●	○ ○
variation 1	x	x x	x x	x	x x	x	x x

Sangban	●	●	○ ○		●●	●●	○ ○
variation 2	x	x x	x x	x	x x	x x	x x

Sangban	●	●	○ ○		●●	●●	○ ○
variation 3	x	x x	x x	x	x x	x x	x x

Sangban	●	●	○ ○		●●	●●	○ ○
variation 4	x	x x	x x	x	x x	x x	x x

Sangban	●	●	○ ○		●●	●●	○ ○
variation 5	x	x x	x x	x	x x	x x	x x

Sangban	●●	●●		●●	●●	●●	●●
variation 6	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x

Doundoun	●●	●●		●●	●●	●●	●●
variation 1	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x

Doundoun	●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●
variation 2	x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x

Doundoun	●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●	●●
variation 3	x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x

Sangban	●	●	○	○			●	●		○	○	●
echauffement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●
repeat	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

transition to	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	
2e echauff.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	
repeat	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	●
last time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	
ending	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Doundoun	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
echauffement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	●	●		●	●	●	●		●	●
ending	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Djembé solophrases:

	T	T	S	S	T	T	S	S	T	T	S	S	T	T
phrase 1	r	l	l	l	r	l	l	r	l	l	l	r	l	l

	T	S	s	S	T	S	s	S	B	T	S	s	S	T	S
phrase 2	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	r	r	l	r	l	r	l	r

	S	S	T	T	S	S	T							
phrase 3	f	f	2	r	l	r	l	r	l					

	S	S	S	T	S	S	S	T						
phrase 4	2	r	l	r	2	r	l	r	2	r	l	r		

	S	T	T	s	S	T	T	s	S	T	T	s	S	T	T
phrase 5 / 6	f	r	l	r	f	r	l	r	f	r	l	r	f	r	l

Djembé	T	T	S	T	T	S	T	S	T	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
echauffement	2	r	l	2	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l

	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	T	T	T	S	S		
ending	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	l	r	2	r	l	r	2	r	l

Sources

Lessons from Famoudou Konaté

Written material: Mamady Keita, Mamoudou 'Delmundo' Keita, Âge Delbanco, Serge Blanc.