

**CARDIFF UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Music**

**The Long Necked Lute's Eternal Return:**  
**Mythology, Morphology, Iconography of the *Tanbūr* Lute**  
**Family from Ancient Mesopotamia to Ottoman Albania**

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Ethnomusicology

By

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This Thesis is dedicated to my late father, Armand Gabriel Charest, who little knew that his random gift from Albania to me would become my life's work, and to my late mother, Martha Hertha Charest, without whose loving support and generosity I could not have made it this far.

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## List of Conventions

*Brackets* [ ] are used in two ways. When quoting translations of Sumerian, Akkadian or Assyrian texts I retain the translators' uses of brackets to indicate missing or partial signs in the originals, or reconstructed words or passages. Ellipse designate gaps in the original texts, although I have either eliminated or reduced many of these to standard ... rather than an ellipsis that reflects the length of the gap.

All other uses of brackets indicate my own insertions or comments in citations, including the use of [sic] when the original text uses a non-standard or British English spelling.

*Parentheses* ( ) in citations from Mesopotamian texts are the translators' insertions to give modern names for Sumerian or Akkadian terms, as for example '...the Stars (Pleiades)...'. In all other citations parentheses denote side comments that are part of the original citation. I also use parentheses to demarcate Return song theme codes that I explain in the Abbreviations section.

*Italics* have several uses. When I refer to a Return song tradition, that is, a number of variant texts of the same narrative, for example *Aga Imer*, the name appears in italics. When referring to a specific variant text within that tradition the name is shown with single quotation marks: 'Aga Imer na u martue'. Similarly, when discussing a text like *Dede Korkut Kitabı* that is a compendium of narratives the name of the complete work is italicized, but I place the names of the individual works contained in it in single quotation marks, as in 'Tells the Tale of Bamsi Beyrek of the Grey Horse', or simply 'Bamsi Beyrek'. The name of the eponymous hero of these tales is simply e.g. Aga Imer, Bamsi Beyrek, etc.

Foreign instrument names are always italicized: *çifteli*, *tanbūr*, *kopuz*, etc, as are foreign terms such as *magur*, *sipahi*, *krushq*, and so on. Foreign or transliterated terms such as ‘Janissary’ that are commonly used in English are italicized the first time only. In addition, names of Mesopotamian, Anatolian and Canaanite deities, rulers, and cities are italicized the first time they occur only.

When I name a class of instruments by a standard English name such as ‘lute’ I do not use italics; when referring to a particular species with that name I write it as e.g. ‘European *lute*’. Likewise, I do not italicize common English instrument names like guitar, mandolin, etc.

I have opted to write plurals of most foreign terms as ‘<term>-s’ instead of the original language’s plural form. I use –s instead of merely adding *s* without hyphen to emphasize that this is an Anglicization.

Quotes from the Christian Bible retain verse numbers, written as superscript preceding the text of the verse: ‘<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word...’.

The term *tanbūr* has had many variant transliterations especially in texts written before the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, due to lack of codified transliteration practices, changes in transliteration fashions, or in some instances the authors’ unawareness of transliteration standards. Some of these variants include: *tamboora*, *tambour*, *tabour*, *tabourat*, *tanpoora*,... I have used the spelling *tanbūr* except in citations that use another form, or when discussing the Middle Persian or Pahlavi term for which I have followed the Iranian spelling *tambūr*.

The term *domain* is used in two senses: first, it denotes the highest taxonomical category, in this Thesis specifically all chordophones. Second, I use it to signify the collective qualities and attributes in the purview of a specific deity or class of deities, for example the goddess Inanna or war and storm deities.

Numbers from one to ten are written out in full except when I refer to a chapter within this Thesis. Thus, ‘this lute has three to six strings’, but ‘in Chap. 3 I discuss...’. I also use numbers when I discuss text and melodic rhizomes of *Aga Imer* in Chap. 7 or when giving measurements.

## Abbreviations

AACAR = Association for the Advancement of Central Asian Research

B<sup>0</sup>, B<sup>I</sup>, B<sup>II</sup> = strophic medial melodic motifs of *Aga Imer* versions

BCE = Before Common Era

BM = British Museum

*BSOAS* = *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*

CDLI = Cuneiform Digital Library

CE = Common Era

*FMIBH* = *Folk Musical Instruments of Bosnia and Hercegovina*

*FMIT* = *Folk Musical Instruments of Turkey*

*GSJ* = *The Galpin Society Journal*

ICONEA = International Council of Near Eastern Musicology

IE = Indo-European

*JAOR* = *Journal of the American Oriental Society*

*JAOS* = *Journal of American Oriental Studies*

*JCS* = *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*

*JHS* = *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*

*JNES* = *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*

*JRAS* = *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*

LNL = long necked lute

M1...7 = *Aga Imer* melodic rhizome [#]

MMA = Metropolitan Museum of Art

*N.A.B.U.* = *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaire*

*OAED* = *Oxford Albanian-English Dictionary*

ORACC = The Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus

PIE = Proto-Indo-European

Sb = soundboard

SNL = short necked lute

T1...5 = *Aga Imer* text rhizome [#]

Languages: I use the ISO 639-2 three-letter language code system, as adopted and defined by the US Library of Congress. The complete list of these codes can be found at: <[https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso\\_639-2/php/code\\_list.php](https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso_639-2/php/code_list.php)>; accessed on: 12 Sept. 2018.

Akk = Akkadian

Alb = Albanian

Ara = Arabic

Ass = Assyrian

Grk A = Ancient Greek<sup>1</sup>

Grk B = Byzantine Greek

Heb = Hebrew

Hit = Hittite

Ira = Iranian languages

MPer = Middle Persian

Lat = Latin

Pal = Pahlavi

Prt = Parthian

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<sup>1</sup> ISO 639-2 Codes differentiate between ancient Greek and modern Greek, but the division between them is the year 1453, when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks. Because important sound changes occurred already in late Antiquity I have modified the ISO codes from *grc* and *gre*, respectively, to Grk. A and Grk. B.

Pra = Prakrit languages

San = Sanskrit

Sem = Semitic

Sla = Slavic, i.e. Serbian, Croatian, Bosniak

Sog = Sogdian

Sux = Sumerian

Tch = Tocharian

Tuk = Turkmän

Tur = Turkish<sup>2</sup>

Uga = Ugaritic

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<sup>2</sup> The ISO code differentiates between Ottoman Turkish (1500-1928) and modern Turkish. Some of the Turkic words I discuss formed part of the Turkic language lexicon from as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE, and these I refer to in the text as 'old Turkic', but otherwise I have not found it useful or necessary to my argument to distinguish between Ottoman and modern Turkish words. Some terms are also from specific Turkic dialects such as Azeri or Turkmän but I note only dialect spellings as these terms are found in modern Turkish as well.

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### Abstract

Musical instruments exist as both material and imaginal cultural objects. This Thesis explores the intersection of these modes of being as pertaining to long necked lutes of the *tanbūr* type and asks, what effect do cultural intangibles like mythology and cosmology have on the physical design of these lutes? I have incorporated the biological theory of phylogenetics, to define the material aspects of the *tanbūr* family and its genera, and the philosophical theory of the rhizome, to conceptualize cultural intangibles. I first examine the earliest known lutes from ancient Mesopotamia and follow their morphological development to the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE *tanbūr* to the Ottoman-era Albanian *çifteli*.

I find them enmeshed in mytho-cosmological complex centered on the semi-divine Dumuzi, the shepherd king, and his wife the goddess Inanna. On the ‘paternal’, Dumuzi-d side, these ancient long necked lutes belong to the courtly instrumentarium, performed in royal banquets to accompany narrative songs that reinforce and illustrate Mesopotamian kingship ideology. On the ‘maternal’ side, Inanna’s domain, the lutes are played by either a shepherd king figure, a marginalized man who Inanna elevates through her intercession, or by masculine warriors and common soldiers who Inanna leads to victory in battle.

These three characters—shepherd king, woman of authority, and long necked lute—and the dynamics between them form a rhizomatic complex that is the basis of a key theme in Return songs like *Odyssey*, ‘Bamsi Beyrek’, and the Albanian *Aga Imer*. The Return songs’ ‘shouting’ theme replicates in miniature all the essential elements of the original Mesopotamian complex, demonstrating that this complex defines these long necked lute genera as much as their morphology.

Textual and iconographic evidence suggests that socially these lute genera of the *tanbūr* family become popular in the Balkans through Anatolia in the course of the late Byzantine (after 12<sup>th</sup> century) and the Ottoman Empires,<sup>1</sup> apparently transmitted via a Frontier Warrior Culture who used them to accompany Return songs, that were in turn built around common experiences of these irregular border forces. The shouting theme of *Aga Imer* incorporates the *çifteli* in a manner that rhizomatically links it to the Turkmën epic of Crazy Harman and the ‘black two stringed (*dutār*), and through the latter’s Sufic and shamanic exegesis I explore the cosmological ideas implicit in *Aga Imer* as a manifestation of the generic Return song and the *çifteli* as a representative of the *tanbūr* family.

I then interpret the *çifteli*’s morphology as an expression of this mytho-cosmological rhizome, and demonstrate the integrity of both morphology and cosmology in their long sojourn from ancient Mesopotamia to modern day Albania.

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<sup>1</sup> For a cogent summary of the arguments and evidence for the *tambura*’s dissemination in the Balkans see Richard March, *The Tamburitza Tradition: From the Balkans to the American Midwest* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), pp. 20-33 and relevant Bibliography entries.



## Introduction

### *The Çifteli Comes to America*

In 1992 my father was rather randomly sent on a relief mission to Albania, a Balkan country on the Adriatic coast north of Greece. Albania had only recently seen a change from its communist government led by Enver Hoxha (1908-1985, r. 1945-1985) to a democratically elected government and reopened its borders to the outside world for the first time since the mid-1970s. I was dimly aware of the country in 1992 but as a result of my father's visit Albania and its musical culture have come to hold a central and determining place in my life.

Strolling through an open market in the city of Shkodra my father came across a local musical instrument that he, knowing my interest in such things, thought I would like. For the equivalent of \$10US he purchased a handmade two string instrument whose name he did not learn, or remember, and had it packed in a small crate and shipped to me in California. When I received the box and opened it I had no idea what to make of this rustic-looking instrument. Its varnished yellow wood, its odd design—long, thin neck, small conical body, diatonic fretting and two strings—and the elaborate, wood-burnt images of ibexes and eagles amid mountain peaks that covered it formed what seemed to me a symbolic language rife with ancient and magical meanings.

When I finally, after two years, found a handful of CDs of Albanian music that contained some examples of this lute, that I had learned was called the *çifteli*, on them, I was even more struck by its music's breakneck tempos, sudden and complex shifts of melody and rhythm, and its unique ringing sound. Its ethos and spirit sounded quite different from those of the Turkish *bağlama saz* or Iranian *setar* that I

was familiar with. What cultural, historic, social and aesthetic factors accounted for this? The current thesis began with this question.

To these I eventually added more specific questions: what mythological elements or associations exist that might link the *çifteli* to its ancestors? Out of what cultural and/or mythological matrix did those ancestors emerge from? What did they evoke in audiences and musicians that made those instruments so enduring?

In my Masters' dissertation (Cardiff University, 2013-2014) I conducted a technical study of the musical aspects of the *çifteli*. I described and analyzed the five main modes or tunings, the *akordim*, and their unique properties as expressions of a vernacular and regional music culture that owed little to the art music traditions of the Ottoman and Byzantine courts. For this Thesis, however, I chose to explore the *çifteli* as a mythic and imaginal object as it is represented in the epics and heroic ballads that it accompanies in real life social performances in Albania and Kosovo.

We can know the *çifteli* and lutes in general not merely as objects to be measured, studied, or even played but additionally as objects to be imagined. They reside in the sensual material world as well as the world of dreams, fantasies, and spirits that humans may, under certain conditions, communicate with. The lute's iconography in Christian Medieval Europe and Central Asian Buddhist monasteries depict it in fact played by members of heavenly or otherworldly orchestras.

In preparation for this Thesis I scanned through several hundreds of Albanian song texts looking for any mentions of musical instruments. With three or four exceptions the only notices of such occurred in two groups of Return song texts—the *Aga Imer* and *Lalë Bajram* traditions—that incorporated the *çifteli* at key moments in their narratives. Of the exceptions, the *sharki*, another LNL, appeared twice, both times in Rescue songs that are a subgenre of the Return song. I then noticed a similar

phenomenon in the Slavic epics collected by Lord and Parry, that LNLs like the *tambura* appeared as narrative elements in certain Return songs only. It seemed clear to me from this that the *çifteli* and closely related LNLs of the *tanbūr* family held a special, nearly exclusive, symbolic and functional relationship to the Return song genre. These songs then became the primary focal point for my research.

The appearance of the *çifteli* as an actor in the Albanian Return song *Aga Imer* follows an ancient tradition of epic story-telling. At the same time, *Aga Imer* and its Slavic, Turkic and Greek cognates are composed to the accompaniment of the very chordophones whose image appears in the text. These narratives drew on the real-life experiences of the soldiers and mountain warriors who sang and listened to them.

Thus the *çifteli* and its *tambura* cousins function simultaneously as material and imaginal objects that stand on the threshold of both worlds, markers of place, memory and commemoration in a warrior culture that crosses borders of all sorts as a condition of its existence.

Historically Albania has been frequently overlooked by the outside world and vulnerable to interpretation through a version of Orientalism, the western ‘Balkanist’ perspective.<sup>1</sup> The 1878 Berlin Congress and 1945 Yalta Conference failed to provide assurances for the nation’s autonomy when dividing Europe amongst themselves.<sup>2</sup> Yet at least since the time of the great national hero Skanderbeg (1405-1468) many Albanians have seen themselves and their nation as resolutely European and they have long sought acceptance and understanding from and integration with the European community.<sup>3</sup> Its historical status as the only Muslim-majority nation in

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<sup>1</sup> See Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Misha Glenny, *The Balkans 1804-1999: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers* (London: Granta Books, 1999), pp. 151-154, 519-521.

<sup>3</sup> The Albanian novelist Ismail Kadare, as one of the most visible Albanian lettrists, has especially discussed this national desire. See ‘The SRB Interview: Ismail Kadare’, *Scottish Review of Books*

Europe, as a secretive land in the grip of one of the most Orwellian of the communist governments, or as the last European outpost of the dissolute and collapsing ‘Sick Man of Europe’, the Ottoman Empire, have all aggravated Albania’s reputation for isolation.

The rugged highlands of northern Albania and adjacent Kosovo were a comparatively common destination for diplomatic travelers and adventurers in the 18<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. A host of travelers such as Lord Byron, his friend John Cam Hobhouse,<sup>4</sup> François Pouqueville,<sup>5</sup> and Charles Cockerell<sup>6</sup> came through the region between 1809 and the 1820s and wrote of their meetings with the Ottoman governor, or *paša* (Tur; Alb *pashë*), Ali Pashë Tepelena (Alb; Tur ‘Ali Paša Tepilene’) who had formed a breakaway state in the Ottoman *vilayet* of Janina (Alb; Grk Ioannina). Later in the century (1861-1869) Johann Georg von Hahn<sup>7</sup> sojourned extensively in the Albanian highlands and became a founder of Albanian studies as a discipline.

Edith Durham (1863-1944)<sup>8</sup> is perhaps the most famous Albanian traveler; in London before and after the First World War she campaigned assiduously for the nation’s rights and autonomy and in the highlands she was dubbed ‘the queen of Albania’ for her advocacy. She published a number of books that sought to relay a

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2/4 (2009); found at <<https://www.scottishreviewofbooks.org/2009/10/the-srb-interview-ismail-kadare/>>; accessed on 9 Jan., 2014; ‘Ismail Kadare: the Art of Fiction, No. 153’, interview by Shusha Guppy, *Paris Review* 147 (summer 1998), found at <<https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1105/ismail-kadare-the-art-of-fiction-no-153-ismail-kadare>>; accessed on 17 March 2013.

<sup>4</sup> John Cam Hobhouse, Lord Broughton, *Travels in Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in 1809 & 1810*, v. 1 (London, 1813; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014/1855).

<sup>5</sup> François Charles Hugues Laurent Pouqueville, *Voyage en Morée, à Constantinople, en Albanie, et dans plusieurs autres parties de l'Empire ottoman, pendant les années 1798, 1799, 1800 et 1801: Tome 1* (Paris: Gabon et Comp., 1805/Elibron Classics, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> Charles Robert Cockerell, *Travels in Southern Europe and the Levant, 1810-1817* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013/1903).

<sup>7</sup> Johann Georg von Hahn, *Travel Writing and Anthropology in the Nineteenth-Century Balkans*, translated and introduced by Robert Elsie (London/New York: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2015).

<sup>8</sup> Edith Durham, *High Albania: a Victorian Traveller's Balkan Odyssey* (London: Edward Arnold/Phoenix Press, 1909/2000); *The Burden of the Balkans* (Whitefish MT: Kessinger Press, 2010/1905); *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1920).

wider sense of the importance of Albanian sovereignty in the nationalist power struggles that occupied the Balkan nations in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Her contemporary the polymath Margaret Hasluck (1885-1948),<sup>9</sup> who lived in Elbasan for 13 years, was similarly dedicated to advancing awareness and knowledge of Albania's distinctive culture and people. In her capacity as an anthropologist and archaeologist she, too, wrote many important works on Albanian society and culture. Most recently, the German scholar Robert Elsie (1950-2017) has made tremendous contributions to the promotion of Albanian literature through his and Janice Mathie-Heck's translations of northern Albanian oral epic poetry, Gjergj Fishta's literary epic *Lahuta i Malcís*, and all genres of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century Albanian literature.<sup>10</sup>

Despite this interest in northern Albania and Kosovo, scholars' attention remained largely fixated on northern customs such as the blood feuds, *gjaku i marrë*, and the Medieval oral law codes, *kanun-s*, that governed them. In modern ethnomusicology a modest amount has been written about Albania's music culture. *Albanian Traditional Music* (2011) by Spiro Shetuni gives a solid survey of the many different styles and genres of Albanian music. Shetuni has also written books on each of the main musical styles including the northern, Geg tradition, although they are all in Albanian.

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<sup>9</sup> Margaret Hasluck, *The Unwritten Law in Albania*, edited by J. H. Hutton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954); *The Hasluck Collection of Albanian Folktales*, edited by Robert Elsie (London: Centre for Albanian Studies, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Robert Elsie and Janice Mathie-Heck, *Songs of the Frontier Warriors, Këngë i Kreshnikësh* (Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Pubs., Inc., 2004); *Lightning From the Depths: An Anthology of Albanian Poetry* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008); Fishta, Gjergj, *Lahuta e Malcís, The Highland Lute: The Albanian National Epic*, translated by Robert Elsie and Janice Mathie-Heck (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., in association with The Centre for Albanian Studies, 2005).

Jane Sugarman's *Engendering Song: Singing and Subjectivity at Prespa Albanian Weddings* (1997)<sup>11</sup> and Eckehard Pistrick's 2015 *Performing Nostalgia: Migration Culture and Creativity in South Albania* are two major works on the *iso* (drone) polyphonic singing of southern Albania.<sup>12</sup> Eno Koço wrote *Albanian Urban Lyric Song* (2004) that provides an in-depth analysis and history of Albania's traditional urban music genre, *saze*, and more recently (2015) *A Journey of the Vocal Ison* on southern Albania's drone-based vocal polyphonic tradition.<sup>13</sup>

Nothing comparable has, to my knowledge, been written in any western European languages on the monophonic, epic music culture of Albania's northern highlands and Kosovo. What has been produced on this topic has followed the lead of the Homeric scholars Milman Parry and his protégé Albert Lord, whose 1960 work *The Singer of Tales* illuminated the oral composition practices of Balkan epic bards, *rapsode* in Albanian. These songs are sung to the accompaniment of a bowed lute with one horsehair string, *gusle* (Slav; Alb *lahutë*). While Lord and Parry's work cast a light on the north Albanian epic singing tradition it also resulted in further researches tending to focus on either, first, the Serbian/Croatian/Bosniak *gusle* (only sometimes the Albanian *lahutë* as such) and the bard's spiritual and musical relationship with it or, second, the epic songs as transcribed texts and their prosody.

Elsie and Mathie-Heck's *Këngë Kreshnikësh* and Anna Di Lellio's collection of Albanian epics *The Battle of Kosovo 1389* (2009)<sup>14</sup> discuss their texts in historical and social contexts but not the musical. *Balkan Epic* contains a number of essays on

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<sup>11</sup> Jane C. Sugarman, *Engendering Song: Singing and Subjectivity at Prespa Albanian Weddings* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> Eckehard Pistrick, *Performing Nostalgia: Migration Culture and Creativity in South Albania* (Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2015).

<sup>13</sup> Eno Koço, *Albanian Urban Lyric Song in the 1930s* (Lanham MD/Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2004); *A Journey of the Vocal Iso(n)* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> Anna Di Lellio *The Battle of Kosovo 1389: An Albanian Epic*, translations by Robert Elsie (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2009).

aspects of the Slavic *gusle* but only one, by Ardian Ahmadaja, on the *lahutë*.<sup>15</sup> The most comprehensive study of Albanian oral epics is Stavro Skendi's *Albanian and South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry* (1954).<sup>16</sup>

Other long necked lutes have gained considerable status within and outside their home cultures. The *bağlama sazı* of the Alevi religious community in Turkey has garnered great interest through its status as a sacred instrument of the minstrel class the *aşık*-s (Tur) and the Alevi position within Turkish society. The Iranian *setar* has gained status through its role in the Persian art music (*dastgāh*) tradition. The Kurdish *tanbūr*, played among the Ahl-i-Haq religious community in Iran, holds the rank of a sacred instrument in the community. This *tanbūr* and its most exemplary modern master, Ostad Elahi (1895-1974), were honored with a special exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2014-2015 and have formed the subject of several books.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, the *dotār* is recognized as a major instrument of art and vernacular music throughout Central Asia.<sup>18</sup> The *tamburica* of Croatia and Serbia and the Bosnian *šargija* have received considerable scholarly attention.<sup>19</sup> The Greek *rebetiko bouzouki* player Markos Vamvikaris (1905-1972) has had his autobiography

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<sup>15</sup> Ardian Ahmedaja, 'Songs with Lahutë and Their Music', in *Balkan Epic: Song, History, Modernity*, edited by Philip K. Bohlman and Nada Petković (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2012), pp. 101-132.

<sup>16</sup> Stavro Skendi, *Albanian and South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry (Memoirs of the American Folklore Society V44)* (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1954).

<sup>17</sup> See 'The Sacred Lute: the Art of Ostad Elahi', found at: <<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2014/sacred-lute>>; accessed on: 18 Aug. 2014; Jean During, *L'Âme des Sons/The Spirit of Sounds* (Gordes/Cranbury, NJ: Les Editions du Relie/Cornwall Books, 2001/2003).

<sup>18</sup> *Asie Centrale: Les maîtres du dotâr/The Masters of the dotâr* (CD AIMP XXVI Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire/Disques VDE Gallo, CD-735, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> Richard March, *The Tamburitza Tradition: From the Balkans to the American Midwest* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013); Jasmina Talam, *Folk Musical Instruments in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2013).

published,<sup>20</sup> and the *bouzouki* and Bulgarian *tambura* are popular instruments in émigré communities and revivalist and neo-folk song circles in Europe and America.

Despite this body of literature, the Albanian Return songs of *Aga Imer* that I have made a centerpiece of this Thesis have not been translated nor discussed outside of Albania. The *çifteli* as well remains virtually unknown outside Albanophone communities, and this Thesis represents a pioneering study of the *Aga Imer* Return song, the *çifteli* that accompanies it, and the larger social and imaginal networks that envelop text and instrument.

### Research Questions and Methodology

My original idea for this Thesis was to write a social history and ethnography of the *çifteli* specifically, and to focus on how the instrument's social status and the perceptions of its Albanian players and audiences have changed through the socio-political turbulence of the country's 20<sup>th</sup> century history. As it turned out, for reasons given below my focus shifted dramatically towards the deep history of the long necked lute family and its mythological associations, and at my supervisor's urging I decided to make the *çifteli* more of a case study than the primary subject. Thus my method also shifted from ethnography to a cross-cultural historical and iconographic analysis method. The relative lack of contemporary emic voices of Albanian musicians in this Thesis has resulted from my shift in perspective and goal. The contemporary history of the *çifteli* therefore is yet to be written, but the present work will hopefully prove invaluable as a prelude and grounding to that study.

In deciding on the topic and objective of this study I formulated three basic research questions:

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<sup>20</sup> Markos Vamvakaris, *Markos Vamvakaris, the Man and His Bouzouki: Autobiography*, edited and translated by Noonie Minogue (London: Greeklines, 2015).

1. Research question 1: what has been the role of intangible elements—social structures, culture-specific factors, mythological complexes and cosmological ideas—on the morphological and musical development of lute instruments?
2. Research question 2: as a representative example, how did the Albanian *çifteli* lute come into being and through what process? What is its relationship to other *families, genera, and species* of lutes?
3. Research question 3: through what resources and by what methodology and theoretical framework can Questions 1 and 2 be investigated and a sound hypothesis offered in response?

Before I could formulate a response to Question 1 I needed to start with Question 2 by constructing a genealogical tree for the *çifteli* (see *Fig. 1.2* and *App. 1*) that showed its relationships to other lutes of the *tanbūr family* of long necked lutes (hereafter referred to as LNL). This tree would necessarily display the *çifteli* and its prototypes' movements and changes through time. Finding the deep history of the *çifteli* as a representative of a larger instrument family became the next step, and led to a study of the earliest documented lutes in human history, from the Mesopotamian Akkadian and Old Babylonian kingdoms dating to c. 2334 BCE-c. 1500 BCE. I thus began to grapple with Question 3 through the Mesopotamian evidence. The resources available to conduct this study were almost exclusively iconographic and archaeological, with but few literary or organological (i.e. historical instruments) sources.

These resources are fairly well represented in current scholarly literature but analysis of them has rarely gone beyond historical and purely organological concerns. Despite the social and cultural information present in the corpus of lute iconography few researchers have ventured much in the way of interpretations of these images

beyond comments on the social and cultural niche and function of Mesopotamian lutes. Such as they are they tend toward the vague and perfunctory.

Because Question 2 asks after just this sort of information, the first element of method and theory drew on art historical methods such as image analysis in order to research and contextualize the ancient lute iconography. Most or none of this corpus had ever been examined through art historical methods in combination with ethnomusicological interests to produce interpretations of the images' meanings within their own culture and time.

Tracing these lute genealogies required some version of a biological or evolutionary method and a theoretical model in which to organize and frame the data. For this, elements of biological *phylogenetic* theory, reimagined as *phyloörganology*,<sup>21</sup> and the method of *cladistics* proved useful.

Because the lute is an artifact of human creativity and intent, not of strictly biological processes, its evolution has been subject to the influence of human imagination, conceptualization, and society, themselves subject to greater forces of history, environment, and time. Thus a simple genealogical tree diagram could only ultimately speak to certain aspects of the historical development of the lutes. It could display geographical distribution and morphological relationships of different forms of long necked lutes and approximately when certain designs and instruments entered the historical record. Still, it could say nothing of what caused and conditioned these distributive patterns and emergences, and sometimes disappearances, of lute genera and species.

Furthermore, the genealogical model could say almost nothing about any ritual, mythic or cosmological complexes—cultural intangibles—that give an

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<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Ilya Tëmkin, 'The Evolution of the Baltic Psaltery: A Case for Phyloörganology', *GSJ* 57 (2004), pp. 219-230.

instrument cultural meaning and much of its social meanings.<sup>22</sup> As its early depictions present the lute playing a role in both court and temple events I inferred that it played some role in disseminating and performing music and song that reflected the mythology of the temple. These myths, often embodied in hymns, informed the rulership ideology that gave the Mesopotamian kings legitimacy and authority to rule. I therefore looked to the mythological and cosmological complexes that informed the lute iconography and the texts related to those complexes.

The key source for this lay in the tradition of the epic genre of Return songs, best exemplified by Homer's *Odyssey*. However, the Return song narrative seemed to travel between and adapt to new cultures and epochs according to different principles than the morphological and musical features of the material objects themselves. Their manner of transmission and ways in which they changed, largely symptoms of the oral poetic traditions from which they originally sprang, refuted several key assumptions of the phylogenetic and cladistics theories and the genealogical model.

I therefore needed an additional scheme to account for these forces that could be juxtaposed on a genealogical map as a complement, but not a replacement. For this I chose to conditionally incorporate the theory of the *rhizome*, described and critiqued in Chap. 2.

The three elements of the theoretical and methodological approach of this Thesis thus consist of, first, elements of *phylogenetics* to base genealogical lines upon; second, aspects of *rhizome* theory to track mythological and cosmological relationships, and art historical analytical methods to draw out data for both of those

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<sup>22</sup> By social meanings I refer principally to items like an instrument's social status (i.e. courtly/common, urban/rural); where it was played, whether in courts, households, taverns, etc., and who played it, such as nobility, courtesans, soldiers and bandits, or peasants. A lute's cultural meanings derive from factors such as if the lute is considered to be foreign or endemic, sacred or profane, its poetic associations and metaphysical attributes. Is it, for example, considered sacred to a particular deity and if so what role does it play in the ceremonial and ritual practices of that deity's worship?

categories from the primary iconographic sources. Thus my materials have enabled me to bring my undergraduate degree in History of Art and Visual Culture from University of California at Santa Cruz (2013) to bear on my doctoral research.

In my undergraduate program I chose a core group of classes on the great art traditions of the Mediterranean culture area: the Italian Renaissance, Byzantine art and manuscripts, and Islamic art. I chose this curriculum to prepare for using iconography as a source for musical instruments and practice, and for insights into the changing philosophies of music. These courses also provided a background into the artistic and socio-political histories of three highly significant ruling powers whose fortunes and downfalls strongly impacted Albanian history and culture.

I have additionally drawn upon my personal collection of string instruments from East and Central Asia, the Middle East and the Balkans, as well as my experience in performing on many of these instruments, to further support and enhance this project. Having a sizable selection of many different kinds of, mostly, long necked and some short necked lutes, and other chordophones, to make up-close organological observations and comparative analyses on morphologies and playing styles, has been an invaluable resource. The instruments used in *App. 3*, for example, almost all came from this collection.

This Thesis has some limitations; because I chose to make this study largely a historical one I had to establish a *terminus post* and *ante quem*. The *post quem* was the time of the earliest known certain attestations of lute instruments, c. 2300 BCE, and the *ante quem* became the end of the Ottoman era in Albania and Kosovo, 1912. This marks the year of Albania's independence from Ottoman Turkey, although culturally the atmosphere of that era lingered in the performance and composition of

mythic and heroic *këngë*—like *Aga Imer*—that either dated from that era or were still profoundly marked by the cultural—and linguistic—idioms of that time.

Yet this meant omitting the century of Albania’s and Kosovo’s entry into modern nationhood, a century in which instruments like the *çifteli* went from popular but still ‘foreign, brought from elsewhere’<sup>23</sup> (Alb *vënë*) and ‘primitive’ (Alb *parak*) to being a national symbol of Albania, admired in the south, where the *çifteli* is not even played, as well as the north. How much has changed, remained, or been remembered of the mythological complex the *çifteli* forms a part of among Albanian communities probably would require a separate Thesis.

Likewise, the *Aga Imer* versions I discuss in this Thesis are in a way taken out of temporal context; though the song remains popular in different versions throughout Albania and Kosovo I have had to forego a detailed treatment of the responses to and interpretations of the song’s current audiences and performers. That even the latest versions, transcribed in the 1970s-1990s, retain important features of the oldest *Aga Imer* versions, c. 1865, led me to end my active research with the political end of Ottoman rule. That same factor allowed me to still feel confident that my insights into *Aga Imer* and its place in the Return tradition would still prove valid for the tradition’s current incarnation, despite whatever changes have occurred.

I have striven, therefore, to use this potential weakness in my methodology as a strength instead, by doing a more detailed analysis of the process that led to the creation of the *çifteli* than I feel I could have done had I ventured more into Albania’s 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>23</sup> Ndue Dedaj, ‘Ndue Shyti, Mbreti i Çiftelisë Shqiptare’, *Zemra Shqiptare* 3/12/2013; found at: <[http://www.zemrashqiptare.net/news/id\\_34260/Ndue-Dedaj:-Ndue-Shyti-Mbreti-i-çiftelisë-shqiptare.html?skeyword=ndue+shyti](http://www.zemrashqiptare.net/news/id_34260/Ndue-Dedaj:-Ndue-Shyti-Mbreti-i-çiftelisë-shqiptare.html?skeyword=ndue+shyti)>; accessed on: 4 April 2015.

### The Hypothesis

My particular line of inquiry led me to conclude that the mytho-cosmological complexes that a musical instrument ‘belongs’ to leave morphological traces on the instrument itself that can serve as an identifying marker or an attribute of an entire family or genus of instruments. These mytho-cosmological factors are what give the musical instrument its cultural and social meanings. They further make the instrument a material signifier in a socio-cultural language, one that is verbal and auditory at its core but includes pictorial, gestural and symbolic modes as well. The lute is thus much more than simply a musical instrument, it forms a link in complex semiotic chain.

More to the point, the mytho-cosmological complexes impart to the instrument its role as a primary vehicle of expression for a specific register of that language. In the case of the *tambura* genus of LNLs, in its performative function it fulfills the role of messenger or communicator of the essential communicative act: the epic song, including Return songs, and the heroic narrative song. In its representational mode—its appearance in texts, mostly of Return songs—these *tambura*-s appear as mediators of and vehicles for expression between the two principal agents of the song, one masculine and one feminine. Finally, the most definitive aspects of this complex remain remarkably consistent across disparate cultures and historical eras, suggesting that the complex and the instrument are in a sense inherent to each other or shape each other in some ways.

The proof of this proposition required three pieces of evidence. The first was to discern and define the contours of this mytho-cosmological complex as it related to long necked lutes, and to show at what historical point the complex and the instrument became intertwined.

As this turned out to be at or very near the emergence of lutes in the historical record, the second evidence needed to be a modern representative of the Mesopotamian lute to see how much, if any, of the original complex still remained attached to the instrument. Did morphology and mythology develop and travel hand in hand with each other throughout the 4,000 –year history of the lute family or was the relationship simply morphological? I chose the Albanian two string long necked lute the *çifteli* to serve as the modern case study, for five reasons:

1. The Albanian *çifteli* is a relatively new member of the long necked lute family, its arrival in the Balkans dating to around the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries CE;
2. At the same time, its basic morphology bears a much closer resemblance to its ancient progenitor than, for example, the short necked lutes such as the European *lute* or Chinese *pipa*, or any bowed lute;
3. Its present popularity in Albania and Kosovo attest to its being part of a still-living musical tradition in its homeland;
4. The consistency between the thematic content and structure of the original Mesopotamian complex and the Albanian version of it, and the clarity of that expression at a date so far removed from its origin, made the *çifteli* a strong demonstration of my thesis;
5. The specificity of *çifteli* as a species plus the integrity of the complex it belongs to shows that the complex is not just an idiosyncratic feature of an isolated species. Rather it shares it with a number of different long necked lutes. It thus suggests that the complex forms an integral identifying element, an organological characteristic, of not just the species but the long necked lute *genus* that the *çifteli* belongs to.

At this point, a third piece of evidence needed to show the social, historical mechanism(s) by which complex and instrument were passed on and survived or, barring such evidence, to account for what would otherwise appear sheer cultural coincidence. This factor was the socio-cultural milieu that this long necked lute family had belonged to since at least the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, and ever since: that of the common soldiery of imperial armies, especially those that guarded the frontiers between empires, what I have termed the Frontier Warrior Culture (FWC).

Epic and heroic narrative songs, including the Return song, were reflective of this social class, and for this reason were widely popular among, if not the creation of, this class as well; two particular *genera* of the *tanbūr family* of LNLs—the *tambura* and the *karadyzen* genera—became the preferred instruments for the accompaniment of these songs. At the same time, members of these genera appear in the texts of these songs as well.

### Chapter Overview

The elements that make up this Thesis form a series of contrapuntal dualities harmonized by the greater field in which they reside: the theoretical themes of phylogenetics and rhizome; the LNL as material or imaginal object; the Return song's interplay of loss and death to renewal and victory and masculine hero and feminine intercessor, and the recurring concept of 'horizontal' vs. 'vertical' find their unity in the mytho-cosmological triad of hero/woman of authority/long necked lute. I have thus arranged the Thesis's eight chapters to mirror this duality-unity principle.

Chaps. 1 and 2 form a pair that covers the theoretical principles of phylogenetics and rhizome. Chap. 1 examines musical instrument classification systems, defines taxonomical terms and describes the *tanbūr* family and its genera.

The latter section focuses on the *karadyzen* genus before I go on to describe and critique the application of biological *phylogenetic* theory to cultural systems and material artifacts. Chap. 2 notes the problems inherent in cultural phylogenetic theory through a critique of the musical bow hypothesis of lute evolution. I then introduce and explain the theory of the *rhizome* as a means to compensate for those shortcomings. I also explain the method developed in Art History by Erwin Panofsky with respect to lute iconography. Finally, I give an example of its application via a controversial Mesopotamian image whose interpretation may or may not offer a very different picture of early lute history than the conventional image.

I have arranged Chaps. 3-5 so that each focuses on one element of the imaginal triad. In Chap. 3 I discuss the ancient Mesopotamian lute and its relationship to the Return song's masculine hero by way of that figure's prototype: the Mesopotamian god *Dumuzi* and iconography of the shepherd king figure. I also elaborate on the construction of genealogies of rulership ideology and legitimacy in the early mythological and epic songs performed with the lute.

This study of the lute is not confined to genealogical concerns, however, and Chap. 4 accordingly examines this topic from its complementary feminine, rhizomatic lineage: the Mesopotamian lute's association with the goddess Inanna—the woman of authority in Return songs—and the long necked lute's connection to Mesopotamian military or warrior culture.

In Chap. 5 I examine the Frontier Warrior Culture, the rhizomatic social nexus that reifies the three aspects of the mytho-cosmological rhizome. I begin with the historical genealogy of the *tanbūr* lute family from the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE to the Medieval era. This discussion acts as a lead-in to the *tanbūr*'s continued relationship

to soldiery through the Byzantine epic of *Digenis Akritis* and that text's representation of the Frontier Warrior Culture rhizome.

Chaps. 6-8 form another trio concerning the Return song as, respectively, genre, species, and cosmology. In Chap. 6 I define and analyze the generic Return song's thematic structure through the examples of Homer's *Odyssey*, the Turkic tale of Bamsi Beyrek, and especially the Albanian *Aga Imer*. The Return song's relationship to Mesopotamian laments and other texts regarding Dumuzi are explained. In Chap. 7 I focus exclusively on the *Aga Imer* tradition, giving a rhizomatic analysis of the text and melodic networks present in the 23 different versions that I collected. Finally, in Chap. 8 I analyze the mytho-cosmological rhizome of the *Aga Imer*'s shouting theme sequence through its linguistic and semantic links to other Return songs and the Turkic epic of *Köroğlu*. I then explore the relationship of the *tanbūr* family's morphology to these mytho-cosmological themes of duality-within-unity.

## **Chap. 1: Lute Organology and Phylogenetics**

### *Introduction*

In this chapter I critique and clarify several issues in lute organology: the uses and limitations of musical instrument classification systems, of taxonomical terminology, and of the biological theory of phylogenetics as applied to human cultural systems and artifacts.

After a brief survey of the various functions of musical instrument classification systems I focus on the Hornbostel-Sachs system devised in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. I synthesize that system's *phenetic* basis with Linnaean taxonomical hierarchy in order to describe and define the *tanbūr* family of long necked lutes and its component genera. In doing so I arrive at a phylogenetic map of lute types based on morphological characteristics with a special emphasis on the *karadyzen* genus that includes the species *çifteli*. I next deconstruct the notion of a lute's neck and propose a definition of long and short necked lutes (LNL and SNL, respectively) that addresses ambiguities in Hornbostel and Sachs's terminology.

Lutes are not defined by morphology alone but also their sound and musical style, their *Klangideal*. I thus describe *Klangideal* as functions of lutes' neck structures and the numbers of their string courses in terms of 'horizontal' and 'vertical' playing styles.

Finally, I review and critique the work of Ilya Tëmkin et. al. in applying phylogenetic theory to organology and note its benefits and shortcomings. This represents the first of the three main elements of the theory and methodology through which I explore the intersection of lute morphology and mytho-cosmology in this Thesis.

Musical Instrument Classification Systems

*'The nature of a classification scheme...is determined by its purpose.'*<sup>1</sup>

This Thesis is primarily concerned with the definition, historical development and cultural aspects of the *tanbūr* family of long necked lutes. In order to track this family of lutes, a classification scheme was needed that would permit their morphological identification and organological definition. In the ancient world's musical instrument classification systems an instrument's physical characteristics served as the basis for taxonomical division. These traits were assigned spiritual or cosmological values that were often bound to ritual practices and esteemed to the point of being laws. The rituals formed a way to preserve and express these laws, and instrument classification systems were one method to ensure that all ritual objects were placed for their most efficacious use.

The ancient Chinese, for one example, formulated their classification system on a cosmological basis in which the instrument's primary material—silk, stone, metal, bamboo—were associated with a season and a corresponding direction of the wind.<sup>2</sup> These in turn, and their associated tones, were identified with moral virtues and characters in the interest of harmonious governance, and so musical instruments had to be harmonized with these virtues in ritual performance.<sup>3</sup>

The Vedic culture in India categorized musical instruments according to the resonant bodies' chief physical traits: stretched, covered, hollow, and solid.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, music and dance were considered as 'of divine origin and a means of

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret J. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments* (Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 1990), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-40.

<sup>3</sup> Roel Sterckx, 'Transforming the Beasts: Animals and Music in Early China', *T'oung Pao* 86/1/3 (2000), pp. 3-8.

<sup>4</sup> Kartomi, *Concepts*, pp. 58-60.

liberation and union with God',<sup>5</sup> and instruments were often conceived as mirroring the parts of the human body in its idealized and sacred form.

For the ancient Greeks, musical instruments held great scientific interest for studies of mathematics and acoustical physics. Yet their instrument classification scheme had only two categories: aerophones, exemplified by the *αυλος*, *aulos*, double pipes sacred to Dionysus the god of revelry and wine; and chordophones represented by the *κιθαρα*, *kithara*, the concert lyre sacred to Apollo, god of reason, science, and the sun. The contest between these two instruments formed a *leitmotif* of Greek music culture at least from the Classical period (5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE) onward.<sup>6</sup> The instruments become enmeshed with their respective deities as much for their acoustical properties as their social uses and affective qualities.

Powerfully influenced by Greek ideas, Arab scholars of the Islamic Middle Ages (9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) likewise took scientific interest in instruments though they 'were less interested in systematic studies of instruments than in...elucidating aspects of music theory or reflecting national identity.'<sup>7</sup> As branches of Islamic philosophy and science these two concerns were inevitably projects to investigate the workings of divine reason in the material world that manifested as physical laws.<sup>8</sup> Here again, within their own cultural nexus the *intangible* cultural forces had a decisive role in shaping the instrument's morphology.

Modern musical instrument classification systems in the Euro-American world, on the other hand, serve a very different function: to catalogue instruments in

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 56-58.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 110-113; John G. Landels, *Music in Ancient Greece and Rome* (London/New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 25-27, 49, 153-159; Eric Csapo, 'The Politics of the New Music', in *A Different God? Dionysus and Ancient Polytheism*, edited by Renate Schlesier (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. K.G., 2011), pp. 207-248.

<sup>7</sup> Kartomi, *On Concepts*, p. 123.

<sup>8</sup> Ahmad Dallal, 'The Interplay between Science and Theology in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Kalam', *Islam & Science* (17 Aug. 2017), found at: <<http://islam-science.net/the-interplay-of-science-and-theology-in-the-fourteenth-century-kalam-3908/>>; accessed on: 18 May 2018.

order to facilitate their scientific study as artifacts of material culture, for cross-cultural research, and for organizing them in museum storage or display.<sup>9</sup> As European and North American scholars and scientists became more aware of the music and instruments of the world through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, museum and private collections of world musical instruments emerged and grew. Thus the need for a classification scheme based on logical principles of sound production and/or morphology arose.

Victor-Charles Mahillon (1841-1924), founder and original curator of the Musée Instrumental du Conservatoire Royale de Musique in Brussels, created the first classification system capable of meeting these new organological challenges in his 1893 work, *Éléments d'acoustique musicale & instrumentale*.<sup>10</sup> His scheme utilized four instrument classes principally defined by their method of sound production: autophones (self-sounders), membranophones, chordophones and aerophones. Subdivisions further clarified this method so that, for example, in the 'chordophones' category Mahillon further broke it down to show whether an instrument was sounded with a plectrum, bow, keyboard or some other means.<sup>11</sup>

Although his system overall avoids using subjective criteria in its subdivisions he does introduce at one level a distinction between aerophones and percussion instruments of tuned and non-tuned pitch.<sup>12</sup> Another weakness of his system was the mix of morphological characteristics and playing methods he used to

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<sup>9</sup> Kartomi, *On Concepts*, pp. 162-163; Erich M. von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs, 'A Classification of Musical Instruments', translated by Anthony Baines and Klaus P. Wachsmann, *GSJ* 14, pp. 4-5, 10; Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy, 'An Explication of the Sachs-Hornbostel Instrument Classification System', in *Selected Reports in Ethnomusicology, Vol. III: Issues in Organology*, edited by Sue Carole DeVale (Los Angeles: Ethnomusicology Publications, Dept. of Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology, University of California, 1990), p. 88.

<sup>10</sup> Victor-Charles Mahillon, *Éléments d'acoustique musicale & instrumentale: comprenant l'examen de la construction théorique de tous les instruments de musique en usage dans l'orchestration modern* (Brussels: Manufacture Générale de Instruments de Musique C. Mahillon, 1874).

<sup>11</sup> Kartomi, *On Concepts*, pp. 163-165.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163; Hornbostel-Sachs, 'On Classifications', p. 7.

distinguish subcategories. Yet the strengths of his system were enough to make it the conceptual foundation for most modern instrument classification systems, and its weaknesses motivated later researchers to compensate for them in their own schema.

The system devised in 1913-1914 by the Austrian ethnomusicologist Erich von Hornbostel (1877-1935) and his German colleague, the musicologist Curt Sachs (1881-1959) proved the most widely influential and oft-cited one of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>13</sup> Hornbostel and Sachs structured their classification system (hereafter HS) according to the principle of logical division, ‘the physical characteristics of sound-production as the most important principle of division.’<sup>14</sup> The three primary divisions consist of aerophones, instruments that produce sound through a vibrating air column set in motion by blowing into or across a tube; membranophones, whose sound is produced by an agent acting on a stretched membrane (e.g. beating drums, pulling friction drums, vocalizing into a *mirliton* such as a kazoo), and chordophones that produce sound from a stretched string caused to vibrate over a resonant body.<sup>15</sup>

These divisions were then broken down into four groupings based on increasingly specific sets of shared physical characteristics: *classes*, *sub-classes*, *orders* and *sub-orders*. In the case of chordophones the initial division concerned the overall design of the instrument and differentiated between lutes, harps, and zithers.

These were then further categorized by more specific traits. As an aid to information

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<sup>13</sup> Kartomi, *On Concepts*, p. 171-172. NB while its original publication in 1914 ‘did not reach a large musical public’, [HS, ‘Classification’, p. 4.] the criticisms voiced over the system have granted it greater attention since, and thus it has become by default a widely discussed system.

Lawrence Picken utilizes it extensively in his major work *Folk Musical Instruments of Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975). The basic schema has also been used by international researchers such as Jasmina Talam in her *Folk Musical Instruments in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2013). Communist folklorists and ethnomusicologists adopted the Hornbostel-Sachs classifications and definitions as well, as for example in Ramadan Sokoli and Pirro Miso’s *Veglat Muzikore të Popullit Shqiptare* (Tirana: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Kulturës Popullore, 1991).

<sup>14</sup> Hornbostel-Sachs, ‘Classifications’, p. 8.

<sup>15</sup> Hornbostel-Sachs included a fourth category under ‘the disconcerting heading “miscellanea”’ (p. 6) for instruments that evaded the above categories; these are now generally referred to as idiophones.

retrieval and cataloguing purposes, each entry and subentry were given numerical codes based on the Dewey decimal system, so that the system's designation of lute instruments was written (*Fig. 1.1*):<sup>16</sup>

- 3 Chordophones
- 31 Zithers
- 32 Composite chordophones [lutes and harps]
- 321 Lutes
- ...
- 321.2 Yoke lutes or lyres
- 321.3 Handle lutes
- 321.31 Spike lutes
- 321.32 Necked lutes
- 321.321 Necked bowl lutes
- 321.322 Necked box lutes or necked guitars

*Fig. 1.1: Coding of lutes in HS classification system.*

These decimal codes could be extended indefinitely to contain more and more precise information as it was added to the classification. Thus, a necked bowl lute plucked with a plectrum was designated as 321.321.6 while one struck by bare fingers was 321.321.5.

Since Hornbostel and Sachs's time a number of other schools of thought have emerged on the designing of classification systems. Broadly speaking, these systems rely on either *phenetic* or *phylogenetic* principles.<sup>17</sup> The former methodology considers physical similarities between organisms as they presently stand but does not generally attempt to trace their evolutionary descent. Phylogenetic methods tend to be concerned with *how* those organisms came to be, in other words with their genealogical lines of descent and the history and nature of change that has occurred in the organisms' genetic pattern, its physical form.

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20-23. The authors' description of their use of the Dewey system can be found on pp. 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> V. V. Sivarajan, *Introduction to the Principles of Plant Taxonomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.]), pp. 20-21.

The majority of modern organological classification systems, such as Mahillon's and Hornbostel-Sachs's, fall into the rubric of phenetic systems. But, because the lute's organological lineages form this Thesis's central concern, I have aimed at a compromise between phenetic and phylogenetic systems. Phenetic systems provide a tool for defining lute families, genera, and species based on morphologies. Phylogenetics, on the other hand, permits wider research on the LNL's history and development as material cultural artifact. The phenetic defining process thus allows for genealogies to be tracked through history via a study of iconography and rare extant specimens.

#### *Taxonomical and Biological Terms and Concepts*

Hornbostel and Sachs, following Mahillon, eschewed using division-ranking terms borrowed from the natural sciences since they wanted to 'let the principle of division be dictated by the nature of the group concerned, so that ranks of a given position within a group may not always correspond between one group and another.'<sup>18</sup> But because I am concerned with a specific set of LNL species of the *tanbūr* type and the historical development of its genera, a more precise and detail-oriented series of categorical levels was needed. Therefore, adapting terminology from the taxonomical system developed by the Swedish botanist Linnaeus (1707-1778) seemed appropriate, albeit conditional.

Applying the taxonomical terminology and concepts of biology like phylogenetics to man-made objects like musical instruments has a host of problems (those related to use of phylogenetic concepts are discussed at length below). Most obviously, musical instruments cannot be said to 'evolve' in anything like the same

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<sup>18</sup> HS, 'Classifications', p. 9.

way natural organisms do.<sup>19</sup> Rather, instruments change and develop according to the aesthetic, cultural and material needs and sensibilities of their human makers and users. Instruments did not spring from a biological ‘common ancestor’, and they do not undergo mutation or adaptation to changes in their physical environments—the very definition of evolution according to Darwin—without the conscious decision of those human agents. Instruments are not subject to the process of natural selection but instead to human selection, which bases itself on entirely different criteria, often of a highly subjective and teleological nature, than the directionless character of natural processes.

The use of biological terms and concepts in organology must therefore be understood as primarily metaphorical and the qualifications of the usage clearly stated. In the following discussion I depart from Mahillon and Hornbostel-Sachs’s classification methods in my use of Linnaean biological terminology, but otherwise retain the formers’ classification by sound-producing and morphological traits. That is, the *domain* of chordophones is logically arrived at through an instrument’s use of strings and a sounding body as the sound production method, and for all other levels the instruments’ morphologies serve as the defining features.

Essentially I have simply given Hornbostel and Sachs’s subdivisions Linnaean labels. This facilitates my discussion of types of lutes throughout this Thesis and avoids having to use the Hornbostel-Sachs number coding system, which in the present context would prove extremely awkward for both myself and my readers. The

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<sup>19</sup> Margaret Kartomi, ‘The Classification of Musical Instruments: Changing Trends in Research from the Late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the 1990s’, *Ethnomusicology* 45/2 (2001), pp. 305-306. For a detailed discussion of the use of other biological terms in ethnomusicology see Margaret Kartomi, ‘The Processes and Results of Musical Culture Contact: A Discussion of Terminology and Concepts’, *Ethnomusicology* 25/2 (1981), pp. 227-249.

reader is therefore advised to not assume any relationship between my use of these taxonomical terms and their specific usage in biology for the reasons stated above.

For those same reasons I have avoided terms like ‘evolution’ and even ‘cultural evolution’ in my Thesis. As noted, musical instruments do not evolve in anything like the same sense that biological organisms do, and the theory of cultural evolution remains bound up with notions of cultural and racial hierarchies that are inappropriate and, at best, strictly tangential to my argument in this Thesis. Instead, I have chosen *development* as a general term for the process of change in musical instruments. I feel this term carries an implicit notion of a developing agent—human makers, users, and listeners of instruments—that enacts change on their instruments; lutes do not develop, they *are* developed by human agents. Development also eschews the notions of dominance-based hierarchies and ‘progress’ from primitive/simple to civilized/complex or sophisticated generally inherent in cultural evolution theory.<sup>20</sup> Versions of such theories have been widely disseminated in the study of lute organology and in the course of my Thesis I have found cause to critique and challenge several of them.

Similarly, my use of terms like genetic and genealogy relate not to actual DNA and biological genes. In the context of my Thesis they denote those formal, symbolic and/or functional similarities or relationships between material objects or mythological and symbolic figures whose historical connections can be demonstrated. In the case of material objects like lutes, one lute species or genus can be distinguished from another through the sum of the type’s physical traits and the differences between it and another type as I will define below. A lute type—e.g. a

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<sup>20</sup> Ruth M. Stone, *Theory for Ethnomusicology* (Oxon/New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 25-27. The discussion of the usefulness of cultural evolution theory in ethnomusicology has seen some reevaluations in recent years; see Patrick E. Savage, ‘Cultural Evolution of Music’, *Cultural Evolution of Music*, *Palgrave Communications* 5/1 (2019), pp. 1-36.

*bağlama sazı*—is constructed according to a template so that, even allowing for regional variations, the finished product will be instantly recognizable as a *bağlama sazı* and not a *cura* or *divan sazı*, or a *sharki* or *setar*. This overall formal consistency constitutes the lute’s genetic makeup that resides in the larger, human-made tradition by which the different types are defined, that marks the instrument’s genealogical lineage.

In the case of mythological and symbolic figures such as the characters of Return songs I discuss in this Thesis, the genetics or DNA consists of each figure’s qualities that define each one’s role and character and that remains consistent through each reiteration of the figure, whatever culture or era it occurs in. As with material objects, the genealogical lineage consists of the tradition of representation and interpretation that human bards and their audiences work within when the tale, the Return song or myth, is performed.

With all that said, my application of the standard, Linnaean taxonomical categories—*domain* (when used of instruments), *kingdom*, *phylum*, *class*, *order*, *family*, *genus*, and *species*—denote, in this Thesis, the following (*Fig. 1.2*):

1. *Domain* includes the entire group of chordophones (HS 3).
2. *Kingdoms* follow the HS division of harps, zithers and lutes.
3. *Phyla* of the lute kingdom include *pluriarc* (HS 321.1) ‘yoked lutes or lyres’ (HS 321.2) and *handle* lutes (HS 321.3).
4. *Classes* of handle lutes are *stick* or *spike* lutes (HS 321.31) and *necked* lutes (HS 321.32). After this level Sachs and Hornbostel continued their division based on the box or bowl resonator shape (*App. 2*), but for reasons discussed below this factor is strictly secondary to the issue of long vs. short necks.

5. Necked lutes fall into two *Orders*: long necked (LNL) and short necked (hereafter SNL).

At the level of orders I have departed from the Hornbostel-Sachs' categories and the following definitions are my own.

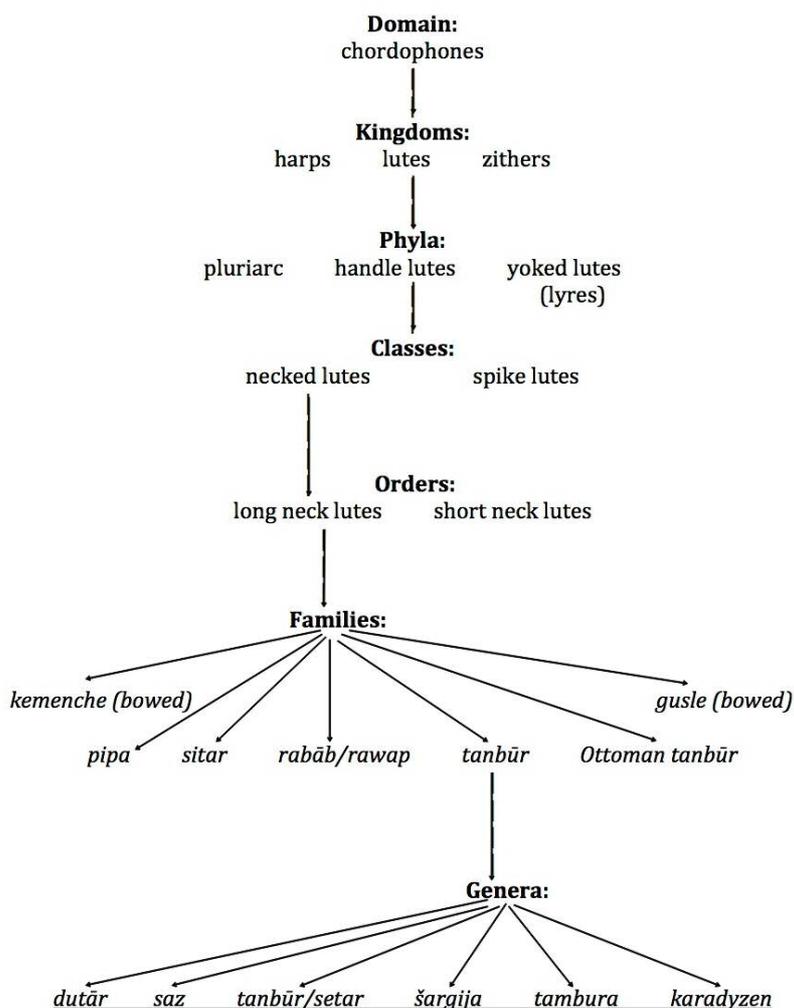


Fig. 1.2: Genealogy of chordophones to genera of tanbūr family (see App. 1).

### Genera of the Tanbūr Family

Mahillon considered the term ‘family’ problematic as it had a history of use for instruments of the same type but of different sizes and pitch ranges, as with flutes or guitars. But in biological taxonomy, family has proven resistant to any standardized set of principles. The biological concept of families was first introduced into the

sciences in 1689 by the French botanist Pierre Magnol. Though biologists devised several alternative methods for defining families after Magnol, ‘in the middle of the nineteenth century, it was generally conceded that most families did not have defining characteristics.’<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, two types of families are generally recognized: *familles par groupe*, in which ‘all the genera resemble each other very closely, each genus touching several others, and the overall classification is often in some confusion.’ These *definable families* are homogenous, natural groups and can be easily recognized among other families,<sup>22</sup> yet their genera resist set definitions. On the other hand, *familles par enchainment*, or *indefinable families* prove very difficult to clearly distinguish from other families, but their component genera are quite distinct from each other. This distinction shows a strong tendency to apply to cultural artifacts as well as biological organisms.

Overall, lute families fall into the definable class; the visual difference alone between a *pipa*, *sitar*, and guitar firmly mark them as representing well-defined families. Yet the genera *biwa* and *pipa* of the *pipa* family each have several species that preserve more archaic features of the other genus. At the level of family, I have used the material of LNL resonators and soundboards as the key characteristics and families are named for representative examples: LNLs with gourd resonators and wood soundboards are represented by the Indian *sitar*, those with wood resonators and skin soundboards fall in the *rabâb/rawap* family,<sup>23</sup> and those with both parts made of wood are typified by the *tanbūr*.

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<sup>21</sup> Sivaraman, *Principles*, pp. 111-113.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> This family includes several lutes known as *kopuz* or variations thereof, but *kopuz*, *komuz*, or *cobza* may be found in altogether different kingdoms, orders and families as well. The *rabâb/rawap* family also represents a ‘mixed’ lute family inasmuch as it contains both short and

The *tanbūr* family is defined by the following morphological features (see *App. 2*):

1. A narrow, straight neck measured from the nut to the final fret or end of fingerboard (discussed below), whose length runs more than half that of the soundboard.
2. A wooden *ovoid* or *teardrop* ('pear') shaped soundboard.
3. Shoulders formed by an *incurve* from the upper soundboard to the neck.
4. A pegbox whose face is *continuous* with the plane of the fingerboard or, as on the *bağlama sazi*, slopes back at no more than a 5° angle.
5. Two-three courses of wire strings. The number of individual strings runs from two to twelve.

Furthermore, the proportions of the LNLs of this family lie at one end of a spectrum defined by the formula  $\frac{L(N)}{W(Sb)}$ , where  $N$ =neck,  $Sb$ =soundboard. In other words, as a general rule the Length  $L(N)$  decreases or increases in inverse proportion to the Width  $W(Sb)$  (*App. 3*), thus the wider the soundboard the shorter the neck and vice versa.

I have defined *genera* of the *tanbūr* family (*Fig. 1.2*) through the intersection of morphologies and naming practices. In these genera lute names—*tambura*, for example—are frequently general terms that may refer to a number of similar instruments. However, these name-groups can include species whose morphological variance to the other species indicates they belong to another genus. Therefore, in most cases where ambiguity exists regarding exact morphological classifications I have made the instrument's generic name the deciding factor. This principle allows for native classification systems to inform the scheme's structure as the act of naming

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long necked instruments such as, respectively, the Afghan and Uzbek *rabâb*-s and the long necked Kashgar *rawap*.

a lute a ‘*tanbūr*’ calls attention to some kind of historical relationship between the name and the object, even if an oblique one.

I have divided *tanbūr* genera into the following types: *dutār*, *saz*, *tanbūr/setar*, *šargija*, *tambura*, and *karadyzen*.



Pl. 1.1: *Dutār* genus—(L-R) *Khorasani dutār*, *Kurdish tanbūr*, *Kazakh dombra*.<sup>24</sup>

The genus of the *dutār* (Pl. 1.1) includes all the *dutār* types of Turkey, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Xinjiang (Turkestan), and the

<sup>24</sup> Image source: author’s photo, personal collection. *Dutār*: ‘Akbari’ (signed), Mashhad, Iran, c. 2010-2012. *Tanbur*: ‘Omid’ (signed), Isfahan, Iran, c. 2010-2012. *Dombra*: Sultan Musayev, Astana, Kazakhstan, 2013-2015.

Caucasus, as well as the Kazakh *dombra*. These represent historically related versions of the same basic morphology. The Kurdish *tanbūr* can also be included in this genus, as it only carried two strings before the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the master musician Ostad Elahi (1895-1974) doubled the melody course.<sup>25</sup> The use of *tanbūr* in this instance may follow a naming practice pre-dating the 10<sup>th</sup> century—before the Iranian word *dutār* entered popular use—when Arab musicologists described a number of two string ‘*tanbūr-s*’ in local use.<sup>26</sup>

*Dutār-s* are characterized by teardrop or ovoid resonators, bowled backs, incurved shoulders, long straight necks, and two strings. They are all made from mulberry wood, in general the preferred wood for musical instruments in Anatolia through Central Asia.

Most of them have moveable frets of gut or nylon; the Turkmen *dutār* uses metal rings hammered into the neck’s circumference, and a few Central Asian species are fretless. Tuning pegs are placed in a variety of ways though the most common is one frontal and the other perpendicular to it on the headstock’s upper side. The strings are now generally very thin gauge wire, in a few instances nylon, but in the past many species bore silk strings; a few, like the Uigher *dutār*, the longest member of the genus at 130 cm., still uses silk strings for their warm, deep tone. As the name suggests, all these species have two strings except the Herati *dutār* of Afghanistan to which sympathetic strings were added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>25</sup> ‘The Art of Tanbūr’, found at: <<http://ostadelahi.com/music/the-art-of-tanbur/>>; accessed on: 20 Nov. 2018.

<sup>26</sup> Henry George Farmer, ‘Abdalqādir ibn Ġaibī on Instruments of Music’, *Oriens* 15 (1962), pp. 243-244.



Pl. 1.2: Saz genus—Turkish *bağlama sazı*, front and side views.<sup>27</sup>

The *saz* genus (Pl. 1.2) contains the Turkish *divan*, *bağlama*, and *cura sazı* species—three different sized Turkish *saz*-s—as well as the Bosnian and Azeri *sazı* species. It also includes a number of less well known species throughout Turkey, the Caucasus, and the Aegean with an array of alternate names: *kopuz*, *çögür*, *bozuk*, etc.<sup>28</sup> Genus here thus includes all members of an instrument family in the sense that

<sup>27</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. Maker not available, Turkey, c. 1996-2002.

<sup>28</sup> Issues of differentiating these localized species, and especially defining the *kopuz*, is not within the scope of this Thesis for the following reasons: first, many of these alternate names have historically been associated with lutes of other families and genera and have 'jumped' from one taxonomic category to another, ignoring morphologies. Second, aside from *kopuz/qopuz* none of these names appear in the Return songs and other epic texts I examined. *K-/qopuz* only appears in Turkic texts, and its function is discussed in Chap. 8. See Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 263-269; Walter Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court: Makam, Composition and the Early Ottoman Instrumental Repertoire* (Berlin: VWB—Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 1996), pp. 117-119, 134-136.

In addition, some name-groups such as *bouzouki*, *bugaria*, and *bullgari* present similar difficulties. I have conditionally included these in the *saz* genus, and not *tambura*, largely because these LNLs typically have three courses of strings, usually doubled, and teardrop-shaped

Mahillon was advised to avoid; by enfolding this use of ‘family’ within the genus category I thereby have aimed to avoid confusion with the meaning of family described in the previous item.

These species are all morphologically close, and their main differences are:

1. Size of bodies ranges from the *cura sazı* at ~32"/82 cm. to the *divan* or *meydan sazı* that reaches 49"/125 cm. The resonators are deeply bowled and their depth increases proportionately to neck length and soundboard width.
2. Neck length changes with overall length, however the *bağlama*-s of the *aşık* or *aşiq* minstrels of Anatolia and Azerbaijan tend to have shorter necks than the ‘standard’ *bağlama*.
3. Total string number ranges from three on the *cura* to as many as 12 on other species. Three courses is the norm but their arrangements and tunings vary considerably.
4. Sound holes on most *saz* are found on the bottom side, below the tailpiece. Occasionally they appear on the soundboard.

The *tanbūr* and *setar* LNLs (*Pl. 1.3*) are very close; the genus is characterized by the exceptional neck length/body length ratio. The resonators of these genera are mostly quite small in proportion to the necks, compared to the ratios of other *tanbūr* genera (*App. 3.21*). *Tanbūr* and *setar* come, like the *saz*, in a number of sizes. However, this is not so much due to a ‘family’ relationship between them, as with *saz*-s, but traits of individual species that seem to have developed due to local preferences. Most species have moveable, tied-on frets, though fixed frets of metal or bone are not uncommon. Fret number varies although most are tuned chromatically or

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resonators with bowled backs as opposed to the two double courses of the *tambura* genus. The *tambura* resonators are described below.

decatonically. Some use heptatonic frettings and a few, like the Iranian *setar*, incorporate five to ten  $\frac{1}{4}$  tones and so have 17-22 notes per octave.



Pl. 1.3: *Tanbūr/setar* genus: *Persian setar*.<sup>29</sup>

The term *setar* or sometimes *sītar* is most likely to be used in Indo-Iranian language areas—Tajikistan, Iran, Kashmir, and the Hindu Kush—for local forms of instruments called *tanbūr* in most Turkophone regions. In some areas, for example the Pamir Mts. and among Chinese Tajiks in Xinjiang, both terms are used, for the same

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<sup>29</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. 'Farīd' (signed), Isfahan, Iran, c. 2010-2012.

or different instruments. However, *setar* is most likely a more recent term that either replaced the older term in some areas or was given to more recently developed instruments. Both words are, however, of Iranian origin.<sup>30</sup>

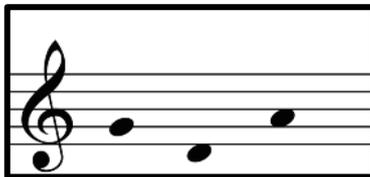


Fig. 1.3: Karadüzen tuning of *šargija* genus.



Pl. 1.4: *Šargija* genus: Albanian *sharki*.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The etymology of the term *tanbūr* is discussed in Chap. 5.

<sup>31</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. Gjoka Family, Albania, c. 1985.

The *šargija* genus (*Pl. 1.4*) consists primarily of two species, the *šargija* of Bosnia-Hercegovina and the *sharki* played in northern Albania and in Kosovo. Both have a deeply bowled resonator that tends to be somewhat conical in its profile with a dorsal ridge on the bottom, though the *šargija*'s body has flatter, straighter sides than the *sharki*. These instruments have five strings in three courses tuned, in relative pitch, to  $g_1g_1-d-a_1a_1$  (*Fig. 1.3*) with the single middle string  $d$  being the lowest pitch. Players of both instruments use their thumbs extensively to fret the top course of strings to sound a note a whole step lower than that of the bottom course on the same fret.



*Pl. 1.5: Tambura genus: (L-R) Macedonian and Croatian tambura.*<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. Left: maker unknown, Macedonia, c. 1950s; Right: Edouard Vondráček, Prague, Czechoslovakia, c. 1920-1930.

The *tambura* genus (*Pl. 1.5*) is the most polymorphous of the *tanbūr* family. The term *tambura* is used to refer to a specific LNL, as in Croatia or Macedonia, or as a generic term for various kinds of LNLs in a particular region, as in former Yugoslav states where even the *šargija* is locally considered a type of *tambura*.<sup>33</sup> Two subgenera of *tambura* exist. The first is an older type illustrated by the Macedonian example in *Pl. 1.5*, now largely obsolete in the Balkans, with an ovoid resonator and a deep, bowled back, and usually tied-on frets. The second type has a teardrop shaped resonator such as the Croatian specimen with a wider diameter than the ovoid body and a correspondingly shallower resonator shell.

Both subgenera have four strings; on the teardrop style *tambura* these are always double courses, but ovoid specimens sometimes arrange them in three courses, with the melody course being doubled. The Bulgarian *tambura* forms an exception to this in having four double courses, but the additional two courses are fairly modern additions. In addition, the ovoid type had moveable frets while the teardrop type has fixed metal frets. This latter, too, is fairly recent, from the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Hornbostel and Sachs only ever loosely defined the term ‘species’, noting that, given their unequal ranking system, species could refer to a concept of an instrument or specific form of instrument. In biological usage, the English naturalist John Ray (1627-1705) had defined species in his 1686 work *Historia Plantarum Generalis*<sup>34</sup> as,

...the distinguishing features that perpetuate themselves in propagation from seed. Thus, no matter what variations occur in the individuals or the species, if they spring from the seed of one and the same plant, they are accidental variations and not such as to distinguish a species. Animals likewise that differ specifically

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<sup>33</sup> Talam, *FMIBH*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>34</sup> John Ray (Joannis Raii), *Historia Plantarum: species hactenus editas aliasque insuper multas noviter inventas & descriptas complectens ...* (London: Typis Mariæ Clark, prostant apud Henricum Faithorne [etc.], 1686), Tome I, Libr. I, Chap. XX, p. 40.

preserve their distinct species permanently; one species never springs from the seed of another nor vice versa.

He thus defines the method by which a species propagates, but not really anything about what defines specific species *qua* a species. Linnaeus formulated a taxonomical system whose principles form the basis for most modern systems, yet he never systematically defined a species either.<sup>35</sup> He stated,

Species are as many as there were diverse [and constant\*] forms produced by the Infinite Being; which forms according to the appointed laws of generation, produced more individuals but always like themselves.<sup>36</sup>

Although he and Ray worked from a decidedly essentialist notion about the form of species, Linnaeus based his descriptions of plant species on empirical observation, carefully noting the physical characteristics of each plant.<sup>37</sup> My own formulation of species of the *tanbūr* lute family also relies on close physical observation as its basis. *Species* is here defined as those instruments that share all of the same major morphological traits, that is, a common standard form that is the result of the genealogical lineage as I have defined it above. Local idiosyncrasies, such as whether a *çifteli* has 11 or 13 frets or is locally called a *tambura*, are not taken into account here but are instead considered as the design parameters of the instrument's genealogical tradition.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> John S. Wilkins, 'Linnaeus on Species', posted 22 May, 2007. Found at: <<http://scienceblogs.com/evolvingthoughts/2007/05/22/linnaeus-on-species-1/>>; accessed on: 29 July 2018.

<sup>36</sup> Carl Linnaeus (Caroli Linnæi), *Philosophica Botanica*, (Stockholm/Amsterdam: R. Kiesewetter/Z. Chatelain, 1751), ¶157, p. 99. '*Species tot sunt, quot diversas [& constantes\*] formas ab initio producit Infinitum Ens; quae formae, secundum generationis inditas leges, produxere plures, at sibi semper similes. Ergo species tot sunt, quot diversae formae s. structurae hodiernum occurrant.*' [\*Added in 1764].

<sup>37</sup> Amal Y. Aldhebiani, 'Species Concept and Speciation', *Saudi Journal of Biological Sciences* 25 (2018), p. 438.

<sup>38</sup> The *tambura* genus would include a wide number of highly local designs, some of them particular to an individual maker or a group of villages. I have therefore only included the most



Pl. 1.6: Karadyzen genus: two sizes of *çifteli*.<sup>39</sup>

widely distributed and/or most standardized types. See Talam, *FMIBH*, pp. 91-152; Richard March, *The Tamburitza Tradition: From the Balkans to the American Midwest* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), pp. 30-33.

<sup>39</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. Left: Sami Hasani, Prishtina, Kosovo, c. 2008-2010. Right: Zef 'Mark' Pershqefa, Fan, Albania, date of production unknown.

### Defining Çifteli-ness

The *karadyzen* genus (*Pl. 1.6*) contains the species *çifteli* (in three sizes), an old type of Macedonian two string *tambura*, the ‘*tambura* with two strings’ of Bosnia,<sup>40</sup> and the *karadyzen*. The term *karadyzen* is interchangeable with *çifteli* and often applied to the same instrument.<sup>41</sup> However, the *karadyzen* is differentiated by having two to four strings arranged and tuned in a variety of way, but virtually always still in two courses.

The term comes from Turkish *kara*, ‘black’, and *düzen*, ‘order’, and refers to a tuning used on Anatolian LNLs,<sup>42</sup> the ‘black tuning’ of the kind used on the *šargija* genus. It is also an older name for *çifteli*, and in Albanian *dyzen* can also mean ‘paired’ or ‘doubled’, so could mean the ‘black two string’.<sup>43</sup> To further demonstrate the slipperiness of lute names, another older name for *çifteli* was *tamërr*, derived from *tambura*.<sup>44</sup>

The primary characteristics of the *çifteli* (*Pl. 1.6*) are its two strings (although there are some with three strings),<sup>45</sup> long slender neck, incurved shoulders, and teardrop shaped resonator with wooden table.

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<sup>40</sup> Talam, *FMIBH*, pp. 91-97.

<sup>41</sup> See Achille Pellerano and Pirro Miso, *Strumenti musicali cordofoni della cultura popolare Albanese: La collezione dell'Istituto della Cultura Popolare di Tirana* (Foggia: Claudio Grenzi Editore, 2008), pp. 94-103.

<sup>42</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 229-230.

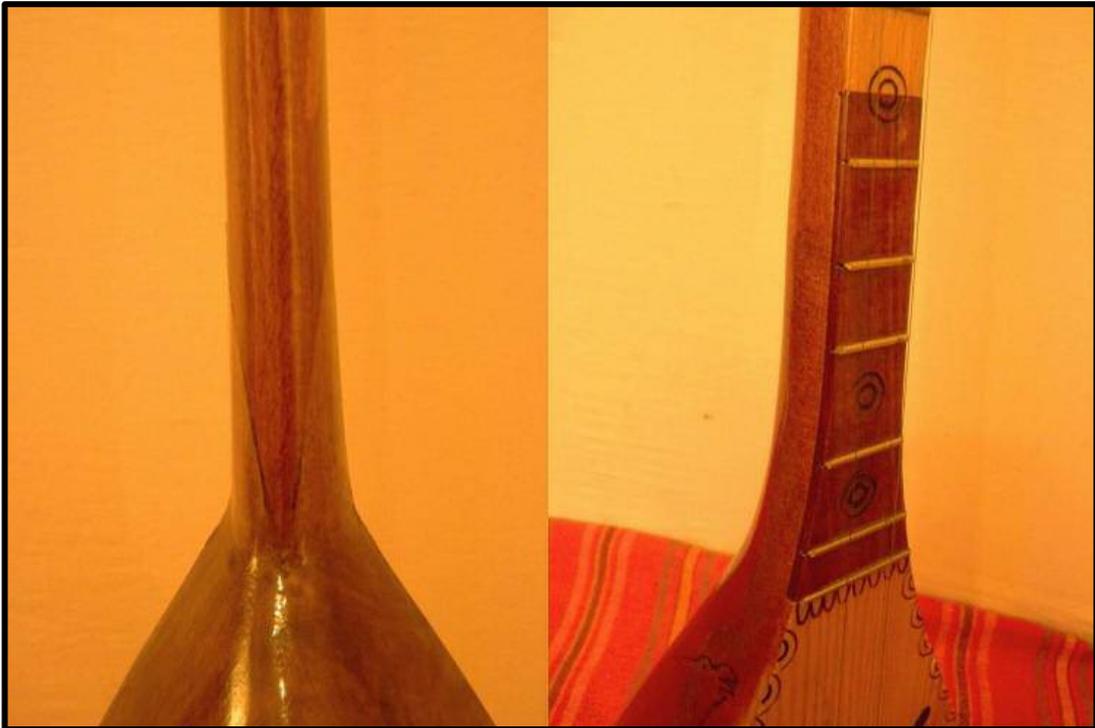
<sup>43</sup> Ramadan Sokoli, *Gjurmime Folklorike* (Tirana: Shtëpia Botuese Naim Frashëri, 1981), p. 385. ‘Black’ in Albanian is *zi*.

<sup>44</sup> Ardian Ahmedaja, ‘Discovering Albania: World premiere of the earliest sound recordings from 1903 and from a milestone expedition in 1957’, booklet for CD (Tirana: Ulysses Foundation, 2012), p. 34.

<sup>45</sup> The *çifteli me tre tela* (*çifteli with three strings*) generally has a chromatic fretboard, sometimes with half-frets. The three strings are single coursed, which distinguishes this species from the *karadyzen*, which may also have three strings but normally in two courses. The three string *çifteli* is occasionally also called a *sharki me tre tela* (see video ‘Albanian Sharki (Çifteli Qifteli) me 3 tela, instrument Shqiptar’, found at: <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_SAI8lrDLE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_SAI8lrDLE)>; accessed on: 20 April, 2019), as it is amenable to being tuned and played as if a single coursed *sharki*. The two string *çifteli* is, however, by far the most common form as indicated by its name.



*Pl. 1.7: Çifteli headstock.<sup>46</sup>*



*Pl. 1.8: Mitered joint and fingerboard plate of çifteli.<sup>47</sup>*

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<sup>46</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection.

<sup>47</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection.

More specifically, the *çifteli* is an LNL with a headstock on a flat plane to the fingerboard. (*Pl. 1.7*) The two tuning pegs attach in a composite fashion; one rises from the headstock's face while the second, on the upper side, rises perpendicularly or slightly angled at around 80-70°. The top of the headstock comes to a javelin-like point in a triangular approach. Because the headstock's front lies on the same plane as the fingerboard, the strings pass under a bar of copper, brass, or other metal before crossing the nut; this bar pushes the strings down so that they pass over the nut from an upward-slanting angle rather than going straight over from the peg stems. The nut, too, is usually made from copper or brass.

The neck and headstock account for 70% of the overall length. The neck contains 11-13 non-tempered diatonic frets made of brass or copper, although a more modern arrangement contains 14 frets/octave: a complete chromatic setting plus two microtones found on 'traditional' *çifteli* fretboards. Typically, the neck is affixed to the body in a mitered butt joint (*Pl. 1.8*) whose seam often proves difficult to distinguish, so that it often appears as if the neck and resonator are of one piece. On some specimens this joint is strengthened by a strip of wood, sometimes stained or naturally darker, glued on the front of the neck so that the fingerboard does not continue to the soundboard in one piece.

The neck widens slightly and the shoulders may be between 0.4-2.6 mm. wider than the nut. The shoulders are incurved. The soundboard is teardrop shaped. A small single soundhole sits in the center of the face and—a unique feature of this genus—a second soundhole sits on the upward-facing side of the resonator about an inch from the soundboard seam (*Pl. 1.9*).<sup>48</sup> This has no known purpose for sound

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<sup>48</sup> Picken states that 'old (or old-style) *saz* [in Turkey]' will often have similar holes in the resonator's side (*FMIT*, p. 220) and *Pl. 24(a)* shows a *cura sazı* from Gaziantep in southeastern

production and is apparently symbolic and/or decorative. Often it becomes incorporated into woodburned designs such as the eye of an ibex head or the center of a flower.



*Pl. 1.9: Side and front sound holes of çifteli.*<sup>49</sup>

The bridge rests about halfway between the primary soundhole and the *çifteli*'s tail. Most makers seem to prefer a metal bridge (*Pl. 1.10*), usually steel, as this gives the tone a brighter, sharper sound, although in some regions such as Mati or Tropoja wooden bridges are used. The metal bridge has two pins on its ends that fit into small holes drilled into the soundboard so they are fixed by string pressure but not glued and have a slight 'give' to them for a degree of fine-tuning.

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Turkey, 97 km. north of Aleppo, Syria, with such a feature. He does not, however, say anything about its function. See also n. 54 below.

<sup>49</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection.



*Pl. 1.10: Metal bridge and copper tailpiece of çifteli.*<sup>50</sup>

The two strings pass over the bridge and are tied into loops at their ends that then wrap around nail heads hammered into or tabs cut from the tailpiece (*Pl. 1.10*). This tailpiece is most often a triangular piece of tin, steel or copper hammered onto the back of the resonator with the pegs or nails for the strings hammered into the center of it, one for each string.

The resonator's shape forms another highly distinctive mark: unlike the vast majority of LNLs it is not round or bowl-shaped but more conical, with a dorsal ridge like the *šargija*'s running along the bottom (*Pl. 1.11*). The sides, therefore, of the resonator run at a steep angle from the soundboard's rim and the bottom edge containing the tailpiece will often become almost flat or squared. The two sides, though rounded, also have an often almost-straight appearance or at least a much slighter curvature than the typical rounded or bowled resonator profile. The bottom of the dorsal ridge, too, will frequently appear flattened or nearly so.

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<sup>50</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection.



Pl. 1.11: Dorsal ridge and flattened base of *çifteli*.<sup>51</sup>

To summarize, the progenitors of the *çifteli* as representative of a specifically Balkan LNL genus feature the following distinguishing characteristics:

1. Incurved shoulders with a mitered butt joint or carved from a single block of wood.
2. Steeply declined sides, frequently almost flat or squared, with a pronounced dorsal ridge on the back and often a flat bottom plane.
3. Two steel strings, or two courses containing three to four strings.
4. Diatonic fretting with non-tempered intervals and often containing at least two  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  tone intervals (some modern designs incorporate 12 tone octaves but retain these microtones).

<sup>51</sup> Image source: BM Eu1997,04.220, 'lute', found at: <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?assetId=865567&objectId=669846&partId=1](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=865567&objectId=669846&partId=1)>; accessed on: 6 Nov. 2014. Maker unknown, Pec or Djakovica, Kosovo, c. 1950-1960.

5. A second soundhole on the upper side of the resonator that is less for acoustic than for decorative or symbolic purposes.

### *A Pain in the Neck?*

Any inquiry into the history of the lute must begin with the most basic question: what is a ‘lute’? The simplest, most comprehensive definition comes from the HS, that a lute is an instrument in which ‘the plane of the strings runs parallel with a sound-table.’<sup>52</sup> This category thus includes lyres but excludes harps, whose strings run at a right angle to the sounding board. The lutes under consideration here fall in the subcategory of ‘handle lutes: the string bearer is a plain handle’ that itself divides into ‘spike lutes’ in which the neck, the string bearer, pierces the body, the resonator, either partly or fully, and ‘necked lutes’, where the string bearer is either mortised into the body or is of a piece with it, carved from one chunk of wood. I would add to the definition of ‘necked lute’ that the fingerboard of such lutes nearly always has a flat surface, whereas the string bearers of spike lutes frequently retain a rounded upper surface that may not even serve as a fingerboard at all, as on many spike bowed lutes.

A further distinction lies between lutes of either type where the body is a ‘bowl’, either of wood hollowed with an adze or made from a natural object like a coconut shell, or a ‘box’, built up with wooden ribs like a mandolin or pieced together like a guitar or violin. Hornbostel and Sachs use the terms somewhat ambiguously, however, writing that ‘[necked] lutes whose body is built up in the shape of a bowl are classified as bowl lutes.’ As many spiked box lutes have rounded resonators, and

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<sup>52</sup> Hornbostel and Sachs, ‘Classification’, pp. 22-23.

some spiked bowl lutes use ‘natural’ resonators like rectangular oilcans,<sup>53</sup> the use of ‘bowl/box’ seems therefore meaningful only if understood as signifying the manner of construction. The *çifteli* and *sharki* both serve as examples of necked bowl lutes whose resonators are carved from a single piece of wood and necks affixed via a v-joint.

However, the distinction between the box and bowl styles can result in some taxonomical displacements: the Persian *setar*, for example, has a bowl-shaped resonator that is currently built up of steam-bent ribs while every other major morphological feature relates it to other long necked lutes, most of which have bowl resonators of one hollowed piece of wood. Similarly, the Chinese *pipa* is genealogically related to lutes like the Arab *‘ūd*, whose body is built up of thin ribs while the *pipa*’s is carved from a solid block of teak wood.

The use of this distinction is further complicated, as in both of these cases the box design is often a later amendment of the instruments’ original designs.<sup>54</sup> This may be related to changes in the particular instrument’s social status, musical capabilities, or innovations introduced by an individual musician or instrument maker, but it is questionable whether this design change should cause the instrument to be taxonomically reclassified. However, modern classification systems are not designed to show such historical changes or their sources.

For the purposes of this Thesis, then, I designate lutes primarily by the actual shape and material of their resonators and not, in general, by their manner of construction. Thus, the Ottoman *tanbūr* is not included in this Thesis’s definition of the overall *tanbūr* LNL family because, though it shares the ‘long neck’ feature

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. the Afghan and Tajik bowed *gaychak* or *gichak*.

<sup>54</sup> See Eliot Bates, ‘The Social Life of Musical Instruments’, *Ethnomusicology* 56/3 (2012), p. 379.

defined below and a bowled resonator (made of individual ribs of wood), its frontal profile is not ovoid or teardrop-shaped but disc-shaped (see Chap. 5).

The Hornbostel-Sachs system does not, however, distinguish between the SN and LNL, and the ancient history of the lute revealed a certain amorphousness in its morphology. That is, while it seems obvious to classify something like the Arab *ʿūd* (*Pl. 1.12*) as a short necked lute and the *dutār* as a long necked lute, the Hornbostel-Sachs definitions of ‘short neck’ and ‘long neck’ contain some ambiguities. When Sachs does define the two terms, in the 1940 English edition of his *The History of Musical Instruments*, he formulates the distinction on the sensible principle of the instrument’s construction:

The ‘short lute’ has a neck shorter than the body. Its origin is a wooden body tapering upward to form a neck and a fingerboard, not, as with the long lute, a stick with a small resonance shell at its under end.<sup>55</sup>

All our lutes, guitars, hurdy-gurdies and...viols and violins belong in the category of *short lutes*, in which the neck is, morphologically speaking, an elongation of the body...and seldom reaches the length of the body.<sup>56</sup>

This definition too runs into some problems fairly quickly: the *ʿūd* does not taper as described, instead the neck affixes to the upper body with a mortise-and-tenon joint, making the shoulders *disjunct* rather than tapered; how then do we get from one to the other historically? As another example, the body of the Afghan *rabâb* (*Pl. 1.13*) indeed tapers seamlessly into the neck, giving it a ‘short’ appearance intensified by having only three or four frets. This indicates that the playing length of the string includes only a quarter or less of its total length, yet in practice performers regularly rise to the octave above the highest pitched open string.

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<sup>55</sup> Curt Sachs, *The History of Musical Instruments* (W.W. Norton & Co., 1940/reprint ed. Mineola: Dover Pub., Inc., 2006), p. 160.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 464.



Pl. 1.12: Arabian ʿūd.



Pl. 1.13: Afghan rabâb.<sup>57</sup>

One must also consider the fretless *Dolan rawap* (Pl. 1.14) of western Xinjiang province, where the neck and body also taper but the musician utilizes half the string length or more. In addition, the ratio of resonator length to the *rawap*'s neck length gives a much longer 'neck' than on the *rabâb*'s two-chambered body (App. 3.3 & 20). Finally, spike lutes such as the Indian *dotara* feature very long necks yet the musician does not stop the strings but merely plucks them. The question then becomes, *what do we mean by an instrument's 'neck'?*

<sup>57</sup> Image source: National Museums Scotland A.1980.368, 'Rabab, lute/waisted', found at: <[https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/?item\\_id=320082](https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/collection-search-results/?item_id=320082)>; accessed on: 25 Nov. 2014. Maker unknown, northwest India, early 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Pl. I.14: Dolan rabâb or rawap.<sup>58</sup>

### Morphology and Musical Style

Much of this difficulty comes about from the rather vague definitions Sachs gives to the terms *neck* and *fingerboard*:<sup>59</sup>

1. '*Neck, stick, handle.* A *stick* is stuck through the body; a *neck* grows out of it as an organic part of the instrument. Either could be called *handle*.'
2. '*Fingerboard* is the front of the neck in those instruments the strings of which are stopped by being pressed against the wood.'

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<sup>58</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. Maker not available, Kashgar, Xinjiang Province, China, c. 2008-2010.

<sup>59</sup> Sachs, *The History*, p. 466.

The first definition supplies one with a distinction between two *classes* of lutes, HS 321.31 and 321.32, respectively, lutes with *stick* handles or ‘spiked’ and those with handles adjoined to the upper resonator end, or *necked*. All the lutes discussed in this Thesis belong to the latter class, in the *order of long necked lutes*, in the *tanbūr family*.

Sachs’s definition of fingerboard somewhat confuses terms, as stick-lutes have fingerboards as well, but more seriously Sachs does not seem to take account of necked lutes whose fingerboard extends beyond the neck’s end, such as the guitar or *‘ūd*. Did Sachs mean to say that a fingerboard is synonymous with the neck, or is the neck a distinct entity from it? Unfortunately, he does not offer a clarification so one can only infer that they are two separate parts of the lute, defined in different terms. In view of these issues and to offer a more precise reformulation of Sachs’s dictum, I have refined the distinction between SN and LNLs to the following:

1. I define a *neck* as the *segment from the nut to the last fret placement before the shoulders begin, the latter marked by either/or the physical end of the fingerboard—outward curvature of upper shoulders*.

In cases like the *rabâb* with its completely tapered design with no clear shoulders, the ‘neck’ ends around the end of the fretted portion, despite the performer’s practice of stopping strings far beyond the last fret. Conflating neck and fingerboard seems the least arbitrary and the most practical marker in view of the great variability of placements of final frets on many LNLs (see *App. 3*, n. 1).

Conversely, some lutes such as the Croatian *tambura* or members of the *pipa* type contain frets well onto the soundboard; in these cases the end of the fingerboard and start of the soundboard are generally clearly demarcated, by

changes in the kind of wood, ornamental designs, etc., which occurs where the shoulders begin a discernible outward curve;

2. *An SNL is a lute in which the neck length, as defined in 1, measures less than half of the length of the resonator shell.* This is basically a restatement of what Sachs wrote, but necessary to state in view of the definition of neck that I offer in 1.
3. *LNL necks* are of two genera:
  - a. The neck is narrow with straight, roughly parallel edges as on the *dutār*, *sitar*, and *çifteli*. The shoulders of this type may curve gently inward towards the neck or be disjunct, but they remain distinct from;
  - b. The second type in which the neck *tapers* from nut to shoulders, generally disjunct, as on the Dolan *rawap*.

These shortcomings with the Hornbostel-Sachs definition of the short lute point to a problem shared with many classification systems. The majority of modern systems aim to provide a central, coherent point of reference and a common terminology for museums, scholars, and interested non-specialists to catalogue and talk about musical instruments.<sup>60</sup> The problems are, first, systems like the Hornbostel-Sachs can only describe instruments from a synchronic perspective and are incapable, as Picken notes, of showing their diachronic movement and evolution, the direction of their change.<sup>61</sup> He does emphasize that ‘it is improbable, in a classification based on morphological as well as functional features, that historical relationships would not be reflected,’ but the specifics of these relationships and how they came about lies outside the scope and purpose of classification systems.

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<sup>60</sup> Kartomi, *On Concepts*, pp. 162-196; HS, ‘Classification’, p. 4-5.

<sup>61</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 564-565.

Second, Kartomi notes that Hornbostel-Sachs ‘does not lend itself to the accurate detailed study of individual instruments and their ordering or grouping for study purposes.’<sup>62</sup> That change, the living quality of instrument genealogies and their essential role in shaping the individual instrument in its specific cultural context, is of primary importance here. As Sachs and Hornbostel admitted, no classification system can adequately capture that vital quality of musical instruments that is ‘alive and dynamic, indifferent to sharp demarcation and set form.’<sup>63</sup>

Musical instruments tend to display a fractal quality in their geographic distribution and variety of subforms; features like bridge design and material (all wood vs. metal or wood containing a metal strip) or number of frets (11-22) characterize individual *çifteli*-s as originating from different regions of Albania and Kosova. In addition, the *karadyzen*’s inconsistent string arrangements and the historical name-changes of the *çifteli* are phenomenon the Hornbostel-Sachs system is hard pressed to account for.

Third, they only view their objects from an etic perspective that omits entirely the characteristics that Picken found to be most essential to the musicians and their audiences themselves, what he labels a *Klangideal*.

Field-studies in Turkey suggest that species are local forms, characteristic of a region...linked with the local population by choice of material, decoration, properties of parts, basic technology, and—of greater significance—by conformity with a local, tonal standard.<sup>64</sup>

These local species are often the product of specific instrument-making lineages, familial or apprentice-master based. Each lineage possesses certain techniques of manufacture and a certain ‘fine structure’ of sound that marks the

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<sup>62</sup> Kartomi, *On Concepts*, p. 172.

<sup>63</sup> Hornbostel and Sachs, ‘Classification’ p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, p. 564.

difference between what his Turkish informants called *bitim musiki*, ‘our music’, and music of others, *ethne*. These differences depend on ‘acoustic events on a small time-scale’ of mere seconds: ‘there is only one “right” kind of sound for a shepherd to be making with his flute or bagpipe in a given community...a characteristic of prime importance in defining specificity.’<sup>65</sup> The presence of these subtle techniques of ornaments and distinctions of tone color indicate morphological distinctions as well, to the degree that musical style and performance technique and instrument design are functions of each other. How then do we approach this problem?

Picken’s description of *Klangideal* emphasizes regional species-specific qualities of tone, sonority, and musical style and technique. Yet aspects of these qualities can also apply to members of an instrument and family. Beyond the differences among members of the *tambura* genus—tuning systems, string arrangements, right-hand techniques and ornamentation—the very design features they share determine key aspects of technique and style. For instance, their long slender necks and their two to three courses precludes, for the most part,<sup>66</sup> triadic harmony. These features make these LNLs particularly suited to a style heavily reliant on a drone provided by the upper and/or middle course that orients the tonality of the course that carries the melody.

This in turn lends itself to techniques centered on rapid tremolo picking, necessary to keep the drone constant, and a musical style that is generally monophonic. In addition, nearly all of the *tanbūr* family use steel strings which

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 517.

<sup>66</sup> Picken notes polyphonic playing styles of certain regions in Turkey, performed on the *cura sazi* or the bowed *kemanche* of the Pontic region near the Black Sea, typically based on parallel fourths or fifths. The Turkmen *dutār* and Kazakh *dombra* utilize a similar style as well. These examples, however, illustrate a type of complex polyphonic performance that still differs in kind and quality from polyphonic and harmonic possibilities of SNLs of the *lute* or *laute* family. See *FMIT*, p. 272; Picken, ‘Instrumental Polyphonic Folk Music in Asia Minor’, *Proceedings of the Royal Music Association*, 80<sup>th</sup> session (1953-1954), pp. 73-86, pp. 74, 76-79, 81-83.

replaced the older gut or silk strings. This has resulted from a shift in the aesthetics of sonority and texture and of volume with the result that the bright, clear sound of wire-strung LNLs characterizes the *tanbūr* family as distinct from other lutes such as the *ūd*, European *theorbo*, or most *rabâb*-s with their gut or nylon strings and correspondingly warmer, gentler and robust sonorities.

When it comes to ornamentation, the neck design, fret patterns, and string layout foster the dominance of hammer-ons and pull-offs and frequent dissonances achieved by playing intervals of a second on two courses simultaneously. On fretless SNLs, on the other hand, slides, slurs and glissandos play a major role in ornamentation; in other LNL families like that typified by the Indian *sitar* with its wide fingerboard and curved frets extreme string bends are the preferred ornamentation.

Thus a clear relationship exists between a lute's morphology and aspects of its *Klangideal*, and instruments of the same family and genus strongly tend to express that relationship.

### *The Vertical and Horizontal Scale*

The LNLs of the *tanbūr* family display a particular relationship between morphology and *Klangideal*. Sachs approached this principle in his *History* when he wrote that 'the musical difference [between short and long lutes] is that in short lutes the melodic scale, in principle, is formed by all strings consecutively, whereas in long lutes it is obtained from one string only by stopping while the others accompany.'<sup>67</sup>

I have modified and expanded his assessment by noting that these tendencies also generally depend on the number of strings or courses as much as the neck-

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<sup>67</sup> Sachs, *History*, p. 160.

structure. That is, lutes with four or more courses display a marked tendency to be played with what I call a *vertical* concept of melodic movement or ‘scale’, where the melody runs vertically across the neck from one course to another. This corresponds to Sachs’ term ‘consecutive’.

*Fig. 1.4* below illustrates the principle. Here, each row equals a course, the lowest pitch being the bottom row, and the columns represent frets with the left side being the nut that leads to the pegbox. A hypothetical scale is mapped out to demonstrate the vertical quality of playing:

Nut	Fret 1	Fret 2	Fret 3	Fret 4	Fret 5
c →		d		e	f →
G →		a		b	(c)
D →		E	F		(G)
A →		B	C		(D)

*Fig. 1.4: ‘Vertical’ fretboard of a four stringed lute.*

Sachs’ description of the long lute illustrates what I call a *horizontal* conception of playing in which the melody is mainly or completely carried by the first string while the other strings, generally one or two, sound a drone.<sup>68</sup> *Fig. 1.5* shows what this looks like on a two stringed lute:

Nut	Fret 1	Fret 2	Fret 3	(etc....)					
D →		E	F		G		a		b →
A									

*Fig. 1.5: ‘Horizontal’ fretboard of a two stringed lute.*

<sup>68</sup> In some instances one or more of these drone strings may be stopped, usually by the musician’s thumb, but this rarely constitutes an extension of the melody. Rather, it forms a drone shift, a dichord, or a polyphonic line, as on the Turkmen *dutār* or the *cura sazı* in some rural parts of Anatolia (Picken, ‘Polyphony’, pp. 81-83). Players of the Iranian *setar*, with four strings, will use their thumbs on the brass fourth (bass) string, but the *setar* carried three strings until the late 19<sup>th</sup>—early 20<sup>th</sup> century and this technique harkens back to this earlier arrangement.

This re-envisioning of the primary difference between lute types holds a key advantage over the previous definition. It brings into focus the relationship between musical styles, playing techniques, instrument structure, and most importantly the number and layout of strings.<sup>69</sup> Two-course instruments, for example, as a general rule possess a long, slender neck and in performance one string carries the melody while the second either sounds a drone or polyphonic tones. This can now be understood as a characteristic of the *tanbūr* family.

Three-string or three-course lutes occupy a morphological intermediate zone and can be either what is traditionally called ‘short’ or ‘long’ necked. Their playing style frequently reflects this interim status and can be both horizontal or vertical. Right-hand techniques on the Turkish *bağlama saz* have traditionally been mainly horizontal although in the 20<sup>th</sup> century many innovative, vertically-oriented techniques such as the finger-tapping style *şelpe* have become popular.<sup>70</sup>

Perhaps just as often, however, this interim quality appears in a way that seems fairly unique to the three-course arrangement: in a polyphonic style based on parallel fourths and fifths and that incorporates elements of both horizontal and vertical playing. Examples of this style include the Kirghiz *komuz*, and the *chonguri* and *panduri* of Georgia and other Caucasus Mt. republics. The Bosnian *šargija* has taken this in another direction, using the possibilities of its *karadüzen* tuning to create a polyphonic style based on dissonant seconds instead of consonances.

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<sup>69</sup> I use *course* instead of simply *strings* since many such lutes have two double or even triple strings in one or another course, thus a total of three to five strings. The Kurdish *tanbūr*, Croatian *tambura*, with, respectively, a double melody course and two double courses, are examples of these layouts. One string plucked lutes are extremely rare although bowed one string lutes like the *gusle/lahutë* and Bedouin *rabâb* are somewhat common; other one string lutes utilize highly unorthodox playing techniques, such as holding one end of the string between the player’s teeth while bowed so that the mouth acts as a resonator.

<sup>70</sup> Of which the video ‘Adem Tosunoğlu—Yabancı “Strange(r)” gives an example. Found at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch>>; accessed on 23 Nov. 2018.

On lutes with four or more courses, the tendency towards a vertical conception becomes highly pronounced. In addition, the drone that forms the most characteristic feature of the two stringed lute's music becomes highly attenuated in 'a process of sublimation where the audible fundamental drone turns into a "mental" center of tonality.'<sup>71</sup> The *ūd* with four to six double courses epitomizes this, as the open strings are used not to sound the tonic but more as a type of musical punctuation.

The apotheosis of verticality can be seen on the Western representatives with six or more courses like the *lute*, *theorbo*, and guitar, where triadic chords and contrapuntal lines dominate over drone-based monophony or polyphony based on parallel fourths or fifths.

Any lute's morphology results from the work of successive generations of makers and players in modifying the basic design to facilitate sonorities, performance techniques, and stylistic idioms sought by musicians and audiences. In this way, musical style and morphology become inseparable and are thus integral to defining a lute's taxonomical classification. Yet it leaves unanswered some important questions, namely how to historically relate the various species of LNLs and what cultural forces led to the development of such a wide array of species? This point marks the practical limit of phenetic classification systems and the beginning of the special utility of phylogenetic systems.

### Phylogenetics

Fully delineating the *tanbūr* family through the historical development of its morphology and musical characteristics, while simultaneously tracing its cultural and imaginal functions, required two separate yet complementary theoretical approaches.

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<sup>71</sup> Edith Gerson-Kiwi, 'Drone and "Dyaphonia Basilica"', *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* 4 (1972), pp. 13, 15.

In keeping with the above conception of vertical and horizontal lute playing, these two approaches focus on a vertical genealogical or evolutionary method and a horizontal method that can account for information transfer across disparate lineages and changes through time.<sup>72</sup>

The vertical method is based on *phylogenetics*, the biological study of evolutionary descent of genetic lineages. Graphically these lineages are represented as tree diagrams called *cladograms*, developed by the German biologist Willi Hennig (1913-1976) in the 1960s.<sup>73</sup> The simplest definition of cladistics states,

The basic idea behind cladistics is that members of a group share a common evolutionary history, and are "closely related," more so to members of the same group than to other organisms. These groups are recognized by sharing unique features which were not present in distant ancestors."<sup>74</sup>

But shared characteristics alone are not sufficient to demonstrate a common evolutionary history: one must somehow show how the traits derive from a common ancestor, and this is done by mapping the patterns of shared traits in a cladogram.

*Cladistics*, the use of cladograms for analyzing phylogenetic relationships, operates from three essential assumptions:<sup>75</sup>

1. Any group of organisms are *related by descent* from a common ancestor. In a cladogram these lines of descent are referred to as a *clade*, 'a group of

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<sup>72</sup> In biology these occur as a result of hybridization and horizontal genetic transfer across species such as *eukaryotes*. While this is known to occur in biology it is mostly limited to particular taxa; in cultural evolution this phenomenon is considerably more problematic. See Ilya Tëmkin and Niles Eldredge, 'Phylogenetics and Material Cultural Evolution', *Current Anthropology* 48/1 (2007), p. 148.

<sup>73</sup> Willi Hennig, *Phylogenetic Systematics* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1966).

<sup>74</sup> Rob Guralnik, 'Journey into Phylogenetic Systematics: An Introduction to Cladistics', found on <<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/clad/clad1.html>> (1994-1996); accessed on 28 July 2015.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

organisms which includes the most recent common ancestor of all of its members and all of the descendants of that most recent common ancestor.<sup>76</sup>

2. There is a *bifurcating pattern* of cladogenesis. In other words, new lineages may branch off from a common ancestor as changes in environment, for example, lead to the development of new traits in closely related organisms. The evolution of modern birds from the *Theropoda* family of dinosaurs serves as an example of phylogenetic bifurcation.<sup>77</sup>
3. *Change* in characteristics occurs in lineages over time. Visible changes allow the observer to distinguish between lineages and these changes are what propels the evolutionary process, or in Darwin's terms 'descent with modification'.<sup>78</sup>

Phylogenetic theory and cladograms have found applications in several fields outside of biology such as linguistics and in studies of cultural artifact evolution.<sup>79</sup> In organology it has been used most notably by Niles Eldredge, Curator Emeritus of the Paleontology Division at the New York Museum of Natural History, and Ilya Tëmkin, Professor in Biology at the Northern Virginia Community College. Eldredge and Tëmkin have authored, separately and collaboratively, several articles on the

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<sup>76</sup> 'UCMP Glossary: Phylogenetics', found on <<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/glossary/gloss1phylo.html#clade>>; accessed on 22 Jan. 2018.

<sup>77</sup> See Rob Guralnik, et. al., 'The Saurischian Dinosaurs', <<http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/diapsids/saurischia/saurischia.html>>; accessed on 22 Jan. 2018.

<sup>78</sup> Tëmkin and Eldredge, 'Phylogenetics', p. 146; 'An Introduction to Cladistics'.

<sup>79</sup> See J. Tehrani and M. Collard, 'Investigating cultural evolution through biological phylogenetic analyses of Turkmen textiles', *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 21 (2002), pp. 443-463; Will Chang, Chundra Cathcart, David Hall and Andrew Garrett, 'Ancestry-Constrained Phylogenetic Analysis Supports the Indo-European Steppe Hypothesis', *Language* 91/1 (2015), pp. 194-244.

application of phylogenetic methods to the history of, respectively, cornet manufacturing and the Baltic psaltery.<sup>80</sup>

Eldredge's article 'Paleontology and Cornets' discusses the uses of phylogenetic methods to analyze material cultural evolution. He states that the fundamental similarity between biological and cultural systems is that,

Beneath each system lies transmissible information that is used as an instructional template to produce the object...the key is that the information in both systems is stored and transmitted to the next generation—of organisms...and of makers of artifacts.<sup>81</sup>

Ilya Tëmkin's essay 'The Evolution of the Baltic Psaltery' states that,

The aim of the historical reconstruction [of psalteries, afforded by use of cladistics method] is to systematize a diversity of entities according to genealogical descent. Ultimately, historical reconstruction results in establishment of a hypothesis of the relationship of [these] entities...representing the degree of their relatedness by a tree.<sup>82</sup>

In his case study of the Baltic psaltery—a type of zither held in the player's lap or on a table with, traditionally, five-twelve strings such as the Finnish *kantele* (Fin)—Tëmkin examines 30 structural and decorative characteristics of 26 examples of the instrument, from Finnish, Russian, and Baltic milieux spanning the 11<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and constructs trees that show relationships among his sample set of these features.<sup>83</sup> He took as the 'root', or presumed ancestor of the different psalteries, a 6<sup>th</sup> century Germanic lyre and a *nars-yukh* psaltery of the Khanty people of the Ural

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<sup>80</sup> See especially Niles Eldredge, 'Paleontology and Cornets: Thoughts on Material Cultural Evolution', *Evo Edu Outreach* 4 (2011), pp. 364-373; Ilya Tëmkin, 'The Evolution of the Baltic Psaltery: A Case for Phyloörganology', *The Galpin Society Journal* 57 (2004), pp. 219-230; Niles and Eldredge, 'Phylogenetics'.

<sup>81</sup> Eldredge, 'Paleontology and Cornets', p. 364.

<sup>82</sup> Tëmkin, 'Baltic Psaltery', p. 221.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

Mts. These acted as his “control group” that enabled him ‘to establish a polarity, or direction, of organological development.’ He concludes that,

...decorative elements are considerably more affected by cultural exchange and artistic innovation, while structural elements are much more stable in the course of time. This analytically derived fact supports the notion that the structure of the instrument is tightly bound to the playing technique and aesthetic sensibilities strongly maintained by the tradition within a single ethnic group.<sup>84</sup>

What Tëmkin terms *phyloörganology*—applying phylogenetic methods and concepts to organology—thereby also recognizes some relationship between morphology and *Klangideal*. Thus phyloörganology provides a reliable basis ‘for establishing hypotheses of historical relationships among musical instruments.’<sup>85</sup> This is its great strength, but the method has a significant shortcoming as well:

As a result of long-term continuous artistic innovation and ever-growing cross-cultural influence, it becomes increasingly difficult to trace the ancestry of many musical instruments, mark changes in their development, and reveal the routes of diffusion.

Tëmkin’s observation here mirrors my own: the more micro-regional the scale the more the data seems to blur and resist classifications. This phenomenon shows how lute families are indeed ‘definable’ ones that can be clearly discerned from other families but whose genera boundaries overlap and blur.

In a 2012 article<sup>86</sup> Tëmkin et. al. explore refinements of the cladistics method to address this weakness. Using two Medieval psalteries unearthed in Novgorod in northwestern Russia as their ‘root’ sample set they expand the use of this method to

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., pp. 229-230.

<sup>86</sup> Ilya Tëmkin, Tomas Veloz and Liane Gabora, ‘A Conceptual Network-based Approach to Inferring the Cultural Evolutionary History of the Baltic Psaltery’, *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Houston: Cognitive Science Society, 2012), pp. 2487-2492.

create ‘similarity graphs’ that operate from ‘perspectives’. They define this term as ‘a part of the conceptual structure that includes a predefined subset of attributes that may or may not be directly linked to each other.’ The authors chose three such perspectives as their bases for comparison: physical attributes (morphology); symbolism, the decorative or cultural elements of the psalteries, and performance, or concepts related to music performance styles (*Klangideal*). The authors aimed to thereby create ‘an independent framework for establishing historical hypotheses that can corroborate or disagree with existing models of cultural change.’

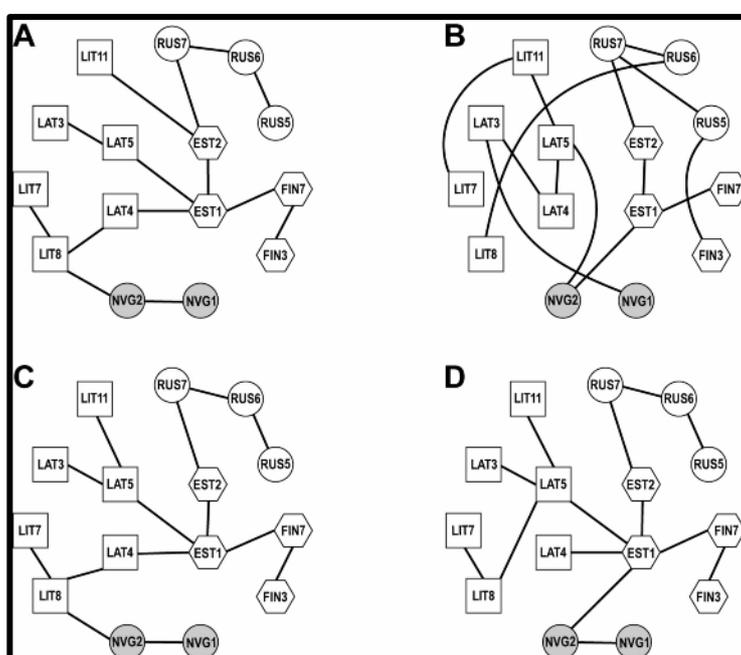


Fig. 1.6: Similarity graph for Baltic psalteries (key in note).<sup>87</sup>

The similarity graph for physical attributes reveals significantly different relationships among his sample set than that for symbolic elements (Fig. 1.6). It suggests that the morphological aspects of the psalteries were constrained by regional traditions of craftsmanship that strongly followed linguistic distribution; i.e. psalteries

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, p. 2490. Key: Lat=Latvian psaltery; Rus=Russian; Est=Estonian; NVG=Novgorod; Lit=Lithuanian; Fin=Finland. Graph A shows relationships between psalteries based on physical attributes; Graph B weighs symbolism; graph C gives equal weights to physical attributes and symbolism; graph D gives physical attributes 25% weight, symbolism 75%.

from Finno-Ugric language areas, Finland and Estonia, contained greater structural similarity to each other than to those from Slavic-speaking and Baltic regions, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia.

Conversely, the graph for symbolic elements showed a marked tendency to follow the geographic proximity of different cultural groups. Whereas in the morphological graph the Baltic—Lithuanian and Latvian—instruments showed greater affinity to the Finno-Estonian examples, in the symbolic graph this connection disappeared and instead marked connections between the Baltic and Slavic—Russian—psalteries emerged.

The authors admit that the physical attributes' graph did not 'unequivocally resolve' the phylogenetic relationships between the three groups of psalteries to the 'root' artifacts of the tree. The Lithuanian, hence Baltic genus, did appear to be the closest to the Novgorod pieces which 'agrees with a presumed northward diffusion of the instrument', hearkening back to one of Tëmkin's conclusions in his 'Evolution' article.<sup>88</sup>

The symbolism graph, however, in which the Novogorodian and Finnic examples shared the greatest affinity, 'is more consistent with archaeological data which indicates that medieval Novgorod, where most ancient Baltic psalteries were discovered, had a substantial proportion of Finnic population.' The first graph remains consistent with the idea of Russian- and Finnic-speaking communities living together in Medieval Novgorod and maintaining their own separate craftsmanship traditions; on the other hand, 'some symbolic features spread as decorative designs without affecting structural aspects of local musical instrument making traditions.'<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 2489.

*Shortcomings of Phylogenetics*

While this expanded application of cladistics goes some way towards overcoming the shortcomings noted in Tëmkin's and Eldridge's earlier papers, it raises additional issues involved in using biological phylogenetics methods in studies of material cultural evolution. As acknowledged in the 2004 article, five fundamental differences lie between the processes of biological and cultural evolution (*Table 1.1*).

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Directionality	Biological evolution: adirectional Cultural evolution: goal-oriented, human agency, greater complexity
Reticulation	Horizontal information transfer across lineages
Culture	Relationships between cultural influence, exchange, convergence
Fidelity	Transmission of coded information through generations
Homology	Common origin, different functions

*Table 1.1: Biological vs. cultural evolution.*

For one, the 'lack of directionality in [biological evolution] precludes the notion of 'progressive' change, whereas a goal-oriented development [determined by cultural factors and needs] is certainly a rule in human society.'<sup>90</sup> That is, in cultural evolution the agency and agendas of human individuals and social groups play a determining role in the nature of changes to musical instruments, songs and musical style and technique.

Furthermore, he notes that this method of historical analysis of instrument morphology,

Does not need to state the mechanism governing morphological change, as the method's strength lies in its capacity for empirically delineating relationships between specimens based on shared, derived physical characteristics. Instead, historical explanations for how these common features came to be can be adduced separately and their feasibility measured against the evidence presented by the cladistic analysis.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Tëmkin, 'The Evolution', p. 227.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

However, while cultural elements can be subjected to cladistic analysis the number of factors that can be similarly adduced remains limited. Tëmkin and Eldredge's paper 'Phylogenetics and Material Cultural Evolution' addresses the limitations of this approach in detail and acknowledges the increased complexity of cultural systems over biological ones. A second, corollary difference between biological and cultural systems noted above is that the latter relies much more on 'horizontal' transfers of information and hybridization across cultural systems that may diverge sharply in language, social practices and worldviews.<sup>92</sup>

In biological systems genetic information is passed on in a vertical manner from one generation to the next, and remains fairly consistent; while the phenomenon known as *reticulation* does occur in diverse domains these domains are fairly limited in number. Reticulation refers to processes like horizontal gene transfer—sometimes even across non-related species or entire clades—hybridization, and genetic introgression that create network patterns in a cladogram rather than the expected straightforward bifurcating branches.

In cultural evolution, however, reticulation 'has been considered a major obstacle to the application of cladistics methods'. It can take several forms: an instrument design may become 'extinct' or obsolete, a process that in biology leads to species' extinction and complete disappearance. In human culture, however, that design may undergo a 'revival' and re-enter the cultural gene pool. Eldredge cites the example of the iconic Victorian-era 'shepherd's crook' bell design of the cornet that disappeared by the end of World War II but became prominent again in the 1980s as a

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 148. This leads the authors to call for 'the development of novel approaches to historical inference' (Tëmkin and Eldredge, 'Phylogenetics', p. 151) that I have attempted to address by juxtaposing phylogenetic theory and the rhizome theory described in Chap. 2.

result of simple nostalgia among cornet aficionados.<sup>93</sup> Lute design has seen many such extinctions and revivals especially within Early Music circles where once-obsolete instruments such as the *cittern* or *citole* and the Anglo-Saxon lyre have been given new life with small but thriving societies dedicated to making, playing, and composing new pieces for such instruments.

A third factor that affects cultural evolution is the directly proportional relationship between the intensity of cultural influence and exchange and the degree of convergence between the cultures in question. This is especially visible in musical style: Albanian music south of the Drin River displays a great affinity with the music of the bordering Greek province of Epirus, and the two regions have much in common in terms of history, social structures, and language.<sup>94</sup> North of the Drin, on the other hand, in the highlands of Albania and Kosovo, the local Geg dialect of Albanian possesses very few Greek loanwords; the non-urban instrumentarium contains a completely different set of instruments; social structures and institutions differ sharply, and the musical style is based on monophony and diatonic scales instead of polyphony and pentatonic scales.

These differences result from several factors: greater social and cultural contact among Geg communities with Slavic communities rather than Greek; the north's more mountainous and less accessible geography than the southern coastal plain, and—in many ways a direct consequence of the geography—a generally greater autonomy from foreign rulers than in the south. These and other factors have in many

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid. Cf. Emanuel Winternitz, 'The Survival of the Kithara and the Evolution of the English Cittern: a Study in Morphology', *Musical Instruments and Their Symbolism in Western Art* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 60-62.

<sup>94</sup> That is, Greek is widely spoken by Tosk and Lab Albanians in addition to their Albanian dialects.

ways pushed musical culture in the north to develop in ways that the linear bifurcating patterns of phylogenetic diagrams are hard-pressed to account for.



Pl. 1.15a : Chinese pipa, ‘crooked’ headstock.<sup>95</sup>



Pl. 1.15b: Himalayan dramnyan, ‘crooked’ headstock.<sup>96</sup>

A fourth complicating factor in material cultural evolution concerns the ‘fidelity of...[the] phylogenetic linkage of ancestors and descendants’ in biological organisms.<sup>97</sup> Among artifacts one element of a design may evolve quite independently from the artifact as a whole; a single feature like the ‘crooked’ headstock of the Chinese *pipa*, for example, may have been borrowed from or to a morphologically

<sup>95</sup> Image source:<<http://www.easonmusicschool.com/chinese-orchestra-instruments/chinese-plucked-string-instruments/pipa/>>; accessed on: 5 Dec. 2017. Maker and provenance not available.

<sup>96</sup> Image source:<[http://www.omnia.ie/index.php?navigation\\_function=3&europeana\\_query=Sgra-snyan](http://www.omnia.ie/index.php?navigation_function=3&europeana_query=Sgra-snyan)>; accessed on: 5 Dec. 2017. Maker and provenance not available.

<sup>97</sup> Tëmkin and Eldredge, ‘Phylogenetics’, p. 150.

dissimilar lute like many Himalayan lutes (*Pls. 1.15a-b*). On an instrument more directly related to the *pipa* such as the *ūd* or Japanese *biwa* (*Pls. 1.16a-b*), however, the headstock retains an older bent design. Such processes will, again, complicate the expected bifurcating pattern of a cladistic tree and require non-linear and cross-clade lines to account for their effect on the genealogy of the objects.



*Pl. 1.16a: Japanese biwa, bent-back headstock.*<sup>98</sup>



*Pl. 1.16b: ūd, bent-back headstock.*<sup>99</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Image source:<<https://www.rekihaku.ac.jp/english/exhibitions/project/old/050813/>>; accessed on: 6 Dec. 2017. Maker not available, Kishu-Tokugawa family, collected by Harutomi Tokugawa (1770-1852).

<sup>99</sup> Image source:<[https://www.oud.gr/turkish\\_oud\\_ud.html](https://www.oud.gr/turkish_oud_ud.html)>; accessed on: 6 Dec. 2017. Maker and provenance not available.

Fifth, the concept of *homology*, in which a feature of an organism may share a common evolutionary origin but differ in function, such as the wings of birds and the forearms of their *Theropoda* dinosaur ancestors, ‘lies at the heart of phylogenetic inference’.<sup>100</sup> Eldredge and Tëmkin stress that in material cultural evolution, on the other hand, the evolutionary impulse comes from man-made innovations that ‘consist of a set of alternative solutions to the same functional problem’. This often leads to alternative and competing designs independently invented and based on different sets of ‘underlying physical principles’. The authors cite the case of the Stölzel and Périnet cornet valves, invented within about 15 years apart from each other, each based on a different conception of how to design a piston valve for the brass instrument.

Though earlier and arguably “less advanced,” the Stölzel valve is not in any meaningful sense “plesiomorphic” to the supposedly more “apomorphic” Périnet valve. The simple reason for this is that the Périnet valve did not derive from the Stölzel valve but rather was an alternative design solution, within certain design constraints.<sup>101</sup>

And yet, the authors concede that *homology* does occur in cultural artifacts, though they emphasize its lesser importance. The art historian Emmanuel Winternitz’s<sup>102</sup> (1898-1983) interpretation of the Medieval *cittern* lute’s anomalous protruding ‘wings’ at the shoulders provides an organological example of cultural homologous descent: he argued these ‘wings’ represented an atrophied relic of the instrument’s supposed ancestry in the prestigious Greek *kithara* lyre.

There are, then, five main areas where phyloörganology faces problems in its theory:

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<sup>100</sup> Tëmkin and Eldredge, ‘Phylogenetics’, p. 150. *Homology* differs from *analogy* in that the latter signifies features that have the same function but not the same evolutionary origin, like the wings of birds, insects, and bats.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Winternitz, ‘Survival’, pp. 57-65.

1. The lack of directionality or teleology in biological systems, in which evolution consists largely of responses to environmental changes, *contra* the primary role of human agency and design in cultural systems, whose needs as expressed in their creative lives may often be invisible to outside observers.
2. The much greater role in cultural systems of reticulation, a process of horizontal information transfer that can result in hybrid forms or unexpected intrusions of genetic or cultural information in otherwise unrelated domains. Reticulation occurs much more rarely in biological systems.
3. Cultural evolution becomes more problematic when assessing the degree of influence, exchange, and confluence between two or more cultures;
4. The fidelity to the original form of a cultural object in the process of information (genetic) transfer presents further issues, as elements of instrument design may develop independently of one another with minimal effects on other parts of the design or system.
5. Finally, biological evolution often unfolds through homology, where a feature shared by two or more species evolves from a common feature but becomes different in function. Shared features of cultural artifacts, on the other hand, as products of human agency and design, may originate and develop quite independently of each other in very different directions.

### Conclusions

In this Thesis I have used the basic principle of phenetic classifications, careful definition of an instrument's morphology, as a basis for classifying long necked lutes on a phylogenetic scheme. This facilitates studying these long necked lutes (LNL) as cultural and imaginal as well as material objects.

I have adapted, with some qualifications, Linnaean taxonomical categories to arrive at definitions for the subjects of this study: the *tambura*, *šargija* and *karadyzen* genera of the *tanbūr* family of LNLs. The *tanbūr* family is primarily defined by its members' long narrow necks of more than half the length from nut to tailpin; their generally incurved shoulders, and their two to three courses of strings.

The *tambura* genus is further characterized by having two double courses and an ovoid or teardrop-shaped soundboard. The *šargija* genus features two outer double courses and a single middle course tuned in a reentrant tuning and a conical resonator with a dorsal ridge instead of a bowled design.

*Karadyzen* species are recognized by their conical resonators and dorsal ridges and two single courses, although individual *karadyzen* may have up to four strings in a variety of arrangements. This genus includes the Albanian *çifteli*, the primary focus of this Thesis.

In making neck length a classification limit I found several ambiguities in Sachs's definition of neck. In order to clarify what is meant by an instrument's neck I decided to partly conflate fingerboard and neck and measure 'neck' from the nut to the last fret on the fingerboard and/or the incurve of the shoulders.

By this definition, two significant morphological facts emerged that played definitive roles in shaping a lute's *Klangideal*. This term, adopted by Picken in his *FMIT*, draws on emic instrument classification concepts in which minutae of an instrument's tone, playing techniques and ornamentation styles define that instrument's social and cultural, its imaginal, meanings.

The first morphological factor is that neck length is in inverse proportion to the width of the soundboard so that the longer the neck the narrower the soundboard. This can be observed even in lute iconography and has enabled me to identify lines of

genealogical descent of proto-*tanbūr*-s from the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium on, discussed in detail in Chap. 4.

The second morphological factor is that the neck length also, as a general rule, directly relates to the number of a lute's courses. The earliest lute form (see Chap. 3) was the LNL with two courses, indicating that the *tanbūr* family most likely descends from the oldest type of lute.

The use of phylogenetic methods and theory to illuminate the development of musical instruments allows the researcher to graphically chart morphological relationships between specimens. The method falters when mapping instruments' symbolic, cultural aspects. The goal-oriented processes of cultural change; the effects of reticulation; the extent of cultural influence, exchange and con-/divergence; fidelity to original form *contra* independent developments, and homology all problematize the use of phylogenetics as an organological tool.

I thus felt a need for an additional theoretical lens to complement the vertical genealogical approach. This complement would need to represent the horizontal effects of reticulation, the movements of cultural intangibles that endow the lute with its imaginal characteristics. I found this in the philosophical theory of the rhizome that represents a poetic mode of knowledge.

## **Chapter 2: Lute Organology and Rhizome Theory**

### *Introduction*

In this chapter I contend with the lute's origins through a critique of the phylogenetic approach. As an extension of this critique I introduce the second and third elements of my theoretical vantage point, rhizome theory and the iconographic method.

In examining the long necked lute (LNL) as an imaginal and cultural object the matter of the lute's genesis, the process by which it came into being, is of fundamental importance for understanding its developmental arc. The first part of this chapter analyzes the musical bow hypothesis, the conventional genesis theory based on an evolutionary phylogenetic model. A key problem with this theory is that it focuses exclusively on the lute's morphological aspects, treating the instrument as a purely material artifact. This approach ignores the influence of the mytho-cosmological complexes that instruments exist within and that have influenced the development of the lute's physical and musical style.

The second part of this chapter describes the theory of the *rhizome* as a model for understanding the relationship between those mytho-cosmological complexes and the lute as an artifact. I also bring rhizome theory to bear on the theory of cultural diffusion as it relates to the lute's transmission across cultures and eras. I also discuss how rhizome theory has been used in ethnomusicology, as a basis for charting my own application of it.

Finally, I explain the art historical method developed by Erwin Panofsky that I use extensively throughout this Thesis, along with an example of its application to questionable theories of the lute's early history.

*The Musical Bow Hypothesis*

*'A once established opinion, however delusive, can hold its own from age to age, for belief can propagate itself without reference to its reasonable origin, as plants are propagated from slips without fresh raising from the seed.'*<sup>1</sup>

The most prevalent and commonly accepted theory is that the earliest lutes evolved from the musical bow. The musical bow is not a single type of chordophone but a family whose basic form is a bowed string holder with one or occasionally two or more strings stretched tautly between the holder's two ends. Some species utilize a resonator, typically a gourd, that may be detachable or affixed in place to the string holder at various points; some species have more than one such resonator. Others use the player's mouth as a resonating chamber in the manner of a jaw harp and are referred to as mouth bows. Musical bows may be bowed, plucked, or struck with a stick. The bow player may stop the string with their finger or an item like a stone, bisect it with a loop of string or wire, or leave it unaltered.

In short, musical bows display as much variation between species as lute species do, and as I discuss below this variety is but one of the complications of the musical bow hypothesis and the evidence cited to support it. The theory reveals little of what cultural factors and needs led to the lute's creation. Neither can it enable an understanding of the mytho-cosmological complex that the lute has been embedded within since its earliest recorded appearances. This complex and the social and cultural milieux informed by it have, in my view, played significant, perhaps even definitive roles in shaping key aspects of lute morphology. Furthermore, as the lute's morphology has changed and new lute families and genera bifurcated from the

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<sup>1</sup> Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom* v. 1 (London: John Murray, 1920), p. 136.

genealogical tree, aspects of the original complex have split off and developed separate yet clearly related identities.

If the musical bow hypothesis is accepted I argue that it obfuscates rather than illuminates the lute's early evolution, its pre-history. On the other hand, if one starts from the proposition that the lute enters the historical record fully formed, rooted in a pre-historic tradition of its own, distinct from other chordophones, then the lute's participation in its mytho-cosmological complex can be understood as an organic part of its development. This Thesis rests therefore on the following three propositions:

1. That the earliest lutes were already an integral part of, or at least contained the germ of this complex in their physical form and social life.
2. That the LNLs of the *tanbūr* family have preserved the complex in its most integral form.
3. That these LNLs therefore preserved key aspects of the earliest lute's morphology as well.

Though Curt Sachs is perhaps the most well known and widely referenced proponent of the musical bow hypothesis the basic idea was current even before the British archaeologist Henry Balfour's (1863-1939) 1899 monograph on *The Natural History of the Musical Bow*, in which he starts by saying that,

In emphasizing the important position occupied by the archer's bow as the prototype of a large series of stringed instruments of music, I in no way profess to advance a new theory. The bow has long been very generally accepted by students of the subject of the evolution of musical instruments, as the parent form whence sprang a long line of descendants, which, under favourable circumstances, have developed into some of the most elaborate and highly specialized of modern instruments. Some

writers even go so far as to refer *all* string instruments to this origin...<sup>2</sup>

Sachs outlines his theory in his *History of Musical Instruments*,<sup>3</sup> stating, ‘since there is no doubt that the [Sumerian] arched harp [c. 3000 BCE] had come from the musical bow, the *vertical arched harp*, which in shape and playing position most nearly resembles the musical bow, must necessarily be the earliest.’ He then describes the Mesopotamian lute’s basic form and then states, ‘the Greeks called a similar lute *pandura* [sic], and this word was almost surely derived from Sumerian *pan-tur*, “bow-small,” thus indicating an origin in the musical bow which can be shown to be very probable.’ The bow in Sachs’ account served as progenitor to at least two major chordophone kingdoms.

The English musicologist and organologist Francis Galpin (1858-1945) had put forth a similar theory based on the same philological argument.<sup>4</sup> His version of the musical bow hypothesis is self-contradictory in some respects, however. He writes,

The idea of a stringed instrument with a small sound-box and a long neck, on which the strings could be “stopped” by the fingers, must have arisen from the...primitive sound-producer known as the musical bow...here we can trace the long staff of the bow, the gourd-resonator attached to it and the use of fingers on the string...<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Henry Balfour, *The Natural History of the Musical Bow: A Chapter in the Developmental History of Stringed Instruments of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Sachs, *History*, pp. 80, 82-83.

<sup>4</sup> Francis W. Galpin, *The Music of the Sumerians and Their Immediate Successors the Babylonians & Assyrians, described and illustrated from original sources* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970 [reprint of 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937]), pp. 34-35.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34. Galpin refers mostly to the Indian *pināka* that is plucked with the bare fingers (cf. Balfour, *Natural History*, pp. 55-56). Most musical bows are not plucked but struck with a stick.

Galpin also (p. 28) thinks that the north Indian *vīṇā* or *bīn*, a fretted plucked zither with two gourd resonators first shown in iconography around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE, represents ‘the first steps in the development and history of this simple lute form’ from the musical bow. The Egyptian arched harp, *ban* or *ben*<sup>5</sup> (*bnt*),<sup>5</sup> a favored chordophone from the Old Kingdom on, seems to have lent its name to the Indian *bīn/vīṇā* as well as its later forms in Cambodian *kin* and ‘Siamese’ *p’in* and the north Indian musical bow *pināka*.

In a later note, however, Galpin discusses the African arched harp and the idea of its derivation from the African musical bow, played almost entirely in sub-equatorial Africa.<sup>6</sup> The musical bow, however, is not found anywhere in North Africa and the African ‘bow-shaped harp’ exists ‘only in a well-defined but narrow tract of country from east to west.’ Galpin then concludes that, ‘owing to its peculiar exclusiveness and manifest superiority over the primitive bow, we do not consider that it is indebted for its existence in Africa to the common instrument of the south.’

In other words, Galpin thinks, on the basis of the alleged Sumerian term *pan-tur*, that the Mesopotamian lute descended from a greatly altered version of the musical bow. The African bow harp, however, did not derive from the southern African musical bow yet the Egyptian and Mesopotamian arched harps did, *contra* the lack of evidence that the musical bow existed north of the Sahara.

More recently, the musical bow hypothesis has been taken up and expanded by Richard Dumbrill, co-founder of the International Council of Near-Eastern Musicology (ICONEA).<sup>7</sup> Dumbrill claims that,

lutes stem from two prehistoric and contemporaneous sources. Firstly from the *hypothetical* bistructural archaic monochord bow-harp [i.e. resonator is detachable from the string carrier] and secondly from the monostructural arched harp [i.e. resonator and string carrier are one piece]. The transition from harp to lute would have been inconspicuous. There is in fact very little difference between the two instruments [*emphasis added*].

His theory follows the same lines as Sachs and Galpin, that the arched harp and lute evolved from the musical bow, but adds that the lute predated the lyre which, in his estimation, was a second generation development from the arched harp. His assertion

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 82. See also Otis T. Mason, ‘Geographical Distribution of the Musical Bow’, *American Anthropologist* 10/11 (1897), pp. 377-380. Galpin, however, does not consider a possibility of influence from musical bows in India (Galpin, *Music of the Sumerians*, pp. 82-83); the implicit assumption seems to be that musical bows are endemic to Africa alone.

<sup>7</sup> Richard J. Dumbrill, *The Archaeomusicology of the Ancient Near East* (Victoria/Cheshire: Trafford Publishing, 2005), pp. 180, 231-233, 310, n. 1, pp. 308-309.

that there is ‘very little difference’ between the arched harp and the lute is, in my estimation, unsupportable, as the two chordophones are in fact based on utterly dissimilar principles as I discuss below.

Summarizing these versions of the musical bow hypothesis, its main components are:

1. The musical bow’s morphology gave rise to the vertical arched harp, the angular harp, in some versions the lyre, and then the lute.
2. The lute’s morphology represents an outgrowth of that of the musical bow, with the bow’s string carrier being straightened out to a proper neck on which the string could be pressed down and stopped to create specific pitches. The gourd resonator became the lute’s body and a second string was added.
3. This presumed ancestry is shown in a Sumerian term *pan-tur*, ‘bow-small’, that became the Greek *pandoura* which may have come through a Caucasus or Anatolian language that additionally gave the Georgian *pantur/fandyr*.

None of the variations of this theory specify what type of musical bow served as the lute’s presumed ancestor, and in their discussions only Sachs even notes the differences among bow species, i.e. struck or mouth bows.<sup>8</sup> Instead Sachs, Galpin, Dumbrill et. al. consider only the musical bow’s general morphology, and only implicitly the performance technique. In my analysis below it is the struck musical bow with a detachable or fixed resonator that I chose as the one under consideration for a hypothetical lute ancestor for the following reasons:

1. Bowing as a method of sound production on chordophones did not apparently exist before the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE, at the earliest,<sup>9</sup> so musical bows played with a

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<sup>8</sup> Sachs, *History*, p. 56-57.

<sup>9</sup> Werner Bachmann, *The Origins of Bowing* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 24-37. The earliest accounts of bowing as a performance technique date from the early 10<sup>th</sup> century CE

bow most likely constitute a late development as well. As with lutes and zithers, plucked or struck musical bows probably were adapted and modified to facilitate bowing,<sup>10</sup> so any hypothetical musical bows in ancient Mesopotamia would have been plucked or struck. In addition, if some type of bowing did exist that long ago it would create another issue in the musical bow/lute hypothesis: if the ancient lute, harp or lyre, which were all clearly plucked, evolved from a bowed musical bow, why would musicians drop such a fundamental aspect of performance technique in the transformation process?

2. While one could argue that the use of the player's mouth cavity as a resonator for mouth bows foreshadowed the use of an artificial resonator, the fact remains that in mouth bows, as with jaw harps, the musician produces different tones by changing the shape of their mouth cavity.<sup>11</sup> In lutes, harps, etc., the musician effects this by stopping a string or plucking other strings, a fundamentally different concept from the mouth bow. Any evolution from musical bow to lute, then, would require several additional steps to go from a mouth bow to a chordophone with an artificial resonator, along with a fundamental shift in the means of tone production.
3. Sachs, at any rate, and Dumbrill as well both state that it is the resonator and pole-like string handle of the musical bow that makes it a candidate for proto-lute. As bowed bows have already been ruled out as a candidate, I have concluded that the struck musical bow is what these theorists had in mind, and it forms the most logical possibility regardless.

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but these accounts describe an already fairly widespread practice, suggesting a prehistory in at least the later 9<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 47-57.

<sup>11</sup> Some mouth bows do possess an artificial resonator like a gourd as well, but the mouth cavity still acts as the primary locus of tone or pitch production.

Challenging Evolutionary Models

The first difficulty with this theory is that its proponents cast this evolutionary process in terms of biological evolution, as if the entire domain of chordophones grew from a primeval one-celled (or in this case one-stringed) ancestor through genetic mutations or adaptation. Human agency and cultural agendas seem entirely absent from the equation. The musical bow hypothesis therefore fails to even acknowledge the question of what *cultural needs* motivated musicians to effect this transformation. It furthermore does not account for the actual nature of the process of invention as enacted by human creators. As Balfour noted,

In studying the development of human arts, it must not be supposed that progress was effected by a simple process of what is known as 'end-on' evolution, the successive morphological changes following one another in simple unilinear series.<sup>12</sup>

The second, more critical problem lies in the vast difference in the concepts and methods of sound production and hence in musical style and technique between the bow and the lute. The struck bow's basic form<sup>13</sup> consists of an arched stick with a string stretched between the notched ends of the stick. The Zambian *kulumbu*<sup>14</sup> (*Pl. 2.1*) serves as a typical example: it averages around 1.5 meters tall with a metal string and a calabash, open at the bottom, affixed to the lower third of the stick. The player holds the bow with their left hand just above the calabash and strikes the string with a thin wooden stick or cane, allowing it to bounce lightly. This technique permits the entire string to vibrate unimpeded so that the full range of overtones rings out. By

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<sup>12</sup> Henry Balfour, 'Presidential Address', *Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society* 65 (1919), p. xxx.

<sup>13</sup> There are a number of musical bows for which the player uses their own mouth cavity as a resonator, akin to a jaw harp; these, however, fall even further from lute morphology than the struck bows being considered here. See Balfour, *Natural History*, pp. 5-18.

<sup>14</sup> Perceval R. Kirby, *The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwaterstrand University Press, 1968/1934), pp. 230, 241-243.

striking the string at different points, the player accentuates different partials from the harmonic series over the fundamental pitch of the open string.



*Pl. 2.1: Kulumbu (kalumbu) musical bow.*

The player further modifies this basic sound wave in several ways: he will use his left index finger to draw the string towards him, bisecting it and momentarily creating a second fundamental pitch, typically a whole or semitone above that of the open string. On some bows a strip of cloth or wire loops around the string roughly parallel to the left hand so that the player has two fundamentals to work with, each with their own set of partials. The player's selective use of those overtones often gives

a ‘polyphonic’ texture to the bow’s voice that the musician may further embellish with their own vocal line.

In his 1934 study of the instruments of southern Africa, Perceval R. Kirby (1887-1970) discussed this phenomenon in terms of the musician having two ‘scales’ that created alternating harmonic planes. The musician, however, followed discernible ‘rules’ or organizational patterns in how he structured the relationship between these harmonic fields and their voice. Kirby notes, ‘but whichever scale was employed, the relation of the harmonics to the fundamentals was the [same]’ and what is much more important *the “progression” of the two parts was controlled in both cases by the same principles, [emphasis his]*<sup>15</sup> which he goes on to list. He concludes that ‘this analysis would appear to indicate the existence of a definite polyphonic scheme controlled by physical laws,’ that is, those culturally unconditioned, universal laws of acoustical physics.

The calabash resonator provides the player with a further means to shape the contours and colors of the string’s sound wave. The calabash amplifies the sound and collects it as it emanates continuously from the vibrating string. The player holds the calabash against their belly, partly to balance the *kalumbu*, but more importantly to modify the harmonics flowing through the reservoir: by holding the resonator’s opening against his belly he mutes or muffles the higher partials and accents the fundamental, and when he pulls it away from his belly he releases the full harmonic spectrum. This timbral ‘counterpoint’ creates a ‘wah-wah’ effect and forms a key element of the music’s rhythmic structure. The rhythm is thus defined by the interlocking of three elements: a) whether the calabash is away from or against the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 241-242. He also notes the similarities to rules of part progression in 12<sup>th</sup> century European *organum*.

player's belly; b) which node of the string the player strikes; and c) the exact timing of the stick strikes.

In this manner melody and rhythm fuse so that '[the] melodic line is not just a set of pitch-sequences...but more often...a delicate web of *timbre-melodic* and melodic-rhythmic patterns [emphasis added]' that indicates 'an acute awareness of *timbre modification* and *timbre* sequences, as a further dimension of musical structuring.'<sup>16</sup> To alter any of these three elements alters the entire rhythmic structure.

The concept of the lute, on the other hand, proceeds along an entirely different route. Its single most defining physical feature is the neck and fingerboard structure directly attached to the resonating body instead of the latter being detachable as in the bow. The two string lute constitutes the most basic and apparently original form; Picken stated that on the long necked, two string design of ancient Mesopotamia and Anatolia 'there would seem to be no other possible use for [two strings]' other than a drone or two voiced polyphony in fourths and fifths.'<sup>17</sup> He then suggested that the Hittite lutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE seem designed to perform a drone below the melody, although one has of course no way of knowing for sure.<sup>18</sup> The upper string in most cases provides a drone and so fulfills the purpose of the bow's one string: it sounds the fundamental tone. Rather than the musician then modifying the full sound field of the fundamental and the natural overtones emitted by its vibration, on a lute the overtone series is used to tune the intervals played on the frets of the second,

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<sup>16</sup> Gerhard Kubik, *Africa and the Blues* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> Picken, 'Instrumental Polyphony', p. 83.

<sup>18</sup> He only mentions Hittite lutes here, as his article discusses polyphonic instrumental music in Anatolia, but this would hold just as true for the earlier Mesopotamian two string lute. A few one string lutes do exist, mostly as bowed instruments like the Balkan *gusle/lahutë*, but are uncommon. Iconographic evidence from Mesopotamia clearly evinces two strings as the original form, strongly suggesting that the lute concept originated with at least two strings as an integral part of the design.

melody string.<sup>19</sup> In performance the drone string orients the melody's intervals and 'acts as the indispensable regulator which maintains the identity of a specific melodic character, or mode, as opposed to the splitting forces of progressive ornamentation' that are really the *sine qua non* of lute music.

These stopped pitches are then foregrounded and the harmonics fall into the background of the sound field. The drone on the fundamental provides an orientation point, a constant auditory context for the stopped notes that make up the melody. These intervals may even contain microtones only present in the overtone series as inharmonics;

On any given string, a true harmonic series could only occur if the string were perfectly flexible. Since all strings exhibit varying degrees of *stiffness* [emphasis author's], the flexible string model no longer applies. Stiffness causes the modes to vibrate at frequencies considerably higher than suggested by [the formula] {fundamental frequency • sequence of integers}. For this reason, we call the sharp mode frequencies of stiff strings *inharmonic mode frequencies*...<sup>20</sup>

These inharmonic microtones can also be derived from Pythagorean *comma*-s, or arrived at theoretically and mathematically, as the Greeks did with their *enharmonic* genus of tetrachords.<sup>21</sup> Essentially the number of notes one can draw from a stopped lute string is theoretically infinite.<sup>22</sup>

In a sense the lute's concept reverses that of the musical bow, and reifies what on the bow is relatively latent. The lute requires division to achieve what on the bow is

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<sup>19</sup> Gerson-Kiwi, 'Drone', p. 10

<sup>20</sup> Cris Forster, *Musical Mathematics: On the Art and Science of Acoustic Instruments* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2010), p. 98.

<sup>21</sup> Curt Sachs, *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World* (Mineola: Dover Books, 2008 [reprint of New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1943]), pp. 206-207.

<sup>22</sup> As the Greek music theorist Aristoxenus (fl. 335 BCE) observed in his *Elements of Harmony* (Gk. Ἀρμονικὰ στοιχεῖα); *The Harmonics of Aristoxenus, Edited with Translation Notes, Introduction and Index of Words*, translated and edited by George Henry Macran, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), pp. 183-184: 'For we must regard the Lichanai as infinite in number...in the locus of the Lichanus there is no empty space—no space incapable of admitting a Lichanus.'

whole and self-contained. A bow-player can attain two fundamentals on a single string through the looped chord, and regulate what partials they want to emphasize by changing the beater's contact point on the string, thus effecting a kind of modulation or Kirby's 'alternating harmonic planes'. On the two string lute a change of fundamental tone would demand that the player switch from one string to another so that the melody string becomes the drone and the drone string stopped to give the melody.<sup>23</sup>

The lute also necessitates a different ergonomic relationship between the instrument and the musician's body than the musical bow. On a struck bow the strong hand will beat the string with the stick but the weak hand must hold the calabash against the player's torso to keep the instrument and body balanced, while still being able to draw the resonator away from and back against the torso. Neither of the player's hands moves far from the calabash, and the human body is an integral part of how the player structures the instrument's sound.

With lutes the strong hand still activates the strings but the strong forearm maintains relatively close contact with the resonator to keep the lute balanced against the player's body. The weak hand requires free play to move up and down the strings to execute melodic passages and ornaments as it stops the strings. Even on vertically held lutes like the Chinese *pipa* the weak hand constantly moves up, down, and across the strings and the only contact with the neck other than the fingertips on the strings is with the pad of the thumb to keep the neck from falling. This, however, takes a light touch and cannot impede the free movement of the hand as it works the strings.

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<sup>23</sup> This, however, is more easily and commonly done on lutes with three or more strings as there will still be a third string, typically the middle one, sounding a consistent drone that orients this kind of modulation. The four-coursed Medieval *cittern* lute and three-coursed Medieval Welsh *crwth*, a bowed lyre, with the two middle or two outer courses, respectively, tuned a major second apart, are based on this concept. In my personal experience I have very rarely seen this done on two strings.

Though the lute's resonator rests against the player's torso the body does not play any significant role in producing or modifying the sound, and it is rare that the player changes the lute/body relationship to effect changes in timbre.<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, this manner of sound production permits, even encourages, a wider range of melodic and rhythmic effects than is possible on the musical bow. That sophisticated and 'delicate web of *timbre-melodic* and melodic-rhythmic patterns' that is the bow's *forte* is eschewed on the lute in favor of melodic sequences and patterning. The kind of non-rhythmic improvisation or *taksim* (Tur < Ara *taqsīm*) that showcase a lutenist's skill in Arab, Turkish or Persian music would be impossible on most kinds of struck musical bows or mouth bows, whose own timbre-melodic idioms are likewise virtually unattainable on most lutes. The types of modal modulations that involve changing scales or briefly incorporating passing tones from outside the scale are likewise impossible on a bow.

There is another problem with the morphological evolution argument—and more generally with the supposition that the early lute was necessarily a 'primitive' instrument. Most struck musical bows uniformly use a calabash, open at one end, as a resonator, and this is often taken as evidence of their presumed primitiveness or simplicity.<sup>25</sup> The musical bow hypothesis would thus necessitate that the first and

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<sup>24</sup> There are a few lutes played horizontally on the player's lap like the Hawai'ian steel guitar, a stand or on a flat surface such as a table, but all of these represent modified techniques for lutes like the guitar, not distinct lute species of their own per se. Any further developments of such instruments such as the pedal steel guitar popular in American Country & Western music must be, by organological standards, regarded as zithers, not as lutes—the pedal steel guitar no longer even has a neck or a true resonator, but is a wide horizontal fingerboard whose 'body' consists of housing for electric pickups and wiring, mounted on a stand and played horizontally.

<sup>25</sup> Balfour (*Natural History*, pp. 53-59) describes some musical bows of very low musical capabilities, but he generally acknowledges that such specimens are either for primarily ceremonial, not musical functions or that they are regressions from more sophisticated types, not survivals of primitive ancestors of the latter.

therefore the most ‘primitive’ lutes retained the gourd resonator until evolutionary forces led to wooden bodies.<sup>26</sup>

In Babylonian and Assyrian lexical lists the cuneiform logograms<sup>27</sup> for lute names contradict the thesis that the earliest Mesopotamian and Egyptian lutes used gourd resonators. In these lexical lists the scribes grouped object-names, including musical instruments, mostly according to their primary construction material. The logogram for *kuš*  skin or hide, appears before names of drum-types; that for reed or cane, *gi*,  before woodwinds; and for several instruments of debatable nature, the sign *urrudu* or *zabar*  for copper or metal, and bronze, respectively. The names of chordophones, harps, lyres and lutes alike incorporate the unvocalized prefix <sup>ḡiš-</sup> or

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Sachs, *History*, pp. 62-63, 82-83; Galpin, *Sumerians*, p. 34; Dumbrill, *Archaeomusicology*, pp. 308-309; Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 203-205.

<sup>27</sup> Cuneiform, ‘wedge-shaped’, writing developed from earlier pictographic writing in Mesopotamia during the early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE. Each cuneiform sign consisted of triangular ‘wedge’ shapes and straight lines connecting them imprinted by a reed stylus on wet clay. Each resulting ‘logogram’ or word-sign signified a whole word of usually one syllable. Rather, a logogram could stand for a number of words, not necessarily related to each other in any way. It was thus a highly polyvalent writing system, and adaptable to other languages as well.

In the Sumerian language, which is agglomerative, additional wedge forms were added to the principal signs in a passage to signify syntactical or semantic modifications to the principal. Cuneiform was later adapted for Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian, all Semitic languages, and other language isolates and non-Semitic languages such as Hurrian and Hittite as well. Its use continued, in scientific contexts, until the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, though for most uses it had been gradually superseded by alphabetic writing systems, especially Phoenician, throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE. The Iranian Achaemenid dynasty of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE created an alphabetic version of cuneiform as well.

Lexical lists were clay tablets inscribed with Sumerian signs and their Akkadian or, later, Assyrian, Hittite, and/or Hurrian equivalents. The earliest such texts, from the Sumerian Early Dynastic (ED) period (c. 2900-2350 BCE), ‘were created in order to standardize and transmit the inventory of symbols that were necessary—or might ever be necessary—for recording administrative transactions’ (Niek Veldhuis, ‘Guardians of Tradition: Early Dynastic Lexical Texts in Old Babylonian Copies’, in *Your Praise is Sweet: A Memorial Volume for Jeremy Black, from Students, Colleagues and Friends*, Edited by Heather D. Baker, Eleanor Robson, and Gábor Zólyomi (London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq, 2010), p. 386).

The Old Babylonian (OB, c. 1900-1600 BCE) lexical texts represented a more flexible tradition as their purpose became more and more to be ‘school texts designed to teach the Sumerian language and writing system...as completely as possible’ in the scribal schools (Ibid., p. 385).

ġeš- 𒄠 ‘wood’ or ‘tree’, denoting that wood formed the instrument’s primary material.<sup>28</sup>

One could argue that perhaps the Sumerians and Babylonians understood the hard shells of gourds as a kind of ‘wood’. Unfortunately, the extensive archaeological record for the Near East and Mesopotamia<sup>29</sup> provides no evidence that the bottle gourd *Lagenaria siceraria*, the kind most commonly for instruments,<sup>30</sup> were used or cultivated there in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> millennia BCE. Although wild strains of *L. siceraria* are believed to be endemic to Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>31</sup> the earliest known occurrence of the plant north of the Sahara is a single 1881 find of a bottle gourd used as a container in an Egyptian tomb dated to the 21<sup>st</sup> Dynasty (c. 1069-945 BCE).<sup>32</sup> The lute did not appear in Egyptian iconography until the New Kingdom c. 1500 BCE and the few extant lute specimens have tortoise shell or, like the ‘lute of Har-Mosë’, c. 1490 BCE,<sup>33</sup> carved wooden bodies. *L. siceraria* cultivation in Anatolia cannot be traced

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<sup>28</sup> See Theo Krispijn, ‘Musical Ensembles in Ancient Mesopotamia’, *Proceedings of the International Conference of Near Eastern Archaeomusicology ICONEA 2008, Held at the British Museum Dec. 4, 5 and 6, 2008*, edited by Richard Dumbrill and Irving Finkel (London: ICONEA Publications, 2010), pp. 125-126.

<sup>29</sup> Charles B. Heiser, *The Gourd Book* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993 ), pp. 83-86.

<sup>30</sup> As examples, the *kora* harp and many lutes of West Africa, the Indian *sitar*, Turkish bowed *kabak kemani* all utilize bottle gourds for their resonators. Use of these fruits is common among folk instrument traditions; see Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 186-205.

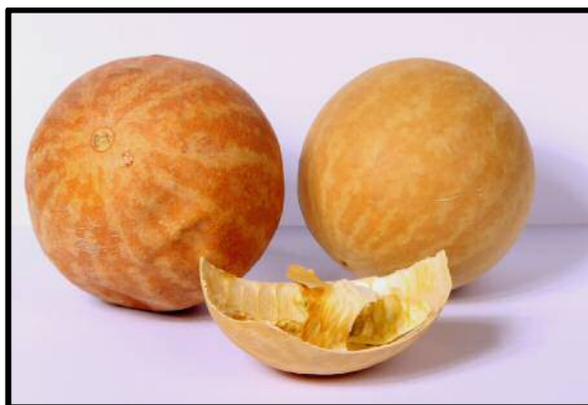
<sup>31</sup> The only known specimen of wild *L. siceraria* was found in Zimbabwe in 2004 (Deena S. Decker-Walters, Wilkins-Ellert, M., Chung, S.-M. & Staub, J.E., ‘Discovery and genetic assessment of wild bottle gourd [ *Lagenaria siceraria* (Mol.) Standley, Cucurbitaceae] from Zimbabwe’, *Economic Botany* 58, pp. 501-508).

<sup>32</sup> Georg Schweinfurth, ‘Further Discoveries in the Flora of Ancient Egypt’, *Nature* 29 (1884), pp. 312-315; the dynasty is erroneously given as the 12<sup>th</sup> in David L. Erickson, Bruce D. Smith, Andrew C. Clarke, Daniel H. Sandweiss, and Noreen Tuross, ‘An Asian origin for a 10,000-year-old domesticated plant in the Americas’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (PNAS)* (2005), 102/51, pp. 18319-18320.

<sup>33</sup> Nora E. Scott, ‘The Lute of the Singer Har-Mosë’, *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin new ser.* 2/5 (1944), pp. 162-163.

beyond the early ancient Near Eastern Iron Age, c. 1200 BCE but may have been as late as around 1000 CE.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, none of the known Sumero-Akkadian lexical lists contain terms in these languages for gourd or calabash. The Hebrew word *qiqayan/kikayon* קִיקַיֹן, found only in Jonah 4: 6-10,<sup>35</sup> relates to the Assyrian *Kukkânîtum*, and thus places it in the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE; this is sometimes translated as ‘gourd’ but is more commonly believed to be the castor-oil plant or possibly the curcubita (*Ara al-qer’īa*), or ‘bitter apple’, whose fruit is not suited for instruments. Alternately it could signify the colocynth (*Pl. 2.2*), another gourd-like plant, but whose fruits are, again, too small and fragile for instruments.



*Pl. 2.2: Dried fruits of the colocynth.*

Therefore, the idea that the earliest lutes used gourd resonators due to their assumed ‘primitive’ quality or an evolutionary descent from a musical bow is unsupported. I have to date found no documented instances of an entire species of musical bows using shaped wooden resonators as a standard feature, nor do the

<sup>34</sup> Kahraman Gürcan, Halit Yetisir, Ahmet Say, Nihal Denli, ‘A study of genetic diversity in bottle gourd [*Lagenaria siceraria* (Molina) Standl.] population, and implication for the historical origins on bottle gourds in Turkey’, *Genetic Resources and Crop Evolution* 62/3 (2015), pp. 322, 330-331. The Iron Age date is hypothetical and rests mostly the presence of *L. siceraria* cultivation known to exist in northern Italy at that time; thus its Anatolian domestication is inferred due to geographical and cultural exchange between the two regions, and from analysis of modern Turkish bottle gourd germplasms and morphology.’

<sup>35</sup> Found at: <<http://biblehub.com/hebrew/7021.htm>>; cf. Strong’s Concordance. See also: <<http://classic.net.bible.org/dictionary.php?word=Gourd>>; both sites accessed 6 Feb. 2016.

calabashes ever have a soundboard covering their open end as this would prevent the player from modifying the bow's sound with their abdomen.

Given the divergent concept and morphology between bow and lute, the role of human agency and directionality in cultural systems must be considered. What changing needs had to arise in Mesopotamian culture for them to actively modify an assumed musical bow to something as radically different as a lute? There is no evidence to suggest that the Sumerians or their successors ever used the bow for musical purposes, nor that it constituted the primal chordophone. Sach's term *pan-tur*, 'small bow', has no attestations in the entire known corpus of Sumero-Akkadian cuneiform texts. The term <sup>ĝeš</sup>*pana* or *ba-na* appears in at least 63 instances<sup>36</sup> but only as a term for a geometrical figure or the archery bow, with no discernible musical connotations.

Furthermore, although in the modern era musical bows exist throughout the Americas and some parts of Europe, their pre-modern range had been primarily in western and southern Africa, certain parts of India and Southeast Asia, in Papua-New Guinea, among the Maori in New Zealand, and in Oceania as far west as Guam.<sup>37</sup> I have not located any notices of musical bows in the instrumentariums of the eastern Mediterranean or Near East. It must also be taken into account that, although some

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<sup>36</sup> See under English term 'bow', <<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu>>; accessed on 17 Jan. 2017. The term *tir* occurs once in conjunction with *pana/ba-na* but in the sense of 'a type of wood' or plant. *Tir* occurs in several hundred instances as a synonym for Akkadian *qaštu*, another word for bow in the above meanings. *Qaštu* in turn is also synonymous with *pana/ba-na*.

<sup>37</sup> Balfour, *Natural History*, pp. 83-87; Otis T. Mason, 'Geographical', pp. 377-380. There is some evidence to suggest the use of musical bows in Pre-Columbian Central America but it remains contested: cf. Balfour, *Natural History*, pp. 39-52; M. H. Saville, 'The Musical Bow in Ancient Mexico', *American Anthropologist* 11/9 (1898), pp. 280-284. The presence of musical bows in North and South America, such as the Brazilian *berimbau* or the *mouth bow* and *diddley bow* of the US Appalachian Mountain region, has resulted largely from the trans-Atlantic slave trade and such instruments are examples of 'extensions' from African types (see Gerhard Kubik, *Angolan Traits in Black Music, Games and Dances of Brazil: A Study of African Cultural Extensions Overseas* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigações Científicas do Ultramar, Centro de Estudos de Antropologia Cultural, 1979), pp. 30-37; Richard Graham, 'Technology and Culture Change: The Development of the "Berimbau" in Colonial Brazil', *Latin American Music Review/Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 12/1 (1991), pp. 1-13).

ancient rock art images seem to depict figures with musical bows, these occur exclusively in the interior of southern Africa, where Mesopotamia had no known contacts.<sup>38</sup>

One could argue that such an evolution occurred through reticulation, although that would require the musical bow to have already existed as a part of some Mesopotamian culture's instrumentarium, which is unsupported. Also, the lute would have had to already exist, and it is hard to see what a primeval lute could have gained from such a horizontal gene transfer to bring it to its first known form.

The question of fidelity to the original form through information ('genetic') transfer fails here as well, for a bow-lute evolution represents not simply a change in some discrete elements of morphology but in fundamental concept. The only thread that connects the two instrument types is the principle of a vibrating string and a resonant body; if this is accepted as enough for an evolution, on what basis does one claim that the musical bow, and not any other chordophone, was the common ancestor?

Only the process of homology can adequately support a causal or evolutionary connection between bow and lute. Even this, however, cannot support a directional evolution *from* 'primitive'—musical bow—to the 'more complex' lute. At most, it can only argue for homologous evolution in numerous directions from the abstract concept of vibrating string-resonant body into harps, lyres, lutes, and numerous kinds of zithers.

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<sup>38</sup> Oliver Vogels, 'Rock Art as Musical Artefact Prehistoric Representations of Musical Bows in Southern Africa', in *Studien zur Musikarchäologie VIII*, edited by Ricardo Eichmann, Fang Jianjun and Lars-Christian Koch (Rahden: Westfalen, 2012) pp. 177-194. Several Mesolithic Aurignacian cave paintings from France and Spain have been interpreted as portraying musical bows but these are extremely uncertain. One rock painting, thought to be from the San people in southern Africa, seems to show a multi-string musical bow but this image has only ever appeared as a photo of a drawing of the original image, as a frontpiece for Kirby's book; the original rock art has apparently never been found since the drawing was made, and only that one image of it exists (Richard Graham, personal communication, 22 Sept. 2016, 12 Feb. 2019).

Thus, I have come to the same conclusion as Balfour<sup>39</sup> that the lute's origin lies not in a genealogical descent from a 'simpler' chordophone but from one of multiple origin points. It is difficult if not impossible to imagine an ur-chordophone that could have been a common ancestor of all the variant families. The parameters of this hypothetical instrument's construction and playing technique could not have been defined, as it would have had to encompass all the basic morphologies and sound-production techniques in order for bifurcation to have occurred.

I argue then that the lute's genesis lay in nothing more than the lute as a concept and owed little or nothing to other chordophone families. It represented an independently arrived-at solution to the problem of how to create a satisfactory musical instrument starting from a vibrating string in a manner similar to that of the independent invention of cornet valve types. The lute came into existence within or adjacent to a culture where chordophones, e.g. harps and lyres, already existed within a mytho-cosmological matrix; the lute was not in competition with them but already possessed its own distinctive niche in that complex. Furthermore, the mytho-cosmological complex was inseparable from the material instrument, and the nature of the relationship between the two determined aspects of the instrument's morphology, musical style, and social uses. Thus, I consider phylogenetic theory as a viable means to study the lute's morphological evolution while the mytho-cosmological complex I envision as a primary illustration of the *rhizome*.

### *Rhizome Theory*

The phylogenetic model allows me to historically define and track lute orders, families and genera, though by the genera level it begins to reach its practical limits.

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<sup>39</sup> Balfour, *Natural History*, p. 1.

Higher levels of classification operate on relative abstractions of lute forms, the common traits of fairly broad groups. At these levels most of the effects of regional cultural influences on the instruments cannot be seen. These only become usefully visible for taxonomy at the level of genera where they reflect a greater degree of microcultural, intensely local traits.

These cultural elements operate on different principles than the morphological traits, as Tëmkin observed in his paper on Baltic psalteries. They follow decentralized transmission patterns that move with little regard for man-made borders. There is no ur-text or ur-lute, despite what the available textual record or iconography might seem to indicate; the first Return song and first lute are only the first historically visible examples of human creative processes that have already been at work for an unknown period of time.

I sought then to find a model for these cultural elements that would allow their fluidity and mercurial nature to be adequately reflected, to show how they both contrast with and yet harmonize with the more linear, ordered movement of a phylogenetic cladogram.

In order to achieve this I have adapted aspects of *rhizomatic* theory developed by Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995), a French philosopher, and Félix Guattari (1930-1992), a French psychoanalyst and semiotician, in the Introduction to their philosophical work *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.<sup>40</sup> They took the image of the rhizome from botany, where it describes plants that grow not from

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<sup>40</sup> Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (London: Continuum, 1987). Deleuze and Guattari began collaborating on the two volume *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, of which *Plateaus* is the second book, after the general and student strikes in France in May, 1968. The two volumes greatly influenced Post-structuralism and are organized thematically rather than linearly; the ideas of *nomadology*, *de-/reterritorialization*, *assemblages*, and *rhizomes* have served as inspiration for later post-modern and anarchist philosophers such as Manuel DeLanda (*A New Philosophy of Society*, 2006), and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (*Empire*, 2000).

seeds but from bulbs, like onions, or laterally by shoots sent out by rootstocks or nodes like ginger, lotus, iris and turmeric (*Pl. 2.3*).

The giant reed plant *arundo donax*, for example, is endemic to east Asia but cultivated throughout the Old World since ancient times and naturalized in the eastern Mediterranean where it is used to make the *ney* cane flute. Considered an invasive species in North America, its success as such is due to ‘rapid clonal spread by rhizome extension and flood dispersal of rhizome and stem fragments.’<sup>41</sup> *Arundo donax* does not produce fertile seeds and displays almost no genetic variation among both wild and cultivated stands even in North America.



*Pl. 2.3: Iris rootstock with rhizomes sprouting from main root.*

Humans have taken advantage of this genetic uniformity when cultivating rhizomes like potatoes, onions and garlic: a parent rhizome, the result of hybridization, is bred for certain qualities—size, hardiness, resistance to disease—and grown rhizomatically because the resulting plants will preserve those qualities as

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<sup>41</sup> Riaz Ahmad, Pui-Sze Liow, David F. Spencer, and Marie Jasieniuk, ‘Molecular evidence for a single genetic clone of invasive *Arundo donax* in the United States’, *Aquatic Botany* 88 (2008), pp. 113, 118-119.

genetic clones. If these plants are allowed to grow from their own seeds, however, the new plants will genetically diverge and any selected traits may change or be lost.

Deleuze and Guattari offer the model of the rhizome as a more organic, truer-to-nature alternative to the classical ‘tree-root’ model of knowledge used extensively in phylogenetics and linguistics. The tree-root model assumes a monogenesis of all living organisms or all human languages, from which all others derive. It further assumes a ‘dichotomization’ or bifurcation sometime after genesis.<sup>42</sup> Their primary criticism of this method states that,

binary logic is the spiritual reality of the root-tree... this system of thought has never reached an understanding of multiplicity: in order to arrive at two following a spiritual method it must assume a strong principal unity.

This binary logic, they argue, fails to comprehend or account for multiplicity because it has, in effect, substituted the study of the workings of nature for the logic of division.

The rhizome theory, on the other hand, represents a true multiplicity and follows, rather stems from, the structure of plant life and reproduction: the tree here is not understood as a reductionist binary concept in the service of schematizing other concepts—as it arguably is in phylogenetics—but as a living organism whose methods of growth and reproduction follow unexpected, unpredictable, and multi-dimensional *lines of flight*. The authors develop the theory of the rhizome through four principles (*Table 2.1*).

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<sup>42</sup> Deleuze & Guattari, *Plateaus*, p. 5.

<b><i>Principle</i></b>	<b><i>Definition</i></b>
1. Connection	Any point in rhizome structure can connect to any other.
2. Heterogeneity	Connected points form semiotic chains containing diverse elements and object classes.
3. Multiplicity	Rhizomes exhibit a decentralized unity or contain multiple originating center points.
4. Assignifying Rupture	Breaks or disturbances in semiotic chains do not end a growth-line but lead to new lines of development or regression to previous (i.e. 'archaic') lines.

*Table 2.1: Four principles of rhizome theory.*

1 and 2 are the principles of *connection* and *heterogeneity*<sup>43</sup> where,

any point of a rhizome can be connected to any other, and must be...[in a rhizome] semiotic chains of every nature are connected to very diverse modes of coding...that bring into play not only differing regimes of signs but also states of things of differing status.

An apt visual metaphor occurs accidentally in the text when the authors describe the rhizome as 'bulb-like'. The lute's shape is also bulb-like: its shoot-like headstock and neck emerge from the bulbous resonator from which sound radiates into the surrounding atmosphere like the tendrils of the plant bulb. The lute thus enters into semiotic chains and influences them just as it itself is penetrated and influenced by other chains. One can never fully understand a lute *qua* lute through its morphology and physical characteristics alone. Rather, we must note what other objects, symbolic systems, and patterns of social and cultural behaviors it participates in and how its sound and presence affects them. How does the community imagine and discuss the instrument in its folklore, its songs and literature, and how does it envision the instrument in its plastic arts? In other words, how does the lute participate in the community's mythos and cosmology by which the community envisions its own place in the natural order of things?

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-8.

This investigation leads naturally into principle 3, that of *multiplicity* which is rhizomatic because “there is no unity to serve as a pivot in the object, or to divide in the subject”. The LNL species considered here and the texts they accompany and appear in share characteristic traits amongst themselves. Yet there is no real center from which they emanate, no discernible concrete original object that they are variations of; as indicated by the wealth of lute names already present by the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium, the lute irrupts into the historical record already variegated. Any hypothetical ‘authoritative’ LNL or text is unrecoverable, and the manifest expressions bear the same relationship to each other as dialects to a ‘standard’ language.<sup>44</sup> That is, all LNLs constitute expressions of an idea which in itself represents an abstraction, a concept.

Principle 4, *asignifying rupture*, states that ‘a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines.’<sup>45</sup> The movement of myths, religious forms and practices, and epic narratives like the Return song from one culture to another resembles an ant trail or nest as they travel with, for example, the common soldiery who form new ‘nests’, i.e. garrison communities, in new cities and cultures. They are, in the authors’ terms, *deterritorialized* in this process.

In this de-/reterritorialization process these narratives travel unseen, unnoticed, in the manner of a virus that “can connect to germ cells and transmit itself as the cellular gene of a complex species: moreover, it can take flight, move into the cells of an entirely different species...bringing with it ‘genetic information’ from the first host.” Here, the arborescent model of the tree-root, “going from the least to the

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<sup>44</sup> John H. McWhorter, *The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language* (New York: Times Books Inc., 2001), pp. 53-93.

<sup>45</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Plateaus*, pp. 9-10.

most differentiated”, is thoroughly undercut as the rhizome jumps flea-like from one “already differentiated line [species] to another...the rhizome is an anti-genealogy.”<sup>46</sup> However, as applied in this Thesis the rhizome is construed not as anti-genealogy but as a counterpoint or polyphonic line to genealogy.

This principle lies behind one of the central ideas of this Thesis, that the primordial LNL formed part of a mythic complex crystalized in the epic genre of the Return song. This complex and its accompanying instrument traveled together, passing from culture to culture and era to era. Yet despite numerous ruptures and even disappearances of the cultures that used the LNLs and sang Return songs, the mythic complex and the LNL resurfaced again and again, the morphological and narrative, thematic forms coherent and intact, but various particulars reconfigured to suit new contexts.

### *Rhizome Theory and Cultural Diffusion*

On closer inspection, however, these four principles of rhizome theory seem to conflict with what the available evidence suggests about the origin and transmission of lutes; if the rhizome is anti-genealogical and against monogenesis in favor of multiplicity, how can rhizome theory be mapped onto the apparent fact that the primordial lute emerged first, and only, in 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE Mesopotamia and spread outward from there through cultural diffusion? While cultural diffusion theory does not necessarily depend on a monogenesis perspective—the anthropologist Franz Boas, one of cultural diffusion’s important early theorists,<sup>47</sup> showed this to be true in

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-11.

<sup>47</sup> See especially his ‘The Diffusion of Cultural Traits’, *Social Research* 4/1 (1937), 286-295; ‘The Methods of Ethnology’, *American Anthropologist*, 22/4 (1920), 311-321; *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1911), pp. 155-187. However, the monogenesis theory remains dominant and is implicit even in Picken’s formulation (Ruth M. Stone, *Theory for Ethnomusicology* (Oxon/New York: Routledge, 2016) pp. 27-32).

the 1920s—in the case of lute instruments the physical evidence indicates a monogenetic origin point. This in turn leads back to the idea of a ‘common ancestor’ of all lutes that emerged in Mesopotamia and evolved into different forms as it diffused outward to different cultural centers. Although for Deleuze and Guattari rhizome theory was anti-genealogy, in my view it does not undermine diffusion or lute origin theory but rather can help to clarify and bring nuance to their key elements.

In his *FMIT*, Picken<sup>48</sup> outline routes of diffusion for a number of early musical instruments, along with astronomical concepts, mythological themes and modal structures, from Mesopotamia eastward. The widespread appearance of some of these, particularly astronomical concepts, can be explained at least as well by independent invention—the number of mathematical methods by which astronomical movements can be computed is finite and does not require a diffusion of the mathematical process.

On other items, diffusion theory as Picken envisions it seems more plausible. Picken suggests several means by which artifacts and ideas—such as lutes—undergo diffusion from their point of origin:

...transport by a migrating population of numerically significant size; or transport as merchandise (in the case of artifacts) [or diplomatic gifts] or by word of mouth (in the case of techniques, customs and ideas) without contact between the first and last members of the chain.

During his subsequent discussion he touches on lute diffusion from Mesopotamia to Central Asia, then China and finally Japan, which altogether occurred over nearly four millennia,<sup>49</sup> and bases his dating on the historical iconographic appearance of lutes in different regions.

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<sup>48</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 579-609.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 582.

Though his is perhaps the soundest approach to the issue, being solidly empirical, it also sidesteps the method's weakness. Picken's approach avoids open speculation on the lute's prehistory in any one region—a positive. On the other hand, whenever lutes do appear in images or texts of a locale they generally do so as instruments already firmly ensconced in a rich cultural context, not as newly arrived novelties. This suggests that the lutes in question had a pre-history in these cultures, of indeterminate length but a pre-history nonetheless. This means that the first known depictions of lutes in a region can not be taken as the absolute *terminus post quem* of the lute's existence there<sup>50</sup> but only as the earliest date at which the lute, for whatever reasons, entered the culture's iconographic tradition.

In view of this, my statement above on the role of independent invention in the lute's origins should be emended to read that its origins may represent a *series* or a network of inventions and refinements worked out by multiple individuals, at least some of whom exchanged and refined ideas amongst themselves in one or, probably, several communities. The goal in this community would not have been to satisfy the ear of a lone performer but the cooperative creation of an instrument suited for the community's *Klangideal*, to play 'our music'. The lute was not, in my view, a one-time invention by one person but a communally-centered process of development.<sup>51</sup>

Such a community would constitute a rhizome of lute origins and development, and other similar rhizomes would have existed as well, with varying

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<sup>50</sup> Any number of factors could account for the dearth of earlier records: many ancient sites remain undiscovered by archaeologists, while others are discovered purely by chance and luck; ancient sites and records may have been destroyed, all at once in an invasion or over centuries by natural or human forces; economic and political circumstances of a given era may have caused fewer artistic or textual documents to be produced, or caused a renaissance of sorts in one or another medium or genre. Some of these factors may be reasonably adduced or pieced together from evidence, but many others must be considered as 'unknowns'.

<sup>51</sup> The concept of polygenesis and importance of reticulation in cultural developments, and the idea of communal co-creation of cultural artifacts have gained wider acceptance, or at least more discussion, in studies of music and cultural evolution (see for example, Savage, 'Cultural Evolution of Music', pp. 8-10, 16-18).

degrees of interconnectedness to each other, or some none at all. The physical evidence from ancient Mesopotamia discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 hints at—but cannot presently prove—alternate centers of lute development in the Levant, northern Iraq, Iran and/or Central Asia. Lute diffusion, notably from Central Asia to China in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium CE, has definitely taken place,<sup>52</sup> but with the early lute the situation provided by the actual evidence is not so clear-cut and one can only assume diffusion from Mesopotamia outwards.

Perhaps a more grounded, open-ended conclusion to arrive at from Picken's starting point would be that in Mesopotamia of the Akkadian era c. 2334 BCE, economic and political conditions were such that an artistic renaissance of sorts took place in which lutes were depicted for the first time for which historical documents are available. Mesopotamia may, in fact, not have been the birthplace of lutes but only the first recipient of the instrument to have reason to depict them in its iconography or, alternately, the first whose lute iconography has survived and come to light. Akkadian Mesopotamia may thus represent the culmination of a series of rhizome-like communities who had progressively contributed to the creation and refinement of lutes over an unknown period prior to the Akkadian kingdom's establishment.

Even if lutes did in fact contemporaneously exist in other regions, there would remain the open question of how to demonstrate that those lutes originated with no 'word of mouth'—i.e. description of lute as concept—between there and Mesopotamia and thus were still the result of a diffusionary process.

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<sup>52</sup> Laurence Picken, 'The Origin of the Short Lute', *GSJ* 8 (1955), pp. 32-42.

*Rhizome Theory in Denise Gill*

Since the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus*, rhizome theory has gained influence in media, art and literary theory and has also provided a (not always accurate) lens through which to view the Internet, and political resistance movements like the Zapatistas and Al-Qaeda.<sup>53</sup> Deleuze and Guattari incorporate a number of musical metaphors to illustrate their ideas<sup>54</sup> and consider some of the rhizomatic behaviors of pop music and culture. Pop culture and postmodern music studies likewise have found the rhizome a useful analytical tool.<sup>55</sup> In English-language ethnomusicology, however, it has to date gained little traction.<sup>56</sup>

Denise Gill's *Melancholic Modalities: Affect, Islam, & Turkish Classical Musicians*<sup>57</sup> constitutes a major exception however, as the rhizome forms not only her guiding metaphor for understanding her subject but also the primary structural device for her text.

The central focus of Gill's book is affective musical practices in the modern Turkish classical music community. Affect, what she calls 'melancholic modalities', signifies something at once subjective that informs a complex esoteric philosophy and poetics, and objective to the degree to which the community has evolved musical and verbal semiotic codes for communicating species of melancholy in an exoteric way. Her use of rhizome theory hews to her experience of her subject: 'how a particular

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<sup>53</sup> Mark Gartler, 'rhizome' (Chicago School of Media Theory, 2018), found at: <<https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/rhizome/>>; accessed on: 26 Feb. 2018.

<sup>54</sup> See especially pp. 24-25, 103-106, and 311-318.

<sup>55</sup> See Timothy S. Murphy and Daniel W. Smith, 'What I Hear is Thinking Too: Deleuze and Guattari Go Pop', *Echo: A Music-Centered Journal* 3/1 (2001), found at: <<http://www.echo.ucla.edu/Volume3-Issue1/smithmurphy/index.html>>; accessed on: 26 Feb. 2018.

<sup>56</sup> It has received a slightly wider reception in French ethnomusicology, however. It is used as an overarching theme, for example, in *Des racines au rhizome: Actes des Assises nationales des musiques et danses traditionnelles*, Marlène Belly (ed.) (Parthenay: Modal, Le Projet FAMDT, 2009).

<sup>57</sup> Denise Gill, *Melancholic Modalities: Affect, Islam, & Turkish Classical Musicians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

artistic community sounds out, embodies, narrates, and experiences melancholies in their music making.<sup>58</sup> Her purpose is not to study musical meaning by analyzing “music”. Instead, she immerses herself in the musicking<sup>59</sup> community as student, researcher, performer and listener to experience how the practice, ‘concepts and diverse iterations of “melancholy”...translate musical meaning’ within a specific community whose members are drawn from diverse larger communities in Turkey.

Her use of rhizomatic analysis takes both a literal and figurative approach.<sup>60</sup> literal because the central instrument of the Turkish classical music canon is the *ney*, an end-blown flute made from the giant reed *arundo donax* described above. Figuratively, Gill uses the botanical rhizome as a metaphor for how the Turkish classical music community creates and communicates affective practices and ‘melancholic modalities’ through diverse channels that all feed into and sprout from the central concept and practice of melancholy.

Gill’s statements on the appropriateness of rhizome theory to her subject underscore the different applications and approaches the theory makes possible from phylogenetic and cladistics theory: regarding the relationship of the *arundo donax*, the *ney* flute, and Turkish classical music, she states that ‘it is *poetically appropriate* to engage rhizomatic analysis in considering Turkish classical music’ (*emphasis mine*).

I believe that rhizomatic analysis is the only way to understand melancholy in Turkish classical musicians’ sonic and social lives, because there is no single origin point from where musicians cultivate melancholies in sound. I move through different levels of examples—from the polyvocality of a single sound; to the work of tears; to horizontal imaginings of musical genealogies; to sites such

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. xiii.

<sup>59</sup> Simply put, musicking relates to the practice of music performance and listening as a set of social actions that create musical meaning, rather than music as a discrete object that acts upon social bodies. In this, ‘We might at times even extend its meaning to what the person is doing who takes the tickets at the door or the hefty men who shift the piano and the drums.’ See Christopher Small, *Musicking: the Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, CT.: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), p. 9.

<sup>60</sup> Gill, *Melancholic*, pp. xv, 2.

as tea houses, music therapy hospitals, and musicians' studios or ateliers; to modes of historical memory and commemoration.<sup>61</sup>

Gill identifies four nexus points, her rhizomes, from which to explore the affective practice of melancholy in Turkish classical music. 'Rhizomes are unfixed, often unmoored, and seizing hold of one of these elements immediately can lead you to a knotted nexus of another rhizome under the surface.'<sup>62</sup>

Rhizome One is Turkish classical music itself. Melancholy, she notes, forms only one aspect of affective practice in the overall genre and she warns against thinking it constitutes the only, or even the most generally important one (against orientaling the Turkish 'other' as sentimental or morose). In many ways, Turkish classical music in the modern nation-state of Turkey is something of an anachronism as it hearkens to a nostalgia for a lost Ottoman past.<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, the State itself acts as the primary sponsor of the genre and often harnesses it for its own nationalistic purposes. At the same time the performance of and listening practices associated with the music function as spaces of resistance to the nationalist and modernizing trends of modern Turkish society.

Rhizome Two Gill labels as 'repertoires of melancholy' and works within the interplay of modern Western understandings of melancholy as a medical and often pathological condition, the influence of this view on modern Turkish views, and the native Turkish understanding of melancholy, or rather melancholies, heavily shaped by Sufism and Sunni philosophy. Turkish classical musicians, she notes, understand four distinct species of melancholy, each with its own name and ethos.<sup>64</sup> Although the official understanding of melancholy follows the pathologized view of modern Europe

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 3, 9.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 10, 12-14.

(the Turkish government declared melancholy an individual medical condition in 1923), the musician Gill works with ‘understand the practice of melancholy as the correct way to be in the world as social and spiritual beings.’

Rhizome Three, the practice of affect, relates to her decision not to analyze musical meaning as a product of heard music, as something that possesses agency to act upon a passive, receptive listener. Instead she analyzes it as one part of an encompassing practice, a rhizome, of melancholy as a way of being in the world. After reviewing several theories of emotion and affect, she declares that her purpose lies not in stating what melancholy ‘is’ but rather what it is for and how it is used as a practice.<sup>65</sup> Her interest is epistemological:

Affect refers to the multivalent and complex ways that feelings and emotions are produced and generate knowledge. . . . it is thus possible to theorize “melancholy” as feeling, emotion, and affect while simultaneously accounting for melancholy as an object or a thing that presses upon us and also a process of evaluation by specific people in a particular time and place.

The fourth and final rhizome concerns the Islamic underpinnings of the affective practice of melancholy in Turkish classical music. Here again the practice of melancholy often serves as a resistance point, in this case against what could be considered the propaganda of emotion and affect promulgated by the secular Turkish nationalist government after 1925. This program aimed to redefine an essentialized Turkishness as “essentially joyous [*şen*] and vivacious [*şatır*]” against an orientalized ‘morbid’ and ‘sentimental’ Ottoman past. As one result of this the Mevlevi Sufi lodges were banned and affective musicking practices like the *sema* (Tur, ‘listening’) ‘whirling dervish dance’ outlawed.

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17, 19-20.

Though these restrictions have lessened since the 1950s, this situation creates some tension within the Turkish classical music community as its members ‘deploy Mevlevi Sufi philosophies that justify individuals’ feelings of melancholy as a product of the human condition of separation from God.’ The phrase that forms a leitmotif in the community and in Gill’s text—‘may God increase your pain’—thus becomes understood not as a morbid subjective individual attachment to suffering but part of the cultivation of melancholy as a spiritually restorative act.<sup>66</sup>

### Application of Rhizome Theory

Deleuze and Guattari’s works have been heavily criticized<sup>67</sup> for what has been perceived as their use of scientific theories in highly unscientific ways and the ‘ubiquity of pseudo-scientific language’<sup>68</sup> that they incorporate, a criticism that has often been levied against postmodern theory in general. Sokal and Bricmont’s criticisms, however, exclusively attack Deleuze and Guattari’s inappropriate and garbled use of mathematical terms and concepts; for a critique of their use of rhizome theory one can turn to the French philosopher and associate of Deleuze, Alain Badiou. In his essay ‘The Fascism of the Potato’ Badiou challenges rhizome theory in relation to Marxist dialectics. ‘Badiou suggests that the rhizome, by collapsing the dialectical principle and subtracting the antagonism that is so central to the mobilisation of the proletariat, leads to political indifference.’<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-3, 21-22.

<sup>67</sup> Perhaps the most sustained criticism of *A Thousand Plateaus* is found in *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals’ Abuse of Science* (New York: Picador, 1997) by Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont, physicists from America and Belgium, respectively.

<sup>68</sup> Sokal and Bricmont, p. 168.

<sup>69</sup> Marika Lysandrou, ‘A Double Critique: Alain Badiou, the Adventure of French Philosophy’, *Review 31* 49 (not dated), found at: <<http://review31.co.uk/article/view/49/a-double-critique>>; accessed on: 25 June 2019. See Alain Badiou, ‘The Fascism of the Potato’, in *The Adventure of French Philosophy*, translated by Bruno Bosteels (London: Verso, 2012), pp. 191-202.

The political philosopher Slavoj Žižek (1949- ) has also challenged Deleuze and Guattari's formulation of the rhizome, in one instance its specific principle of reterritorialization:

The Deleuzian/post-modern mode of authority is itself oppressive, and requires overthrowing, asking "How, then, are we to revolutionize an order whose very principle is constant self-revolutionizing?" (Žižek 213). His point here is that the Deleuzian position of continual reterritorializing is itself a somewhat fascist one, in that it actively prohibits revolution. After all, as he asks, how can one revolt against continual revolutionism? Especially without returning to simple fascism?<sup>70</sup>

Such criticisms focus almost exclusively on the utility of rhizome theory in postmodern and Marxist studies—in short, as a tool of political and cultural analysis. While Gill's use of the rhizome touches on the politics of affect, religion and historical identity in Turkey, she gives it an altogether different focus.

Gill admits that her focus on the rhizome model necessarily challenges and eschews other legitimate theories of affect and emotion as social practices, yet her approach opens up new and fruitful avenues for exploring the less tangible and exoteric aspects of music culture. Where she delves into the complex relations between affect, emotion, sound and sensation on individual and communal levels in a living contemporary community, my use of the rhizome model takes a different tack. I have identified three nexus points within this study whose workings can be considered rhizomatic and are, like Gill's, 'unfixed...unmoored...[that] lead...to a knotted nexus of another rhizome beneath the surface'<sup>71</sup> and are equally poetically appropriate for their subject here. These three rhizomes are:

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<sup>70</sup> Phil Sandifer, 'Annotations' to Slavoj Žižek, *Organs Without Bodies: On Deleuze and Consequences*. (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), p. 213, see also pp. 194-196; found at: <<http://csmt.uchicago.edu/annotations/zizekorgans1.htm> > ; accessed on: 25 June 2019.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

1. The epic song, specifically the genre of the Return song in which the chordophone appears at key moments as an agent or catalyst of action, and the oral poetic tradition that informs the performance of the Return song.
2. The figure of the divine feminine or ‘woman of authority’ who serves as consecratrix of the hero of Return songs and in her divine form as an object of religious devotion.
3. The Frontier Warrior Culture, a highly mobile geographical and social network of landholding soldiery, mercenaries, bandits and other groups among whom the *tambura* lutes were designed, performed, and transmitted.

It can be argued that Deleuze and Guattari’s formulation of rhizome theory as an alternative to the phylogenetic tree model can stand as a critique of the limitations of the strictly scientific worldview. In my view, their use of rhizome theory specifically can be construed as a metaphorical rather than a scientific model; from this perspective the rhizome acts as a lens through which one can engage one’s subject via a *poetic* mode of knowledge rather than an analytical logical mode.

The language of poetry is also the language of myth, and the mytho-cosmological complex that encompasses the LNL relies on metaphor as a mode of knowledge. Myth expresses a conception of the world based on the apprehension of relations between things, ‘inner’ and external states, events and objects as a unity.<sup>72</sup>

Men do not *invent* [emphasis original] those mysterious relations between separate external objects, and between objects and feelings or ideas, which it is the function of poetry to reveal. These relations exist independently, not indeed of Thought, but of any individual thinker.

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<sup>72</sup> Owen Barfield, *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973/1928), pp. 86-92.

Poetic and mythic language can thus be said to operate in the manner of the rhizome. Their manner of transmission, particularly in oral poetic traditions like that of the epic and Return song, likewise works in the same way as a botanical rhizome.

Genres such as the Return song do not maintain pristine wholeness in these transfers but often fracture; themes or episodes disappear by the wayside yet sometimes reappear centuries later speaking another language in another land. However, themes and narrative elements carry over into new cultural contexts, enter subterranean labyrinths, and find new cultural-ecological niches.

### *Iconographic Organology*

The majority of the resources I have used to develop this study of lutes have not been LNLs themselves but images of them. Ancient historical instruments of any category are quite rare: four Sumerian lyres and a harp from the royal graves at Ur; some Egyptian bow harps and a lute; eight so-called ‘Coptic’ lutes; and scattered specimens of harps, lyres, flutes, and the *aulos* double pipe from ancient Greece, Egypt, Anatolia and Central Asia are all that remain of the Antique instrumentarium.<sup>73</sup>

Artistic images of instruments are, conversely, fairly common but present a number of difficulties for organological research. Due to physical decay of the artifact, the degree of the maker’s artistic skill, and the purpose for and materials from which the object was made, the morphological accuracy of these representations proves inconsistent and frequently unreliable. Details such as the placement of lutenists’ fretting hand on molded plaques and sculptures, for example, should not be taken at face value—are left hands shown on the upper neck near the nut so often because that marks where the musicians actually played? Or was this a technical

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<sup>73</sup> Prehistoric bone flutes and lithophones from Central Europe, Central Asia, Siberia, and North Africa are, curiously, perhaps just as commonly found.

convention, done to stabilize and prevent breakage to the sculpted upper neck and headstock of the instrument?

Similarly, when a musician's strumming hand is depicted plucking the strings halfway up the neck instead of over the soundtable, one is justified in asking if that, too, depicts actual performance practice or results from the sculptor's aesthetic choice? Perhaps the artist placed the right hand there to keep the sculpted mass of the right arm tightly against the figure's torso, to prevent the right elbow from jutting out where it could more easily be broken off or to create or preserve a compositional balance.

Though many musicologists, archaeologists and historians have studied and written about the ancient Mesopotamian, Greek, Gāndhārī and Iranian images I discuss in this Thesis, few have gone further than to remark upon the pictured instruments' morphological features and basic social settings.<sup>74</sup> This body of images possesses a much greater store of symbolic, imaginal, and even social and economic information about its subjects than has been explored. What is lacking in this endeavor, I feel, is a dedicated and skilled application of art historical analysis, or *iconographic* and *iconological* methodologies.

I have drawn upon the methodology and theory developed by Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), one of the most significant figures of 20<sup>th</sup> century art history. Though he developed most of his iconological method through his studies of

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<sup>74</sup> Theo J. H. Krispijn, 'The Acceptance of Pop Music in Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian lute of the Second Millennium B.C. and its socio-cultural context', in *ICONEA 2011. Proceedings of the International Conference of Near-Eastern Archaeomusicology held at Senate House, University of LONDON December 1, 2 and 3, 2011* (London: Lulu on behalf of ICONEA Publications, 2011), pp. 113–126, constitutes one exception, though Krispijn's analysis concerns what the dress and hair styles seen on lutenists from Mesopotamian iconography says about the figures' social statuses, gender roles, and ethnicities.

European Renaissance art, Flemish and German in particular,<sup>75</sup> the principles of his method and theory are widely applicable to other periods, cultures and styles.

In the Introductory to his work *Studies in Iconology*<sup>76</sup> he outlines his approach (*Fig. 2.1*), beginning by defining *iconography* as ‘that branch of the history of art which concerns itself with the subject matter or meaning of works of art, as opposed to their form.’<sup>77</sup> However, it is through the correct identification of forms in an artwork that the viewer arrives at the most basic level of meaning, that of the *factual* and *expressional*, or *primary* and *natural* (NB all emphases his).<sup>78</sup> Through one’s practical experience one identifies natural objects and expressive gestures represented in the work to arrive at a *pre-iconographic description* of it—‘pre-’ because one has not begun the interpretive process at this stage. That is, to use *Pl. 2.4* as an example, “a bearded figure with head covering seated on a square support holds a long pole-shaped object, with a cord looped around the upper end, with his hands near either extremity.”

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<sup>75</sup> See especially his *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005 [1943]) and *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origins and Character* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1953).

<sup>76</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1972 [reprint of Oxford University Press, 1939]).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 14-15.



*Pl. 2.4: Neo-Hittite lutenist.*<sup>79</sup>

The relationships between forms, or objects, Panofsky calls *events*, and the perception of objects, events, and expressional qualities constitute the *motif* or combinations thereof, which in turn make up the *composition*.<sup>80</sup> Once the viewer makes these identifications they can then begin to ascertain the composition's *secondary* or *conventional* meanings, and this properly speaking is what Panofsky calls an *image*. In *Pl. 2.4*, then, once the figure is positively identified as a male and the object he holds as a lute, one can speak of the motif of the *seated lutenist*; the *theme/concept* of the image then becomes the *bardic figure*. If the seated lutenist motif incorporates animals one is then dealing with the theme of the *shepherd king*. Through examining those other images in proximity to the lutenist—since this figure

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<sup>79</sup> From city of Zincirli, northwest Syria, c. 10<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. Image source: <[http:// www.hittitemonuments.com/zincirli/zincirli35.jpg](http://www.hittitemonuments.com/zincirli/zincirli35.jpg)>; accessed on: 8 Dec. 2014.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

forms part of a linked series of relief carvings—one arrives at the *story* conveyed by the combination of images. All of this makes up the ‘correct *iconographical analysis in the narrower sense*’.

Panofsky’s third step, discerning the work’s *intrinsic meaning or content*, ‘is apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion...’ This process involves uncovering the artwork’s *symbolic values* and is ‘correct *iconographical analysis in the deeper sense*’. In this, the viewer needs to be aware of changes in the configuration, the form and/or event that a motif displays: the above male lutenist can be identified as such in part through comparison with similar images—how does one know the figure plays a lute as opposed to holding a pole or javelin?

#### *The Faux-lutenist of Sumeria*

Such identification of objects can prove more complicated than it might seem, and a misidentification can lead the researcher into a compounding series of errors. The figure in *Pl. 2.4*, for example, is assessed as a lutenist due to the formal similarity of the object he holds with other Hittite and Assyrian motifs that include objects incontestably lutes. Yet his seated position represents something of an anomaly in the overall iconographic tradition of male lutenists from the ancient Near East; except for two cylinder seal impressions and a handful of ‘shepherd lutenist’ plaques discussed in Chap. 3, virtually all such images depict *standing* lutenists. That these two seal impressions form the earliest confirmable images of lutenists, c. 2334 BCE probably contributed to what I argue is the misidentification of another seal impression from

800 years earlier. This misidentification has caused a number of further errors in the writing of lute history.



Pl. 2.5: Cylinder seal impression of royal magur barge.<sup>81</sup>

Pl. 2.5 depicts this controversial image. Though the figures have been sparsely etched in a manner more suggestive than demonstrative, the scholarly consensus, based on a comparison with a wealth of formally similar scenes, holds that this Early Dynastic I (c. 2900-c.2600 BCE) seal depicts a royal barge, a *magur*.<sup>82</sup> Mesopotamian kings rode such *magur* to inspect the waterways they were responsible for administering and maintaining, and to travel to other cities in their domain, especially during royal festivals and ritual processions. In these processions, the king would journey from his own city's temple where the primary deity dwelt to perform the deity's rites at subsidiary temples in the vassal lands, thus reasserting his dominion over them.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Uruk, c. 3100 BCE. Image source: BM 141632 'cylinder seal', found at: <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/search.aspx?searchText=141632&object=23120](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx?searchText=141632&object=23120)>; accessed on: 7 Dec. 2014.

<sup>82</sup> See Dominique Collon, *First Impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East* (London: British Museum Press, 1993), pp. 158-160.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Samuel Noah Kramer, 'Shulgi of Ur: A Royal Hymn and a Divine Blessing', *The Jewish Quarterly Review 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Volume* 57 (1967), pp. 377-379.

In the front of this *magur* boat, on the right side, stands a rower with his pole; behind him stands a king, identifiable by his headdress, succeeded by a bull with a load on its back. The bull functions as both an emblem of kingship and a sacrificial offering,<sup>84</sup> and the square baskets it carries may contain offerings to the temple deity, or deities, of the cities along their route. On the left sits the controversial figure. Is he paddling or steering the *magur* boat, or is he whiling the time making music?



Pl. 2.6: Cylinder seal impression of royal *magur* barge.<sup>85</sup>

In similar scenes from centuries before and after, this figure is indeed an oarsman, not a lutenist: this seal impression from the Uruk period, before 3000 BCE, (Pl. 2.6) shows almost exactly the same configuration of pole-man, king, bull with baskets, and seated figure. The pole object is fully expressed and it can be seen from its length, the position of the rounded lower end, and the distance of the figure's right hand from the putative resonator that it could not be a lute but is rather a rudder oar. The object in Pl. 2.5, on the other hand, contains no such level of detail to allow one

<sup>84</sup> Christopher Woods, 'Sons of the Sun: The Mythological Foundations of the First Dynasty of Uruk', *JANER* 12 (2012), p. 87.

<sup>85</sup> From city of Uruk, Iraq; Uruk period, pre-3000 BCE. Image source: <<http://maritimehistorypodcast.com/ep-002-surplus-food-big-buildings-power-hungry-lugals/>>; accessed on: 29 Nov. 2014.

to identify it as a ‘lute’—the lower end of the pole was simply not delineated, in keeping with the indistinct style of the overall composition (see *Pl. 2.7, detail*).



*Pl. 2.7: Detail, Pl. 2.5.*

Richard Dumbrill<sup>86</sup> et. al. assumes that this image does in fact depict a lutenist, a ‘crouching female identified as such by her hair style’, who plays a ‘round-bodied’ lute with a string length of approximately 50 cm. However, the image does not contain enough detail to make either assertion; his Plates four and five consist of drawings, not the actual image, and have been rendered to suit this interpretation, including the addition of a ‘body’ for the pole object that in the clay impression is simply not there.

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<sup>86</sup> Dumbrill, *Archaeomusicology*, pp. 321-322.



*Pl. 2.8: Detail of seal impression.*<sup>87</sup>

An even clearer representation occurs in a detail from a seal impression of roughly the same period (*Pl. 2.8*). Here, however, the left-hand figure clearly dips the stem of a rudder-like long oar into the water. The only significant difference lies in the position of the left arms: the figure in the first seal holds his under the handle, and that in the second seal above it, both positions that recur in other such scenes. These seal impressions collectively utilize a compositional convention that communicates the Sumerian kingship ideology via a concise, standardized iconographic scheme of the king engaging in one of his primary activities with some of the essential objects of his office.

The fact that this figure and his posture occurs so often, and over so many centuries, and that it is never a lutenist, argues in my view that we have no solid ground for concluding that this seal impression constitutes such an anomaly. Moreover, if the figure in question did depict a lutenist it raises the question *why* would this single *magur* barge composition replace the standard rudderman with a

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<sup>87</sup> Mesopotamia, early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium. Image source: Eva Strommenger, *5,000 Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*, translated by Christina Haglund, photographs by Max Hirmer (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1964), pl. 17.

lutenist—much less a feminine one when women lutenists are entirely absent from the iconographic record until the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, in Egypt and the Levant no less,<sup>88</sup> not Mesopotamia—and on a royal barge where one would expect that a rudderman would be necessary to keep the barge on a steady course?

As a consequence of this interpretation, Dumbrill adduces that,

What makes the lute an instrument of paramount importance in the genealogy of the string family, in relation to the *early date when it appeared [emphasis mine]*, is that it generated the principle of fretted instruments where each string produces more than one sound. This constituted one of the greatest developments in the science of organology. The size and position of each of the frets or fret marks, was consequently approporioned to the speaking length of the strings. It probably is this principle which led the Sumerian theoreticians to the apprehension of ratios, rather than the principle of ratios leading them to the concept of the fret.<sup>89</sup>

If, however, one accepts the identification of the figure as a rudderman, not a lutenist at all, then the notion that the *Sumerians* knew such a principle, and a significant element of Dumbrill's reconstruction of ancient Mesopotamian music theory is no longer supportable. No Sumerian-language texts prior to the rule of the Semitic-speaking Akkadians around 2300 BCE contain names for chordophones other than harps and lyres. Nor do lutes appear in any other pre-Akkadian Sumerian iconography and unlike harps and lyres no preserved specimens have been unearthed in royal and aristocratic graves. If lutenists had performed for kings on their *magur* barges as the kings carried out such an essential royal task, it could be reasonably expected that lutes would have figured in any of these contexts. The complete absence

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<sup>88</sup> Women lutenists do not appear outside of Egypt until the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE and then almost exclusively in figurines of the Iranian Achaemenid Empire; the closest Mesopotamian musicians are ambiguously gendered figures on plaques from Mari and Kititum in Syria from the Neo-Babylonian era of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE. Even these can be identified as male-gendered by their bound genitalia; see Chapter 3.

<sup>89</sup> Dumbrill, *Archaeomusicology*, p. 310.

of any such records further argues against the interpretation of this seal impression figure as a lutenist.

### Iconographic Genealogies

One can further make this determination via cross-comparing the image with other images of seated male figures with like objects and noting similarities in form and the motival, compositional, and thematic context the single figure occurs in. The viewer must ask questions such as, what were the social and/or political conditions under which this image was made? Do textual sources from this period and society provide references to support, or negate, my interpretation? What do documents tell me about the attitudes toward music and musical instruments at that historical moment? Is this image part of a greater tradition of like compositions, and what about its form differs from that tradition's identifying traits?

In asking such questions the viewer utilizes three 'controlling principles of interpretation' (*Fig. 2.1*) the history of *style*, *types*, and *cultural symptoms or 'symbols'*. Knowledge of these histories provide control groups for the viewer's possible errors of interpretation that may arise from factors such as insufficient knowledge of a culture's worldview; inability to recognize an object in the image, or simple ignorance of how cultural understanding and use of a motif may change from era to era.

<b>Object of Interpretation</b>	<b>Act of Interpretation</b>	<b>Equipment for Interpretation</b>	<b>Controlling Principle of Interpretation</b>	<b>H i s t o r y  o f  T r a d i t i o n</b>
I= <i>Primary or natural</i> subject matter= (A) factual, (B) expressional—, constituting the world of artistic motifs	<i>Pre-iconographic description</i> (and pseudo-formal analysis).	<i>Practical experience</i> (familiarity with <i>objects</i> and <i>events</i> ).	History of <i>style</i> (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, <i>objects</i> and <i>events</i> were expressed by <i>forms</i> ).	
II= <i>Secondary or conventional</i> subject matter, constituting the world of <i>images</i> , <i>stories</i> and <i>allegories</i> .	<i>Iconographic analysis</i> in the narrower sense.	<i>Knowledge of literary sources</i> (familiarity with specific <i>themes</i> and <i>concepts</i> ).	History of <i>types</i> (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, specific <i>themes</i> or <i>concepts</i> were expressed by <i>objects</i> and <i>events</i> ).	
III= <i>Intrinsic meaning or content</i> , constituting the world of 'symbolic' values.	<i>Iconographic interpretation</i> in a deeper sense ( <i>iconographical synthesis</i> ).	<i>Synthetic intuition</i> (familiarity with the <i>essential tendencies of the human mind</i> ), conditioned by personal psychology and ' <i>Weltanschauung</i> '.	History of <i>cultural symptoms</i> or ' <i>symbols</i> ' in general (insight into the manner in which, under varying historical conditions, <i>essential tendencies of the human mind</i> were expressed by specific <i>themes</i> and <i>concepts</i> ).	

Fig. 2.1: Panofsky's interpretive method.<sup>90</sup>

For example, Panofsky points out that the Classical revival of the Italian Renaissance was not a simple revival of Classical motifs and their meanings, but was a response in part to how their values changed in the Medieval period, 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>91</sup> In these centuries, 'classical *motifs* were not used for the representation of classical *themes* while, conversely, classical *themes* were not expressed by classical *motifs*.'

Panofsky's method, therefore, is integral to the genealogical aspect of my theory in that it allows for the tracing of the genealogy of specific iconographic motifs, themes, and compositions even through changes in their assigned meanings

<sup>90</sup> Panofsky, *Studies*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

and through re-interpretations. Direct lines of descent and bifurcations can be distinguished through the study of typology, as for example when,

Suggested by a certain iconographical affinity, for instance when *the figure of Orpheus was employed for the representation of [King] David*, or when the type of Hercules dragging Cerberus out of Hades was used to depict Christ pulling Adam out of Limbo [*emphasis added*].<sup>92</sup>

These genealogies can also be discerned by following the artists' use of actual visual models for a motif or image whether through original images or copies found in more recent works, or via literary descriptions.<sup>93</sup>

At the same time, such a *volte-face* in the functions of Classical themes and motifs in Christian and Humanist contexts suggests a rhizomatic process at work as well. Reinterpreting the pagan Orpheus as a Christ or Davidic figure marks an asignifying rupture between the pagan, neo-Platonic and Christian cosmologies; the rhizome of the Orphic motif and theme did not cease to exist but found a new line of flight through which to grow anew.

Panofsky's art historical method of image analysis, then, serves as a methodological tool by which to harmonize and make sensible the genealogical and rhizomatic lines of descent and transmission of the LNL and its mytho-cosmological complex through various eras and cultures.

### Conclusions

The conventionally accepted theory of lute genesis, the musical bow hypothesis adduced by Sachs, Galpin, et. al., demonstrates the limitations of the phylogenetic model of lute evolution. This hypothesis argues that the first lute developed out of the musical bow via the Sumerian arched harp. The arch gradually straightened out and,

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-31.

with the subtraction of all but two strings and a fingerboard, became the Mesopotamian lute by 2334 BCE.

This idea encounters a number of problems. First, its proponents have conceptualized musical instrument evolution in biological terms, developing organically like plants, when in fact instruments come into being through shifting and variegated cultural needs of the human agents who design, make and play the instruments. Second, the musical bow and the lute display highly homologous interpretations of the sound-producing string-over-resonator concept. The struck bow string produces a full harmonic field that the player modifies through his body/bow relationship.

On the lute, on the other hand, the harmonic field falls into the background of the sound field and the player foregrounds the prescribed pitches made by stopping the strings along their length. On the original, two string Mesopotamian lutes, one string sounded a drone and the other the melody. Thus the string's function on a musical bow became divided between two strings on the early lute.

This and other factors lead me to conclude, in agreement with Balfour, that the lute therefore did not genealogically descend like a biological organism from the 'simple' musical bow. Rather, the ur-lute arose rhizomatically from multiple origin points as more or less independent developments from the basic concept of a vibrating string and a resonant body. Even homology cannot support a direct evolution of lute from bow although it could be used to adduce the multiple independent evolutions of harps, lyres, zithers, and lutes from an ur-chordophone. But this 'common ancestor' proves, in my view, to be an undefinable and purely hypothetical entity.

As a way to compensate for these issues with phylogenetics while still upholding its value as a means to analyze lutes as material objects in a vertical,

genealogical perspective I introduced the theory of the rhizome. In biology, a rhizome is a plant that grows mostly through sending out shoots or runners from a root node. Plants that grow rhizomatically can reproduce via rhizome fragments carried far from the 'parent' rootstock as well, and these colonies tend to display little genetic variation from their ancestors.

Rhizome theory presents an alternative to the binary, analytical logic of the phylogenetic tree-root model. The rhizome provides a way to account for multiplicity and change as it occurs on its own terms, as distinct from a model that imposes an analytic artifice based on division and compartmentalization. The rhizome exhibits four defining characteristics: interconnection of all points with all other points; connected points form semiotic chains with unrelated elements; they show multiple origin points or decentralized wholes, and when they experience asignifying ruptures or breaks in those chains the growth does not stop but continues along forward or regressive lines, thus confounding genealogies.

I thus located three elements within my thesis that encapsulate these four traits. The first rhizome is the epic Return song and its constituent themes, their configurations within the narrative structure and the culturally conditioned elements that differentiate the Return song's manifestations. The second rhizome is the divine feminine or woman of authority figure who plays a pivotal role in the elevation of the Return song hero to a renewal of his status as man in his society. Third, the LNLs involved with the performance of these Return songs traveled through a highly mobile, border crossing social network I call the Frontier Warrior Culture. A fourth element, the archetypal figure of the Return hero, is intimately linked to the institution of kingship beginning with ancient Mesopotamia and to the iconographic tradition of the shepherd king that begins with the Mesopotamian deity Dumuzi.

### **Chap. 3: The Lutes ‘Paternal’ Genealogical History**

#### *Introduction*

In Chap. 3 I examine the early history of the lute through iconographic and textual evidence from 23<sup>rd</sup> century BCE Mesopotamia to the Old Babylonian Empire (c. 1830-1551 BCE; *Fig. 3.2*). Lute iconography of this period does not provide sufficient evidence to establish genealogies based on morphology beyond very general types. Textual evidence suggests that a number of morphological and regional species with wide geographical distribution existed but these cannot be matched to the visual documents.

This chapter therefore focuses on the ‘paternal’ aspect of the lute as imaginal object, centered on the archetypal figure of the shepherd king. This figure finds an earliest recorded manifestation in the legendary Sumerian king Dumuzi ‘the shepherd’, husband of the goddess Inanna/Ištar. This pair constitutes the prototype of the hero and woman of authority of the later Return song genre, and the Mesopotamian lute is intimately bound to them since its inception.

Mesopotamian kingship ideology regarded the king as an embodiment of Dumuzi whose legitimacy rested on his consecration through marriage to Inanna or her representative priestess via a divine ordination. Therefore, while the lute’s morphological lineages cannot be reconstructed at this earliest phase in its evolution, its social and cultural matrix relied on genealogies constructed partly through the epics and mythological poems that the lute accompanied in courtly performance settings. Furthermore, many or most of these epic songs highlight the central role of the ruler as warrior, and in this he foreshadows the Frontier Warrior who plays a definitive role in the *tanbūr*’s transmission from ancient Mesopotamia to the Balkans.

The mytho-cosmological rhizome of hero, woman of authority, and mediating long necked lute of the Return songs begins in this matrix.

Thus in this chapter I elucidate the interweaving of vertical, genealogical elements—rulership ideology, dynastic lineages, and the iconographic *motif* of the shepherd king with his chordophone—and the horizontal, rhizomatic elements—lute as attribute of Dumuzi-d kingship, and the shepherd king *theme*—that form the dual strands, or strings so to speak, of the lute’s early history.

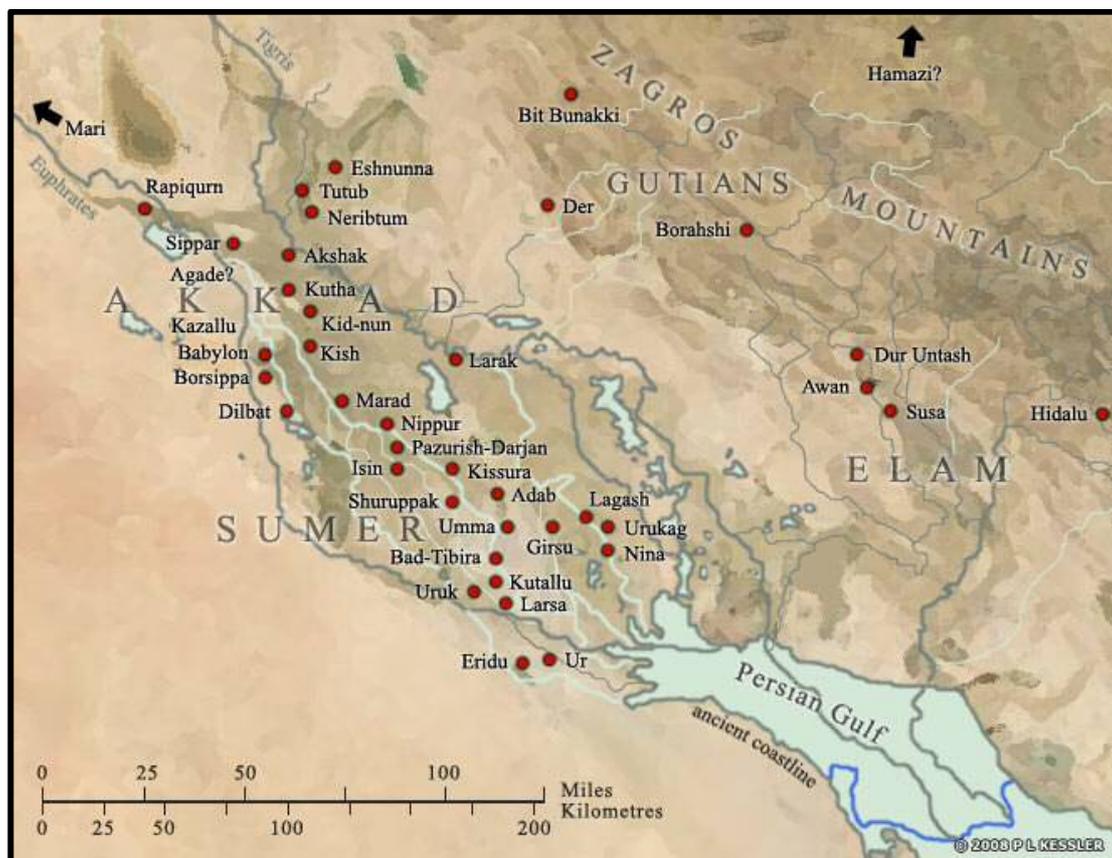


Fig. 3.1: Mesopotamia, 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE.

### The First Lutes and Lutenists 2334 BCE

The first recorded instance of lute instruments comes from two Mesopotamian images of the Akkadian Empire (2334-2218 BCE). Mesopotamia up to that time contained two fairly distinct cultural-linguistic zones (Fig. 3.1): the northern Tigris-Euphrates River basin cradled several Semitic-speaking societies including the Akkadians, and

further north the Hurrian-speaking kingdoms. The southern area, south of modern Baghdad, was the center of the Sumerian-speaking city-states. The Sumerian language was an agglutinative language isolate.

<b>Mesopotamia</b>		
5000 4000	<b>Ubaid Culture</b>	
4100 3000	<b>Uruk Dynasty</b>	
2900	<b>Early Dynastic</b>	<b>Sumerian Dynasties</b>
2800		
2700		
2650		-----
2600	2600	Dumuzi Sipad (legendary)
2550		
2500		
2450		
2400		
2350	<b>2334</b>	<b>Akkadian Empire</b>
2300		-----
2250	2334-2279/84	Sargon
		-----
	2261-2224	Naram-Sin
	<b>2218</b>	<b>Gutian invasion, end Akkadian Empire</b>
2200		
2150		
2100		
2050	<b>2047</b>	<b>Ur III Dynasty</b>
		-----
	2047-2030	Ur-Nammu
2000		-----
	2029-1982	Šulgi
1950	<b>1950</b>	<b>Isin-Larsa</b>
		-----
	1940	Elamite invasion, end Ur III
1900		
1850	<b>1830-1550</b>	<b>Old Babylonian Empire</b>
1800		-----
1750	1750	End Isin-Larsa
		-----
	1728-1686	Hammurabi
1700		-----
1650	1650-1600	Old Hittite Kingdom founded
1600		
1550	1551	Hittites sack Babylon, end OB
1500		

*Fig. 3.2: Timeline, Mesopotamia 5000-1500 BCE.*

‘Sumer’ was an Akkadian synonym for the Sumerian *ki-en-gi(-r)* ‘land of the noble rulers’; the Sumerians called themselves *ùĝ saĝ gíg ga*, ‘the black-haired people’. The alluvial plains and marshes of the Tigris-Euphrates delta at the head of the Persian Gulf had held permanent settlements since at least 5000 BCE, the *Ubaid* culture (c. 5000-4100 BCE). These settlements developed into the first real cities during the *Uruk* period<sup>1</sup> (4100-2900 BCE) (*Fig. 3.2*) and it was during this era that the pictographic writing used since the late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE was reformulated into cuneiform writing.

In the Sumerian Early Dynastic (hereafter ED) epoch (2900-2334 BCE)<sup>2</sup> cuneiform writing, at first used mostly for mercantile and administrative purposes, by the 25<sup>th</sup> century BCE became sophisticated enough to be used for literary texts. These included narrative poems that served as the basis for later Babylonian works like the *Epic of Gilgamesh*<sup>3</sup> as well as numerous myths. In fact, these poetic texts were kept alive in the Old Babylonian Empire (hereafter OB) to create a sense of continuity with the Sumerian past. ‘The stories...that are aligned to express a national identity projected far back into the past are based in part on pre-existing elements that are re-contextualized to serve their new purpose.’<sup>4</sup>

In other words, the preservation and refashioning of these texts provided a kind of genealogy for the ruling dynasties of the various ethnicities in Mesopotamia from the Akkadians through the Neo-Assyrian Empire (911-609 BCE). This

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<sup>1</sup> Marc van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2016), pp. 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> Archaeologists use two dating systems—the Middle and Short Chronologies—for ancient Mesopotamian history based on different readings of the ‘kings-list’ compiled in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE. All dates used in this Thesis follow the Short Chronology. See Mieroop, *A History*, ‘Debate 1.1: Dating Near Eastern History’, pp.17-18.

<sup>3</sup> Betty De Shong Meador, *Inanna, Lady of the Largest Heart: Poems of the Sumerian High Priestess Enheduanna* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000), p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> Veldhuis, ‘Guardians’, p. 393.

genealogy derived not from bloodlines per se but on a concept of rulership ideology that gained its legitimacy via a mythological connection to the founders of the ruling institutions: the Sumerians of the Uruk and ED periods.

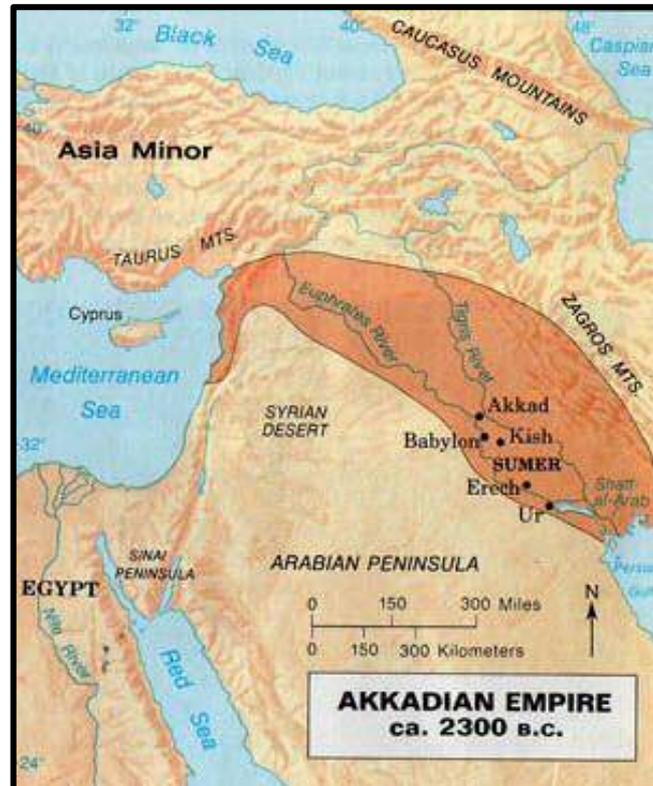


Fig. 3.3: Extent of Akkadian Empire.

This is largely why Sumerian continued to be used as an administrative language and its lexicon maintained through the lexical lists for nearly two millennia after it had ceased to be a living language. Sumerian myths and epics provided grounding for this ideology and so the performance of these tales held an important place in the musical culture of the courts. At the same time, each new ruling class added its own marks to this musical culture, and in this way the lute was introduced into Mesopotamia.

Akkadian *Sargon I* (r. 2334-2279/84 BCE) became the first king to unite north and south Mesopotamia and thus took the title ‘King of Sumer and Akkad’ (Fig. 3.3). During his reign he founded the first true empire, taking all of Mesopotamia,

northern Syria and Lebanon, and Anatolia as far west as the Taurus Mts. Parts of the Hurrian kingdoms in northeast Anatolia and the Elamite kingdom in southwest Iran formed tributary states to his Empire. Sargon established active trade as far away as the Indic Harappan civilization, Tajikistan's Pamir Mountains—a prime source for lapis lazuli—the Old Kingdom in Egypt, and with *Dilmun*, a Persian Gulf kingdom.

After Sargon's death in 2279/84 BCE his successors maintained the Empire despite a series of revolts. The rule of his grandson *Naram-Sin* (r. 2261-2224 BCE) represented the Akkadian Empire's zenith. Shortly after his death the Empire, weakened by drought and famine, fell to the predations of the Gutians (r. 2218-2047), widely hated nomads from around the Zagros Mountains in northwestern Iran. They were eventually deposed by *Ur-Nammu* (r. 2047-2030 BCE), the first king of the 'Sumerian renaissance', the Ur III period (2047-c. 1940 BCE).



Pl. 3.1: Cylinder seal impression BM 89096, presentation scene.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Iraq, Reign of Sargon I, 2340-2284 BCE. BM 89096. Image source: BM 89096, 'cylinder seal', found at: <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=756797&partId=1](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=756797&partId=1)>; accessed on: 27 April 2015.

These two earliest lute images (*Pls. 3.1, 3.3*), both kept at the British Museum, are cylinder seal impressions and have been dated to, respectively, the reigns of Sargon and Naram-Sin. Cylinder seals were small cylinders of semi-precious stones incised with designs that, when rolled over damp clay impressed the image onto them. These clay impressions were then placed on parcels of goods, storehouse doors, or legal documents inscribed on clay tablets as receipts, ownership marks, and protective seals. Government officials, merchants, members of the aristocratic class, and other persons of note each had their own custom designed cylinder that they typically wore around their neck and that sometimes included identifying or dedicatory inscriptions.<sup>6</sup>

The first seal, BM 89096, (*Pl. 3.1*) depicts a ‘presentation’ scene of sorts. The god *Ea*, (Sux; Akk *Enki*)<sup>7</sup> sits on a crate-like throne similar to those in the ED *magur* boat image (*Pl. 2.5*) and wears a horned headdress, two signs of divinity.<sup>8</sup> Ea/Enki was the Sumerian god of water and dwelt in the *abzu* (Sux; Akk *apsû*), the ‘cosmic subterranean water’ below the earth from which all terrestrial waters flowed.<sup>9</sup> He was also ‘a favourite [sic] god amongst diviners (*bārû*) and exorcist priests (*ašipû*) as he is the ultimate source of all ritual knowledge used by exorcists to avert and expel evil.’<sup>10</sup> Ea also played a formative role in the creation of the world and of mankind and was, significantly, the god of the arts and crafts and patron of musicians in Sumer.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Collon, *First Impressions*, pp. 108-119.

<sup>7</sup> Ea/Enki can be identified by the streams of water that pour from his shoulders and the fish swimming within it.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 151-153. Cf. Dominique Collon and Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, ‘The Lute in Ancient Mesopotamia’, *The British Museum Yearbook 4: Music and Civilization*, edited by T. C. Mitchell (London: The British Museum, 1980), p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Tammi J. Schneider, *An Introduction to Ancient Mesopotamian Religion* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge UK: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2011), p. 43, n. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Ruth Horry, ‘Enki/Ea (god)’, *Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses*, Oracc and the UK Higher Education Academy, 2016. Found at: <<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/enki/>>; accessed on: 22 August 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Collon, *First Impressions*, p. 165.

A double-faced attendant stands behind Ea while a second, possibly his chief advisor *Isimu* (Sux; Akk *Usmû*) presents to the god a birdman, led in by another attendant who wields a spear-like object in his upraised hand and a possible staff in his lowered hand. This birdman has often been interpreted as the mythical *Anzû* bird who stole the Tablets of Destiny and was brought before the god for judgment.<sup>12</sup> Though the exact mythological reference of this scene is in doubt, the motif itself constituted a fairly popular genre (*Pl. 3.2*).



*Pl. 3.2: Cylinder seal impression, presentation scene.*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> For one example see the British Museum's online collection information for BM 103317, 'cylinder seal'; <[http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collectionobject\\_details](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collectionobject_details)>; accessed on: 21 August 2018.

According to Renate Marian van Dijk-Coombes, (PhD., 2016, Ancient Cultures, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, South Africa), the type of bird, based on its leg structure, is unclear. This and the lack of definite description as to what the Anzû bird actually looked like in the Mesopotamian imagination, least of all if it was a human-bird hybrid at all, means that in the end we can assign no more definite reading of the image than 'birdman'. That the figure has an audience before Enki does allow us to attribute some important mythic significance to it, however. (Renate Marian van Dijk-Coombes, Personal communication via email 5 Nov. 2015). For translation and discussion of Anzû-bird myth, see: Stephanie Dalley, *Myths of Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) pp. 203-227.

<sup>13</sup> Iraq, c. 2250 BCE; BM 103317 'cylinder seal'. Image source: <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/search.aspx?searchText=103317&object=23120](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx?searchText=103317&object=23120)>; accessed on: 23 Aug. 2018.



*Pl. 3.3: Detail of lutenist, Pl. 3.1.*

BM 89096 stands apart from other examples of the genre in the small figure, identified as a mortal human by his plain headdress, diminished size, and posture, who squats or sits cross-legged behind this guard. The cuneiform inscription above him reads ‘*Ur.Ur.Nar*’, or ‘*Ur.Ur, singer*’.<sup>14</sup> *Ur.Ur* holds a vaguely rendered lute in his hands that provides only the most basic morphological information: a small rounded body and a long, pole-like neck with two etched appendages that dangle from its top (*Pl. 3.3*). These latter are the first instance of what in later iconography are shown as braided tassels, probably attached to two leather tuning rings and have thus been interpreted as signifying that these lutes had two strings.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Collon, *First Impressions*, pp. 153, n. 672. The Sumerian term *Ur* held several meanings all of which used the same cuneiform sign , including ‘wanderer’, ‘dog’, ‘person’, ‘pride’, and ‘servant’, primarily a temple official who was a servant of a deity. It could be both a personal name and a title. *Nar* denoted a singer generally but sometimes a singer attached to a temple, thus a hymnist. See entries for Akkadian terms: *nāru*—*nar* ‘musician’, and Sumerian term *UR*. Found at: <<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/nepsd-frame.html>>; accessed on 25 Feb. and 3 March 2015.

<sup>15</sup> This interpretation seems the strict majority view, although Émilie Masson considered the idea that two tassels meant two strings ‘stupid’; *Recherches sur les plus Anciens Emprunts Sémitiques en Grec* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1967), pp. 90-91.

The absence of any evidence for lutes in the Sumerian period and their first historical appearance in Sargon's reign, suggest that lutes were introduced into agrarian southern Mesopotamia via some pastoralist, nomadic culture.<sup>16</sup> Theories as to what specific society or region were the first to introduce or invent it vary, from 'the barbarian mountain peoples to the northeast of [Mesopotamia, i.e. the Zagros Mts.]',<sup>17</sup> to the Caucasus Mts., to Elamites, to northwestern Semites from Syria (*Fig. 3.1*).<sup>18</sup>

It is probably impossible to say where the lute's genesis point lay, but by the 23<sup>rd</sup> century BCE it could already have been transmitted across and common to the entire upper Mesopotamian region and extending from Elam and the Zagros Mts. to Syria. This swathe of territory was already linked by active trade routes in the ED period<sup>19</sup> and cultural artifacts show a network of reciprocal influences in artistic styles and techniques. This is also exactly the extent of the territory that Sargon ruled from his Mesopotamian base.

Southern Mesopotamia before the Akkadian era, on the other hand, shows greater signs of independent development and was less connected to the above trade routes due to the extensive marshes and mountain ranges that made it relatively inaccessible. The affect of this on Sumer's early music culture can be surmised by the ED music iconography that features a wealth of harp and lyre species and names in a variety of contexts but no hint of lutes. When lute images do become plentiful by the 19<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE they are found in that same broad range from Susa through Mesopotamia into Syria and the Taurus Mts. The 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium iconography shows

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<sup>16</sup> Harvey Turnbull, 'The Origin of the Long-necked Lute', *GSJ* 25 (1972), pp. 58-59.

<sup>17</sup> Joan Rimmer, *Ancient Musical Instruments of Western Asiatic Antiquities in the British Museum* (London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1969), p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> Turnbull provides a summary of all these theories of origin in 'The Origin', pp. 58-59, as do Collon and Kilmer, 'The Lute', pp. 13-15.

<sup>19</sup> Collon, *First Impressions*, p. 20.

that the lute was well established in a number of distinct cultures, each with its characteristic social and artistic contexts for the instrument.

*The Bard and Oral Narrative Poetry*

Seal 89096, however, displays a number of hints that its introduction into Sumer entailed a *rapprochement* of Akkadian and Sumerian cultures. This *rapprochement* was necessary in order to establish that genealogical link with the Sumerian legacy that would confer the Akkadian kings' authority to rule over a 'foreign' people, yet allowed the Akkadians to distinguish themselves as a creative culture in their own right.

The inscription identifies this as personal seal of Ur.Ur and gives his professional station of 'singer'. His title 'the singer', not 'musician' or 'lutenist', defines his relationship to the instrument and his self-inclusion in this generic scene suggests that he is not a part of the *tableau* but a commentator or reciter of the divine or mythic event depicted here. His instrument is important enough that it completes his iconography but is not the central element of his professional identity.

What kind of song does he sing? The context suggests a song with some narrative element; most presentation scenes show a figure coming before a deity as a supplicant, devotee or petitioner, and an attendant who leads them before the deity. In this *tableau*, the birdman is presented to the god Ea/Enki, whose posture suggests he is listening to the first attendant relate the case. The somewhat threatening gesture of the attendant behind the birdman implies that the hybrid creature has not come forth voluntarily. The scene thus has an air of suspense, a dramatic moment before judgment is pronounced. This, combined with Ea/Enki's role as 'source of ritual knowledge' used by exorcists and magicians to avert 'evil'—i.e. unlawful and

socially destructive acts, further suggests the justification and reification of law, a restoration of order after a disturbance.

In this interpretation the *nar* would be fulfilling two of the primary functions of a bardic office in, one, narrating the unfolding drama—a singer of tales—and, two, telling a story that justifies the divine law that the gods passed on to mankind, thereby establishing human social order. He represents the bard as lawgiver or, perhaps more precisely the bard as lawkeeper. Sargon's era was still several centuries before the first known written law code was etched in clay by Ur-Nammu in the Ur III kingdom, yet the increasing social and economic complexity of Mesopotamian civilization necessitated increasingly complex law codes. Cuneiform writing had, as noted above, only recently evolved to the point where it could express purely literary texts, and among the first of these were the corpus of myths that served to justify and legitimize the king's authority to rule as given by divine mandate.<sup>20</sup>

These myths described the workings of the heavenly order, the ways of the deities, and mankind's relationship to them. In the absence of a *written* systematic legal code, such myths demonstrated and encapsulated what was considered proper and improper conduct and the rewards and punishments for each. Any textual codification of the law must have taken place via oral tradition, for as modern students of oral traditions have come to realize, 'the remarkable truth [is] that not just some but all literary traditions begin with an oral phase that customarily dwarfs the written phase in its longevity.'<sup>21</sup> The knowledge necessary to the cohesion, creativity, and continuation of the society lies embedded in both the characters of the mythic

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<sup>20</sup> Beate Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria* (Boston/Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc., 2017), pp. 228-232.

<sup>21</sup> John Miles Foley, 'Man, Muse, and Story: Psychohistorical Patterns in Oral Epic Poetry', *Oral Tradition* 2/1 (1987), pp. 91-93.

figures and the events of the tale, the narrative dynamics that take place between them.

Furthermore, the relationship between law and what we would call ‘singing’, some form of recitation or ‘musical’ intoning,<sup>22</sup> is very ancient and originates in oral traditions that heavily rely on narrative poetry, and eventually become codified in written form. The Indic *Rgveda* is one well known example of this. The Greeks also felt this connection, as Hesiod in his *Theogony* relates how the Muses ‘uttering through their lips a lovely voice, sing the laws of all and the goodly ways of the immortals, uttering their lovely voice.’<sup>23</sup>

The thesis that Sumerian narrative poetry and, by extension, the Akkadian and Babylonian editions of this corpus stemmed from oral tradition has been well argued by Bendt Alster (1946-2012), Assyriologist and lecturer at the University of Copenhagen (1978-2005), especially in his monograph *Dumuzi’s Dream*.<sup>24</sup> Drawing on Albert Lord’s classic study of oral poetry in the former Yugoslavia, *The Singer of Tales*,<sup>25</sup> Alster examines one text of *Dumuzi’s Dream*, discussed in greater detail below. He notes that the lack of a clear ur-text of the numerous versions of this

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<sup>22</sup> Greeks writers like Alexander Polyhistor (fl. c. 190-150 BCE), for example, distinguished between ‘the epic diction (*epê*) of Homer and the melodies (*melê*) of Orpheus’ (quoted in John Curtis Franklin, ‘Terpander: the Invention of Music in the Orientalizing Period’, PhD. Thesis, University of London, 2002, p. 52, n. 99). This distinction corresponds with a probable difference in the melodic forms and styles between the epic and lyric or hymnal performance.

<sup>23</sup> Hesiod, *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homeric, with an English Translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Theogony* (London/Cambridge MA: William Heinemann/Harvard University Press, 1914), l. 63. See also John Curtis Franklin, ‘Structural Sympathies in Ancient Greek and South-Slavic Heroic Song’, *Studien zur Musikarchäologie. 4. Musikarchäologische Quellengruppen: Bodenerkundungen, mündliche Überlieferung, Aufzeichnung. Vorträge des 3. Symposiums der Internationalen Studiengruppe Musikarchäologie im Kloster Michaelstein, 9.-16. Juni 2002.* (Rahden/Westf.: Leidorf, 2004), pp. 244-245.

<sup>24</sup> Bendt Alster, *Dumuzi’s Dream: Aspects of Oral Poetry in a Sumerian Myth* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1972).

<sup>25</sup> Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1960).

poem<sup>26</sup> and the rhetorical devices<sup>27</sup> it employs—heavy parallelism, intensely formulaic nature, alternate readings and inconsistencies between them, use of repetition, and thematic structures—display the same characteristics that Lord and his mentor Milman Parry showed to be ‘an unmistakable mark of oral poetry.’

Furthermore, the strophic and colaic structures in the *Dream* texts display a richness and variety that suggests the ‘work of generations of poets’. Though these rhetorical devices can in some instances be attributed to the repeated copying and transcribing practices of the Mesopotamian scribes, and ‘the knowledge of scribal art has certainly helped to fix the Sumerian literary tradition...an unambiguous “literary” style has never existed [in it].’<sup>28</sup>

All of these features are present throughout the Mesopotamian narrative poetic corpus; the kings of the Ur III dynasty, for example, were the first to set to writing the ‘nine Sumerian narrative poems’ of the Uruk *Gilgameš* cycle. ‘Judging from internal considerations...[this collation was probably] commissioned to entertain the royal court at Ur’ [*emphasis added*].<sup>29</sup> This supports the general view among modern scholars that such poems were intended to be sung or recited with the accompaniment of musical instruments, usually harps or lyres.<sup>30</sup> However, the use of lutes cannot be ruled out even if they are not typically listed as such, given that lute names do not appear in the literary or lexical corpora until the Ur III period. The

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<sup>26</sup> Alster, *Dream*, pp. 126-129. For a broader discussion of the problem of textual relationships in Mesopotamian poetic literature, see Jeremy A. Black, *Reading Sumerian Poetry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), pp. 28-32.

<sup>27</sup> Alster, *Dream*, pp. 17, 22-27, 36-42.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 38.

<sup>29</sup> Woods, ‘Sons of the Sun’, pp. 79-80. These served as the basis for the famous Old Babylonian Epic of Gilgameš.

<sup>30</sup> B. Foster, ‘Sumerian Poetry’, *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics: Fourth Edition*, edited by Stephen Cushman, Clare Cavanagh, Jahan Ramazani, and Paul Rouzer (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 1376; Gonzalo Rubio, ‘Chap. 2: Sumerian Literature’, in *From an Antique Land: An Introduction to Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, edited by Carl S. Erlich (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Pubs., Inc., 2009), p. 20.

evidence of the two British Museum cylinder seals strongly suggests that this was the case, and that lutes were played by *nar* singers who fulfilled a bardic function in their performance of such narrative epics and myths.



Pl. 3.4: Cylinder seal impression BM 28806, Akkadian banquet scene.<sup>31</sup>

### A Feast of Music

The second seal impression, BM 28806 (Pl. 3.4), reinforces this notion and adds a second dimension to the picture of the ancient lute's social and musical role in the Akkadian era. It also features Ea/Enki, on the right and his chief attendant Isimu. On the seal impression's left side sits the moon god *Nanna* (Su., also <sup>d</sup>*Šeš.ki*; Akk. *Sīn*, *Su'en*), patron god of the city of Ur who along with Ea represents the oldest documented strata of the Sumerian pantheon.<sup>32</sup>

Nanna/Sīn was an important deity to the king Naram-Sīn whose royal name incorporates the god's Akkadian name. His chief symbols were the crescent moon,

<sup>31</sup> South Iraq, Reign of Naram-Sin, ca. 2260-2159 BCE. Image source: BM 28806 'cylinder seal', found at: <[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/search.aspx?searchText=28806&object=23120](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx?searchText=28806&object=23120)>; accessed on: 14 Nov. 2014.

<sup>32</sup> Adam Stone, 'Nanna/Suen/Sin (god)', *Ancient Mesopotamian Gods and Goddesses* (Oracc and the UK Higher Education Academy, 2016). Found at: <<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/nannasuen/>>; accessed on: 23 August 2018.

pictured above his upraised hand in this seal, and the bull whose crescent horns are reflected in the god's headdress. He also served as the patron god of shepherds and cowherds, so his inclusion on this seal next to the lutenist may further corroborate the lute's provenance among pastoralist people of northern Mesopotamia. His children include the goddess Inanna and her brother *Utu* (Sux; Akk *Šamaš*), which provides another link to the lute's mythological complex.

In his role as god of the moon,

[he] is referred to in terms characteristic of the celestial body, e.g., radiant, shining, and much is made of the moon's path and cycle, which were also keenly observed for omens of the future... Both the moon god and the sun god...are associated with issuing laws and verdicts, the determination of destinies, and the announcements of omens...This judicial role was already obvious in the text of the Early Dynastic 'Stele of the Vultures', where oaths are taken in the presence of Su'en, and in his epithet "diviner of fates", which is used across the Near East.<sup>33</sup>

The presence of these two gods, then, highlights the image's theme of the connection of oaths, divination or prophecy, and the law or judgment. In conjunction with the seated lutenist between them this further supports the sense of the function of the lute and lutenist as a bardic figure.

In addition, the composition can be regarded as a type of banquet scene in its specifically Akkadian form. On one level, the banquet scene genre displayed simply royal feasting and entertainments; on a deeper level, however, an intimate connection ran between the royal feast and rituals in which the king displayed his piety before the gods. The Mesopotamian ritual feeding of the gods, or rather of the gods' icons which the god was believed to inhabit, took place daily and 'the meals were served in a style and manner befitting a king.'<sup>34</sup> Every step in the preparation of food and drink and

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Schneider, *Introduction*, p. 103.

every item used in the preparation underwent a careful process of blessings and purifications, and finally,

A table was brought in...before the image, then water for washing was offered, and a number of...dishes were placed on the table in a prescribed arrangement...specific cuts of meat were served for the main dish followed by fruit...the meal was accompanied by musicians...the meal was clearly fit for a king, because after the having been presented to the deity's image the dishes from the god's meal were sent to the king.<sup>35</sup>

This aspect of the banquet was common to all civilizations across the ancient Near and Middle East, though specifics varied: in Hittite festivals of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, the king would drink wine from a silver cup instead of the thick Sumerian beer through a strainer-tube from an urn. But otherwise the significance was the same: 'from it [the Hittite king] "drinks the god". This is a sacramental act. By it the king comes into mystical union with his divine guest, for the cup symbolizes the god himself.'<sup>36</sup> The Hittite feasts, too, were *de rigueur* accompanied by lively and spectacular entertainments such as jugglers, wrestling matches, dancers and musicians, including lutenists.<sup>37</sup> Banquet scene iconography can thus be simultaneously read as both a royal, earthly event and a heavenly, divine one, and the king's image, because he is the gods' representative and agent on earth, acts as a stand-in for the gods.<sup>38</sup>

The banquet scene was a popular genre of Sumerian seal impressions but these typically took a very different form (*Pl. 3.5*): the scene was divided into an upper and lower register with a crowd of figures, and those of highest status sat on either

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>36</sup> Trevor Bryce, *Life and Society in the Hittite World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 190.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 189-190; Ahmet Ünal, 'The Textual Illustrations of the "Jester Scene" on the Sculptures of Alaca Höyük', *Anatolian Studies* 44 (1994), pp. 211-215. The relief carvings from the Hittite ceremonial site at Alaca Hüyük feature a colorful composition of such festivities that includes a sword-swallower, fire-eater, dwarf ladder-acrobats, and a controversial image of a lute with an indented waist similar to a modern guitar.

<sup>38</sup> Bryce, *Hittite*, 189-191; Schneider, *Introduction*, pp. 102-104; Collon, *First Impressions*, pp. 32, 35.

side of a beer urn and drank from long curved tubes, typical of the Sumerian style. The secondary figures often included a lyrist playing a trapezoidal lyre, although sometimes an arched harp was substituted. *Pl. 3.5* includes two small figures dancing beneath the bull-headed lyre.<sup>39</sup>



*Pl. 3.5: Cylinder seal impression, Sumerian banquet scene.*<sup>40</sup>

During the Akkadian era, however, an Akkadian style of banquet scene replaced the Sumerian type. Instead of the communal beer urn and apparently human participants, the Akkadian style featured a banquet table with only one or two feasters, displayed in a single register. Generally, as in BM 28806, a single attendant and a musician with a chordophone are present. In the third millennium BCE the lyre or harp featured prominently but by the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE the long necked lute (LNL)

<sup>39</sup> Their small stature and bowed legs, and presence in the banquet bears strong formal similarities to the terracotta votives of dwarf lutenists found in children's graves in Susa, the capital city of the Elamite kingdom in southwestern Iran, dated to the OB era, housed in the Louvre. OB banquet scenes sometimes use the Sumerian compositional style of *Pl. 3.4* and include a figure whose bowed legs and arm positions are formally identical to the Susa dwarf lutenists.

<sup>40</sup> Southern Iraq, ED period, Ur, 2550-2450 BCE. Image source: PG 1327, 'cylinder seal', found at: <[https://www.penn.museum/sites/iraq/?page\\_id=503](https://www.penn.museum/sites/iraq/?page_id=503)>; accessed on: 25 Aug. 2018.

had become common in such scenes. BM 28806, then, can be viewed as a harbinger of the latter trend. Perhaps most importantly, the Akkadian banquet scenes replace the *de facto* banquet with the ‘presentation before the gods’ scene or, as in this seal impression, with gods at the table, which made the image of the king redundant.<sup>41</sup>

Again, the lutenist/singer who accompanies the banquet of the gods provides a mirror image of the performer’s role in royal banquets, and his performance consists of songs that suit the listeners’ tastes and appropriate to their domains. Thus, one could expect to hear epic narratives and mythic tales that:

1. Enumerate the codes and customs that justify the divine order given to human society as a model for earthly order;
2. Remind the human listener of the proper conduct of and relationship between gods and men;
3. Justifies the legitimacy and authority of the king and reinforces the ideology of kingship.
4. Finally, at the simplest level, provide dramatic tales that, hopefully, keep the interest of the audience piqued and entertained while instructing on the above.

The *rapprochement* between Sumerian and Akkadian culture and rulership, then, was effected in these images in the following ways:

1. The Akkadian use of an originally Sumerian artistic medium and administrative and mercantile technology—the cylinder seal.
2. The adoption of a popular Sumerian iconographic genre—the banquet scene—that expressed a central idea of kingship ideology, but in Akkadian pictorial terms.

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<sup>41</sup> Collon, *First Impressions*, pp. 27, 32, and 35.

3. The representation of two central deities from the Sumerian pantheon—Ea and Nanna, both of whom appeared but rarely in iconography<sup>42</sup> after the Ur III period—the first of which was important to Sumerian agrarian society and the latter significant to the pastoralists of northern Mesopotamia.
4. An apparent synthesis of Sumerian and Akkadian music cultures in the figures of the lutenists who replace the Sumerian lyrist as banquet performer and singer of Sumerian epics and myths appropriated to establish Akkadian ruling legitimacy.

### *Dumuzi the Shepherd King*

The mytho-cosmological genealogies that Mesopotamian kings utilized to secure their authority were transferred to and reified as an actual, dynastic genealogy through the ritual of the sacred marriage. Central to this concept are two mythical figures—the goddess Inanna/Ištar and her semi-divine husband *Dumuzi*. Their characters and functions in the texts are inextricably interlaced with the lute's destiny, and serve as prototypes of the central figures in the Return song.

This ceremony took place at the temple of the goddess Inanna and took two forms: in the earlier, Sumerian form the *entu* priestess was married to the moon god Nanna.

The *entu*... was a priestess of the highest order, elected by the god Nanna and revealed to the country through omens. So important was the office that the priestess was always of royal blood, the daughter or sister of the king.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 35; Stone, 'Nanna/Suen/Sin (god)'.

<sup>43</sup> Penelope N. Weadock, 'The *Giparu* at Ur', *Iraq* 37/2 (1975), p. 101.

Under Semitic-speaking dynasties it was the king who married the priestess, the stand-in and representative of the goddess Inanna/Ištar.<sup>44</sup> In the latter case the king assumed the place of her mythical husband Dumuzi, an early iteration of the archetype of the Shepherd King, the human man who rises from humble beginnings to become a great leader or culture hero due to intercession from a divine feminine figure.

The *entu*'s greatest responsibility was enacting her role in the sacred marriage, which took place during each new year's festival that celebrated the harvest season, and was an actual, not merely symbolic, rite.<sup>45</sup> One Sumerian text 'tells of the gods' reward to Ur-Nammu for his piety; they ensure his royal line by giving him a son, born of the *entu*-priestess of Nanna in Nippur.' This new year's rite then reaffirmed the relationship between palace and temple; rewarded piety with genealogical heirs to the king's throne; celebrated a successful harvest—signifying the king's efficacy in securing the gods' favour—and ritually enacted the ruling couple's divine types, Inanna and Dumuzi.<sup>46</sup>

There are two Dumuzi-s listed in the Sumerian king lists, codified in the OB era from texts written in the Sumerian ED I (C. 2900-2750/2700 BCE). One was an apparently historical ruler known as Dumuzi(d) the Fisherman who ruled for '100 years' around 2600 BCE. The other was a legendary one called Dumuzi(d) the Shepherd said to have ruled for an incredible 36,000 years before the Deluge recounted by *Utnapištim*, the 'Sumerian Noah', in the Epic of Gilgamesh.<sup>47</sup> This latter figure became the divinized-human 'god' Dumuzi and 'Dumuzi-d [DIĜIR] became in

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 101-103.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>47</sup> See 'Gilgamesh XI', *Myths from Mesopotamia*, pp. 109-116. Modern archaeologists have dated this Deluge to approximately 2900 BCE based on radiocarbon dating of sediments in the Tigris-Euphrates River basin of southern Iraq.

later literary tradition a designation of a role, a metaphor, or a prototype essential for the conception of Mesopotamian rulership.<sup>48</sup> His name in Sumerian, *dumu.zi*, is usually translated as ‘rightful/faithful/honored son’.<sup>49</sup> In Babylonia and Assyria he and his divine spouse were known, respectively, by the Semitic cognates *Tammuz* and *Ištar*.

This divinized Dumuzi had an established cult before the closing of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE as attested by votive plaques that show him with his bride the goddess Inanna (*Pl. 3.6*). Sumerian literature dated to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE also provides information as to the widespread popularity of his cult<sup>50</sup> and extant prayers to Dumuzi are either ‘requests that he will more copiously express his own being’<sup>51</sup> or pleas for protection from evil and magic.<sup>52</sup> The name Dumuzi referred to a complex of gods, most of them agrarian in nature,<sup>53</sup> each with their own titles and cults.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Gebhard J. Selz, ‘The Divine Prototypes’, *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond*, ed. by Nicole Brisch (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), p. 20.

<sup>49</sup> Alternative translations include ‘expelled son’ and ‘true lover’; Wiggerman argues either of these make more sense in light of the god’s mythology. See F. A. M. Wiggerman, ‘The Image of Dumuzi: A Diachronic Analysis’, in *Gazing on the Deep: Ancient Near Eastern and Other Studies in Honor of Tzvi Abusch*, edited by Jeffrey Stackert, Barbara Nevling Porter and David P. Wright (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2010), pp. 329-330.

<sup>50</sup> Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 26. Cf. Jacobsen’s comments on Inanna, p. 135.

<sup>51</sup> Thorkild Jacobsen, *Toward the Image of Tammuz and Other Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture*, edited by William L. Moran (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Pubs., 1970), p. 75.

<sup>52</sup> See for example, ‘To Dumuzi’, in *From Distant Days: Myths, Tales, and Poetry of Ancient Mesopotamia*, translated and introduced by Benjamin R. Foster (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1995), p. 222.

<sup>53</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 135. ‘The figure of the god tends...to divide into different aspects, each with the power in a particular basic economy emphasized and each with its own characteristic segment of ritual events.’

<sup>54</sup> Jacobsen, *Toward the Image*, pp. 73-74. Dumuzi in his aspect of *Damu* was the power in plants and trees that caused their sap to rise; as *Dumuzi ama-ušumgal-anna* he caused the date palms to bear ripe fruit (although this name sometimes appears in reference to Dumuzi the shepherd as well), and Dumuzi of the grain was the immanent power in grains and beer.



Pl. 3.6: 'Marriage of Dumuzi and Inanna.'<sup>55</sup>

His most popular and wide-reaching aspect and cult was that of *Dumuzid Sipad*, Dumuzi the Shepherd.<sup>56</sup> This form of his cult was most popular in the central grasslands of the Euphrates River delta in the cities of Uruk, Umma, et. al. 'the cities of the shepherders' (Fig. 3.1). In his pastoral cult and associated myths, primarily the variants of the text *Dumuzi's Dream*,<sup>57</sup> Dumuzi dies a horrible, nightmarish death.<sup>58</sup> Accordingly, the main body of Dumuzi texts consists of laments that tell of his attempts to escape his demonic pursuers, his death, the lamentations of his mother and sister, *Geštinanna*, and/or his divine bride Inanna and their concerted efforts to restore him from the underworld.

The epithet of 'Shepherd King' is essential to understanding the nature of Dumuzi and his archetypal descendants; the man of humble, usually pastoral beginnings who is chosen to receive a special, privileged dispensation by a divine feminine figure. This dispensation elevates him from his lowly background on

<sup>55</sup> Sumerian, southern Iraq, c. 2600-2400 BCE. Image source: <<http://www.mesopotamiangods.com/the-courtship-of-inanna-and-dumuzi/>>; accessed on: 22 Feb. 2018.

<sup>56</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 25, 135.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 47-63.

<sup>58</sup> Scholarly opinions are still divided as to whether Dumuzi should be considered a 'dying and returning god', with seasonal agricultural implications, or simply a 'dying god'. Cf. Tryggve Mettinger, 'The 'dying and rising god': a survey of research from Frazer to the present day', in *David and Zion: biblical studies in honor of J.J.M. Roberts*, edited by Bernard Frank Batto and Kathryn L. Roberts (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2004), pp. 373-386.

society's margins and makes him into an exemplar of the virtues and qualities of manhood as conceived by that society. In Dumuzi's case, he is chosen by Inanna, with the intercession of her brother *Utu/Šamaš* the sun god, to be her husband in a competitive dialogue with the farmer *Enkimdu*.<sup>59</sup> In a *kunġar*, a dialogic song between the lovers, 'Inanna taunts that had her family not adopted Dumuzi, he would be a ceaseless wanderer on the dark paths of the steppes':<sup>60</sup>

If it were not for my mother Ningal, he would be chasing me along  
the dark (?) paths of the desert!

If it were not for Father Suen, he would be chasing me along the  
dark (?) paths of the desert!

If it were not for my brother Utu, he would be chasing me along  
the dark (?) paths of the desert!<sup>61</sup>

It is probably by reason of Dumuzi's sense of lostness in the world that it takes this intervention by a superior feminine figure, daughter of gods, to raise the hero from his humble position as shepherd to an exalted one as king. In his prior status he represents an 'intransitive' power that acts within his realm—causing the sheep and goats to give plentiful milk and offspring—but he is rarely a god called upon to intervene or intercede in human affairs.<sup>62</sup> Without the active efforts of the feminine figures in his life, whether mother and sister or Inanna, he remains,

As being rather than doing, as having no responsibilities, innocently self-centered, yet pleasing and attractive, [which] is very finely expressed *in its symbolism as a young boy*, a youth, a symbol shared by all the aspects of Tammuz. In the youth, attractive for what he is, not for anything he has done or may do, unformed by responsibilities, *still part of nature*, immediate as a young animal, the element of sheer being, of intransitiveness, in Tammuz [Dumuzi] finds its right human form. [*Emphases added*]

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<sup>59</sup> Samuel Noah Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology: A Study of Spiritual and Literary Achievement in the Third Millennium B.C.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961), p. 102.

<sup>60</sup> Woods, 'Sons of the Sun', p. 90.

<sup>61</sup> 'A *kunġar* to Inana (Dumuzid-Inana I)', translation: t.4.08.09. Found at: <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.4.08.09#>>; accessed on: 14 Nov. 2014.

<sup>62</sup> Jacobsen, *Toward the Image*, pp. 74-76.

In other words, before the events that lead to his death in the laments he is an innocent; the hunt, his capture and death, and his encounter with his would-be rescuers represent a quickening of his being, a kind of maturing and a growth in his ability to accept his new station. This painful process results, in the end, in the emergence of a type of ‘new man’.<sup>63</sup>

*Dumuzi and the <sup>giš</sup>gu-di*

In the Return song texts discussed later in this Thesis an LNL of the *tanbūr* family or, in the Greek context, the *lyre*, almost inevitably appears in the narrative to mark the end of this state of innocence and the beginning of the protagonist’s figurative death, journey to the ‘underworld’, and eventual renewal as a ‘new man’. Does the LNL, then, play an analogous role in the Mesopotamian context?

In the corpus of Dumuzi texts there are few mentions of chordophones: in the lament titled ‘In the Desert by the Early Grass’<sup>64</sup> the ghost of the dead Dumuzi encounters other spirits of the dead on the road to the underworld. Not realizing that they, too, are dead, he wishes for them to send a message to his mother to dissuade her from following him. The group encounters the shade of a ‘songstress’ who says to a ‘ghost child’,

Little one, little one, why come you to me?  
 Setting up the wailing harp, I shall stay with you.  
 As for me, my setting up a spirit harp in the wind,  
 What matters it?  
 I am one versed in understanding spirits, in dirges,  
 What matters (now) my understanding?<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Foley, ‘Psychohistory’, pp. 96-98, 103.

<sup>64</sup> Jacobsen, *The Harps*, pp. 57-84.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74. A transliterated text of this poem is not currently available so the original term that Jacobsen has translated as ‘harp’ is unknown to this author.

Later in the poem, in a litany of the dead god's various forms and locations of their tombs,<sup>66</sup> the name *Lugalshadi*, 'the king who hails', occurs and in a god-list is described as 'the name of a deified harp of *Ningišzida*'s'. Ningišzida was a god of trees and pastures and of the underworld. His tomb or temple bore the title 'tomb of tears' or 'mountain of lament'.<sup>67</sup> This god's association with royal laments in the Ur III and OB eras and the songstress with her 'wailing harp' signifies that at least one type of chordophone was used to accompany the performance of the Dumuzi laments.

There is little other textual evidence that might directly link the ancient lute to Dumuzi or his cult. However, a number of references do clearly show it as a bona fide member of the royal instrumentarium and among the chordophones featured in the king's music education. Therefore, to the extent the king, the shepherd king, symbolically fulfills the role of Dumuzi, the Mesopotamian lute can be inferred among the Dumuzi-d attributes.

A line in a fragmentary prayer to Dumuzi unearthed at Nippur reads, 'the seven(-type?) *giš.gù.di* instrument(s) is/are there'.<sup>68</sup> The term <sup>giš</sup>*gu-di* (Sux; Akk *inu*;  or  ) was the most commonly-used of a number of terms that denote a lute (*App. 4.1*) although by the late 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE it was used denote musical instruments in general. The 'seven-type' possibly refers to the lute's ability to play all seven notes of a heptatonic scale and/or all seven scales derived from heptatonic tuning on its fingerboard. It could also mean seven types of *gu-di*, including other chordophones, or one of seven types of instruments.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 59, 76-78.

<sup>67</sup> Adam Stone, 'Ningišzida (god)', found at: <<http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/amgg/listofdeities/ningizida/index.html>>; accessed on: 24 August 2018.

<sup>68</sup> Collon and Kilmer, 'Lute', p. 22, n. 3. (Ibid., p. 16).

The *gù.di* also merits mention in several praise-poems of the Ur III king Šulgi, in which he enumerates all the instruments and song forms he has mastered. In ‘Šulgi B’ he boasts that,

The *gù.di* instrument that had never been played (before by me),  
when it was...brought to me,  
Of that very instrument I divined its secret.  
I was able to set in order as something that had ever been in my  
hand,<sup>69</sup>

This passage suggests that the *gù.di* as a lute with its concept of stopped strings ‘is a logical choice to have mentioned as a new and different instrument in his repertoire.’<sup>70</sup> However, it should be noted that the king has earlier stated that,

I, Šulgi...dedicated myself also to music;  
Nothing related to it was too complex for me.  
I penetrated the depth and width of the consummate musical  
training of the *tigi* and *adab* compositions,  
The *šu-kár* instrument to appease the heart in anger,  
...  
By pondering and striving I succeeded in fixing their rules.<sup>71</sup>

*Šu-kár(a)*, another term for lute (*App.* 4.3), or perhaps a particular species, is mentioned here as part of Šulgi’s educational curriculum along with two musical genres—the *tigi* and *adab*—that formed standard parts of temple liturgies. The *šu-kár*, then, could not have been much of a novel instrument at this time, especially considering that ‘fixing [its] rules’, i.e. learning its tuning and intervals, is placed here on a par with learning to perform the ancient *tigi* and *adab* compositions. That the *šu-kár* and *gù.di* both were conventional parts of music education and of the music culture of the Ur III court is further supported in ‘Šulgi C’, another praise-poem:

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<sup>69</sup> G. R. Castellino, *Two Šulgi Hymns (BC)* (Rome: Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente, 1972), Šulgi B, l. 169-171, p. 49.

<sup>70</sup> Collon and Kilmer, ‘Lute’, p. 16.

<sup>71</sup> Castellino, *Two Šulgi Hymns*, l. 155-161, p. 47.

I can perform *tigi*, *adab*, and great *malgatum* compositions.  
 When fixing the frets [*si-ŠIR*] of the great lutes [*šū-kar gal-gal*],  
 I know how to raise and lower them. I am adept at playing  
 perfectly all the seven instruments [<sup>ḡiṣ</sup>*gù-di NU-na*]  
 ...[including] the *sa-eš* [three string] instrument...<sup>72</sup>

Again the *šū-kar* occurs with important musical forms, and the <sup>ḡiṣ</sup>*gù-di* enumerated as among ‘seven’, though here it could be a general noun denoting seven important types of instruments.<sup>73</sup> At least one of these seven is another lute, the *sa-eš*, with three strings.<sup>74</sup>

Another mention of the <sup>ḡiṣ</sup>*gù-di* occurs in the ‘The Debate between Summer and Winter’, a text dated to the reign of *Ibbi-Šīn*, last king of the Ur III era (r. 1963-1940 BCE).<sup>75</sup> Summer describes the preparations for the royal banquets that take place during Winter’s reign: the king *Ibbi-Suen*, ‘named by Nanna, the son of Enlil,’ arrays himself in rich ceremonial garments that have been produced during the winter months and a ‘perfect feast for the gods’ has been prepared at ‘the holy abode of kingship founded by An [head of the pantheon].’ Summer then notes the entertainments for the ‘choice banquet’:

When the *šem* and *ala* drums...and other string instruments  
 [<sup>ḡiṣ</sup>*gù.di*] play together for him, he passes the time with your  
 heart-gladdening *tigi* and *zamzam* instruments.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> ‘Šulgi C’, l. B.77-79, composite translation found at: <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.4.2.03#>>; accessed on: 20 Feb. 2015. The same passage also occurs in ‘Šulgi A’; see Jacob Klein, *Three Šulgi hymns: Sumerian royal hymns glorifying King Šulgi of Ur* (Ramat-Gan, Israel : Bar-Ilan University Press: 1981), l. 158, p. 193.

<sup>73</sup> The text at this point is damaged so the following passage is fragmentary.

<sup>74</sup> Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, ‘The Strings of Musical Instruments: Their Names, Numbers, and Significance’, in *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on His Seventy-fifth Birthday, April 21, 1965*, Assyriological Studies 16, edited by Hans G. Güterbock and Thorkild Jacobsen (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1965), p. 263; Krispijn, ‘Musical Ensembles’, p. 147; Joachim Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archaeological, Written, and Comparative Sources*, translated by Douglas W. Stott (Grand Rapids/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2002), p. 42.

<sup>75</sup> ‘The Debate between Winter and Summer’, translation t.5.3.3., l. 225-237. Found at: <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.5.3.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#>>; accessed on: 20 Feb. 2015. See also Herman L.J. Vanstiphout, ‘Sumerian Canonical Compositions. C. Individual Focus. 5. Disputations’. In *The Context of Scripture, I: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, edited by William W. Hallo (Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill, 2003), pp. 584-588.

<sup>76</sup> T.5.3.3., l. 236-237.

Although the translation here renders  $\hat{g}\hat{i}\hat{s}$  *gù.di* as ‘other string instruments’, the transliterated line and its gloss read (*Table 3.1*) :

<i>Šem</i>	<i>kuš-ala</i>	<i>Si-ŠIR</i>	<i>ġiš-gu-di</i>	<i>ni-ba</i>	<i>u-mu-na-du</i>
type of drum	type of drum	fret	string musical instrument	it-themselves	to perform (music)

*Table 3.1: Translation and gloss, l. 236-237 of Debate text.*<sup>77</sup>

That *si-ŠIR*, ‘fret’, precedes *ġiš.gù.di* thus suggests that the latter term here refers to a lute instrument and not simply musical instruments in general.

Significantly, this banquet is being performed in honor of the god Nanna who appears on seal impression BM 28806 (*Pl. 3.4*). That the *gù.di* here figures among the older, Sumerian *šem* and *ala* drums as part of the musical entertainment for the ritual feast indicates that the foreign lute had become thoroughly integrated into religious and courtly life during the Ur III dynasty.

Finally, documents regarding the *gala-mah* Dada from the Ur III period show that lutes formed a royally sanctioned part of the court instrumentarium. Dada (fl. c. 2052-2029 BCE)<sup>78</sup> organized and oversaw funerary rites, a specialized function of the *gala* priesthood which they executed using a special ‘dialect’ or register of Sumerian called *emesal*, otherwise only spoken by priestesses who performed laments. Of equal importance were Dada’s roles as *nar-gal*, ‘chief musician/singer’, and as ‘the official state musical impresario, a manager and organizer of various ceremonial events rather than merely as a musician.’

<sup>77</sup> Found at: <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/edition2/etcslgloss.php?lookup=c533.236&charenc=ġcirc>>; accessed on: 20 Feb. 2015.

<sup>78</sup> Piotr Michalowski, ‘Love or Death? Observations on the Role of the Gala in Ur III Ceremonial Life’, *JCS* 58 (2006), pp. 49-50.

In this capacity Dada was charged with managing singers and musicians for ceremonies, procuring materials for making instruments, and overseeing instrument deliveries and repairs.<sup>79</sup> One administrative text, UDT 97,<sup>80</sup> lists a *tigidlu* player (*App.* 4.2) named *Ereš-ig-dùl* in the company of Dada, his assistant or ‘star performer’ *Ur-Ningublaga*, and an Amorite military commander *Naplānum*. *Naplānum* was a ‘major military ally of the Ur III state’ who lived at least part of the year in Sumer on an estate large enough to accommodate his family and his soldiers.

Michalowski notes that *Ereš-ig-dùl*, as a player of the *tigidla* lute, was a ‘low-level musician’ of a type rarely mentioned in Ur III administrative documents. Yet this record in conjunction with the handful of other *tigidla* notices indicate that this lute and its players were integral to various royal ceremonies and ritual functions including temple-founding ceremonies.<sup>81</sup> Considering too the variety of *tigidla* types there seemed to be—‘travelers’ *tigidla*, an Elamite type, an ‘eastern highland’ type, etc.—it is possible the instrument carried an array of symbolic weights, as a common type with many region-specific forms.

These citations demonstrate that possibly several lute species were integral to the education and performance of kingship. If an attribute of the king’s, then by extension it would be a Dumuzi-d attribute as well.

### *Iconography of the Shepherd Lutenist*

Iconography featuring Dumuzi is surprisingly infrequent given the popularity of his cults, and much of it either shows him with his bride Inanna or being dragged off to

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<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*; Sam Mirelman, ‘The gala musician Dada and the si.im instrument’ *N.A.B.U.* 2 (2010). 33, pp. 40-41.

<sup>80</sup> Michalowski, ‘Love or Death?’, pp. 57-59.

<sup>81</sup> Miguel Civil, ‘The *Tigidlu* Bird and a Musical Instrument’, *N.A.B.U.* 2 (1987), 48, p. 27; Niek Veldhuis, ‘LÛ.ĝesŠÀ.TAR in Ur III’, *N.A.B.U.* 1 (1999), 19, p. 20.

the underworld by the seven *galla/gallû* demons, martial guardians and enforcers of the underworld.<sup>82</sup> Overt musical motifs are as rare in the iconography as they are in texts. However, one genre of Mesopotamian images (*Pl. 3.7*) suggests that the LNL was among Dumuzi's attributes in at least one phase of his life: his innocent, youthful existence as a shepherd on the steppes, before his courtship and marriage to Inanna, and before he is hunted by the *galla* demons. Furthermore, this moment has a direct analogue in the Balkan Return songs when LNLs make their appearance in those texts.



*Pl. 3.7: Molded terracotta plaque.*<sup>83</sup>

*Plate 3.7* shows one of a number of molded terracotta plaques bearing the same motif from the ancient city of Nippur in Iraq (*Fig. 3.1*) dated to the Isin-Larsa

<sup>82</sup> The term *gallû* also occurs in *Dumuzi's Dream* to describe Dumuzi's attackers; thus it additionally signifies a relentless human enemy, one who behaves like a *gallû*. For more information on the *gallû* and the related *Sebettu* demons see Chap. 4 of this Thesis.

<sup>83</sup> Iraq, Isin-Larsa period, ca. 1900-1750 BCE. Image source: Penn Museum, L 29-303, 'plaque figurine', found at: <<https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/313030>>; accessed on: 7 Dec. 2014.

period (1950-1850 BCE). At this time, the Ur III kingdom (c. 2112-2004 BCE) had collapsed and no one city-state held political hegemony in the region. The city-states of Isin and Larsa, on the southwestern Tigris-Euphrates delta, formed the main power centers before the rise of the OB kingdom that united most of the region by the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century BCE (*Fig. 3.1*). Plaques such as these were mass-produced from molds, and the existing images of this type are almost identical, indicating they came from the same mold or used a generic compositional form. These were popular objects, typically used as votive offerings at shrines and temples or personal use.

The plaques feature a beardless, naked, male lutenist sitting on a stool with his face in full profile but his torso in frontal view. To his right a mastiff sniffs his leg on which an indistinct object rests. To his left stands a less distinct animal, possibly a sheep. The male figure plays a standard kind of Mesopotamian LNL with an indication of two strings. The shoulders appear to be incurved. The instrument differs in one key detail from all virtually all other ancient lute images in that it lacks tassels, a feature almost unique to this image genre.

The male figure's nakedness, close-trimmed hair, and lack of facial hair may signify him as a young man, 'attractive for what he is...unformed by responsibilities, still part of nature.'<sup>84</sup> Alternately, these same traits may further signify him as a nomadic herdsman 'chasing...along the dark paths of the desert' on the outer fringes of civilization among threatening mountain tribes.<sup>85</sup>

Despite some varying opinions as to the identity of the animal on the left (i.e. a sheep or a pig), the mastiff's presence makes clear that the central figure is a herdsman. Mastiffs were the dogs of shepherds and herdsmen and in *Dumuzi's Dream* Dumuzi lives a nomadic shepherd's life in the wilds of the steppes along with,

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<sup>84</sup> Jacobsen, *Toward the Image*, pp. 74-76.

<sup>85</sup> Mieroop, *History*, pp. 81-85.

Your black dogs, the dogs of the shepherdship,  
Your noble dogs, the dogs of the lordship.<sup>86</sup>

These same dogs ‘utters bitter cries in the desolate steppe’<sup>87</sup> and when Dumuzi dies ‘at the side of the corpse the dog lay...the dog ate by his side, [lay] at his feet.’<sup>88</sup>

The absence of tassels on the lute provides a final key detail that identifies this lutenist as a pre-civilized, semi-wild ‘other’. Although every writer on the subject of Mesopotamian lute images has noted them, none, so far as I have found, has offered any theory as to their significance other than as decorative cords leading from the cloth or leather tuning rings.<sup>89</sup> The persistence of these tassels, from the 23<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to at least the 9<sup>th</sup> century BCE and from Mesopotamia to Egypt and Anatolia, indicates that they had some important function beyond the purely pragmatic or decorative.

The Bible contains several passages regarding tassels, *šîšîth* in Hebrew, attached to the corners of religious garments<sup>90</sup> and ‘the commandment to wear the *šîšîth* was regarded by many as the most important of all commands because it signified the whole law.’<sup>91</sup> The Hebrew term *šîšîth* is etymologically related to the Babylonian term *sisiktu* or *sissiktu*, generally ‘garment’, more specifically a religious or ceremonial garment. The *sisiktu* and its functions seem to have been a widespread institution throughout Western Asia that ‘had a long past of religious meaning behind

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<sup>86</sup> Jacobsen, *Harps*, p. 35

<sup>87</sup> Samuel Noah Kramer, ‘The Death of Dumuzi: A New Sumerian Version’, *Anatolian Studies* 30 (1980), p. 9: l. 11 and 31.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10: l. 84 and 86.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Turnbull, ‘Origin’, pp. 60-61; Collon and Draffkorn Kilmer, ‘The Lute’, p. 18.

<sup>90</sup> See *Holy Bible, New International Version*, Numbers 15:38; Deut. 22:12; I Samuel 15:24; I Sam. 24:1-8. Several New Testament passages indicate the popular survival of this function of the *šîšîth*: cf. Matt. 14:35-36; (NIV); and Matthew 9:20-21, ‘Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. [21] She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed”’

<sup>91</sup> Ferris J. Stephens, ‘The Ancient Significance of *Šîšîth*’, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 50/2 (1931), pp. 59-61, 68, 70.

it' by the time it appears in Old Testament law. *Sisiktu* was also used in a more specialized sense to refer to the garment's hem where the *sisiktu* tasseled cord was attached, or to the cord itself.<sup>92</sup>

As described in Akkadian and Babylonian documents these tassels had four main functions:

1. A worshipper or petitioner of a deity could seize the *sisiktu* of the garment used to clothe the deity's image in a temple to attain greater certainty of receiving the desired ends of one's prayer.<sup>93</sup>
2. As part of certain formal business proceedings or contract negotiations, a party could seize another's *sisiktu* or *zīqu* to finalize or authorize the second party to comply with or fulfill the desired business services.
3. The *sisiktu* could be used as a substitute for the seal on legal and administrative documents recorded on clay tablets. When used this way it may 'have served as a substitute for the presence of its owner' in the sense of a ritual object whose presence or depiction, as an emblem of the station of, for example, kingship, was endowed with the same kind of living presence as the person who fulfilled that position.<sup>94</sup>
4. Finally, tearing or cutting off a person's *sisiktu* could drastically alter or even ruin that person's social station in both religious and judicial ways. The act was performed in divorce proceedings and some magic incantations provided

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., pp. 65-66 and 67. Other terms for this cord include Akkadian *ulinnu* and *ziqqu* that are the Semitic equivalents for the earlier Sumerian term TÚG.SÍG, 'cloth strip' in EPSD though Stephens renders it as 'garment of hair/wool' (p. 66). For a full listing of forms and citations see also *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago: Vol. 15, S*, edited by Erica Reiner and Oriental Institute Editorial Board (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1984), pp. 322-325.

<sup>93</sup> Stephens, 'Šišith', pp. 61-64.

<sup>94</sup> Gebhard J. Selz, 'The Divine Prototypes', in *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond*, ed. by Nicole Brisch (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), pp. 13-32.

protection from ‘an unfriendly sorcerer who might practice dire magic against a man by making an image of [him] and tearing the *sisiktu* of the image.’<sup>95</sup>

The connecting thread between these various uses of the tassel is that they all imbue the object with a legal and religious authority; to seize hold of or take away one’s *sisiktu* gives the seizer a measure of power over the wearer. Furthermore, the wearing of the tassel signifies the authority of the wearer as one who might be petitioned for legal, business, religious or magical purposes. It carries some of the same life force and even social identity as the one who wears it and to damage the *sisiktu* damages the life force or social position of the wearer.

With this in mind, the image of the shepherd with lute and herd animal—ostensibly a sheep—then suggests a symbolic and material circuit: the nomadic shepherd provides the sheep and goats that form the life’s blood<sup>96</sup> of the temple economy, for without sacrificial animals there could effectively be no means of communicating with the deities. The lute utilizes certain animal parts as well: sinew from goats or sheep was twisted into the strings that gave the lute its voice. Hence the lute, too, partakes of the sacredness of the sacrifice and becomes an additional means of communicating with the divine.

A lute’s tassels, then, mark the instruments’ consecrated status; their authority to ‘speak for’ or to the gods; that a certain god dwelt within the instrument, or that the deity ‘owned’ or possessed the lute and spoke through it. In a more mundane legal interpretation the tassels could signify that the lute belonged to the king, and the musician who played a tasseled lute was a sanctioned member of the

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<sup>95</sup> Stephens, ‘Şişith’, pp. 64-65.

<sup>96</sup> Mark Essig, *Lesser Beasts: a Snout-to-Tail History of the Humble Pig* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), p. 46; cf. Benjamin R. Foster, *The Age of Agade: Inventing Empire in Ancient Mesopotamia* (New York/Oxon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 62, 67, 71, 99, 104, and 125.

ruler's retinue. In fact, such tassels hung from the bridles of Assyrian imperial warhorses and even the sash worn by the king himself (*Pls. 3.8a-b*).



*Pls. 3.8a-b: Details from Assyrian royal friezes showing tassels.*<sup>97</sup>

Their absence may mark this lute as a type found outside the palace and temple circles, a true 'rustic' instrument appropriate for those who dwell beyond the pale of urban civilization: young men who have not yet grown beards or shepherds who wander the grasslands and mountains and live among animals, as Dumuzi once did before Inanna 'civilized' him.

### *The Shepherd King Motif*

The shepherd king image stands at the head of an iconographic tradition that spans some 3,000 years and crystallized in the early Christian centuries in the image of the

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<sup>97</sup> Nineveh, Iraq; reign of Ašurnasirpal II (r. 883-859 BCE); Neo-Assyrian Empire (911-612 BCE). Image source: BM 124550 'wall relief', photo author's.

Biblical King David as a youthful shepherd.<sup>98</sup> The depiction of the shepherd king with his chordophone emblemizes a specific transitional moment in his life, when his station rises through feminine intervention. Thus his humble beginnings, the feminine authority figure, and the hero's use of chordophone at that moment—these traits link the shepherd king to the Return song hero, and trace the same mytho-cosmological road.

Admittedly, from the time of these Mesopotamian plaques to the David-as-shepherd image lies a stretch of close to two millennia, during which the pictorial motif seems to have gone underground. Yet despite this vast lacuna the motif's formal elements and the ideational elements of the image's *theme* remain so consistent that I believe it is possible to speak of a kind of *phylo-iconographic* lineage. That is, one can trace a genealogy of these iconographic elements that remains viable even through the great changes in interpretive modes—polytheist, Hellenistic, Judaic, Christian—the image was used to express. Just as, as Panofsky noted, the figure of Orpheus was given a Christological spin in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages,<sup>99</sup> that figure's iconography represents a Hellenized version of an even earlier Mesopotamian artistic motif and theme. Indeed, in the first centuries CE the iconography of Orpheus and shepherd David showed frequent syncretism.

Moreover, that long gap is not completely void, for a textual genetic link from Dumuzi to David may be traced through certain themes and motifs in the narratives pertaining to the two figures. The story of Dumuzi was highly significant to

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<sup>98</sup> In the early centuries of the Christian era it also shared characteristics of the image of the legendary Greek musician Orpheus; see Marek Titien Olszlewski, 'The Orpheus Funerary Mosaic from Jerusalem in the Archaeological Museum at Istanbul', *11 TH INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON ANCIENT MOSAICS OCTOBER 16TH - 20TH, 2009, BURSA TURKEY Mosaics of Turkey and Parallel Developments in the Rest of the Ancient and Medieval World: Questions of Iconography, Style and Technique from the Beginnings of Mosaic until the Late Byzantine Era*, edited by Mustafa Şahin (Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2011), pp. 655-664.

<sup>99</sup> See John Block Friedman, *Orpheus in the Middle Ages* (Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), esp. pp. 38-55.

Mesopotamian kings in that their identification with him allowed them to claim a political, cultural, and mythological continuity with the original Sumerian rulers of Mesopotamia. They backed up this claim through the enactment of rituals like the sacred marriage, and through the transmission of myths regarding Dumuzi and his divine spouse Inanna; these two acts lay at the heart of a Mesopotamian tradition and constituted a genealogy that transcended, to a degree, genetic bloodlines in favor of a divinely ordained genealogical order.

King David's story, too, is intensely concerned with genealogies, continuity, and the legitimacy of rulers across interruptions of dynastic bloodlines. The Book of Ruth relates how this foreign Moabite woman left her home and came to Israel with her widowed Hebrew mother-in-law Naomi. This act of loyalty earned her favor from Boaz who hired her to work in his fields and eventually married her. She bore him a son, Obed, who fathered Jesse, the father of David. However, when Ruth bore Obed, Boaz gave the boy to the widowed Naomi and her attendants proclaimed to her,

“Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer...<sup>15</sup> He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law...has given him birth.”

<sup>16</sup> Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. <sup>17</sup> The women living there said, “Naomi has a son.”<sup>100</sup>

The final verse of Ruth outlines the genealogy of the House of Perez up to David; in this way, David the future king of Israel and Judah was justified for the kingship despite having a foreign-born great-grandmother.

At the time when David was born Israel had no king but was ruled by a council of judges advised by prophets, the spokesmen for God. In I Samuel 8 the Israelites beseech Samuel to appoint ‘a king to lead us and to go out before us and

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<sup>100</sup> *NIV*, Ruth 4:14-17.

fight our battles' so that they might 'be like all the other nations.'<sup>101</sup> God informs Samuel that He will send the prophet a young man from the tribe of Benjamin, Saul, who God chose to be anointed the first king.<sup>102</sup> With no prior dynasty in place, in other words, the first king of Israel was chosen by a decree of the chief deity, and gave his human spokesman the duty of anointing him king in order to establish his legitimacy.

Later, when Saul is rejected by God for failing to follow God's instructions to slaughter every living thing after a battle with a Philistine tribe, it again falls to God to choose Saul's replacement: Samuel anoints a shepherd boy, youngest of seven sons of Jesse the shepherd.<sup>103</sup> David, though, only first comes to Saul's attention when the king's attendants advise him to find a 'harpist' to play for him to relieve the effects of an 'evil spirit' that has come upon him. An attendant tells him of David, son of Jesse, 'who knows how to play the harp. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him.' David becomes Saul's armor-bearer and 'whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul...and the evil spirit would leave him.'

After David slays the Philistine giant Goliath, Saul becomes jealous of David's military prowess and tries to kill him. David flees into exile. Ultimately Saul dies in battle and David '[takes] up' a lament that honors the deeply flawed fallen leader.<sup>104</sup> Once David assumes the throne and later unites the kingdoms of Judah and Israel he 'receives the divine blueprint [through revelation] for the Temple, and

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<sup>101</sup> *NIV*, I Sam. 8:20.

<sup>102</sup> I Sam. 9:15-18.

<sup>103</sup> I Sam. 16:1-16, 18, 21-23.

<sup>104</sup> II Sam. 1:17-27.

teaches the Levites to sing.<sup>105</sup> In Antiquity David's foremost role in the Abrahamic religious imagination was less as statesman and ruler and more as 'a visionary poet, ethical exemplar, prophet, and even heavenly being.' Many of the Psalms were attributed to him at a late date, and these show 'a concentration on lament, fear, and contrition' and highlight his image as 'a suffering, penitent David, not a triumphant king.'

Similarly, the Dumuzi-d texts focus on themes of lamentation and fear, portraying the shepherd as an extremely vulnerable man, haunted by demons, betrayed by friends, pleading with the sun god Šamaš to deliver him. Despite his function as a template for earthly kings the texts and iconography never show him as such. Also like David, Dumuzi was not born into kingship but chosen for that office by virtue of his marriage to his divine bride Inanna, thus divinely ordained. The sacred marriage rite at the temple can thereby be seen as analogous to David's anointing by the prophet Samuel, God's worldly representative.

Other aspects of Dumuzi's story have informed the Davidic narrative. The story of David's son *Amnon*, his rape of his half-sister *Tamar*, and the revenge exacted on him by his older brother *Absalom* at the sheep-shearing festival<sup>106</sup> shows a number of parallels to the Dumuzi/Inanna myths.<sup>107</sup> The sheep-shearing festival at

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<sup>105</sup> Eva Mroczek, 'King David, Sacred and Secular', *Secularization & Sacralization (Frankel Institute Annual)* (Ann Arbor: Michigan Pub., University of Michigan Library, 2016), pp. 5-7.

<sup>106</sup> In II Sam. 13.

<sup>107</sup> G. R. H. Wright, 'Dumuzi at the Court of David', *Numen* 28/1 (1981), pp. 54-63. Not least among these is the common meanings of their names: Amnon (Hb. אֲמֹנִן), related to Babylonian *imana* and Assyrian *amuna*, (Ibid., pp. 54-55) means 'true/faithful', and so he is the 'faithful son' of David and the 'faithful shepherd', like Dumuzi *sipad*, 'shepherd'. One of Inanna's symbols is the palm tree and so there lies a connection to Tamar (Hb. תָּמָר), whose name has the triconsonant root *tmr*, or 'palm tree'.

In addition, the two sets of *dramatis personae* are embroiled in a common web of covertly incestuous relationships (Ibid., pp. 58-59) that directly parallel each other. At one point, Dumuzi even tries to get his sister Geštinanna alone in his sheep-fold on the steppes with intent of seducing her, (Ibid., p. 59) and she and Inanna at times seem almost like stand-ins for each other in the laments. For her part, Inanna acts intensely seductively towards her brother Šamaš the sun god, who has strong parallels to Amnon's brother Absalom, Tamar's full sibling.

which Absalom has Amnon murdered for raping Tamar probably took place during spring equinox which was also ‘generally the juncture for reckoning the New Year [in ancient Mesopotamia].’ The New Year is of course when the Mesopotamian sacred marriage ceremony between the king/Dumuzi and priestess/Inanna took place.

Though there is ‘no direct record’ of ‘any sacrificial element in connection with sheep-shearing celebrations in Mesopotamia,’

In the ancient Middle East the sheep-shearing festival fell at the same time as the New Year and there is record of the association of shearing with the New Year Festival House in Mesopotamia...[where] the New Year was certainly the occasion of the...sacred marriage...

Therefore without recourse to general folklore it is reasonable to think that in the ancient Middle East a sheep-shearing feast would be an understood setting for a story of sexual union and killing deriving from an ultimate “religious” pattern.

Thus the archetypal image and function of the shepherd king has a lineage traceable from Dumuzi to Judaeo-Christian David to pagan Orpheus. This genealogy of literary tropes and mythological functions relates as well to aspects of the figure’s iconography, and always a chordophone is never far away.

### *Iconographic Genealogy of the Shepherd King*

The young beardless man seated on a rock and playing a chordophone, the dog, and the herd animal, a sheep or goat, form the central elements of David-as-shepherd images and, to a great extent, as psalmist. This motif was already fully formed when it first begins to show up in Jewish and Christian icons in the first centuries CE, suggesting that they drew on some pre-existing artistic tradition, and formed the basis for all such depictions in both Catholic and Orthodox iconographic traditions through the Middle Ages and up to the present day. As noted, Panofsky mentions this

iconographic tradition, in connection with Orpheus, to illustrate the Renaissance use of Classical themes to inform Christian images and vice versa.<sup>108</sup>



Pl. 3.9 (left): David as shepherd with kinnor lyre.<sup>109</sup>

Pl. 3.10 (right): David as psalmist/shepherd, bowed vielle.<sup>110</sup>

When depicted specifically as shepherd David appears as a young man with no facial hair, dressed in a simple tunic or cloak and seated on a rock (Pl. 3.9). A tree flanks him on one side and before him one or more sheep and/or goats graze, watched over by a dog. He plays a chordophone whose type varies by tradition and era but is most commonly a lyre or harp.

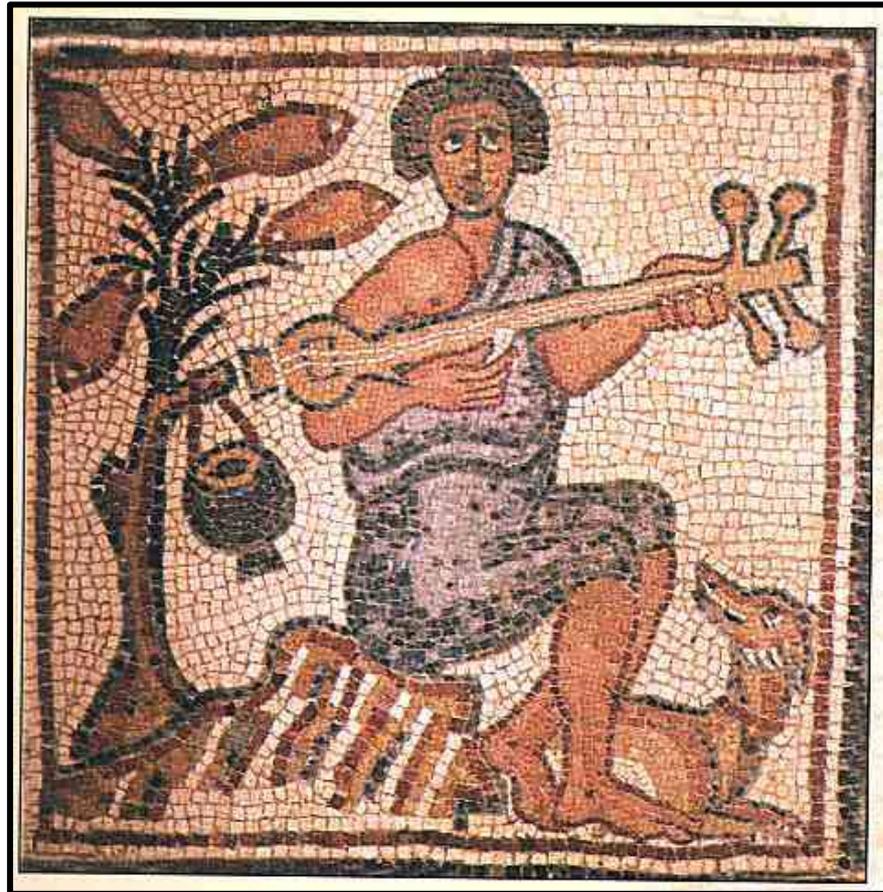
<sup>108</sup> Panofsky, *Studies*, p.19.

<sup>109</sup> Paris Psalter, Byzantine Illuminated Ms., fol. 1v; c. 950-1000 CE. Image source: <<http://www.thebyzantinelegacy.com/parispsalter>>; accessed on: 6 Oct. 2013.

The Paris Psalter icon shown here includes several details unique to this icon. The red-skinned man in lower right; the city of Jerusalem and hills in background; the red-ribboned tower and woman on right, and the Greek figure of *Melodia* (*ΜΕΛΟΔΙΑ*) seated behind David can be attributed to the influence of the *Antiquitates Judaicae* of Flavius Josephus (written 93-94 CE). This text, a Greek paraphrase of I and II Samuel, was widely cited by Byzantine authors and was especially popular during the Macedonian dynasty, 867-1056 CE. The David cycle of images in this psalter shows many discrepancies with the Biblical account traceable to Josephus' texts. See Steven H. Wander, 'The Paris Psalter (Paris, Biliothèque nationale, cod. gr. 139) and the *Antiquitates Judaicae* of Flavius Josephus', *Word and Image* 30/2 (2014), pp. 90, 93-94.

<sup>110</sup> St. Alban's Psalter, p. 56, quire 4; 1119-1123 CE. Image source: <<https://www.abdn.ac.uk/stalbanspsalter/english/commentary/page056.shtml>>; accessed on: 18 Feb. 2018.

Those images that depict him as psalmist show a bearded David wearing a crown, generally seated on a throne (*Pl. 3.10*) though occasionally he kneels before an altar. He plays a chordophone whose type, again, varies widely. Some of these icons allude to David's shepherding past—and the continuity of his role as musician and psalmist—by including a dog and/or a herd animal.



*Pl. 3.11: Mosaic of shepherd king.*<sup>111</sup>

All of these artworks show their figures holding a harp or lyre; where then does the lute enter this iconographic tradition? This element of the images constitutes a culturally conditioned, rhizomatic feature in that the choice of chordophone depends on several factors: the contemporary popularity of a type of instrument, readings (or misreadings) of Biblical terms, or a nomenclatural tradition adopted by the artists and

<sup>111</sup> Qasr al-Libia, Libya; c. 539 CE. Image source: <[https://www.temehu.com/Cities\\_sites/qasr-libya.htm](https://www.temehu.com/Cities_sites/qasr-libya.htm)>; accessed on 11 Nov. 2014.

ecclesiastic authorities. *Pl. 3.11* shows a mosaic from Qasr al-Libya, Theodosia to the Byzantines, on the northeast coast of Libya. Byzantine Emperor Justinian (r. 527-565 CE) rebuilt the city by 539 CE after the Vandals had sacked it. The image was one of 50 mosaic floor panels in a pictorial sequence that one encountered when entering the east basilica of the city and moving towards the apse. Many of these panels use Classical themes to express Christian messages about the resurrection, salvation, and paradise.

The panel shows a young man without facial hair who wears a blue tunic that leaves his legs and right arm and shoulder bare. He sits on a rock in the picture-center. To the picture's right a greyhound-like dog lies on the ground, its head turned back over its shoulder and looking up expectantly at the man. On the left stands a tree with a pot hanging from a branch. The male figure plays a four stringed LNL with a plectrum. Only two strings are visible, perhaps representing two double courses, as white lines that run down the lute's neck, and they run across a wide bridge in the middle of the sound table and back to a tailpiece that juts out from the resonator's bottom edge. Where the small round resonator joins the neck, two wedge-shaped ornaments jut out. Notably, the lute displays no tassels, although by the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE this feature was no longer so common as it had been.

Emanuel Winternitz (1898-1983), Curator for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's musical instrument collection (1949-1983), argued that this mosaic represents Orpheus<sup>112</sup> but I argue it should be interpreted as David as shepherd. Three elements differentiate the two genres: first, Orpheus is always attended by *wild* animals that never include a (domesticated) dog or domesticated sheep or goat (*Pl. 3.12*). Second, Orpheus in every case holds a lyre or kithara, his classic Greek attribute, never any

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<sup>112</sup> Winternitz, 'The Survival of the Kithara', pp. 64-65.

other type of chordophone. Third, he is always depicted wearing a Phrygian peaked cap, never a crown and virtually never bare-headed like the shepherd David.



*Pl. 3.12: Mosaic of Orpheus.*<sup>113</sup>

Images of David the shepherd, on the other hand, never present him with a wild menagerie. In addition, the string instrument David plays, whether in his role as shepherd or psalmist, is culturally conditioned and thus varies widely while his other attributes remain fairly consistent.

It is unfortunate that our knowledge of Dumuzi-d iconography is relatively incomplete. Nevertheless, the identification of the shepherd lutenist plaques with Dumuzi is, I contend, reasonably secure on the grounds of:<sup>114</sup>

<sup>113</sup> Philipapolis (87 km. south of Damascus, Syria), c. 325-350 CE. Image source:< [https:// www.theoi.com/Gallery/Z49.2.html](https://www.theoi.com/Gallery/Z49.2.html)>; accessed on: 18 Feb. 2018.

<sup>114</sup> It must also be noted that the presence of a chordophone in an image of a shepherd virtually always signifies a shepherd king image. The simple pastoralist theme with a 'real life' shepherd would be expressed through the shepherd playing a pipe or panpipe.

1. The sheer consistency of the motif's formal and thematic elements from the OB plaques to the Davidic and Orphic images.
2. The borrowing or adapting—or common origins—of themes and motifs from the Dumuzi-d mythology and Mesopotamian epics in the Biblical story of David.
3. The importance of the themes of lamentation, suffering and consolation, and deliverance from enemies in King David's psalms, in the Orphic mythos and songs, and in Dumuzi's laments and the *Dream*.

### Conclusions

Mythic and epic narrative poetry in ancient Mesopotamia was bound up with concepts of law, social order, and proper conduct as divinely ordained precepts, handed down from the gods to the ruler who shouldered the responsibility of maintaining right relations between the human and divine realms. Those dynasties and empires that succeeded the Sumerian rulers of the early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE sought to establish a sense of continuity with Sumerian culture and institutions. This continuity constituted a tradition that allowed later rulers to claim legitimacy to rule, and they adapted myths and epic narratives from Sumerian sources to achieve this. This mythic tradition acted as documents of a genealogy based on dynastic bloodlines and a presumed inheritance of divine ordination.

These narrative poems most likely came to their written forms from a long prehistory of oral transmission. They encoded the necessary knowledge for proper conduct in society and with the divine realm in representations of the narratives' characters and events. Furthermore, the close relationship between the recitation of law and a specialized form of singing, attested in texts like the Indic *Rgveda*-s, argues

that the performance of these narratives was integral to the reinforcement and performance of rulership.

The Akkadian cylinder seal images depict lutes as an instrument used to accompany the performance of these tales sung or recited by *nar*, ‘singers’, an official class of vocal performers in both court and temple ceremonies. This is demonstrated by the settings these lutes appear in, namely the Akkadian revisions of the Sumerian banquet scene genre. The Akkadians are the most likely channel for the lute’s introduction into Sumerian music culture, and the two cylinder seals show signs of a political and cultural *rapprochement* on the Akkadians’ part to foster that sense of continuity and tradition.

The banquet scene possessed two simultaneous readings: the feast of the deities and the royal worldly feast in which the ruler’s divine favor was reestablished and his legitimacy confirmed. As such, the banquet served as a prime setting for the lutenist-singer’s recitation of these tales that reminded the king and attendees of their responsibilities to the deities and to human society.

Another primary way these divine genealogies were constructed was through the king’s identification with the semi-divine Dumuzi, and his epithet the shepherd king. When kings assumed the Mesopotamian throne they undertook a marriage with the goddess Inanna/Ištar through the head priestess of her temple. This sacred marriage reified the myths of this mythic couple and the goddess’s acceptance of the human ruler in this marriage his kingship was consecrated. It was by her authority that he earned the right and privilege to rule.

This relationship forms the archetypal foundation of the central figures and events in the Return song genre of epic poetry. In these, the hero is a human man of lowly station who receives a dispensation from a woman who wields great legal

authority. By doing so she elevates him from, say, a humble shepherd or war-prisoner to an exemplar of manly virtues and character, a leader and a hero.

The lute plays an equally important role in this relationship, really a triad. The instrument can be inferred as a Dumuzi-d attribute partly through a number of textual citations. These show that several types of lutes, a *gu-di*, *šu-kâr*, *sa-eš* among them, as notable parts of the education and performance of rulers from at least the Ur III period, c. 2047 BCE.

The shepherd king motif presents this archetypal figure in a moment of his life when he existed in a relative state of innocence as a shepherd in the wilderness, before his exaltation by the woman of authority. The OB plaque images form the first attested iteration of the shepherd king iconographic tradition whose components—youthful man on rock with chordophone, his dog, a herd animal, and often a tree—reappear almost two millennia later in images of the Biblical King David-as-shepherd and of the Greek Orpheus.

These pictorial traditions represent an iconographic genealogy in which compositional elements are purposefully retained to express a common theme: the future culture hero who uses his chordophone to contend against agents of death and depression and herald a personal and cultural revitalization and renewal. This *mise-en-scène* finds an exact analogy in the later Balkan Return songs when the imprisoned hero's LNL playing, or its silence, attracts the intercession of the woman of authority, their exchange of sworn vows, and his release from prison, his renewal and exaltation.

For her part, the woman of authority finds her early manifestation in the divine feminine figure of the goddess of Inanna/Ištar. This goddess demonstrates a horizontal, highly rhizomatic nature that provides a counterpoint to the vertical, genealogical patterns of the Dumuzi-d kingship office and the important epic and

mythological theme of divinely transmitted law, centered on the sacred quality of the sworn vow. In addition, the shepherd king illustrates the military or warrior aspect that becomes highly pronounced in 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium lute iconography. In these images the warrior appears with his LNL and lead into battle by a dancing woman who embodies the woman of authority in her guise of war goddess and as law-unto-herself.

#### **Chap. 4: The Lute's 'Maternal' Rhizomatic History**

##### *Introduction*

The association of the Mesopotamian long necked lute (LNL) and Dumuzi represents only half of either figure's story; the other half concerns the lute's 'maternal' heritage as an instrument associated with Inanna/Ištar, Dumuzi's divine bride, and the institution of the temple. Her attributes and geographical and cosmological domains developed not through mythically delineated and divinely ordained dynastic lineages but in the manner of a rhizome, disseminated horizontally from one locale to another through conquest and cultural exchange. In this way the figure of the goddess absorbed and disseminated elements in a decentralized, non-linear, allusive manner.<sup>1</sup> This chapter therefore traces the figure of the divine feminine as represented by Inanna/Ištar through the image of the rhizome, describing the major aspects of her domain.

On the other hand, it is only in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE that a phylogenetic analysis of lute types becomes possible. By the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE the lute had spread far outside Mesopotamia, to the Old Hittite kingdom in Anatolia (c. 1650-1500 BCE) and to Egypt's New Kingdom (16<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE) (*Fig. 4.1*). Both societies developed their own distinctive forms of the lute-as-concept that clearly diverge from the Mesopotamian type.

The primary aim of this chapter is therefore to identify that branch of LNL development that led to the *tanbūr* family, identified as such through its morphology and through that type's relationship to a particular set of aspects within Inanna's domain. Inanna's aspects as war goddess, consecratrix, law-bringer, and as law-unto-

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<sup>1</sup> Joan Goodnick Westenholz, 'Inanna and Ishtar in the Babylonian World', in *The Babylonian World*, edited by Gwendolyn Leick (New York/London: Routledge, 2007), p. 332.

herself make her a prototype of the woman of authority of the Return songs. Her link to the ancestral *tanbūr* LNL is made explicit by several key images examined here from the second millennium BCE that contain all of the morphological and mytho-cosmological elements encountered in the Return songs.

Finally, the iconography of the LNL in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE explicitly ties the divine feminine and the *tanbūr*-type LNL to the social milieu of the common soldiery, who became the LNL's players and transmitters and whose experiences were mirrored in the hero of the Return songs. It is this class of soldiery that eventually gave rise to the Byzantine and Ottoman Frontier Warrior Culture I will discuss in Chap. 5.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Domain of Inanna*

Inanna/Ištar seems to have begun as two independent deities: Inanna, 'lady' or 'queen of heaven',<sup>3</sup> and patroness of the city of Uruk from the fourth millennium on, was the 'one and only deity whose worship is known from the dawn of Babylonian civilization.'<sup>4</sup> She was one of the children of the moon god Nanna and originally encompassed the dual economic interests of Sumerian society: agriculture and animal husbandry.<sup>5</sup> Her earliest symbol, a reed post surmounted by a circle and a 'ribbon' that resembles a woman's flowing hair,<sup>6</sup> emerged as a pictograph in the proto-cuneiform writing system of Uruk in the late 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE. The Sumerians also regarded

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<sup>2</sup> Though it is possible that this martial culture was already present in the Kassite and Assyrian periods I feel the available evidence does not yet permit a definitive description of it. However, the Assyrian wars of conquest generally took place at frontiers of both other empires and of 'barbarian' regions, and foreign soldiers and mercenaries, notably Amorites, formed significant parts of the Akkadian and Babylonian armies, so it is probable that a proto-Frontier Warrior Culture already existed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 336, n. 1. Derived from 'nin-an-na' 'lady of heaven' {(n)in "lady" + an "heaven" + a(k) genitive}'.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 333.

<sup>5</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 135.

<sup>6</sup> De Shong Meador, *Inanna*, p. 12.

her as the planet Venus and she received different sets of offerings in her guises as ‘morning’ and ‘evening’ star.<sup>7</sup>

		Southern Mesopotamia	Anatolia	Northern Mesopotamia	Mediterranean	
1550	1551	<b>Kassite kingdom</b>		<b>Hittites sack Babylon, end OB</b>	<b>Egypt New Kingdom</b>	
1500	<b>1555-1155</b> <b>1531-1155</b>					
1450	<b>1430-1180</b>			<b>Hittite Empire</b>		<b>Middle Assyrian Empire</b>
1400	<b>1392-1056</b>					
1350						
1300						
1250	1244-1208			Kaštiliaštu IV Melišipak II		Tukulti-Ninurta I
1200	1232-1225 1186-1172					
1150	<b>1160-705</b>					<b>Syro-Hittite city states</b>
1100						
1050						
1000						
950	<b>911-609</b>	<b>Neo-Assyrian Empire</b>				
900	883-859	Aššurnasirpal II				
850	858-823	Shalmanesar III				
800	811-783	Adad-Narari III				
750						
700	722-705	Sargon II				
650	668-627	Aššurbanipal		Homer		
600	<b>609</b>	<b>End Neo-Assyrian Empire</b>				
550	<b>550-330</b>	<b>Persian Achaemenid Empire</b>				
500				<b>Greek Classical Age</b>		
450						
400						
350	356			Alexander the Great born		
300	336-323	Alexander the Great		<b>Hellenistic Age begins</b>		
250						
200						
150	<b>146</b>			<b>Roman Republican era begins</b>		

Fig. 4.1: Timeline of Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Mediterranean, 1550-150 BCE.

Already by the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE her domain had accumulated so many contradictory traits ‘that one is inclined to wonder whether several, originally different deities have not coalesced in one, the many-faceted goddess Inanna.’<sup>8</sup> She was,

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 13; Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 138-139.

<sup>8</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 135.

... a deity who incorporated fundamental and irreducible paradoxes. She represented both order and disorder, structure and anti-structure. In her psychological traits and behavior she confounded and confused normative categories and boundaries and thereby defined and protected the norms and underlying structure of Mesopotamian civilization.<sup>9</sup>

On the one hand, she is Dumuzi's blushing, breathless, sexually charged teenaged lover, at once innocent and pornographically lewd—in one song she even attempts to seduce her brother Šamaš, telling him she knows nothing of sex or kissing.<sup>10</sup> This is also Inanna the patroness of prostitutes and the taverns where they plied their trade, goddess of female sexuality not controlled by court or temple.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, Inanna is patroness of childbirth and marriage, and the *nu-gig* or *qadištu* priestesses that oversaw her temples also officiated at childbirth ceremonies.<sup>12</sup>

Then again, she also wields the power of the thunderstorm that,

Crushes the mountain to garbage  
Scattering the trash from dawn to dark  
With her mighty stones she pelts  
And the mountain  
Like a clay pot crumbles.<sup>13</sup>

This aspect merges into her role as the war goddess, as was common with other Near and Middle Eastern storm deities such as her brother *Iškur*, *Ninurta*, the Ugaritic god *Ba'al* and his consort *Anat*, and the goddess *Aštoret(h)* (Sem; Grk A *Astarte*).<sup>14</sup> Like these other storm deities, in her storm goddess guise she rides a chariot drawn by

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<sup>9</sup> Rivkah Harris, 'Inanna-Ishtar as Paradox and a Coincidence of Opposites', *History of Religions* 30/3 (1991), p.263.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Noah Kramer, *From the Poetry of Sumer: Creation, Glorification, Adoration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 94-95.

<sup>11</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 139-140; Harris, 'Inanna-Ishtar', pp. 269-270.

<sup>12</sup> Joan Goodnick Westenholz, 'Tamar, Qēdēšā, Qadištu, and Sacred Prostitution in Mesopotamia', *The Harvard Theological Review* 82/3 (1989), pp. 259-260.

<sup>13</sup> Betty De Shong Meador, *Inanna*, p. 122.

<sup>14</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 136-137; cf. *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, translation and commentary by J. C. L. Gibson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark Ltd., 1977), pp. 8-13, 46-67.

seven lions,<sup>15</sup> one of her principal animals, and she is the sole Mesopotamian goddess to bear the epithet of the lion, *Labbatu*.<sup>16</sup> The lion falling upon its prey and the thunderstorm's howling, whirling winds constitute two major tropes used throughout Mesopotamian epic poetry to describe the fury of the king and his army in battle.<sup>17</sup>

Ištar, a Semitic term possibly derived from the root *ʿṣr*, 'to be rich',<sup>18</sup> originated in the West Semitic *'Attar*, a male rain god, and his consort *Astarte* (a cognate of Ištar), goddess of war and sexuality.<sup>19</sup> Her name eventually served as a generic term for goddess (Akk; pl. *ištaratu*). Ištar was an Akkadian goddess invoked by Sargon as the city-deity of his capital city of Akkad, and like Inanna her domain included rain and storms, war, and Venus. The process by which the two goddesses syncretized is not well understood and is complicated by the existence of various localized forms and names of each deity before they even became identified with each other. Due to the importance of the two goddesses as city-deities of Uruk and Akkad and the kingship ideology developed by the cities' rulers, the establishment of Inanna/Ištar's temples in newly-conquered city-states served as a foundational act that marked the city as a possession of the conquering king.

This was not a linear, vertical kind of dissemination but a horizontal, rhizomatic one in which local goddesses and their temples became appropriated and absorbed into the ever-expanding domain of Inanna. Their absorptions affected the original domain in return, adding some of their 'genetic' material to it in a hybridizing manner. Metaphorically speaking, this is akin to onions and potatoes that grow genetic

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<sup>15</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 136.

<sup>16</sup> Harris, 'Inanna-Ishtar', p. 272.

<sup>17</sup> Peter Bruce Machinist, *The Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta I: a Study in Middle Assyrian Literature, (a Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Yale University in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ann Arbor/London: University Microfilms International [print on demand], 1982), Col. A reverse, l. 38-39, p. 111.*

<sup>18</sup> Westenholz, 'Inanna and Ishtar', p. 345, n. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 140-141, 336, 339, 345-346, n. 6.

copies when grown from rhizomes of the original, hybridized parent plants. The city of *Nineveh*, for example, housed a temple dedicated to the local goddess *Šauša*, a Hurrian name,<sup>20</sup> as early as the third millennium BCE. She was ‘a goddess of nature, passion, fertility, sex and war, and a healer too.’ By the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE the goddess was known as ‘Ištar of Nineveh’ and the temple continually rebuilt around the *ziggurat*, or tower, of Ištar that ‘maintained its status as a cult-center even when Nineveh itself was not a powerful city.’<sup>21</sup>

Ishtar of Nineveh must have begun life as a local goddess, with a reputation which grew because Nineveh was a regional center... When Nineveh fell under Assyrian rule... Ashur-uballit restored her temple, and later kings took care to maintain it properly. Just as Ashur, once the god of an obscure mountain, became a supreme imperial deity, Ishtar of Nineveh also evolved.<sup>22</sup>

The Hurrian *Šauša*, then, eventually became fully assimilated into Ištar who gained the status of a ‘state goddess’ or imperial deity of the Assyrian Empire in the early 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE and was closely associated with Aššur’.<sup>23</sup> The Inanna/Ištar temples formed points on the circuits traversed by Mesopotamian kings on their *magur* boats especially during festivals or major ceremonies, and the ruler’s ritual visit to these temples reasserted his rulership of these cities.<sup>24</sup> During major festivals such as the *akitu* festival the statue of the goddess was brought by chariot or ceremonial barge from sites outside a city to her shrine in the main temple to reaffirm her protective presence in the city.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Julian Reade, ‘The Ishtar Temple at Nineveh’, *Iraq* 67/1 (2005), pp. 347, 357.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 361-362, 364-365, 369, 372, 381.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 386.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 347. The Assyrian rulers often appended Aššur’s name to their own, as for example with Aššurbanipal or Aššurnasirpal, both described below.

<sup>24</sup> Schneider, *Introduction*, p. 107.

<sup>25</sup> Reade, ‘Ishtar Temple’, p. 381; cf. Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 126-127.

Her final important characteristic, one that connects her directly to the narrative function of the Return songs' woman of authority, is her autonomy from the established institutions of power. Inanna, like the women of authority, represents an authority unto herself and she acts as the usurper, the breaker, and the bringer of the law set down by the gods. In the Balkan Return songs she acts independently of her father, the king, in negotiating a sworn vow with and then releasing the imprisoned hero. This action nearly costs her life in the Return songs; Inanna faces a similar daunting challenge when she, too, usurps her father's authority.

In the myth *Inanna and Enki*,<sup>26</sup> Inanna wishes to further the prosperity of her tutelary city of Erech. She visits her father, the god Enki, at his seat in the city of Eridu where he 'has under his charge all the divine decrees that are fundamental to civilization.' The Sumerians called these divine decrees *me-s*, the 'properties and powers of the gods which enable a whole host of activities essential for civilized human life to take place.'<sup>27</sup> After getting her father, the king of heaven, properly drunk he begins bestowing the *me-s* to her in a magnanimous display. He hands them to her one at a time, each offering preceded by Enki uttering,

"O name of my power, O name of my power,  
To the pure Inanna, my daughter, I shall present..."<sup>28</sup>

She of course eagerly accepts all of them and when Enki has given her all 100 of them and passes out, Inanna departs on her *magur* boat to bring the *me-s* back to her city Erech.

When Enki awakes, his steward Isimu informs him what he has done with the *me-s*. Enki orders Isimu to overtake his daughter's boat and bring back the divine

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<sup>26</sup> Samuel Noah Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology: A Study of Spiritual and Literary Achievement in the Third Millennium B.C.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1961), pp. 64-68.

<sup>27</sup> Schneider, *Introduction*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>28</sup> Kramer, *Mythology*, p. 66.-68.

laws. Isimu attempts to force Inanna to return them seven times, but seven times her admiral Ninshubur fights off the assaults of sea monsters. Seven times Inanna chastises her father's hypocrisy in breaking his word:

“My father, why pray has he changed his word to me,  
Why has he broken his righteous word to me,  
Why has he defiled his great words to me?  
My father has spoken to me falsehood,...  
Falsely he has uttered the name of his power, the name of the  
*Abzu.*”

In order to further emphasize the importance she puts on fidelity to one's sworn vow and her determination to ensure that vows are kept, even against the will of the oath-breaker, seven times she commands Ninšubur,

“Come, my true messenger of Eanna,  
My messenger of favorable words,  
My carrier of true words,  
Whose hand never falters, whose foot never falters,  
Save the ‘boat of heaven’ and Inanna’s presented decrees.”

Finally Inanna reaches the dock at Erech with her cargo intact. A feast is thrown with all the city attending to celebrate the arrival of the ‘arts of civilization’ that will uplift their city and bring greater prosperity.

The list of *me*-s is inclusive and repeated in the text three times, once when Enki presents them to his daughter, once when Isimu informs Enki which of the decrees are missing, and once when Inanna presents them to her people in Erech. They cover everything from emblems and offices of kingship to the various arts and crafts to qualities of mind;

“You have brought with you the noble scepter [sic], you have brought with you the staff and crook, you have brought with you the noble dress, you have brought with you shepherdship, you have brought with you kingship.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> ‘Inana and Enki’, t.1.3.1.; I: 6-10. Found at: <<http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?Text=t.1.3.1#>> ; accessed on: 13 June 2016.

“You have brought with you wisdom, you have brought with you attentiveness, you have brought with you holy purification rites, you have brought with you the shepherd's hut, you have brought with you piling up glowing charcoals, you have brought with you the sheepfold, you have brought with you respect, you have brought with you awe, you have brought with you reverent silence.”<sup>30</sup>

Among these arts of civilization, it is announced that,

“you [Inanna] have brought with you the mistress of heaven, you have brought with you *loud musical instruments*, you have brought with you the art of song.” [*emphasis added*]<sup>31</sup>

The ‘loud musical instrument’ she has brought is the Sumerian line,

*ĝiš-gu-di ba-[e-de]*

Thus the ‘loudly sounding wood’ (*App. 4.1*) in the company of the ‘mistress of heaven’, *nu-gig an-na*, or a temple priestess of the goddess, the ‘art of song’, *nam-nar*, indicates that chordophones, including lutes, were important enough to civilization to number among its essential pinions as *me-s*.

The spread of her worship, her image, and her political and cultural functions thus developed like a rhizome that sends stalks and tendrils out above and/or below the ground from any one of its individual manifestations. Her domain, her DNA, was grafted onto any similar deity’s domain and made to incorporate it as if her own. As empires rose and fell she retained her characteristics and her place within those empires regardless of what cities lost and gained political prominence and of what dynastic genealogies came and went.

Her temples, subject to asignifying ruptures like destruction during war, were nevertheless rebuilt and carefully maintained by successive empires. Like the *arundos donax* reed, her temples’ foundations acted like rhizomes. Her cult, her institutions,

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., l. 73-81.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., l. 47-52.

and the energies that she represented were integral to the socio-political ecosystem that had cultivated her, but never quite domesticated.

Finally, when regarding Inanna and Dumuzi as original prototypes of the Return song characters, whereas Inanna/Ištar exists largely outside her relationship with her human husband Dumuzi, his existence depends almost entirely on his relationship with her. When he is not being sexually pursued by or marrying her, he dies as a result of her wrath, seeks her aid when he flees death, or (partially) returns to life through her intervention. Even in his guise as the god of the date palm, Inanna acts as the goddess of the storehouse where the harvested dates were stored.<sup>32</sup> As god of the grain he is the beer consumed in Inanna's taverns by the prostitutes that she oversees and protects. In the Return songs the hero may be the primary actor but without the intercession of the woman of authority—a version of the divine feminine—there is essentially no story to tell except the hero's meager existence in prison.

### *Lute Bifurcations in Egypt and Mari*

Although the Mesopotamian LNL's association with Dumuzi is attested somewhat obliquely, it abounds throughout the entire spectrum of activities and contexts presided over by Inanna/Ištar from the tavern brothels to sacred marriage rites to the fields of war. Lute iconography reveals that the instrument genetically diversified and underwent morphological bifurcations in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium. The mytho-cosmological rhizome associated with the Akkadian-Babylonian lute began to diversify as well. The core genetic structure of each new rhizome retained the divine feminine DNA, in a kind of clonal self-reproduction typical of rhizomes, yet each accumulated new

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<sup>32</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 26-27.

culturally conditioned aspects as the complex de- and reterritorialized in new contexts. Their textual, archaeological and iconographic contexts show that each of these species or genera possessed their particular social and cultural milieu as well. Ultimately, each becomes its own center of further refractions as new lute genera and species continue to emerge.

In New Kingdom Egypt (beginning c. 1450 BCE) two distinct forms are attested (*Pl. 4.1*), both with long, slender, tanged necks and hide-covered soundboards. They are differentiated by their ovoid or lozenge-shaped resonators, and by having, respectively, two or three tassels and thus, presumably, strings as well. The Egyptian lutes formed strong associations with the Egyptian goddess *Hathor*, goddess of music, the arts, sexuality, and childbirth, among other things. Egyptian lute iconography indicates that the Egyptian lutes were played almost entirely by women trained in music in the goddess Hathor's temple or to serve in her cult.<sup>33</sup> These lutes accompanied primarily lyric songs and dances. Like Inanna/Ištar, Hathor possessed a violent war-like aspect in her guise as *Sekhmet*, and Hathor's cult expanded by absorbing attributes of other deities although she eventually was eclipsed to a degree by *Isis*. In other important ways, however, Hathor, the Egyptian lutes and their social and cultural roles diverged from their Mesopotamian counterparts. Egypt, for example, did not develop a literary genre comparable to Mesopotamian epic and so these instruments never displayed any particular connection to soldiery or warrior culture.

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<sup>33</sup> Sonia Gergis, 'The Power of Women Musicians in the Ancient and Near East: The Roots of Prejudice', *British Journal of Music Education* 10/3 (1993), p. 190; Lisa Manniche, *Music and Musicians in Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), pp. 60-61, 117-118.



Pl. 4.1: Ancient Egyptian round- (center) and lozenge-shaped lutes (left).<sup>34</sup>



Fig. 4.2: Ebla, Mari, Mesopotamia and western Iran, 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE.

<sup>34</sup> Tomb of Nebamun; Thebes, Egypt, New Kingdom Late XVIII Dynasty, c. 1350 BCE. Image source: BM EA 7981, found at: <[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight\\_objects/aes/n/a\\_feast\\_for\\_nebamun.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/n/a_feast_for_nebamun.aspx)>; accessed on: 19 Jan. 2015.



*Pl. 4.2: Squared-resonator lute, central Mesopotamia.*<sup>35</sup>

Lutes with squared resonators, slightly rounded corners, wide necks, and a tailpiece figure prominently in images from central Mesopotamia, Mari, Ebla, and other city-states of Syria and Canaan (*Fig. 4.2*). In the Hittite Empire of Anatolia, in northern Mesopotamia, and in western Iran two similar types are shown, both with extremely long, narrow necks and disproportionally tiny resonators; the key distinction between these two is their resonators that are either teardrop- or disc-shaped.

The Mari and Ebla images of the squared lutes closely connect the instruments to Inanna's temples, their officials and rituals, and festivals. These

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<sup>35</sup> Ishchali, central Iraq; Kititum temple; Eshnunna Kingdom, Isin-Larsa period; 1950-1850 BCE. Image source: <<http://www.cemml.colostate.edu/cultural/09476/iraq05-089.html>>; accessed on: 7 Dec. 2014.

musicians, however, reflect the goddess's inherent gender ambiguities described in her hymns and manifested by several classes of her temple personnel.<sup>36</sup>

The mytho-cosmological complex that enfolds the SNL family when it appears in 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE Gandhāra in northern Pakistan centers on the goddess *Hārītī*. *Hārītī* shows a few parallels to Inanna. The Gāndhārī SNL-*Hārītī* complex, however, is an original entity whose basic characteristics remain visible in Medieval associations of the Arab *ʿūd* and European *lauto/lute* with the goddess Venus and the sexuality—albeit highly veiled—of troubadour and trovere songs of the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.

In Mesopotamia, textual references from the OB period onward indicate that an array of lute forms were known: several OB lexical lists specifically name types of *tigidla* lutes (*App.* 3.2, 6) particular to the kingdom of Dilmun in the Persian Gulf (*Fig.* 4.2), to Marghiana in Transoxiana, to a *tigidla* with three strings and a '*tigidla* of the highlands'. In fact the sheer number of probable lute names in OB texts suggests a wide variety of possible regional forms of the instrument family.

That original mytho-cosmological rhizome, however, stayed with one particular type of lute in relatively intact form, and it is this lute type and expression of the complex that is the subject of this chapter. I will focus only on the last iconographic type, an LNL with an extremely long, narrow neck and a disproportionately small resonator found in images from Anatolia and other northern regions. This morphology is entirely consistent with that of the *tanbūr/setar* genus of the *tanbūr* LNL family, and thus this seems the most likely ancestor of the *tanbūr* type

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<sup>36</sup> Will Roscoe, 'Priests of the Goddess: Gender Transgression in Ancient Religion', *History of Religions* 35/3 (1996), pp. 213-219; Harris, 'Paradox', pp. 276-277; Daniel Reisman, 'Iddin-Dagan's Sacred Marriage Hymn', *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 25/4 (1973), p. 187, l. 44-66.

known from the Medieval era on, and through that lineage to the *çifteli* and *tambura-s* of the Balkans. It is not simply the morphological similarities that mark it as such but the type's clear association with martial culture and the common soldiery—perhaps a nascent Frontier Warrior Culture—and a bardic function as accompaniment to epic narrative poetry.

### *The Warrior Lutenist Tradition*

The earliest iconographic evidence of this proto-*tanbūr* occurs in the visual culture of the *Kassite* kingdom in Mesopotamia. After the fall of the Old Babylonian Empire c. 1531 BCE, the Kassites, originally a semi-nomadic people from the Zagros Mts. in the Loristan province of northwestern Iran (*Fig. 4.3*), ruled Mesopotamia for almost 400 years (c. 1531-1155), the longest period of relative stability in ancient Mesopotamia. Elamite documents mention them already in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium. The Kassites had attacked Babylonia several times in the 18<sup>th</sup> century BCE but had ruled other parts of northern Mesopotamia since the early 15<sup>th</sup> c. BCE. After the Hittites sacked the city of Babylon in c. 1551 BCE the Kassites took back the city. They retrieved and reinstalled the cult statue of Marduk that the Hittites had taken away to *Hattusa*, their own capital city. The Kassite dynasties came from a small military or warrior aristocracy<sup>37</sup> yet were apparently efficient and popular rulers. They spoke a language isolate that is only known through toponyms and personal names and adopted the Babylonian/Akkadian language for administrative purposes.

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<sup>37</sup> 'Kassites: people', found at: <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kassite>> accessed on: 18 March 2018.



Fig. 4.3: Kassite kingdom, 15<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE.

The most important Kassite artistic form was the *kudurru*. These were stone boundary markers carved with insignias and symbols of deities and rulership used to record land grants bestowed by the king to family members, important officials of court or temple. The *kudurru* was inscribed with a record of the grant and kept in the city temple.<sup>38</sup> Most of these markers display a fairly standardized iconographic programme such as emblems of gods arranged in a hierarchical order (Pl. 4.3). The *kudurru* in Pl. 4.3, commissioned by the Kassite king *Melišippak II* (r. 1186-1172 BCE), contains images that directly connect the lute to the divine order, rulership ideology, warrior culture and to Inanna/Ištar in her guise as war goddess. In addition,

<sup>38</sup> Patrick Pouysségur, 'Work: Kudurru of King Melishipak II', found at: <<https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/kudurru-king-melishipak-ii>>; accessed: 16 March 2018.

it marks the first appearance of that morphologically distinctive lute type that henceforth appears primarily in military or warrior contexts.



Pl. 4.3: *Kudurru of Melišippak II.*<sup>39</sup>

This *kudurru* was commissioned to commemorate an expansion of the Kassite territory. But before it could be placed the kingdom was conquered by the Elamites, who brought it back to their capital city Susa as a spoil of war. Its iconographic programme ‘represents the hierarchy of the deities and presents the Babylonian pantheon as a symbolic microcosm. The layout reflects both the divine

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<sup>39</sup> Elam, southwest Iran, reign of Kassite King Melišippak II, 1186-1172. Image source: Musée du Louvre, ‘unfinished *kudurru*’, found at: <<https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/unfinished-kudurru>>; accessed on: 23 July 2014.

ordering of the cosmos and the hierarchy of the pantheon.<sup>40</sup> As such it expresses a cosmology in which the Kassite king's authority is ordained by the divine order and establishes or maintains that order on earth, primarily through three types of royal actions:<sup>41</sup>

1. The Royal Hunt, a favorite theme in later Assyrian art. In hunting wild animals such as lions, wild bulls or the ibex, the king thereby 'pacified' the world beyond human society and kept the herds secured. These hunts functioned on a mythological level as well, as the primordial battles between gods like Marduk and the horned serpent Tiamat.<sup>42</sup> In these myths, the victory of the god over the chthonic entities symbolized the taming of cosmic chaos in preparation for the creation of the world and initiating cosmic order.
2. Warfare against rival kingdoms or nomadic or mountain people—as the Kassites once were to Babylonia—who made frequent raids and incursions into the kingdom. On a practical level warfare protected state security and defined and tamed the kingdom's frontiers. But warfare was also cosmological and, to the Mesopotamian rulers, a spiritual activity; the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium Assyrian 'Myth of the Creation of Man and King', in its list of qualities with which the gods endowed the office of kingship, states that 'the [great] gods gave the battle to the king.'<sup>43</sup> This line 'expresses the idea that the battle was integral to the process of creation, and that it was conferred on the king by the great gods.' In Assyrian epics, military engagements were often framed in

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<sup>40</sup> Pouysségur, 'Work: Kudurru of King Melishipak II'.

<sup>41</sup> Pongratz-Leister, *Religion*, pp. 208-210, 217, 250, 260, 287.

<sup>42</sup> NB this battle follows the same narrative structure of the taming of goddesses like Inanna, the Egyptian goddess Hathor and the Gāndhārī goddess Hārītī, discussed above.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209, l. 37.

terms of the hunt and so they served as ‘mythic icons’ of the primordial battle in which the king enacted the Marduk archetype.

3. Once the king had successfully performed the above actions his culminating duty was to create a sacred space where he could then build and maintain the temple as the earthly home of the gods where the rites could be performed in good order. The temple’s completion signaled fulfillment of the king’s essential duties and represented the ideal outcome of the pacification of the world. Through the reification of the hunt and battle myths, building the temple manifested the ‘ideological potential [of the relevant myths] to shape and engender social and political communities.’<sup>44</sup>

#### *The Iconography of the Kudurru*

The *kudurru*’s pictorial space is divided into four levels, or registers, that conform to a conventional pattern of such objects. Each register contains a set of divine insignias whose order establishes a cosmological hierarchy. The top register contains emblems of the major deities: the hero *Marduk* followed by *Nabu*, god of scribes; the storm god *Adad*; the chief war god *Ninurta* and war deities *Zababa* and *Nergal*. The emblems of the Astral deities Sin, the Moon god, Ištar as the seven-pointed star in the crescent moon, and Šamaš the eight-pointed sun below, come next (*Pl. 4.4*) followed by the elemental and chief deities of sky and air, *Anu* and *Enlil*, and *Ea* and *Ninhursag*, deities of earth and water.

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.



Pl. 4.4: Top Register—emblems of Sin, Šamaš, Enlil, Anu, and star of Ištar.<sup>45</sup>

On the fourth, bottom register that would have contained the dedicatory inscription, coils the horned serpent *Tiamat*, chthonic deity of the underworld and of chaos. Tiamat directs the viewer back to the emblem of Marduk on the top register, whose victory over the serpent established the beginnings of cosmic and thus social order.



Pl. 4.5: Second register, Inanna/Ištar leading procession.

<sup>45</sup> Image source, Pls. 4.4-6: photos by Stephen Zucker, found at: < <https://www.flickr.com/photos/profzucker/14741041403/in/photostream/>; accessed on: 23 July 2014.



*Pl. 4.6: Second register, sixth lutenist.*

The second register is considered a ‘most unusual’ composition for a *kudurru*.<sup>46</sup> ‘This composition is remarkable, even unique, in that it is most unusual to find two separate representations of the gods - one symbolic, one anthropomorphic - on the same monument.’ It displays a procession of eight anthropomorphic figures alternating with animals sacred to Inanna and headed by a feminine figure playing a *daff* frame drum while dancing (*Pl. 4.5*). She is followed by seven bearded male figures with bows and quivers of arrows on their backs. They all play lutes with unusually long necks and disproportionately small resonators characteristic of what I have termed the Assyro-Hittite LNL (hereafter LNL) (*Pl. 4.6*).<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Nicolas Benoit, ‘Work: Unfinished Kudurru’, found at: <<https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/unfinished-kudurru>>; accessed on: 18 March 2018.

<sup>47</sup> The eight figures alternate with, in order, a large bowl filled with pomegranates or opium pods; an ostrich; a leopard; a sphinx-like creature; a wild bull; an ibex; a gazelle or Arabian oryx, and a lion who precedes the dancing female figure.

The Musée du Louvre's description of the *kudurru* professes consternation over the interpretation of this composition, stating that the reason for its inclusion 'remains a mystery. The procession may refer to a ritual involving the minor deities, probably the protectors of animals. The figures may also possibly be foreign deities.'<sup>48</sup> I believe, however, that they represent the seven-star cluster the Pleiades that figured significantly in Babylonian astrology and astronomy and mythology. Furthermore, I argue that their presence on this *kudurru* testifies to the tradition of the lute as an emblem of Mesopotamian kingship, the king's function as warrior, and to the role of Inanna/Ištar as the divine feminine authority. This triad of king (hero)-feminine authority-lute features in all of the Return song texts discussed in Chapters 5 and 8 of this Thesis.

#### *The Warrior Lutenists as War Omens*

The seven stars of the Pleiades appear in several contexts in Mesopotamian literature, all of them related to war, the war god Ninurta, Inanna/Ištar in her guise as war goddess, and to the pantheon of gods depicted on the *kudurru*. As an astronomical phenomenon their appearance and disappearance in the night sky corresponded 'to the beginning of the agricultural season after the winter pause'<sup>49</sup> and to the final harvest season. The star cluster's heliacal rising<sup>50</sup> on the eastern horizon marked the start of the second month of the Babylonian calendar, *Ayāru* (Sux *gu.si.sá*, 'to drive the oxen'), whose patron deity was god of war and agriculture Ningirsu/Ninurta.

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<sup>48</sup> Benoit, 'Work'.

<sup>49</sup> Lorenzo Verderame, 'Pleiades in Ancient Mesopotamia', *Mediterranean Archaeology and Archaeometry* 16/4 (2016), p. 113.

<sup>50</sup> A star's heliacal rising occurs when it returns to the sky after usually a year below the eastern horizon. At this time it becomes visible just before sunrise.

The Pleiades were also associated with the planet Mars and an omen text notes that ‘the Stars (Pleiades) (are equivalent to) *Šalbatānu* (Mars) [...] of Mars [.....] the Pleiades [.....]’, meaning in this case that Mars and the Pleiades can be seen in the moon’s halo.<sup>51</sup> Mars was considered the ruling planet of the war god Nergal who later became god of the underworld as well.<sup>52</sup> The Pleiades lie in the constellation Taurus and form the mane of the bull, hence their Sumerian and Akkadian names MUL.MUL., ‘the stars’, and *zappu*, ‘bristle’.<sup>53</sup> Taurus is often referred to as The Bull of Heaven.<sup>54</sup> They are closely associated with the planet Venus, represented as the seven-pointed star of Inanna/Ištar, and frequently appear in Inanna’s iconography as seven dots or seven-pointed stars.

Astronomical tablets refer to the Pleiades as ‘the seven great gods’ who in some instances comprise the three primary gods An(u), Enlil and Ea or Enki; the astral gods Sin, Šamaš and Ištar, and the mother goddess Ninhursag.<sup>55</sup> All of these deities’ emblems appear on the *kudurru*’s upper register. A Neo-Assyrian omen reports that,

[If in] the month Ayāru (II) the Stars (Pleiades) – [the seven] great [gods – rise] at [their] appropriate time: the great gods will gather and make a favourable [decision about the land]; sweet [winds] will blow.<sup>56</sup>

Conversely, the Pleiades appear as a group of seven demons known as *Sebēttu*, ‘Seven’, assigned to the gods of war and the underworld Nergal and Erra, whose emblem figures in the top register, as assistants and to accompany them in

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., citing H. Hunger, *Astrological Reports to Assyrian Kings* (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1992), no. 376 II. 6-r.1.

<sup>52</sup> Verderame, ‘Pleiades’, p. 112.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>54</sup> See for example in the epic of Gilgameš when Inanna/Ištar sends the monstrous bull from the heavens to punish Gilgameš for spurning her sexual advances (Dalley, *Myths*, pp. 81-83).

<sup>55</sup> Verderame, ‘Pleiades’, p. 110.

<sup>56</sup> Hunger, *Astrological*, no. 275 II. 6-r.3.

war.<sup>57</sup> As such they sometimes fought alongside great mythic heroes like Marduk, in his battle with Tiamat, and Gilgameš and Enkidu as they warred with the forest demon Huwawa.

Finally, and most significantly in relation to the *kudurru*'s image, the Seven demons constitute the assault force of Ištar's plan 'to conquer the leadership of Heaven':

Ishtar [sic] plots the eclipse of the moon (Sîn)...the Seven of them were evil gods who were whirling about in the base of heaven, they kept circling furiously in front of the crescent moon. Once the hero Šamaš and valiant Adad were deflected, Ištar, together with Lord Anu, occupied the holy residence and was plotting against the rule of heaven.

The inherently warlike nature of the Sebēttu caused their association with the Pleiades to figure in astrological omens as signs of warfare and sieges, as one omen text declares that 'if the Pleiades flare up and go before Venus, in the morning [...] the city *will be encircled*. (As) planet Pleiades is Mars.'<sup>58</sup>

A final text that may shed light on the meaning of the seven lutenists is a land grant from the Neo-Assyrian king Adad-narari (sometimes –nirari) III (r. 811-783 BCE) that invokes the Sebēttu as witnesses to the treaty and swears an oath in their name against violations of it:

By Aššur, Šamaš, and [Enlil], the Assyrian Ištar, Adad, Nergal, Ninurta and the Seven (Pleiades), all these great gods of Assyria, a future prince shall not cast aside the wording of this document.<sup>59</sup>

Significantly, this text makes clear the inviolate, divinely ordained nature of the sworn vow. That it names three war deities Ištar, Nergal and Ninurta, the storm god Adad

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<sup>57</sup> Verderame, 'Pleiades', pp. 111-112.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., citing Hunger, *Astrological*, no. 63 II.r 5-8.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 115; citing L. Kataja and R.M. Whiting, *Grants, Decrees and Gifts of the Neo-Assyrian Period* (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1995), no. 10 I.r.6.

and the Seven warriors of the Pleiades implicitly invokes the consequences of the sworn vow's transgression: military retribution, warfare as a means of enacting justice and redressing a rupture between the divine and earthly orders. This theme of the sanctity of the sworn vow and its divine ordination has already been noted in the discussion of the Akkadian seal impressions. This thematic recurrence in association with the LNL will appear again in the Balkan Return songs as a narrative cornerstone.

As I interpret it, then, the *kudurru* was intended as a 'victory' marker to record land taken or anticipated in a military excursion or a forthcoming campaign. The seven lutenists represent the seven-starred Pleiades due to their number and their depiction as armed warriors. The feminine figure can be identified as Ištar through the presence of her emblem, the seven-pointed star, and the evidence of the above myth of her attempt to take the throne of heaven leading the Sebēttu. The lutenists, then, would be the demons and not the 'seven great gods'.<sup>60</sup>

I therefore argue that the procession was intended to invoke the myth of Ištar's storming of heaven with the Sebēttu as the cosmic presage and an omen of the Kassite king's anticipated victory. The Pleiades, with their connection to Ninurta god of war and agriculture and their role in omens of such, would be the logical choice of subjects in this setting.

The presence of the lutes in the *kudurru* gives strong support to my theory of the lute's association with Dumuzi and Inanna/Ištar on several counts:

1. First, it helps to confirm that the lute, though associated with the goddess, was primarily an instrument of the royal courts, kingship ideology, epic and mythic

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<sup>60</sup> Pongratz-Leister, *Religion*, pp. 250-252, 254. Simply because if they were the latter then Ištar would have to be among them. Furthermore, the emblems of the great gods lie in the top register and if the lutenists were meant to personify them they would be shown with individuating attributes. In addition, the animals interspersed between them include several—the lion, ibex, wild bull—that are sacred to the goddess or especially associated with her in myths. All these wild animals are additionally mentioned in Mesopotamian literature or pictured in art as among those species favored in royal hunts with all their mythic overtones

narratives, and the military, as opposed to the temple and hymnody or lyric songs.

2. Second, its presence in the hands of mythological figures here lends credence to my view that it was used in the performance of myths and/or epics with their heavy mythic overtones, and that a major function of these sung narratives was to emphasize the importance of the sworn vow as legal foundation of human society.
3. Third, this mythic dimension supports my theory of the function of the tassels—seen in the *kudurru* as two thin lines etched from the top of each lute—as signifying that the lutes that bore them had been consecrated or authorized to perform songs that expressed or confirmed royal ideology and legitimacy in the presence of the king.
4. Finally, the motif of the dancing woman with a percussion instrument at the head of a procession stands at the forefront of an iconographic tradition in the same manner as the Old Babylonian shepherd lutenist plaques. In addition, the three figures of the shepherd lutenist, the dancing war goddess, and the LNL in both images bear the same relative functions or relationships to the Dumuzi-Inanna-lute complex as they do to the later hero-woman of authority-LNL complex of the Return songs.

### *The War Goddess*

The woman can be identified as the war goddess by her position at the head of the procession, her *daf* drum, and her leading posture; her raised arm, backwards glance and forward movement. These are elements of an iconographic tradition that communicates her status as an encourager of warriors to victory and are essentially

identical to depictions of the prophetess Miriam, sister of Moses and Aaron in the Exodus 15:20-21 (*Pl. 4.7*). As the Hebrews, released from slavery in Egypt yet then pursued by the vindictive Pharaoh, successfully crossed the Red Sea, the parted waters crashed closed on the Egyptian army and Pharaoh, saving the Hebrews.

<sup>20</sup>And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. <sup>21</sup>And Miriam sang unto them: Sing ye to the LORD, for He is highly exalted: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.<sup>61</sup>



*Pl. 4.7: Miriam leading the Hebrews in Song of the Sea.*<sup>62</sup>

This role of women as leaders of military victory celebrations and encouragers of warriors, primarily as a function of priestesses of goddesses like

<sup>61</sup> Exodus 15: 20-21, *Hebrew-English Bible According to the Masoretic Text and the JPS 1917 Edition*, electronic text and HTML version by Larry Nelson and Mechon Mamre, 2016, last updated 14 Nov. 2017. Found at: <<https://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0215.htm>>; accessed on: 29 Dec. 2017.

<sup>62</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> century CE, Byzantine. Image source: Chludov Psalter, Moscow, State Historical Museum MS. D.129, found at: <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chludov\\_Miriam.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chludov_Miriam.jpg)>; accessed on: 29 Dec. 2017.

Inanna/Ištar,<sup>63</sup> was widespread in the ancient eastern Mediterranean. 1 Samuel 18:6 states,

When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs (*b<sup>e</sup>šimhâ*) and with tambourines (*b<sup>e</sup>tupim*) and lutes (*ûb šalašim*).<sup>64</sup>

The term *šalašim* is, according to Joachim Braun (1929-2013), professor of musicology at Israel's Bar-Ilan University from 1972-1997,<sup>65</sup> the only name for a lute instrument used in the Bible. It derives etymologically from Sumerian *sa.eš* (Sux *sa*, 'tendon, sinew, string'; Akk *pitnu*)<sup>66</sup> + *eš* = 'three'  through Akkadian *schalaschtu* to the singular Hebrew form *šlš* or *šaloš*, all of which indicate a 'three stringed' musical instrument.<sup>67</sup>

Even two millennia later the feminine victory dancer's iconographic form of this *kudurru* still appeared in Christian manuscripts to convey the idea of the woman who leads the victory dance. The Chludov Psalter's marginal illustration in *Pl. 4.7* shows Miriam at the banks of the Red Sea, but David's return in 1 Samuel, illustrated

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<sup>63</sup> Or, in Canaan and Judea/Israel (Palestine), of the goddess Ašerah.

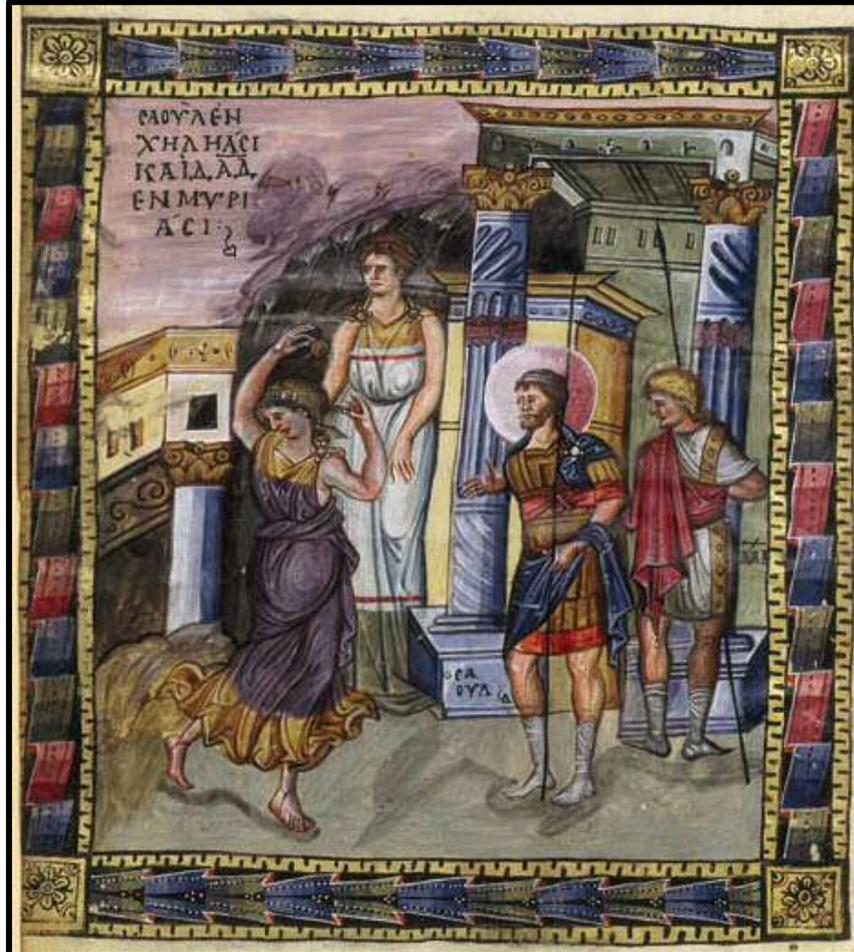
<sup>64</sup> *The Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1996), p. 291. Other Bible translations variously use 'instruments of music', 'three-stringed instruments', 'harps', or 'lyres'; see <[http://biblehub.com/1\\_samuel/18-6.htm](http://biblehub.com/1_samuel/18-6.htm)>; accessed on 6 June 2018.

<sup>65</sup> Joachim Braun, *Music*, pp. 41-42;

<sup>66</sup> Kilmer, 'Strings', p. 262.

<sup>67</sup> Translated here as 'lyre', this is mostly due to a tradition in which instruments associated with David, who famously played the *kinnor*, a kind of lyre or harp, were generally translated to mean the lyre. As, for example, the Byzantines used ancient Greek *kithara* to denote a lute of some type, which was adopted by the Arabs as *qithara*. As this lute migrated along North Africa into Moorish Spain, the name travelled with it and eventually transformed into the words *citera*, *cither*, *guitar* and *zither* in Romance languages. See Laurence Wright, 'The Medieval Gittern and Citole: A Case of Mistaken Identity', *GSI* 30 (1977), p. 10; Henry George Farmer, 'A Maghribi Work on Musical Instruments', *JRAS* 67/2 (1935), pp. 348, 350-351.

in the Paris Psalter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the dancer is portrayed with essentially the same form (*Pl. 4.8*).<sup>68</sup>



*Pl. 4.8: Woman dancing for David's return from battle.*<sup>69</sup>

Such women may have formed part of a class of priestesses of *Ašerah* and other Canaanite goddesses.<sup>70</sup> Among their roles in the public sphere was that 'reserved for women in the rituals observed for preparation for war, the handling of defeat and celebrations of victory.' The usual string instrument noted in this connection is the

<sup>68</sup> Although in both illustrations the artists interpreted *b<sup>e</sup>tupim* 'timbrels' as finger cymbals instead of as a frame drum.

<sup>69</sup> Byzantine, 10<sup>th</sup> century CE. Image source: Paris Psalter, Bibl. nat. gr. 139, fol. 5v; found at: Wander, 'Paris Psalter', fig. 7, p. 97.

<sup>70</sup> Meindert Dijkstra, 'Women and Religion in the Old Testament', *Only One God?: Monotheism in Ancient Israel and the Veneration of the Goddess Asherah*, ed. by Bob Becking, Meindert Dijkstra, Marjo C. A. Korpel and Karol J. H. Vriezen (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), pp. 177-178.

*kinnor* (*knrh*, *knr*, *knnr*) like that carried by the Ugaritic and Egyptian goddess *Anat(h)*, a war goddess who played a *knr* lyre for war and love songs, to celebrate the victorious return of her lover Ba'al, the god of storm and war, and led the ruler in military expeditions.<sup>71</sup>

In a reprise of the latter's role in Mesopotamia, Dijkstra suggests that Arabian women before the advent of Islam sang war songs as well, carrying a sedan either empty or with 'the most beautiful girl of the tribe'. She could be seen as representing the war goddess, and that 'Deborah as "mother of Israel" also represented the goddess...in her role as singer of the song of victory.' The custom of the sedan may serve a similar symbolic and ritual function as the Israelites carrying the Ark of the Covenant that represented God's presence as leader of the warriors into battle.

The LNLs' presence in this Kassite image suggests two things: first, that this scene represents a tradition already established throughout the Near East by the late 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, and second that in such a practice the playing of the lute was, at least in Mesopotamia at this time, performed by the soldiers themselves while the *daf* was the province of women as it had already been, and largely remains so even today throughout much of the Near and Middle East and in several Mediterranean European cultures as well.<sup>72</sup>

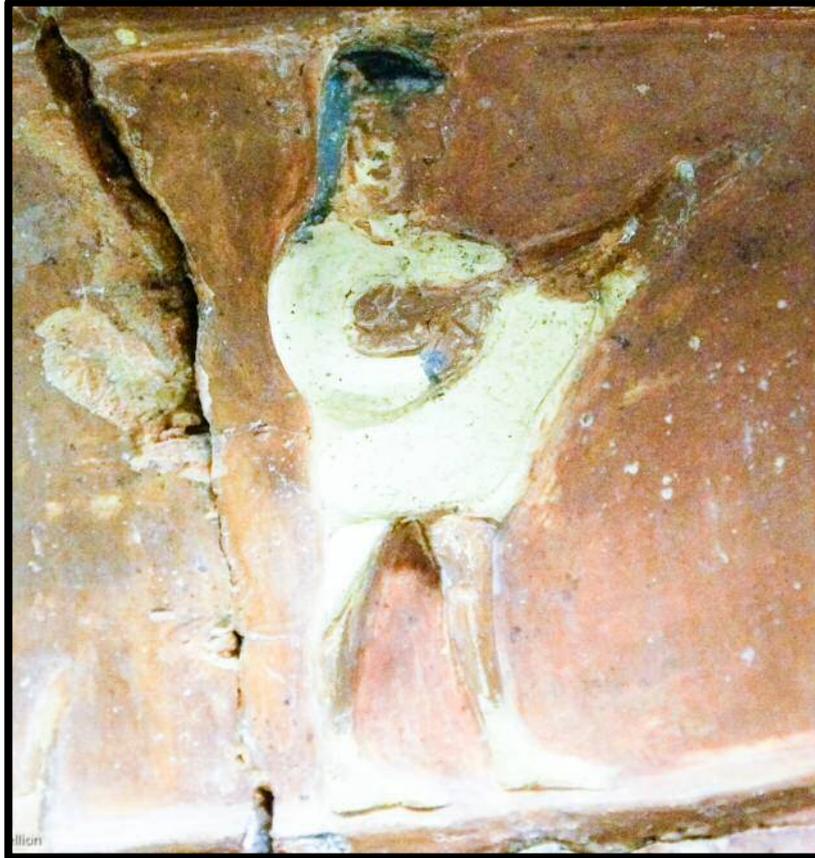
Furthermore, it indicates that in rituals of warfare women reified or reenacted the mythological roles of the divine feminine. Furthermore, as celebrators of victorious warriors these mythological and real-life feminine agents incorporated chordophones in their rituals: the *knr* lyre as part of anticipatory rites inside the temple and lutes like the three string *šalašim* in outdoor victory dances with percussion

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<sup>71</sup> See *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, p. 48, l. 45 and p. 113, l. 8.

<sup>72</sup> i.e. Spain, Portugal, and Italy. For the frame drum as a woman's instrument see Mauricio Molina, *Frame Drums in the Medieval Iberian Peninsula* (Phd dissertation Graduate Faculty in Music, The City University of New York, UMI microform 3232017, 2006), pp. 93-100.

instruments, the latter the specific domain of women. The evidence therefore strengthens the links between the masculine hero, the woman of authority, and the chordophone as mediator of communication between the two.



Pl. 4.9: Hittite lutenist from Inandik Vase.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Old Hittite c. 18<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Image source: Thomas Moore, *Old Hittite Polychrome Relief Vases and the Assertion of Kingship in 16<sup>th</sup> Century BCE Anatolia* (unpublished PhD dissertation, The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences of İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, Dept. of Archaeology, İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University, 2015), Fig. 23, p. 122.



Fig. 4.4: Hittite Empire, c. 1700-1300 BCE.

#### *The Assyro-Hittite LNL in Banquet Scenes*

Lutes first appear in Anatolia during the Old Hittite (hereafter OH) Kingdom (Fig. 4.4) that arose c. 17<sup>th</sup> century BCE, roughly concurrent with the emergence of the Kassite dynasty in Mesopotamia. The earliest depictions occur on wedding vases (Pl. 4.9) and show them in small ensembles of lute, lyre, and one or more women with *daff* round hand-drums performing in wedding ceremonies.

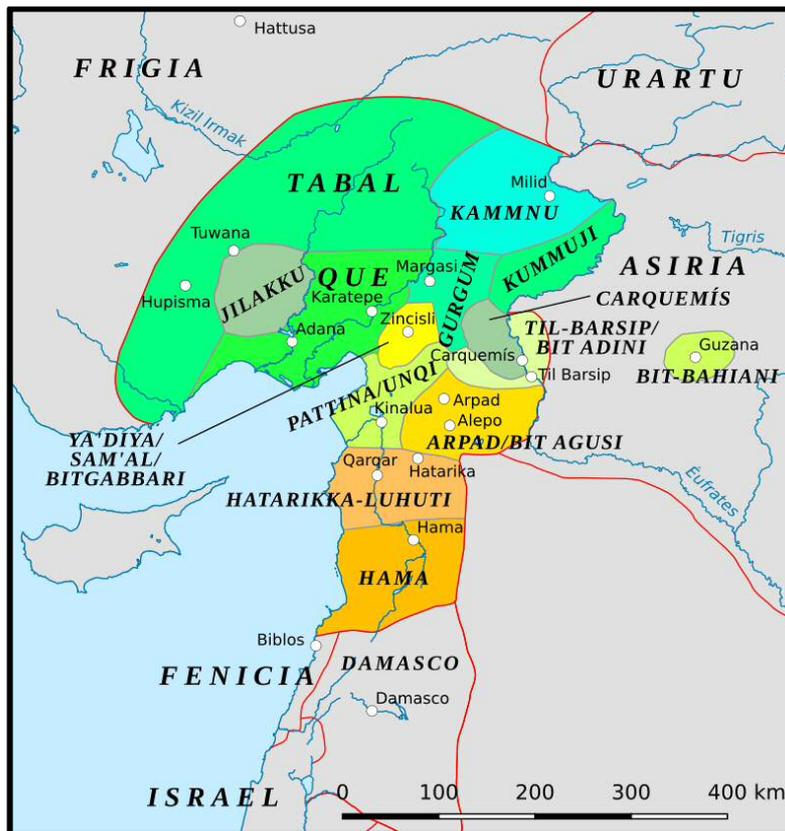


Fig. 4.5: Neo- or Syro-Hittite city states, c. 800 BCE.<sup>74</sup>

The Hittites were an Indo-European people who developed a sizable and highly heterogeneous empire from the upper Tigris-Euphrates Rivers to northern Syria and west-central Anatolia during the 17<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century BCE they were powerful rivals of Egypt for control and influence in the Levant and Palestine. During the mass collapses of empires and kingdoms in the late Bronze Age, c. 1100 BCE, the Hittite Empire dissolved into a series of independent city-states (Fig. 4.5).<sup>75</sup> These Syro-Hittite or Neo-Hittite kingdoms such as *Karkemiš* (Hit, Tur Carchemish) and *Alaca Höyük* were centered in northern Syria and southeastern

<sup>74</sup> Map source: compiled from data in *Tübinger Bibelatlas (Tübinger Bible Atlas)*, edited by S. Mittmann & G. Schmitt (Peabody MA: Hendrickson Pubs., 2008) maps B IV 13-14; O.R. Gurney, *The Hittites*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976/Pelican Books, 1954), pp. 39-46. "State borders" are approximate only.'

<sup>75</sup> Mark Weeden, 'After the Hittites: The Kingdoms of Karkamish and Palistin in Northern Syria', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 56 (2), pp. 6-10.

Anatolia. These lasted until being annexed by the Neo-Assyrian Empire around the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

The Hittite language, or *Hatti*, is the oldest recorded Indo-European language and was related to several other Anatolian languages of the time. The Hittites wrote inscriptions and texts in a unique form of hieroglyphic writing, not cuneiform. The linguistic and cultural diversity of their Empire was mirrored by a ‘polytheist extremism’<sup>76</sup> in which the Hittite rulers attempted to forge a pan-Anatolian imperial identity centered on that of the Hittite culture but inclusive of all the societies within their realm.<sup>77</sup>

Four lute images survive from the Neo-Hittite era (*Table 4.1*), all of them found on *orthostats*, stone slabs used as foundations of imperial architecture and carved in relief. Of these, three portray the A-H LNL, one from Zincirli of the disc-shaped resonator type (*Pl. 2.4*) and the other two, both from Karkemiš, the teardrop type. The Karkemiš images depict the A-H lute in banquet scenes (*Pls. 4.10-11*), and this forms the primary setting of almost all images of the A-H lute (*Table 4.1*).<sup>78</sup> The re-emergence of this motif recalls the Akkadian seal impressions (*Pls. 3.1-4*) and given the Hittite orthostats’ monumental contexts they portray the same equivalency of royal banquet-feast of the gods’.

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<sup>76</sup> Ekrem Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1962), p. 76; Bryce, *Life and Society*, pp. 135-137; O. R. Gurney, *Some Aspects of Hittite Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.4.

<sup>77</sup> Bryce, *Life and Society*, pp. 135-137; Gurney, *Aspects*, p.4.

<sup>78</sup> The Zincirli image shows a seated lutenist in the midst of an orthostatic series depicting mounted warriors, mythological animals, and the Hittite goddess Kubaba. Facing the lutenist a standing figure seems to either sing/recite or to listen while performing possibly cheironomic gestures. While the social context of this image is not made obvious the lutenist’s place in the iconographic programme here seems connected with a bardic function.



*Pl. 4.10: Assyro-Hittite lute from Karkemiš.<sup>79</sup>*



*Pl. 4.11: Neo-Hittite banquet scene with lutenist.<sup>80</sup>*

<sup>79</sup> Karkemiš, northwest Syria; Syro-Hittite, c. 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. Image source: < <http://www.hittitemonuments.com/karkamis/>>; accessed on: 15 Sept. 2015.

<sup>80</sup> Karkemiš; Syro-Hittite, c. 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE. Image source: Ibid.

Image:	Provenience	Date	Figure Types	Lute Type
1	Syro-Hittite, Karkemiš, NW Syria	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lutenist</li> <li>• double-pipe player</li> <li>• 2 dancing children</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, mandorla resonator
2	Syro-Hittite, Karkemiš, NW Syria	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Servant with whisk,</li> <li>• king (seated)</li> <li>• servant with cup</li> <li>• lutenist</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, mandorla resonator
3	Syro-Hittite, Zincirli, NW Syria	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seated lutenist</li> <li>• male figure facing with hand gestures</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, disc resonator
4	Neo-Assyrian, N. Palace of Aššurbanipal, Nineveh, Iraq	r. 668-627 BCE  carving made: c. 645 BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double-pipe player</li> <li>• lutenist</li> <li>• 3 harpists</li> <li>• 7 servants with whisks &amp;/or food trays</li> <li>• queen (seated)</li> <li>• king (reclining)</li> </ul>	LNL, type indeterminate
5	Neo-Assyrian, NW Palace of Aššurnasirpal II, Nimrud, Iraq	r. 883-859  carving made: 865-860 BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standing lutenist</li> <li>• 2 figures in lion skins</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, mandorla resonator
6	Luristan, W. Iran, Iranian with Babylonian Influence	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Servant with cup</li> <li>• king (seated)</li> <li>• lutenist</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, disc resonator
7	Luristan, W. Iran, Iranian with Babylonian Influence	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lutenist</li> <li>• servant with whisk</li> <li>• king (seated)</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, disc resonator(?)
8	Luristan, W. Iran, Iranian with Babylonian Influence	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lutenist</li> <li>• servant with whisk</li> <li>• king (seated)</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, mandorla resonator(?)
9	Luristan, W. Iran, Iranian with Babylonian Influence	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lutenist</li> <li>• 2 servants with whisk</li> <li>• servant with cup</li> <li>• king (seated)</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, type indeterminate
10	Luristan, W. Iran, Iranian with Babylonian Influence	c. 10 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> centuries BCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lutenist</li> <li>• servant with whisk</li> <li>• king (seated)</li> </ul>	A-H LNL, type indeterminate

Table 4.1: Images of LNL in Banquet Scenes, 2<sup>nd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> Millennia BCE.

Following the Kassites, the Iranian Medes took control of the entire region and most of Iran as well until deposed by the Persian Achaemenid Empire (c. 550-330 BCE), itself destroyed by Alexander the Great's armies by 330 BCE. The northwestern Iranian province of Luristan formed the eastern edge of the A-H LNL and banquet scene distribution, represented by five extant bronze *situlae* or drinking cups (Pls. 4.12a-b). Luristan contains the Zagros Mts., home to various transhumant, pastoral mountain tribes like the Gutians who overthrew the Akkadian dynasty in the

21<sup>st</sup> century BCE. It is possible the Akkadians themselves came from this region, and if so the conclusion that the lute came with them suggests that the instrument family's association with the Frontier Warrior Culture described in Chap. 5 is a long-standing one. Luristan's position directly north of the Elamite kingdom and Susa, its capital city with an abundance of lute iconography, contributes to the likelihood that the LNL formed part of its ancient instrumentarium well before these decorated beakers were made.



*Pls. 4.12a-b: Luristani bronze situlae with banquet scenes.*<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> *Pl. 4.12a*: inscription 'Šamaš-kin-ahi, officer of the king'; 10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE; Luristan, northwest Iran. Image source: Photo © Erich Lessing / <lessingimages.com>, used by permission.

Bronze works represent the most characteristic genre of Luristani art, the oldest objects dating to c. 1500 BCE. The situlae, however, date from between 10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE, when the Assyrian Empire reached its peak.<sup>82</sup> They show stylistic traits of Babylonian, Elamite and North Syrian art though they contain a number of details that hint at local influences as well. Nonetheless, the consistency of the motifs present—the bearded lutenist with A-H-type lute, beardless servant with cup or palm whisk, and king seated before a table—shows that this region formed part of the A-H LNL’s distribution zone and the royal or courtly music culture it belonged to.

At least two of the Luristani bronzes show the disc-shaped A-H LNL like that on the Hittite Zincirli relief (*Pl. 4.12a*), albeit with a suggestion of incurved, not disjunct shoulders. At least one other situla shows a somewhat tapered profile with lines etched across the fingerboard that might imply frets.<sup>83</sup> The modeling on this is, however, of a cruder quality than the others, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions. The tapering suggests a mandorla resonator as opposed to the disced type. On at least three of the five beakers, the lutes bear ornate tassels that cross each other forming an ‘X’ design.

The significance of these Hittite and Luristani examples are that,

1. The frequency of lutenists on these Luristani banquet scenes demonstrates that, given the limits of the pictorial space and how many figures it could include, the trio of king, servant and lutenist encapsulate something essential about the banquet ambiance and what an attendee could expect to see there.

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*Pl. 4.12b*: MMA 54.5, Oscar White Muscarella, ‘Decorated Bronze Beakers from Iran’, *American Journal of Archaeology* 78/3 (1974), Pl. 46:5.

<sup>82</sup> Muscarella, ‘Decorated Bronze’, pp. 243-249, 252.

<sup>83</sup> Photographs of items 9 and 10 in *Table 4.1* were either unavailable or of too poor quality—the situlae themselves being in poor condition—to determine the resonator’s exact shape.

2. The Assyrian composition (*Table 4.2.4*) aside, the lutenist is always shown as a solo performer, suggesting an intimate performance setting with music that called for listening over movement, and therefore probably text-based.
3. That all the lutenists (*4.2.4* excepted) wear beards seems to indicate that they are something more than servants, eunuchs, or slaves—beards indicate masculine maturity and typically sported by kings and high officials—and occupy an office of some importance in court society, such as a bard.
4. Political, social and cultural contacts between Luristan, Elam, Mesopotamia, and the Syro-Hittite city-states make it likely that the formal and thematic similarities in lute iconography point to a distribution of the A-H lute species throughout this geographical area.
5. The motivic and thematic parallels of these banquet images with those of the Akkadian cylinder seals point to a continuation of a musical and iconographic tradition. This tradition positions the LNL as an instrument whose primary function was that of facilitating communication between the gods and their worldly representative, the (shepherd) king, in the form of (largely) narrative songs concerned with kingship ideology and the legal codes that structured the relationship.

### *Neo-Assyrian Kingship Ideology*

The use of warrior lutenists as displays of imperial ideology connected with divine mandate, as discussed in Chap. 3, continued in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE in the Assyrian Empire. In a frieze from the northwest Palace of *Aššurnasirpal II* (r. 883-859 BCE) at Nimrud, capital of the Assyrian Empire, dated to 865-860 BCE, there appears the first image of a *single* warrior lutenist playing an Assyro-Hittite style lute.



Pl. 4.13: Detail of Assyrian relief.<sup>84</sup>

He appears in the midst of an iconographic programme depicting preparations for war, the ‘behind the scenes’ activities of the military, and the brutal face of battle. To the left of this vignette, inside a round tower, stable attendants groom warhorses and millers grind flour and prepare food. On the upper right of this panel, near a gateway flanked by two columns each crowned by an ibex—one of Inanna/Ištar’s sacred animals<sup>85</sup>—the lone warrior plays the lute in front of two figures draped in lion skins who seem to dance or perform ritual movements around the heap of enemy soldiers’ severed heads from a battle that King Aššurnasirpal II has just returned from.

The lute the figure plays closely resembles those of the Hittite and Luristani motifs: a remarkably long, fine neck with a comparatively small, teardrop-shaped resonator (Pl. 4.14).<sup>86</sup> The persistent association of this specific LNL form with

<sup>84</sup> NW Palace of Aššurnasirpal II; 865-860 BCE; Nimrud, Iraq. Image source: BM 124548, ‘wall relief’, photo author’s.

<sup>85</sup> The ibex was an enormously popular subject of prehistoric rock art from Sinai to Iran and its depictions far outnumbered any other type of animal. It seemed to carry considerable astral symbolism related to a feminine deity, although its precise meanings are difficult to determine. The ibex also forms a popular subject for the elaborate headstocks of the bowed Balkan *gusle/lahutë* (Slav./Alb.) played by epic singers. See Richard Dibon-Smith, ‘The Ibex as an Iconographic Symbol in the Ancient Near East’, self-published, *passim*. Found at: <[https://www.academia.edu/15735124/The\\_Ibex\\_as\\_an\\_Iconographic\\_Symbol\\_in\\_the\\_ancient\\_Near\\_East](https://www.academia.edu/15735124/The_Ibex_as_an_Iconographic_Symbol_in_the_ancient_Near_East)>; accessed on: 1 March 2016; Uzi Avner, Liora Kolska Horwitz and Wayne Horowitz, ‘Symbolism of the ibex motif in Negev rock art’, *Journal of Arid Environments* 143 (2017), pp. 35-43.

<sup>86</sup> The resonator is barely visible due to the low relief of the carving at this point. However, its general outline and dimensions can be deduced from the sections shown just under and above the lutenist’s right forearm; the curvature indicates incurved shoulders.

military and warfare contexts through the mid-2<sup>nd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> millennia BCE establishes genealogical, cultural and social continuities with the *tanbūr* family of LNLs in the Byzantine and Ottoman eras. The real-world social domain of these later LNLs possessed a particular mythology and cosmology, expressed through epic songs and especially in the Return song genre, that continues key aspects of the tradition established during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE.



*Pl. 4.14: Detail of lutenist from Nineveh relief, Pl. 4.13.<sup>87</sup>*

The lion-clad performers are, I believe, the key to interpreting this motif's meaning in the context of the entire relief programme. In addition to the lion being a favorite prey in Assyrian imperial hunting parties and its subjugation a symbol of the king's power and authority, the lion serves as a literary metonym for the fierceness of the Assyrian warriors in combat. The *Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta* (c. 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE) relates the story of Assyrian King *Tukulti-Ninurta I*'s (r. c. 1243-1207 BCE) repeated

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<sup>87</sup> Image source: BM 124548, photo author's.

military campaigns against the Kassite King *Kaštiliaštu IV* of Babylonia (r. c. 1232-1225 BCE). The latter broke treaties he had made with the Assyrian ruler and would not negotiate further. This led to war and in the three battle scenes presented in the poem the Assyrian king and/or his warriors are compared to lions:

But the valiant warriors of Aššur watched the king of the Kassites.  
They were not clothed in body armor, (but) like lions they kill...<sup>88</sup>

Elsewhere in the *Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta* the king himself is represented as the Weapon of Aššur and the *umu*, a mythical monster likened to a ‘storm-wind’ compared to an ‘attack of lions’ and possibly depicted sometimes as a winged lion-like creature.<sup>89</sup> Although *umu* is rare as a royal epithet, lion and stormwind both occur frequently as metonyms for the king.<sup>90</sup>

The irresistible Weapon of Aššur meets (in battle) those attacking  
[his] force.  
And Tukulti-Ninurta, the fierce, un pitying storm, lets [their blood]  
flow.<sup>91</sup>

And again, in the epic’s final battle scene:

They go fiercely and furiously to the fray, without armor.  
They had stripped off their chest-armor (and) changed clothing.  
...  
The ferocious, heroic men played with their sharpened weapons;  
[And] destructive monster winds blew at each other like attacking  
lions.

These lion-clad figures then may represent, perhaps simultaneously, lions killed in a royal hunt—note the tassel that hangs from the back of the figure on the left, indicating royal possession and authority—and ritual re-enactment of warriors on the field of battle. They therefore also enact the first two of the three essential royal actions—the hunt and war in their earthly and mythic aspects. The lutenist appears to

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<sup>88</sup> Machinist, *The Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta I*, Col. A reverse, l. 38-39, p. 111.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., n. IVA 41’, p. 326.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 327.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., Col. IVA, l. 40-41, p. 111.

accompany them in a dramatic ritual performance relating the lion-like power of the king and his forces in the battle depicted on other panels of the relief programme.

Although *Tukulti-Ninurta* predates the Nimrud reliefs of Aššurnasirpal II by some 500 years, the text proved essential to the development and elaboration of Assyrian royal ideology. The epic contained all the rhetorical devices and motifs used in inscriptions and other royal texts from *Tiglath-Pileser I* (r. 1114-1076 BCE) onward to the Empire's fall.<sup>92</sup> In this it was not innovative but rather formed a late crystallization of the style used for such poems during the Akkadian and Old Babylonian dynasties<sup>93</sup> and so was firmly traditional. The relief programme of Nimrud Palace can then be taken as an extension of this tradition and its motifs as illustrations of the same ideological principles found in the epic.

The claim that this Assyrian lutenist participates in a performance of epic requires qualification, however. Machinist notes that, 'no native designation of the composition survives... "epic" is not a Mesopotamian word and...no Mesopotamian *Poetics* is known into which the present work or any other can be fitted.'<sup>94</sup> He justifies the use of 'epic' for *Tukulti-Ninurta* on the grounds that, like the Homeric poems, it recounts a dramatic narrative that describes 'connected historical episodes'. It additionally focuses on key actors who engage in a series of military encounters of a 'heroic' nature, each preceded by and punctuated with verbal exchanges.

I would add that these exchanges revolve around the making and transgressing of treaties whose validity is based on the power and authority of the sworn word or vow; the Kassite king's violation of these sworn vows provides

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<sup>92</sup> Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology*, p. 223.

<sup>93</sup> Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 'Tukulti-Ninurta Epic (Mesopotamian Epic)', last revised 22 Nov. 2000. Found at: <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Tukulti-Ninurta-Epic>>; accessed on 7 June 2018.

<sup>94</sup> Machinist, *Epic*, p. 44.

Tukulti-Ninurta with sufficient justification for going to war with him. Kaštiliaštu has not only broken a human legal contract but one made in the presence of and sanctioned by the gods.<sup>95</sup> Finally, the significance of these martial encounters is less about the specific conflict described but, like the *Iliad*, ‘to illustrate various larger principles’ such as the sanctity of the law and the sworn vow. The power of the sworn word forms a cornerstone of codes of honor in general, notably in Albanian society and as I will show in later chapters of this Thesis it becomes a pivot around which the Albanian Return song Aga Imer revolves.

Machinist suggests the Akkadian term *zamāru* (Ass *Zimru*; Sux *Šir*, ‘to sing’), ‘song’, as a Mesopotamian designation for this literary genre, as ‘elsewhere...[it] is regularly applied to dramatic poems and/or poems of praise that are meant to be “sung”’.<sup>96</sup> Though it is not clear if texts like *Tukulti-Ninurta* were performed as ‘songs’ per se, *zamāru/zimru* was used for an array of meanings whose domain ‘is still unresolved’. The phrase *zamāru ša pitnu*, ‘to play ([a gut string of] a musical instrument)’,<sup>97</sup> occurs frequently in Mesopotamian texts. Thus the connection between the lutenist and the performance of dramatic texts, including those like the *Epic* that are ‘heroic’ in nature, is implied in the semantic domain of the term *zamāru*. The motif could then be taken to indicate that his depiction in the Nimrud relief depicts something like the singing of epic poetry regarding military victories.<sup>98</sup>

Due to the metonymic and allusive nature of such texts and related iconography, they function as ‘hypertexts...of the original Combat myth...[or]

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<sup>95</sup> See l. 32-47, Col. IB obverse, pp. 63-65.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 97, pp. 58-59.

<sup>97</sup> Akk. *pitnu*, ‘string, tendon, sinew, gut (of a bow or musical instrument)’. Kilmer, ‘Strings’, p. 262.

<sup>98</sup> The use of terms that indicate ‘singing’ of dramatic poems can also signify speech acts such as recitative, ‘shouting’, or giving speeches of heroic or dramatic character; the Albanian term *këndoj*, ‘I sing’ and its nominative form *këngë*, a song of heroic or epic character, is often used in these senses in the texts of such songs. See Chap. 6 for a fuller discussion of this in Balkan Return songs.

“charter myth”<sup>99</sup> that kingship ideology derives its legitimacy from. No royal text, image or ritual stands alone as a full expression of that myth but needs to be seen in its relationship with other cultural expressions. The Nimrud lutenist and the lion-clad figures act as signifiers of the hypertext within the relief. Their presence alludes to the ceremonial singing about the king’s military exploits by which he fulfills his divinely ordained duties.<sup>100</sup>

These in turn allude to the royal epics that the relief programme depicts *in veritas*, that the depicted actions have reified. The lutenist, as a representation of the real lutenists and perhaps reciters that actually declaimed the epics, illustrates the self-referential and self-reinforcing nature of the epic ethos in general as seen in *Odyssey* and the Balkan Return songs.

Finally, the extant end of *Tukulti-Ninurta*<sup>101</sup> demonstrates that praise songs accompanied by chordophones formed a standard part of Assyrian victory ceremonies. After Kaštiliaštu’s final defeat Tukulti-Ninurta glorifies his god Aššur and proclaims,

...the design of the gods let me/him do...  
 ...of the gods let me/him put in the mouth of the people...  
 ...to the *lyre-bearer* [*sammi* (<sup>gi5</sup>*ZĀ.MÍ*)] let me/him...  
 ...the greatness of the gods the people who...  
 ...his companion let me/him send forth...  
 ...established like heaven (and) earth until the day when...<sup>102</sup>

Despite the text’s fragmentary nature it indicates that the gods themselves ordained the Assyrian king’s victory over the Kassite oath-breaker. Furthermore, Tukulti-Ninurta’s continued reign is, through his righteous victory, ‘established like heaven and earth’, and that his deeds deserve praise in the form of a song or hymn that the gods inspire

<sup>99</sup> Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology*, p. 290.

<sup>100</sup> In the same way that actual battles served as re-enactments or reifications of the Anzû myth, or the myth of Marduk’s battles with the demoness Tiamat; see Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion*, pp. 260 and 287.

<sup>101</sup> The tablet here is damaged and breaks off before the actual ending.

<sup>102</sup> Machinist, *Epic*, Col. VIB reverse, l. 30-35, p. 133.

the people to sing accompanied by the *za-mi* (Sux; Akk *sammi*), a nine string lyre.<sup>103</sup> This, in conjunction with the pictorial evidence, also lends some clue as to the relative positions and functions of the lute and polychord in the aftermath of military campaigns: the lyre is, as usual, a highly regarded ceremonial chordophone whereas the lute is perhaps a more informal instrument played by soldiers, not necessarily ceremonial functionaries, to accompany dramatic, ritualistic performances.

### Conclusions

As the Mesopotamian lute bifurcates and develops new morphological lineages over the course of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium in Egypt, Syria and Anatolia the original mytho-cosmological rhizome travels with it. This rhizome becomes reconfigured by the new social and cultural contexts it enters yet it retains the original rhizome's genetic core.

Of the various new lute types, the Assyro-Hittite LNL with its exceptionally long neck/resonator width ratio emerges exclusively in banquet or warrior scenes in a geographic range from Anatolia to western Iran. This iconography locates this proto-*tanbūr* and its male players within the Dumuzi-Inanna-lute tradition already present in the Akkadian and Ur III periods.

The goddess Inanna/Ištar acts as the prototype of the woman of authority of the Return songs. Inanna's domain and geographic spread developed in a rhizomatic manner; the actions of conquering kings, inter-state alliances and diplomatic processes transferred her temples and cult from city to city and region to region. Once established in a new locale the goddess's character absorbed the domains of other, regional goddesses. Yet despite her continually evolving and highly paradoxical

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<sup>103</sup> Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, 'The Discovery of an Ancient Mesopotamian Theory of Music', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 115/2 (1971), pp. 139-140; Bo Lawergren and O. R. Gurney, 'Sound Holes and Geometric Figures: Clues to the Terminology of the Ancient Mesopotamian Harps', *Iraq* 49 (1987), pp. 39-41.

nature several of her key traits, her genetic core of war goddess, consecratrix, and law-unto-herself remained prominent and eventually formed the heart of the Return songs' woman of authority.

Inanna appears as war goddess on the Kassite *kudurru* where she exhorts a procession of seven warrior lutenists onward to battle. Her 'victory dance' pose is nearly identical to images of the Biblical Miriam celebrating the Hebrews' Red Sea crossing and the woman who dances to celebrate David's victory over Goliath. In performing these dances the feminine figures exalt and elevate the masculine objects of the dance and thus the war goddess enacts her additional role as the male's consecratrix and initiatress. This aspect identifies her with the Return songs' woman of authority as she approaches and releases the hero from prison.

This pictorial tradition additionally draws together aspects of the Dumuzi-d shepherd king lineage. The recurrence of Inanna's victory dance pose in iconography related to David subtly invokes the association of David as shepherd and through him that motif and theme's roots in the shepherd Dumuzi plaques. The episode illustrated in the Davidic 'victory dance' image refers to the only passage in the Bible that names a lute instrument, the *šalašim*. The A-H LNLs played by the seven warrior lutenists on the *kudurru* thus evinces the lute-warrior association as a widespread phenomenon in the ancient Middle East.

The relationship between Inanna and the seven warriors invokes Inanna's aspect of law-unto-herself, the essential function of the Return songs' woman of authority. This feminine figure compels or contravenes the authority of the masculine higher authority who holds the Return hero in death-like confinement with his LNL. When Inanna manipulates her drunken father Enki into endowing her with the sacred *me-s* that she may bring greater prosperity to her tutelary city she performs the same

function as the woman of authority when she releases the hero from prison against her father's orders.

This thematic rhizome recurs on the *kudurru* that alludes to a myth in which Inanna seeks to overthrow rulership of heaven with the aid of the seven Sebēttu demon-warriors. These warriors were often invoked in Mesopotamian land grants and administrative documents whose authority rests on the divinely ordained vows whose breaking will result in punitive war against the oath-breaker. This theme of the inviolate, sacred sworn vow formed a lynchpin of imperial Mesopotamian epics such as *Tukulti-Ninurta* and their iconographic representations in the wall reliefs of the Nimrud palace. Texts and images encapsulate at once the construction of genealogies of rulership ideologies—the vertical, Dumuzi-d thread—and the mytho-cosmological rhizome with Inanna—the woman of authority—at its genetic heart.

The persistence of the A-H LNL's association with the Dumuzi-d warriors and their consecratrix demonstrates the LNL's integral role in the rhizomatic triad that informs the Return songs as well. This mytho-cosmological rhizome continued on from the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE into the Byzantine and Ottoman Frontier Warrior Culture described in Medieval epics such as *Digenis Akritis* and the Balkan Return songs.

## Chapter 5: Tanbūr, ‘Greek’ Pandoura, Frontier Warrior Culture

### Introduction

In the last two chapters I presented the long necked lute’s (LNL) existence as a primarily imaginal object, a mediating instrument in a mythological dialogue between the Dumuzi-d kingship lineage and the rhizome of Inanna, prototypes of the Return song hero and the woman of authority. The LNL’s involvement in this triad made it an inevitable part of Mesopotamian and Anatolian warrior culture as an accompaniment to the performance of epic songs that revolved around the inviolate nature of the sworn vow between the masculine and feminine characters. In this chapter I follow the trail of the Assyro-Hittite LNL to the actual *tanbūr* within this warrior culture as it developed in the Common Era. Starting from the Iranian Parthians in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE I trace this Frontier Warrior Culture from Iran to Byzantine Anatolia and then to Ottoman Albanian highland culture where the lute culminates in the *çifteli*.

The long necked lute (LNL) virtually disappears from the historical record between the end of the Assyrian Empire in 609 BCE to the rise of the Persian Sasanid Empire in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. The earliest use of the term *tanbūr* or *tambūr* occurs in Pahlavi texts from the Sasanian Empire (3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE). The textual evidence of Arab writers of the 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries CE shows that *tambūr* or *tanbūr* had come to denote an entire class of lutes with two to three courses, long thin necks, and ‘pear-shaped’ resonators. In the first part of this chapter I trace the morphological genealogy of the *tanbūr* LNL and its relationship to the Greek *πανδούρα*, *pandoura*.

Although iconographic depictions of *tanbūr* are rare in this period, images of the *pandoura* indicate a continued association of the LNL and martial, warrior culture into the Byzantine period. The Byzantine epic cycle of the hero *Digenis Akritis*

reveals the *θαμπουριν*, *thampourin*, as an essential attribute of what by then was the full-fledged Frontier Warrior Culture, a highly mobile, border-confounding, and dynamically rhizomatic social class. *Digenis Akritis* forms the first in a long line of attestations of the intimate link between imperial border troops and LNLs of the *tanbūr* family that continues into the Ottoman period.

The soldiery of the Frontier Warrior Culture constitute the primary players and transmitters of *tanbūr* lutes from the Near East to Anatolia and, by the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, into the Balkans. Albanian highland warriors played an instrumental role in the FWC and the *tanbūr*'s transmission process and so this chapter presents a brief history of Albania and Kosovo from ancient times to Albanian independence from the Ottomans in 1912. In this I also discuss three primary ways in which Albanian highlanders entered the Frontier Warrior Culture's circuits, and thereby formed a close relationship with the *tambura* lutes.

This chapter's central theme thus concerns the interplay between the morphological genealogies of specifically *tanbūr* LNLs and the rhizomatic behavior of the Frontier Warrior Culture whose denizens played these LNLs to accompany their heroic and epic songs, including various types of Return songs.

### *The Parthian and Middle Persian Tanbūr*

As the phylum of handle lutes becomes geographically more diverse through the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE into the first centuries CE, lute iconography displays a greater variety of distinct types as well. In Egypt and North Africa the 'Coptic' lute<sup>1</sup> like that seen on the Qasr 'al-libia mosaic (*Pl. 3.11*) was popular, and the SNL emerged in the

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<sup>1</sup> See Ricardo Eichmann, *Koptische Lauten: Eine musikarchäologische Untersuchung von sieben Langhalslauten des 3. – 9. Jh. n. Chr. aus Ägypten* (Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1994); Hans Hickmann, 'Un Instrument à Cordes Inconnu de l'Époque Copte', *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie copte* 12 (1946-1947), pp. 63-80.

Greco-Buddhist kingdom of Gandhāra in the Swāt Valley of northern Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Mesopotamian type of LNL, however, almost completely disappears from iconography by the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE and is rarely shown until the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE.



*Pl. 5.1: The Parthian LNL.*<sup>2</sup>

The one LNL type that does figure in artworks in this period is that which I have labeled the ‘Parthian’ LNL, as it virtually always appears in the hands of

<sup>2</sup> Detail of Hellenistic relief carving from Andan Dheri, Gandhāra, NW Pakistan, c. 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries CE. Image source: Marco Galli, ‘Hellenistic Court Imagery in the Early Buddhist Art of Gandhāra’, *Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia* 17 (2011), p. 316.

Parthian soldiers, minstrels (*gōsān*)<sup>3</sup> or male and female courtiers. The Parthian LNL's morphology (*Pl. 5.1*) is characterized by its disc-shaped soundboard with two to four 'x'-shaped soundholes; a wide, flat bridge with no visible tailpiece; a long straight-sided neck; disjunct shoulders, and, on most examples, two to four tuning pegs. Its disc-shaped soundboard and elongated neck recall the Assyro-Hittite LNL specimen of the Hittite relief from Karkemiš (*Pl. 4.10-11*) and some of the Luristani bronze beakers; that the Parthian lute's geographic range includes that of the Assyro-Hittite type suggests a genealogical relationship between the two.



*Pl. 5.2: 15<sup>th</sup> century illustration of a 'tanbūr'.<sup>4</sup>*

In their turn, iconographic depictions of the Parthian LNL ceased by the 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, one of the last being those in *Pl. 5.1*, the only known depiction of a LNL in Gāndhārī art.<sup>5</sup> But the instrument's design may have been the genealogical ancestor of a family of disc-shaped, flat- or round-backed lutes of both short necked (SN) and

<sup>3</sup> Mary Boyce, 'The Parthian *Gōsān* and Iranian Minstrel Tradition', *JRAS* 89/1-2 (1957), pp. 10-12.

<sup>4</sup> From a 15<sup>th</sup> century *Shahnameh*, 'Book of Kings', from Heart, Afghanistan. Image source: Feldman's reproduction in *Ottoman*, Fig. I-15, p. 145.

<sup>5</sup> Galli, 'Hellenistic Court Imagery', pp. 316-318.

LN genera played throughout Central Asia, China, and Russia. A probable descendent of this LNL—with an expanded soundboard diameter—can be seen in a 15<sup>th</sup> century miniature from a Herati manuscript of the *Shahnameh*, the Persian ‘Book of Kings’ (Pl. 5.2), a literary epic composed by the Iranian poet Ferdowsi in the 10th century CE.<sup>6</sup> It is depicted being played by the Iranian hero Esfandiyār, and may be the *rūh-efzâ* lute described by the early 15<sup>th</sup> century Arab writer Marāghī (Ibn Ghaibī) as having a body like a *turunj*, a grapefruit-like fruit.<sup>7</sup>

By the 17<sup>th</sup> century this type, by then known only as *tanbūr*, had become the sole representative of the plucked, handle lute phylum in the Ottoman court instrumentarium and it held this position until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> In its construction, morphology, right and left hand techniques, tuning and resonance properties this Ottoman *tanbūr* held virtually no resemblance to the *tanbūr*-s of the Iranian instrumentarium, and its putative ancestors of the 15<sup>th</sup> century had disappeared from the Persian Safavid courts around the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Its social and mytho-cosmological trajectory diverged significantly from the Iranian *tanbūr* type as well, despite the similar names.<sup>9</sup>

The Parthians were a nomadic Iranian people from Central Asia who overthrew the Greek Seleucid dynasty in Iran and Central Asia and established a powerful empire around 247 BCE under Arsaces I (3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE). At its greatest extent Parthian rule extended from eastern Anatolia to the western borders of modern India (Fig. 5.1) They ruled over a culturally and linguistically heterogeneous territory

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<sup>6</sup> Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, pp. 144-145.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 144, citing Abd al-Qadir ibnu Ghaibī al-Marāghī, *Maqâsid al-Alhân*, edited by Taqī Binīsh (Teheran: Zendegi, 1977), p. 128; Farmer, “Abdalqādir”, p. 244, transliterates this instrument as *rūh afzāy*.

<sup>8</sup> Feldman, *Music*, pp. 142-143, 146, 148-149, 152-153.

<sup>9</sup> Picken’s *FMIT* includes a photo of a disc-shaped, flat-backed LNL with three strings from Gaziantep, SE Turkey that presumably belongs to the same genus as the Ottoman *tanbūr*; unfortunately he does not discuss this example further (Pl. 24.1/II.e, preceding p. 225).

that included Greek, Armenian, Sogdian, and Aramaic speakers, although the Parthian language became the official court language.<sup>10</sup> This was written in a script derived from the Aramaic script, originally designed for the Semitic Aramaic language.

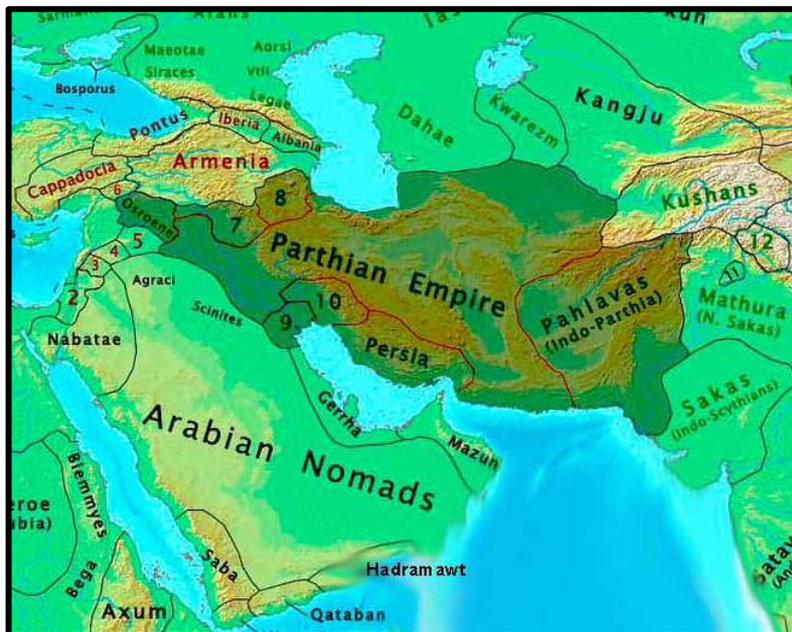


Fig. 5.1: Parthian Empire c. 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE.

The Sasanians, who overthrew the Parthians in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE and ruled Iran for nearly four centuries, adopted the script and used it for a number of Iranian dialects collectively referred to as Middle Persian.<sup>11</sup> After the Arab conquest in the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE, when Arabic script came into general use, the Parthian script became known as Pahlavi; the form of Persian written in Arabic script is now called New Persian and was the basis of the modern Persian language.<sup>12</sup>

An early term for ‘minstrel’, *gōsān*, was a Parthian word and such minstrels were highly regarded in the Parthian courts where they sang—among other genres—

<sup>10</sup> Mary Boyce, ‘Gōsān’, *Encyclopaedia Iranica* v. 11, fasc. 2 (2002), pp. 167-170; found at: <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gosan>>; accessed 10 June 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Christopher J. Brunner, ‘The Fable of the Babylonian Tree Part I: Introduction’, *JNES* 39/3 (1980), p. 191.

<sup>12</sup> Mary Boyce, ‘Middle Persian Literature’, *Handbuch der Orientalistik* 1, 4/2 (Leiden: Brill, 1968), pp. 31-33.

orally transmitted narrative songs before kings.<sup>13</sup> These *gōsān* were not generally represented in early Iranian literature as wanderers but court members<sup>14</sup> and various references to them imply that they went to war as it happened and that part of their role was to transform the experience into song. A Manichaean parable ‘describes how men attacking a fortress distract its defenders by a spectacle “with much song and music” (*srūd ud niwāg ī was*), while they themselves storm it from the rear.’<sup>15</sup> This function of *gōsān* sheds further light on the Kassite and Assyrian warrior-lutenists and suggests that such an office existed well before the 1st millennium BCE.

The earliest use of *tanbūr*, originally spelled *tambūr* (MP  ; *tm-*; *tnbwl*)<sup>16</sup> occurs in *Draxt ī Asurīg/-īk*, ‘The Assyrian [or Babylonian] Tree’, a Middle Persian text from sometime during the Sasanian Empire (3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE) written in Pahlavi script ‘distinguished... by its free use of Parthian vocabulary’.<sup>17</sup> The text is a debate or *tenson* between a palm tree and a goat as to who provides greater benefits to mankind.<sup>18</sup> Prosodic factors<sup>19</sup> show that,

This mixed-dialect text was originally meant to be sung. More specifically, it was probably delivered in a chant or recitative; perhaps it was punctuated with melodic ornamentation in a manner somewhat similar to the treatment of Manichaean hymns... it displays abundant use of repetition and parallelism in

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-57; see also Boyce, ‘Parthian’, pp. 10-12, 16-17. ‘Poetry and music, it is evident, were among the Parthians’ greatest pleasures, and for them the two were indissolubly joined (no native word is known in any Iranian language for a poet as distinct from a singer. Moreover, to compose and sing verses appears to have been a common polite accomplishment in Parthian society)’ (pp. 20-21).

<sup>14</sup> Boyce, ‘Parthian’, p. 26; ‘Middle Persian’, p. 55.

<sup>15</sup> Boyce, ‘Parthian’, p. 26.

<sup>16</sup> McKenzie, *Pahlavi*, p. 81; Henning, *Sogdica*, p. 48; cf. entry for *tmbwr* in Desmond Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary of Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian (Dictionary of Manichaean Texts: Vol. III Texts from Central Asia and China), Pt. 1* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepolis Pubs., 2004), p. 324.

<sup>17</sup> Brunner, ‘Fable I’, p. 191.

<sup>18</sup> This was already a popular genre in Sumerian and Babylonian literature, as seen in the Debate Between Summer and Winter discussed in Chap. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. For a fuller discussion of the poem’s prosody, see W. B. Henning, ‘A Pahlavi Poem’, *BSOAS, University of London* 13/3 (1950), pp. 641-648; G. Lazard, ‘La métrique de la poésie parthe,’ *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce, Acta Iranica* 25 (Leiden, 1985), pp. 371-99.

verse construction—devices familiar both in the hymn literature and in epic tradition.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, the Parthian linguistic elements and prosodic features signify that the poem almost certainly had a long pre-history of oral transmission before being written down.<sup>21</sup>

The goat boasts to the palm tree that, among the many other ritual, ceremonial, and everyday services it provides,

Harp and *vīṇā* and lyre, and lute and zither,  
Everything they play, they sound upon me.<sup>22</sup>

In his earlier translation,<sup>23</sup> Unvala renders this as:

Whenever [they play] the *Čang*, and the *vin*, and the *kannār*,  
[and] beat on the *barbut* and the *tambūr*, they play [of course]  
on me...<sup>24</sup>

*barbut ō kannār u vin u čang man pa žadand hamē tambūr tō  
hač apartar...*

Unvala holds that the first three instruments that the goat names—*barbut*, *kannār*, *vin*—all use goat sinew for their strings,<sup>25</sup> which was the primary string material even in the Sumerian ED period.<sup>26</sup> He next claims that ‘the hide [of *čang* and *tambūr* are] made of the skin of the goat.’ Unvala treats *tambūr* as a drum, probably confusing it with French *tambour*<sup>27</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>21</sup> C. Bartholomae, *Zur Kenntnis der mittelpersischen Mundarten* 4, (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1922), pp. 23-28.

<sup>22</sup> Christopher J. Brunner, ‘The Fable of the Babylonian Tree Part II: Translation’, *JNES* 39/4 (1980), p. 294.

<sup>23</sup> J. M. Unvala, ‘Draxt-i-Asurik’, *BSOS, UL* 2/4 (1923), pp. 637-678.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 663-664.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 664, n. 48<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Kilmer, ‘Strings’, pp. 261-262.

<sup>27</sup> Unvala, ‘Draxt’, n. 48<sup>s-h</sup>, p. 664. This French word ultimately derives from Greek *τύμπανον*, *tympanon*, a drum, through Latin *tympanum* into *timballo* (Ita), *timbre* (Fre), *t<sup>o</sup>bl* (Ara), *atabal* (Spa From Spa-Ara) and *tabour* (Fre).<sup>27</sup> At some point, *timb-* and *tbr-* morphologies became

The operative verb in this passage, *žadand*, means ‘[they] hit, beat, blow, strike, smite [all these instruments]’,<sup>28</sup> but similar terms are used in many languages for the action of playing a chordophone. In Tocharian B, the eastern-most IE language (c. 600-800 CE), the term *kärn* (vt.)<sup>29</sup> could mean ‘to inflict pain, afflict’, but its primary use was in musical contexts: *rapeyäntu kärnäsmäm yeñc* (‘they went [around] playing/striking [their] musical instruments’). The ancient Greek *κρούω*, (*krouō*), v. *κρούμα* (*krouma-*) likewise means both ‘strike/knock together’ and ‘to strike/play a stringed instrument’, particularly the lyre.<sup>30</sup> In Albanian the verb *bie•*, the main verb used in the *Aga Imer* texts, can mean ‘to play <a musical instrument>’ as well as ‘to strike, hit <>, to descend with force on <>, to knock, to reprimand.’<sup>31</sup>

In addition, the other four instruments are all chordophones: *barbut* (Pal; MPer *blbwt*)<sup>32</sup> may derive from Greek *βαρβίτος*, *barbitos*, a bass lyre popular in 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE Athenian high-life,<sup>33</sup> but by the Sasanian Empire denoted an SNL of the

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confused, and many 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century writers on music used various transliterations of *tambūr* and *tambour* to denote either the LNL or some kind of drum.

It should also be noted that *tambour* (Anglicized spelling) spelled with initial Arabic ت *tā’* (IPA /t/, a voiceless alveolar stop) denotes ‘drum’ or ‘tambourine’ but is a recent loanword from French *ta[m]bour*, also meaning drum. W. H. Worrell, ‘Notes on the Arabic Names of Certain Musical Instruments’, *JAOR* 68/1 (1948), p. 66.

<sup>28</sup> McKenzie, *Pahlavi*, p. 97.

<sup>29</sup> Tocharian A and B are the two known members of a now-extinct IE language family spoken in the Tarim Basin region (Xinjiang province). They are attested in a number of texts dating between the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. See entry ‘*kärn-*’ in Douglas Q. Adams, *A dictionary of Tocharian B* (Leiden Studies in Indo-European 10), (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 1999), p. 173.

<sup>30</sup> Found at: <<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?>>, search term ‘krou/w’; accessed on: 3 April 2015.

<sup>31</sup> *OAED*, edited by Leonard Newmark (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), ‘*bie•*’, p. 76.

Several forms of this verb are used in the Albanian Return song of Aga Imer when the hero plays his *çifteli* while in prison. In Bosnian, *kucanje*, ‘knocking, rapping’, is the general term for the right hand’s action on the *tambura*’s strings (Talam, *FMIBH*, pp. 95-96).

<sup>32</sup> D. N. McKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971/1986), p. 17.

<sup>33</sup> Such an etymology may have followed a similar line of descent as Greek *kithara* → Arabic *qithāra*, but there is as yet no compelling evidence to prove this. Other theories hold the Parthian term stems from the Iranian words *bar + bat*, ‘duck’s breast’, describing the lute’s deep rounded back; Abū ‘Abd-Allāh Moḥammad Ḳhwārazmī, *Mafātīḥ al-‘olūm*, ed. G. van Vloten, (Leiden: Brill Pubs., 1895). For Greek *barbitos* see Bo Lawergren, ‘Etruscan Musical Instruments and Their

slightly later <sup>c</sup>*ūd* type. *Kannār*, which Brunner translates as ‘lyre’, most likely comes from Ugaritic and Aramaic *knnr/knr*, the *kinnor* lyre played by Canaanite storm-goddesses and by King David.<sup>34</sup> *Čang* (*cng*; MPer *šnng*; Sog *cngr*)<sup>35</sup>, an Iranian term, signified the Iranian angular harp, though it did not necessarily have a hide soundboard, and *vin* equals *vīṇā* (Sog *wyn* )<sup>36</sup> a term used in the Indic *Veda*-s of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE to signify an arched harp.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore, *tambūr* here denotes a lute with gut strings, and although it is impossible to know for certain what specific species of lute it is, it is likely to have been an LNL. Each of the other named chordophones represents a different type: a lyre, an Iranian angular harp, and Indic arched harp or zither, and an SNL. To thus include *tambūr* as a generic type of LNL would complete the catalogue of gut string instruments. Finally, the attested Parthian word for ‘drum’ or ‘frame drum,

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Wider Context in Greece and Italy’, *Etruscan Studies: Journal of the Etruscan Foundation* 10 (2007), pp. 121-122; Landels, *Music*, pp. 66-67;

<sup>34</sup> On Ugaritic texts from the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE it is written as *knr* (Gibson, *Canaanite*, 19 l.8, p. 113). An Arab manuscript dated 1301 (CE) still incorporates the Arabized version of the Aramaic term as *knnr* (*kinnāra*) although by then it was taken to signify either a lute or percussion. H. G. Farmer, ‘A Maghribī Work on Musical Instruments’, *JRAS* 67/2 (1935), p. 348.

<sup>35</sup> McKenzie, *Pahlavi*, p. 21; Gharib, *Sogdian*, 3219, p. 127, 3352, p. 132; W. B. Henning, *Sogdica* (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1940), pp. 36, 38.

<sup>36</sup> B. Gharib, *Sogdian Dictionary: Sogdian-English-Persian* (Tehran: Farhang Publications, 1995), 10395, p. 422.

<sup>37</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, ‘The Old Indian *vīṇā*’, *JAOS* 51/1 (1931), pp. 47-50; cf. Louise Wrazen, ‘the Early History of the *Vīṇā* and *Bīn* in South and Southeast Asia’, *Asian Music* 18/1 (1986), pp. 35-37; Karaikudi S. Subramanian, ‘An Introduction to the *Vīṇā*’, *Asian Music* 16/2 (1985), pp. 7-10.

*Vīṇā*, as noted above in Chap. 2, has no known Sanskrit etymology and probably originally referred to an Indic form of arched harp of the type seen in Buddhist iconography of the Mauryan Empire (c. 322-180 BCE). It also came to mean ‘lute’ and by the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE the stick zither that developed into the *rudra vīṇā* and *bīn* (*bīn*), central chordophones of the early Indic classical music traditions. As Buddhist monks left India into Central Asia at the beginning of the Common Era and established monasteries where they translated Sanskrit and Pali texts into numerous local languages, *vīṇā* became a general word to denote ‘string instrument’ and was left untranslated in most texts. Thus the word entered Manichaean religious texts and the Tocharian, Sogdian, Middle Persian, and Khotanese lexicons as well.

tambourine' is *ṭbyl* (*tabīl*; cf. Ara *ṭbl*),<sup>38</sup> and later Middle Persian texts that mention *tambūr* also name it with the same chordophones as *Draxt ī Asurīg*.<sup>39</sup>

### Tanbūr in the Medieval Period

By the 9<sup>th</sup> century CE *tambūr* had definitely come to denote family of two or three string LNLs. The 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century Arab Muslim philosopher al-Fārābī (c. 870-950 CE) in his *Kitāb al-mūsīqī al-kabīr*, *Great Book of Music*, discusses two types of two stringed lutes and their tunings: a *ṭanbūr al-Baghdādī*, identified in another 10<sup>th</sup> century Arab work as *ṭanbūr al-mīzānī*<sup>40</sup>, tuned a whole tone apart and a *ṭanbūr al-Khurāsānī* tuned in fourths.<sup>41</sup>

Ibn Ghaibī (d. 1435 CE), main court minstrel to several sultans, in a manuscript dated to 1418 CE,<sup>42</sup> notes a variety of *tanbūr*-s: two called simply *tanbūr*, one with two strings tuned in fourths and ten frets with an octave ambitus, and another with three strings also tuned in fourths and seven frets spanning an octave plus a minor third. Ibn Ghaibī later describes a *ṭanbūr šarwīnān* with a 'bulky' pear-shaped resonator and two strings tuned a whole tone (8:9) apart. This, he states, was favored in Tabrīz, a city in the extreme northwest of Iran. There is additionally a *ṭanbūr turkī* with a smaller body than the Tabrīzi lute and two or three strings tuned in

<sup>38</sup> 'ṭbyl', Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary*, p. 323; Worrel, 'Notes', p. 66.

<sup>39</sup> 'Pad čang ud vīn ud barbut ud tambūr ud kinnār, ud harw srūd [ud] čigamaḡ' ('in harp and lute and barbiton and guitar and cithara, and in all songs and chants...'). *Xusrau and his Page*, Pahlavi text cited in Boyce, 'The Parthian Gōsān', pp. 27-28, see also n. 4-6.

<sup>40</sup> Farmer, 'Maghribī', pp. 352-353. There is some confusion over the reading and translation of the appellation *al-mīzānī*, which has been interpreted as '*tanbūr* of Transoxiana', 'of the singing girls', or—Farmer's preference—as 'the measured *tanbūr*' of the Sabeans, a Semitic-speaking people who lived in southern Arabia.

<sup>41</sup> Henry George Farmer, *Historical Facts for the Arabian Musical Influence* (London: William Reeves Bookseller Ltd., [pub. date not given, c. 1930]), pp. 234-235.

<sup>42</sup> Farmer, 'Abdalqādir', pp. 242-248. Ibn Ghaibī's ms. is kept at the Bodleian Library, MS Marsh 282. This is the same manuscript that describes the *ruh 'afzāy* [sic] that Feldman cites.

fourths giving two octaves, and a two string *nāy tanbūr* of two kinds, one played with the fingers and the other with a *midrāb* (Ara *mizrāb*; ‘plectrum’).

The manuscript provides no precise information regarding the morphology of these instruments, only that they consistently feature a ‘pear-shaped’ body—which suggests they had incurved shoulders—and all of them have two or three strings tuned either in fourths or a whole tone apart. It is likely that none of these were SNLs because, first, SNLs very rarely have fewer than three strings and, second, the ambitus described is measured by the extent of the instruments’ frets and thus indicates a horizontal design rather than the vertical one typical of SNLs. Significantly, the tunings noted are two common tunings still used on Balkan LNLs like the *çifteli*, *sharki*, *šargija*, et. al.

Thus, the term *tanbūr* had, by the 10<sup>th</sup> century at the latest, come to denote an entire family of LNLs whose species were differentiated through either adjectival tags, similar to those appended to the Mesopotamian *tigidla*, or—in Iranian languages—by names signifying the number of strings, such as *dutār*, ‘two strings’, or *setar*, ‘three strings’. The *tanbūr* family was, moreover, distributed from southern Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula in the west and east and north as far as Khorasan and Afghanistan (Fig. 5.2), and was played by Iranian, Arab, and Turkic peoples. The Middle Persian texts indicate that the instrument formed part of courtly ensembles along with prestigious chordophones like the *čang* harp and *barbut* SNL.

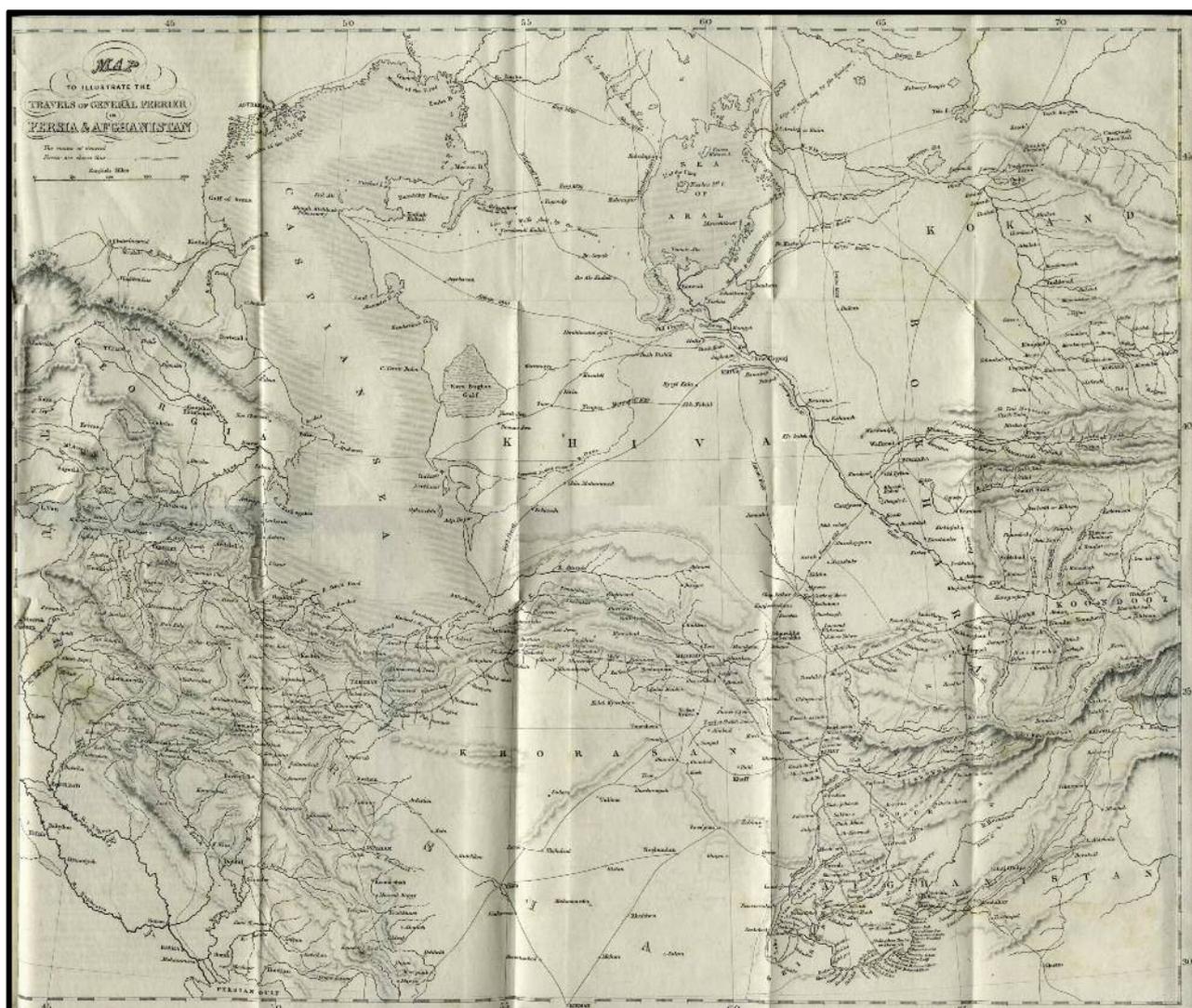


Fig. 5.2: Khorasan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, 1856.<sup>43</sup>

The LNL as a taxonomical order was not limited to the Iranian cultural sphere; LNLs existed further west in Syria, North Africa, and Anatolia that the ancient Greeks knew as *πανδούρα*, *pandoura* (Lat *pandura*). There is still considerable confusion amongst organologists, classicists, and musicologists alike regarding the etymology of *pandoura* as well as what instrument it signified, and no comprehensive study has yet been undertaken.<sup>44</sup> Even the most authoritative books on Greek musical

<sup>43</sup> Image source: <[http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history\\_asia.html](http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history_asia.html)> ; accessed on: 15 Sept. 2018.

<sup>44</sup> R. A. Wiggins and R. P. Winnington-Ingram, 'Lute-Players in Greek Art', *JHS* 85 (1965), pp. 62-71, remains the most comprehensive study but is a brief survey and catalogue of Hellenistic lute iconography.

instruments give it scarcely more than a few brief paragraphs of general and mostly rote information.<sup>45</sup> The term only appears in 14 known instances between the 2<sup>nd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries CE, in a variety of contexts that include lexicons, funerary monuments, music theory treatises, and a saint's *vita* (*App.* 5).

The earliest notice of the term is from the poet Euphorion of Chalcis (c. 275- after 221 BCE) who claimed the *pandoura* was played at the Isthmian Games held every four years in Corinth.<sup>46</sup> This information, however, comes from the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE work *Deipnosophistae* (*The Learned Banqueters*) of Athenaeus who quotes Euphorion (*App.* 5.1). Only Julius Pollux (fl. 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)<sup>47</sup> and Nicomachus of Gerasa (c. 60-120 CE)<sup>48</sup> give any organological information about it; this consists merely of comparing the *pandoura* to the *monochord* in which intervals are determined by the principle of division of a single string, i.e. mathematical ratios (*App.* 5.5-6). This distinguished the *pandoura* from the polychord instruments, the lyre and harp, where intervals are a function of string length, thickness, and tension.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> The most ambitious attempt at an art historical interpretation can be found in Martha Maas and Jane McIntosh Snyder, *Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 185-186, although even this consists of slightly over a page.

<sup>46</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae; The Deipnosophists: V.II*, translated by Charles Burton Gulick (London/New York: William Heinemann Ltd./G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), IV:182e, 183f, pp. 306-307.

<sup>47</sup> Julius Pollux, *Όνομαστικόν (Onomastikon), Pollvcis Onomasticon e codibus ab ipso collatis denvo edidit et adnotavit*, translated and annotated by Eric Bethe (Stuttgart/Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1998), IV:60, p. 219.

<sup>48</sup> Nicomachus of Gerasa, *The Manual of Harmonics of Nicomachus the Pythagorean*, translated and commentary by Flora R. Levin (Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 1994), Chap. IV, p. 61.

<sup>49</sup> Adding to the confusion, the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century Latin writers Martianus Capella and Isidore of Seville associated *pandoura* (Lat. *pandura*) with the Greek goat-footed god Pan, interpreting it as 'gift of Pan', the *syrix* panpipe. Any attestations after the 6<sup>th</sup> century, whether Greek or Latin, are thus uncertain as to whether they refer to wind or string instruments. Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, IX: 906 and 923-924; for Latin text see *Martianus Capella*, edited by Adolfus Dick (Stuttgart/Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1925), pp. 480, 491; English translation in W. L. Stahl, R. Johnson and E. J. Burge, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts, 2 Vols.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), vol. 2, p. 351. *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, edited and translated by Stephen A. Barney, et. al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), III.xx.5-8, p. 97.



*Pl. 5.3: Roman pandura, c. 240 CE.*<sup>50</sup>

Iconography proves scarcely less ambiguous: roughly a dozen lute images exist from Hellenistic culture between the 4<sup>th</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> centuries BCE, but these show a variety of forms and it is unknown if the Greeks used *pandoura* as a generic or specific term. Imperial Roman lute iconography is more consistent as to morphology but the instrument displayed diverges sharply from previous lute types and could be considered as a lute-zither (*Pl. 5.3*). In addition, almost all of the Greco-Roman

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<sup>50</sup> Detail from 'Achilles at the Court of King Lycomedes'; marble sarcophagus, Rome, c. 240 CE. Image source: Musée du Louvre, Ma 2120, photo by Ilya Shurygin, found at: <<http://ancientrome.ru/art/artworken/img.htm?id=5249>>; accessed on: 20 Nov. 2014.

images show the supposed *pandoura* played by women—often aristocratic women—erotes, or mythological figures.

The Irish musicologist and Arabist Henry George Farmer (1882-1965) considered the *pandoura* (that he wrote as ‘pandore’) and *tanbūr* or *tanbūra* to be interchangeable terms and he consistently used the former term as such in his writings. In fact, he maintained that the latter derived from the former through *metathesis*, a process in which phonemes, usually medial ones, became transposed, as for example in English ‘ask’ > ‘aks’, in IPA /aks/.<sup>51</sup> Farmer’s theory has since become the standard view, repeated by Curt Sachs,<sup>52</sup> Galpin, Anthony Baines,<sup>53</sup> and Picken.<sup>54</sup> It has, however, several serious issues that I have addressed in *Appendix 6*.

### *The Πανδούρα, the Byzantine Warrior Lutenist*

During these centuries the operative Byzantine Greek words for chordophones, on the other hand, were either *λύρα*, ‘lira/lyre’, that by the 11<sup>th</sup> century had come to denote a bowed lute, or *κίθαρα*, ‘kithara’, which had already entered Arabic as *qithāra* or *qīṭārā* and signified numerous species and genera of lutes.<sup>55</sup> *Pandoura* had long since

<sup>51</sup> See Mohammad Reza Ahmadvani, ‘Phonological Metathesis in Persian: Synchronic, Diachronic, and the Optimality Theory’, *Pazhuhesh-e Zabanha-ye Khareji* 56 (Special issue, English, 2010), pp. 5-24.

<sup>52</sup> Curt Sachs, *Real-Lexikon Der Musikinstrumente zugleich ein Polyglossar für das gesamte Instrumentengebiet, Mit 200 Abbildungen* (Berlin: Verlag Von Julius Bard, 1913), pp. 139b, 375b.

<sup>53</sup> Anthony Baines, ‘Ancient and Folk Backgrounds’, in *Musical Instruments Through the Ages*, edited by Anthony Baines (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1961), p. 212.

<sup>54</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 262-263. These authors all additionally cite an etymological theory for *pandoura* as a derivation of Georgian and/or Ossetian *pantur/fandyr*, names of various chordophones of the Caucasus, especially the small three stringed LNL. The Caucasus *pantur* lute, however, is a fairly recent invention from between the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, much younger than the larger *chonguri* lute (from Ira *čang*, the ancient Iranian angular harp). This most likely represents a ‘heritage’ naming practice similar to the transfer of Greek *kithara* and *lyre* to, respectively, plucked and bowed lutes during the Byzantine era (George Aleksandria, Giorgi Bugianishvili, members of Rustavi Choir of Tbilisi, Georgia, personal communication, 3 June 2016).

<sup>55</sup> Arab travelers of the 11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries CE sometimes used variations of *qithāra* to describe lutes they observed in North Africa. In the Moorish kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula this term became the European *guitar* and *gittern* by the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Laurence Wright, ‘Medieval Gittern’,

disappeared as a common name for lute, if indeed it had ever been at all. Of the extant images of a putative *pandoura*, two of them hold significance for this discussion.



Pl. 5.4: Muse holding *πανδουρα*.<sup>56</sup>

The first is also the earliest such image and shows an LNL in the hands of a Muse (Pl. 5.4). This motif appears in one of three extant marble panels from Mantinea, in central Peloponnesus, Greece and dates to sometime between 375 BCE

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*passim*. However, they also called such instruments *tunbūr*, the Arabic transliteration of Iranian *tanbūr*, or, in Ibn Battūta's case (mid-14<sup>th</sup> century CE), a *qanābir* (cf. Eric Charry, 'Plucked Lutes in West Africa: An Historical Overview', *GSJ* 49 (1996), pp. 10-13.

<sup>56</sup> Detail from marble panel from Mantinea, Greece; c. 375-300 BCE. Image source: National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Greece, 216, found at: <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Three\\_relief\\_slabs\\_depicting\\_Apollo\\_Marsyas\\_a\\_Scythian\\_and\\_six\\_Muses.\\_4th\\_cent.\\_B.C.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Three_relief_slabs_depicting_Apollo_Marsyas_a_Scythian_and_six_Muses._4th_cent._B.C.jpg)>; accessed on: 13 Nov. 2015.

to the early Hellenistic period, c. 300 BCE. The panels once adorned the base of a statue of the divine siblings Apollo and Artemis and their mother Leto, in an Apolline temple shared with a shrine to Asclepius, the semi-divine deity of medicine and healing, and Apollo's son.<sup>57</sup>

The bases depict six of the nine Muses<sup>58</sup> attending the musical contest between Apollo with his *kithara*, a concert lyre, and the Phrygian satyr Marsyas, master of the *aulos* double pipes. Marsyas lost the contest and in consequence a Scythian soldier flayed him alive. Why the one Muse holds a lute is unknown: it is the only depiction of the instrument in the Greek artistic corpus actually from Greece itself, and the composition's style seems to place it in the last decades of the Classical period—between ca. 380-334 BCE—or around 334-300 BCE, before Hellenistic aesthetics became dominant.<sup>59</sup>

Its interest for this Thesis is primarily morphological. Though the image lacks fine details the Classical concern for clean lines and image-subject fidelity gives a reliable view of the instrument's basic design: the shoulders are damaged but the soundboard's edges show the familiar LNL curvature towards the lute's tail. The fingerboard, also damaged, is fairly wide with no indication of tuning pegs, suggesting that tuning rings were still in use. At the base of the resonator a triangular form juts from the soundboard's lower edge, apparently the sculptor's attempt to indicate the body's shape. The peaked form suggests that this lute had a distinct dorsal ridge

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<sup>57</sup> Percy Gardner, 'A Stone Tripod at Oxford, and the Mantineian Basis', *JHS* 16 (1896), pp. 280-282; Charles Waldstein, 'The Mantineian Reliefs', *The American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts* 7/ ½ (1891), pp. 1-3.

<sup>58</sup> The existence of a now-lost fourth base slab was first argued by the slabs' discoverer Gustave Fougères, 'Bas-reliefs de Mantinée : Apollon, Marsyas et les Muses', *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 12 (1888), pp. 105-128; cf. Waldstein, 'Reliefs', *passim.*, Gardner, 'Stone Tripod', pp. 283-284, and Percy Gardner, 'The Mantineian Basis: A Note', *JHS* 17 (1897), pp. 120-121.

<sup>59</sup> Waldstein, 'Reliefs', pp. 11-18 argues for the earlier date. Higgins and Winnington-Ingram, on the other hand, anxious to place all Greek depictions of the *pandoura* in the Hellenistic era, stated that 'the later the date [for the marbles] the happier one will feel' ('Lute-Players', p. 69).

instead of a bowled body and was probably built on the same lines as the back of the *kithara* (Pl. 5.5).<sup>60</sup>



Pl. 5.5: Apollo's kithara, back view with dorsal ridge.<sup>61</sup>

Insufficient evidence from the following centuries prevents any conclusions regarding a continuous tradition of lute construction using this dorsal ridge. Picken does note that in the Gaziantep region of southeastern Turkey this feature is characteristic of *saz* design and 'belongs to a tradition older than that...at present

<sup>60</sup> Higgins and Winnington-Ingram, 'Lute-Players', pp. 69-70; Martha Maas, 'On the Shape of the Ancient Greek Lyre', *GSJ* 27 (1974), pp. 113-117. Such a morphological allusion to the most prestigious of Greek chordophones may have been the reason the sculptor modeled this detail; as the instruments held by other Muses in the panels are all foreign yet used in Greek communities in Italy or Anatolia (Maas and Snyder, *Stringed Instruments*, p. 185).

<sup>61</sup> 'Apollo Citharode', Temple of Apollo at Cyrene, Libya; 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE. Image source: BM 14258987993, photo author's, 19 Feb. 2016.

widely current [i.e. bowl-backed style]'.<sup>62</sup> The triangular shape of the Mantineian lute's base, however, does hint at the kind of flattened base typical of those of the *šargija* and *karadyzen* LNL genera. This represents a genealogical divergence from the only other type of dorsal ridge I have observed on LNLs. This second type is seen on the Afghan *tanbūr* with carved resonators (*Pl. 5.6*) and some other Central Asian LNLs. This bifurcation of design traits suggests that the dorsal ridge and flattened base combination constitutes a design tradition distinct to Anatolia and the Balkans.



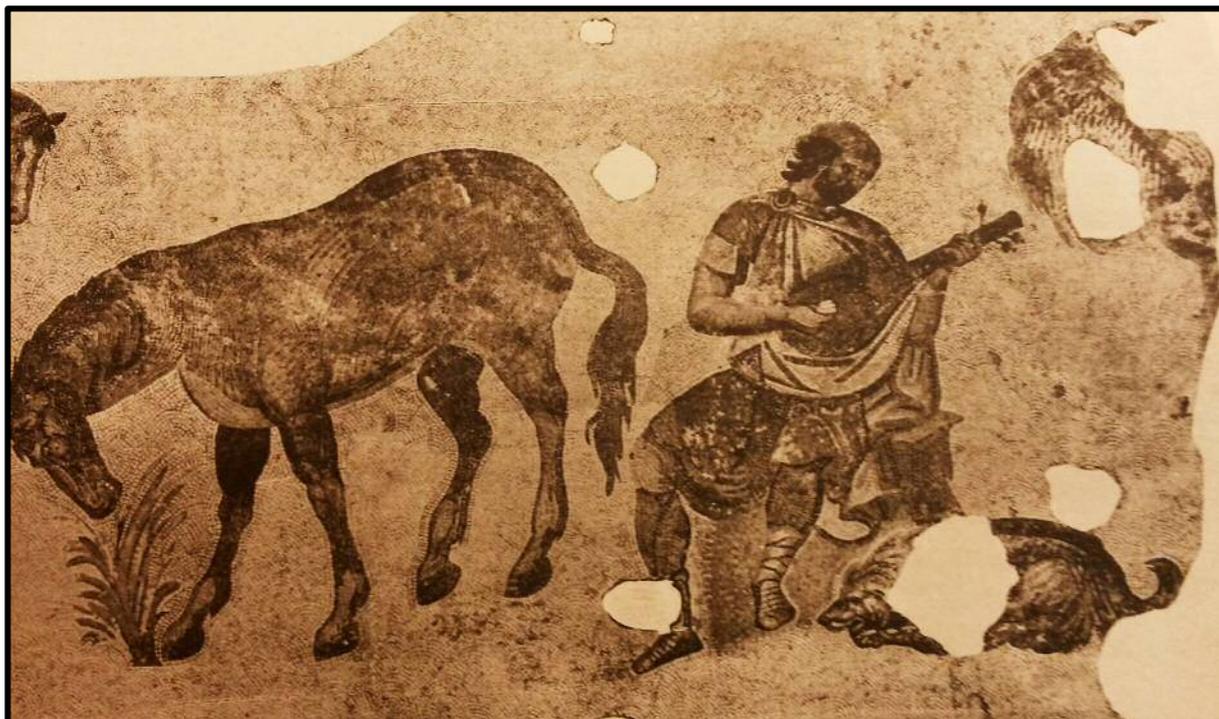
*Pl. 5.6: Afghan tanbūr with dorsal ridge and rounded base.*<sup>63</sup>

The other relevant image comes from the far end of the *pandoura*'s historical spectrum in a floor mosaic in an early courtyard of the Byzantine Great Palace of Constantinople (*Pl. 5.7*). The courtyard dates to the reign of Justinian I (r. 527-565 CE) or Justin II (r. 565-578 CE) and the mosaic programme consists of scenes of

<sup>62</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, p. 273; see also p. 220 and *Pl. 24.IIa*, facing p. 225.

<sup>63</sup> Image source: author's photo, personal collection. Maker not available, Urumqi, Xinjiang Province, China, c. late 1940s-early 1950s.

everyday life and mythological scenes.<sup>64</sup> The detail in *Pl. 5.8* shows a bearded Byzantine soldier, possibly a ‘barbarian’ mercenary or conscript.<sup>65</sup> He can be identified as such by the style of his cloak pinned at his right shoulder; his short-sleeved tunic; knee-britches underneath his tunic’s belted skirt, and his cross-stitched boots or *cothurni*.



*Pl. 5.7: Byzantine soldier-lutenist.*<sup>66</sup>

At his feet lies a dog and to his right a horse grazes while a mare nurses her colt further right. To his left a few branches of a tree remain. The soldier uses a large

<sup>64</sup> Brett, *Great Palace*, pp. 27-28, 91-93; Thomas Mathews, *Byzantium: From Antiquity to Renaissance* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 76. Pl. 53 in Mathews shows the horse on picture-left of the above plate but the rest of the motif is missing, present whereabouts unknown.

<sup>65</sup> Brett, *Great Palace*, p. 92.

<sup>66</sup> Detail of floor mosaic of Great Palace, Constantinople; Byzantine, c. 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. Source: Gerard Brett, *The Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors, Being a First Report on the Excavations carried out in Istanbul on Behalf of the Walker Trust (The University of St. Andrews), 1935-1938* (Oxford/London: Oxford University Press/Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1947), Plate 30, description p. 73.



Mamai sitting near or under a tree playing any of several lute species, with his saddled horse and sometimes a dog nearby. Mamai was the leader of the Blue Horde whose defeat in 1380 by Dimitri, son of Tzar Ivan II, broke Mongol and Tatar domination of the Russian and Ukrainian kingdoms, a campaign that became a signal event in Ukrainian culture.<sup>69</sup>

The iconographic similarities of these two motifs points to their common theme: that of the warrior-lutenist who bridges two conflicting worlds, the settled world of empire and its military defenders and the rootless world of the nomadic ‘barbarian’ invader. Both of these figures come together in the dual nature of the Frontier Warrior. In the Byzantine Empire this Frontier Warrior with his LNL found its purest expression in the literary figure of Digenis Akritis. *Digenis Akritis* is the only Byzantine example of epic poetry, and though not a Return song it clearly illustrates the Frontier Warrior Culture that played a pivotal role in the transmission of the Return song genre and the *tanbūr* LNL family into the Balkans. This transmission process seems to have mostly taken place in the early centuries of the Ottoman Empire, but the essential features of the process and the Frontier Warrior Culture are already visible in the Digeneid. In addition, *tanbūr*, here *θαμπουρι(v)*, *thampouri(n)*, occurs in one manuscript for the first time in a Greek text and possibly in any European language.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Henry Hoyle Howorth, *History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th Century: Part 2 the So-Called Tartars of Russia and Central Asia* (New York: Cosimo, 1876/reprinted 2013), pp. 208-216; R. Van Bergen, *The Story of Russia* (New York: American Book Company, 1905), pp. 88-91; Stanislav Bushak, Valeriy Sakharuk, Irine Sakharuk, Rostyslav Zabashta, *Cossack Mamai: In Ukrainian Folk Paintings of the 17th to 19th Centuries* (Kiev: Rodovid Press, 2010).

<sup>70</sup> Maria Kouroumali, Asst. Prof. of Byzantine Studies, Hellenic College and Holy Cross, Brookline MA; personal communication via email, 9-14 Aug. 2016. In Escorial ms., see *Digenis Akritis: The Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions*, edited and translated by Elizabeth Jeffreys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 301/302, ln. 827; 325/326, ln. 1149.

The social nexus of this Frontier Warrior Culture<sup>71</sup> was the common soldiery who traveled along intricately interwoven social circuits that brought together peasants and farmers, foreign prisoners of war and slaves, foreign mercenaries, landholding soldiers, bandits and raiders, members of elite military corps, and border garrisons at imperial frontiers. Very often, individuals could in their lifetime be members of all of these groups, even two or more at the same time.

The Frontier Warrior Culture's defining characteristic is their constant crossing, blurring, merging and subversion of geo-political, class, linguistic, and religious borders. This mobility gave these men a particular kind of knowledge of the larger world and brought them into contact with other cultures in a very particular way that fostered the emergence of the Frontier Warrior Culture. It made them border-crossers in a literal, geo-political and a figurative sense; they served as flesh and blood expressions of the porosity of borders even in an imperial setting where so much stock is placed on the careful delineation and absolute definition of 'our space' vs. 'their space'. The frontier forms a 'transitional zone' between institutionalized states, and it and the people who live there are recognizable as a culture but not quite definable.<sup>72</sup> In this way, the Frontier Warrior Culture acts as the horizontal, rhizomatic counterpoint to the verticality of Empire and its genealogical transmission of authority and hierarchical power structures.

The poetic cycle is known from six extant manuscripts<sup>73</sup> of which the two oldest are the Grottaferrata (referred to as ms. G) and Escorial (known as ms. E)

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<sup>71</sup> Although I am speaking here specifically of the late Byzantine and the Ottoman Empires, the basic contours of the Frontier Warrior Culture hold for other imperial militaries as well.

<sup>72</sup> Mark L. Stein, *Guarding the Frontier: Ottoman Border Forts and Garrisons in Europe* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2007), pp. 15-16.

<sup>73</sup> Roderick Beaton, 'Was Digenes Akrites an Oral Poem?', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 7/1 (1981), p. 11. Aside from the Grottaferrata (G) and Escorial (E), the other four manuscripts were found in Trebizond (T), Athens (A) and Oxford (O), and a prose version from Thessaloniki (P). These are all relatively late compositions, around the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and generally considered

manuscripts. The textual tradition shows signs of orality in its ‘composition by theme and a varying degree of formulaic stylization.’<sup>74</sup> Yet neither mss. Grottaferrata nor Escorial can be considered ‘oral poetry’, and though they have several episodes and some diction in common the two texts diverge from each other in so many ways that they represent two entirely separate ‘Digeneid’ traditions.<sup>75</sup>

In common with the Albanian Aga Imer tradition I describe in Chap. 7, the Digeneid tradition has no clear genealogy of texts from some ‘lost original’. Rather, the six versions relate to each other in the manner of the rhizome, and several purely hypothetical versions and a theoretical composite text, Manuscript Z,<sup>76</sup> must be postulated in order to construct a phylogenetic tree that accounts for them all.

Internal and external evidence suggests that both manuscripts ultimately derived from an earlier composition or series of compositions that originated between the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>77</sup> yet the real nature of the putative ‘original’ cannot be determined by either of the two manuscripts. ‘The authenticity of each... is undermined by the other. \**Digenis*, their common source, was like neither of the preserved texts.’<sup>78</sup>

As in Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of the rhizome as a decentralized mode of self-replication, the *Digenis* manuscripts evince no physical origin point but rather a genesis in the bare concept of the Digenis cycle and character. That is, the

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as a group though their relationships to G and E is confused; Ms. A is considered the ‘authoritative text of the four (Ibid., p. 14; cf. E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, pp. xxiv-xxv).

<sup>74</sup> Beaton, ‘Oral Poem’, p. 16; see pp. 13-16. Cf. Albert Lord, *Singer*, pp. 211-215, where he analyzes the use of oral formulas in *Digenis* but concludes that the poem, in any of its versions, was not the product of oral tradition but only included stylistic aspects of oral composition.

<sup>75</sup> *Digenis*, E. Jeffreys, p. xxv.

<sup>76</sup> Michael Jeffreys, ‘*Digenis Akritas* Manuscript Z’, *Dodoni* 4 (1975), 163–201; *Digenis*, E. Jeffreys, pp. xxiii-xxvi.

<sup>77</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, p. xviii. Jeffreys argues for a date in the 12<sup>th</sup> century; however, an argument for an early 10<sup>th</sup> century *terminus-post quem* date is given in George Huxley, ‘Antecedents and Context of *Digenes Akrites*’, *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 15/3 (1974), pp. 317-318.

<sup>78</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, p. xxvi.

idea pre-existed its expressions, perhaps in a lost pre-history of oral tradition. The Digeneid's central ideas imprint themselves into each text, although the texts' characteristics have been affected by cultural and historical factors, their cultural conditioning.

The poems' background context lies primarily in the 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries, when the Byzantine institution of the *ακριτης*, *akritīs*, border soldier reached its height,<sup>79</sup> before the eastern imperial frontiers with the Muslim Arabs were extended by John Kourkouas,<sup>80</sup> and sometime around 1071, the year of the Battle of Manzikert in eastern Anatolia. In this battle with the Seljuk Turks the Byzantine Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes was taken prisoner and his army defeated. This represents the beginning of major inroads into Anatolia by Turkic tribes and the definitive end of the akritic guardianship of the eastern frontiers.<sup>81</sup> Nonetheless there is virtually no trace of Turks in the poem cycle, thus placing the cycle's origins to before or slightly after 1071.

The Grottaferrata text, identified in 1879, dates from the late 13<sup>th</sup>-early 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and was copied in Terra d'Otranto, southern Italy.<sup>82</sup> Despite the text's metrical irregularities and syntactical problems it displays a considerable literacy and familiarity with frontier culture and history.<sup>83</sup> The Escorial manuscript was compiled between 1450-1500<sup>84</sup> and contains serious defects in orthography, style, diction and narrative structure.<sup>85</sup> Yet it has some material and terminology not found in the Grottaferrata manuscript.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>80</sup> Huxley, 'Antecedents', p. 317.

<sup>81</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, p. xviii.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., pp. xviii-xix.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. xxv.

<sup>84</sup> Beaton, 'Oral Poem', p. 11.

<sup>85</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, p. xxvi.

*The Frontier Warrior Culture of the Byzantine Empire*

*Digenis Akritis* follows the life course of its hero beginning with the story of his parentage in a poem labeled *Lay of the Emir*. The Emir, an Arab commander, goes to battle against the Byzantines and seizes a Greek Cappadocian girl. He eventually takes her as his bride and converts to Christianity to appease her family. He even persuades his own mother in Syria to convert along with his entire court. Thus this episode explains the meaning of the hero's name: *digenis* means 'twi-born' or 'two-blood',<sup>86</sup> for Digenis is born between Greek Christian and Arab Muslim worlds. His father the Emir, a military commander on the frontier, technically serves the Arab rulers of Syria and eastern Anatolia but *de facto* operates mostly autonomously within his own domain.

When Digenis comes of age he, too, becomes a military commander under the Byzantines but effectively ruler of his own section of the borderlands.<sup>87</sup> In fact, he spends at least as much time fighting other Christians as he does Muslims, and his funeral is attended by rulers from Cappadocia, Cilicia, Lebanon, Baghdad, Babylon and Armenia. 'He is thus honored on both sides of the frontier'<sup>88</sup> and is an *ακριτης*, *akritīs*, *akritai* 'frontiersman', synonymous with the Latin *miles limitaneus*, 'soldier of the borders'. The *akritīs* was a warrior and a soldier but an irregular, not part of an official standing army, and by the 11<sup>th</sup> century he 'was a commander with fortifications'.<sup>89</sup> In other words, he had become a landholding irregular military commander whose main tasks were 'to repel incursions and to deal with banditry.'

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<sup>86</sup> Huxley, 'Antecedents', p.317.

<sup>87</sup> Ms. G contains an episode where the Byzantine Emperor Basil visits him to grant him a *chrysobull* that awards Digenis nominal rulership of the border area in his keep (Huxley, 'Digenis', p. 328; E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, G. ln. 971-1093, pp. 125-133.

<sup>88</sup> Huxley, 'Digenis', p. 331.

<sup>89</sup> David Ricks, *Byzantine Heroic Poetry* (Bristol/New Rochelle: Bristol Classical Press/Aristide D. Caratzas, 1990), p. 11.

He had his Arab counterparts across the border<sup>90</sup> though the allegiances of both sides were often contingent and religious conversions both ways were fairly common.<sup>91</sup> Cross-border cooperation also took place, especially when dealing with bandits or *απελαταις*, *apelatai*, and frontier commanders ‘would have used renegade Arab *akritai* as lookouts because they knew the ground.’<sup>92</sup> In campaigns against the *apelatai* such ‘renegades’ could mount guard against bandit incursions but, conversely, ‘in the hope of lifting booty. Plunder, indeed, must have provided much of [the *akritai*’s] income...in frontier societies cattle-droving and cattle-stealing [for example] can be overlapping activities.’ Prisoners were also valuable as ransom or as marketable slaves.<sup>93</sup>

In this way, *akritai* and *apelatai* proved interchangeable designations and in the Digenis poems the hero’s status often becomes highly ambiguous. In late Antique and Byzantine sources *apelatai* can mean a bandit, a horse thief, or a military squad member, but they may also have been ‘locally recruited irregulars’.<sup>94</sup> These often were soldiers who left service without compensation of land or money, or whose inconsistent employment led them to resort to raiding, banditry, and conflict even with garrison members that they had once served with. And yet, because economic opportunity was a prime attraction of border duty, mutual cooperation between raiders, garrisons, and even compatriots from across the frontier border was also common.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, p. xxxii.

<sup>91</sup> Huxley, ‘Antecedents’, p. 323.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 334-336.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 336. For the practice of ‘professional prisoners’ and ransom as an economic activity in the Ottoman-Hapsburg frontier see Stein, *Guarding*, pp. 22-24; Peter F. Sugar, ‘The Ottoman “Professional Prisoner” on the Western Borders of the Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’, *Etudes Balkaniques* 7/2 (1971), pp. 82-91.

<sup>94</sup> Ricks, *Byzantine*, p. 11.

<sup>95</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi, *Subjects of the Sultan: Culture and Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire*, translated by Martin Bott (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2005), pp. 55-57; Stein, *Guarding*, pp. 18-27; Wendy Bracewell, ‘Ritual Brotherhood Across Frontiers in the Eastern Adriatic Hinterland, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries’, *History and Anthropology* 27/3 (2016), pp. 350-355.

In the Escorial manuscript Digenis himself begins his career by going to join a local band; he has heard about ‘the noble and brave guerillas’ [απελατων] and their valiant deeds and he longs to join them.<sup>96</sup>

*Και εκατσειν και ευθειασεν ωραιον, τερπνον λαβουτον*

So he sat down and prepared a beautiful, delightful lute.<sup>97</sup>

*Lavouto, λαβουτον*, here serves as a generic term for a lute instrument<sup>98</sup> and is used interchangeably with *θαμπουρι, thampouri*, throughout the Escorial manuscript.

Jeffreys notes that it is unusual for Digenis to bring a lute, of all things, on a dangerous mission like this although its presence in Akritic iconography suggests it was a traditional attribute of his, and perhaps of *akritai* in general.<sup>99</sup> The LNL’s presence in the Great Palace and Mamai images would support this view.

Significantly, the Grottaferrata manuscript uses neither of these terms but has *κιθαρα (kithara)* throughout.<sup>100</sup> This indicates that at the start of the 14<sup>th</sup> century *kithara* was still the operative term for chordophone in Byzantine Greek vernacular and probably meant a lute of some type. By the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, 32 years after the death of the Albanian Skanderbeg (1405-1468) and subsequent Turkish subjugation of Albania; 47 years after the Ottoman Turks had taken Constantinople (Istanbul), and 111 years after the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 that marked the

<sup>96</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, pp. 285/286, ln. 610-626.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285, ln. 627.

<sup>98</sup> Maria Kouromali, personal communication, 9-13 August 2016.

<sup>99</sup> E. Jeffreys, *Digenis*, p. 285, n. 627.

<sup>100</sup> In other late Byzantine writings such as reports of Nicephoras Gregoras in his travels through Macedonia around 1325, the term *λυραν (lyra)* was still used, although apparently for several chordophones (Nicephoras Gregoras, *Nicephori Gregorae, Byzantina Historia, Graeca et Latine cum Annotationibus Hier. Wolfii, Car. Ducangii, Io. Boivinii et Cl. Capperonii*, edited by Ludwig Schopen [Ludovici Schopeni] v. II (Bonn: Weber, 1830), pp. 705-706; Teresa Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 117-118.

effective end of the Serbian kingdom, Greek vernacular poetry was using a Grecized form of *ṭanbūr/ṭambūr*.

Thus *tanbūr* or *tambura* had entered the Greek lexicon by the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, when Turkic languages were widespread in Anatolia and the Balkans under first Seljuk and then Ottoman control. By 1437 even the Orthodox clergy in many parts of Anatolia ‘wore Turkish clothing and...’[knew] nothing of Greek except for how to sing the mass.’’<sup>101</sup>

Moreover, Greek-speaking soldiers in Anatolia were probably playing the instrument itself by this time. Once the *akritai* system disbanded at the beginning of the Seljuk conquest post-1071 many former *akritai* joined the Seljuk army.<sup>102</sup> Additionally, Greek *ḡulām*-s, ‘military servant,’<sup>103</sup> were impressed into the Seljuk forces through raiding; Greek and Frankish mercenaries, *Μιζοβαρβαροι*, *mixobarbaroi*, ‘the offspring of Greek mothers and Turkish fathers’, and ‘renegades’ also entered the Turkish ranks. The use of *thampouri* in the Escorial manuscript to replace the older *kithara* thus likely represents an archaizing element that reflects the Escorial compiler’s contemporary social reality intruded into a narrative set before the Battle of Manzikert.

When Digenis prepares to court the daughter of a Greek general *Λουκας* (*Doukas*),

...he entered his chamber  
And picked up his *tamboura* [*θαμπουριν*] and tuned it.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> P. B. Golden, ‘The Byzantine Greek Element in the Rasulid Hexaglot’, *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* V/5 (1985 [1987]), p. 44.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>103</sup> Literally ‘son, young boy’, but in official usage it designated a slave soldier in service to the Sultan. Mark C. Bartusis, *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 580.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 301, ln. 826-829. The passage continues with, ‘He slit snakes’ skins and made the instrument’s strings...And used their teeth as delightful pegs’, details which complicate the identification of this somewhat fantastical lute.

When he approaches the girl's window but does not see her waiting for him, the Grottaferrata manuscript says that,

In his great puzzlement  
He decided it was right to play his *kithara*  
To try out the things about which he was mystified.  
"To spare myself as I test the girl," he said  
"I shall make this *kithara* my helpful go-between,  
"And God's wish will certainly take its course."<sup>105</sup>

His lute, then, functions as his go-between whenever he enters a trying and potentially dangerous situation; it is an instrument of romantic courtship as well as an attribute needed to gain acceptance among the *apelatai*. In the Balkan Return songs the hero's *tambura*, *çifteli* or *sharki* serves almost exactly the same function: it attracts the attention of an important woman who then acts as a catalyst for the narrative's forward motion. Moreover, the Return song hero ostensibly brings his instrument with him when he goes off to war or else makes it while in prison, as Digenis 'prepares' his *thampouri* when he sets out to join the *apelatai*, and to court his future wife.

This episode reflects another aspect of Frontier Warrior Culture, and a strategy used since at least the Roman Imperial epoch to contend with increasing numbers of aggressive 'barbarian' warriors drawn into the imperial armies from the restive frontiers: as reward for their service such soldiers were often granted land and became 'smallholding' frontier guards.

[A smallholding was] a property whose owner lived within the social milieu of the peasantry, [i.e.] the holdings of a proprietor who, regardless of his wealth, condition of servitude, and daily labors, spent his time, lived, *and married among the peasantry* [*emphasis added*].<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 93, ln. 425-429.

<sup>106</sup> Mark C. Bartusis, 'On the Problem of Smallholding Soldiers in Late Byzantium', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990), p. 22.

The Cumans, a nomadic Turkic people originally from north of the Black Sea, serve as an example of the process by which the Frontier Warriors moved through the porous borders of imperial frontiers. Around 1239 thousands of Cumans, fleeing the Mongol hordes in Central Asia and Russia, entered the Byzantine borderlands in Thrace. In 1242, to prevent their raids and pillaging expeditions the Emperor John III Doukas Vatatzes of Nicaea,

“with gifts and diplomacy made them over from a very savage to an obedient people, and he drew them away from Macedonia [Thrace] and ferried them to the eastern regions.”<sup>107</sup>

[Vatatzes] “enlisted them in the Roman armed forces, distributed lands to them for habitation...some in Thrace and Macedonia, others in Asia throughout the Maiandros [valley] and Phrygia [northwestern Anatolia].”<sup>108</sup>

Once these foreign soldiers were given these land grants they were encouraged to marry into the local community. In the Seljuk era (c. 1037-1194) the shrinking Byzantine Empire employed Turkic mercenaries, often deploying them in Thrace and Macedonia, where they eventually formed their own communities, and in eastern Anatolia,<sup>109</sup> and they received Byzantine wives. The Seljuk Turks followed the same practice. These men were called *igdish* (Tur < ‘pseudo-Ara’, pl. *agādisha*),<sup>110</sup> ‘a corps raised from the sons of *ğulām*-s, of men brought into the Islamic world where they married local girls.’ Like Digenis, they were ‘indigenous’ by upbringing or culture, converted to Islam and married Turkish wives—‘a time-honored way to

<sup>107</sup> Akritopolites, *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, v. I, edited by A. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 53-54, 65, quoted in Bartusis, ‘Smallholding’, p. 12.

<sup>108</sup> Nicephorus Gregoras, *Nicephori Gregorae, Byzantina Historia, Graeca et Latine...* v. I, edited by Ludwig Schopen (Bonn: Weber, 1829), p. 37, l. 6-9; quoted in Bartusis, ‘Problem’, p. 12.

<sup>109</sup> Bartusis, ‘Problem’, pp. 12, 25.

<sup>110</sup> V. L. Ménage, ‘Some Notes on the “devshirme”’, *BSOAS* 29/1 (1966), p. 65. Ménage writes the term possibly derives from an *-ish* noun form of *igiδ-/ikiδ-/ikit-*, ‘to rear, bring up, [home]bred’.

integrate war-prisoners, foreign mercenaries and other “outsiders” to the dominant milieu.<sup>111</sup>

The Digeneid then displays six defining traits of the Frontier Warrior Culture that carried forward to the Ottoman Frontier Warrior Culture:

1. The frontier warrior is a border guard with a notable degree of autonomy from imperial control.
2. He is a landholding military commander with a number of men at his summons, but who are not necessarily his subordinates; in epics and heroic songs these men often figure as heroes in their own rights with their own song cycles within that of the primary hero’s cycle.
3. He engages in frequent conflicts with bandits, though he and his own warrior band will engage in raiding as well.
4. Due to his semi-autonomy he holds ambiguous loyalties to the imperial rulers.
5. He is a non-native to the region he serves in, though he has either a native or foreign wife. Alternately he has mixed parentage or has experienced some unusual circumstance at birth or in youth at the hands of a feminine figure who has endowed him with some exceptional quality/-ies.
6. At some point in the hero’s narrative he carries or plays a chordophone, always a handle lute (except the *phorminx* lyre in *Odyssey*), whose essential function is to mediate communication between him and an important feminine figure. He sings songs as well, usually but not exclusively of a heroic, epic, or lamenting nature.

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<sup>111</sup> Claude Cahen, ‘Note sur l’Esclavage musulman et le Devshirme Ottoman: à propos de travaux récents’, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 13/2 (1970), pp. 214-215.

*Albania: A Brief History*

These six characteristics together lent the frontier warrior that exceptional border-crossing mobility that formed the core of the Frontier Warrior Culture's rhizomatic nature, which in turn informed the basic continuity of the culture from the Byzantine to the Ottoman Empires. The Ottomans introduced several institutions—*devşirme*, the Janissary corps, Bektashi Sufism—that especially affected Albanian highland and South Slavic societies. These Ottoman institutions became juxtaposed with certain endemic customs—Albanian *besë* and *pobratim*—that gave the Frontier Warrior Culture in these regions a particular flavor of their own.

Albanian history begins with the Illyrian tribes that occupied a swathe of the western Balkans from modern Albania northwards to Dalmatia and the upper Adriatic coast and eastward to the Danube River valley in modern Hungary and Romania (Fig. 5.2). 'Illyrian' referred not to a single society but a clan-based confederacy of loosely knit tribes, each bearing their own tribal name.<sup>112</sup> The modern name Albania is only first attested in the 11<sup>th</sup> century CE<sup>113</sup> and is thought to derive from the name of an Illyrian tribe, *Albanoi*, mentioned by Ptolemy.

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<sup>112</sup> Tajar Zavalani, *History of Albania*, translated and edited by Robert Elsie and Bejtullah Destani (London: Centre for Albanian Studies, 2015), pp. 11-12.

<sup>113</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (London: Pan Books, 2002), p. 28.



Fig. 5.3: Roman provinces of Illyricum, Pannonia, Dacia.<sup>114</sup>

Beginning in 1043, the Byzantines and Arabs noted the *Albanoi/Arbanitai* (Grk B; Lat *Albanenses*)<sup>115</sup> Illyricum became an important Roman province (Fig. 5.3) and Illyrian soldiers played a major role in the Roman military.<sup>116</sup> Illyricum held an important position in the Eastern Roman Empire as well, although it went through many changes of hands and fell in and out of Byzantine rule. Succeeding waves of Celts, Huns and Alans from Central Asia pushed the Illyrians deeper into the

<sup>114</sup> Image source: W. and A. K. Johnston, *The World, A Classical Atlas: in Twenty Three Colored Maps with Complete Index* (Edinburgh: W. and A. K. Johnston, 1877), pl. 9.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p.29. Latin authors used *Albanenses/Arbanenses*. The latter Greek spelling above later became *Arnaut* and *Arvanitas*.

<sup>116</sup> J. B. Bury, *The Invasion of Europe by the Barbarians* (New York/London: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc./Ltd., 1967), p. 69.

mountains until the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>-century Slavic migrations and invasions, when ‘Illyrians’ as such disappear from the historical record.<sup>117</sup>

After Manzikert in 1071 Turkic raiders and nomads ranged further west into Anatolia with little effective challenge from Byzantine authorities. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century Seljuk and Osmanlı Turks roamed the southern Balkans as mercenaries or raiders. The Byzantines attempted to rein them in by inducting the invaders into the Imperial military with promises of land grants for their loyalty.<sup>118</sup> This allowed Turks to establish a presence in the region that the Osmanlı Turks exploited from the 14<sup>th</sup> century on and it aided in their eventual conquest of southeastern Europe. The increasing fragmentation and disorganization of the Byzantine Empire created a power vacuum that the Turkish Sultanate of Rum exploited. Eventually the Osmanlı Turks, the best organized of the various Turkic tribes and small warring Turkic states in Anatolia, consolidated themselves as the dominant power in the region, initiating the Ottoman Empire’s 500-year long reign.

Albania and Kosovo had been under the rule of the Serbian Kingdom since the reign of Stefan Milutin (r. 1282-1331) that reached its peak of power under Tsar Stefan Uroš IV Dušan (r. 1331-1355). The Battle of Kosovo Polje, ‘Field of Blackbirds’, in 1389 marked a turning point in the balance of power in the Balkans: Sultan Murad I (r. 1362-1389) was assassinated in his tent by a Serb named Miloš Obilić, and the Serbian leader Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović (r. 1373-1389) died in the

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<sup>117</sup> Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp. 22-27. The 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century incursions of Slavic tribes into the Balkans dramatically changed the social and ethnic makeup of the Balkans, and many areas became Slavonicized in language and customs. Cf. Zavalani, *History*, pp. 42-45.

<sup>118</sup> L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453* (London: Hurst & Co., 1958), pp. 41-43. Turkic-speaking groups had been present in the Balkans and Eastern Europe since the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries, for example the Petchenegs, Avars, and Cumans, but they had been more or less assimilated or at least incorporated into various kingdoms and empires. The Seljuks and most importantly the Osmani Turks in Anatolia were the first to establish themselves into significant and powerful political entities.

battle.<sup>119</sup> The Serb-led coalition army was technically defeated but they were not devastated. Some Christian princes actively colluded with or fought alongside the Turkish forces against Prince Lazar and the coalition.<sup>120</sup> Kosovo Polje's greatest consequence was that the already-deteriorating authority of the Kingdom of Serbia ended and its former territories broke up into smaller kingdoms and fiefdoms that gradually became Ottoman vassalages.<sup>121</sup>

Albania after the end of Dušan's rule was divided among various local chieftains and clans. The national hero Gjergj Kastrioti (1405-1468), better known by his Turkish title Skanderbeg (from Iskander Bey, after Alexander the Great), had served in the Ottoman army as a commander but later returned to Albania. He united most of the Albanian clans in the League of Lezhë in 1444 that, with occasional though unreliable help from the Venetians, engaged in a military campaign against the Ottomans that kept much of the country free of Ottoman control until Skanderbeg's death in 1468. Ottoman control of Albania and Kosovo was consolidated by the 1470s.

Ottoman control of southeastern Europe reached its height around 1566 at which time it extended as far north as Hungary, Moldova and some areas of southern

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<sup>119</sup> Early versions of the accounts of the battle give this assassin no name, but later versions give Miloš Obilić as the assassin. It remains doubtful if this knight really existed, however. DeLillo's introduction contains a discussion of the veracity of his Albanian, not Serbian identity, which has become a hotly debated issue in nationalist circles. See Anna Di Lello, *The Battle of Kosovo 1389: An Albanian Epic*, translations by Robert Elsie (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2009), pp. 6-48.

<sup>120</sup> Branimir Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1999), pp. 38-43; Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, pp. 21-22. This situation spawned a huge corpus of epic songs and ballads centered on the Serb King Marko Kraljević, a vassal who fought on the Turkish side but who oral tradition remembers as a trickster figure who fights bravely and competently for the Ottomans but as often as not outwits the Sultan and his viziers to gain concessions for his Christian subjects, or to make fools of the Turks when called upon to defend the Ottoman borders against invaders (for a full treatment of the Prince Marko cycle see Tatyana Popović, *Prince Marko: The Hero of South Slav Epics* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1988).

<sup>121</sup> The historical Marko Kraljević was one such vassal. This process had actually begun decades earlier as Byzantine control of the eastern Balkans weakened and the Frankish Crusader kingdoms in Greece and Constantinople itself (1204-1250) caused further political and social chaos. See Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, pp. 15-23.

Poland.<sup>122</sup> The 16<sup>th</sup> century, especially the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520-1566) is often considered something of a ‘golden age’ for the Ottoman Empire and its culture.<sup>123</sup> These two centuries also saw nearly unremitting warfare between the Ottomans—who unsuccessfully lay siege to Vienna in 1529 and 1683—and the Hapsburg Empires. During this period the Frontier Warrior Culture flourished along the frontier zone.

The 18<sup>th</sup> and especially 19<sup>th</sup> centuries saw a slow reversal and decline of Ottoman power. The Hapsburg Empire had, by 1700, retaken most of Hungary and Croatia. The first uprisings in Serbia between 1804-1817 resulted in a ‘rump state’ under Prince Obrenović, and Serbian forces expelled the Ottoman garrison at Belgrade in 1867. The Greek War of Independence from 1821-1832 ended with an independent Greek state, and Bulgaria was recognized as a sovereign kingdom in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin.

A series of brief but exceptionally violent Balkan wars between 1903 and 1912 drove the Turks from Macedonia, claimed by Serbia and Greece despite Bulgaria’s claims to it. Albania was the last part of Turkey-in-Europe (aside from Istanbul and eastern Thrace) to declare independence, in November 1912, although it lost the city and district of Ulcinj to Montenegro, Kosova to Serbia, and for a time Gjirokastër in the south to Greece.<sup>124</sup>

The Geg clans of northern Albanian and of Kosovo and the southern Albanian Tosk and Labë societies display some notable differences in their overall social structures and historical development. Geography plays a significant role in

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<sup>122</sup> See Radovan Samardžić, ‘History and Legend in the Kosovo Tradition’, in *Битка на Косову* (*Bitka na Kosovu*), edited by Dragoslav Srejović (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Historical Museum of Serbia, BIGZ, 1989), pp. 115-119.

<sup>123</sup> Faroqi, *Subjects*, p. 176.

<sup>124</sup> Since the Balkan Return songs I reference in this Thesis and the music culture of the FWC crystallized over the course of these centuries, the Ottoman era in the Balkans is the main historical focus here.

this: south of the Drin River (Fig. 5.4) that runs through the middle of the modern nation, the rugged mountains of the north give way somewhat to a coastal plain that fostered more developed agriculture, a semi-feudal social system, and a greater number of towns and cities along trade routes.



Fig. 5.4: Albania and surrounding regions, physiography.<sup>125</sup>

The South's greater geographic accessibility also made it the area most susceptible to foreign invasion, and it was this region that formed the center of

<sup>125</sup> Image source: <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/cia-maps-publications/map-downloads/>> ; accessed on: 12 Nov. 2018.

successive outside rulers: the Byzantines, including the Despotate of Epirus (1204-1337); Bulgars (c. 840-1019, 1218-1241); Serbs (c. 1190-c. 1373), and the Kingdom of Albania under Charles d'Anjou (1272-1285) all included southern and central Albania in their domains.

None of these states extended as far north as Shkodra (Ita *Scutari*; Sla *Skadar*), the main northern city, and most reached no further than Durrës (Ita *Durazzo*) on the Adriatic coast due west of Tirana, the modern capital. Those tribes seeking isolation from and resisting assimilation to foreign rulers often found some refuge in the mountain valleys of Dalmatia, Montenegro and northern Albania.<sup>126</sup> Even by 1322 Albanians did not necessarily form a majority population in coastal cities, and their presence in towns like Durrës, Ulcinj, and even Dubrovnik was to some degree a result of nomadic emigration from their highland villages.<sup>127</sup>

Further east of the Albanian highlands, the terrain consists of broad plains like *Kosovo Polje*, 'Field of Blackbirds' (Fig. 5.4).<sup>128</sup> These plains made central Kosova a natural conduit for trade, military movements and communication between the Black Sea and the Adriatic coast over to the Italian peninsula. It is ringed almost

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<sup>126</sup> A number of ostensibly archaic music practices thrived in Dalmatia in particular, including the use of the bowed one string *gusle* (Alb *lahutë*) to accompany epic and heroic songs. As the 20<sup>th</sup> century composer and ethnomusicologist Béla Bartók testified, this rich rural music culture had existed almost entirely unknown to urban society and establishment musicians and composers before the Serb Vuk Karadžić's South Slavic folksong collections of the 1820s brought the tradition to the attention of Europe. See J. G. Kohl, *Austria, Vienna, Prague, Hungary, Bohemia, and the Danube; Galicia, Styria, Moravia, Bukovina, and The Military Frontier* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1844), p. 330; Alberto Fortis, *Osservazioni di Giovanni Lovrich sopra Diversi Pezzi del Viaggio in Dalmazia* (Venice: Presso Francesco Sansoni, 1776), pp. 126-129; Alberto Fortis, *Lettre de M. L'Abbé Fortis à Mylord Comte de Bute, sur Les Mœurs et Usages des Morlaques, appellés Monténégrins, avec figures* (Bern: Chez La Société Typographique, 1778), pp. 65-66, 70-72; Larry Wolff, *Venice and the Slavs: the Discovery of Dalmatia in the Age of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 181-186.

<sup>127</sup> Robert Elsie, '1322 Simon Fitzsimons: Itinerary from Ireland to the Holy Land'; found at <[http://www.albanianhistory.net/1322\\_Fitzsimons/index.html](http://www.albanianhistory.net/1322_Fitzsimons/index.html)>; accessed on: 1 Nov. 2018.

<sup>128</sup> Historically, however, Kosovo refers to the eastern half of the modern nation while Metohija (Gr. *metochia*, a Byzantine term for the Orthodox monasteries that owned large estates here) forms the western half. A chain of hills subdivides the province. Malcolm notes that 'how and why Kosovo became the name for this component territory is a little unclear...[it] first appears in accounts of the great battle of 1389, which took place on Kosovo Polje, or "Kosovo field [or Field of Blackbirds].' Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp. 2-4.

entirely by three mountain ranges including the *Malësi i Madhe*, the Great Highlands, that run east from Shkodra along the Montenegrin frontier into Kosovo. This geological continuity created the conditions for an element of social continuity as well.

To say that the Malësi and Kosovo are umbilically connected might even be to understate the case: until a frontier was created between them after the war of 1912, the two areas had been [in Albanian eyes] parts of a single, continuous ethnic realm.<sup>129</sup>

The region contained two important trade routes: one from Shkodra to Prizren, with connecting roads to Prishtina, Skopje, and Salonika, and the other from Dubrovnik (Lat. Ragusa) on Croatia's Adriatic coast through Novi Pazar into Kosovo. From there a traveler could go eastwards to Niš, Belgrade, Sophia or Istanbul, or south to Macedonia.<sup>130</sup> These routes gave Kosovo great strategic importance, and thus its control has formed the goal of numerous military campaigns from Roman to modern times.

Another result of these strategic routes through Kosovo was that its cities, notably Prishtina, Prizren, Peć, Gjakova and Mitrovica,<sup>131</sup> and the nearby Macedonian cities of Tetova and Skopje—both in western Macedonia near large communities of Geg Albanians—were also important administrative and trade cities for the Ottoman *vilayets* of Shkodra and Kosovo (*Fig. 5.4*). These two factors—major travel routes and administrative urban centers—fostered cultural and familial continuity and lines of cultural transmission between the Glegs of Malësia, of Kosovo and of northwestern Macedonia.

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>131</sup> See *Ibid.*, p. 193, for an overview of the importance of these cities to the Ottomans. Mitrovica, for example, became a major garrison town. With so many soldiers drawn from all over the Ottoman lands stationed here, there may well have been an active culture of heroic ballads and other soldiers' songs, and an exchange of musical ideas and instruments.

On the other hand, the Frontier Warrior Culture that lived in and traveled through these regions frequently circumvented these geo-political boundaries, and through these agents instruments and songs like the *çifteli* and *Aga Imer* became integral parts of this cultural sphere. In the Tosk/Lab south they both are known specifically as northern cultural objects.

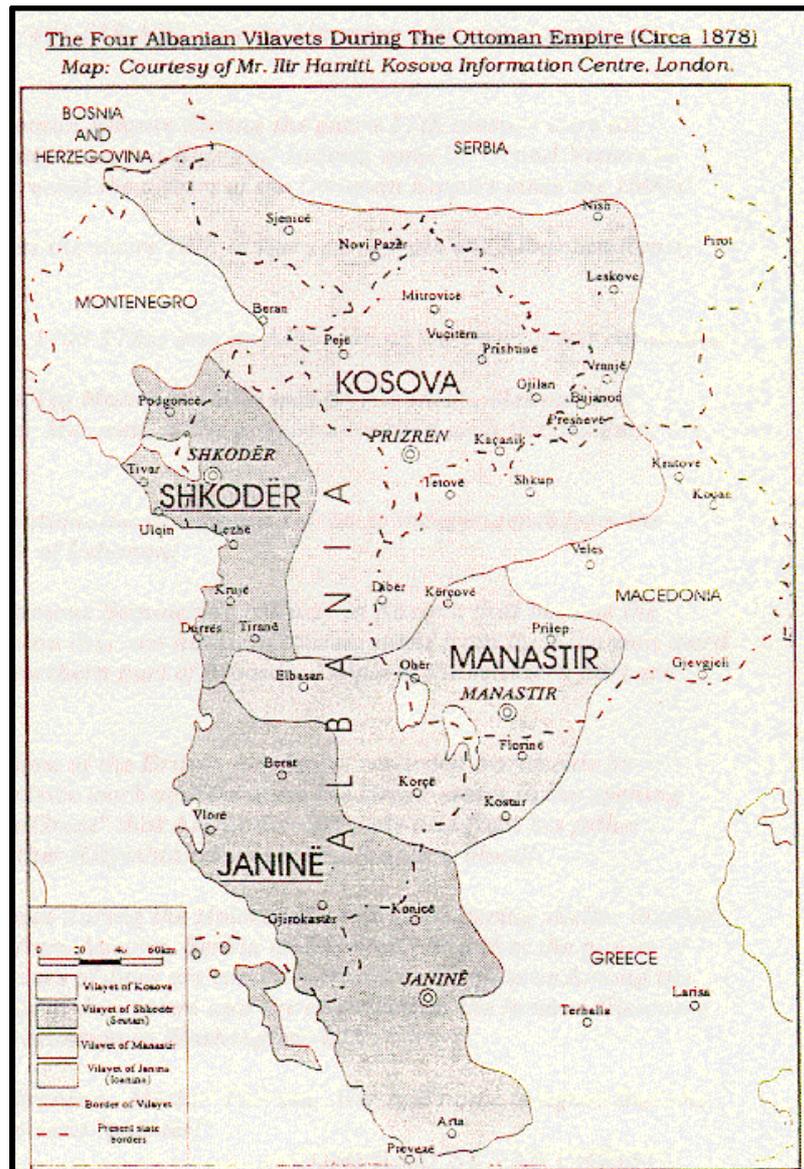


Fig. 5.5: Ottoman vilayets of Albania, 1878.<sup>132</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Image source: <<https://www.frosina.org/page/52/>> ; accessed on: 11 Dec. 2018.

*Mercenaries, Devşirme, and Albanians*

Even the Ottomans could maintain only loose control of the highlands and as often as not they acceded their authority to local tribal law,<sup>133</sup> the orally transmitted *kanun*-s.

The nature of these *kanun* formed a prominent source of attraction to European travelers in Albanian territories and social scientists in the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>134</sup>

Though the *kanun i Lek* (Dukagjini, an Albanian contemporary of Skanderbeg) is the most well known of these orally transmitted legal codes, ‘variation was the essence of the unwritten law...[that] adapted to life, not the other way around...[and they] refused to be a single, coherent set of rules.’

Part of what made the highlands so difficult to subjugate and rule was the Albanian people’s attachment to their regional *kanun*-s and the principle of self-rule that these legal traditions expressed. The imperial authorities’ attempts to enforce imperial law, often through force of arms, met with hostile and usually successful resistance. In fact, the clans of the highlands proved so militantly resistant to outside subjugation that the Ottomans eventually ceded them autonomy on the condition that they provide contingents for the imperial army.<sup>135</sup> As the Victorian traveler Edith Durham observed in the closing years of Ottoman rule,

What the tribesman resents to the uttermost is not the administration of law, but the attempt to force on him laws to which he has never assented.<sup>136</sup>

As a result of this resistance,

The Albanians originally agreed with the Turks that they should retain their own law, and give in return voluntary military

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<sup>133</sup> Sugar, *Southeastern Europe*, pp. 42-43, 92, and 237.

<sup>134</sup> Albert Doja, ‘Customary Laws, Folk Culture, and Social Lifeworlds: Albanian Studies in Critical Perspective’, in *Spomenica Valtazara Bogišića o stogodišnjici njegove smrti [Gedächtnisschrift für Valtazar Bogišić zur 100. Wiederkehr seines Todestages]*, v. 2, edited by Luka Breneselovic (Beograd: Sluzbeni & Institute of Comparative Law, 2011), pp. 187-190.

<sup>135</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkans*, p. 507.

<sup>136</sup> Edith Durham, *High Albania: a Victorian Traveller’s Balkan Odyssey* (London: Edward Arnold/Phoenix Press, 1909/2000), p. 31.

service. They have kept their own part of the contract, and have quite justly resisted Turkish attempts to forcibly break the other part.<sup>137</sup>

This was one of three important ways that Albanian fighters circulated throughout the Empire, and how the Gëgs in particular introduced LNLs and their associated repertoires into the highland music culture.

The second factor in this transmission process was the Turkish institution of *devşirme* (Tur), or ‘gathering in’,<sup>138</sup> and the *Janissary* corps (from Tur *yeni-çeri*, ‘new force’),<sup>139</sup> that was, in part, a result of it. This was a form of tribute that demanded the levying of one out of five Christian children every three to five years<sup>140</sup> These young men were brought to Istanbul, converted to Islam, and given an Ottoman education. A number of them rose to high positions in the Ottoman administration, including service as *vizier*-s, a position analogous to a prime minister and second only to the sultan. Many more of them were inducted into the *Janissary* corps, the most elite unit in the Ottoman military (*Pl. 5.9*).<sup>141</sup>

In this way, Albanian highland men<sup>142</sup> entered—and shaped—Ottoman military culture both at its fringes in the Frontier Warrior Culture and at its core through their participation in the *Janissary* corps. After their term of service, during which these men had opportunities to absorb the military cultural practices such as singing *këngë* to the accompaniment of LNLs like the *çifteli*, these men often returned

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Paul Witteck, ‘Devshirme and sharī’a’, *BSOAS* 17/2 (1955), p. 274.

<sup>139</sup> J. A. B. Palmer, ‘The Origin of the Janissaries’, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 35/2 (1953), pp. 462-463.

<sup>140</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkans*, p. 39.

<sup>141</sup> Basilike Papoulia, *Ursprung und Wesen der ‘Knabenlese’ im osmanischen Reich* (Munich: Verlag R. Oldenburg, 1963), p. 15.

<sup>142</sup> These factors affected southern Albanian society as well, though it is the northern highlanders that I am especially considering here.

to their homes in the Albanian highlands and brought these songs and instruments with them.

The Janissaries were a uniquely Ottoman institution, though its roots seem to lie in the giving of land grants to soldiers.<sup>143</sup> In the Byzantine Empire these grants were known as *προνοια*, ‘pronoia’, and most *akritai* were *pronoiac*-s. The Ottomans called them *tīmārlar* (Tur; pl.; sg. *tīmār*) and they consisted of former Christian lands the Ottomans took over and gave out to leaders or heroes of the *ġāzī*, ‘fighters for the faith’ (Ara, from *ġazw*, ‘raid, incursion’).<sup>144</sup> These *ġāzī* were nomadic soldiers—perhaps Turkomēn from Central Asia—who fought for the Sulṭān performing excursions and raids into opposing lands.<sup>145</sup> By the early Ottoman period *ġāzī* had acquired a specialized sense as,

A body of fighters with some kind of organization, of the nature of a military order, and enjoying support from another organization somewhat resembling a guild of which the members are known as *ahī*-s.

The land grants, as with the *akritai*, were often territories these men had conquered and included many former *akritai* holdings. The *tīmār* was a military fief that had ‘feudal characteristics, such as the office of *beg* [Tur; more commonly *bey*; Alb *bej*] who oversaw ‘a feudal levy consisting of *tīmār*-holders’. A *bey*, then, had the same degree of authority as a Digenis Akritis. *Tīmār* holders were called *sipahi*-s and given authority to levy taxes on peasant farmers, and therefore the *sipahi* was expected to fulfill military and sometimes administrative duties in exchange for the position.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Palmer, ‘Origins’, pp. 453, 457-459.

<sup>144</sup> *Arabic-English Dictionary: The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, edited by J. M. Cowan (Urbana: Spoken Language Services, Inc., 1994), p. 788.

<sup>145</sup> Palmer, ‘Origin’, p. 453.

<sup>146</sup> Faroqhi, *Subjects*, pp. 54-55.

The initiation of *devşirme* as such was first noted by European observers by 1438.<sup>147</sup>

The initial Ottoman practice of filling the Janissary's ranks with prisoners acquired through raiding could not sustain itself after their defeat by the Central Asian *jihādī* Timurlane at Ankara in 1402. The Ottomans lost many Christian east Anatolian provinces that had been good sources for such prisoners and so turned to their not-yet fully subjugated Balkan provinces for a solution.<sup>148</sup>



Pl. 5.9: Seated Janissary, 1480.<sup>149</sup>

It was primarily rural populations who were most subject to *devşirme* and thus mostly Albanians and Slavs, and the dominant language amongst Janissaries was

<sup>147</sup> Palmer, 'Origin', pp. 464-466.

<sup>148</sup> Witteck, 'Devshirme', p. 274. Witteck formulated the 'Ghazi [sic] thesis' to explain the Osmanlis' rise from a principality to a sprawling empire. His theory argued that the first Sultan, Selim, drew warriors from around Anatolia by appealing to a sense of *jihad*, in the sense of holy war against the 'infidels'. Though it has been the consensus view since the 1930s this theory has been heavily criticized since the 1980s; see Paul Witteck, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, edited and Introduction by Colin Heywood (Oxfordshire/New York: Routledge, 2012/1938), 'Introduction', pp. 1-28, and pp. 43-47, 111-124.

<sup>149</sup> Gentile Bellini, 1480-1481.

Slavonic.<sup>150</sup> Therefore, whereas before *devşirme* came into effect those Janissary inductees from among prisoners were first sent to farms—*tīmār-s*—and set to ‘ploughing the fields’, now it was largely rural farmers who felt the brunt of *devşirme* as their sons were taken. Eventually their sons returned, albeit with a new religion, but also with war stories and information of the larger world, new songs to sing, and some measure of political authority, being able to intercede on their families’ or clans’ behalf in Istanbul.<sup>151</sup>

There was yet a third way that Albanian and Kosovar men entered and circulated throughout the Ottoman military and its music culture. By the close of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the *tīmār-sipahi* system had become ‘militarily obsolete’ and was phased out.<sup>152</sup> It was then more and more up to the *paša-s*, Ottoman governors of *vilayet-s*, to maintain order in their *paşalık* (Tur, pl., *paša* > Alb *pashe/pashë*)<sup>153</sup> and fulfill the *sipahi-s* old duties. Especially in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the *paša-s* came to rely heavily on mercenary soldiers who were not considered *akseri*, ‘servants of the sultan’, and thus politically and economically disenfranchised. These mercenaries were usually hired short term and when out of work—a chronic problem—became ‘gangs’. Sometimes they maintained ties to specific localities, which kept their worse excesses in check. But often as not smaller bands of these *levend-s* or irregular troops, coalesced with other groups to form veritable rogue armies free of imperial control.

In Anatolia the *levend* mostly consisted of the sons of Muslim peasants, but in the Balkan provinces the great majority of the rural population remained Christian.

Thus the irregular forces employed by *paša-s* consisted largely of Christian fighters, as

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<sup>150</sup> Witteck, ‘Devshirme’, p. 278.

<sup>151</sup> Faroqhi, *Subjects*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56-57.

<sup>153</sup> The form with terminal *-e* also appears with terminal *-a*, and is the historical form used when designating a historical person; the form with terminal *-ë* is the Albanicized form, a feminine noun with masculine agreement that denotes a given title (*OAED*, p. 627).

did the gangs of bandits, *haiduk*, who roamed the mountains when there was no military work for them. The Englishman James Hobhouse (1786-1869), a friend and traveling companion of Lord Byron, traveled through Albania in 1809-1810 in the Janina (Grk B Ioanina) *pašalik* of the renegade Ali Pashe Tepilene. He illustrated the social mobility of these *levend* warriors:

As we were acquainted with the character of the Albanians, it did not at all diminish our pleasure to know, that every one of our guard had been robbers, and some of them a very short time before. The most respectable and best mannered *Bolu-bashee* with us, had been, four years past, a very formidable one, having had the command of two hundred upon the mountains behind Lepanto, but he had submitted with his men, and was now in the service of Ali [Pashe Teplilene].<sup>154</sup>

*Tambura, the Ottoman Soldier's Accoutrement*

European observers first commented on the *tanbūr* in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which lends some support to the argument that the *tanbūr* formed a notable part of the Balkan instrumentarium only after the Ottoman conquests. The early European writers consistently emphasized that these long necked, small bodied lutes were ‘Turkish’, not Arab or Persian instruments,<sup>155</sup> and furthermore travelers through Albanian territories often wrote of Albanian warriors’ attachment to their LNLs.

The 15<sup>th</sup> century writer Johannes Tinctoris (c. 1435-1511) provides the earliest European notice of the *tambura*. In 1480 a Turkish fleet briefly occupied the Italian city of Otranto in Apuleia but shortly afterward surrendered to King Alfonso of Naples. Tinctoris commented that in the battle’s aftermath Alfonso’s Turkish prisoners played,

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<sup>154</sup> John Cam Hobhouse, Lord Broughton, *Travels in Albania and Other Provinces of Turkey in 1809 & 1810*, v. 1 (London, 1813; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014/1855), p. 167.

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Guillaume Villoteau, *Description de l'Égypte ou Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française* Tome 3 (Paris: C. L. F. Panckoucke, 1823), pp. 246-289.

The miserable and puny instrument which the Turks with their even more miserable and puny ingenuity...call the *tambura*...

I happened to be in Naples and myself heard various tunes played on the *tambura*...tunes which they played in private, being allowed to do so to console their captivity. The extravagance and rusticity of these pieces were such as only to emphasize the barbarity of those who played them.<sup>156</sup>

Nearly 200 years later, in 1668, a French observer, Sieur Pouillet, wrote of the *tabourat*, or *tamboura*, that,

The Turks are so charmed by them that there is no son of a good family...among them who does not know how to play it, and who doesn't have one which he carries everywhere—on campaign, at war, on foot, on horse, attached to the two ends of the scabbard of his scimitar, or hanging on his back with his pipe.<sup>157</sup>

The famed Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi (1611-1684) made several trips through the Balkans, including Kosovo, the *Malësia*, and the Hapsburg frontier between 1630-1665. Being a trained musician himself he described several dozen instruments he saw in Istanbul and made inventories of how many musicians played each type and how many instrument workshops did business. He noted at least two types of *tanbūr* with two or three strings with between one- and five-hundred players each.<sup>158</sup> He also cites a 'bottle-shaped lute', the *qaraduzen* [sic], with 50 players in the city and 'favored by shoemakers', and the *sharkī* 'played by the Turkomans' with 200 players.

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<sup>156</sup> Anthony Baines, 'Fifteenth-century Instruments in Tinctoris' *De Inventione et Usu Musicae*', *GSJ* 3 (1950), pp. 23, 25.

<sup>157</sup> Le Sieur Pouillet, *Nouvelles Relations du Levant*, v. 1 (Paris: Chez Louis Billaine, 1668), pp. 61-62; quoted and translated in Feldman, *Music*, p. 173.

<sup>158</sup> Henry George Farmer, 'Turkish Instruments of Music in the Seventeenth Century', *JRAS* 68/1 (1936), pp. 33-37.



Pl. 5.10: Aegean Greek 'taboura' player, 1708.<sup>159</sup>

Çelebi classified the lutes he encountered by their social milieu:<sup>160</sup> those used in *fasıl*, the courtly *makam* music, those played by the 'folk'—which included the aristocratic class—and the lutes of the *levend*. Though Çelebi's scheme placed the *çöğür*, *ravzâ* and *kopuz* lutes in the *levendâne* group and the *tanbūra*, *şarki* [sic] and

<sup>159</sup> Charles de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent estampes représentant les diverses nations du Levant, tirées d'après nature en 1707 et 1708*, engravings by Jean-Baptiste van Mour (Paris: Chez le Hay & Duchange Collambat, 1714-1715), pl. 70.

<sup>160</sup> Feldman, *Music*, p. 169.

*karadüzen*, among others, in the ‘folk’ group, it is clear that the two overlapped considerably (*Pl. 5.10*) and that the *tambura*-s of Hungary, Croatia and Bosnia and the *šargija* are ‘modern descendants’ of the *levendâne*.

These were all instruments associated with ‘the young unmarried men who served in the various irregular military organizations which were especially important on the “*serhad*”, the marches between the Ottoman and the Hapsburg imperial realms.’<sup>161</sup> Despite the wealth of lute names that Çelebi mentions, apart from the *kopuz* and *barbüt* all the *levendâne* and folk lutes were LNLs of the *tambura*, *šargija*, or *karadyzen* genera.<sup>162</sup>

Still another 138 years after Poulet, Hobhouse witnessed his Albanian soldier-escorts, including the ‘*bolu-bashee*’ described above, performing wild dances and singing around their campfire ‘with astonishing energy’<sup>163</sup> to the accompaniment of a ‘lute’.

All their songs were relations of some robbing exploits. One of them, which detained them for more than an hour, began thus—“When we set out from Parga, there were sixty of us”...

...this lute is a very simple instrument—a three-stringed guitar with a very long neck and a small round base, whose music is very monotonous, and which is played with...a plectrum, made of a piece of quill...The majority of Albanians can play on this lute, which, however, is only used for, and capable of those notes that are just sufficient for the accompaniment and marking the time of their songs.<sup>164</sup>

Moreover, Hobhouse elsewhere described the Albanian *levendi*-s’ devotion to these lutes in idyllic terms:

...his supreme delight, when unoccupied by the wars of his Pasha or of his village, is to bask in the sunshine, to smoke, to

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<sup>161</sup> Feldman, *Music*, p. 169.

<sup>162</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 171-173.

<sup>163</sup> Hobhouse, *Travels*, pp. 166-167.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

eat, to drink, to doze, or to stroll slowly through the garden of his cottage, tinkling his tuneless lute. Yet though he is idle he is still restless, and ready to seize his gun and plunge into the woods, at the first summons of his chief.<sup>165</sup>

The American illustrator and political cartoonist for *Harper's Weekly* magazine, Thomas Nast (1840-1902), created several engravings based on photographs of Albanian scenes in the 1880s. One of them, 'A Night's Entertainment in Albania during the Feast of Ramazan [sic; Ramadan]' from 1881, (*Pl. 5.11*) portrays a group of men listening to a singer performing with a double coursed LNL. Their rapt expressions suggest a deep emotional engagement with the presumably heroic song the singer relates.



*Pl. 5.11: 'A Night's Entertainment in Albania during the Feast of Ramazan', 1881.*<sup>166</sup>

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>166</sup> Thomas Nast, engraving for *Harper's Weekly* magazine, 11 June 1881.

Edith Durham, traveling through the *Malësia* a century after Hobhouse, witnessed the same casual yet pervasive presence of these LNLs when she and her guides were hosted for a night in *Prokletija* region, a mountain chain that straddles the borders of Montenegro, Albania, Serbia and Kosovo (*Fig. 5.4*).

A man...came in with a *tamboora* [sic] and played and sang interminable ballads, his lean fingers plucking strange trills and wonderful shakes from the slim, tinkling instrument. The room was foggy with tobacco smoke and reeked of humanity ...the visitors sprawled on the floor in heaps, drinking black coffee, and the harsh voice of the singer and the thin, acid notes of the *tamboora* rose and fell amidst the buzz of talk.<sup>167</sup>

Eye-witness accounts like these testify to the entrenchment of several genus of *tanbūr*-s in the Balkans and specifically as the province of the mercenaries, Janissaries, peasant farmers, border garrisons and mountain bandits who lived, fought, and died along the imperial frontiers. These rhizomatic social networks also carried an oral tradition of heroic and epic songs performed by these frontier warriors with these same LNLs. And among these songs were several varieties of Return songs that reflected much of the reality of these soldiers as well as their own fantasies, and that included their beloved LNLs as actors in their own right within the texts.

Thus the Return song heroes followed a standard practice of their real-life military milieu. The *tambura*, *çifteli*, *sharki* and *karadyzen* were as emblematic and as necessary an attribute of men of their position in the Ottoman world as Digenis Akritis' *thampourin* was to a Byzantine *akritai*.

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<sup>167</sup> Durham, *High Albania*, pp. 141-142.

### Conclusions

The term *tambur* is first attested in the Middle Iranian text *Draxt-i-Ašurig* along with other chordophones, where it almost certainly signifies an LNL. Arab music theorists from the 9<sup>th</sup> century on describe many regional types of *tanbūr*-s that almost uniformly display the characteristic long, narrow neck, ‘pear-‘ or teardrop-shaped soundboard, and two to three courses of strings. It is thus clear that *tanbūr* had already become attached to a whole definable family of LNLs whose morphologies are close to each other but distinct from other lutes.

The Middle Persian *tambūr* was closely associated with a class of minstrels known as *gōsān* who held important positions within the royal retinue and accompanied armies on their campaigns. The *gōsān* operated within an oral narrative song tradition and were known to extemporize such songs to commemorate victories on the battlefield. In this way the close association of the LNL with kingship ideology and the imperial military had been preserved in the LNL’s genealogy since the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE. For this reason I argue that the *tanbūr* family and its genera can be fully understood when these stable social and cultural aspects of its history are considered.

On those rare occasions when a *tanbūr* type of LNL does emerge in iconography it does so in the hands of a ‘barbarian’ soldier like the one shown in a mosaic from the Great Palace of Constantinople from the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century CE, or the Cossack Mamai of Ukrainian folk art. These images repeat all the main motifs of the shepherd king iconographic genealogy discussed in Chap. 3: the outsider seated on a rock, playing a chordophone that is a culturally conditioned, rhizomatic element, with a dog by his side and a herd animal nearby, and usually a tree present.

Most significant is his status as an social outsider who, as a warrior, exists embedded in the imperial military whose borders mark who is ‘in’ and who is ‘other’. This characteristic holds the iconographic genealogy together, from Dumuzi lethally recruited into a warrior band to David the shepherd boy impressed by King Saul into playing the *knr* to relieve the king’s demons, and to Orpheus whose lyre playing (nearly) overcomes death. Like those ancient figures these warrior lutenists begin as marginalized figures who can, for scattered moments at least, expel the shadows of gloom and death with the music and commemorative songs they perform with their *tambura-s*.

These warrior lutenists, also like the shepherd king, thus inhabit two worlds, a phenomenon exemplified by the hero of the sole example of epic in Byzantine literature, Digenis Akritis the ‘Twi-born borderer’ whose earliest text dates from the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century CE. When Digenis decides to join the *απελατας*, *apelatai* mountain brigands, the first thing he does is refurbish his *thampourin* lute that, in other songs of the cycle, he uses to first court and later soothe and entertain his wife. This is the first known use of *thampourin* in Greek and probably resulted from the increased cultural influence of the Turks after 1071.

The *apelatai* were not only brigands but irregular or mercenary soldiers as well and they inhabited these roles almost simultaneously in an expression of the rhizomatic quality of the Frontier Warrior Culture they belonged to. These soldiers were experienced fighters who were often given land grants as reward for their military service to the empire. Living, fighting and dying on the imperial frontiers that they maintained, they developed a distinctive culture that crossed, with impunity, the official borders of geo-politics, religion, language, and culture that empires and nations depend on maintaining. The Frontier Warrior is an outsider to the region he

lives in, with a local wife and/or unusual parentage, and he is, at some point, inevitably depicted playing a *tanbūr* LNL that helps him communicate with a significant feminine figure.

Under Ottoman rule from 1470-1912 Albanians became almost emblematic of the Ottoman military. It is through their involvement in the social circuits of the Frontier Warrior Culture that LNLs like the *çifteli* entered the north Albanian and Kosovar instrumentarium. First, the northern *bajrak*-s, notoriously difficult to rule over, were granted the right to keep their own law, the oral legal *kanun*-s, and thus their autonomy in exchange for providing military service to the Empire. Second, the Ottoman practice of *devşirme* begun in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century conscripted the boys of Christian subjects in the Balkans into the administrative or elite Janissary corps of the military. Third, from the 17<sup>th</sup> century on, it increasingly fell to local *paşa*-s to conscript troops to maintain order in their *vilayets*. As a result they relied heavily on mercenaries or irregulars called *levend* who often formed into bands of brigands when out of work.

Travelers through Greece and the Albanian *vilayets* from Evliya Çelebi in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to Edith Durham in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century commented on the intimate and ubiquitous relationship of these irregular and *levend* troops with their *tambura*-s and *karadyzen*. They also remarked on some of the songs they sang, sometimes for hours, and their heroic themes and characters, solidly based on the actual experiences of these frontier warriors.

Among these were surely epic Return songs whose prototype was Homer's Odyssey but manifested as several genera of Balkan Return songs including the Albanian *Aga Imer*. Contained within these Return narratives lay the very *tambura* or *çifteli* LNLs that these frontier warriors accompanied their songs with. The

instruments' narrative function remains essentially unchanged from the lyres played in *Odyssey*, and before that the shepherd king archetype whose manifestations had already set the template for the Return song hero, his relationship with the woman of authority, and the chordophone that brings them together.

Thus the genealogical elements of *tanbūr* genera's morphologies and their social and cultural functions of bardic accompaniment to narrative songs that uphold kingship ideology, often in a military context, intersect with the rhizome networks of the woman of authority, the mobility of the Frontier Warrior Culture, and the oral themes from which the Return songs were made. In the following chapters I explore the rhizomatic characteristics of epic themes in the Return song genre and in the Albanian *Aga Imer* Return species.

## Chapter 6: Thematic Rhizomes in the Return Song

### Introduction

This chapter introduces and defines the Return song genre and analyzes its core thematic structure through the interpretive lens of the rhizome. The relationship between Mesopotamian laments and the Return song is examined in order to demonstrate the longevity and continuity of the story pattern and of the long necked lute's (LNL) role in the Return's mythic complex. The story pattern of Homer's *Odyssey*, the earliest recorded Return song proper, is described and analyzed. The 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century Turkish Return song of *Bamsi Beyrek of the Grey Horse* is discussed, and finally the story of the Albanian *Aga Imer* is narrated. Aspects of Albanian highland culture—*besë*, 'the sworn word' (Alb, sg. indef.; def. *besa*), and *pobratim*, blood-siblinghood (Sla > Alb, def. *pobratimi*)—are explained to highlight the significance of several events in *Aga Imer*.

My method for analyzing these texts concentrates primarily on thematic and narrative structures, and only secondarily on linguistic and prosodic features. I am not attempting to cross-compare Albanian, Mesopotamian and Turkic texts in order to determine their orality or literary quotients.<sup>1</sup> Rather, I trace the narratives' central actors—the returning hero and the woman of authority—who, as archetypal figures, exist independently of their respective cultures, languages and prosodic forms.

The rhizomes formed by these actors and their varied manifestations are, however, culturally conditioned. The same archetypal character manifests as recognizably Mesopotamian, Greek, Turkic, Albanian or Slavic personas that the singers of tales refashion to suit their cultural ethos. This cultural conditioning gives

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<sup>1</sup> See John Miles Foley, *Traditional Oral Epic: The Odyssey, Beowulf, and the Serbo-Croatian Return Song* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 1-10.

the generic Return texts their rhizomatic qualities such that, like the *Digenis Akritis* manuscripts, each version, no matter how old or ‘close to a source’, varies so much from any other that they can each be considered ‘authentic’.

*Genealogies and Rhizomes: Formula and Theme*

The similarities between the texts presented here are not only due to the rhizomatic nature of cultural artifacts and traits. They result as well from linguistic and prosodic—and perhaps musical<sup>2</sup>—substructures that constitute a genealogy of linguistic substructures. These substructures run like a deep current through the poetics of Indo-European languages from the Indic *Vedas* through the Homeric poems to the Slavic and Albanian epics. Historical linguistics has demonstrated the continuity of elements of poetic technique, diction,<sup>3</sup> and the presentation of the bardic figure and his songs; these elements find their roots in Proto-Indo-European (\*PIE) language, the prehistoric putative ancestor of the Vedic, Greek, Slavic, and Albanian languages.

In considering oral epic songs like *Aga Imer* these cultures can be considered ‘cognate cultures’ who,

May bear little superficial resemblance to each other after centuries (or millennia) of individual innovation since their common origin [in PIE cultures]...but deep structural sympathies [and] affinities may lie below the surface, and the more closely these may be related to language use, the more securely they may be demonstrated.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Franklin, ‘Structural Sympathies’, pp. 246-249.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 242-244.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

Because the earliest genres of literature—law, mythology, epic poetry—have their bases in preceding forms of orally transmitted texts<sup>5</sup> the compositional elements and techniques such as the *oral formula* and *theme* became ingrained even in the texts' literary forms.

Milman Parry famously defined the oral formula as “a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea.”<sup>6</sup> In, for example, a ten-syllable *deseterac* line of a Slavic rhapsode, a formula may consist of a character's name: *Kraljeviću Marko*, ‘Prince Marko’, a popular hero of South Slavic epics, may occupy the six-syllable second hemistich of a line. Or the singer may fill the four-syllable first hemistich before the caesura by using simply *Kraljeviću*.<sup>7</sup>

The exact terms used to express the formula's essential idea will vary from one language and culture to another, but the *semantic* value of the phrase shows exceptional longevity and stability across IE languages and cultures. Formulas also fulfill a metonymic function as they can evoke an entire theme or narrative. ‘The formula is the vehicle of the central theme of a proto-text, a central part of the symbolic culture of the speakers of Proto-Indo-European.’<sup>8</sup> This centrality is what lends the formulas their usefulness and continuity, as they ‘make reference to culturally significant features—“something that matters”’.

Though formulas are fundamentally important to the art of the oral poet they are not the only aspect of poetic diction that demonstrates these linguistic genealogies.

Beyond metrical kinship and cognate phraseology, many specifically Indo-European compositional elements, such as ring-

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<sup>5</sup> Foley, ‘Psychohistorical’, pp. 91-94.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Lord, *Singer*, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 41.

<sup>8</sup> Calvert Watkins, *How to Slay a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 9-10.

structure and a predilection for sound patterns (e.g. assonance, alliteration, and chiasmus of vowel or consonant classes) have also been identified.<sup>9</sup>

However, because the Return genre also finds expression in non-IE languages—the Sumerian isolate, Semitic Akkadian, and Turkic—with vastly different syntactic structures, the formulaic genealogy is less important to this Thesis than the thematic structure of the Return narrative. Formulas constitute the syntactic structures, the vehicles, from which themes emerge, but the themes provide the semantic content<sup>10</sup> and display a more rhizomatic quality. The theme is most succinctly defined as a ‘grouping of ideas’<sup>11</sup> or events, and the sequencing of these ideas and events create the narrative thrust of the song.

I am interested here in examining how actors in these narratives, however disparate they seem, follow similar patterns of behavior even if a direct linguistic thread cannot be demonstrated. These archetypal figures and the mythic rhizomes they form are imaginatively and ideationally transferrable entities that prove malleable to many languages and cultural worldviews. In the same way that a melody is, in part, defined by its rhythm and meter, the presentation of these figures and events is partly dictated by these linguistic and prosodic genealogies. In this way, the rhizomes of cultural conditioning, themes, and interpretive modes interact with the phylogenetic lineages of formulas and prosody.

In addition, I have conducted this cross-comparison with Foley’s description of the epic text and its diction as a ground. The diction of the text marks it as a piece of its poetic tradition that is

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<sup>9</sup> Franklin, ‘Sympathies’, p. 244. Watkins’ *How to Slay a Dragon* gives an exhaustive analysis of these ‘sympathies and affinities’ among the poetic diction, metrics, imagery and the bardic figure of ancient Indo-European languages.

<sup>10</sup> Watkins, *Dragon*, p. 152.

<sup>11</sup> Lord, *Singer*, p. 69.

A connotatively explosive medium, a touchstone or nexus of indication and reference...such a diction and narrative structure have obvious and necessary reference not only to the present poem, poet and time but also to an enormous number of other poets, poems and eras.<sup>12</sup>

In this sense all the texts I refer to can be shown to have their origins in a collective, preliterate milieu rather than a literate one such as Byron's Orientalist narrative poems *The Giaour* or *The Bride of Abydos*.<sup>13</sup>

Connected to this I have also studiously avoided the common pitfall of *only* examining texts as creations of a long-standing tradition. Foley also notes that

A tradition[-al] text is not simply a synchronic latticework [like a rhizome], but also a diachronic document of great age and depth...it has roots which reach back into its pre-textual history [a phylogenetic history] and which inform the present avatar of its identity.<sup>14</sup>

I have therefore analyzed the texts as both nodes in the tradition's 'latticework' and additionally as a series of unique documents each shaped by unique circumstances. Working in these two interpretive modes allows me to perceive more precisely the domains of the rhizome and of the phylogenetic at work in the Return texts, and to thereby assess their interaction in the creation of the performed song.

### Return Song Definition

The Albanian ballad of *Aga Imer*<sup>15</sup> constitutes a contemporary example of the Return Song genre first exemplified in the Homeric *Odyssey*.<sup>16</sup> The Return narrative revolves around three archetypal characters:

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<sup>12</sup> Foley, *Oral Epic*, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> George Gordon Byron, *Lord Byron: Selected Poems*, edited by Susan J. Wolfson and Peter J. Manning (London: Penguin Books, 1996), pp. 167-247.

<sup>14</sup> Foley, *Oral Epic*, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Also spelled Ymer, Imeri or Ymeri. In the latter two the final *-i* denotes the nominative form of the name as is usual in Albanian when using a proper name as an address or as the subject of a

1. The hero struggling to return home from long absence to regain lost bride and status.
2. The woman of authority who arranges his conditional release. She assumes several forms: a goddess, the wife or daughter of the hero's captor, or the hero's sister or mother. In some instances she is conflated with the hero's bride. Her most definitive trait is that in almost all cases she has subverted or contravened the authority of her male counterpart, the head god or the king who holds the hero captive, in releasing or compelling the hero's release.
3. The hero's chordophone, an LNL in post-Homeric songs, that he plays and either a) effects a recognition on the part of a key feminine actor (or on occasion a poor herdsman), or b) effects his release from imprisonment.<sup>17</sup>

Despite often significant differences in their respective plot structures, language, provenance, etc., the essential theme remains the same: the hero of the song has been away at war for many years and despite many dangers and obstacles attempts to return to his home, his bride, and his status as a man within his native society. When he returns he disguises himself until the time is right to reveal his true identity and he then reunites with his bride and regains his status.

Albert Lord and John Miles Foley have given more finely honed analyses of what Lord also labeled the Return-Rescue song.<sup>18</sup> In a series of *Tables* I show a

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sentence. Because his name appears both with and without the case ending, I have dropped it for consistency's sake and to avoid confusion for my English-language readers.

<sup>16</sup> See Foley, *Oral Epic*, pp. 11-14, and W. W. Parks, 'Generic Identity and the Guest-Host Exchange: a Study of Return Songs in the Homeric and Serbo-Croatian Traditions', *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, 15/1 (1981), pp. 24-41.

<sup>17</sup> An additional actor must be mentioned: the figure of the hero's mother who sometimes replaces or takes on aspects of the woman of authority, or continues her role when the latter is absent from the story and acts as advisor to the hero. See Chap. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Lord, *Singer*, pp. 120-123, 260-265; Mary Louise Lord, 'Withdrawal and Return: An Epic Story Pattern in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter and in the Homeric Poems', *The Classical Journal* 62/6 (1967), pp. 241-248; Foley, *Oral Epic*, pp. 359-387.

succession of thematic forms and subthemes based on Lord's, Foley's, and my own analyses of the Return song form. The five major themes are Capitalized, and the lesser themes that occur within those five are given in lower case. As I discuss each Return song below I have made a *Table* for the poem's thematic structure, the corresponding events, and their analogues in the other Return songs as they are introduced.

Foley<sup>19</sup> defines five essential themes that constitute the overarching narrative structure. *Table 6.1* shows these five elements:

<b>Theme event</b>
Absence
Devastation
Return
Retribution
Wedding

*Table 6.1: Foley's five-part Return song.*

Absence is the hero's sojourn to war and his imprisonment. Devastation happens when the hero learns of the fate of his bride, mother, and property. Return marks the hero's arrival back in his homeland. Retribution is the moment when the hero reclaims his bride, and his honor, and in some Return genera this culminates in a Wedding.

Within these five broad actions a host of more specific actions occur. Lord identified two groups of auxiliary themes that make up two key events. The first set of themes takes place during Absence and Devastation (*Fig. 6.2*):

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<sup>19</sup> Foley, *Oral Epic*, pp. 361-362.

Theme	Theme's defining event(s) [emphasis added]
summons lesser wedding	'How the hero was <i>summoned</i> from home on his <i>wedding</i> to go to war...
capture	How he was <i>captured</i> ...
shouting	<i>Shouting</i> [in prison after many years]
release lesser return	<i>Release</i> with stipulation of <i>return</i> to prison.'

Table 6.2: Lord's analysis of 'auxiliary' themes.

These preliminary actions enable the dramatic high point: the recognition theme. This sequence contains three themes that Lord outlines as (Table 6.3):<sup>20</sup>

Theme event
disguise
deceptive story
recognition

Table 6.3: Lord's tripartite Return song.

These last three themes constitute the key events of the Return song form, and define the Return as a genre. Although Lord formulated this outline in reference to a body of Slavic Return songs, he notes that these themes 'roughly parallel' the *Odyssey*'s core. There are, however, a few auxiliary themes that neither Lord nor Foley identified as such but are essential in the discussion that follows. Table 6.4 shows the sequence of 'nested' themes within the five part narrative superstructure of Table 6.1. My own thematic additions are *italicized*.

Three of these themes fall between the hero's shouting and release from prison: in the Slavic Returns the hero usually learns of his losses by word of mouth, a *story* but often he sees the coming Devastation in a *dream*. The hero's subsequent shouting—or sudden silence—leads directly to the *intercession* of the woman of authority. She and the hero swear an *oath* that if she releases him he must return in an allotted time. Once the oath is sworn she releases him.

<sup>20</sup> Lord, *Singer*, p. 121.

<b>Absence</b>	<b>Devastation</b>	<b>Return</b>	<b>Retribution</b>	<b>Wedding</b>
summons and lesser wedding	shouting <i>or</i>	disguise	<i>[revenge]</i> <i>or</i>	<i>(lesser) return to prison</i>
capture	<i>dream/ story</i>	deceptive story	<i>[combat, with mercy) or</i>	
	<i>intercession</i>	recognition	<i>[blessings, bestowing kumar]</i>	
	<i>oath or sworn vow</i>			
	release from prison			

Table 6.4: 'Nested' thematic structure of Return song.

The Retribution theme can take three different routes: when the hero is ready to undo his disguise he may embark on *revenge* as in *Odyssey*. Alternatively, as in the Turkic and most Slavic Returns, he may enter into *combat* with his rival and defeats him, but grants him his life in a magnanimous display. The third possibility marks the Albanian Returns, in which the hero recovers his bride and then shouts *blessings* to the would-be groom, and grants him some high honor.

Lord's Wedding theme proves the most unstable of the five main themes. It does not occur as such in either *Odyssey* or the Albanian songs but is *de rigueur* for the Turkic and Slavic Returns. In the Albanian songs the Wedding is generally replaced with the hero's *return to prison* to fulfill his oath to the woman of authority. I have labeled this as a 'lesser return' as the hero's Return home is really the peak moment of his story, and his return to the woman of authority functions as a seal on the story and show the hero's honor.

*Figure 6.1* displays how all the major and lesser themes interact as part of a narrative flow:

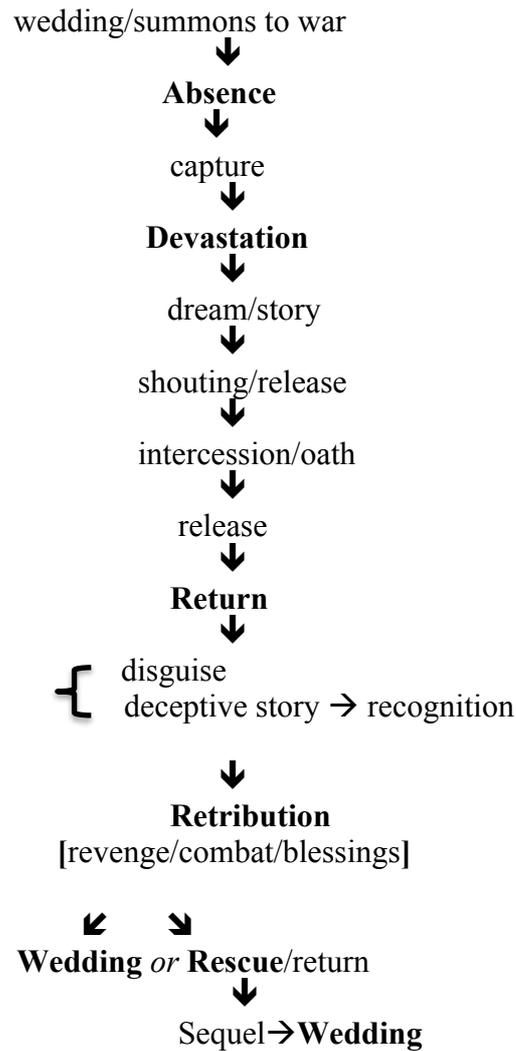


Fig. 6.1: Narrative flow of Return song.

All of these themes are subject to great variation. As noted above, different cultural Return traditions tend to have their own distinctive set of variations on these themes, and individual singers, too, may have their own favorite versions. This wide variety of alternative stories is a function of what Lord called the use of thematic *multiforms*. He offers this analysis while discussing how *guslari* (Sla, pl.; sg. *guslar*,

‘one who plays *gusle*’) alter the songs in performance, through ‘substitut[ing]...one multiform of a theme for another, one kind of recognition scene for another.’<sup>21</sup>

Such alterations do not affect the song’s thematic core or genre,<sup>22</sup> but result from the natural tension that arises when a singer must modulate the story’s direction in performance. If singer B alters a song he learned from singer A he must compensate in a later theme to avoid narrative inconsistencies and conclude the tale properly. This process accounts for the diversity between traditions and of different performers’ versions of the same song, as observed later in *Aga Imer*.

### *Dumuzi’s Dream and Laments*

The genesis point of the Return song has been argued to lie in ancient Near Eastern myths of the dying and returning god.<sup>23</sup> As related in a corpus of laments and texts like *Dumuzi’s Dream*, Dumuzi dies several times, but there is scant evidence that he conclusively returns from death.<sup>24</sup> I have approached the relationship of this Mesopotamian corpus to the Return song from a different, and I think more pertinent angle. The laments and *Dream* texts initiated a significant element of the Return songs’ thematic form.

The individual themes from which the narrative emerges act much like rhizomes; as such they exist independently of any given story, appearing in a wide variety of narrative types or genres. Yet any song’s specific set of themes and their sequencing are a major element in defining the song’s genre. In this, the laments and

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>22</sup> Although some themes recur in songs of different genres.

<sup>23</sup> See Albert Lord, ‘The Theme of the Withdrawn Hero In Serbo-Croatian Oral Epic’, *Prilozi za književnost, jezik, istoriju i folklor* 35 (1969), pp. 18-30.

<sup>24</sup> Jacobsen, *Treasures*, p. 68. Only one of the many Dumuzid laments has him clearly brought back from the underworld, and that only for part of the year.

*Dream* texts show great thematic affinity to the Return even as they exhibit a distinctive form and tone of their own.

In his analysis of oral poetic elements in *Dumuzi's Dream*, Alster identifies the text's three primary themes:<sup>25</sup>

1. The *dream* of Dumuzi, his sister's interpretation of it, and the dream's fulfillment at the text's end. The dream, in other words, completely frames the story.
2. The *oaths* or vows that his wife Inanna and his closest male friend swear to not betray him, although here the friend breaks his oath.
3. The series of *three escapes*<sup>26</sup> Dumuzi performs before the 'rangers' capture him, all effected by a god transforming him a hunted animal. This is, in effect, a *sacrificial hunt* story.

Alster then demonstrates the clear marks of oral tradition in the function and handling of these themes within the narrative. Alster states that these themes—their shapes, motifs and formulas—have come down to the individual singer through tradition. The singer's education consists of learning how to put these themes together in a coherent tale that will please the traditional audience's aesthetic sensibilities. This 'repertory of structural units', as he calls them, follows Lord's principle of *thematic attraction*<sup>27</sup> that Alster restates:

Each element in a sequence of events may attract another [element] because of [the singer's] habitual association [of them], even...[if] this involves elements which contradict the logical structure of the poem.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Alster, *Dumuzi's Dream*, pp. 36-41.

<sup>26</sup> The *escapes* or *hunt* themes do not figure significantly in the Return songs I have examined.

<sup>27</sup> Lord, *Singer*, pp. 95-97.

<sup>28</sup> Alster, *Dream*, p. 38.

The dream theme is really the central organizing principle of the *Dream* narrative, and the oath, or ‘bribery of the friend’, and escapes<sup>29</sup> are secondary themes. The singer could omit, shorten or expand in these themes in performance without affecting the story’s core. Although not identified by Parry, Lord, or Foley, the dream and oath constitute key themes in the Return song genre as well, and this ‘jumping’ of themes from one genre—laments—to another—the epic Return song—is analogous to reticulation, horizontal gene transfers from one species to another, not necessarily related, one. This demonstrates one important rhizomatic quality of themes in oral traditions.

*Dumuzi’s Dream*<sup>30</sup> opens with theme. Dumuzi has a terrible dream and begs his sister *Geštinanna* to interpret it. She tells him it means his sheepfold will be ransacked, that seven *galla* demons, bandits or military recruiters (‘rangers’) will come to take him away and kill him, and that he must run and hide.

Dumuzi expects that Death, the netherworld and its powers, will send for him. Its ghostly emissaries are depicted in the myth under the image of army recruiters—in real life Death’s messengers for many a young man...<sup>31</sup>

He makes the oaths with *Geštinanna* and his male friend to not betray him. His sister keeps hers but his friend gives him away and Dumuzi flees again. He prays to the sun god *Utu/Šamaš*, *Inanna*’s brother, to transform him into animal forms such as a fish or gazelle. He escapes, but his pursuers nearly catch him each time. Finally, he runs out of places to hide; the *galla* enter his sheepfold one at a time, systematically ransack it, and:

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>30</sup> Alster, *Dumuzi’s Dream*; Jacobsen, *Treasures*, pp. 47-55; *Harp*s, pp. 28-46; Kramer, ‘Death’, pp. 9-10.

<sup>31</sup> Jacobsen, *Harp*s, p. 28.

As the sixth [ranger] entered fold and pen  
 The churns lay on their sides, poured out no milk.  
 As the seventh one entered fold and pen  
 The cups lay on their sides,  
 Dumuzi lived there no more, the winds only swept the fold.  
 Dumuzi was slain in (battle), the festival of young men.<sup>32</sup>

The laments often contain notices or allusions to the events of *Dumuzi's Dream*, as when a narrator recalls in 'In the Desert by the Early Grass'<sup>33</sup> how

They scanned [the desert, they saw him,]  
 They cried out, they seized him,]  
 ...  
 He was blind[folded] and, bound [as he was],  
 He was driven along, [allowed] no sleep.<sup>34</sup>

The lament corpus tells the story from the vantage point of Dumuzi's mother and sister, how his mother, mourning her son's death, searches for him and encounters his ghost. He repeatedly attempts to turn her back from following him to the underworld, but she continues to insist on it, even desires to cook him a 'reviving meal' that might bring him back to the earth.

Finally, Dumuzi accepts that he is now a shade of the dead and he asks his mother to dig up a blood red tuber and make beer that will be his blood so that he can drink it back.<sup>35</sup> The Military then repossess his house, driving his mother and sister onto the streets. Dumuzi's sister vows to join him in the underworld, his mother continues to care for him there as well. Some laments hint that Dumuzi's sister or mother won for him a yearly reprieve from the underworld, which led to changes of

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 45-46. Jacobsen's n. 21, p. 46, notes that the final line above is a 'phrase...a stereotype for recording the death of a young soldier. It is applied here mechanically, although it does not fit Dumuzi at all.' I would point out, though, that if the 'rangers' came for Dumuzi to conscript him against his will, this formula could as well mark an ironic or pathetic register.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 56-84.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 79-80. This is most likely a reference to Dumuzi's role as 'god of the grain'.

seasons, but overall the tendency is for Dumuzi to remain, in some cases willingly, as a ghost in the underworld.

*Dumuzi's Dream* can perhaps be understood as a Return song gone horribly wrong; instead of being taken away, escaping, and then returning home to set things aright, the ranger-demons simply destroy Dumuzi's livelihood and drag him to the underworld. It is an epic in the tragic, pathetic mode, whose hero has not even had the chance to demonstrate his valor. Rather, Dumuzi is presented as a frightened, desperate man, perhaps even still a boy.

Alternatively, *Dream* is like a Return song cut short. It ends at about the same moment when the Return song really begins: in *Dream*, Dumuzi's dream and Geštinanna's interpretation functions as the summons as well as the dream theme. In *Aga Imer*, for example, the hero is summoned to war, is imprisoned, and it is then, after nine years, that he has his *ëndërr i keq*, his 'terrible dream' (Alb, lit. 'dream of badness'). In *Dumuzi's Dream*, theme initiates the entirety of the narrative. In Return songs the hero simply answers the summons and goes off to fulfill his obligations; in *Dream* the hero flees for his life.

The Return texts are often unclear on the hero's immediate response to the summons, and one Slavic Return has the hero dally for hours in bed with his bride during a raid. Dumuzi is characterized as a young shepherd, living his simple life on the steppes and with his wife Inanna; in contrast, the Return heroes are already seasoned fighters. Dumuzi's response, therefore, is appropriate for one in his position; the Return songs posit their heroes differently, so going to war is for them an obligation that they enter with relative willingness.

The dream itself directly parallels the structure and imagery of the Return hero's dream. As Geštinanna interprets Dumuzi's dream she elucidates those things it foretells will be lost:

'A lone reed was shaking the head  
In grief for you: the *mother* who bore you  
Will shake the head in grief for you.

'Of twin reeds one was removed for you:  
They were I and you, one will be taken away *from me*.

In the forest a tall tree was uprooted for you all by itself:  
An evildoer will seize you within the walls.  
On your pure embers water was poured in your presence:  
*The fold* will quiet down for you into a silent *house*.<sup>36</sup>  
[*emphasis added*]

That is, Dumuzi's house and sheepfold, comparable to Aga's *kullë* (Alb, 'tower')<sup>37</sup> and fields, will fall silent and desolate, torn down in ruins. His mother, like Aga's, will lament bitterly at his loss. Dumuzi's dream, then, is remarkably similar to the standard Return dream theme.

Jacobsen comments on this scene that,

The netherworld rangers have come for Dumuzi, as in real life rangers would seek out anyone trying to avoid the military and labor service to which he was obligated. They operate like a press gang.<sup>38</sup>

In other words, these rangers recruit much the same way as slavers operate. Dumuzi is not so much conscripted as he is taken captive and enslaved.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 31-32.

<sup>37</sup> *Kullë*, sg. indef.; *kulla*, sg. def. From Persian *qulla*, 'mountain summit, top', through Turkish *kale/kulle*, but originally the Arabic *qulla*, 'summit, apex' (Gjergj Fishta, *The Highland Lute (Lahuta e Malcís)*, translated by Robert Elsie and Janice Mathie-Heck (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., with The Centre for Albanian Studies, 2005), p. 435; Hans Wehr, *Arabic-English Dictionary: The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Urbana: Spoken Language Services, Inc., 1994), 'qulla', p. 916.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 34, n. 7.

The respective heroes of the Returns and *Dumuzi's Dream* thus share three central traits that define their characters and mark them as rhizomatically related across genres:

1. The forced separation of a man of fairly low rank from his beloved;
2. The explicit or implicit threat of forced military service and his imprisonment or death;
3. The hardship of the hero's mother, sister, and/or bride as a result.

Because the Return genre extends the narrative further than *Dream* does, it ends with the hero's eventual return to these women and the restoration of his status as a man within his society. This differentiates the two genres even as it attests to the rhizomatic behavior of oral themes in practice. *Table 6.5* demonstrates how the Return song's themes of Devastation and shouting and their subthemes map onto those of the *Dream* texts and laments. Note that there is no distinct release theme in these texts.

<b>Theme</b>	<b><i>Dumuzi's Dream</i> and laments: events</b>
<b>Devastation</b>	
dream	Dumuzi has terrible dreams and goes to his sister Geštinanna for her interpretation.
shouting	Dumuzi pleads with his mother, sister, and/or his wife Inanna to protect him.
intercession	Geštinanna and/or Inanna try to hide him from the rangers.
oaths	Geštinanna and friend swear not to reveal him to the rangers.

*Table 6.5: Dumuzi texts and theme.*

There is, however, no intimations of direct contact or textual lineages from the Mesopotamian laments and *Odyssey*, the earliest documented Return song. Mesopotamian literature could be construed as a time when genre boundaries were

still being drawn, so themes from the laments and *Dream* texts could easily reticulate to other poetic genres. The ‘Lugalbanda’ cycle, for example,<sup>39</sup> finds many themes in common with Return songs—including the soldier Lugalbanda’s diplomatic mission to Inanna when he survives after being left for dead—except it lacks the crucial Wedding and the Return sequence disguise→recognition.

‘Lugalbanda’ cannot clearly be classified as a Return song per se but shows strong signs of a rhizomatic interface with the latter genre. This raises the question, should *Odyssey* be regarded as a peculiarly Greek spin of the ‘Lugalbanda’ type, or do they represent two synchronistic occurrences of some ur-Return-type of text? That is, do they share a genetic lineage or have they sprung from the same rhizome shoot? ‘Lugalbanda’ differs enough from the classic Return that it offers an image of the complexity that rhizomatic texts display, but Return songs follow a distinct trajectory that leads to the central mytho-cosmological rhizome of the shouting →release sequence. The next sprouting of this rhizome would thus be *Odyssey*.

### *Thematic Structure of the Odyssey*

The Homeric poems *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were first written down sometime between the 8<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE, though the oral epic tradition that the Homeric poet drew on seemed to crystallize first among Ionian and Aeolic Greeks; they too were building on an oral heroic poetry of the Bronze Age Mycenaeans c. 1500 BCE.<sup>40</sup> Lord and Parry famously demonstrated that both poems are products of an oral epic performance

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<sup>39</sup> Herman Vantiphout, *Epics of Sumerian Kings: The Matter of Aratta* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 97-103, 132-135.

<sup>40</sup> M. L. West, ‘The Rise of the Greek Epic’, *JHS* 108 (1988), pp. 151-163.

tradition<sup>41</sup> and ‘Homer’ may even very well be a construct, a tradition rather than a single author.<sup>42</sup>

*Odyssey* contains 24 books or episodes and 12,110 lines. Its plot consists of several nested narrational frames and parallel narratives. Due to its numerous subplots and tangents, its extended length, and its sophisticated, elaborate structure, I will only summarize those chapters that form the core of the Return tale. This includes parts of Books I, V, and VIII, and the entirety of Books XIII-XXIV. In the following synopsis I have included the appropriate theme codes, and it should be noted that some themes occur in more than one place in the text (*Table 6.6*).

The themes of the summons/wedding and of Absence have already occurred in *Iliad* and are summarized in *Odyssey*’s Book I. Book I introduces Odysseus, a commander of the Greek army against Troy, and tells his backstory: how after the war and Troy’s final destruction he and his men set sail for Ithaca, Odysseus’ home. After many dangers and seductive traps, Odysseus, by now the lone survivor, washed ashore on the island of the nymph Calypso, who keeps him for seven years as her somewhat unwilling lover (analogous to the capture theme).

The goddess Athena intercedes with Zeus for Odysseus’s release. Zeus tells Hermes to order Calypso to let the hero go (release). Meanwhile Athena appears to Odysseus’s son Telemachus who appraises her of the situation in Ithaca (Devastation): a flock of suitors have taken over, feasting and making merry in Odysseus’s banquet hall and trying to coerce his wife Penelope to remarry to one of them. Athena encourages Telemachus to go abroad to his father’s former companions-in-arms and seek news of his father. Telemachus calls an assembly of the suitors and tells them to leave; of course they do not. In the first shouting (shouting<sup>1</sup>)

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<sup>41</sup> Lord, *Singer*, pp. 141-197.

<sup>42</sup> M. L. West, ‘The Invention of Homer’, *The Classical Quarterly* 49/2 (1999), pp. 364-382.

multiform the bard Phemius sings a song, ‘the Homecoming of Akhaians [sic]’.<sup>43</sup>

Penelope objects (intercession multiform) that the song causes her too much sorrow but her son reminds her that,

“Odysseus was not the only one at Troy  
Never to know the day of his homecoming.  
Others, how many others, lost their lives!”<sup>44</sup>

Books II-IV relate Telemachus’s travels, which amount to a frustrated Rescue theme. In Book V, Calypso releases Odysseus and he washes ashore at the land of the Phaeacians; in Book VIII he finally comes to the court of the Phaeacian king Alkinous (Alcinous). There the bard Demodocus performs epic songs in the banquet hall on his *phorminx* lyre. In one of them, Demodocus sings of the conflict between Odysseus and the Greek hero Achilles (shouting<sup>2</sup>). Odysseus breaks down in tears at hearing the song and tells his hosts his real identity, and in Books IX-XII he recounts his perilous adventures since leaving Troy, the story theme.

In Book VIII Odysseus has left Alkinous’s court aboard the Phaeacians’ ship. When Poseidon stirs a storm that destroys the ship, Athena transports an unconscious Odysseus to Ithaca initiating theme of Return where she instructs him to disguise himself as a beggar and go to the swineherd Eumaeus. In subsequent books the hero and Eumaeus trade stories and Odysseus learns what is happening in his hall. Telemachus returns from his travels and goes to Eumaeus’s hut. Odysseus reveals his identity to his son and the pair form a plan to rid themselves of the suitors. Odysseus, disguised as a beggar (deceptive story), comes to his hall where the suitors abuse him and he discerns which of his household remains faithful to him.

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<sup>43</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by Robert Fitzgerald (London: Vintage Books, 2007 [1961]), l. 375-413, pp. 11-12.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 405-407, p. 12.

Penelope holds a contest to determine who she will remarry to: whoever can string her husband's bow and shoot an arrow through 12 axes will become her new husband. Everyone fails, but the 'beggar' argues for a turn and succeeds. Then he and Telemachus, with help from several faithful servants, massacre the suitors to a man in Retribution. The only survivor is the bard Phemius who begs Odysseus for his life amid the carnage:

Mercy, mercy on a suppliant, Odysseus!  
 My gift is song for men and for the gods undying.  
 My death will be remorse for you hereafter.  
 No one taught me: deep in my mind a god  
 Shaped all the various ways of life in song.  
 And I am fit to make verse in your company  
 As in the gods....<sup>45</sup>

In the final two books Odysseus at last makes himself known to Penelope (Recognition) and they reunite. The next day he goes to visit his father and is confronted by the families of the dead suitors but Athena intervenes and the two sides make peace.

*Odyssey*, however, concludes not with a Wedding, Rescue, nor with the return to captors. Rather, it concludes with the confrontation with the suitors' families and Athena effecting peace among them. This can be interpreted as analogous to the Balkan Return songs' return theme in that this episode is Odysseus's last step to completely reclaiming his patrimony; Athena, his consecratrix and initiator, his woman of authority, helps Odysseus negotiate a settlement with the dead suitors' relatives. Odysseus then shows the fair-mindedness, composure, and compassion worthy of a hero. Odysseus has shown himself worthy of Athena's trust and faith in him, and so in a sense he has fulfilled a vow to her. In *Odyssey* the release actually follows the dream.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., l. 387-293, p. 420.

Theme	<i>Odyssey</i> themes Devastation and shouting
Devastation	Telemachus tells Athena of situation in Ithaca.
dream	Athena tells Telemachus his father may yet live; seer interprets fighting eagles as omen of Odysseus' return and retribution.
shouting <sup>1</sup>	At Phaeacians' court Demodocus' song brings Odysseus to tears and he reveals his identity.
shouting <sup>2</sup>	Phemius's song on the Achaeans upsets Penelope, but Telemachus announces he will seek news of Odysseus.
intercession	Alcinous offers a ship and crew to bring Odysseus home; Athena intercedes with Zeus on Odysseus's behalf.
oaths	Athena brings Odysseus to Ithaca and instructs him how to proceed, which he carries out faithfully.
release	*Persuaded by Athena, Zeus orders Calypso to release Odysseus; he comes to Phaeacian court[see (sh) <sup>1</sup> above].

Table 6.6: Themes Devastation and shouting of *Odyssey*.

The Homeric epics gained fame in western Europe during the Medieval era though the west had its own regional epics and heroic song traditions. While *Odyssey* became a mainstay of Classical education it is, again, a matter of vertical textual lineages or horizontal textual rhizomes. The early 14<sup>th</sup> century CE text of 'Sir Orfeo', a Middle English Rescue-Return telling of Orpheus's sojourn to the underworld, contains a classic Return narrative embedded within a framing story.<sup>46</sup> This includes a prominently-placed harp that the hero plays on to gain back his bride Heurodis from death.<sup>47</sup>

The thematic structure of 'Orfeo' resembles that of the Slavic Return tradition of *Đulić Ibrahim* yet the English poem comes from a literary tradition not an oral one.<sup>48</sup> Thus some amount of conscious literary borrowing from or influence of local oral song traditions or other literary texts is clear. While 'Orfeo' warrants further investigation in light of my theme in this Thesis, it is the eastern Return tradition

<sup>46</sup> Ward Parks, "The Return Song and a Middle English Romance: *Sir Orfeo*, "Četić Osmanbey," "Đulić Ibrahim," and the *Odyssey*", *Southeastern Europe/L'Europe du sud-est* 10/2 (1983), pp. 223-224.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 234-236, 240.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 227-232, 240-241.

represented by the Turkic ‘Tale of Bamsi Beyrek’ that manifests the thematic Return rhizome first formulated in the Mesopotamian corpus.

Specifically, ‘Bamsi Beyrek’ continues the tradition of the LNL in the Return genre; the choice of harp in ‘Sir Orfeo’ reflects the cultural conditioning of the milieu that produced the ‘Orfeo’ text. This is not a deviation from the eastern Return pattern but a western European literary expression of the Return rhizome. It is, of course, the mytho-cosmological rhizome that carries the *tanbūr* LNL, the hero and woman of authority into new cultural contexts like the Turkic.

### Background of Turkic Epics

The next relevant Return song is a Medieval Turkish tale found in two collections of Turkic epics linked through the character of Dede Korkut, the principle *ozan*, bard, of the Oghuz Turks. Throughout the cycle he appears with his *kopuz* singing songs, acting as a mediator and judge in disputes, and performing the functions of a ‘soothsayer and high priest’.<sup>49</sup>

*Dede Korkut Kitabı* (Tur, ‘The Book of Dede Korkut’) is known principally from two manuscripts: *Mscr.Dresd.Ea.86* at the Saxon State and University Library of Dresden<sup>50</sup> was first catalogued at the Saxon Electoral Library around 1750<sup>51</sup> and published in a German edition in 1815.<sup>52</sup> The second, *Vat.turc.102* at the Vatican Library, was first discovered in 1950 and contains only six of the 12 stories of the Dresden manuscript. Neither manuscript contains a colophon or date but both are dateable on paleographic, linguistic, and material evidence to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>49</sup> *The Book of Dede Korkut*, translated and introduced by Geoffrey Lewis (London: Penguin Classics, 2011/1974), p. 12

<sup>50</sup> SLUB; NB Lewis refers to it as Royal Library of Dresden.

<sup>51</sup> Found at: <<https://www.slub-dresden.de/en/collections/manuscripts/kitab-i-dedem-korkut/>> ; accessed on: 6 May 2018.

<sup>52</sup> *Korkut*, Lewis, p. 19.

The stories and the myth as a whole date much earlier, however. Based on a comparison of the texts' genealogy of the *Ak-koyunlu* Sultans<sup>53</sup> to historical lists, the act of compiling the manuscripts began before the early 15<sup>th</sup> century when the Ak-koyunlu established their first Sultanate. The earliest written attestation of any of the stories comes between 1309-1340 in an Arabic history book written in Egypt by a Dawadari.<sup>54</sup> He noted an *Oghuzname* (Per; 'Book of the Oghuz') that briefly related the tale of one-eyed Tepegöz that has drawn much attention for its similarities to Odysseus' encounter with the Cyclops Polyphemus.

Linguistic elements of the manuscripts indicate that the stories in these forms were 'consistent to a book's belonging to the late 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> century...back in the time before Azeri and Ottoman emerged as separate [Turkic] dialects.' These elements cannot be used to date the texts as there is no way of knowing how much of the language and diction originated with a compiler who simply recorded dialectical features present in the text—an archaicizing poetic diction typical of epics—or who added his own imprint on the text. Alternately, these linguistic elements could have resulted from errors or changes introduced by subsequent *ozan* or copyists. The two manuscripts are highly divergent, typical of oral transmissions 'that happened to be twice recorded in writing'. Therefore, like *Digenis Akritis* Grottaferrata and Escorial manuscripts, neither of them can be said to represent an older or more authentic tradition than the other.<sup>55</sup>

The manuscripts do share certain features that point to the archaic roots of the tales and of the figure of Dede Korkut. First, the stories are set in a legendary past when the Oghuz Turks still identified as such; that is, before the 13<sup>th</sup> century when

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid. The *Ak-koyunlu* or *Aq Qyynlu* were a confederation of Oghuz Turks who ruled from eastern Turkey and Armenia into Iran in the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 21-22.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-20.

they were fully known and identified as *Turkmën*.<sup>56</sup> None of the characters bear any historical identities and although the narratives show Islamic influence the prevailing religious and spiritual ethos is that of the Siberian and Altaic shamanism of the pre-Islamic era. Korkut himself displays many shamanic traits, his function as *ozan* not the least among them, and he represents the foremost sign of the stories' genesis in a pre-Islamic period of the Oghuz tribe.<sup>57</sup>

Thus, even though Turkic shamanism remained vital at the time of the manuscripts' manufacture the tales' temporal setting lay in a romanticized past, a mythic time. The general lack of historical rootedness is in a sense 'timeless', a projected and perhaps somewhat nostalgic vision of a past that has been edited to reflect and justify contemporary realities for Turkmen society.<sup>58</sup> That is, it seems a primary purpose for the tales' compilation in manuscript is similar to that of many epic traditions' written forms: to help consolidate and define an emerging sense of extra-tribal identity as a society starts to become a viable power among other imperial or national powers.

Among the stories collected in the manuscripts, 'Bamsi Beyrek of the Grey Horse' constitutes the primary representative of the Return song genre in Turkic epic poetry. Victor Zhirmunsky, one of the foremost folklorists of Soviet Central Asia

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-11.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-13 and 16. Zhirmunsky considered 'archaic', 'fabulous' or supernatural elements in the Central Asian legend of *Alpamysh*, to be considered below, as a sign of the archaicism of individual texts of the song (see Nora K. Chadwick and Victor Zhirmunsky, *Oral Epics of Central Asia*, (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 294-296).

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 9-13; Zhirmunsky, *ibid.*, argues of Bamsi Beyrek's predecessor Alpamysh, discussed below, the historical localization of three versions of the Alpamysh epic 'is completely absent from all other national versions. In this connection the other versions reflect an earlier stage of the epic's development and show in some cases a number of original national features' (p. 294).

In other words, Zhirmunsky approaches these epics from a Marxist analytical dialectic viewpoint that dates the different versions partially via the nature of the society depicted in the text. The Alpamysh epic was for a time a cultural flashpoint in the application of Marxist principles to the study of folklore (see H. B. Paksoy, *Central Asian Identity under Russian Rule* (Hartford CT: Association for the Advancement of Central Asian Research [AACAR] Monograph Series, 1989), pp. 18-49, 120-126; Chadwick and Zhirmunsky, *OECA*, pp. 308-310).

(1891-1971), considered that at least two of the tales stemmed from when the Oghuz still inhabited Central Asia in the 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries, before they migrated to modern Azerbaijan.<sup>59</sup> ‘Bamsi Beyrek’ and the tale of Tepegöz the Cyclops bear more than accidental resemblance to the stories of Odysseus’ return to Ithaca and his encounter with Polyphemus, and the former has another predecessor in the Altaic myth of the hero *Alpamysh* that contains a comparable storyline and thematic structure.

Zhirmunsky further holds that ‘as an ancient heroic folk-tale it existed in the mountains of the Altai as early as the seventh and eighth-centuries (the epoch of the Turkic Kaganate)’ and that the Oghuz brought the tale with them in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>60</sup>

#### *Bamsi Beyrek Synopsis*

‘Tells the Tale of Bamsi Beyrek of the Grey Horse, O My Khan!’<sup>61</sup> opens with a long section on the birth of Bamsi Beyrek, son of Prince Bay Burë; his betrothal to the future daughter of Prince Bay Bijan (the Lady Çiçek); their first albeit accidental meeting; how Dede Korkut gave Bamsi Beyrek his name, and helped him overcome Lady Çiçek’s brother Crazy Karchar, who gave Dede four impossible tasks in order to gain permission for the marriage.<sup>62</sup> The episodes of this section present a picture of Beyrek’s virtuous character, his honesty, fairness, and noble composure.

From here the text enters the Absence theme. The day before the wedding Beyrek has pitched his marriage tent, but that night a troop of ‘infidels’ (i.e. Christian soldiers) abduct the groom and 39 of his companions and imprison them at Bayburt castle of Parasar, the capture theme. Beyrek’s seven sisters and ‘grey-haired parents’ weep and lament over his capture.

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<sup>59</sup> *OECA*, *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295.

<sup>61</sup> *Korkut*, Lewis, pp. 59-87.

<sup>62</sup> In *Korkut*, Lewis, pp. 59-68.

The text then jumps ahead 16 years to when the bride's brother Crazy Karchar steps forward to offer rewards for news of his brother in law's status: if Beyrek yet lives Karchar will give the bearer of the news 'richly embroidered robes and gold and silver'.<sup>63</sup> If the news tells of Beyrek's death, Karchar will give the bearer his sister Lady Çiçek to marry. A man named Yaltajuk, son of Yalanji, volunteers to seek out Beyrek. He takes a shirt the captive prince had given him, dips it in blood and returns saying 'Bamsi Beyrek is dead!' The entire court falls into mourning.

Theme Devastation begins when Bay Burë sends out merchants to determine if this grim news is true. Some of them come to Bayburt castle and arrive on the infidels' feast day where,

Everyone of them was eating and drinking<sup>64</sup>

(Tur: *her biri yimekte [yemek-] içmekte idi*)

They [the infidels] brought Beyrek and made him play his lute  
[*kopuz*]

(Tur: *Beyregi dahı getirüp kopuz çaldururlar-idi*).

Beyrek's captors eat and drink while they force their captive to perform for them.

From his stage he spies the merchants from his home country and calls to them to inquire about his parents, family, friends and his betrothed Lady Çiçek, the story theme. When they tell him of her approaching marriage to Yaltajuk he becomes distraught and, telling his 39 companions, they all dash their turbans to the ground and weep.<sup>65</sup> At this point Bamsi's 'silence'—whose relationship to the shouting

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 71; Turkish text from *Dede Korkut Kitabı: Metin-Sözlük*, edited by Muharrem Ergin (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basimevi, 1964) p. 35, D95.

<sup>65</sup> *Korkut*, Lewis, p. 73.

theme is comparable to Aga Imer's below (and will be discussed in detail Chapter 8)—attracts the intercession of the woman of authority:

Now the infidel lord had a maiden daughter, who loved Beyrek, and came every day to visit him. That day again she came. Seeing Beyrek looking downcast, she said, "Why are you downcast, my kingly warrior? Whenever I have come I have seen you cheerful, smiling and dancing. What has happened now?"

He tells her of the bad tidings from his home and she asks if he will come back and marry her if she frees him; he swears an oath that 'may I be sliced on my own sword, may I be spitted on my own arrow...' if he does not return to marry her.

He then reunites with his grey horse and while riding to his home he encounters a minstrel, *ozan*,<sup>66</sup> and Beyrek offers his horse to the *ozan*'s temporary keeping if Beyrek can borrow his *kopuz*. The *ozan* agrees and Beyrek in disguise continues on.

He finally comes to his family's encampment where he finds his 'little sister' weeping for her lost brother. They converse and she tells him, 'play not, minstrel; tell no tales, minstrel...go to the wedding-feast and sing!'<sup>67</sup> He goes to his older sisters' tent where he must add a second level to his disguise; he requests a caftan—one of his own—but realizes everyone will recognize him. So he 'found an old camel-cloth, poked a hole in it, put his head through and pretended to be mad.'

He proceeds to defeat Yaltajuk in an archery contest, smashing his competitor's bow, for which Prince Kazan declares that everyone must allow this minstrel madman free rein around the wedding camp. He makes his way to the

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<sup>66</sup> *Ozan* normally signifies a bard, a teller of tales. Lewis explains that in this case he translated it to 'minstrel' as this 'was dictated by consideration of rhythm in the ensuing 'declarations' between Beyrek and his sisters.' These poetic declamations take the form of fairly teasing songs between the two camps, whose metrics presumably differ markedly from those used for epic and heroic narrative songs (Ibid., n. 47, p. 200).

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 77-81.

women's tent and demands 'I want the bride to get up and dance while I play the lute'. The women try to trick him with two other women but Beyrek knows them and exposes their coquettish behavior in teasing songs. Finally Lady Çiçek goes up to dance and Beyrek sings a song about their old memories together—a multiform of the shouting theme. The Lady realizes who it is and tells his parents, the recognition theme. Beyrek then goes to his blind father and with his own blood cures his father's eyes. Beyrek pursues the fleeing Yaltajuk and defeats him in combat but spares his life, the Retribution with combat theme.

In the final theme Beyrek gathers 'the teeming Oghuz' to free his 39 companions at Bayburt castle, the lesser return theme. They engage the infidels in combat, defeat them, rescue the 39 and Beyrek retrieves the king's daughter. In the closing Wedding feast Beyrek marries her—not Lady Çiçek—and gives his companions the other infidel women as brides. Dede Korkut appears again and proclaims 'let this song of the Oghuz be Beyrek's!'<sup>68</sup>

*Table 6.7* shows how the themes Devastation and shouting are structured in 'Bamsi Beyrek'. This Turkic tale is unusual in that the second 'shouting' theme happens during the disguise-deception-recognition sequence, where Beyrek, disguised as a mad *ozan*, slyly reveals his identity to his bride in her tent. *Aga Imer* has nothing like this, but this Turkic variation can be seen as a multiform of the Slavic recognition themes in *Đulić Ibrahim*.

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

Theme	‘Bamsi Beyrek of the Gray Horse’
Devastation	Merchants from home tell Beyrek of bride’s impending marriage to another.
shouting	Beyrek, who played <i>kopuz</i> for captors as <i>ozan</i> , becomes depressed; infidel lord’s daughter questions him.
intercession	Lord’s daughter agrees to release him <i>on her own authority</i> , if he returns to marry her.
oaths	Beyrek vows to girl he will return and marry her.
release	She releases Beyrek herself.

Table 6.7: ‘Bamsi Beyrek’ themes Devastation and shouting.

‘Bamsi Beyrek’ finds many echoes in Slavic and Albanian Return songs but though its particular mytho-cosmological rhizome with *tanbūr*/hero/woman of authority recurs in the Balkan texts it is those themes it shares with the Albanian *Aga Imer* that led me to position the latter as the next representative. The Slavic Returns with their *tambura*-s manifest yet another culturally conditioned expression of the cultural and thematic rhizomes, though they are the creation of the same Frontier Warrior Culture as the Albanian highland warrior *rapsod*-s (Alb < Grk Α ραψωδία, *rhapsōdia*, ‘reciter of epics’) and *lahutarë* (Alb, pl.; sg. *lahutar*, one who sings epic songs with bowed *lahutë* accompaniment).<sup>69</sup>

#### Narrative Structure of Aga Imer

*Aga Imer* seems to be a specifically Geg Albanian species of the Return song. I have not found any versions of it in the Parry and Lord archives at Harvard University<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Rapsod*, strictly speaking, means a singer of epic tales, although in contemporary Albanian usage denotes singers of both epics and heroic or historical narrative songs, often but not exclusively accompanied by *çifteli* and/or *sharki*, and even instrumental *melodi*-s for *çifteli* can be called *rapsodi*-s. *Lahutarë*, however, use the bowed *lahutë* specifically to accompany epic songs, especially those of the hero Mujo and his brother Halili; the Mujo cycle is also referred to as *Këngë Kreshnikësh*, *Songs of the Highland Warriors* (See Elsie, *Këngë*). Here I use the term ‘highland warrior’ to signify simply the fighting men of the Albanian mountains. See Chap. 7 on use of *lahutë* in accompanying *Aga Imer* versions.

<sup>70</sup> Found at: <<https://mpc.chs.harvard.edu//index.html>>; accessed on: 5 June 2017. *Srpsko-Hrvatske*, pp. 21-45, contains a digest of the Slavic epic songs in the Milman Parry collection. Without reading the full transcribed texts it proves difficult to know with certainty if any of the

nor did Lord mention it in any of his texts that I have consulted. Furthermore, whereas the Slavic Return genus of *Đulić Ibrahim* and *Četić Osmanbey*<sup>71</sup> have an Albanian counterpart in the song of *Lalë Bajram*,<sup>72</sup> *Aga Imer* has no such Slavic counterpart. Although Parry and Lord both recorded several Albanian epic singers the majority of them lived in Slav-dominated areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, or Novi Sad in Serbia. This suggests that *Aga Imer* has a limited distribution area and supports my own argument that it is a distinctively Geg Albanian Return song.

I have located ten transcribed, printed texts of *Aga Imer* (hereafter *AI*) in various Albanian folklore collections and thirteen recorded performances on Youtube or CDs (*Appx. 7-8*). Where so far I have been discussing the rhizomatic behaviors of oral epics, their themes and characters on a macro, transcultural and trans-historical level, the variations between these 23 versions of *AI* demonstrate the rhizomatic behaviors of oral texts and their thematic components on the micro level. The oldest transcription comes from the song collections of the pioneering Albanian folklorist Thimi Mitko (1820-1890) originally published in the 1860s-1880s.<sup>73</sup> The other eight were collected and published between the early 1950s-early 1990s (*App. 7*).<sup>74</sup>

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songs Parry and Lord collected contain the same narrative details as *Aga Imer* but under a Slavic name. Nonetheless, neither Lord nor Parry ever seem to have commented on a Return song with the characteristics of *Aga Imer*.

<sup>71</sup> *Srpsko-Hrvatske Junačke Pjesme/SerboCroatian Heroic Songs, V. 1: Novi Pazar: English Translations*, collected by Milman Parry, edited and translated by Albert Bates Lord (Cambridge MS/Belgrade: The Harvard University Press and The Serbian Academy of Sciences, 1954), pp. 90-113 and 314-322.

<sup>72</sup> Hafezat Osmani, *Epikë Popullore Shqiptare (Mbledhur në Tetovë, Gostivar me rrethinë)*, (Skopje: Ministrisë për Shkencë-Shkup, 1998), pp. 43-68. The versions of *Lalë Bajram* represent somewhat abbreviated tellings of the Slavic songs mentioned above. I have identified it as their counterpart due to its narrative structure and the presentation of the Recognition scene, which in both cases is effected through the hero's playing of his own LNL while in disguise. In the Slavic songs he plays a 'mother of pearl tambura' and in the Bajram songs he takes up a *qeteli i kara* or 'black *çifteli*', the significance of which I will discuss in Chapter 8 of this Thesis.

<sup>73</sup> Thimi Mitko, *Mbledhës të Hershëm të Folklorit Shqiptar (1635-1912) II*, edited by Z. Sako and Q. Haxhihasani (Tiranë: Instituti i Folklorit, 1961), pp. 158-159. Mitko, born in Korçë on Lake Ohrid, was one of the first folklorists of Albanian culture and was especially interested in folklore of southern Albania and Albanian communities in Egypt and Italy. His major collection, *Bleta* ('The Bee') was finally published in 1878 in Alexandria, Egypt, where he then lived, and became an important document for the Albanian League of Prizren and the first stirrings of Albanian

The five versions in Osmani's collection all come from Macedonian Geg communities near Tetova or Skopje (*Fig. 6.2*).<sup>75</sup> The two collections compiled by the folklorist Qemal Haxhihasani (1916-1991), *Balada Popullore* and *Këngë Popullore*<sup>76</sup> contain one version each from the southern Tosk/Lab traditions. *Këngë Popullore* contains a second, unattributed version but certain linguistic markers identify it as belonging to the Geg tradition. The version in Mitko's collection is listed as a 'heroic Geg song', *këngë trimërie Gegërishte*, though it bears linguistic markers of the Tosk tradition.<sup>77</sup>

The musical performances vary widely from each other in their melodic forms, performance settings, instrumentation, and choices of texts. Not all of the themes described below are present in all of the versions (*App. 9*). Among the music and text collections, however, certain syntactic patterns, formulas and narrative elements correspond with one or another, in varying degrees, of the alternate versions. Of the 14 video performers (*App. 8*), just over half are from Kosovo, and the others from Republic of North Macedonia<sup>78</sup> and northern Albania. I have additionally found three *AI* recordings of Tosk/Lab versions on CDs (*App. 7,8*).<sup>79</sup>

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national consciousness. See Dh. L. Shuteriqi, 'About the Activity of Mitko as a Folklorist and the Publication of "Bleta Shqiptare"', in *Questions of the Albanian Folklore*, ed. the Academy of Sciences of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, the Institute of Popular Culture (Tiranë: 8 Nëntori Pub. House, 1984), pp. 256-272.

<sup>74</sup> Two of these were collected before 1954 (*Këngë Popullore Legjendare*, edited by Qemal Haxhihasani (Tirana: Instituti i Shkencave, 1955), pp. 52-56). One of the remaining six come from before 1982 (*Balada Popullore Shqiptare*, edited by Qemal Haxhihasani (Tirana: Shtëpia Botuese "Naim Frashëri, 1982), pp. 40-42). The last five, from Osmani, *Epikë Popullore*, pp. 28-43, 63-65.

<sup>75</sup> Osmani's project focused on Albanian-Macedonian folklore so this concentration should not be taken to indicate that *Aga Imer* was necessarily more popular around Tetovo and Skopje.

<sup>76</sup> *Këngë Popullore*, pp. 52-55 (Geg) and 55-56 (Lab).

<sup>77</sup> Mitko, *Mbledhes*, p. 158n. This version does contain a reference to 'Omer-aga [sic] from Ulqini'; (or Ulqinj/Ulcinj, Alb.; Srb. Улцињ), a port city in the extreme southwest of Montenegro. Ulqinj was once part of Albania in the Ottoman *vilayet* of Shkodra but was ceded to Prince Nikola of Montenegro by the Great Powers in the Berlin Congress of 1880. A number of Albanian epic songs from this time refer to the 'Seven Great Kings'. A recording of *Aga Imer* by an anonymous *lahutar* also bears the title of 'Albanian Legend, Aga Ymer of Ulqinj'.

<sup>78</sup> The country's name was recently formally changed from Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM, after a protracted legal struggle with Greece.

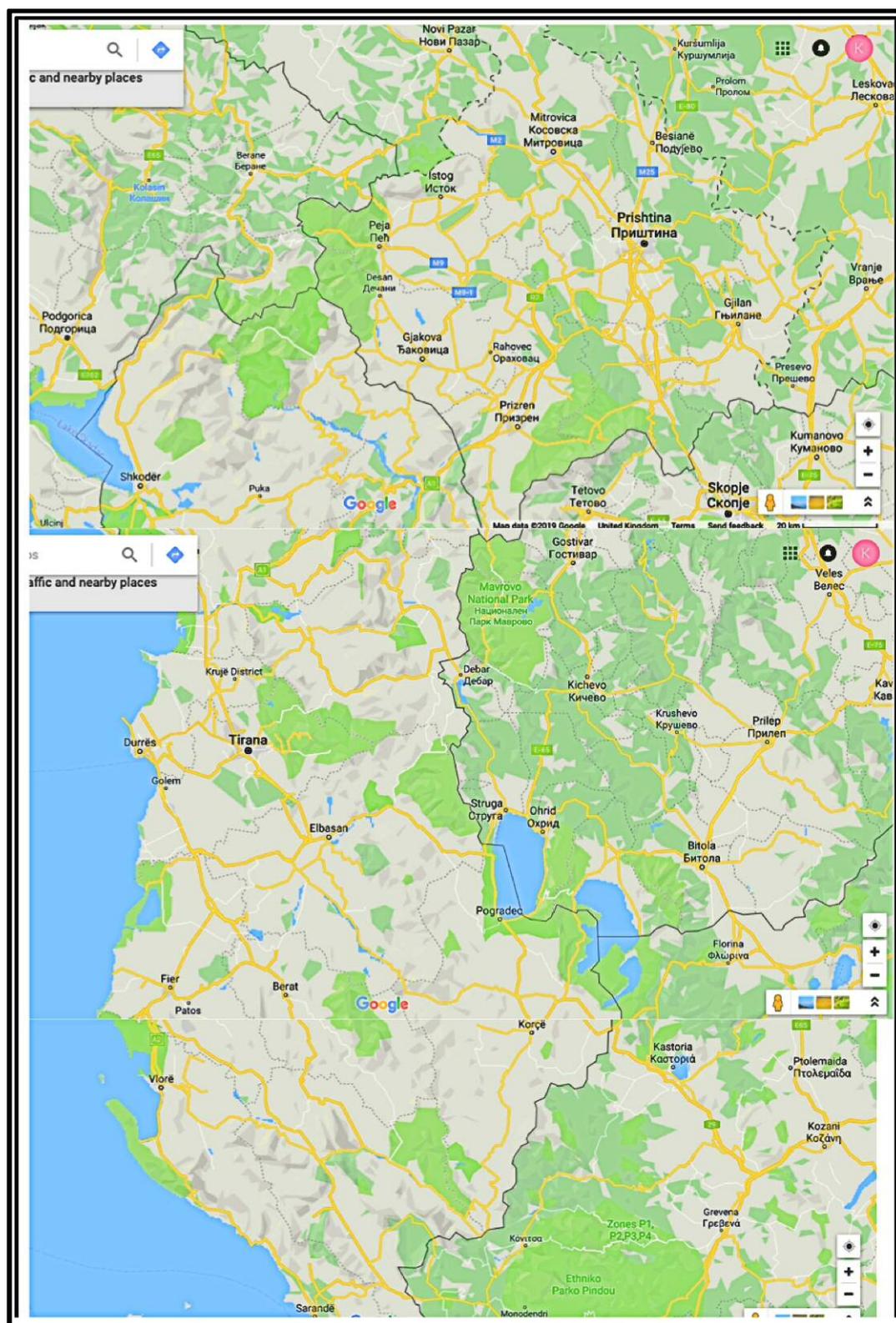


Fig. 6.2: Albania, Kosovo and western Macedonia.

<sup>79</sup> *Vranisht/Kenge Polifonike Labe* (Naxos/Daqui CD NAX-DAQ3320-18, 2003), track 3 'Ago, Ago, Ymer Ago'; *Polyphonies Vocales du Pays Lab: Ensemble Vocals de Gjirokastër* (Inédit / Maison des cultures du monde CD W 260065, 1995), track 14 'Ago Ago Ymer Ago!'; *Albanie, Pays Labë, Plaintes et Chants d'Amour/Albania, Lab Country, Complaints and Love Songs* (Ocora CD C 560188, 2004), track 5 'Pse S'ha Buke E Pse S'pi Vere'.

Of these 23 printed or recorded versions, then, there are:

1. Eight from Macedonia: six from Tetovo district, two from Skopje).
2. Seven from Kosovo, concentrated around Prishtina or Prizren.
3. Four from the Albanian highlands: one from Lezhë, the other three unattributed.
4. Four from the Tosk/Lab regions of southern Albania: Vlorë, Gjirokastrë, Pogradec, and one unattributed.

The story pattern of *Aga Imer* runs thusly:<sup>80</sup> Aga has been married but spends only one night with his bride before he is called off to war. He makes a pledge with his bride that she will wait for nine years before remarrying. The enemy captures and imprisons him; he whiles away the time in prison, *zandan* (<Tur), by eating, drinking and playing his *çifteli*. When his nine years come due, he dreams that his home has been destroyed, his mother driven away and his bride married off to another man. He ceases eating, drinking and playing until the *çikë* (Alb, indef. nom.; def. nom. *çika*), the daughter of the king who has imprisoned him, enquires as to why. He explains and begs her to be released for ‘two-three days’ to return home. They pledge *besë* to each other, an inviolate ‘sworn word’, that she will let him go and when he has done his errand he will return to prison.

Upon reaching home he encounters first his mother, who does not recognize him. He says he is a *rob i zan*, a prisoner or landless serf, and that he comes from ‘far-off Spain’ and knew her son, but he had died three weeks earlier. Aga-in-disguise relates how he himself washed, dressed, buried and lamented over Aga’s dead body.

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<sup>80</sup> For an English version of a folktale that relates the complete story, see ‘Aga Ymer of Ulcinj’ in *Albanian Folktales and Legends*, ed. and translated by Robert Elsie (London: Centre for Albanian Studies, 2015), pp. 155-159.

They espy the *krushq*, the wedding party bringing his old bride to her new husband. He hides his identity and tells them he was a prisoner of war and knew Aga, but that Aga has died and he himself buried the hero. He speaks to the bride and asks how she would know Aga if she saw him. ‘His mother told me of a birthmark on his arm’, she says, whereupon he raises his arm and reveals the birthmark. His bride goes to him and they ride off together. He must fulfill his *besë*, however, and so returns to the king’s land. The daughter has been thrown in her father’s prison for her rash act, but on Aga’s return she is set free and Aga, too, released from his obligations and allowed to return home to his bride.

*Table 6.8* demonstrates themes Devastation and shouting as they take place in nearly all versions of *Aga Imer*.

<b>Theme</b>	<i>Aga Imer</i>
<b>Devastation</b>	
dream	Aga passes time in prison playing <i>çifteli</i> until he has ‘a terrible dream’.
shouting	Aga stops eating, drinking, and playing.
intercession	The king’s daughter inquires as to why. Aga asks her to intercede with the king to release him for two-three nights.
oaths	She swears to release him herself if he returns on the third night. They swear <i>din e iman</i> .
release	She releases him.

*Table 6.8: Themes Devastation and shouting of Aga Imer.*

The shouting→release thematic sequence takes several forms (*App. 11*) and in some versions Aga simply remembers his pledge to his bride instead of having a terrible dream. In other cases, his remembrance and awakening to his grim situation is prompted by the dream.

A comparative overview of the thematic structures of all the above texts is given in *App. 10* where it can be seen that despite multiforms and other dissimilarities the genetic structure of the dream and shouting→release sequence remains consistent.

This sequence still retains the hero/woman of authority/LNL triad and the mytho-cosmological rhizome that contains them. Moreover, the triad's interactions hinge on the inviolate sworn vow of the oath theme. A clearer understanding of this theme's significance to the Albanian context can be found in the Albanian social institutions of *besë* and *pobratim*.

### Besa and Pobratimi

*Gjûa âsht tulit e gjithshka bluen; 'the tongue is soft, but chews everything.'*<sup>81</sup>

While the uncertainty over whether or not Aga will succeed in winning back his bride forms the dramatic driver in *Aga Imer* another, perhaps more pressing tension hinges on Aga's fulfillment of the vow of *din e iman*, 'faith in Allah/God',<sup>82</sup> he makes with the king's daughter to return to prison in three days and nights as condition of her releasing him. His promise is a form of *besë* (indef. nf.; def. *besa*), most simply defined as an oath or word of honor,<sup>83</sup> that constitutes a cornerstone of Albanian society and the *kanun*. *Besë* as both term and concept has ancient Indo-European roots: its reconstructed Proto-Albanian form *\*baitša* derives from IE *\*bhoidh-tā* or *\*bheidh*, 'to persuade', 'trust' with the sense of a contract and faithful obedience to it.<sup>84</sup> As discussed in relation to the Assyrian *Epic of Tikulti-Ninurta*, fidelity to the sworn vow or contract forms a central element of kingship. The consequences of

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<sup>81</sup> *Kanuni*, §520, pp. 117/118.

<sup>82</sup> The formula *din e iman* is an Islamic formula, from *dîn*, 'creed, religion', and *īmān*, 'faith, belief'. The *e* is the Albanian feminine possessive article in the noun + adjective construction, so a literal rendering of the formula would read 'creed of faith'.

<sup>83</sup> *OAED*, 'besë', p. 59.

<sup>84</sup> Orel, *Etymological*, 'besë', p. 22; Watkins, *Dragon*, p. 83.

breaking that vow, or the dilemmas posed by staying true to it, drives the plot of epic songs in general.<sup>85</sup>

It can be used interchangeably with ‘religious faith’, though that is a secondary meaning, and in fact has a wide range of applications. In older usage it signified ‘pledge taken by a family to take revenge on the murderer of a member of that family’,<sup>86</sup> the infamous *gjaku i marrë*, ‘taking of blood’ or blood feuds. These blood feuds revolved around the Albanian concept of *ndera*, ‘honor’, and according to the *kanun* ‘an offense to honor is never forgiven...“an offense to honor is not paid for with property, but by the spilling of blood or by a magnanimous pardon.”’<sup>87</sup>

Honor was everything to a man of the *Malësia*, for “‘what profit is life to a man if his honour [sic] be not clean?’” To cleanse his honour no price is too great.<sup>88</sup> A man’s honor could be ‘blackened’ by another man striking him, calling him a liar, running off with his wife or promised bride, or causing harm to a guest of the man’s house.<sup>89</sup> As indicated by the *Kanun* an offense to one’s honor constituted an offense to the man’s entire clan, *fis*, and could only be cleansed by blood. But the taking of blood required the victim’s clan to take retribution, and thus some feuds continued for generations.<sup>90</sup>

*Besë* can additionally be sworn to end a feud, at least temporarily, and to make alliances. Edith Durham recounted a story of a young man she met in Dushmani:

He had sworn a few weeks’ *besa*, with a man to whom he owed blood. Yesterday he had visited his foe and been treated handsomely in the way of victuals and drink. To-morrow the

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<sup>85</sup> See Bracewell, ‘Ritual’, pp. 347-349, 352-354.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> *Kanuni*, §597-598, p. 130.

<sup>88</sup> Durham, *High Albania*, p. 32.

<sup>89</sup> *Kanuni*, §601, pp. 130-132; Durham, *High Albania*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>90</sup> Durham, *High Albania*, pp. 166-167.

*besa* expired; he would be liable to be shot, and was looking forward joyfully to the renewal of hostilities.<sup>91</sup>

*Besë*, then, is a vow of utmost seriousness and thus when Aga swears it with the king's daughter he has put his entire *raison d'être* on the line. If he fails to return at the end of his allotted time and the daughter is executed by her father, he loses all honor and her death falls on his hands. He then enters into blood with his captor-king's clan and can be shot at any time and all his efforts to set his affairs aright will have been wasted.

The scene of Aga's return to fulfill his *besë* and thereby prevent the essentially needless shedding of the daughter's blood at her own father's hand has resonances with the mythic blood sacrifice.<sup>92</sup> The king is bound by implacable law to take his daughter's blood, by extension his own blood. She has contravened and usurped his authority that has, in a sense, been granted him by divine decree and if he does not cleanse this black spot on his honor then he is forever disgraced in the sight of heaven.

Aga's timely return functions as a divine intervention and he becomes a sacrificial substitute for the daughter. By fulfilling his *besë* to her he satisfies the letter of the law, releasing the king from his own crux. Instead of locking Aga back in prison the king, no doubt relieved, grants Aga—and his fellow prisoners, in some versions—final freedom. Aga then returns home to his bride, *kullë* and mother, his honor intact and his social position as a true Albanian man restored, in effect he becomes his own sovereign.

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170. See also Watkins, *Dragon*, p. 83.

<sup>92</sup> This analysis was suggested by my reading of George Dumézil, *Mitra-Varuna*, translated by Derek Coltman (New York: Zone Books, 1988), pp. 104-105.

Extending this idea further, Aga here plays the role of Dumuzi to the daughter's Inanna newly returned from her sojourn to the underworld. The daughter, the woman of authority, is on the verge of death, analogous to Inanna's death when she is hung from the hooks of her sister the queen of the realm. Aga-as-Dumuzi comes back to save her from the precipice after being with his bride, which parallels Dumuzi being taken down below after dallying with his concubines. In Aga's case, as a member of a society that seems to place much greater stakes on the honor of its men than Dumuzi's, he returns strictly voluntarily, but the net effect is the same: the woman of authority is released from the realm of death.

The daughter also enacts the function of Athena in *Odyssey* who compels Zeus to assert his authority over the nymph Calypso and allows Athena to force Odysseus's release, enabling his eventual Return to Ithaca. Likewise, this daughter plays a nearly identical role the infidel king's daughter in 'Bamsi Beyrek' who subverts her own father's authority by releasing Beyrek. Inanna, for her part, has similarly subverted her own father Enki's authority when she manipulates him into giving her the 100 *me*-s, the pinions of civilization, to bring them to mankind. Athena, Beyrek's savior, and Inanna do not face punishment for their actions in these instances yet their functions are each the same as Aga's woman of authority.

The analogies of *Fig. 6.3*:

Dumuzi → Odysseus → Bamsi Beyrek → Aga Imer

And:

Inanna → Athena → Christian daughter → captor-king's daughter  
 ↘ lord's or *ban*'s wife

*Fig. 6.3: Lineages of Return hero and woman of authority.*

are not exact, for Aga and the daughter are not, save in one sole version of *Aga Imer*, married, betrothed, or otherwise romantically involved.

They do, however, share a bond beyond, and even more profound than, the *din e iman* they make *besë* over. This is the bond of *pobratim*, ‘blood brotherhood’, they contract that seals their sworn vows to each other. If *besë* acts as a legal genealogy of contractual obligation, a reciprocal exchange of verbal gifts of honor, and thus a vertical construct, then *pobratim* can be understood as the horizontal rhizome of another kind of contract, one sealed with blood that creates kinship ties cutting across and confounding the strict borders of clan or tribe, religion, politics, and imposed national or imperial identity.<sup>93</sup>

*Pobratim* is the Albanian form of the Slavic word *pobratimstvo* or *\*pobratimъ*, ‘adopted brother’,<sup>94</sup> but can be more properly understood as ‘sworn brotherhood’.<sup>95</sup> However it is defined, the ritual involves the sharing of blood between the parties. The *Kanun* states that it is ‘effected by two men drinking a few drops of each other’s blood, [which] causes a permanent prohibition on intermarriage between the brothers, their families, and their descendants.’<sup>96</sup> The ritual also includes swearing *din e iman* and sharing food and drink as well, as attested by a *ġāzī* that Evliya Çelebi encountered in Bosnia in 1660 who had tried to hide and protect a Christian irregular soldier who had been captured.

“Mercy, Great Vezir [sic]! I have sworn brotherhood with this captive on the battlefield, we have pledged each other our faith. If you kill him, he will go to paradise with my faith, and that will be an injury to me...if I die, the faith of this captive...will stay with me, and we will both go to hell, so that again I am the loser.”<sup>97</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Bracewell, ‘Ritual Brotherhood’, p. 339.

<sup>94</sup> Orel, *Etymological*, p. 337.

<sup>95</sup> Bracewell, ‘Ritual’, p. 340.

<sup>96</sup> *Kanuni*, §704, p. 144.

<sup>97</sup> Quoted in Bracewell, ‘Ritual’, pp. 338-339.

The custom predates the Ottomans and was not sanctioned by either the Islamic or Christian clergy,<sup>98</sup> and the Christian authorities often actively discouraged its practice. Despite the prohibitions levied against it, its continued practice across religious divides ‘reflect[ed] a popular conviction that friendship was in some sense a holy thing’ and spoke to a sacred sense of brotherhood and friendship felt by frontier soldiers that superseded and even transcended the strictures of religion. For the soldiers of the Frontier Warrior Culture the swearing of *pobratim* across borders was a means to alleviate the harshness of the frontier and, in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries especially, its unceasing state of war. Although in many ways such conflict was many a soldier and officer’s way to a better life for themselves through land grants or the loot gotten from raiding, ‘a degree of accommodation with the other side was often desirable.’

Although *pobratim* was most often contracted between two men women also engaged in it, though such relationships were rarely commented on. It could also involve a man and a woman, as *Aga Imer* illustrates, yet sexual attraction between such blood-siblings was, as the *Kanun* declares, a ‘heinous sin’.<sup>99</sup> The pact sworn by Aga and the daughter actually works to Aga’s benefit in many ways as it provides him with a surplus of opportunities to demonstrate his manly valor, the worth of his *besë*, and the purity of his honor.<sup>100</sup>

*Pobratim* served a number of lesser functions for the frontier population as well such as ‘setting a seal on negotiations over the details of ransom payments,’

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp. 342 and 343-346.

<sup>99</sup> *Kanuni*, p. 144; Bracewell, ‘Ritual Brotherhood’, p. 342. This makes the one version of *Aga Imer* in which Aga returns to marry the king’s daughter even more anomalous, though this incident may reflect a further influence of the ending of ‘Bamsi Beyrek’.

<sup>100</sup> Bracewell, ‘Ritual’, pp. 348-349, 352-353.

which is exactly how Aga and the daughter arrive at it. In several versions of the text, when Aga first makes his plea to be released ‘for two-three nights’, the daughter demands he pay ‘nine purses’ of money to which he replies he has no money, as he has been imprisoned for nine years. A prose version of the text<sup>101</sup> notes that early on in his prison tenure Aga hoped that his lord would surely pay his ransom as he had fought so bravely before being captured. The ransom, of course, never arrives. Ransom, then, serves as a key motivator for the daughter’s agreement to make Aga her sworn brother. Its practice was apparently common on the frontier and brigandage ‘was not all that different from the animal theft, ransom and extortion that characterized the “little war” of the frontier.’<sup>102</sup>

The Return song of Aga Imer, then, is grounded in and informed by the living realities of the frontier warriors. The rhizomatic social relationships and border crossing quality of their culture were not unique to them, as evidenced by details found in Return songs and epics from the Byzantine and Antique worlds. Albanian highland culture was a staunch part of this greater world, although its more unique characteristics are reflected as well in its Return song of Aga Imer. These influences are largely invisible on the surface but, as with rhizomes, their traces are discernible on closer analysis.

### Conclusions

Oral formulas, prosody, and thematic structures constitute linguistic substructures that create vertical phylogenetic lineages among Return song texts. The presence or absence of particular themes or theme sequences and their multiforms in a given corpus of texts distinguishes Return species or subgenres. The themes act as rhizomes

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<sup>101</sup> *Albanian Folktales*, Elsie, pp. 155-159.

<sup>102</sup> Bracewell, ‘Ritual’, p. 352.

that problematize efforts to construct Return song genealogies as they operate through reticulation, crossing genre lines from, say, the Mesopotamian Dumuzi-d laments and *Dream* texts to the Greek, Turkic and Balkan Return songs. Like the rhizome, themes cross these asignifying ruptures of culture, epoch and language without losing their genetic integrity.

Within the five primary themes of the Return narrative fall sequences of lesser themes that take many multiforms. The thematic sequence of the Return theme—disguise, deceptive story and recognition—forms the narrative’s dramatic climax but the Devastation sequence of dream and shouting → release marks the dramatic pivot that makes all further actions possible. This pivot turns on the interactions between the three archetypal figures of hero, woman of authority, and the LNL that mediates their communication. This triad constitutes the mytho-cosmological rhizome whose DNA has remained essentially unchanged since the Mesopotamian Dumuzi-Inanna-*gú-di* rhizome formed.

These two rhizomes—the dream/shouting → release thematic sequence and the archetypal triad—appear in the Greek *Odyssey*, Turkic ‘Bamsi Beyrek’, the Slavic *Dulić Ibrahim* and the Albanian *Aga Imer* Return songs. Although the *φορμιγγα*, *phorminx*, lyre of the Odyssean bards represents a culturally conditioned divergence from the more common LNL its narrative function remains the same.

*Odyssey*’s first shouting multiform occurs when Telemachus prepares to leave Ithaca to seek news of his father on Athena’s intercession and the bard Phemius’s song about the Achaeans upsets Penelope. The second shouting multiform provokes Odysseus’s recognition by Alcinous and his courtiers when Odysseus weeps at the bard Demodocus’s song on the heroes of the Trojan War. The latter multiform

finds another expression in the Turkic ‘Bamsi Beyrek’ and Slavic Returns in their conflation of the shouting and recognition themes.

Bamsi Beyrek’s first shouting theme, when Beyrek’s captors have him perform as a minstrel for their festivities, in an echo of the hapless Greek Phemius, and Beyrek falls silent after hearing grim news from merchants of his homeland.

This silence theme is followed by the intercession of the Christian king’s daughter and the oath she swears with Beyrek. This thematic sequence occurs also in the Albanian *Aga Imer* tradition albeit under Albanian cultural conditions. The Albanian and Balkan cultural institutions of *besë*, the sworn vow, and *pobratim*, blood brotherhood, inform *Aga Imer*’s presentation of Aga and the daughter’s interaction. This in turn forms a crystalline expression of the underpinning of the epic song tradition that bolstered the fundamental importance of the sworn word in Mesopotamian kingship ideology, and the role of Inanna, the ultimate woman of authority, in legitimizing the ruler’s authority. This relationship between epic hero and woman of authority has been encoded in the ancient formula of rock and tree in which the rock serves as a metonym for the divine feminine and the tree her human charge. That this formula acted as a crux for the judicial power of the sworn vow in Antiquity as well as modern Albania testifies to the significance and endurance of the mytho-cosmological rhizome of the Return song’s triad. With the addition of the chordophone, particularly the LNL, the figure of the shepherd king thus appears as the equivalent of Return song heroes like Aga Imer.

## Chapter 7: Meter, Melody, and Diction in Aga Imer

### Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the thematic structure and the historical and social context of the Albanian Return song *Aga Imer*. This chapter analyzes the linguistic, prosodic and musical aspects of the 23 transcribed and video performance versions of *Aga Imer* from a rhizomatic perspective to delineate the network of relationships between a number of rhizomatic clusters of versions. In my textual and musical analyses I endeavor to show that the rhizomatic behavior of Return songs is not limited to the epic themes and mythic figures discussed previously but applies on the microcosmic level to the individual phrases and melodic motifs of the songs as well. However, I limit my analyses here to the texts and music of the *Aga Imer* tradition alone; although the verbal and melodic patterns of these songs could be shown to be close cognates to those of other Albanian epic and heroic *kenge*, such a project is beyond the scope of this Thesis. My intent in this chapter is to use the *Aga Imer* tradition as a case study to show how the rhizome model marks a phenomenon present at all levels of the epic tradition, and to demonstrate the usefulness of rhizome theory in conceptualizing the creation, transmission, and structure of epic songs.

My method here sets the stage for explicating cosmological, thematic and organological connections to a larger, intercultural body of Return songs and related narratives.

### Albanian Language, Dialects and Grammar

Albanian is an Indo-European (IE) language but is an isolate in the IE language family. It has two main, mutually intelligible dialects (*Fig. 7.2*): *Geg* or *Gheg*, spoken

from central Albania to northern Albania, southern Montenegro, throughout Kosovo and into southwestern Macedonia, and *Tosk* spoken south of Elbasan and in southwestern Macedonia. The *Tosk* dialect includes *Lab*, *Cham*, and *Arvanitika* (now almost extinct), while *Geg* has four main divisions: southern, central, northwestern and northeastern. Finally, émigré communities in Italy and Sicily, descendants of Albanian refugees who left Albania after Skanderbeg's death, speak *Arbëresh* dialect, based primarily on southern Albanian dialects current in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The primary differences between *Tosk* and *Geg* are phonological, syntactic and morphological. *Geg* often uses some nasalized vowels such as *y*, similar to French *u*, and *â*, a nasalized *a* sound. Some consonants show a tendency to shift as well, notably *n* to *r* through rhotacism (ex. Standard form *shira*, 'threshing season' > *Geg shina*)<sup>1</sup> and initial *s* to *z* (ex. Standard *zgjebe*, 'scabies' > *Geg sgjebe*)<sup>2</sup> Syntactically, one key difference is that *Geg* has a gerund or infinitive form of verbs while *Tosk* lacks this feature.

*Geg* also uses a distinctive form for the past infinitive mood, *me* + <infinitive>. *Me*, in standard Albanian a preposition in the accusative case that means 'with, by' here serves as a syntactical marker to indicate 'having <verb>'. *Tosk*, by contrast, does not have the verbal infinitive per se so past tenses are indicated by conjugation.

Morphology constitutes probably the most significant difference between the dialects. Many of these morphological divergences appear in the texts of *Aga Imer*. For example, standard *një*, 'one', in *Geg* is *ni* or *nji*; *Tosk shtëpi*, 'house', in *Aga Imer* is found as *shpi*; *bëj*, 'to do', becomes *boj* or *bâj*, and *qenë*, 'been' (past participle of

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<sup>1</sup> *OAED*, p. lxxiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, lxxiv.

*jam*, ‘I am’), may become *kjen* or *kon*, as in the opening line of the video performance of Jeton Fetiù:

*Ago Ymerit jo di të ka kon*

All of these song texts except the southern versions are in Geg dialect. Osmani’s transcriptions fall within the Southern and Central Geg subdialect of Tetovo, Gostivar and Skopje in Macedonia (*Fig. 7.2*). Most of the other northern versions are in the Northeastern subdialect spoken from the Tropoja district in extreme northeastern Albania and east into Kosovo, extending as far north and east as Prishtina and Mitrovica. Several video versions—the version by Gjon Frroku from the coast of Albania, and those from Prizren in southwestern Kosovo—may be in the Northwestern subdialect.

The Albanian lexicon includes a large number of loan words from Latin. Several important terms in the *Aga Imer* texts derive from Latin, such as *këngë* (*kâng*, Geg), ‘song’, from Latin *canticum*;<sup>3</sup> *këndoj*, ‘[I] sing’, from *cantāre*,<sup>4</sup> and *lëshoj* (*lishoj/lshue*, Geg), ‘[I] free, let, permit’, from *lassāre*, ‘to render faint, to tire, to let’.<sup>5</sup> By contrast only a relative handful of ancient Greek words are found, a factor sometimes used to adduce a Danubian origin for the Albanian language.<sup>6</sup>

Considering Albania’s long history with Slavic speaking nations, surprisingly few Slavic loanwords have gained acceptance in Albanian. Some of those that do, such as *pobratim*, ‘blood brother’,<sup>7</sup> concern elemental social institutions

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>6</sup> Geg has very few Byzantine or modern Greek loanwords as well. They are somewhat more common in Tosk due to that region’s long-standing relations with Epirus in northern Greece. Greek is widely spoken in southern Albania—in some areas Greek is learned as a primary language—and the region is sometimes referred to by both Albanians and Greeks as ‘northern Epirus.’ The musical styles have much in common as well.

<sup>7</sup> Orel, *Etymological*, p. 337.

common to both Albanian and Slavic highland societies and occur in both cultures' oral epics.

Turkish loanwords occur frequently; the Albanian linguist Tahir Dizdari's (1900-1972) *Fjalor i Orientalizmave në gjuhën shqip*<sup>8</sup> (*Orientalisms in the Albanian Language*) lists at least 1,732 Turkisms.<sup>9</sup> A few Turkish suffixes have become productive syntactical features in Albanian,<sup>10</sup> such as *-xhi*, from Turkish *-ci*, *-ci*, *-cu*, *-cü*, which denotes occupation or social position as in *ahengxhi*, a performer of Ottoman-era urban songs, or *jabanxhi*, 'foreigner, stranger'. In the *Aga Imer* texts Turkisms form an essential part of the poetic diction. The majority of these Turkisms relate to legal or military terminology, the latter including a number of equestrian terms.<sup>11</sup>

Albanian is a highly inflected language with five main cases: nominative, accusative, genitive, ablative, and dative. Declensions vary depending on the ending of the noun stem, as for example the singular indefinite declension for masculine nouns ending in *-ër/-ës* is *-i*, but masculine singular nouns with final *-k/-g/* or *-h* decline with *-ut* in indefinite or *-u* in definite.<sup>12</sup> *Table 7.1* shows declensions for *çifteli*, a feminine noun.

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<sup>8</sup> Tahir Dizdari, *Fjalor i Orientalizmave në gjuhën shqip: rreth 4500 fjalë me prejardhje nga gjuhët turke, arabe dhe perse* (Tirana: Instituti Shqiptar i Mendimit dhe i Qytetërimit Islam (AIITC), 2005).

<sup>9</sup> Mustafi Muhamed, 'Oriental linguistic elements in Albanian. Baytajejan creativity', *European Journal of Literature and Linguistics* 1 (2017), p. 36.

<sup>10</sup> Lindita Khanari, et. al., 'Characteristics of Common Turkisms in Albanian-Greek Dictionary in Folk Collection "Bëleta Shqypëtare" of Thimi Mitko', *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 5/3 (2014), p. 629

<sup>11</sup> Albert B. Lord, 'The Effect of the Turkish Conquest on Balkan Epic Tradition', in *Aspects of the Balkans: Continuity and Change (Contributions to the International Balkan Conference held at UCLA, October 23-28, 1969)*, edited by Henrik Birnbaum and Speros Vryonis, Jr. (The Hague/Paris: Mouton, 1972), pp. 305-308.

<sup>12</sup> For a comprehensive list of Albanian declensions see *OAED*, p. xlii.

Case	Singular indefinite	Singular definite	Plural indefinite	Plural definite
Nominative	<i>Një çifteli</i>	<i>Çiftelija</i>	<i>Çiftelie</i>	<i>Çiftelitë</i>
Accusative	“	<i>Çiftelinë</i>	“	“
Dative	<i>Një çiftelije</i>	<i>Çiftelisë</i>	<i>Çiftelive(t)</i>	
Ablative	“	<i>Çiftelisë</i>	<i>Çiftelish</i>	<i>Çiftelive(t)</i>
Genitive	<i>e çifteli</i>	<i>e çiftelisë</i>	<i>Të çiftelish</i>	<i>Të çiftelive(t)</i>

Table 7.1: Albanian noun declensions.

*Një*, ‘one, a’, is the indefinite article but the definite article comes as a suffix on the noun: *një çifteli*, ‘a çifteli’, *çiftelija* ‘the çifteli’. Nouns are gendered and modifying terms and pronouns must agree with them.

The syntax has flexible word order but the standard form is SVO, subject-verb-object, and object pronouns come before the verb even if the referent object is present in the sentence. Object pronouns serve three functions: to indicate an object noun by its gender, to replace the noun when it has already been indicated, and to anticipate an object later in the sentence. Attributive adjectives follow their referent noun and a gendered possessive pronoun:

*Çiftelija e dru*

The wooden çifteli

Albanian also has an *admirative* tense used to express surprise, doubt, irony or reportedness. ‘In all its uses the admirative somehow refers to the speaker’s past or present nonconfirmation of the truth of the statement.’<sup>13</sup> The admirative past tense is expressed by *paska*, ‘has, had’.

<sup>13</sup> Victor A. Friedman, ‘Evidentiality in the Balkans: Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Albanian’, In *Evidentiality: The Linguistic Coding of Epistemology*, edited by Wallace L. Chafe & Johanna Nichols (Norwood, NJ: Ablex. Pub. Corp., 1986), pp. 180-182.

*History of Albanian Language and Orthography*

The roots of the Albanian language are obscure. The most widely accepted hypothesis is that it descends from one or more of the ancient Illyrian languages spoken from the Danube River valley to the coast of the Adriatic Sea, but so little is known of Illyrian that no firm conclusions can be reached on the matter. However, an Illyrian descent or relationship proves more likely than the main competing theory, of ancestry with ancient Thracian formerly spoken in modern Bulgaria and Macedonia. The historian Noel Malcolm, in *A Short History of Kosovo*, collates and critiques the gamut of linguistic theories as to the nature of the Illyrian language(s) and the origins of Albanian.<sup>14</sup> The general consensus is that it is more likely that Albanian forms the modern descendent of the Dardanian languages—Dacian, et. al.—and not Thracian, the language of eastern neighbors of Greece and Illyria in modern Bulgaria and Macedonia.

One of the strongest pieces of evidence for this lies in the syntactical structures of proper names in the three languages: Illyrian toponyms ‘are composed of a single unit. Many Thracian ones are made of two units joined together’ as in *Bessapara*, from *Bessi*, a Thracian tribe, and *para*, ‘ford’. Albanian, however, utilizes an adjective-possessive pronoun-noun structure so that this toponym would have to be *Para e Bessëve*, ‘Ford of Bessa’. This syntactical principle makes it unlikely that Albanian developed from Thracian, though it does not offer conclusive proof that it came from Illyrian.

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<sup>14</sup> Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp. 30-40.

More compelling evidence to connect Albanian and Illyrian is found in the former's relationship to modern Romanian. The ancient Illyrians and the pre-Roman Dacians shared territory in the Danube River valley but the Illyrians eventually migrated or were forced to move further west and south. Traces of their shared linguistic substratum can be found in their common lexicon of archaic terms, especially in pastoral words, and in some shared syntactical features such as both modern languages' use of a postfix as definite article.

Though essentially a Romance language with some Slavic syntactical features, modern Romanian possesses a small remnant of ancient Dacian vocabulary—some 100 words—that find many exact or nearly exact equivalents in modern Albanian. One common example is the pre-Latin Romanian *copil*, 'child', and Albanian *kopil*, 'bastard child'.

This common pre-Latin lexicon also includes a number of archaic terms for folkloric figures like the Albanian *zana*<sup>15</sup> and Romanian *zâna*,<sup>16</sup> female mountain spirits analogous to the Germanic *Valkyrie*. *Zana*-s appear frequently in the epic song cycle of the hero Mujo and his brother Halili. They serve as young Mujo's consecratrices when they give him their own breast milk to drink. This endows him with incredible strength, his reward for tending their cradled infants at a lonely

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<sup>15</sup> Alb., sg. def; *zanë*, sg. indef.; *zanat*, pl. def.

<sup>16</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Zalmoxis the Vanishing God: Comparative Studies in the Religions and Folklore of Dacia and Eastern Europe*, translated by Willard R. Trask (Chicago/London: Chicago University Press, 1972), p. 68. Just as the Albanian epic or ballad corpus would be incomplete without the presence of *zana*-s, so it is necessary to introduce them as a study of north Albanian music would be incomplete without awareness of their crucial role. The term *zana* is cognate with the Roman goddess of the hunt Diana, and several grottoes in the western Balkans known to have been dedicated to Diana probably then were consecrated to the *zana*-s as well.

mountainside.<sup>17</sup> Like Inanna, the *zana*-s live by a law of their own that often collides with human society, causing Mujo to act as a mediator between the two worlds.<sup>18</sup>

The earliest document in the Albanian language is a 14<sup>th</sup> century baptism formula recorded by a Franciscan monk, but the first stirrings of literature appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the hands of Catholic clerics such as Pjetër Budi and Pjetër Bogdani. These early writers, however, did not live or publish in Albania but in Italy, and native-born Albanian authors first emerged during the Ottoman Empire.

Among the first dictionaries or lexicons on the language is the folklorist and nationalist Thimi Mitko's (1820-1890) Greek-Albanian dictionary included in his journal *Belëta Shqyptare*, 'The Albanian Bee', or in Greek *Alvaniki melissa* in 1878.

The Arbëresht folklorist and linguist Girolamo (or Jeronim) de Rada (1814-1903) also produced extensive documents of his native Arbëresh dialect in his journal *Flamuri Arbërit* ('The Flag of Albania') between 1883-1887. De Rada also created a modified Latin alphabet for the language—possibly the first to do so, as at that time most Albanian texts were written using Arabic orthography as filtered through Ottoman modifications.

The first efforts to create a standardized language and orthography began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with the nationalist *Rilindja* society, 'Rebirth'. Its members included renowned men of letters like Naim Frashëri, his older brother Şemseddin Sami Bey who created the 'Stambouli alphabet' with Arabic letters,<sup>19</sup> and Gjergj Fishta (1871-1940) who composed Albania's first literary epic *Lahuta e Malcis*, 'The Highland Lute', published between 1905-1937. However, the orthography used by

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<sup>17</sup> *Songs of the Frontier Warriors, Këngë i Kreshnikësh*, edited and translated by Robert Elsie and Janice Mathie-Heck (Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Pubs., Inc., 2004), pp. 2-9.

<sup>18</sup> See 'The Marriage of Gjeto Basho Mujo' in Elsie and Mathie-Heck, *Këngë Kreshnikësh*, pp. 11-30.

<sup>19</sup> See Francis Trix, 'The Stamboul Alphabet of Shemseddin Sami Bey: Precursor to Turkish Script Reform', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 31/2 (1999), pp. 255-272.

Albanian writers during the Ottoman era varied depending on their religious or cultural affiliations: Orthodox writers in the south preferred Greek script, while Catholic officials mostly in the north and center used Latin script. Moslem writers in centers like Berat, Elbasan, or Gjakova wrote with Arabic letters in Arabic, Turkish, or sometimes Persian as well as their native tongue.<sup>20</sup>

These divisions created a number of complications in the process of deciding on a standard orthography for Albanian.<sup>21</sup> Ottoman authorities, namely the Young Turks, and some Muslim leaders in Albania and Kosovo argued for adoption of an Arabic-based alphabet for the Albanian language. At *Kongresi i Manastirit*, the Congress of Manastir, (Nov. 14-22, 1908), organized by *Bashkimi*, ‘the United’ or ‘The Union’, the committee decided to use both modified Arabic and modified Latin alphabets, a compromise to recognize the Ottoman and European aspects of Albanian history and culture.<sup>22</sup>

In *Kongresi i Dibrës*, the Congress of Dibra (July 23-29, 1909), the Young Turks proclaimed that the Arabic-based Turkish writing system would be the sole, official alphabet, and the controversy caused by this led to *Kongresi i Elbasanit*, the Congress of Elbasan (Sept. 2-8, 1909), whose delegates argued for a Latin-based system and the use of the central Albanian Elbasan dialect in Albanian schools. This created further conflict but finally at *Kongresi i dytë i Manastirit*, the Second Congress of Manastir and April 2-3, 1910) the Latin-based alphabet was made official. Albania’s independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912 solidified this decision.

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<sup>20</sup> *Lightning From the Depths: An Anthology of Albanian Poetry*, edited and translated by Robert Elsie and Janice Mathie-Heck (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2008), pp. xxv-xxvii.

<sup>21</sup> See Stavro Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening 1878-1912* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 366-390.

<sup>22</sup> See Frances Trix, ‘Alphabet conflict in the Balkans: Albanian and the Congress of Monastir’, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 128/1 (1997), pp. 1-23;

By the early 1920s, the men of *Rilindja* had worked out a modified Latin alphabet for the newly-minted ‘standard’ Albanian, based largely on the Central Geg dialect. In 1972 Enver Hoxha (1908-1985), Albania’s communist leader from 1946-1985, was suspicious of the traditional political autonomy of the Geg clans and their generally republican leanings and so linguistically disenfranchised Geg speakers and formed a new standard tongue based on his own native Tosk dialect.

*Dialect in Aga Imer, Karadyzen and Qeteli*

The *Aga Imer* texts display an array of dialectal characteristics. The transcribers also wrote out their transcriptions phonetically, a practice that resulted in many inconsistencies in spelling: a term like *çifteli* may be written as *çifteli*, *qifteli*, or *qeteli* all in the same song. Some of the spellings may even reflect idiosyncratic pronunciations of individual singers as much as, or more than, dialectal pronunciation, although in many cases the variations are clearly due to dialects. The singers, *këngëtarë* (masc., pl. def.) of the six texts I-VI from Osmani’s *Epikë Popullore*, use the Macedonian northeastern Geg dialect. In these texts some verbs take distinctly regional forms: the standard *jep* (text/line II.29), ‘give’, also appears as *epë* (text/lines I.9; II.110), and *nxjerre*, ‘pull out, remove, extract’, as *çitsha* (text/line I.15).

More common dialectal changes are the vowel shifts from *-a-* → *-o-* and final *-ë* → *-a* in verbs of the form *ka*, ‘has’—*kanë*→ *kona*, ‘have’—or as in *ba*, past participle of *bie-*, ‘to fall; to play/cause to vibrate <a musical instrument>’, which becomes *bo* (line II.3). Consonantal shifts also occur, as in initial *ç-* → *q-*, where *ç-* signifies a soft *ch* as in ‘cherry’, /tʃ/ while *q-* is sounded as a hard *ch* close to ‘itch’, or sometimes as *ky-* /c/. Such a shift can be observed in the name of the Serbian epic

hero *Čejvan Aga* (> MPer *kēwān*, > Per *kayvān*)<sup>23</sup> that became *Qefan Aga* > *Qefanag* in Albanian. A consonant neutralization also often occurs with *g* and *k*, as Skendi notes: ‘it is one of the features of the Albanian language to neutralize in final position voiced and unvoiced phonemes of the same pair. Thus the hero *Qefanag* becomes *Qefanak* because of the neutralization of (g/k).<sup>24</sup> This phenomenon occurs in many of the video performances, where ‘Aga Imeri’ is pronounced as ‘Akoj Meri’, ‘Agoj Meri’ and ‘Agkoy Meri’ even in the same performance.

The songs frequently employ *paska*, the admirative form of the past participle of *ka*, ‘has’, instead of the more usual imperfect past form *kishte* or the simple past indicative form *pati*:

*Se ke nana paska shkue.*

(That the mother has gone away! [I.53])

Some obscure terms are words of foreign derivation that seem to survive only in poetic diction, a typical phenomenon in the diction of Homeric Greek and modern Slavic epic songs as well.<sup>25</sup> *Izën*, for example, appeared in several texts such as line I.46:

*Aj çaushi izën i ka dhanë.*

(That corporal, *izën* he has given to you.)

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<sup>23</sup> Skendi, *Epic Poetry*, p. 148; Antonio Panaino, ‘Planets’, *Encyclopedia Iranica*, online edition, 20 Sept. 2016, found at: <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/planets>>; accessed on: 29 May 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Skendi, *Epic*, p. 148.

<sup>25</sup> John Miles Foley, ‘Guslar and Aoidos: Traditional Register in South Slavic and Homeric Epic’, *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 126 (1996), pp. 25-27.

In a version of the Albanian Return song *Lalë Bajram*, ‘Ki Bajrami ni jesir i ri’, ‘Young Bajram was a prisoner of war’,<sup>26</sup> the term occurs in line 51:

*A m’i ipni izën ni kang me ja çue.*<sup>27</sup>

[She] granted him leave a song he gave them.

Osmani here glosses the term as *izëm*, a Turkish word whose Albanian equivalent is *leje*, ‘permit, license, authority, [permitted] leave’ so I.46 reads, ‘that corporal, authorized leave he has given to you’.<sup>28</sup> *Izën*, then, had entered the Macedonian Albanian dialect and at least some local *këngëtarë*, singers, retained it as an element of poetic diction even as it fell from use in common speech.

The clearest and most pertinent example of the texts’ dialectal characteristics concerns the names for Aga’s lute: *çifteli*, *qefteli*, *qeteli*, *qifteli* and *karadyzen*. The variant *qeteli* is, according to Ramadan Sokoli, specifically used by Macedonian Albanians.<sup>29</sup> It also appears in lyric songs, sometimes in connection with the term *ashik*, from Turkish *aşık*, literally ‘lover’, that denotes minstrels of the Turkish Alevi religion. Picken in *Folk Musical Instruments of Turkey*<sup>30</sup> notes the Turkish term *ikitelli*, ‘with two strings’, from the old, pre-13<sup>th</sup> century Turkish form

<sup>26</sup> Osmani, *Epikë*, pp. 54-56.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 55. This passage and its context will be discussed in full in the relevant chapter.

<sup>28</sup> In Mitko’s 1878 collection of folk songs *Bëleta Shqypëtare*, which includes an Albanian-Greek dictionary, the term appears as *izë* (Xhanari, et. al., ‘Characteristics’, p. 629).

<sup>29</sup> Sokoli, *Gjurmime Folklorike*, p. 394. The name *qeteli* appears in standard Albanian as *çetele*, an ‘old’ word (*OAED*, p. 137), that signifies a stick used as an accounting record like a receipt or storage record; it often came in two parts, one kept by the owner of the item and the other kept with the stored item. It might consist, alternately, of a tick or identifying mark on an item.

Though I have to date found a definite etymological connection between *qeteli* and *çetele*, I note a poetic association between this accounting stick and the *tambura* of *Lalë Bajram* and the Slavic Return songs: when the disguised hero returns to his mother or aunt’s home and asks to play the *tambura* that he left in his mother’s care, he uses it to sing a song in which he makes his true identity known to her. The *tambura* thus functions as a kind of proof of identity.

It should also be noted that throughout Osmani’s renderings of *Aga Imer* he gives the initial phoneme of *çifteli* as both *ç-* or *q-*, presumably reflecting dialectal pronunciation.

<sup>30</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 270-271.

*ekke*,<sup>31</sup> ‘two, second’, and *telli*, ‘string’. From this, he believes, derived an Albanian *kutelya* or *kitelliya*,<sup>32</sup> and this may have formed the basis for *qeteli*.

*Çifteli* and its *q*- variants follow a different etymology although it means essentially the same as *ikitelli*, ‘paired strings’, from Turkish *çift*, ‘two, pair (of)’, and *tel* or *teli*, ‘string, wire’. It is not clear if *çift* derived from or was used coextensively with the old Turkish *ko:š*, ‘pair, one of a pair’,<sup>33</sup> and/or *koš*, ‘to unite, join together’,<sup>34</sup> but the use of *çifteli* for the instrument seems to have begun not later than the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>35</sup> *Çiftetelli* is also the name of a widely popular rhythm used in Turkish music (*Fig. 7.1*).

The term for ‘paired strings’ denotes the rhythm because in an Arab or Turkish ensemble the rhythm is additionally marked by a string player alternating between two open strings tuned a fourth apart. The bass *dum* of the *daff* frame drum or clay *doumbek* drum corresponds to the lower-pitched string, and *ka-tek*, the right and left hand strokes, respectively, near the drum’s rim, to the higher-pitched string. Hence, a two string instrument could handily perform a rhythmic or melodic function when playing in this rhythm.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Sir Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), ‘ekke’, p. 100.

<sup>32</sup> The *-ya* ending that Picken gives it probably shows the singular definite form of *-ia*, the *-a* definite postfix being used following a final *-i* in Albanian masculine nouns.

<sup>33</sup> Clauson, *Etymological*, ‘ko:š’, p. 670.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, ‘koš’, p. 671. Clauson does not give *çift* a separate entry but it is attested in texts in conjunction with *ko:š*.

<sup>35</sup> Ndue Dedaj, ‘Ndue Shyti: Mbreti i Çiftelisë Shqiptare’, *Zemra Shqiptare*, 3 Dec. 2013, found at: <[http://www.zemrashqiptare.net/news/id\\_34260/Ndue-Dedaj:-Ndue-Shyti-Mbreti-i-çiftelisë-shqiptare.html?keyword=ndue+shyti](http://www.zemrashqiptare.net/news/id_34260/Ndue-Dedaj:-Ndue-Shyti-Mbreti-i-çiftelisë-shqiptare.html?keyword=ndue+shyti)>; accessed on: 4 April 2015.

<sup>36</sup> I am indebted to my supervisor John Morgan O’Connell for this information.



Fig. 7.1: Çiftetelli rhythm.<sup>37</sup>

The final term *karadyzen* denotes, along with *dyzen*, *tamërr*, and *tambura*, a regional term for the *çifteli*.<sup>38</sup> Sokoli gives the term a North Albanian, Geg, provenance from the Turkish words *kara*, ‘black’, and *dyzen*, ‘two stringed’,<sup>39</sup> and describes it as being of the *tamboura* [sic] family. *Karadyzen* represents an Albanicized form of Turkic *karadüzen*. In some pre-13<sup>th</sup> century Turkic texts<sup>40</sup> *düz-* is related to old Turkic *tiz-*, ‘line up, string’, and signifies ‘to arrange (things) in a row; to string (beads).’ The 11<sup>th</sup> century lexographer al-Kāshgarī, in his dictionary of the Turkic language held that *düzen* stemmed from the verb *tüzmek*, later *düzmek*, ‘to level, straighten, put in order’.<sup>41</sup>

In both cases the term’s musical sense refers to tuning the strings and frets of a string instrument and there a number of *düzen* tunings used for Anatolian lutes. *Karadüzen* is, Picken reports, another name for the *bozuk düzen* (Fig. 1.3), a re-entrant tuning for three courses, from upper to bottom course tuned to *g-d-a*. This *karadüzen* tuning is used on the species of the *şargija* genus, in fact is one of its defining traits. On a two string LNL like the *çifteli* the middle, *d*-course is eliminated and the drone and melody strings are tuned *g-a*. Because of the *çifteli*’s fretting this results in a very different set of musical possibilities than the *şargija* species displays.

<sup>37</sup> Found at: <<http://www.maqamworld.com/rhythms/muwashahat2.html>>; accessed on: 14 April, 2018. The *çiftetelli* (Tur; Grk *tsifteteli*) is most commonly notated in Western notation as an 8/4 rhythm but can also be rendered in 4/2 or two bars of 4/4. This example shows the ostinato figure as an interval of a sixth, *g-e*, but this is uncommon; typically it would be notated as a fourth, *g-c*, or sometimes a fifth, *g-d*.

<sup>38</sup> Pellerano and Miso, *Strumenti musicali*, p. 56

<sup>39</sup> Sokoli, *Gjurmime*, p. 385.

<sup>40</sup> Clausen, *Etymological*, ‘tüz- (d-)’, p. 572.

<sup>41</sup> Picken, *FMIT*, pp. 229-231; Clausen, *Etymological*, ‘tüz- (d-)’, p. 572.

It is thus probable that the tuning, which on *çifteli* is said to ‘make it sound like a *sharki*’,<sup>42</sup> was adapted to the *çifteli* from the *sharki*.

It is noteworthy in this respect that although this *çifteli* tuning, or *akordim* in Albanian, is popular, its repertoire is very limited.<sup>43</sup> As this term only appears in those texts from Tosk tradition where the *çifteli* or *karadyzen* is not played, it may therefore represent an older name for the instrument that fossilized in southern diction while nomenclature evolved in the north where the instrument was a common item.

### Rhizome Theory and Origin Points

In order to examine the relationships between the texts of *Aga Imer* I have compiled a table of the number of textual correspondences between transcriptions I-X and the video performances by Gjon Frroku, Rrahman Hasani and Abdyl Babatinca from the village of Llapi (hereafter referred to simply as Llapi), Mahmut Ferati, Mirak Ukaj, Afrim Gashi, and Pjeter Matusha.<sup>44</sup> This data allows me to discern regional ‘schools’ of interpretation within *Aga Imer*’s oral nexus and I have modeled their relationships as a network of rhizomatic clusters. I have defined these textual rhizomes through:

1. The number of each version’s oral poetic formulas in common with others or unique to it.
2. The themes that each version contains or omits relative to the most ‘complete’—i.e. longest—versions.

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<sup>42</sup> See video ‘How to play çifteli—make your çifteli sound like sharki IN ALBANIAN—SHQIP’, found at: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-4pNtFX9vg>>; accessed on: 6 Nov. 2013.

<sup>43</sup> In my Master’s dissertation I noted the tunings used in a sample of 100 songs that incorporated the *çifteli*. Of these 100 I found this *g-a* tuning used in only five performances; these, moreover, were all versions of one of two songs whose melodies were structurally quite close to each other.

<sup>44</sup> I excluded videos A. Ukaj, H. Gashi, Fetiu, R. Gashi, Broja, and *Albanian Legend* from this project primarily because a cursory review revealed that their texts, musical settings, or both diverged so much from my ‘control’ group of texts Frroku/Llapi as to put them in their own traditions. A secondary reason was that for all but *Albanian Legend* no transcription was available for detailed analysis and time limitations made transcribing them myself impractical.

3. Certain regional linguistic markers.
4. In some cases I defined a rhizome by the individual idiosyncrasies of its members, not their apparent connections, and created a ‘miscellaneous’ category as a compromise against a complicated number of rhizomes with one member each.

In this analysis I have followed the principle set down by P. D. Ukhov in his study on Russian oral folklore:<sup>45</sup>

...as the typical formulas of one narrator differ from the typical formulas of all other narrators, and...as the typical formulas are peculiar to him and are employed in all *byliny* [Russian narrative songs] narrated by him, this regularity can be used as a key for determining authorship (‘narratorship’) of those texts of *byliny* the author (narrator) of which is not known[.]

[I]f the typical formulas of one product agree with the typical formulas of another, then their attribution to a single author (narrator) is indisputable.

Following this principle, it seems clear that the text *Frroku* displays a template that other texts as far as northwest Macedonia and eastern Kosovo have followed. *Contra* Ukhov, I argue that Gjon Frroku cannot be claimed as ‘author’ or ‘narrator’ of this template, nor can it be said to form an ur-text of the song from which the other ‘schools’ derive their arrangements. His is simply the oldest *recorded* performance that I have found and this recording has influenced performers in other Albanian-speaking communities. The fact that texts VII and VIII pre-date his LP performance indicate that Frroku drew on a widely known and pre-existing model.

I chose text of Frroku’s version as my ‘control’ text due to its length, its thematic inclusiveness, and its high 67% degree of formulaic correlation with text I, the first version I began translating. It showed an even higher 97% degree of

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<sup>45</sup> P. D. Ukhov, ‘Tipičeskie mesta (loci communes) kak sredstvo pasportizacii bylin’, *Russkij fol’klor* 2 (1957), quoted in Lord, *Singer*, p. 285, n. 13. Translation is Lord’s.

formulaic agreement with the text of Llapi, the first video performance I began working with. The level of formulaic agreement between these three indicates that they form not an original or ur-text but a particular rhizomatic cluster, an *Aga Imer* tradition. Indeed, of the 17 texts I examined in detail, ten of them demonstrated more than 55% agreement with the control group of Frroku/Llapi (*Table 7.2*).

Text	Source	Provenance	# of lines total	# of lines in agreement	% of lines in agreement
Frroku	Video	Lezhë, Albania	116		
Llapi	Video	Llapi, Kosovo	117	114	97%
I	Osmani	Xhepçisht, Macedonia	87	58	66.7%
II	Osmani	Sellcë, Macedonia	115	28	24%
III	Osmani	Gurgurnicë, Macedonia	102	25	23.5%
IV	Osmani	Sellcë, Macedonia	94	40	42.5%
V	Osmani	Brodec, Macedonia	70	23	33%
VI	Osmani	Pallçisht i Eperm, Macedonia	95	59	62%
VII	Mitko	Southern Albania	62	38	61%
VIII	<i>Këngë Legjendare</i>	Northern Albania	153	100	65%
IX	<i>Balada Popullore</i>	Nivan, Albania	44	18	41%
X	<i>Këngë Legjendare</i>	Dërdushë, Albania	28	17	60.7%
XI	CD	Vranisht, Albania			
XII	CD	Gjirokastër, Albania			
Ferati/ Kasami	Video	Tetovo/Gostivar, Macedonia	46	28	61%
Ukaj	Video	Gjakova, Kosovo	120	102	85%
A.Gashi	Video	Prizren, Kosovo	104	80	57%
Matushi	Video	Northern Albania	93	54	71%

*Table 7.2: Aga Imer transcriptions, line agreement percentages.*

Greater familiarity with each of the 23 transcribed and recorded versions shows that they fall into a number of textual and musical rhizomatic clusters. These two structures usually, but not always overlap, as the text cluster of one song might

display musical features found in another, otherwise divergent text cluster. This phenomenon proves commonplace in folk song traditions, as the folklorist Samuel Bayard observed in his seminal study of tune types or families in British folk songs.<sup>46</sup>

The rhizome served as a more appropriate model for these relationships than a genealogy as the latter requires an origin point from which to trace lines of descent and bifurcations. *Aga Imer*'s manifestations show no such origin point; my choice of Frroku/Llapi as a control was to an extent an arbitrary choice on my part. In fact Bayard and, more recently, James R. Cowdery note in some detail the a-genealogical behavior of vernacular music traditions, although neither was aware of the rhizome as a theoretical model. Bayard states, 'the time when any folk-tune variant is recorded has no reference to the real age of that variant',<sup>47</sup> while Cowdery drives the point home even further by saying, 'the suggestion of descent [of the members of a tune family] from a single ancestor is as inappropriate here as it would be in a biological study.'<sup>48</sup>

Agreement of diction and oral formulas provides only one metric for establishing relationships. The number and type of themes in each version, the instrumentation used in performance, geographical provenance, and melodic structure provide alternative focal points that reveal a range of interactions between rhizomatic clusters. My criteria for determining the degree of relationships between texts rests primarily on five factors:

1. Which themes are present or lacking in each text compared to the control group (*App. 10*).

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<sup>46</sup> Samuel P. Bayard, 'Prolegomena to a Study of the Principal Melodic Families of British-American Folk Song', *The Journal of American Folklore* 63/247 (1950), p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> James R. Cowdery, 'A Fresh Look at the Concept of Tune Family', *Ethnomusicology* 28/3 (1984), p. 502.

2. The number of line-agreements with the control texts Frroku/Llapi and, conversely, the number of lines unique to a given text.
3. The diction and narrative structure of key passages, particularly themes of shouting or silence, intercession, oaths, and the lesser return.
4. The name used for Aga's instrument.
5. The narrative form of lesser return theme which shows the greatest amount of variation among texts and is the most likely theme to be omitted.

The closest I could come, I decided, to an origin point was not any one of the manifest texts but rather the story of Aga Imer as an archetypal form. This, too, does not necessarily present one with a pure Aga Imer narrative but contains elements of other Return songs and reticulated themes from other genres such as the Dumuzi-d laments and *Dream* texts. The *Aga Imer* versions as a collective whole behave in the same rhizomatic manner as the *Digeneid* and *Dede Korkut* manuscripts; each individual version or manuscript shows unique traits even as each iteration retains the DNA, the key thematic rhizomes, of the narrative's archetype. Looked at as a phylogenetic lineage, on the other hand, most versions of *Aga Imer* show no relationship with the others strong enough to group them together on one branch, nor do they develop further 'descendants' that bifurcated from the branch.

A rhizome, on the other hand, allows me to visualize the 23 versions in terms of relative relationships in which any one of the versions can act as the center of a cluster without the need to determine which one represents the older, purer, or original version. Because I had ten versions that were text only, I made this the natural starting point though musical relationships *tended* to correspond to textual ones. I then grouped the 23 versions into five rhizome clusters based on text

agreements (T1-5) and seven based on musical settings (M1-7) as follows (*Tables*

7.3-4):

<b>Rhizome</b>	<b>Contains</b>
T1	Frroku, Llapi, I, VIII, M. Ukaj, A. Gashi, Matusha
T2	III, VI, VII, IX, X, XI, XII
T3	H. Gashi, Broja, Fetiu
T4	Ferati, Kasami
T5	II, IV, V, A. Ukaj, <i>Legend</i>

*Table 7.3: Text correspondences, rhizomes.*

<b>Rhizome</b>	<b>Contains</b>
M1	Frroku, Llapi
M2	M. Ukaj, A. Gashi
M3	H. Gashi, Broja, Fetiu
M4	Ferati, Kasami
M5	Matusha, <i>Legend</i>
M6	R. Gashi
M7	A. Ukaj

*Table 7.4: Melodic correspondences, rhizomes.*

<b>Key, Fig. 7.2:</b>	
—	Geg dialect zone
—	Tosk dialect zone
AL...XII	Video/audio versions
I...X	Transcribed versions
	Text rhizome T1, Melodic rhizome M1
	Text rhizome T2,
	Text rhizome T3, Melodic rhizome M3
	Text rhizome T4, Melodic rhizome M4
	Text rhizome T5, Melodic rhizome M5
	Melodic rhizome M2
	Melodic rhizome M6
	Melodic rhizome M7

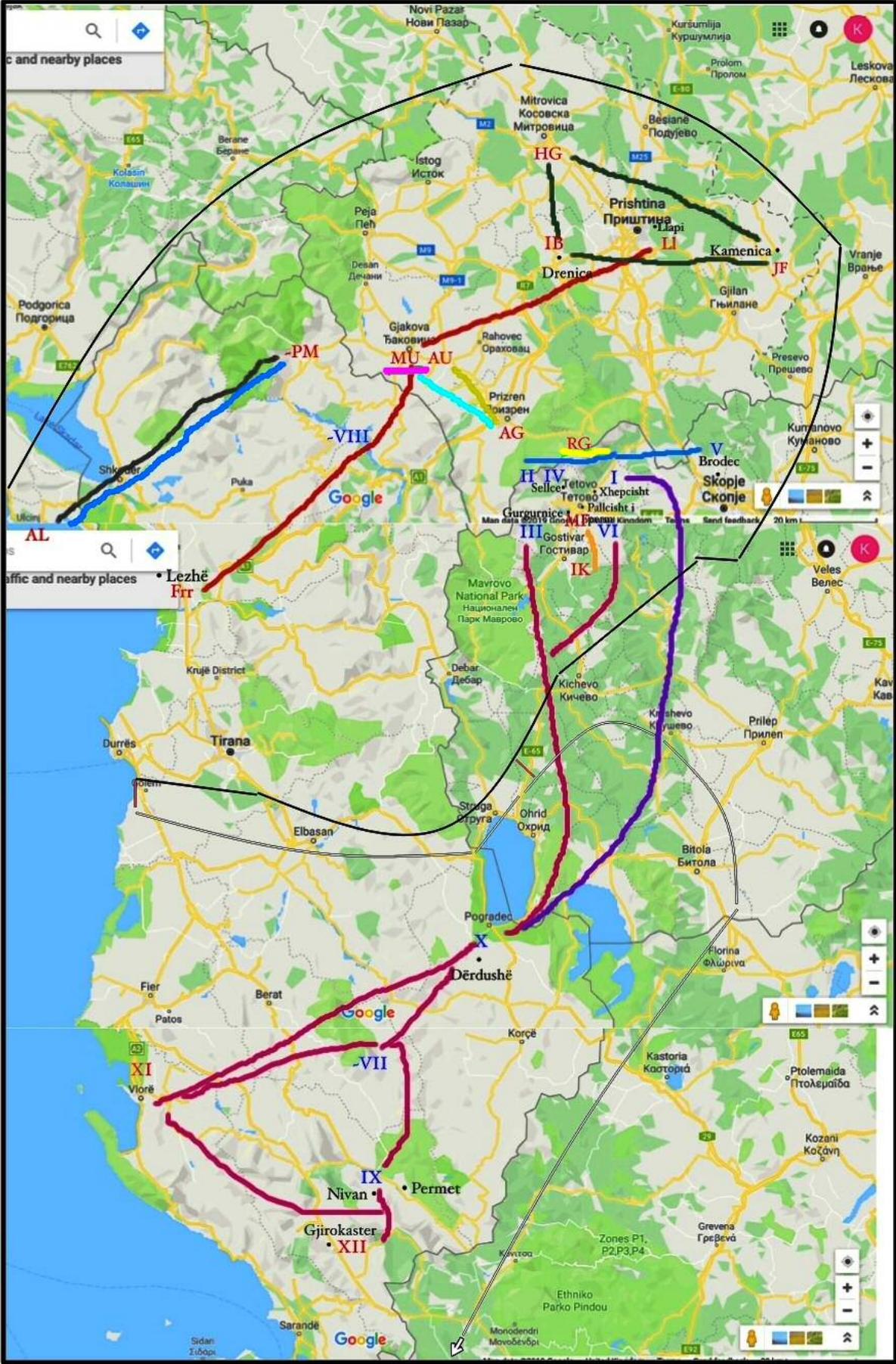


Fig. 7.2: Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia; Music and Text Rhizomes of Aga Imer.

*The Five Text Rhizomes*

Text rhizome T1 includes the two control texts Frroku/Llapi and the five texts that demonstrate an agreement of more than 65% or 2/3rds or more of their line totals.

Text rhizome T2 consists entirely of southern versions of *Aga Imer*. Their textual agreement with text rhizome T1 varies from 23.5% for Text III, the lowest percentage, to around 61% for Texts VII and X. These texts are distinguishable as part of the ‘southern’ *Aga Imer* tradition primarily by four dictional markers: first, with the exception of Text X, whose shouting theme differs radically,<sup>49</sup> they are the only versions to use *karadyzen* as the term for Aga’s instrument.

*Ç’kije Ago karadizenit ç i s’na i bije?* [III.16]

‘For what reason, Aga, your *karadyzen* you have stopped playing to us?’

*Pse s’e mer karadyzenë?* [VII.8]

*T’engledic’ karadyzene’?* [IX.7]

Second, all six of these versions employ the conjunction *sikur*, ‘as if, as though’, at the beginning of each line in which Aga describes his terrible dream to the king’s daughter:

*Sikur baba mu ka shurdhu* [III.17]

*Sikur nana mu ka qëru* [III.18]

*Sikur gruja mu ka martu* [III.19]

As if [my] father had lost his voice

As if [my] mother was sobbing

As if [my] wife had married [another]

This construction is absent from *Aga Imer* versions of the northern tradition whose diction is typified by the formulaic lines of text I:34-37,

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<sup>49</sup> Text X omits Aga’s playing and singing altogether. It also has no king’s daughter to free Aga Imer; instead, the Serbian epic hero Marko Krali [Alb; Sla. *Kraljević*] appears. Haxhihasani notes that this is a feature of the *Aga Imer* tradition around the Albanian city of Korçe, 90 km. NE of Gjirokastër and 35 S of Pogradec. (*Këngë Popullore Legjendare*, p. 56, n. 1).

*Se kamë pa ni andërr t'keçe.  
Nana plakë oshtë verbue,  
Kulla e saraj janë shkatrue.  
Gruja e dalë për me u martue.<sup>50</sup>*

“That I have had a terrible dream.  
The old mother was driven out.  
The tower [*kulla*] and courtyard [*saraj*] were ruined.  
The woman already married was getting married off (by) them.”

The third marker, related to the second, is some version of the term *martue vasha*, ‘young girl, maiden’, in the dream-recounting.<sup>51</sup>

*Sikur me' martonet vasha* [VII.11]  
*Sikur m'u martua vasha* [IX.11]  
*Sikur m'u martuake vasha* [X.6]

As if the maiden was married off (by) them

Fourth, it is characteristic of southern versions of Aga Imer to begin *in medias res* at the shouting theme.<sup>52</sup> The one exception to this is Text III that opens with a full Absence sequence, though it treats this section very differently from the norm. It has only one line, III.4, ‘only one night he stayed with his wife’, in common with the others and it is not until III.11 that III other formulaic agreements emerge. Of the 15 texts I have analyzed Text III measures last in formulaic agreements with the control group at 23.5%. Text III also differs from the others in its rhizome cluster in that it is the only to include the lesser return theme. Text III’s treatment of it, alone among all analyzed texts, sees the king give Aga his daughter in marriage as reward for his honorable fulfillment of his *besa* to her.

Text rhizome T3 contains three versions by Halit Gashi (H. Gashi), Ibish Broja (Mulaku), and Jeton Fetiu. All three come from villages near Prishtina in

<sup>50</sup> ‘Imer Aga na ishte martu’, Osmani, *Epikë*, p. 31.

<sup>51</sup> Text III does not contain this line though it still uses the *sikur* syntax.

<sup>52</sup> Haxhihasani, *Këngë Popullore*, n.1, p. 55.

northwestern Kosovo (*Fig. 7.2*) and their texts and music show a nearly exact correspondence to each other. They thus seem to constitute a ‘Prishtina’ *Aga Imer* rhizome or tradition.

Text rhizome T4 includes only two members, the performances by Mahmut Ferati and by Ibrahim Kasami. Ferati’s recording is the older one and Kasami’s follows it so closely that it can be viewed as a ‘cover’ version of Ferati’s. These two texts contain a fully developed Absence theme but a weak lesser return. Although text rhizome T4 shows a 61% agreement with text rhizome T1 it is almost purely via semantic agreements, not syntactical or formulaic ones. In terms of their formula usage Ferati and Kasami’s versions stand alone, closely related only to each other: they even lack mention of Aga’s instrument, saying only, in Ferati’s line *MF.13*,

*O nje ditë nje këng e kish knu*

O one night a song he was singing

Finally, the textual rhizome cluster T5 contains what I call ‘outliers’: texts that display anomalous or unique features from the more cohesive rhizomes yet show no clear relationships to each other. Texts II, IV, and V have only between 23-42.5% agreement to text rhizome T1 (*Table 7.2*); at a cursory reading *Albanian Legend*’s text is almost unrecognizable as an *Aga Imer* story, even opening with the hero in prison singing and playing the *lahutë* instead of *çifteli*. The Augustin Ukaj version will be discussed in the section on music analysis below.

By the five criteria listed above, text V is noteworthy in its divergence even from the other texts in rhizome T5. In addition to its low formulaic agreement rate at 32.8%, and its weak theme, its strongest agreement comes in the wedding, summons and capture themes and its weakest in shouting, intercession and oaths themes which it almost entirely lacks. The standard terms *zandan*, ‘prison’, and *rob i zan*, ‘captive

slave, serf<sup>7</sup>, or variations thereof, do not appear at all in Text V. Hence Aga is not presented in text V as a prisoner of war; instead he is referred to as *trimi*, ‘the brave warrior’ (line V.20).

Text V also never mentions either *çika* or *bija*, Aga’s intercessor, nor does her father the king warrant any notice. Instead, in the lesser return theme Aga returns to seek *lishue*, ‘release from captivity’ from a mysterious woman called only *madhe nusja*, ‘the great bride’. Finally, Text V omits the hero’s dream theme and the term *ëndërr* or *andërr*, ‘dream’, never appears.

Osmani collected text V from Skopje district (*Fig. 7.2*), and texts II and IV from near Tetovo. That text rhizome T4, and text III as well, all come from Tetovo district demonstrates how even in a concentrated area individual version of *Aga Imer* may show no tendency to coalesce as a distinct local performance tradition. These northwestern Macedonian examples completely contradict the traits shown in the theoretical Prishtina ‘tradition’ of text rhizome T3. This phenomena exemplifies why the rhizome provides a more accurate model for these texts than a genealogy.

### Textual Correspondences

In determining formulaic correspondences between text I used two criteria for: first, the degree of verbal similarity between lines in different texts, i.e. their formulaic patterns and syntactical correspondences. In the Frroku text, for example, line *Frr.2* reads,

*veq nji dit ka nej me gru*

But [only] one day had he laid/stayed with his wife

This line occurs in all of the texts except X and VII. The other occurrences follow Frroku’s verbal formula almost exactly:

*veç ni natë ka (negji) me g(i)ru* [L1.2]  
*Sall ni natë ka ndejt me grue* [I.2]  
*Veç ni nat me nusen ban* [II.5]  
*Sall nji natë ka ndejt me grue* [III.4]  
*Sall ni natë kish ndejt me grue* [IV.2]  
*Sall ni natë na ndejt me grue* [V.2]  
*Veç ni nat ka ndejt me grue* [VI.2]  
*Sall nji natë mâ s' ndej me grue* [VIII.2]  
*O veq një nat ka nejt me grue* [MF.2]

Their variations from one another consist of dialectical word forms. *Sall* is an old regional word for ‘only, alone’,<sup>53</sup> while *veç* as a proclitic can mean ‘only, just’ and as a conjunction means ‘except that, but’. Frroku’s line *Frr.2*’s *nej*, ‘laid, sat, stayed (with); kept to’, and *nji*, ‘one’, are found in several dialectical or phonemic forms: *ndejt*,<sup>54</sup> *ndej*, *nejt* and *ni*, *një*, respectively. Finally, line II.4 substitutes *nusen* (‘bride’, acc. sg. of *nusë*, nom.) for *gru(e)*, ‘wife, woman’ and *ban*, a regional Geg form of the verb *mba-*, ‘to hold on to, keep’,<sup>55</sup> for *nej*.

My second criterion concerns lines where the diction shows considerable differences but that have an equivalent semantic function in the narrative. For example, in Frroku’s line *Frr.39* Aga has told the daughter of his terrible dream and then begs her to release him, to which she responds,

*m'jep [nën] qese se t'lshoj vet* [Frr.39]

“Give me nine purses, that I [may] release you myself”

*m'jep nan qese të lshoj vet* [L1.38]

*M'ep nantë qese po t'lëshoj vet* [VI.33]

<sup>53</sup> *OAED*, p. 763.

<sup>54</sup> *Ndejt* is the standard Albanian past definite and participle stem for the verb *rri-*, ‘to stay, stand; sit; to fit well on one’s body’. *OAED*, p. 750.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 493.

Lines Frroku *Frr*.39, Llapi *Ll*.38 and text VI.33, all follow this formula. But in lines of texts II.28, IV.31, VII.21, and IX.14 the daughter responds with,

*Ma jep besën din e imanë* [II.28]

*Unë besën po ta jap* [IV.31]

*Po la bese'n edhe dinin* [VII.21]

*Te' le' bese'n e imane'* [IX.14]

All of which state essentially, 'then you give to me the oath of *din e imanë*'. In both cases the lines' semantic function is to open the oaths theme and mark the daughter's opening of negotiations with Aga for conditions of his release, the 'exchange of guest-gifts'. They thus immediately precede Aga's release, theme.

### *The Seven Melodic Rhizomes*

The relationships between the musical settings of Aga Imer show the same rhizomatic qualities as the texts, though as noted above the two groups do not always overlap.

My criteria for defining these melodic rhizomes consist of:

1. Similarities and differences in the melodic phrases and interval structures of the compared versions.
2. The types of poetic meters and song structures (i.e. strophic, stichic, etc.) used in performance.
3. The instrumentation used in performance.
4. The details of the text used in a version, although this was a secondary factor as the text and melodic rhizomes do not always correspond.

The melodies used in these melodic rhizomes display characteristics of several different *tune families*, that Bayard defined as,

a group of melodies showing basic interrelation by means of constant melodic correspondence, and presumably owing their

mutual likeness to descent from a single air that has assumed multiple forms through processes of variation, imitation, and assimilation.<sup>56</sup>

In determining which theoretical family a given tune belonged to Bayard considered several aspects of the tune,<sup>57</sup> particularly,

1. ‘Stereotyped features’ or formulas such as a tune’s opening motif and cadence.
2. Correspondences and dissimilarities in melodic contour, intervals and accented tones.
3. Lastly his belief that closely related tunes must be derived from or variations of ‘one archetypal, individual *tune* [emphasis his]’.

Bayard’s interest lay in tracing the tune families of a large swathe of folk tunes from the whole British Isles and in some important respects, especially his notion of tune archetypes, was fairly reductionist. My own aim in the following sections is much less ambitious: to examine melodic correspondences among a selection of *Aga Imer* versions to show the utility of my rhizome metaphor as an analytical framework, and to note that the rhizomatic behavior of the epic Return song genre extends from the social network the Return songs circulate in to the songs as integral wholes—i.e. their narrative and thematic structures—down to the textual and musical aspects of the songs themselves.

Although Bayard implicitly seemed to recognize the fluid, ahistorical and a-genealogical nature of these tune families, his tune-archetype theory showed that he was reluctant to abandon the genealogical model altogether. Bayard’s tune archetype theory has been more recently critiqued by researchers such as Cowdery and his

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<sup>56</sup> Bayard, ‘Prolegomena’, p. 33.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.

refined definition of tune family. Although neither scholar could have been aware of rhizome theory as Deleuze and Guattari conceived it, Cowdery's reimagining of the tune family concept bears a number of affinities with rhizomatic principles and thus his version has been more useful for my analysis:

A given culture may be predisposed to certain kinds of melodic contours, but the actual *process* [emphasis his] of composition is suggested by complex permutations based on melodic pools...certain melodic moves are seen to belong together not as a fixed chain of events, but more as a system of potentialities. These motives can recombine in various ways, expanding or contracting, to make new melodies which still conform to the traditional sound.<sup>58</sup>

Cowdery formulates three principles by which tunes may interrelate:

1. 'Outlining', essentially similar to Bayard's idea of similarities in melodic contours between two or more tunes.
2. 'Conjoining', in which sections of tunes correspond while other sections remain dissimilar; the dissimilar sections may then be related to other tune families or be more individualized.
3. 'Recombining', that allows for, for example, a section or phrase of a tune to occur in another but in a greatly expanded or contracted form, with elements of other tunes added to it or new elements created within it.

All three of these principles occur in the melodic motifs I discuss below.

One element missing from this method, however, is the voices of the musicians themselves. While Albanian-language ethnomusicological literature contains discussions and analyses of tune 'types', families and modal structures,<sup>59</sup> the majority of these were written during the communist period (1945-1992) and accordingly bear the heavy imprint of the Marxist-Leninist theory that Enver Hoxha

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<sup>58</sup> Cowdery, 'A Fresh Look', p. 499.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Sokoli, *Veglat Muzikore*, pp. 143-192; Lorenc Antoni, *Folklori Muzikuer Shqiptar I-VIII* (Prishtina: Rilindja, 1964).

imposed on all cultural studies.<sup>60</sup> These studies themselves imposed various frameworks upon the cultural materials—discussions of Albanian folk music in terms of Western modes and/or Turkish *makam*-s,<sup>61</sup> for example—in efforts to construct historical trajectories for the folk music that fit the required Marxist dialectic model of social and cultural evolution. Thus the Albanian sources do not always necessarily reflect a true emic perspective either.

In my assessment, I have found that analysis of melodic motifs in Albanian songs must factor in some extra-musical elements as well. One major factor in how the two rhizome groups relate internally is that whereas the text rhizomes can be differentiated largely by factors related to linguistic dialect, in the melodic rhizomes differentiation depends to a great degree on the musicians' choices of instrumentation and those instruments' musical capabilities.<sup>62</sup> Instrumentation also bears on the poetic meter of the individual performance but I have not factored meter into the present analysis for two reasons: first, the relationship between instrumentation and meter is visible but not entirely consistent, and second the scholarship around north Albanian meter remains inconsistent in its conclusions.

The base meter of the north Albanian heroic song is generally considered the octosyllabic line analyzed by Albanian folklorist Stavro Skendi,<sup>63</sup> not the more well-

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<sup>60</sup> Shetuni, *Albanian Traditional Music*, pp. 16-20.

<sup>61</sup> The influence of this communist-era theoretical framework is still evident in current Albanian scholarship; see Kushtrim Jakupi, 'Modality, an Essential Feature of Albanian Folklore', *Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Literature, Linguistics and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICLLIS) Tetovo, Macedonia, Feb. 20, 2015* (Tetovo: Info Media Group & Anglisticum Journal, 2015), pp. 142-150.

<sup>62</sup> Bayard suggests this in his discussion of intentionality in the tune variation process, but does not develop the idea further ('Prolegomena', p. 32). Lord (Muslim Influence, p. xy) and Skendi (Oral Epic, p. yx) note in passing the meters of sung epics tend to change depending on whether the performer accompanies themselves on the bowed *gusle/lahutë* (*deseterac* 10-syllable meter) or a plucked LNL like the *tambura* or *çifteli* (generally a hepto- or octosyllabic meter). This in turn seems to stem from the rhythmic textures each type of chordophone is prone to: a fluid pulse for the former, a more regular percussive beat for the latter.

<sup>63</sup> Stavro Skendi, *Albanian and South Slavic Oral Epic Poetry (Memoirs of the American Folklore Society V44)* (Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1954), pp. 168-197, p.p. 171-176.

known *deseterac* of the Serbo-Croatian and Bosnian epics, a ten-syllable line with, in its simplest formulation, a caesura between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> syllables.<sup>64</sup> Skendi argues that the octosyllabic line is ‘the true verse of Albanian popular heroic poetry—and of Albanian poetry, in general.’<sup>65</sup> In Albanian songs the *deseterac*, he claims, appears only in the song cycles of the heroes Mujo and his brother Halili and of the hero Gjergj Elez Alija, all of which originated in the Ottoman-Hapsburg frontier region around the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The two *lahutë* versions of *Aga Imer* do use a *deseterac*-like meter which suggests that both Albanian *lahutare* and Slavic *guslari* consider this meter proper for epic songs performed on these bowed instruments.<sup>66</sup> Yet the Albanian epics with *lahutë* display a looseness with syllable count and lines may contain eleven or twelve syllables whereas Skendi, Lord and Foley observed that ‘Yugoslav’ epic verse proves highly regular in its syllable count and caesurae positions.

The Albanian caesura has proven problematic as well: in the Albanian decasyllabic songs, most notably the Mujo cycle, ‘it is not easy...to find the break’.<sup>67</sup> The Albanian poet Koliqi finds the caesura after the fourth syllable, while the Frasheri brothers argued it came at the line’s end. The latter also noted that when sung to *lahutë* the lines contained ten syllables, but when recited become mixed with nine, seven, or eight syllable lines. The presence of both *deseterac*-like and ‘heroic’ octosyllabic Albanian meters in these and other Albanian songs, Skendi argues,

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<sup>64</sup> See Foley, *Traditional Oral Epic*, pp. 158-200, Lord, *Singer*, pp. 30-67.

<sup>65</sup> Skendi, *Oral Epic Poetry*, p. 171.

<sup>66</sup> ‘Pjeter Matusha-Ago Imeri’, found at: <<https://www.youtube.com>>; accessed: 1 March 2017. ‘Albanian Legend, Aga Ymeri of Ulqini’, found at: <<https://www.youtube.com>>; accessed: 26 Nov. 2016. This is not hard and fast, however, for the versions performed by Jeton Fetiu and Hashim Gashi, both featuring the *sharki* lute, also use the decasyllable. Significantly, these performances do not center on the *çifteli* which appears as a companion instrument to the *sharki*, in contrast to the version I analyze here which features three *çifteli*-s and only one *sharki*, played by a non-singing ensemble member.

<sup>67</sup> Skendi, p. 175.

suggests that ‘as the *deseterac* is not the meter that the Albanian mountaineer feels exactly as his own, it is natural not to stick closely to it.’<sup>68</sup>

The octosyllabic caesura proves just as difficult to clearly discern. Gjergj Fishta, the Albanian poet who composed the first Albanian literary epic, *Lahuta e Malcis, The Highland Lute*, published in 1937, wrote that most commonly the stress fell on the third and seventh syllables of this line.<sup>69</sup> I have noticed, however, that in performance the singers will pause halfway through the musical measure, on beat four, and not on any predesignated syllables. Caesurae such as this seem to have little bearing on nor regard for syntactical divisions such as the *deseterac* caesura follows, and I would argue that the pauses are determined by the musical measure, falling almost always on beat four.

The Albanian octosyllabic line contains several other metric inconsistencies. In accounting for such inconsistencies Skendi points mostly to syntactical devices such as ‘animate’ or ‘inanimate’ accusative forms (which he does not elaborate on), the first of which contains more syllables. The singers, he claims, choose between such forms to fill out or curtail line lengths while performing. This may explain some cases of metric inconsistency but *këngetare*, at least in my observations of the *Aga Imer* versions, use a number of techniques to regulate line lengths that highlight the discrepancies between what the performers do and what the text *looks* like it is doing in print. When transcribing a text from a recorded performance a scholar can reconstitute the ‘proper’ line lengths and ‘correct’ syntactical oddities resulting from

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 175. In practice, the caesura in decasyllabic Albanian songs can easily become even more obscured when the singer, *këngetar*, employs techniques such as stringing several lines together without pause and then returning to the more usual delineation of individual lines with slight breaks in between.

<sup>69</sup> Skendi, p. 172.

the performer's manipulations, and a reader would have no idea of the transcriber's interventions in the written text.

Some of these performance techniques include:

1. Elision of syllables or words, especially a possessive particle '-i-' or '-e-', 'X of Y', or word-final vowels that are often elided into surrounding phonemes. (In other instances a possessive article may count as a distinct syllable.)
2. Condensing or separating syllables to keep each line within the musical rhythm, i.e. a singer may give each syllable a full beat or rush two-four syllables into one beat.
3. Shortening or elongating words by dropping or adding phonemes, usually vowels and most often the *ë*, at any point in the word.

Such techniques result in an overall line-syllable count that ranges between seven to twelve syllables per line. In the Frroku/Llapi versions of *Aga Imer*, for example, although 2/3rds of the lines contain seven or eight syllables a full 1/3<sup>rd</sup> still contain between nine-twelve. Thus one may conclude that the base meter of such songs could be octosyllabic or heptasyllabic with decasyllabic tendencies (*Table 7.* ).

Syllable count	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number of lines	42	44	23	8	0	1

*Table 7.5: Total of syllabic line lengths in Frroku/Llapi versions of Aga Imeri.*

Finally, while the *Aga Imer* versions with *çifteli*-centered accompaniment tend to favor an octosyllabic line most of the performances with *sharki* lean towards a ten or eleven syllable line, like the versions with *lahutë*, while the southern versions use an overall six syllable line. None of these prosody-instrumentation patterns appear

reliable enough to come to solid conclusions on this relationship, so I have abstained from doing so until further research confirms or negates this idea.

Table 7.5 restates the melodic rhizomes M1-7:

<b>Rhizome</b>	<b>Contains</b>
M1	Frroku, Llapi
M2	M. Ukaj, A. Gashi
M3	H. Gashi, Broja, Fetiu
M4	Ferati, Kasami
M5	Matusha, <i>Albanian Legend</i>
M6	R. Gashi
M7	A. Ukaj

Table 7.6: Melodic rhizome groups.

Melodic rhizome M1 again contains the control versions. Their musical content, performed with a *çifteli/sharki* pair in Frroku and a ‘quartet’ dominated by three *çifteli*-s with a lone *sharki* in Llapi, is characterized by a strophic singing style and the use of at least four distinct melodic formulas arranged successively within each individual strophe. There are musical interludes between strophes that have their own melodic form.

These melodic motifs and strophic arrangement are closely related to those of melodic rhizome M2, and can be considered as belonging to one Albanian tune family. The versions in rhizome M2 are performed in ensembles with several *sharki*-s and *çifteli*-s, with the former somewhat dominant and the *çifteli*-s using apparently chromatic fretting to match the tuning of the *sharki*.

Melodic rhizome M3 also bears some similarities to the previous two rhizomes but its three *Aga Imer* versions are sung stichically with an interlude figure between each line. Their lines are sung to one melody throughout with two subcadences that use a ‘closing’ motif. These versions are twice as long as those of melodic rhizomes M1 and 2, at around 19-20 minutes, and utilize 7/4 time rather than the 8/4 or 8/8 of the first two groups. The M3 versions are performed either with a

single *sharki* or, in Fetiù and Kongjeli's version as a duet with a *sharki* and violin. Because the melodies of the remaining four melodic rhizomes diverge greatly, in some cases entirely, from those of rhizomes M1-M3, I have limited the following analysis to these first three groups in the interest of conciseness.

Melodic rhizome M4 consists of the Ferati and Kasimi songs. Their most obvious musical characteristic lies in their use of a vocal drone to support melody sung by Ferati or Kasami. This represents a common singing style in western Macedonia among Geg, Tosk, and Macedonian communities alike, though each community has its own ways of effecting the style. Rhizome M4's instrumentation sets it apart as well, as it includes an electronic keyboard, *davul* or *derbuka* drum, electric guitar and a clarinet or *zurla* reed horn, respectively.

The melody uses an augmented second tetrachord with occasional rises to the 5<sup>th</sup> scale degree and heavy use of the subtonic degree. However, at several points in the song the major third degree lower a half-step to a minor third, effecting a modulation from the augmented second tetrachord to one whose intervallic structure is analogous to a Phrygian mode or, in Turkish terms, a *Kürdî* tetrachord (*Fig. 7.3*).<sup>70</sup> With their augmented second scale, instrumentation, and modulation techniques the two versions of melodic rhizome M4 bear closer relationship to the urban music genres such as *saze* that have their roots in Ottoman era music.

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<sup>70</sup> For the relationship between Turkish *makam*-s and the modes used in Albanian urban lyric songs see Eno Koço, *Albanian Urban Lyric Song in the 1930s* (Lanham MD/Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2004), pp. xviii-xxi, 25-28, 158-162, 190-198. Modulation does occur in the melodic rhizome cluster M2 but in a different manner described below.



Fig. 7.3: Closing passage of Mahmut Ferati's *Aga Imer*.

Melodic rhizome M5 contains two performances with *lahutë*, one by Pjeter Matusha, the other simply titled *Albanian Legend*. Their melodic shapes differ tremendously yet I have classed them in one musical rhizome as their singers have adapted the vocalized text to the musical idiom of the *lahutë qua lahutë*, not as a modified or adapted version of the *sharki* or *çifteli* accompaniments.

Melodic rhizome M6 contains only Rexh Gashi's (R. Gashi) treatment which has two unique features. First, its instrumentation includes *sharki* and *çifteli* but also accordion. Second, and more significantly, its rhythm is in 12/4, divided as groups of three or two beats: 3-2-3-2-2. The constraints of this rhythm pulls the shape of the melody to its own form; the melody's resultant shape distinguishes it from the previous melodic rhizomes. In addition, it is sung in couplets rather than stichically or strophically, with an interlude between each couple.

Finally, melodic rhizome M7 contains only Augustin Ukaj's (A. Ukaj) interpretation with solo *çifteli*. I consider it a separate rhizome cluster for two reasons: first, his is the only version of *Aga Imer* I have encountered in 9/4 rhythm. Second, his arrangement is in two distinct parts or sections each with a characteristic melody (the 9/4 occurs in the first section) that represent a third Albanian tune family that I have opted to save for a future study.

*The Six Musical Motifs*

The musical structure of the Frroku and Llapi versions of *Aga Imer* builds on six melodic motifs (Figs. 7.4-9) used in the strophes—a strophic Opening motif, three variants of a strophic Medial motif (motifs B<sup>0</sup>, B<sup>I</sup>, and B<sup>II</sup>), a Penultimate and a strophic Closing motif—an Interlude phrase between strophes (Fig. 7.10), and a final cadential formula. The cadential motif represents a type of formulaic phrase widely used in north Albanian epic and heroic *këngë* performed with *çifteli* and/or *sharki* and as such can be considered a genre marker. However, my purpose in the following sections is primarily to show the melodic relationships between versions of *Aga Imer*; while I reference the larger tune families of these *këngë* a fuller examination of where the *Aga Imer* melodies lie in relationship to these tune families falls outside the scope of this Thesis, and so I have not transcribed or analyzed the cadential formulas here.

The dichord of *g/d* that closes each of the strophic motifs except the Closing marks the eighth, final ‘empty’ beat that follows and closes the sung line that concludes on beat seven. This dichord consists of the open *jehonë* (Alb, ‘echo, reverberating’) or melody string and the *g* subtonic note played on the drone<sup>71</sup> string stopped at fret six with the thumb. This dichord should not be considered the finalis however. Rather, it is the most heavily emphasized *sung* note, that intoned on the

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<sup>71</sup> In Albanian ethnomusicological literature (e.g. Sokoli, *Gjurmime*, pp. 326-327) this string is often referred to as the *iso* string, from Grk *ἰσος*, *ison*. In ancient Greek the term referred to a sense of equalizing or equality, or in other contexts a ‘leveling (of opportunities)’ or simply making ground level. In musical contexts, however, it is used as the equivalent of *bourdon*, a musical drone, generally vocal, as the *ison* drone of later Byzantine chant. Eno Koço uses it freely to describe the drone-based *iso-polyphony* singing of southern Albania (*Journey*, passim) and *iso-polyphony* has become an international standard term for that style of Albanian vocal music.

However, *iso* is not used in Albanian vernacular for the drone strings of chordophones and was not used even by southern singers to describe their own music (Beniamin Kruta, *Polifonia dzyrëshe e Shqipërisë Jugore* (Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, 1989); Eno Koço, *Journey*, p. xix).

seventh beat, that provides, in modal terms, the finalis. This use of a dichord forms a common characteristic of modes in north Albanian music.<sup>72</sup>



Figure 7.4: Aga Imer, Strophic Opening motif.



Figure 7.5: Aga Imer, Strophic Medial motif  $B^0$ .



Figure 7.6: Aga Imer, Strophic Medial motif  $B^I$ .



Figure 7.7: Aga Imer, Strophic Medial motif  $B^{II}$ .



Figure 7.8: Aga Imer, Strophic Penultimate motif.



Figure 7.9: Aga Imer, Strophic Closing motif.

<sup>72</sup> Spiro Shetuni, *Muzika Tradicionale Shqiptare: Muzika Gege* (Denver: Outskirts Press, 2012), pp. 49-50. More precisely the G represents one member of the double tonic phenomenon common in many genres of Balkan music, in which the tonic shifts between the G and A. In some cases, the çifteli is tuned in in major seconds, a practice that strongly emphasizes and exploits the ambiguity of the double tonic.



Figure 7.10: *Aga Imer, Interlude motif.*

Musically the overall melodic contour of the strophes can be schematized as follows: the strophic Opening motif (*Fig. 7.10*) centers on the fifth scale degree  $e'$  and descends to its finalis on the tonic  $a$ ,<sup>73</sup> with subtonic  $g$  as an auxiliary tone or di-tonic (*Fig. 7.11*).



Fig. 7.11: *Schematic of modal structure of Aga Imer, Opening motif (1).*

The opening tone of motifs  $B^0$ ,  $B^I$  and  $B^{II}$  (*Figs. 7.5-7*) falls on the second scale degree that, on the *çifteli*, is a  $\frac{3}{4}$  tone between  $b$ -flat and  $b$ -natural that I have notated as  $b \natural$ .<sup>74</sup> In motif  $B^0$  it also serves as the tonal center within the motif whereas in motifs  $B^I$  and  $B^{II}$  the prominence of the tonic  $a$  within the phrase makes note  $b$

<sup>73</sup> I use the term 'tonic' conditionally; in conventional usage tonic refers to the first note in a scale, but that scale generally falls under a key signature. The type of Albanian music under discussion here is not key-based but primarily modal, but I find the term tonic useful as a name for the stopped note an octave above the note given by the drone string. The drone note provides an orientation point for all other intervals played, and its stopped counterpart, more often than not, is the note that a given piece of music concludes on even if it is not an internal finalis.

<sup>74</sup> North Albanian music is not microtonal in the same way or to the same degree that, say, Turkish, Arab, and Persian art music are; nevertheless microtones do form important parts of the musical structure in a number of Albanian genres. In many of these genres—for example epic singing to the bowed, unfretted *lahutë*—the exact pitch of a quartertone may rise and fall in the course of a performance. On a fretted instrument like the *çifteli*, on the other hand, the  $\frac{1}{4}$  tones are more fixed on the fretboard and so, while the *këngetar's* voice may alter the notes' precise pitch the instrument does not. I have therefore opted to incorporate the  $\frac{1}{2}$ -flat and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -sharp accidentals at the head of the staves in my transcriptions to reflect this quality of the *çifteli's* intonation.

more of a downward leading tone instead of the tonal center. The motifs then descend to subtonic  $g$  with a finalis on  $b \text{ } \text{♯}$ . The final ‘empty’ beat of all three motifs lands on the  $g/d'$  dichord.

Although motif  $B^0$  differs the most in keeping the second degree  $b \text{ } \text{♯}$  as its main internal center I have named it as the prototype because it appears from the first strophe on and always enters before either of motifs  $B^{I-II}$ . In fact, motif  $B^I$  does not appear until strophe three and motif  $B^{II}$  until strophe four (*Table 7.7*).

Motif	Strophe 1	Strophe 2	Strophe 3	Strophe 4	Strophe 5	Strophe 6	Strophe 7
Opening	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3	1-3
Medial $B^0$	4-5	4-7	4-6	4-7	4-7	4-6/17-18	4-7
Medial $B^I$	--	--	7-10	8-9	8-9	7-8/19-23	8-10
Medial $B^{II}$	--	--	--	10-19	10-13	9-12	11-16
Penultimate	--	--	11-13	20-22	14-16	13-16	--
Closing	6-7	8-9	14-15	23-24	17-18	24-25	--

*Table 7.7: Distribution of motifs within each strophe.*<sup>75</sup>

*Figure 7.12: Medial Strophic motif of Aga Imer ( $B^0$ ,  $B^{II}$ ) and song ‘çka ka thonë ai Mbreti i ri’ in 12/4.*<sup>76</sup>

Motif  $B^{II}$  (*Fig. 7.7*) is further distinguished by its opening phrase, the minor third degree  $c'$  played on the *jehonë* string at fret six while the thumb frets the drone string, same fret, a fourth below on subtonic  $g$ . It then descends through the second, tonic and ends on  $g$  on the drone string, letting the open melody string ring out on

<sup>75</sup> \* = Strophe seven’s last three lines use the cadential formula, hence motifs D and C do not appear.

<sup>76</sup> NB: the çifteli here is tuned B-E instead of A-D; a is the subtonic, b tonic, and f# the fifth.

note  $d'$  for one beat. This melodic formula proves extremely common especially in heroic and epic songs as in the song *Çka ka thonë ai mbriti i ri* (Fig. 7.12).

The  $g/d'$  dichord described above is likewise standard, providing a rhythmic, percussive punctuation to phrases typically at the end of a measure. The motif then continues to the same figure found in motif B<sup>1</sup> that moves from the second degree to the tonic  $a$ .

The Penultimate motif (Fig. 7.8, 7.13) opens on the fourth scale degree  $d'$ , touches on the fifth scale degree  $e'$  before descending to its finalis on tonic  $a$ .



Figure 7.13: *Aga Imer, Strophic Penultimate motif.*

The Opening, Penultimate and Interlude motifs share a common figure (Fig. 7.14) but otherwise their melody lines follow divergent paths. Motifs D and Interlude share an initial note  $d'$ , in contrast to motifs A and C that open on note  $e'$ . The Interlude phrase consists of a simple descending figure that touches each note between  $e'$  and  $a$  in turn and ends on the tonic  $a$ .



Fig. 7.14: *Common figure of Opening (A), Penultimate (D) and Interlude motifs of Aga Imer.*



Figure 7.15: Aga Imer, *Strophic Closing motif*.

The Closing motif (*Fig. 7.15*) is the most unique: it closes every strophe on its last two lines with a sharply emphatic, punctual character in which the drone string rings out only with each melody note until the unsung measure three, a lead-in figure to Interlude. Closing motif descends in thirds in measure one and measure two pivots around the second degree  $b^{\sharp}$ . The finalis for Closing also varies from the rest by concluding on the tonic  $a$  instead of subtonic  $g$ . Finally, Closing's second measure changes meter from 8/4 to 6/4 and back to 8/4 in measure three.

Thus the modal contour and tonal hierarchy of the strophic melodic sequence in motifs Opening-Medial  $B^{0,1,II}$ -Penultimate-Closing can be given as the opening notes of each motif in succession:  $e'-b^*-d'-e'-a$ . The fifth scale degree  $e'$  functions as the primary modal center and the second scale degree  $b^{\sharp}$  function as the secondary, medial center. The subtonic  $g$  serves as an auxiliary or di-tonic note, generally marking each measure's 'empty' beat, while the tonic  $a$ , usually the last sung note, acts as the most common finalis. The following sections will show that this represents the modal form of one of the most important melody types of the *këngë* genre.

#### Melodic Types, Instrumentation, Genealogy

Rhizomes M2, with Mirak Ukaj's and Afrim Gashi's versions from western Kosovo, and M3, with the versions by Halit Gashi, Ibrahim Broja, and Jeton Fetiu, from

Prishtina district in northeastern Kosovo (*Fig. 7.2*), display several important features of melodic rhizome M1's melotype. However, melodic rhizome M2 can be considered either a germ of or a condensed version of melodic rhizome M1, and in a sense either one could be a subset of the other. Melodic rhizome M3 shows considerable enough differences to warrant placing it in its own rhizome. Here, I examine in turn the Opening, Medial and Interlude motifs from all three rhizomes to illustrate their relationships to each other.

1.  
Oh ———. A—ga Me—ri, na—u ma-rë tu.

2.  
Oh ——. A—ga Me—ri, nau mar—tu.

*Fig. 7.16: Melodies of Strophic Opening motifs. (1) melodic rhizome M1; (2) melodic rhizome M2.*

Melodic rhizome M2's Opening motif (*Fig. 7.16.2*) can be represented as  $e'-d'-b \overset{\oplus}{\ominus}-(g)$ , the same as rhizome M1's Opening (*Fig. 7.11*), except M1's movement is descending/ascending (*Fig. 7.16.1*) where M2's Opening is strictly descending. In both Openings the note  $d'$  acts as a medial cadence at the caesura on beat four. Melodic rhizome M2's note  $d'$  is weaker than in rhizome M1's opening though it falls at the same point. Note  $b \overset{\oplus}{\ominus}$  acts as the finalis in both Opening motifs.

*Fig. 7.17: Melodic rhizome M3, Stichic motif.*

Melodic rhizome M3 (*Fig. 7.17*) entirely lacks Opening motif, strictly speaking, due to its stichic, rather than strophic structure. The vocal melody remains the same throughout the performance except during the three subcadences when its Closing motif, discussed below, enters. Two significant differences in the music of rhizome M3 must be noted. First, in rhizome M3's Stichic motif the seven beat rhythm changes the stress/beat pattern (*Table 7.8*).

Rhizome & Rhythm	Beat: 1 <sup>st</sup> Hemistiche			Beat: Caesura
	1	2	3	4
M1 (8/4)	1	2	3	4
Note	$b \grave{e}$	$d'$	$b \grave{e}$	$b \grave{e}$
Scale degree	2	4	2	2
M2 (8/4)	1	2	3	4
Note	$b \grave{e}$	$b \grave{e}$	$d'$	$d'$
Scale degree	2	2	4	4
M3 (7/4)	1	2	4	6
Note	$b \grave{e}$	$b \grave{e}$	$d'$	$d'$
Scale degree	2	2	4	4
Syllable	1	2	3	4

*Table 7.8: Rhythm and stress pattern in melodic rhizomes M1-3.*

The second difference is that the prosodic meter of the rhizome's lines is an irregular meter, not strictly octosyllabic as the actual syllable count of each line varies between eight to as many as 15.

1.

Çif — te — lis ma —, nuk po i bjen.

2.

Çif te lis ma, nuk po i bjen.

3.

Bëj nga nu — se, të mi — rë ja ka — zo — ne.

Fig. 7.18: Medial Strophic motifs. (1) melodic rhizome M1, Motif B<sup>0</sup>; (2) melodic rhizome M2; (3) melodic rhizome M3.

Rhizome & Rhythm	Beat: 1 <sup>st</sup> Hemistiche			Beat: Caesura	Beat: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Hemistiche					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
<b>M1 (8/4)</b>										
Note	b $\natural$	d'	b $\natural$	b $\natural$	b $\natural$	d'-c'	b $\natural$	d'/g		
Scale degree	2	4	2	2	2	4-3	2	4'/7		
Syllable	1	2	4	5	6	7-8	9	Ø		
<b>M2 (8/4)</b>										
Note	b $\natural$	b $\natural$	d'	d'	c'	c'-d'	b $\natural$	d'/g		
Scale degree	2	2	4	4	3	3-4	2	4'/7		
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6-7	8	Ø		
<b>M3 (7/4)</b>										
Note	g	b $\natural$	d'	d'-(Ø)	c'	c'	c'	d'-c'	b $\natural$	b $\natural$
Scale degree	7	2	4	4	3	3	3	4-3	2	2
Syllable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Ø

Table 7.9: Prosodic and musical relationships in Medial Strophic motifs of melodic rhizomes M1-3.

The Medial strophic motifs of melodic rhizomes M1, M2, and M3 (Fig. 7.18.1-3) open with second scale degree b $\natural$  as the dominant. Comparative analysis of these three motifs as shown in Table 7.9 indicates a closer relationship between melodic rhizomes M2 and M3 than with melodic rhizome M1; in rhizomes M2 and M3 the caesura falls on note d', the fourth scale degree, instead of melodic rhizome

M1's second degree  $b\sharp$ , and the minor third degree  $c'$  is more pronounced in their second hemistiches than in rhizome M1, where it appears only as a passing tone.

This proves somewhat deceptive, for melodic rhizome M1's strophic motif is more internally cyclical than the other two. In other words, the measure contains two repetitions of the melodic form, one for each hemistich. The apparent divergence between it and the other two motifs can be reconciled by treating each hemistich of melodic rhizome M1 as a condensed expression of the entirety of melodic rhizomes M2 and M3 (Fig. 7.19.1-3; Table 7.10):

Fig. 7.19: Melodic contours and recombinations in Medial Strophic motifs.  
(1) melodic rhizome M1; (2) melodic rhizome M2; (3) melodic rhizome M3.

Rhizome and Rhythm	Notes and Beats						
<b>M1 (8/4)</b>	$b\sharp$	$d'$	$c'$		$b\sharp$	$(g)$	
<b>Beats</b>	1	2	2+		3	4	
<b>M2 (8/4)</b>	$b\sharp$	$d'$	$c'$	$(-d')$	$b\sharp$	$(g)$	
<b>Beats</b>	1-2	3-4	5-6	$(-+)$	7	8	
<b>M3 (7/4)</b>	$b\sharp$	$d'$	$c'$	$(-d')$	$(-\emptyset)$	$b\sharp$	$(g)$
<b>Beats</b>	1-2	4-6	1-4	-6	$(-7)$	1-4-6	(7)

Table 7.10: Melodic contour of medial motifs, melodic rhizomes M1-3.

Fig. 7.20: Schematic of modal structure of Strophic or Medial motif (2).

*Fig. 7.20* presents the melodic contour of the medial motif and demonstrates that all three cases are here in agreement.

The cyclical nature of melodic rhizome M1 highlights why I find that the rhizome serves as a better model for understanding these motivic relationships than a genealogical tree, and for the same reason as with the texts as a whole: constructing a genealogy necessitates a determination of which melodic motif will act as the root form or the ‘common ancestor’. As noted above, there is no way of knowing whether one form represents an expansion or contraction of one of the others, or which rhythm or prosodic meter served as the first carrier of music or text. Thus any more expansive study of tune families in the north Albanian epic and heroic *këngë* is subject to the same problems and limitations that Bayard observed in his study of British Isles folk tunes. That is,

There is no external evidence to tell us whether the very first, original, set of a melody had one or another of all the several recurring melodic phrase-patterns now broadcast among our traditional tune-versions, or was originally longer or shorter than we find its set to be at present.<sup>77</sup>

That these motifs are not even particular to the *Aga Imer* corpus but are found in any number of heroic or epic *këngë* outside the Return genre further adduces the point that the imaginal archetype of the *Aga Imer* narrative is really the only origin point for all its manifestations.

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<sup>77</sup> Bayard, ‘Prolegomena’, p. 22.

1.



Vet e la—va, vet e—ndrro—va. Vet me dhe, me dor e mlo—va.

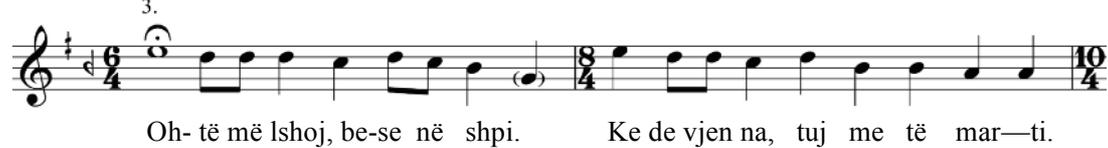
2.



Na— na gjall—, isht qo— rru—.

Gruja dal për me, u mar—tu. (Interlude motif...)

3.



Oh- të më lshoj, be-se në shpi. Ke de vjen na, tuj me të mar—ti.

Fig. 7.21: Closing motifs. (1) melodic rhizome M1; (2) melodic rhizome M2; (3) melodic rhizome M3.

In the closing motifs (Fig. 7.21.1-3) that mark divisions in the sung text some rhizomatic cleavage begins to appear. Melodic rhizomes M1 and M2 place the same notes on the stressed beats for most of the duration, the principal difference being that rhizome M1 descends in thirds while rhizome M2 descends note by note. Melodic rhizome M1's first sung line has its finalis on tonic *a* while rhizome M2's concludes on subtonic *g* and rhizome M3's falls on second degree  $b\sharp$ . All three rhizomes, however, end their second sung lines on note *a*, which thus provides the motivic finalis in all three cases.

Rhizome M3 follows an ascending-descending movement that repeats in measure two and ends on the motivic finalis on *a*. I have schematized this as:

$$||: e'-d'-c'-d'-b\sharp (g) :|| a.$$

Fig. 7.22: Interlude motifs. (1) melodic rhizome M1; (2) melodic rhizome M2; (3) melodic rhizome M3.

The Interlude motifs (Fig. 7.22.1-3) of the three clusters display a further sense of rhizomatic cleavage. M1 and M2 follow the same essential pattern until the final beat of their third measures, where melodic rhizome M1 ends on *a* while M2 ends on *d'* (Table 7.11):

<b>Note</b>	<i>e'</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>b♯</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b♯</i>	( <i>g</i> )	<i>a</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>b♯</i>	<i>a/d'</i>
<b>Beat</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4

Table 7.11: Interlude form, melodic rhizomes M1-2.

Melodic rhizome M3's Interlude, on the other hand, follows a different form. It opens on *d'*, omits *e'*, and has its finalis at *a*, with *g* acting as a leading tone instead of tonal center. Its primary notes and stress pattern runs as follows (Table 7.12):

<b>Note</b>	<i>d'</i>	<i>b♯</i>	<i>c'</i>	( <i>g</i> )	<i>a</i>
<b>Beat</b>	1	3	4	6-7	1-7

Table 7.12: Interlude form, melodic rhizome M3.

To summarize these motivic relationships, then, the Opening motif of melodic rhizomes M1 and M2 show close affinity to each other while rhizome M3 uses only a single Stichic motif due to its stichic as opposed to strophic organization (*Figs. 7.16-7.17*).

The contour of rhizome M3's Stichic motif and the Medial strophic motifs of rhizomes M1 and M2—motif B<sup>0,1,II</sup> in melodic rhizome M1—shows complete agreement in all three cases, on the condition that rhizome M1 be treated as two repetitions of the same condensed figure as in the other two groups (*Fig. 7.18-7.19, Tables 7.9*). Rhizome M3's 7/4 rhythm causes a shift in the pattern of stressed beats as well, which encourages the use of a roughly decasyllabic instead of octosyllabic prosodic meter (*Table 7.10*).

Closing motifs (*Fig. 7.21*) display the following characteristics: melodic rhizomes M1 and M2 share a common contour except for phrasal finalis and their manner of descending movement. Rhizome M3 changes from rapid 7/4 to slow 6/4, some ambiguity in the opening note, an ascending-descending movement, and repetition of the pattern from measure two on.

In the Interlude motif (*Fig. 7.21, Tables 7.11-7.12*), melodic rhizome M3 shows markedly different contours from the others, who share the same form. Rhizome M3 additionally contains a different entry tone and finalis from M1 and M2.

To conclude, melodic rhizomes M1 and M2 reveal close affinities across all four motifs. Melodic rhizome M3, while its main Stichic motif agrees with the Medial strophic motifs of the others, differs from them in its Opening, Closing and Interlude motifs. These differences may affect its textual differences from text rhizomes T1 and T2; the lines of text rhizome T3 had, in a sense, to be recomposed to fill out the rhythmic and melodic lines.

### Conclusions

Aga Imer is sung in several subdialects of the Geg dialect spoken in northern Albania, most of Kosovo, and northwestern Macedonia. These subdialects are characterized by the use of highly regional morphologies and some sound changes. The poetic diction of these texts contains a number of archaic, regional and foreign words mostly of Ottoman Turkish derivation and dealing with the military, legal matters, or music terms such as *çifteli* and *karadyzen*.

As products of oral tradition the 13-15 texts I analyzed are composed of verbal formulas narrative themes. The use-frequency of the formulas across all the versions, each text's unique elements, distribution of themes, and forms of musical motifs and musical structure reveal a complex network of relationships between the 23 versions I examined. These relationships are better understood in terms of the rhizome rather than the cladogram model, and I grouped the corpus into five rhizome clusters based on textual correspondences and seven rhizomes based on musical factors.

In most cases these two categories overlap but some texts and musical settings present serious departures from the Aga Imer tradition. These anomalies mostly still fall within the purview of the Albanian oral epic singing tradition as a whole and constitute irruptions from musical rhizomes outside the Aga Imer tradition. The analyses I have given illustrate the rhizomatic properties of the Aga Imer tradition as a specific example; though the melodies and verbal formulas of these versions have cognates in the greater Albanian epic and heroic corpus I have presented my findings only as an example of how rhizome theory may be useful in delineating such tradition-wide radiations.

Using text and melodic rhizomes T1/M1, with the versions *Frroku* and *Llapi*, as a control group—since they had the highest number of correspondences between them—I discussed elements that made each rhizome distinctive. Text and melodic rhizomes T1 and M1/M2 showed the closest inter-rhizome relationships; rhizomes T2/M3 displayed considerable textual differences and several musical correspondences but enough variance to consider it as a separate melodic rhizome.

The rhizomatic network that connects all versions of *Aga Imer* does not, however, allow for nominating any one version as the first or original one. Instead, the only thing they all have indisputably in common is the story of *Aga Imer* itself, considered as a narrative archetype. That is, there is no ur-text of *Aga Imer* but a multiplicity of versions that nonetheless follow the same essential narrative structure, despite the omission or inclusion of different episodes within the narrative.

Detailed cross-analysis between these *Aga Imer* texts and between other Return songs in the larger Balkan epic tradition, as well as certain epics in Turkic, Bosnian, and Greek traditions, reveals greater rhizome clusters interacting. The way ‘genetic’ information is transmitted between them shows a strong tendency to cleave to an ancient pattern in which the LNL acts as a mediator between a ‘shepherd king’ archetype and a divine feminine or ‘woman of authority’ archetype. This mythic dynamic is shaped by and a reflection of the fantasies and lived experience of the warrior milieu for whom some form of LNL has been *sine qua non* of their Frontier Warrior Culture since the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE.

## Chapter 8: Cosmology and Morphology of the Çifteli

### Introduction

In the previous chapters I demonstrated the thematic stability of the Return song and the shouting theme in particular across linguistic, cultural and historical divides, showing their rhizomatic nature. I also showed how certain LNL genera of the *tanbūr* family became enmeshed within, socially, a Frontier Warrior Culture and, culturally, within the Return genre of epic songs that they accompanied, and that this became early on a specialized role of these LNLs. The melodic motifs of the Return songs were part of tune families used by other epic genres as well.

In this chapter I return to my research question concerning the relationship between the mytho-cosmological rhizome these *tanbūr* LNLs act within and the lutes' morphological genealogies. What has been the role of these cultural intangibles on the morphological and musical development of these particular instruments? More to the point, in what ways might these lutes' physical designs and resultant musical styles embody or reflect those cosmological concepts?

To this end I will further explore aspects of the Return song thematic sequence shouting → release as rhizomatic outgrowths shared with the key episodes from the Turkmën epic *Harman Däli*, *Crazy Harman* and the performance and destruction of a 'black *dutār*'. This epithet finds a counterpart in the Albanian Return song *Lalë Bajram's zezë qeteli* whose silence leads back to the silence of Aga Imer's *çifteli*. This rhizomatic complex demonstrates the persistent continuity of the original Mesopotamian mytho-cosmological rhizome.

Lastly, I examine how lutes of the *çifteli*, *tambura* and *šargija* genera have become so thoroughly enmeshed in this historical and cross-cultural role. The reasons

for this involve these instruments' material designs and what these practical elements suggest on an imaginal level.

*The Phorminx Lyre and Musical Genealogies*

The Greek *φορμιλλα*, *phorminx*, lyre of the Homeric poems descends from an entirely separate phylum of chordophones from handle lutes and the two lack a demonstrable 'common ancestor' (see Chap. 2). Its presence in *Odyssey*'s shouting multiforms signals an asignifying rupture from a lyre culture to a *tanbūr* lute culture. In spite of this rupture the thematic sequence shouting→release and the narrative function of the chordophones within them remain, in rhizomatic fashion, as genetic clones of each other.

Concurrently the Return traditions I have examined show signs of being genealogically related through certain linguistic substructures. The *phorminx* of *Odyssey* evinces a further genetic link to the LNL-bearing Return songs via certain musical or modal substructures.



Pl. 8.1: Greek four stringed phorminx lyre.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Detail from painted Geometric vase; Attica, Greece, c. 735-720 BCE. Image source: <<https://www.webstagram.one/tag/Phorminx>>; accessed on: 12 Dec. 2018.

The vocalization of epic songs in the Indo-European ‘grand tradition’ show a strong tendency to center on a tetrachord whose effective tonic falls *within* the tessitura, not at either extremity. In the latter case the subtonic, or leading tone, and the ‘dominant’ tone assume the roles of cadential notes and are integral to the melodic structure. Their melodic importance and musical meaning stems from their relationship to the central tetrachord.<sup>2</sup>

The Homeric *phorminx* lyre was the signature instrument of the Homeric *aioidoi* or *ραψωδοις*, *rhapsode-s*. In Greek art of the Geometric period contemporary with Homer (c. 900-700 BCE)<sup>3</sup> the *phorminx* was represented with two to four strings (*Pl.* 8.1). By the 5<sup>th</sup> century it had become obsolescent due to the popularity of the newly created seven string *kithara*.<sup>4</sup> It was thus only capable of playing a tetrachord.

Although there is much that remains obscure about ancient Greek scales of the Homeric era, there are several of which ‘there is no doubt that they are genuinely ancient, not some later reconstruction or fraud’:<sup>5</sup> the Spondeion, Lydian, Dorian, Phrygian, Ionian, Mixolydian and Syntonolydian.<sup>6</sup> They all share in common a central enharmonic tetrachord that runs, in relative pitch,  $\{e (\bar{e}) f a\}$ , the first interval  $\{e-\bar{e}\}$  forming a  $\frac{3}{4}$  tone.<sup>7</sup> The melodic motifs used *Aga Imer* (Chap. 7) display these same characteristics. The tetrachord from  $\{a'-d\}$  forms the kernel of the melodies and the

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<sup>2</sup> M. L. West, ‘The Singing of Homer and the Modes of Early Greek Music’, *JHS* 101 (1981), p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Greek and Roman Art, ‘Geometric Art in Ancient Greece’, in *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), found at: <[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/grge/hd\\_grge.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/grge/hd_grge.htm)> (October 2004); accessed on: 12 Dec. 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Winnington-Ingram, *Mode in Ancient Greek Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936), pp. 15-16.

<sup>5</sup> West, ‘Singing’, p. 118; cf. West, *Mode*, pp. 21-30.

<sup>6</sup> West, ‘Singing’, pp. 117; R. P. Winnington-Ingram, ‘The Spondeion Scale: Pseudo-Plutarch de Musica, 1134f-1135b and 1137b-d’ *The Classical Quarterly* 22/2 (1928), pp. 83-84; *Mode*, p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> West, ‘Singing’, pp. 119-121. However, there is much to suggest that Greek modes employed the *μεση*, *mese* or ‘middle’ tone as a tonic which in this tetrachord would fall on the *f* and the  $\frac{3}{4}$  tone would then form two optional leading tones; see West, *Mode*, pp. 21-45.

subtonic *g* and dominant *e'* constitute cadential adjuncts.<sup>8</sup> This structure is common to most or all of the chordophones used to accompany epic songs; the bowed *gusle/lahutë* very seldom sounds notes beyond the fourth scale degree from the open string, and when it does they occur mostly in medial and/or final cadences.<sup>9</sup>

This central tetrachord with extensions on either end thus provides the basis for the musical accompaniment to the epic text and is subservient to that text. In the IE epic traditions, at least, epic songs generally utilize a stichic singing style where each line of poetry is sung to the same basic melodic motif, and this structure ‘belongs to the most archaic phase of melodic development’.<sup>10</sup> These melodies follow certain sets of formulaic patterns that vary from culture to culture, yet their essential characteristics of limited tessitura, repetitive stichic performance style, and subordinate status to the sung text evince their roots in an archaic genealogy of musical substrata. This substrata cuts across linguistic lines and has been documented in performances of Turkic, Mongol-Altaiic and Finno-Ugric epics.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Aşık, His Sharki, and the Dog*

The Return song species exhibit the four principles of the rhizome (*Table 2.1*). First, they are connected: each text shares themes, dictional elements, and narrative

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<sup>8</sup> I find it suggestive that the first interval of this tetrachord on the *çifteli*, *a'-b'*, constitutes a  $\frac{3}{4}$  tone, although this cannot be taken as conclusive evidence of a ‘survival’ of the archaic tetrachord.

<sup>9</sup> Ferial Daja, *Rapsodi Kreshnike: tekste e melodi* (Tirana: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, 1983), pp. 53-54.

<sup>10</sup> Karl Reichl, ‘Introduction: The Music and Performance of Oral Epics’, in *The Oral Epic: Performance and Music*, edited by Karl Reichl (Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 2000), p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> For examples (all from *The Oral Epic: Performance and Music*) from Russian *byliny*, see Reichl, ‘Introduction’, pp. 1-40; for Slavic epics see Stephen Erdely, ‘Music of South Slavic Epics’, pp. 69-82; for Turkic epics see Dzhamilya Kurbanova, ‘The Singing Traditions of Turkmën Epic Poetry’, pp. 115-128 and Reichl, ‘The Performance of the Karakalpak *Zhyrau*’, pp. 129-150; a cross-comparison of Slavic, Romanian and Old French epic melodies in Margaret H. Beissinger, ‘Creativity in Performance: Words and Music in Balkan and Old French Epic’, pp. 95-114.

structures with all other texts both within its own species and horizontally across genera. That is, the Albanian *Aga Imer* texts show close similarities to the Slavic *Dulić Ibrahim* genus in their Absence themes. The Slavic songs show greater parity with the Turkic ‘Bamsi Beyrek’ in their common use of two shouting multiforms and conflation of shouting and recognition themes. ‘Bamsi Beyrek’, however, is closer to *Aga Imer* in the former’s first shouting→release sequence. *Odyssey* has many thematic points in common with these three Return traditions while its use of the *φορμιγγα*, *phorminx*, lyre instead of an LNL sets it apart, and the four Return types together find a common ground in the Dumuzid laments and *Dream* texts that enunciate the primary elements of the Return story in the dream, summons and capture themes.

This reticulation of themes and other elements across genres, cultures and languages demonstrates their heterogeneity, the second rhizome principle, and this decentralized unity with multiple origin points is a function of multiplicity, the third principle. Finally, their cross-cultural and –linguistic transmission that results in their variegated thematic in-/exclusions and structures represents their rhizomatic flexibility in the face of asignifying ruptures.

In this section I explore the mytho-cosmological rhizome that informs the thematic sequence shouting→release, the moment when the hero, woman of authority, and the long necked lute intersect. This sequence contains the key to the Return song’s deeper significance, its ‘hidden meaning’. I thus follow semiotic chain of this rhizome from its traces in *Aga Imer*’s shouting theme to other Balkan Return songs that in turn lead to Central Asian epics with the same mythological triad at their core.

This trail begins in the formulaic phrase employed in *Aga Imer* to describe Aga Imer's tenure in prison:

*Mirë tue hangër Aga mirë tue pijë.  
Mirë tue këndue Aga me qefteli.*<sup>12</sup>

Well you eat, Aga, well you drink,  
Well you sing, Aga, with *çifteli*.

The formula of these two lines appears also in two other Albanian songs.

The first, 'Omeri prej Mujit', 'Omer Son of Mujo',<sup>13</sup> is a Rescue song in the epic cycle of the hero Mujo. Mujo's son Omer has turned seven and has never met his father, who has been held prisoner since before Omer's birth. Omer has been told that his father died of illness but when Omer finally learns the truth he devises a plan to rescue Mujo. Taking his *sharki* LNL he goes and sits at the well in the courtyard of the Christian king who holds his father captive and plays *sharki*. This attracts the attention of the king's daughter Rusha who, it turns out, has been in love with Omer for some time. The two formulate a plan to win Mujo's freedom and the song ends with the marriage of the two young lovers. Rusha is, of course, the woman of authority of this text and the scene at the well constitutes a multiform of the shouting→release sequence.

*Omer prej Mujit* says that Omer at the fountain,

*Ma ka marrë sharkinë në dorë,  
Mirë po i bjen, sa mirë po i kndon.*<sup>14</sup>

[Omer] had taken the *sharki* in hand,  
Well he is playing it, [just] as well he is singing (to it).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Osmani, *Epikë*, 'Imer Aga na ishte martu', l. 21-22, p. 31. Translation following mine.

<sup>13</sup> Elsie, *Këngë*, pp. 313-328.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, l. 174-175, pp. 320-322.

<sup>15</sup> Translation mine. Elsie and Mathie-Heck's translation reads, 'he took his *sharki* and did play it/ Played with skill and sang out fairly.' I have translated it more literally to emphasize the syntactic parallels with the parallel *Aga Imer* passage.

This is apparently a well-known formula and is not specific to the *çifteli*, as shown by its use in another Albanian, non-Return, epic, ‘Ashike Imeri e Begzadja e Bardhë’ (‘Ashik Imer of the White Begzade’):<sup>16</sup>

He was Ashik Imer  
 And he stayed [a long time] on the hassock in the minaret  
*And the sharki in hand he is taking.*  
*Well he plays it, [just] as well he sings (with it)*  
 From all around the nightingales circle around him  
 From all around the young girls of the *mahalls*<sup>17</sup>  
 To the bosom of (the) White Begzadja!  
 [emphasis added]

*E sharkijen n’dor’ po ma merrte.*  
*Mir’ po i bjen, ma mir’ po i kënon.*<sup>18</sup>

This formula’s use for both *çifteli* and *sharki* does not, however, signal an equivalency of their narrative functions in their respective texts. Rather, it highlights the variance in their real life social positions and the divergent emotional tenors of the scenes in which they appear. In Albania and Kosovo the *sharki* accompanies epic *këngë* but also may accompany *dashurie*, love songs, but as an imaginal object it is seen as a proper instrument for courtship and for minstrelsy. The imaginal *çifteli*, on the other hand, serves the same role as the *tambura* of Tinctoris’s Turkish prisoners from the Battle of Otranto in 1480-1481.

In *Aga Imer* the above phrase portrays Aga attempting to keep his morale high in prison. A prose version of *Aga Imer*<sup>19</sup> relates how, full of hope for his bride’s fidelity and his Sultan’s eventual ransom (which never arrives), ‘he ate, drank,

<sup>16</sup> ‘Ashike Imeri e Begzadja’, in Haxhihasani, *Balada Popullore*, pp. 128-134.

<sup>17</sup> *Mahalls* is a regional form of *mëhallë*, ‘a district in which everyone is of the same religion’, *OAED*, p. 522.

<sup>18</sup> *Balada Popullore*, p. 128. *Merrte* is a dialectical or perhaps a transcribed form of Omer’s *marrë*, to take, grab, to cut. Omer’s *kndon* is likewise a form of *këndon*, (s/he/it) sings.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Elsie, *Albanian Folktales and Legends* (London: Centre for Albanian Studies, 2015), pp. 155-159.

cheered his friends and played the lute.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, Ramadan Sokoli notes a proverb,

*Haja qenit, pija qenit e bjeri karadyzenit.*

The dog eats, the dog drinks, and he plays the *karadyzen*.<sup>21</sup>

With the addition of the adjective *mire* and substitution of Aga for *qenit*, ‘the dog’, the two formulas’ parallel construction and semantic sequence indicate that Aga and the dog share an equivalency.

This proverbial association recalls Dumuzi’s loyal dogs who lie on his burial place after he dies, and the continuous role of the dog in shepherd king iconography. Thus Aga Imer is, at that moment, enacting the role of David-as-shepherd driving King Saul’s evil spirits away and Orpheus charming Hades to reclaim Eurydice his beloved. That is, Aga sits on the stones of his prison cell like the shepherd king on his rock and plays his *çifteli* well and sings to ward off his imminent despair. In doing so Aga becomes, in a manner of speaking, his own loyal dog, his best friend.

On the other hand, the symbolism of the dog is highly culture-specific but certain broad themes emerge: the dog can represent faithfulness, loyalty and courage or abasement, pathos and carnal appetite. In Islamic societies the dog is often regarded as dirty and *harām*, ‘forbidden, unlawful’, although the *Qur’ān* gives no injunctions against the animal and, in fact, counts them among the saintly ‘sleepers in the cave’.<sup>22</sup> In Sufi doctrine the dog serves as a symbol of the *nafs*, literally ‘self,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>21</sup> Sokoli, *Gjurmime Folklorik*, p. 385.

<sup>22</sup> *Surah al-Kahf*, v. 18:1-26, v. 18:22.

soul' but among Sufis it takes on additional meanings of 'the lower self, the base instincts...the biblical sense [of] "the flesh"'.<sup>23</sup>

The *nafs* is something very real, and many stories tell of its having been seen outside the body. Sometimes it took the form of a black dog that wanted food but had to be trained and sent away...the lower faculties are not to be killed, but trained so that even they may serve on the way to God.<sup>24</sup>

Viewing Aga as a rhizomatic manifestation of the shepherd king archetype, here his imprisonment has transformed the shepherd king as bard into the bard's own herd-dog. He now performs on the level of *Odyssey*'s Phemius, bard as craftsman, instead of Demodocus the honored bard; instead of performing at banquets he performs in a prison cell; instead of receiving gifts and esteem he works for scraps; instead of singing ennobling songs of *klea andrōn* he sings for either mere entertainment or for his own personal catharsis. Aga acts as a kind of parody of the *rapsod* as he performs to cheer himself and his companions until he learns that his hopes were based on illusions and that he is an expendable, faceless body.

This succession of inversions—from landholding soldier on his wedding night to ragged prisoner, 'landless serf'; from bard enacting the shepherd king archetype to the shepherd king's dog, and from loyal sheepdog to pathetic, masterless cur—mirrors the dual nature of the frontier warrior-lutenist. He may be the courageous agent of imperial conquest or the brigand, scourge of villagers. He may be the erstwhile peasant using his body as ransom in lieu of a soldier's pay, or a commander with his own lands—and peasants to work them—and commander of a band of frontier warriors.

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<sup>23</sup> Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), p. 112.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

The Return songs' hero and his LNL go through two other significant inversions, of the celebratory *çifteli* to 'the lamenting two string' and the hero's shouting into the hero's silence. The former occurs in the Albanian Return song of *Lalë Bajram* and the latter in *Aga Imer*. Both of these elements form links in a semiotic rhizome that leads to the Turkic story cycle of the brigand-hero *Köroğlu/Görogli* whose Sufic interpretation enables an exegesis of *Aga Imer's* shouting→release sequence.

### *Lalë Bajram and the 'Black Two String'*

The song of Lalë Bajram is found in nine versions in Hafezat Osmani's collection *Epikë Popullore Shqiptare*.<sup>25</sup> Osmani collected five texts from the environs of Gostivar, Macedonia, and four from villages around Tetovo, western Republic of North Macedonia<sup>26</sup>. I have found no other versions or analogues in the other Albanian song collections I have used, and no performances of it online. It may be that *Lalë Bajram* is particular to Albanian communities in western Macedonia. It seems to follow the general outline of *Đulić Ibrahim* and, like the Slavic song, its shouting theme is conflated with the recognition theme.

*Lalë Bajram's* main point of interest in this Thesis is its use of the designation *zezë qeteli*, 'the black *çifteli*' or 'black two string(ed)'. Semantically this epithet is equivalent to *karadyzen*, 'black two string(ed)', an older term for *çifteli* used especially in the Tosk/Lab versions of *Aga Imer*.

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<sup>25</sup> Osmani, *Epikë*, pp. 43-68, 72-73. In one of these versions, 'Lal Bajrmomi ka qon çifçi', (pp. 63-65) Lalë Bajram suddenly transforms into Aga Imer at line 21 and continues with *AI's* storyline to the end although the hero's name switches back and forth throughout.

<sup>26</sup> Greece and the former FYROM officially agreed on the latter's name change to Republic of North Macedonia on 12 June 2018.

Bajram, a *rob i zan/zonë* like Aga Imer, has been released from prison and returns home. Disguised as a prisoner who ‘knew’ the ‘dead’ Lalë, he requests of his mother and bride to play, not a ‘mother-of-pearl *tambura*’ but Lalë’s own *zeza qeteli* or *qiteli*, a Macedonian-Albanian dialectical variant of *çifteli*.<sup>27</sup> The song he sings, or in this case *diktue*, ‘he dictates’ or ‘he detects’,<sup>28</sup> also bears an old meaning of ‘he makes an appeal’, and it causes his mother and bride to recognize him.

The epithet *zezë* (sg. indef.; *zeza*, sg. def.), the singular feminine adjectival form of *zi*, (nf.) primarily means ‘black’. It has a host of figurative meanings related to mourning and grieving, to items worn as signs of mourning, to a miserable, wretched person, or to something or someone that brings misfortune.<sup>29</sup> In *Aga Imer*, Aga’s mother is sometimes referred to as *zeza nana*, the grieving or wretched mother. Literally, *zezë çifteli* can refer to the dark mulberry wood used to make the *çifteli*’s resonator but figuratively the phrase would signify ‘the lamenting *çifteli*’. This is an odd epithet since, ‘according to *rapsodë*, one cannot sing accompanied by *çifteli* when someone dies because *çifteli* is only to be used in celebrations.’<sup>30</sup>

Affixing the adjective *zezë* to this celebratory instrument with its bright ringing twang, its *tingull*, (Alb),<sup>31</sup> inverts the *çifteli*’s social position and function. This dramatic inversion calls attention to itself and hints at another layer of meaning; Lalë Bajram has been pronounced dead—by Lalë himself—and his *qeteli* remains all his mother, bride, and/or sister have left to remember him by. It is not simply his old

<sup>27</sup> Sokoli, *Gjurmime*, ‘qeteli’, p. 394.

<sup>28</sup> *OAED*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>29</sup> *OAED*, ‘zi’, p. 965.

<sup>30</sup> Ardian Ahmedaja, ‘Songs with Lahutë and Their Music’, in *Balkan Epic: Song, History, Modernity*, edited by Philip K. Bohlman and Nada Petković (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2012), p. 118.

<sup>31</sup> *OAED*, ‘tingëllimë’, p. 867; ‘ringing sound resulting from striking a resonant object: clang, twang. Cf. *tingëlllo*•, vi., ‘to make a resonant metallic sound: clang, twang, ring, peal.’

lute, in a sense it embodies him and its material presence keeps Lalë alive and unchanged in their memories. The *zezë qeteli* equates to Lalë as an imaginal object.

In other examples, the instrument is described as,

*Kur ma murë t' shkretën qeteli.*<sup>32</sup>

When he took the abandoned *qeteli*.

Here the adjective *shkretë* continues the theme of the *çifteli*'s association with grieving and death, as in addition to 'abandoned' it also denotes 'forsaken, alone and miserable'.<sup>33</sup> Even more to the point, it can mean simply 'dead' and as a transitive verb *shkreto*• its subject causes devastation and annihilation.

With this cluster of mutually reinforcing adjectives the text subverts the normally invigorating associations of the *çifteli* and, merging its presence with the memory of the supposedly dead son and husband, turns its sound into an evocation of shades. When the women do permit the prisoner to play and sing to it, he sings them into recognition and the lute's true meaning is restored. It, like its player, has been brought back to life. It is significant, too, that the whole while that Lalë was lost in prison (nine years) his *qeteli* remained in a corner of his old room in silence, a mute reminder of son and husband to the grieving women.

The hero not only regains his self through recognition but he brings his old LNL back to life by restoring its *tingull* through his playing. Like the young shepherd David playing his *knr* to King Saul, Lalë dispells the murk and gloom that has enshrouded the house in his absence. Like Orpheus with his lyre he has brought his sorrowful bride 'back to life'. And like King David in his Psalms, Lalë, an incarnation

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<sup>32</sup> Osmani, *Epikë*, 'Ç'paska qon ni rob I zonë', l. 116, p. 68.

<sup>33</sup> *OAED*, 'shkretë', p. 817.

of the shepherd king, has defeated death by taking up his chordophone and singing himself back into existence.

*Harman Dāli and the 'Black Dutār'*

As far as I have found the appellation *zezë çifteli* is unique to *Lalë Bajram* among Balkan Return songs, although as noted above it forms a cognate with *karadyzen*. The phrase, in conjunction with the theme of the silence of the LNL, does play a significant role in an episode from the Turkic epic tale of the bandit-hero *Köroğlu*. *Köroğlu's* story cycle is generally agreed to have originated among the western Oghuz Turks in Anatolia, Azerbaijan, and the Turkmen in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup> The figure of *Köroğlu* himself seems to have been a conflation of several real life *Köroğlus*, known to both Ottoman and Persian Safavid authorities. One of which was a 'daring and amazingly elusive bandit' in western Anatolia during the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>35</sup> This historical *Köroğlu*, along with at least two other bandits of the same name and era, was also known as a celebrated poet and musician in a heroic or epic vein.

The career trajectory of the historical figure followed much the same lines as the Byzantine *Digenis Akritis* who started off taking his *lavouto* or *thampourin* and joining a troop of bandits, later becoming a wealthy and respectable *akritai* commander on the eastern Anatolian frontier. The historical *Köroğlu* was a *Celali* (Tur <Ara *Jalal*, 'majestic, glorious'), one of the irregular soldiers-turned-bandits who rebelled against the Ottoman authorities in eastern Anatolia in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries. In a number of cases the Ottoman government pardoned former *Celali* and granted them administrative or military positions; a compatriot of *Köroğlu* 'was made

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<sup>34</sup> Judith M. Wilks, "The Persianization of *Köroğlu*: Banditry and Royalty in Three Versions of the *Köroğlu "Destan"*", *Asian Folklore Studies* 60/2 (2001), n. 2, pp. 307-311, 314-315.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 307-308, 311.

*beylerbeyi* of Bosnia and was sent there together with ten thousand of his followers, and thus he was no longer a menace in Anatolia.’

The real life Koroğlu(s) therefore provided a familiar template for the Koroğlu of the Turkic tales and songs, a template drawn directly from the Frontier Warrior Culture described in Chap. 5 of this Thesis. The historical and legendary figures alike precisely follow the rhizome-like border crossing and merging behaviors of the Frontier Warrior Culture, switching roles from aristocratic ruler on the frontier to crude and violent brigand and even enacting them simultaneously. ‘Any bandit with sufficient power may be in effect a ruler; and a ruler with sufficient power may behave like a bandit if he so chooses.’<sup>36</sup>

In addition, although the *Koroğlu* stories do not include a Return episode their hero demonstrates several key features of the Return hero and shepherd king archetype: known as Koroğlu, ‘son of the blind [man]’ in Turkish and Azeri stories, in the Turkmen and Iranian versions his name becomes *Görogli* or *Görogly*, ‘son of the grave’, as it is said his mother died while still pregnant with him and he was miraculously born in her grave. Even in his birth, then, he has already traveled a road from innocence into death and to renewal. From this lowly beginning he went on to ultimately become a border-straddling heroic figure, brigand and prince at the same time.<sup>37</sup>

A second commonality is his prowess on, originally, the *kopuz* and eventually the *dutār* LNL of the *tanbūr* family as accompaniment to heroic, epic and courtship songs he is famous for. In other words, one of Görogli’s primary functions is as a bard

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 311. See also p. 307.

<sup>37</sup> His brigandage is his central trait in the Azeri and Anatolian tellings, while in the Turkmen and Central Asian tales his princely attributes are stressed (Ibid., pp. 311-314). For an introduction to the complicated history and interactions between Turkmen and Iranian tribes in Central Asia see Sławomira Żerańska-Kominek with Arnold Lebeuf, *The Tale of Crazy Harman: The Musician and the Concept of Music in the Turkmen Epic Tale*, Harman Däli (Warsaw: Academic Publications Dialog, 1997), pp. 17-29.

and minstrel. Like Bamsi Beyrek, Görogli performs this role situationally, to provide entertainment, mediate disputes, mark celebrations, and to court women especially when he lands in dire straits.<sup>38</sup>

This latter use of his LNL becomes pronounced in the Turkmän epic of *Harman Däli*, ‘Crazy Harman’, and its manifestation there illustrates the rhizomatic nature of epic themes as they maintain their structural DNA while moving from one genre and culture to another, asignifying ruptures. Despite *Harman Däli*’s lack of Return narrative, Görogli’s relationship with his LNL and with the woman Crazy Harman bears close comparison to the Return song’s shouting theme and demonstrates strong continuities with the mytho-cosmological complex of the *tanbūr* genera.

*Harman Däli* follows a lengthy and intricate plot, but its basic storyline involves the efforts of Görogli to win the heart and hand of the lady Harman. Crazy Harman is the first child of Arslan Baý, who ‘had as much wealth as seven Padişahs kept in their vaults’.<sup>39</sup> Arslan had prayed for a boy but decided to raise his daughter as ‘like a son to me’. Right away, then, Harman begins to show characteristics of the woman of authority archetype; as Inanna could ‘turn men into women and women into men’ so Harman is born a girl yet treated like a son. When she turns 14, matchmakers begin arriving with offers of marriage from other families. She, however, tells her father that she ‘will not marry some idle vagabond...I want to become the wife of a man who is protected by the Prophet’s [i.e. Muhammad {pbuh}] love.’<sup>40</sup>

Arslan Baý balks at her high standards but she assures him, ‘father, if you accept the man of my choice...I will find a husband myself.’ He agrees to giving her this authority and even puts it in writing. She then demands, ‘father, divide your riches

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<sup>38</sup> See Chodzko, *Specimens of Popular Persian Poetry...* (London: W. H. Allen, 1842/Forgotten Books, 2015).

<sup>39</sup> Żerańska-Kominek, *Crazy Harman*, §1000, p. 89.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, §1001, p. 90.

and give me half of everything you have. If I spend it all, then you'll give me more.' She winds up with sixty large gardens and palaces to suit them and announces herself to the people as ruler of the land. That is, she has wrested authority and agency over herself from her father, challenging though not overthrowing his reign and relegating him to a secondary position. In this she proves analogous to Inanna tricking her father Enki out of the sacred *me*-s and the Return songs' woman of authority who releases the hero from prison against her father's laws.

Harman sends out word that she will marry the man who can defeat her in a singing (with *dutār*) and then fighting contest. Any *bagşy*<sup>41</sup>-warrior who succeeds Harman will marry and 'give him her throne-crown and all her valuable possessions. But if she wins, then she will cut off the *bagşy*'s head, the warrior's head.'<sup>42</sup> After many disappoints, and many beheadings, Harman learns of Görogli from an elderly sooth-saying woman. Harman then has her deliver a summons to the hero, who is already married. Görogli answers Harman's summons, leaving his marital bed. In doing so he enacts the initial journey of the Return hero, who answers the call to war on his wedding night and goes off in the dual function of bardic figure and soldier-warrior. Görogli is not imprisoned but Harman does defeat him although she spares his life.

The hero decides to become a disciple of *Aşyk Äýdyň*, a *pir* or holy man.<sup>43</sup> Through numerous turns of events, *Aşyk* and one of his disciples, a Kerem Däli, both end up winning singing and wrestling contests with Harman. Yet it remains Görogli who she wants.

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<sup>41</sup> *Bagşy* is roughly the successor to Oghuz *ozan* or *uzan* among the Turkmän. See *Ibid.*, pp. 39-68.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, §1002, p. 90.

<sup>43</sup> The term is used in Islam for a Muslim saint but in *Harman Däli* et. al. also relates to men considered powerful shamans, *bagşy*-s or wise elders.

Görogli, meanwhile, has been on the road with his troop of 40 warriors collecting ‘tax money’ from passing caravans, which one can read as an act of brigandage as much as a legitimate duty. Thinking it will improve his chances on a second attempt with Crazy Harman, Görogli goes to the rude, opium-addicted *dutār*-maker Badam to get a fine new *dutār* for his companion Köse.<sup>44</sup> Görogli decides he needs a pretext for the visit and dents his *dutār* in order to have Badam repair it. The slightly damaged *dutār* infuriates Badam with perceived disrespect for his trade and he smashes the lute against a rock. Görogli finally reveals his identity to Badam who promptly feeds the hero and has his apprentices fix the instrument. This enables Görogli to gain entrance to Harman Däli in her garden. There he serenades her with a song on the theme of the distant, unattainable woman.

I’m here for your tender promise!  
 Don’t say your words were false.  
 Weren’t your flower beds colorful?  
 Has your summer turned cold?<sup>45</sup>

Harman Dali retrieves her *dutār* and the two engage in a spirited musical repartee, exchanging witty insults until they finally wind up spending the night together. Finally, after many more episodes the two get married.

### *The Dream, the Shouting, and Silence*

The theme and imagery of this song of frustrated longing for ‘the Capricious One’ signals it as a classic *aşık*, and *ashik*, performance in that the lyrics carry, respectively, a spiritual and profane meaning simultaneously. Thus Görogli can be interpreted as rhizomatic figure in the same vein as, respectively, the Alevi *aşık* bards and Mujo’s son Omer with his *sharki* at the well. The figure of Aşyk Aÿdyñ brings

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., §1106-1121, pp. 139-141.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., §1115, pp. 142.

Görogli's function as an *aşık* into sharper focus as well, for Aşyk Äydyň and Kerem Däli can be viewed as Görogli's alter egos, symbolic of his own spiritual state at different stages of development.<sup>46</sup>

Aşyk Äydyň is Görogli himself who rose from the grave as the Shining One [*Rowşen*, Görogli's birth name] and returns to the world of darkness in order to give life to the Shining One-Son of the Grave once again... Kerem Däli turned Görogli is a poetry and music master, an initiated *bagşy*, a sage.

Aşyk Äydyň has a dream very similar to those reported by Alevi *aşık*-s in Turkey that initiates them into their bardic vocation:

I saw the Prophet's many friends this night,  
 ...  
 On my head the Prophet put a crown  
 Each of his friends was wearing a *taj*...

The most beautiful women gathered together,  
 Bejewelled, their dress woven with gold.  
 She appeared like a Full Moon,  
 Wonderful with her hair in curls.<sup>47</sup>

Kerem Däli, the Aşyk's beloved pupil, alone succeeds in the task of interpreting the dream.<sup>48</sup> As he describes the dream, Kerem sings:

Beautiful girls gathered, they came out for a walk,  
 Casting glances around, fluttering their lashes.  
 Small *heykels* flung over their shoulders  
 The girl you saw in your dream is Harman Däli.

Despite the great difference in imagery of the Aşyk's dream and those of Dumuzi and Aga Imer, the dream's *function* in the narrative correlates with that of the latter's 'terrible dreams'. In *Harman Däli* Aşyk Äydyň's dream spurs him to take Kerem to investigate the lady Harman, who smashes the *dutār* Kerem courts her with.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 223-224.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., §1058, p. 117. A *taj* is a crown, but in Sufi terms signifies 'ritual headwear' (n. 39).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., §1064-1068, pp. 119-121. Kerem does this after Görogli, also known as Rowşen, gives a spurious interpretation and throws a fit after the Aşyk rejects it.

The two men's departure also incites Görogli to set off on his own journey that later results in his *dutār* being smashed as well, by Badam, Kerem's father. In both cases, the dream leads to the *silencing* of the *dutār*-s that in turn instigates the encounter between the hero and the woman of authority. The net result of this is Görogli's attainment of not only Harman's heart but of a higher spiritual state in which he becomes transfigured as a type of 'new man'.

Aga Imer's situation is inverted. First, he dreams not of a beloved he has not yet met but one he seems on the cusp of losing forever, it is a 'terrible' dream. Second, the dream does not impel him to action, to journey outward with agency. Instead his spirit fails him and he falls into depression, a passive inwardly focused stasis and a kind of death. Third, it causes the woman of authority, the king's daughter, to approach him instead of him seeking her. This reverses the power dynamics between the pair found in *Harman Dāli*. Finally, and most significantly, rather than the hero playing his LNL, like Omer, with vigor, determination and purpose, Aga's dream results in his loss of purpose and his *çifteli* falls completely silent. For him, it is literally 'the day the music died'.

Žerańska-Kominek describes the *dutār*'s destruction in light of the visionary destruction of the shaman's body in initiation rites and visions:<sup>49</sup> 'the destruction of the *dutār* means the hero's initiation death, puncturing the thick layers of the flesh and freeing the spirit from the restraints of the sensual world.' When Harman Dāli smashes Kerem's, or really Aşyk Aýdyň's lute, she thus,

plays the main role in the painful process of the birth of the New Man...she takes the Crazy One's [i.e. Kerem Dāli] life by smashing his *dutār*...demanding and merciless Harman finally puts an end to Kerem's indecision. After all, *he has been chosen to die and to become immortal* [emphasis added].<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 203-204.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 209-210.

In doing so she acts as both men's consecratrix and intercessor.

The Turkmän LNL then, like the shepherd king's lyre and Lalë Bajram's *zezë qeteli*, and Aga Imer's *çifteli/karadyzen*, acts as an extension of and externalized manifestation of the hero's spiritual state. Its death mirrors his spiritual death and his rebirth is signaled when the instrument regains its voice in his hands. It is this incipient death of the *nafs* that *Harman Däli* hints at when the text states that, 'Aşyk Äydyň had a black *dutār* [*kara-dutār*] sent from Heaven'<sup>51</sup> that he gives to Kerem and lady Harman then smashes.

Aga's conscription that tears him from his bridal bed and subsequent imprisonment for nine years marks the beginning of the death of his old self. In those nine years,

Well he eats, Aga, well he drinks,  
Well he sings, Aga, with *çifteli*,

like the proverbial dog. This represents his imprisonment in the world of 'untamed instincts', his animal appetites, and the 'uncontrolled aggression' of war and the merciless *zandan* that strips him of his humanity. In this prison of the world and his animal nature he becomes the bard as craftsman, either forced to play for his captors like Bamsi Beyrek or playing to keep his morale up even while he languishes in forgetfulness.

The sudden silence of his *çifteli* after his terrible dream represents the equivalent of Badam's destruction of Görogli's *dutār*. Both symbolically enact the final expunging of that lower self trapped in the sensual, material world and its

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., §1068, p. 121.

cessation into *silence* that is a preparation for a rebirth or emergence into the initiated shaman, the Sufi's New Man, or in Albanian terms the 'man of honor'.

In Sufi terms, this silence compares to 'the Life Absolute...[that] becomes active in a certain part [i.e. a certain facet of its being]'.<sup>52</sup> As Schuon puts it, 'the Life Absolute represents perfect motionlessness, although it also carries potential of perfect mobility because it is the Infinite Absolute.'<sup>53</sup> In Aga's case that potential of perfect mobility manifests when the silence of his *karadyzen* alerts the daughter to a change in Aga's temporal spiritual state. It prompts her to intervene in his 'death crisis' as he pleads for her help and after their bardic exchange of gifts of honor—the *din e iman* and *pobratimsvo* or *besa*—he attains new life and the gift of perfect mobility.<sup>54</sup>

In Jungian terms, Aga in prison sits trapped in the darkness of the self, tending only to his animal appetites like a dog and singing to his 'black two-string'. Even in this state his instrument contains the potential of a 'mount' to a higher realization but must first fall silent, return to the primordial stillness, Life Absolute. For in his prison, captured by the demon recruiters and thrust into the death of war, he lies in forgetfulness of his bride, his home, his mother...until his nine years come nearly due and he receives a visit from the 'collective unconscious'. This brings a messenger from the divine realm of archetypes whose representative, the daughter, has been aware of him for some time but could not approach him while he remained lost in the prison of forgetfulness.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>54</sup> In some versions of Aga Imer she gives him a horse that enables him to magically traverse the distance from Spain to Albania in less than a day. This episode contains shades of the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) miraculous overnight journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and back on the fabulous *Buraq*, as well as the shaman's visionary journey on his instrument, his 'mount'.

The message comes to him as the terrible dream, and it takes this grim visage because from the point of view of ordinary consciousness the call to awakening can only be reached by a descent into the chthonic underworld<sup>55</sup> before ascent is possible. Aga's dream vision is one of his particular hell where all those markers of his former identity are stripped away finally. The threat of this trio of losses shocks him into action and remembrance. The dream vision strikes his heart, and as Jung states,

the unconscious is...something like what the Bible calls 'heart'...[where] dwell the wicked blood spirits, swift anger and sensual weakness. This is how the unconscious looks when seen from the conscious side...anyone who descends into the unconscious gets into the suffocating atmosphere of egocentric subjectivity, and in this blind alley is exposed to the attack of all the ferocious beasts which the caverns of the underworld are supposed to harbor.<sup>56</sup>

### Construction of the *Tanbūr*

Having explored the cosmological ideas encoded in the LNL as an imaginal object, the question must be raised, what was it about these *tanbūr* genera as material objects that made them so popular with the Frontier Warrior Culture as opposed to other types of lutes? I have found four primary reasons to explain this phenomenon.

First, instruments like the *çifteli*, *karadyzen*, *sharki* and the species of *tambura* are fairly simple to construct. A professional instrument maker can, of course, turn out virtuoso-quality *tambura* or *çifteli* and introduce design innovations, and such, no doubt, were highly popular among the soldiery like those observed by Sieur Pouillet in 1667. The 'mother of pearl *tambura*' of the Slavic Return heroes Đulić Ibrahim and Četić Osmanbey probably numbered among these finely made

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<sup>55</sup> Carl Gustave Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (East Sussex: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1968 [1959]), p. 19.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

lutes; the fact that both heroes left their *tambura*-s at home in their mothers' care instead of 'taking them in hand' on campaign may signify the value of these richly-decorated instruments to their owners. As observed in Lalë Bajram's *zezë qeteli* they served as keep-safes for the women to remember their men by.

A soldier in the field, brigand in the mountains, or a prisoner of war requires a serviceable instrument only, sturdy enough to withstand weather, hard travel and rough conditions, and easy enough to construct by himself. The basic materials to make a *dutār*, *karadyzen*, *tambura* or *çifteli* consist of a block of wood between 12-34 inches long, some lengths of wire for strings and, if fretted, some thick metal wire or sinew thread.

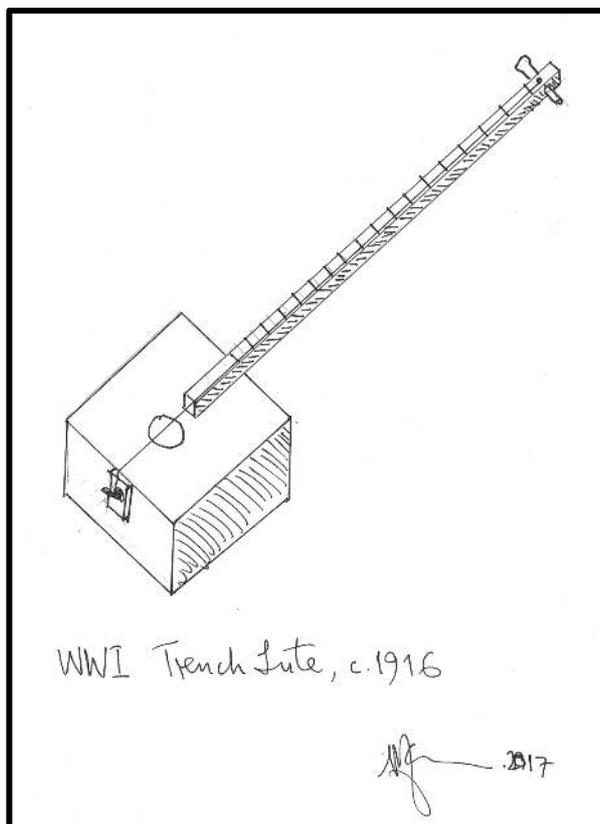
The toolkit for the project requires tools easily available in a community involved in woodworking, for structures or implements: an adze to hollow out the resonator; hatchet to rough out and shape the external surfaces; a carpenter's saw for rough cutting and mitre or razor saws for fine work; rasps and files to shape and smooth the outer surfaces; perhaps a drawknife or spoke shave and a wood plane to construct the neck and soundboard, and a borer or reaming tool to drill the tuning peg holes. Bridges and tuning pegs can be made from scraps leftover from making the body. The warrior lutenist can carve the whole instrument from a single piece of wood or affix the neck to the shoulders with a simple V-joint (*Pl. 1.8*), neither of which necessitates complex joinery skills.

For Ottoman soldiers on the Hapsburg-Ottoman frontier such tools were generally at hand. Siege troops and fortress garrisons alike engaged in extensive carpentry work when building siege-works or repairing fortresses.<sup>57</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman supply inventories for fortresses like Uyvar on the Hapsburg frontier list as

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<sup>57</sup> Stein, *Guarding*, pp. 52-53.

many as 26,500 *destere* (Tur) handsaws and large numbers of adzes maintained there for construction and repair works.<sup>58</sup> Such work was generally done by carpentry guilds or local carpentry teams<sup>59</sup> but many soldiers, especially those from rural backgrounds, would have learned woodworking skills before their conscription.



Pl. 8.1: WWI 'trench lute', 1916.

The *tambura*-s and *çifteli*-s made in the field represent the tradition of so-called 'trench lutes'.<sup>60</sup> These instruments could be made quickly and easily, even incorporating found objects such as cigar boxes and metal canisters (Pl. 8.1). In the example shown in Pl. 8.1 the frets were drawn on with ink or indelible pencils made

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>60</sup> I am indebted to Michael Gunn of the Anglo-Albanian Association in London for the following information and sketch of his grandfather's 'trench lute' from WWI. Michael's grandfather served in the Royal Horse Artillery on the Western Front and made this instrument out of a cigar box, a dowel and some piano wire. Personal communication via email, 22 March 2017.

for troops in the First World War that ‘did not run in the soggy conditions of the trenches.’<sup>61</sup>

LNLs like these could even be made in prison and it is clear that this custom originated before Tinctoris’s time. In his 1487 tract *De inventione et usu musicae* where he describes ‘the extravagance and rusticity’<sup>62</sup> of the *tambura* songs played by Turkish prisoners, he describes ‘the miserable and puny’ lutes played by these men as ‘the shape of a large spoon and has three strings tuned to octave, fifth and fourth; it is played either with the fingers or with a quill.’ In their diminutive size, ladle-like shape and tuning these *tambura*-s recall the *baglama*-s [sic] played by Greek *rembetes*, underworld gangsters and urban toughs in inter-War Greece. These *baglama* are not the Anatolian *saz* but were ‘a smaller version of the bouzouki, very portable, easy to make in prison and easy to hide from the police.’<sup>63</sup>

Second, lutes like the *çifteli* or *tambura* do not, in general, demand the sophisticated playing techniques, advanced knowledge of *makam* (Tur < Ara sg. *maqām*; pl. *maqamāt*) theory with its intricate modulations and melodic development, or the long musical training demanded by Ottoman court music. The *çifteli*, by contrast, has diatonic fretting with two ¼ tones at the second and sixth scale degrees; as a result, changing modes requires retuning the drone string, making modulations practically impossible.

In addition, *çifteli* notes have short sustain and few lower harmonics—probably due to its resonator shape—so the unmetered *taksim* improvisations of Turkish or Arabic classical music are rarely heard. At any rate, the performance contexts of *çifteli* music—folk dances and *aheng*, men’s gatherings in private

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Baines, *Tinctoris*, pp. 23, 25.

<sup>63</sup> Elias Petropoulos, *Rembetika, Songs from the Old Greek Underworld*, translated by John Taylor (London: Alcyon Art Editions, 1992), pp. 13-14.

homes—fostered a preference for a more immediate, highly rhythmic musical style built around repetitions of a basic melody like those described in Chap. 7.

Most *tambura* and *šargija* species use a chromatic or decatonic fretting, respectively, with few or no microtones essential for Ottoman court music. Musically this represents a sharp distinction between these genera and the Ottoman disc-shaped *tanbūr* with at least 24 notes per octave<sup>64</sup> and which belongs to another lute family altogether.

The horizontal playing style of these LNLs also suits a very different range of ornamentation styles from the vertically oriented short necked lutes (SNLs) like the *ūd* that form a mainstay of Arabic and Turkish art music, as discussed in Chap. 1. The use of the *ūd*'s three or four open courses provides the musician with modulatory possibilities not afforded by the single, fixed pitch of the *çifteli*'s drone string.

This is not to say that these *tanbūr* genera cannot sustain virtuosic playing or melodically sophisticated music. Rather, the performance of such utilizes a radically different set of parameters than the courtly art music traditions. The *tambura*, *šargija* and *karadyzen* species express vernacular, rural and urban middle class traditions reflective of the music that many soldiers of the Frontier Warrior Culture grew up with in the first place. The courtly and vernacular modal systems have little in common, and in my Master's Dissertation I had concluded that the latter represents a largely separate tradition developed in multiple regional centers that engage in discourse among themselves but not with the courtly traditions, and in some cases—the *karadyzen* genus especially—not even the urban lyric songs. In this, these LNLs and their music operate like rhizomes.

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<sup>64</sup> Karl L. Signell, *Makam: Modal Practice in Turkish Art Music* (Sarasota: Usul Editions, 2008), pp. 26-30.

Conclusion: Çifteli Morphology as Mytho-cosmological Rhizome

In the previous section I gave several reasons for the *tambura-s*' popularity in the Frontier Warrior Culture: these LNLs' simplicity of design and ease of construction, the vernacular nature of their tunings and musical style, and their status as a 'folk' or popular instrument as opposed to a courtly, art music instrument. These help to explain the *tambura-s*' popularity as a material object but prompts the question, what aspects of *tambura-s* as imaginal objects brought them into this mytho-cosmological rhizome of the Return song?

My reading of the symbolism of the LNLs' morphology has not, to my knowledge, been explicated in the available resources but lies latent in the relationship between the two courses or, more basically, two strings of the *çifteli*, *dutār*, Assyro-Hittite LNL and the Mesopotamian lute. The two strings mirror or perhaps suggest the dynamics between the shepherd king and Return hero and the woman of authority. The drone string can be construed as enacting the feminine figure's role. The woman of authority's function in Return songs is to provide a ground for the despairing hero, to tie him to his honor through a sworn vow to her, and to act as an orientation point that keeps the narrative moving forward in a harmonious order.

Just so, the drone string provides a sonic ground, a lower tonal limit that contextualizes and supports the melody string. It orients the intonation of the ever-moving melody. The melody string, in this reading, represents the Return hero whose journey unfolds along two separate and contrary roads, *rrugë* in Albanian. The first road compels him away from home and beloved and into the underworld of the *zandan*. The second road leads him out and returns him to home and beloved, from absence and devastation to return and renewal, even a wedding.

The constraints of the modes the musician has available shape the melodic motifs and musical architecture of the song he plays, and the music represents the active principle, the forces of action and change. In fact, the idea of the LNL's music as a journey and the road forms a structural principle of the Turkmän *bakşy-s'* performance of epics like *Harman Däli*.<sup>65</sup> The *bakşy* begins his song with *dutār* tuned low and he gradually tunes the strings up as his tale's dramatic tension builds. Each rise in intonation symbolizes a change, a crossroads, in the narrative's direction.

The terminology of other modal music systems reflects this idea as well. The Arabic word *maqam*'s (> Tur *makam*; pl. *makamlar*, Ara *maqamāt*) musical meaning is the system of modes and their tunings to create musical meaning. But *maqam*'s primary meaning is 'way' or 'station' and can signify a material waystation on a road. In Sufi exegesis, however, the term is used,

by Sufis to refer to the stages or degrees along the path to illumination. The goal of the path is personal experience of divine reality. A *maqam* is a stage that can be achieved through human effort, as opposed to *hal* (grace), which is a gift from God. The stages are to be achieved through the guidance and authority of a *shaykh*.<sup>66</sup>

The tonal hierarchies in such modal music establish the locations of the music's orientation points. The patterned interplay of notes expresses the way the song's figures, the hero and woman of authority, interact as if in conversation with each other as well as the motifs played with upper tetrachords.

The two strings can also symbolize the sworn vow taken between hero and his intercessor. The success of the performance relies in large part on the agreement, the consonance, between drone and melody string, a musical analogue to *besë* and *din e*

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<sup>65</sup> See Sławomira Żerańska-Kominek, 'The Concept of Journey (Yol) in Turkmän Music Tradition', *Ethnomusicology* 42/2 (1998), pp. 265-282.

<sup>66</sup> 'Maqam', in *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, edited by John L. Esposito, found at: <*Oxford Islamic Studies Online*, <<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1428>>; accessed on 29 Jan, 2019).

*iman* between Aga Imer and the king's daughter. Important terms for the tuning of *tambura*-s and *çifteli*-s draw this connection: the Turkish word *düzen* denotes '[in an established] order, arrangement', while the Albanian term *akord*, *akordim* signifies 'to tune, bring into harmony or consonance'. *Akordim* has an additional legalistic sense of 'to give, grant; to [come to an] accord'<sup>67</sup> as well as a business deal or contract.

The tuning and regulation of the notes requires a type of contract between drone and melody string; they must accord with each other and follow a pre-ordained arrangement in order to sound 'true'. If this agreement is broken the instrument goes out of tune. With the drone's orientation point nullified the melody ceases to express musical meaning and the music collapses into dissonance and confusion.

Furthermore, as the *tingull* of Aga's *çifteli* playing serves as the vehicle by which the daughter approaches Aga at the crucial moment so the *çifteli*'s morphology brings the duality of masculine and feminine together. The thematic sequence dream-shouting→release is told through the lute's sound as it reverberates within the resonator, the unifier of dualities. In its resting state of silence and emptiness the empty space of the resonator represents the latent possibilities, the potential journeys and their roads, told in the songs it accompanies. The resonator makes the *çifteli*'s sound, its harmony and accord, audible to the sensate world and if the agreement between strings is lost it necessarily reflects in the music.

Seen from this perspective, the two string, long necked lute design appears as an intuitive choice for the lute's ancient Akkadian creators. Originally nomadic pastoralists the tribes of the Zagros Mts. and northern Mesopotamia, the cultural needs of their manner of living wanted a portable instrument of simple design. In the

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<sup>67</sup> *OAED*, 'akord, akordo•, akordim', p. 8.

same way, the soldiers of the FW needed an instrument that could withstand the rigors of their constantly moving, often dangerous lives.

As an imaginal object, the two string LNLs' very morphology and resultant *Klangideal* seems to reify the mytho-cosmological rhizome expressed in the Return's shouting→release sequence and its basic idea: the life journey from innocence to death and then to renewal. And, of course, behind this theme lies an even more ancient and primordial duality: the worldly, 'material' desire for one human to unite with another in love and the imaginal, spiritual, yearning of the soul to find grace from the darkness of death and reunion with the divine ground of all being.

## Conclusions

This Thesis set out to explore the influence of cultural intangibles, primarily mythological patterns and cosmological ideas, on the morphology and social functions of musical instruments using the Albanian *çifteli* long necked lute as my case study.

In Chapter 1 I examined issues concerning organology, musical instrument classification systems, taxonomical terminology, and especially the question ‘what do we mean by an instrument’s neck?’ I then brought together the descriptive ability of phenetics, the genealogical information afforded by phylogenetics, and the taxonomical terms and structure of biological classification schema to order lutes into families and then genera. Having determined the components of a *tanbūr* family of LNLs based on morphological details, I differentiated them into genera including the *dutār*, *tambura*, *karadyzen*, and *šargija* genera. The *çifteli* inhabited the *karadyzen* genus.

One defining feature of the *tanbūr* family is the horizontal playing style afforded by the former’s long, narrow necks and their two sometimes three string courses. This differentiates them from short necked lutes that tend to have four or more courses and a vertical playing style. This divergence in neck configuration has played a significant role in determining the lutes’ respective social, cultural and musical functions.

But ordering these instruments based on their purely material features did not provide an answer to my research question. Researchers who have used phylogenetic theory and methods as an organological tool have achieved indisputably useful results but also confronted the limits of adapting biological theory to cultural evolution. The

generally teleological nature of human social processes and the production of cultural artifacts contrasts sharply with the evolution of biological processes. Phylogenetics provided a basis for analyzing lutes as material and historical objects, but lutes also embody cosmological and mythological concepts. They exist as imaginal objects as much as material ones, and this aspect remains necessarily opaque to material studies. Defining a particular type of lute, therefore, demanded finding what cultural intangibles had been at work in shaping the instrument as it is now.

I opened chapter 2 with a critique of the conventional theory of lute genesis as an evolutionary development from the musical bow. I evaluated the theory from several viewpoints and concluded, in agreement with Henry Balfour (1899), that lutes represented one possibility of the abstract concept of a string stretched over a resonating body. The lute does not, in my view, share a putative ‘common ancestor’ with harps, lyres and zithers but represents an independent invention based on that abstract concept. The lute’s creators chose this particular configuration to suit certain cultural needs and aesthetic sensibilities that other chordophones, for whatever reason, did not. This material conception of the lute, I argue, arose in tandem with a particular mytho-cosmological perception that differed from those of other chordophones, and marked the lute *qua* lute.

I thus introduced rhizome theory as explained by Deleuze and Guattari as a lens through which to analyze and discuss the effects of mytho-cosmological concepts on the *tanbūr* lutes. I envisioned these concepts as rhizomes, a term used in biology to describe plants that grow primarily from rootstocks or bulbs as opposed to seeds. Rhizomatic growth occurs in a decentralized, non-hierarchical manner, i.e. any plant that sprouts from a rhizome operates as a new ‘center’ from which other plants sprout,

*contra* the ‘tree-root’ model that posits an ultimate common ancestor that all other entities develop from in a bifurcating, genealogical manner.

The rhizome grows in a horizontal fashion, often across asignifying ruptures in the transmission chain, and cuts across the vertical lines of genealogical descent. While phylogenetics proves useful for determining historical relationships of lute morphologies, rhizome theory is more adept at conceptualizing the movements of items like epic themes, mythological figures, and the social milieu—the Frontier Warrior Culture—with which most *tanbūr* genera have been enmeshed with since their recorded origins.

In chapter 3 I then investigated the early history of lutes from Mesopotamia c. 2334-1700 BCE. From their first recorded appearance (*Pls. 3.1-4*) in the Akkadian era the iconography shows these long necked lutes with small rounded bodies as part of ritual banquet and presentation scenes. This testifies to their mundane use as accompaniment to mythic and proto-epic narrative songs that arose from a pre-existing oral tradition. These songs reaffirmed aspects of Mesopotamian kingship ideology and illuminated through narratives the workings of the law, conceived of as divine decrees from the gods to mankind.

These early LNLs formed part of the court instrumentarium and this, combined with the songs’ concern with kingship and its sacred pact with the heavens, led to the lutes’ association with Dumuzi, a legendary king and mythic husband of the goddess Inanna/Ištar. The Mesopotamian king held his office through divine ordination. This ordination took the form of a sacred marriage contracted between palace—the king as Dumuzi—and temple—the head priestess as Inanna. The king’s legitimacy and authority rested on his fulfillment of his obligations to Inanna. This

relationship provided the basis for the thematic importance of the sanctity of the sworn vow and the consequences of breaking one's vow in the lute's songs.

Dumuzi also served as prototype for the figure of the shepherd king, the man of low or marginal social position who achieves an elevated status through the intercession of a woman of authority, a role enacted by Inanna. Iconographically, the shepherd king is represented by a young man seated on a rock and playing a chordophone, a lyre or lute in most cases. Dumuzi therefore acts as the original model for the hero of the later Return songs whose performance and sudden silence on his LNL instigates the woman of authority's intercession.

In chapter 4 I examined the rhizome of the woman of authority, manifested in Inanna/Ištar in her guise of war goddess, intercessor, and law-unto-herself. As war goddess, she inspires warrior-lutenists in battle and leads their victory dances. As law-unto-herself she contravenes or compels the authority of the supreme masculine figure(s) in order to intercede on behalf of the beleaguered shepherd king.

By the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE the lute's iconography provides enough detail to discern the emergence of various genera. One in particular, that I call the Assyro-Hittite LNL, appears exclusively in banquet scenes and images related to warfare. Its morphology makes it the primary candidate for ancestor of the *tanbūr* family, and its artistic representations continue and develop the mytho-cosmological theme that defines these instruments as imaginal objects.

Chapter 5 continues the morphological genealogy of the Assyro-Hittite LNL into the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> millennia CE, when the LNL's iconography falls mostly silent. The term *tambūr* or *tanbūr* is first attested in Middle Persian texts from the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Arab scholars attest it as a general term for a number of regional LNL species, all characterized by their 'pear-shaped' bodies, long narrow

necks and two to three string courses. A 12<sup>th</sup> century manuscript of the Byzantine epic cycle *Digenis Akritis* provides the first known use of *tanbūr*, as *thampourin*, in a European language and its occurrence suggests the term had become known to the Greeks from Turkic, in which it was a loanword from Persian. This Perso-Turkic LNL may have adapted a dorsal ridge design feature of the Anatolian *pandoura* that eventually became a signature of the *karadyzen* and *šargija* genera of Balkan LNLs.

Digenis Akritis's *thampourin*, along with warrior-lutenist images from the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> centuries, further testify to the continued association of *tanbūr* LNLs with a Frontier Warrior Culture. The Frontier Warrior Culture's essential feature is its rhizomatic border-crossing behavior that, like the woman of authority rhizome, cuts horizontally across the vertical demarcations established by Empire and its genealogies of power through religion, language, politics, and culture. The primary traits of the FWC remained basically intact in the shift from Byzantine to Ottoman imperial control of the Balkans, another mark of its rhizomatic nature. It was at this time, from the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, that lutes of the *tanbūr* family entered the Balkan instrumentarium in earnest and were noted by Western observers as an indispensable *accoutrement* of Ottoman soldiers, Albanians in particular.

Chapter 6 analyzes the thematic structures of Greek, Turkic, and Albanian Return songs, whose narratives constitute mythologized versions of circumstances well known to frontier warriors, brigands and garrison troops. The Albanian *Aga Imer* tradition formed my special focus for its inclusion of the *çifteli* and its distinctive function in the narrative. The shouting theme common to all of these tales replicates the ancient Mesopotamian thematic rhizome of Dumuzi/shepherd king, Inanna/woman of authority, and long necked lute-as-mediator and instigator of intercession and release. The social institutions of *besë* and *pobratim* practiced in

Albania and among the FWC in general form the crux of these Return themes. Thus the Return song as a genre demonstrates the enduring quality of this mytho-cosmological rhizome and the *tanbūr* LNLs associated with it since Mesopotamian civilization.

In chapter 7 I continued exploring the *Aga Imer* tradition, noting the rhizomatic behavior of the 23 transcribed and audio/video versions I was able to compile. I grouped these versions in five textual rhizomes and seven melodic rhizomes based on correspondences in their verbal formulas and diction on the one hand, and modal and melodic characteristics on the other hand.

Mapping these rhizomes onto their provenances in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia demonstrated the decentralized, non-hierarchical nature of *Aga Imer*'s interpretive 'schools'. That is, I found it effectively impossible to determine from their distributive patterns any origin point or any authoritative versions that the others descended from genealogically. The only 'authentic' genesis point for the *AI* tradition is not any text or performance but the *story* of the generic Return song.

This, too, did not originate with Homer's *Odyssey* but has an indeterminate prehistory in Mycenaean oral epic tradition, Assyrian royal epics, the Dumuzi-d laments and *Dream* texts, and Sumero-Akkadian myths of Inanna. The generic Return song represents the rhizomatic confluence of themes and characters from various genres. In this, the origins of *Aga Imer* can be likened to the origins of the lute: the source lies not in an ur-text or ur-chordophone but has multiple origin points that, due to historical events, came together in different configurations that yet shared the DNA common to each of them, filtered through cultural conditioning.

Finally, chapter 8 returned to my original research question to examine the intersection of *tanbūr* morphology and the mytho-cosmological rhizome it forms a

part of. The music of epics and Return songs in particular align with linguistic substructures to form a parallel lineage of musical substructures. The crucial dream, shouting → release theme sequence form particular to *Aga Imer* contains connections to the shepherd king theme in the shepherd's faithful dog. A recurring formula in Albanian Returns subtly implies that Aga himself fulfills the dog's role as the loyal best friend of man and, alternately, the lower self caught in the animal passions. In playing his *çifteli* and singing to keep his spirits high in prison Aga also enacts the shepherd king as expressed in David-as-shepherd and as Orpheus.

His silence after his terrible dream, however, and the mention of *zeza çifteli* in the Albanian *Lalë Bajram* Return, reveal a semiotic chain between the shouting theme and the role of a *kara dutār* in the Turkmën epic of *Harman Däli*. When the hero Köroğlu's *dutār* is smashed, its silence leads Köroğlu to a kind of renewal at the hand of husband-seeking Crazy Harman, a Turkmën manifestation of the woman of authority. The numerous parallels between *Aga Imer* and these episodes of *Harman Däli* despite their being in quite different genres show the same mytho-cosmological rhizome at work.

In Chap. 8 I then explored the ancient association of *tambūr* LNLs with Frontier Warrior Culture through the instruments' materiality: their simplicity of design, ease of construction (as 'trench' or prison lutes), and vernacular idioms make the *tanbūr*-s a supremely suitable instrument for the shifting and dangerous lives of the border soldiers.

Finally, I analyzed these LNLs' morphologies as symbolic encapsulations of the mytho-cosmological rhizome with its hero/woman of authority/*tambura* triad. The two strings of the *çifteli*, *dutār*, Assyro-Hittite LNL and Mesopotamian lutes can be seen as acting much like the masculine and feminine Return characters; terms like

*maqām*, *akordim* and *düzen* invoke the Albanian *besë* and *pobratim* and the sworn vow of Mesopotamian epics. These instruments then express in their morphology the essential spirit of the mytho-cosmological rhizome that informs the Return songs so frequently accompanied by LNLs of the *tanbūr* family.

#### *Limits of My Theory/Methodology and Topics for Further Research*

The multi-disciplinary methodology I have formulated in my Thesis represents an original approach to the organological and historical study of the lute. Previous studies have largely focused on lute history and morphology from the Medieval era on and concentrated on the Arabian *ūd* and its European descendent the *lute*. Some scholars such as Emanuel Winternitz have applied Panofsky's art historical method to these instruments' iconography, exploring their mythology and cosmology in Islamic and Christian terms. Yet the majority of researches have concerned themselves with material organological themes—the development of the instruments' morphology, music theory and performance practices.

The literature on the pre-Medieval history of the lute family, in particular long necked lutes, remains largely unwritten.<sup>1</sup> I have therefore aimed to construct a methodology and theoretical framework to begin filling in this lacuna and to move past the strictly material organological viewpoint with its often outdated notions of hierarchical and progressive cultural evolution. As I have shown, the mytho-cosmological aspects of lutes have played—and continue to play—important, if not

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<sup>1</sup> Since my initial submission of my Thesis, Hans de Zeeuw has recently published a monograph on the *tanbūr* family, *Tanbūr Long-Necked Lutes along the Silk Road and beyond* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2019) and several articles on his specialty, the *bağlama sazı*. His book covers the origins of *tanbūr* lutes but still mostly relates the organological, not the mytho-cosmological or social, history, and begins in earnest in the Persian Sasanian Empire, covering the previous three millennia BCE still in summary form.

definitive roles in shaping lute design, performance practice and social roles, yet it is this aspect that has gone overlooked.

As with any new, innovative theoretical and methodological approach, the one I have constructed here will require some modifications. In ethnomusicology, anthropology and culture studies in general the use of terms and concepts from the natural sciences can still be imprecise or misleading and a considerable lag time still exists between where the anthropological community stands on these issues and how their work is represented in popular media and culture.<sup>2</sup>

While I have tried to define my terms with precision and nuance I am aware my own work has not completely escaped the problems involved with biological concepts in cultural artifact studies. On the other hand, in challenging a number of entrenched ideas and dogmas in lute organology, such as the musical bow hypothesis, I feel I have taken an important step towards formulating a theoretical language for discussing the cultural and historical development—not evolution—of music and musical artifacts, one that foregrounds the vast difference between biological and cultural processes. I have aimed to use biological concepts only to the degree to which they provide meaningful analogies to my subject and not overextended them.

That said, it is true that the rhizome, too, is primarily a biological term, even in the philosophical sense envisioned by Deleuze and Guattari. I felt rhizome theory has been appropriate in this Thesis because it has enabled me to distance my research from the rigidity of the monogenetic tree model that has dominated most organological studies of lutes. The rhizome model offers a greater conceptual flexibility and is compatible with phylogenetic concepts like reticulation, providing a nuanced counterpoint rather than a contradictory alternative. The rhizome allowed me

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<sup>2</sup> E.g. Kartomi, 'Processes and Results', p. 231.

to understand both material and intangible cultural artifacts—lutes and mythologies—in their full, dynamic complexity, as active points of convergence and divergence in multi-dimensional semiotic chains, rather than the somewhat static, isolated evolutionary steps that the tree model represents them as being.

Another of my theory and method's shortcomings lies in my decision to forego ethnographic fieldwork. This was, as I noted in my Introduction, determined by the necessary parameters I had to place on my research in order to create a coherent Thesis. Nevertheless, inclusion of ethnographic research by myself or other researchers would provide an important test or 'control group' of the conclusions I have reached here; do my findings here have any support in current perceptions among players and audiences of the *çifteli*, for example, or is the mytho-cosmological rhizome of Aga Imer a forgotten relic of the past? Has the social and cultural place of the *çifteli* in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century abandoned what it represented for Albanians in the past? Denise Gill's application of rhizome theory to her ethnography of the musical community centered on the Turkish *ney* flute represents an alternative approach and signals the possibilities I have not explored.

In addition to ethnographic work on the *çifteli* tradition in contemporary Albania this Thesis has had to leave practically unremarked some major topics that would prove vital to testing my findings. Ethnographic studies such as Żerańska-Kominek's work on the Turkmeni *dutār* would reveal how the connection between *tanbūr* genera and the Return song tradition plays out in other music cultures, and what light these might shed on its Albanian iteration. How does the reterritorialization of the mytho-cosmological rhizome between, say, Turkey, Iran or Croatia alter its cultural meanings and expressions? To what degree are these meanings and expressions influenced by polytheist, Islamic or Christian cultural matrices?

Furthermore, I have had to omit except in passing important topics like the Alevi *aşık* bards and their *bağlama*-s; the *aşiq* bards of Azerbaijan; the *tanbūr* of the Ahl-i-Haq religion in Iran; the *saz* of the Yezidi *qawal*-s<sup>3</sup>; and the Bektashi Sufis of Albania, all religiously heterodox groups who, with the possible exception of the Bektashi, hold some form of a *tanbūr* LNL as sacred. I have also had to leave unanswered the question of how their music cultures and sacred instruments have been affected by a Frontier Warrior Culture like I have described. Research on these groups might also provide important information on the relationship between the bardic figure and a warrior or military culture.

What, too, of the Western European Return song tradition represented by poems like *Sir Orfeo*, poems such as the Medieval Scottish ballad of Sir Thomas of Erceldoune or Thomas the Rhymer,<sup>4</sup> or the troubadour poetry of Medieval Occitania and its themes? My recent reading of Robert Graves's *The White Goddess*<sup>5</sup> has shed light on the widespread occurrence of the mytho-cosmological triad I have discussed throughout this Thesis, with the harp instead of long necked lutes. What historical and mythological connections might link these European traditions with those of the Balkans and the Near East?

The mythological associations of long necked lutes in East Asia—China, Tibet, Japan, Mongolia, Korea—have also been unjustly left out here but would no doubt comprise an entire volume in their right.

Finally, the *çifteli* is not used exclusively for epic and heroic songs and nor is it the only or even primary chordophone used to accompany them (the *lahutë* and

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<sup>3</sup> Not to be confused with the *Qawwali* singers of Pakistan who represent a separate, Islamic tradition.

<sup>4</sup> For the former see J. R. R. Tolkien, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: With Pearl and Sir Orfeo* (Glasgow: HarperCollins Pubs., 1995); for Thomas the Rhymer see Josephine M. Burnham, 'A Study of Sir Thomas of Erceldoune', *Publications of the Modern Languages Association of America* 23/16 (1908), pp. 375-420.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Graves, *The White Goddess* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1999).

*gusle* seem to have been the original and still significant instruments in that role). The Albanian instrumentarium contains a number of other long necked lutes besides *çifteli* and *sharki*, most of which do not seem to play a significant role in performance of these genres. The *çifteli* accompanies lyric songs, dances, and instrumental pieces in an array of social contexts like weddings, rituals and festivals; why, of all these chordophones, is the *çifteli* the only one that appears in Return songs like *Aga Imer* and *Lalë Bajram*, and why so predominantly in Return songs? The *çifteli* and *sharki*'s relationship to each other and these other long necked lutes, and to their other social uses and repertoires, should also be studied.

It is my hope that the theory, method and research I have done in this Thesis will be found useful and further refined in the future, if not by myself than by other researchers. In particular the ancient BCE history of musical instruments may profit tremendously. My use of art historical methods has broad applications in ethnomusicological studies of organology and historical social roles of instruments and their mythological associations in ways that could illuminate aspects of those instruments' current existences. My pairing of phylogenetic and rhizome theories could also find applications in studies of folklore, oral poetry traditions, and religious studies. Seeing phylogenetics and rhizome theory as harmonizing counterpoints instead of opposites could even potentially create fresh, less problematic approaches to concepts of diffusion and cultural evolution.

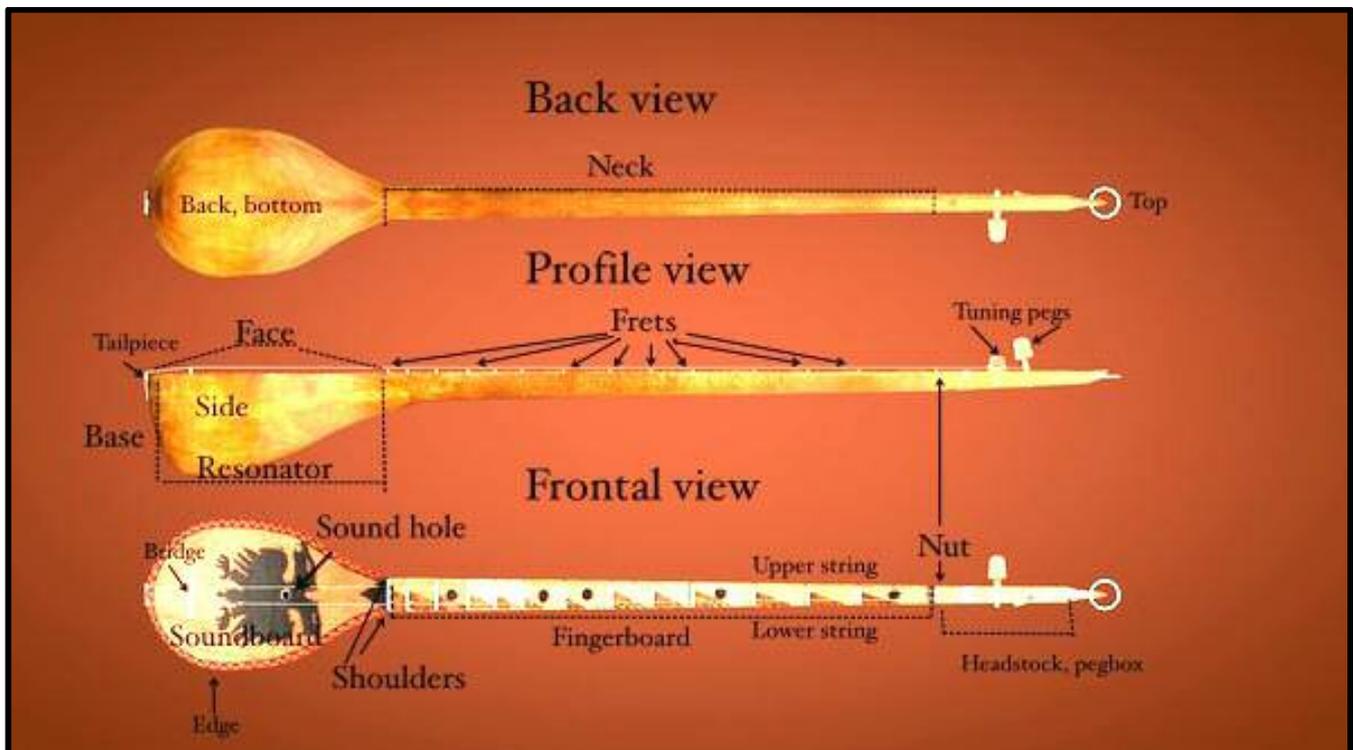
Appendix 1: Species of Genera of *Tanbūr* LNL Family

Dutār		Saz		Tanbūr/Setar		Šargija		Tambura		Karadyzen	
Name	Region	Name	Region	Name	Region	Name	Region	Name	Region	Name	Region
Tanbūr	Kurdistan	Cura	Turkey	Tanbūr	Xinjiang (Uygher)	Šargija	Bosnia & Hercegovina	Brac	Slovenia	Çifteli	Albania, Kosovo
Dombra	Afghanistan	Bağlama	Turkey	Tanbūr	Uzbekistan	Sharki	Albania, Kosovo	Tambura prim	Croatia	Karadyzen	Albania, Kosovo
Dutār	Afghanistan (Herati)	Meydan	Turkey	Setār <sup>1</sup>	Pamir Mts., Tajikistan	Çarky	Turkish <sup>2</sup>	Samice	Croatia	Pivačka tambura (with two strings)	Bosnia & Hercegovina
Dutār	Uzbekistan	Polusaz	Bosnia & Hercegovina	Setār	Chitral, Pakistan			Dvožica	Croatia	Tambura sa tri žice (with three strings)	Bosnia & Hercegovina
Dotār-i mayda	Tajikistan	Saz	Bosnia & Hercegovina	Setār, siitar	Kashmir			Bugarija	Bosnia & Hercegovina	Tambura	Macedonia
Dotār	Turkmenistan	Saz	Azerbaijan	Tanbūr	Tajikistan			Tambura	Bosnia & Hercegovina	Tamrra (tamërr)	Albania
Dombra	Kazakhstan	Saz	Kosovo	Setār	Afghanistan			Tambura	Bulgaria		
Dutār	Xinjiang (Uygher)	Buzuq	Syria, Iraq	Setār	Iran			Tambura	Hungary		
Dutār (Turkish)	Khorasan (western)	Baghlama	Syria, Iraqi Kurdistan					Tambura (ovoid)	Macedonia		
Dutār	Khorasan (eastern)	Saze	Albania					Bozuk	Macedonia		
Tanburag	Baluchistan	Bouzouki	Greece					Bakllama	Albania		
								Tambura (ovoid)	Albania, Montenegro		

<sup>1</sup> = There is also a Pamir lute called *tanbūr* but it is not included here as its particular dimensions, hide-covered soundboard, and other lesser features place it in the *rabâb* lute family.

<sup>2</sup> = Villoteau used this spelling for the *tanbour çarky* he noted in Egypt in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was, however, to him a ‘Turkish’ instrument as he saw it mostly played by Ottoman soldiers.

Appendix 2: Terminology for Parts of the Lute



*Pl. 0.1: Parts of a lute.*

I use the following terms to denote parts of lute instruments and to describe different configurations or designs of those parts. *Plate 0.1* shows the basic parts of a *çifteli* which apply to all the lutes I talk about in this Thesis.

*Soundboards* are most commonly made of either soft woods like spruce or of animal hide or skin. In some lute families or species the soundboard may be half skin and half wood, or on two-chambered lutes the lower chamber is covered with skin and the upper one adjoining the shoulders will be made of wood or left open. In some rare cases metal is used for the soundboard.

*Soundboards* or a lute's *face* come in several shapes. The *çifteli* above displays a *teardrop*-shaped soundboard, also called pear-shaped; I have opted to describe this shape as a teardrop as this term, in my view, more precisely describes

the diminishing curvature that comes to a point in between the shoulders. This is the most common soundboard design for the lutes I discuss but some alternate designs important for what follows include:

*Ovoid* soundboards curve and narrow at roughly the same rate towards both the base and shoulders;

*Disc-shaped* soundboards display a circular shape like the banjo;

A *waisted* soundboard typically has two sound chambers with an indented midsection like a violin or guitar;

A *squared* soundboard is uncommon outside of East Asia, where the Japanese *shamisen* gives an example of this design with its straight, parallel sides and slightly rounded corners.

Lutes' *shoulders* mark the junction of the neck and resonator and have four main configurations depending on their construction method:

*Disjunct* shoulders indicate that neck and body are affixed via a mortise-and-tenon or dove-tailed joint so that the point where they meet forms an 80-90° angle.

The guitar and mandolin have disjunct shoulders;

The *çifteli* above displays *incurved* shoulders. The neck is affixed with a v-joint (see Chap. 1) but the maker carves the shoulders so neck and resonator seem to merge gradually with each other;

*Tapered* shoulders result from a noticeable widening of the neck from nut to joint so that the shoulders per se are almost absent. In this design neck and body meld seamlessly, although in some cases the neck tapers to a disjunct connection with the resonator;

Finally, *tanged* or *spiked* shoulders result from the neck continuing as a dowel that penetrates the resonator to its base or, especially on lutes with animal hide soundboards, end near the bridge where the skin is cut away so the exposed base of the pole acts as a tailpiece for the strings.

A resonator's *back* takes seven basic forms, again depending on construction methods:

A *bowled* back, as I use the term, is fairly deep (more than 4") and fully rounded. This design usually signifies that the resonator has been carved from a single block of wood;

*Conical* backs also result from this construction method but are distinguished from bowled backs by their steeply inclined sides that terminate in a dorsal or 'fishback' ridge that is either flattened at its pinnacle as on the *çifteli* or peaked like the *šargija* some species of Central Asian *tanbūr*-s;

*Ribbed* backs also display a bowled shaped but are formed from separate thin wooden ribs bent over a mold and glued together. The Neapolitan mandolin represents a European example of a ribbed resonator;

Another variant of the bowl shape is the *carveled* back, which the maker carves from one piece of wood in such a way that the back has multiple planes that imitate a ribbed construction;

The *planar* back represents a variant of the carvel shape except that here the basic bowl shape is planed into four to six wide flat surfaces. In this, the back, sides and base each form separate planes;

*Flat* backs are simply that: flat with 90° angles where the sides and base meet it as on a guitar or Appalachian mandolin;

*Rounded* backs differ from bowled backs in that the curvature is much broader and the angle formed by resonator and soundboard edges much smaller, approximately 10-60° as opposed to the bowled back's 65-90° angles. This is usually found on lutes with wide soundboards and shallow resonators—generally three to four inches deep—such as the Chinese *pipa*.

A lute's *headstock* or *pegbox* also takes a variety of forms. Most of the long necked lutes that I examine in this Thesis display *continuous* headstocks in which the headstock's face form a simple continuation of the fingerboard or lies on the same plane as it. Occasionally this headstock declines at no more than a 5-7° angle;

Many or most short necked lutes (see Chap. 1) have *bentbacked* pegboxes. These curve back at 70-90° just past the nut. On this design the interior of the headstock's face is almost always chiseled out and the tuning pegs inserted laterally. The strings affix to the pegs' exposed stems in this chiseled groove from which they pass over the nut;

The *crooked* headstock roughly resembles the hand grip on a gentleman's walking cane or a shepherd's crook. It curves downward past the nut but then curves back up in a semi-circular swoop so that the *top* of the headstock lies at an equal or greater plane to the nut. These sometimes display a 'hook' at the top and, like the bentbacked design, usually have a chiseled groove in the interior with lateral tuning pegs. The crooked design occasionally curves backward like a curved bentback design;

*Clubbed* pegboxes also contain an interior groove and lateral pegs but a continuous face with the fingerboard. I call this construction clubbed because the headstock's sides are flattened and very deep, resembling somewhat the head of a mace. Although the strings pass the nut at a steep angle the clubbed headstock differs

from the bentbacked in that this angle varies from 80 to  $\sim 140^\circ$ . The Afghan *rabâb* bears a clubbed pegbox.

Lastly, the face of the *disced* pegbox forms a simple circle that meets the fingerboard on a continuous plane. The disc's back is flat as well and the pegs typically are inserted from the back so that their stems emerge 'upside down' from the face. Many Balkan bowed lutes such as the Greek and Cretan *lyra* feature this design, and there is often no nut.

Finally, *tuning pegs* come in a variety of configurations but the most common include:

*Lateral* pegs inserted on the headstock's side pass through to the other side at a  $180^\circ$  angle.

*Frontal* pegs are inserted into the headstock's face and stick either straight up or straight underneath it at  $90^\circ$ .

When some pegs are lateral and some frontal they are *sagittal* or *perpendicular* pegs, although in some cases the side pegs enter at oblique, not  $90^\circ$  angles.

Appendix 3: Table of Ratios of Neck Length/Soundboard Width (cm.)

#	Lute name nationality	Total length	Fingerboard length	Neck length	Soundboard width	Ratio L(N)/W(Sb)
1.	<i>Cobza</i> Romania	63.5	12.3	12.3	27.2	.45/1
2.	<i>Rabâb</i> Afghanistan	80	43	17	20	.85/1
3.	<i>Đàn tỳ bà</i> Vietnam	96	54 <sup>1</sup>	23.5	26	.9/1
4.	' <i>Mandolino</i> ' Albania	78.3	32.5 <sup>1</sup>	27.7	22.8	1.2/1
5.	<i>Bouzouki</i> Ireland	95	52.7 <sup>1</sup>	40.4	31.1	1.3/1
6.	<i>Tambura 1</i> Croatia	89	46.3 <sup>1</sup>	38.5	23.6	1.6/1
7.	<i>Tambura 2</i> ( <i>Farkas</i> ) Croatia	85.3	38.5 <sup>1</sup>	38.5	21.3	1.8/1
8.	<i>Rabâb</i> Tajikistan	88.7	34	34	19.4	1.8/1
9.	<i>Bajiaoqin</i> China	81.3	45	45	25	1.8/1
10.	<i>Tambura 3</i> ( <i>Farkas</i> ) Croatia	84.4	46.2 <sup>1</sup>	40.5	19.7	2/1
11.	<i>Dombra</i> Kazakhstan	98.6	48.2	48.2	23	2.1/1
12.	<i>Tanbūr</i> Kurdistan	90.2	44.5 <sup>2</sup>	38.5	18.6	2.1/1
13.	<i>Bağlama saz</i> Turkey	110.3	51.5	49.8	23.2	2.2/1
14.	<i>Çifteli</i> Albania	99	43.8	43.8	19.2	2.3/1
15.	<i>Dutār</i> Khorasan	100	45.3	49 <sup>3</sup>	18.2	2.7/1
16.	<i>Çifteli 1</i> Albania	87	46.7	46.7	16	2.9/1
17.	<i>Çifteli 2</i> Albania	84.8	45.6	45.6	15.8	2.9/1
18.	<i>Tambura</i> Macedonia	83.5	41.5 <sup>1</sup>	37.7	12.5	3/1
19.	<i>Setar</i> Iran	86	45	45.5	14.5	3.1/1
20.	<i>Rabâb</i> China <sup>4</sup>	90	62.5	62.5	20	3.1/1
21.	<i>Tanbūr 1</i> China <sup>4</sup>	127	86	87.5	15.5	5.6/1
22.	<i>Tanbūr 2</i> Afghanistan	89.3	70	70	12.6	5.6/1

All instruments are from my personal collection but represent standard design specifications as they are made from design templates used in professional instrument workshops for both small-scale craftsman and mass production techniques.

<sup>1</sup> All entries marked with <sup>1</sup> have fingerboards that extend beyond the length of the neck well onto the soundboard, similar to a guitar's construction. I therefore measured the end of the neck at the fret that most nearly coincides with the shoulders' outward curve.

<sup>2</sup> The Kurdish *tanbūr* presents a special case. The virtuoso *tanbūri* Ostad Elahi (1895-1974) introduced several structural changes to this instrument such as doubling the melody string and equalizing the ratio between neck/fingerboard and resonator length to 38.5 cm. each, or 1/1 (see <<http://ostadelahi.com/music/the-art-of-tanbur/>>; accessed on: 20 Nov. 2018). Previously, the Kurdish *tanbūr*'s dimensions displayed more variability, and Elahi's innovation provides an example of how local and individual changes to LNL morphologies and playing styles problematize efforts to create classification schema that rely on standardized, uniform definitions of the instruments.

The last of its 14 gut frets is now placed 38.5 cm. from the nut and coincides with the joint seam where the neck joins the resonator. This point is still ~5-6 cm. before the shoulders begin, so technically the neck should measure 44.5 cm. However, the soundboard covers this section and the wood of the body underneath is hollowed out nearly to the neck joint. Furthermore, this unfretted stretch of the handle is only occasionally played on (see p. 26), and a small sound hole on the soundboard sits between the start of the shoulder's outward curve (see *Pl. 1.9, p. 37*). This sound hole could thus be construed as the real end of the neck/fingerboard which would

make the neck's true length 44.5 cm., the ratio 2.4/1, and an exception to my definition of 'neck' on p. 26.

On the other hand, strictly applying that definition to this instrument would make the neck 38.5 cm. long and the resonator length 38 cm. In this case, the Kurdish *tanbūr* would no longer meet the criteria for an LNL even though all of its other morphological features agree with the criteria. It would then be in a class of 'Intermediate neck' lutes—of which there are few members; I therefore decided to make a harmless modification of my definition of 'neck' rather than adding this *tanbūr* to a category that obviates its obvious historical and organological ties to the *tanbūr* LNL family.

<sup>3</sup> The Khorasani *dutār* presents a similar case to the Kurdish *tanbūr* except here the ambiguity is compounded by the fact that this *dutār*'s last fret comes 4 cm. from the joint seam, at 41 cm. rather than 45.3 cm. To count the seam as the neck's proper end would make the resonator length 45 cm. and the ratio 1.09/1.

As with the *tanbūr* above, the shoulders' curve begins another four centimeters below the seam parallel to the uppermost sound hole, so the neck could then be reckoned as 49 cm. This would make the resonator's length 38 cm. as shown in the table, and the ratio 2.7/1.

It should be noted the Iranian *setar* shares this conundrum as well and it may therefore represent a design tradition common to Iran and Khorasan, or perhaps the influence of Ostad Elahi's ideas. The *setar*, however, in keeping with my definition of the *setar* and *tanbūr* genera has a much shorter resonator, so using either set of measurements results in a ratio of 3.1-3.5/1.

<sup>4</sup> This *rabâb* is not a Chinese instrument but is particular to the Dolan people, a Turkic speaking community in western Xinjiang province in northwestern China. They are

related to more numerous Uigher people, another Turkic community who form the majority non-Han population in Xinjiang, but who have their own very different and distinctive type of *rabâb*. The *tanbūr* in #21 is also from Xinjiang but represents the Uigher species of the instrument.

Appendix 4: Mesopotamian Lute Names<sup>923</sup>

- 1.
- ġiš-gu-di*
- ġeš-gu-de*
- (Akk.
- inu*
- )

**Sign analysis:**

- *ġiš* = ‘wood, wooden’ 
- *gu* = ‘voice, cry, noise’ 
- *di* = ‘to speak, command; speech, word’ 
- *de* = ‘to bring, carry; to pour, winnow’ 

**Semantic values:**

- ‘wooden voice speaking’
- ‘voice-carrying wood’
- ‘loudly-sounding wood’ (Krispijn., p. 146)

Attestations	Text type
• OB Nippur Ura I, l. 617 OB	• Lexical list
• Can. Hh VII B: 117-134	• Lexical list
• OB Hh I (Krispijn, p. 146)	• Lexical list
• A praise poem of Šulgi B, l. 168	• Royal praise poem
• A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi C) l. c242.03), c24203.B.85	• Royal praise poem
• A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi E) l. c24205.35	• Royal praise poem
• A praise poem of Išme-Dagan (A + V), l. c254.01.A.370	• Royal praise poem
• Inana & Enki, l. 33, 50	• Mythological poetic text
• The building of Ninjirsu’s temple, cylinders A & B, l. 163, 189	• Royal dedicatory inscription

<sup>923</sup> Sources: Krispijn, ‘Musical Ensembles’, pp. 140, 145-148; signs and meanings found at: <<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/>>; accessed on: June-July 2016, Aug. 2018, Dec. 2018; Michalowski, ‘Love or Death?’, pp. 50, 58-59; Collon and Kilmer, ‘Lute’, pp. 16-17, n. 28 p. 21, n. 32.3-9 p. 22; Miguel Civil, ‘The *Tigidlu* Bird and a Musical Instrument’, *N.A.B.U.* 2 (1987), 48, p. 27; Niek Veldhuis, ‘L# .fiÅ.TAR in Ur III’, *N.A.B.U.* 1 (1999), 19, p. 20; H. Radau, *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts; Sumerian Hymns and Prayers to God Dumu-zi, or Babylonian Lenten Songs from the Temple Library of Nippur*, edited by H. V. Hilprecht (Munich: Rudolf Merkel, Erlangen, 1913), n. 9.iii.8; citations, texts and translations found at: <[http:// etcsl. orinst.ox.ac.uk/edition2/etcslbycat.php](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/edition2/etcslbycat.php)>; accessed on: June-Aug. 2016, Aug.-Sept. 2018.

Attestations	Text type
• The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A), l. c2411.1.04, -.188	• Lament
• A šir-namursaĝa to Ninsiana for Iddin-Dagan (Iddin-Dagan A), l. c2531.M.206	• Praise hymn to Inanna
• The debate between Winter and Summer, l. c533.236	• Debate text
• MVN 16 1429, MVN 18 649	• Administrative documents
• CBM 11393 (Radau)	• Praise hymn to Dumuzi

2. *tigidlu/-la*    *tigidla* (ŠA.MIN.DI)    *tigidla* (ŠA.MIN.TAR)    <sup>ĝeš</sup>DI.TAR



### Variant forms:

- OB Diri Nippur; l. 233: [[tigidla]] [GIŠ.ŠA3].TAR# = ti-mi-it-ta#-lu-u2
- OB Nippur Ura I; l. 613: ĝištigidla
- OB Nippur Ura I; l. 614: ĝištigidla kaskal-la (= ‘nomad’s/traveler’s *tigidla*’)
- OB Nippur Ura I; l. 615: ĝištigidla sa 3(diš) (= ‘three string *tigidla*’)
- OB Nippur Ura I; l. 616: ĝištigidla NIM-ma (= ‘eastern highlands *tigidla*’)
- MB Hh 4265: *tigidla sa.3* = *talmuttu* (= ‘three string *tigidla* of Dilmun’) (Kr. 148)
- MB Hh: *tigidla.elam.ma* (= ‘*tigidla* of Elam’)

### Sign analysis:

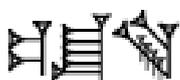
- Ša = šag ‘heart’ 
- TAR = ‘(type of) bird; to cut (down), divide’ 
- Min = ‘two, doubled’ 
- Di = ‘to speak, command; speech, word’ 

### Semantic values:

- ŠA.TAR = ‘bird’s heart; bird of the heart’, ‘split heart’ (Kr. 148)
- ŠA.MIN.DI = ‘two hearts’ speech; two-voiced heart’
- ŠA.MIN.TAR = ‘two birds of the heart; bird of two hearts’
- <sup>ĝeš</sup>DI.TAR = ‘talking bird of wood’

Attestations	Text type
• OB Diri Nippur l. 233	• Lexical list
• OB Nippur Ura I, l. 613-616	• Lexical list
• MB Hh 4265	• Lexical list
• MB Hh (line not stated)	• Lexical list
• PDT 2, 1120	• Administrative document
• UET 3, 15	• Administrative document
• UDT 97	• Administrative document
• The building of Ningirsu's temple (Gudea, cylinders A and B) l. c217.122	• Royal dedicatory inscription (Civil, NABU, 48, p. 27)

### 3. *šukarak* <sup>ḡiṣ</sup>*šu-kara*



#### Sign analysis:

- *šu* = 'hand' 
- *kar* = 'to blow, light up, shine' 
- = *dug* 'to speak, command; speech, word'

Attestations	Text type
• OB Nippur Ura I; l. 619	• Lexical list
• OB Nippur Lu; l. 640a	• Lexical list
• Bridges, 451 l. 5	• Akkadian literary text
• Amarsuen 9 E3/2.1.3.9, l. 35,42	• Ur III literary text
• A Praise Poem of Šulgi (Šulgi C) l. c24203.B.77	• Royal praise poem
• The debate between Winter and Summer, l. c533.236	• Debate text

4. *sa-eš*      *ġiš-sa-eš*      *ġeš-sa-eš*



**Sign analysis:**

- *sa* = ‘gut, tendon, string (of a musical instrument)’; Akk. *pitnu*



- *eš* = ‘three’; Akk. *šalāš*
- ‘three [gut] stringed (instrument)’

**Semantic values:**

- ‘wooden three stringed (instrument)’

Attestations	Text type
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi B), l. c24202.162</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal praise poem</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi C), l. c24203.B.82</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal praise poem</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A praise poem of Išme-Dagan (Išme-Dagan A + V), l. c25401.A.371</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal praise poem</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Not listed, see Krispijn, ‘Musical Ensembles’, p. 147)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ur III/early OB administrative texts, Isin</li> </ul>

5. *ħarħar*      *ġiš-ħarħar*      *ħar-mušen(na)*



**Sign analysis:**

- *ħar* = ‘ring, links of a chain, hoop’



Attestations	Text type
• OB Nippur Ura I; l. 607	• Lexical list
• MB Hh l. 4254-4255	• Lexical list
• Enki's Journey to Nibru, l. 63	• Mythological poetic text
• A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi B), l. c24202.165	• Royal praise poem
• Praise poem of Išme-Dagan, (A+V), l. 372	• Royal praise poem
• UET 3, 0400.2; 0408.1; 0481.2; 0487.2; 0502.2; 0506.2; 0524.2; 0533.2; 0570.2; -589.2	• Administrative or literary document
• UTI 6, 3800, o ii.11; o iv.25; r i.14; r i.15; r ii.3; r iii.3; r iii.15	• Administrative or literary document

### 6. <sup>giš</sup>-dim(dim)



#### Variant forms:

- MB Hh 42, l. 62: <sup>giš</sup>-dim.mar.kur.ra = *ḫalmatru*, 'pole from Margiu/ḫalmatru' (Margiu/ḫalmatru = Marghiana, ancient city near modern Merv, Turkmenistan) (Krispijn, p. 145)
- MB Hh 42, l. 63: <sup>giš</sup>-dim.mar.ha.a. šī = *paraḫšû*, 'pole from Fars' (Fars = Iran)

#### Sign analysis:

- *dim* = 'wood, pole'

Attestations	Text type
• MB Hh 42, l. 62-63	• Lexical list
• Hh VIII B, l. 48	• Lexical list
• Hg B I, l. 191	• Lexical list

7.  $\dot{g}i\ddot{s}$ -*du-a* Akk. *karna inu, karnānu*



**Sign analysis:**

- *du* = ‘plant, fix upright; to play (a musical instrument); to touch/take

hold of’; 

‘erected wood/tree; supplied with a penis’ (Krispijn, p. 145)

- *a* = ‘a bird’s cry’ 

Attestations	Text type
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OB Nippur Ura I, l. 618</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lexical list</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OB Nippur Lu, l. 640</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lexical list</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The building of Ningīrsu's temple (Gudea, cylinders A and B), l. c217.122, 148</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal dedicatory inscription</li> </ul>

Appendix 5: Πανδούρα (Pandoura) Sources & Citations

*Table A: Citation Information*

#	Date	Era	Text name	Text type	Author	Provenance
1	275-221 BCE (cited early 3 <sup>rd</sup> c. CE)	Late Hellenistic	<i>Deipnosophistae</i> ( <i>The Learned Banqueters</i> )		Euphorion, quoted by Athenaeus of Naucratis	Chalcis, near Athens, Greece
2	Before late 2 <sup>nd</sup> c. CE	Roman	<i>Deipnosophistae</i> ( <i>The Learned Banqueters</i> )		Protagorides, quoted by Athenaeus of Naucratis	Sea of Marmara, NW Anatolia
3	Before late 2 <sup>nd</sup> c. CE	Roman	<i>Deipnosophistae</i> ( <i>The Learned Banqueters</i> )		Pythagoras (unknown), quoted by Athenaeus of Naucratis	Unknown
4	1 <sup>st</sup> c. BCE-2 <sup>nd</sup> c. CE	Roman	Funerary inscription	Inscription	‘Lanpadiou’	Seleucia ad Calycadnum, Cilicia, Anatolia
5	60-120 CE	Roman	<i>Enchiridion (Manual of Harmonics)</i>	Music theory treatise	Nicomachus of Gerasa	Gerasa, Syria
6	2 <sup>nd</sup> c. CE	Roman	<i>Onomasticon</i>	Encyclopedic dictionary	Julius Pollux	Naucratis, Egypt
7	Late 4 <sup>th</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> c. CE	Roman	<i>Lexicon</i>	Encyclopedic dictionary	Hesychius of Naucratis	Naucratis, Egypt
8	306-337 CE (218-222 CE)	Roman	<i>Scriptores Historiae Augustae (The Augustan History)</i>	Imperial history	Author(s) unknown	Rome(?)
9	410-428 CE	Roman	<i>De nuptiss Philogiae et Mercurii (On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury)</i>	Encyclopedic allegory	Martianus Capella	Madaura, Algeria

#	Date	Era	Text name	Text type	Author	Provenance
10	490-580 CE	Byzantine	<i>Chronographia</i>	Chronicle	Ioannis Malalas (John Malalas)	Antioch, Syria/ Constantinople, Anatolia
11	642-649 CE	Byzantine	<i>Life of Symeon the Holy Fool</i>	Saint's vita	Leontius of Neapolis	Limassol, Cyprus
12	1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> c. CE	Roman/ Byzantine	Funerary inscription	Inscription	'Thoma'	Gerasa, Syria
13	Late 10 <sup>th</sup> c. CE	Byzantine	<i>Suidae (Suda) Lexicon</i>	Encyclopedic dictionary	Unknown	Unknown
14	560-636 CE	Visigothic Iberia	<i>Etymologies</i>	Encyclopedic work	Isidore of Seville	Seville, Spain

Table B: Bibliographic Information, Greek/Latin Text and English Translations

#	Bibliographic information	Greek/Latin text	English translation
1.	Athenaeus, <i>The Deipnosophists</i> , v. 2, translated by Charles Burton Gulick (London/New York: William Heinemann Ltd./G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928) IV: 182e, 183f, pp. 306-307.	<i>Εὐφορίων δὲ ὁ ἔποποιὸς ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἴσθμίων, “οἱ νῦν”, φησὶν, “καλούμενοι ναβλισταὶ καὶ πανδουρισταὶ καὶ σαμβυκισταὶ καινῶ μὲν οὐδενὶ χρῶνται ὄργάνῳ.</i>	‘The epic poet Euphorion, in his treatise on the Isthmian Games, <sup>94</sup> says that “the persons now called <i>nablas</i> - players, <sup>95</sup> <i>panduristae</i> , and <i>sambuca</i> -players use no newly invented instrument;...”’
2.	Athenaeus, <i>The Deipnosophists</i> , IV: 176a-b, pp. 175-176.	<i>Πρωταγοριδης δ’ ο Κυζικηνος εν δευτερω περι των επι Δαφνη πανηγυρεων φησιν. “παντος δε οργανου κατα μιτον ηπται, κροταλων, υπο φανου, πανδουρου, τω τε ηδει μοναυλω τας ηδιστας αρμονιας αναμινυριζει.</i>	‘Protagorides of Cyzicus, in the second book of his work On the Games at Daphne, says: “He has laid fingers to every instrument, one after the other — castanets, tambourine, <i>pandura</i> , [sic] and on the sweet single-pipe he hums again the sweetest scales.”’
3.	Athenaeus, <i>The Deipnosophists</i> , IV: 183f-184a, pp. 310-311.	<i>Πυθαγορας δε ο γεγραφως περι της ‘Ερυθρας θαλασσης τους Τρωγλοδυτας φησι κατασκευαζειν τεν πανδούραν εκ της εν τη θαλασση φυομενης δαφνης.</i>	‘Pythagoras, he who wrote on the Red Sea, says that the Troglodytes make the <i>pandura</i> [sic] out of the white mangrove which grows in the sea.’
4.	<i>Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua</i> 5/3 (1931), pp. 13, 16	<i>Παραστατικον Λανπαδιου πανδουρου.</i>	‘Tomb of Lanpadiou, <i>pandoura</i> -player.’
5.	<i>Musici Scriptores Graeci: Aristoteles, Euclidus, Nicomachus, Bacchius, Gaudentius, Alypius, et melodiarum veterum quidquid exstat</i> , edited by Carolus Janus (Teubneri, 1895), p. 243;  Nicomachus of Gerasa, <i>The Manual of Harmonics of Nicomachus the Pythagorean</i> , translated and commentary by Flora R. Levin (Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 1994), p. 61; Chap. IV.	<i>Μεσυ δ’ αυτων κ[χ]αι οιον κοινα και ομοιπαθη τα τε μονοχορδα φαινεσθαι, α δη και φανδουρους καλουσιν νοι πολλοι, κανονας δ’ οι Πυθαγορικοι, και τριγωνα...</i>	‘There are instruments that appear to be intermediate between these in the sense that they share common properties and are subject to the same affects; these are the monochords, commonly called <i>phandouroi</i> [sic] but which the Pythagoreans call canons.’

#	Bibliographic information	Greek/Latin text	English translation
6.	Julius Pollox, <i>Ὄνομαστικόν, Pollvcis Onomasticon e codibvs ab ipso collatis denvo edidit et adnoatavit</i> , translated and edited by Eric Bethe [Ericvs Bethe] (Stuttgart/Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1998), IV: 60, p. 219.	<i>μονόχορδον [δε Ἀραβῶν το εὐρημα] [τριχορδον], ὁπερ Ἀσσυριοὶ πανδοῦραν ὠνομαζον. Ἐκείνων δ' ἦν [[καὶ]] το εὐρημα. Πενταχορδον Κυθῶν μὲν το εὐρημα, καθηπτται δ' ἡμᾶσιν ὠμοβοῖνοις, αἰγῶν δε χηλαὶ τα πληκτρα.</i>	'The monochord [that, an invention of Arabia] [3-stringed], as like the Assyrian <i>pandoura</i> that is so-called and invented [by them]. The Scythian 5-string on the other hand invented by them, rests on an untanned leathern strap, the plectrum [of] goat hoof.'
7.	Hesychius of Alexandria (Hesychii Alexandrini), <i>Lexicon</i> , edited by Friderico Ritschelio, (No publisher listed: 1864), In. 31-33, p. 1181.	<i>πανδουρα πανδουρις .οργανον μουσικου. Πανδουρος δε ο μεταχειρις το οργανον.</i>	' <i>Pandoura</i> or <i>pandouris</i> : a musical instrument. But <i>pandouros</i> is the one playing the instrument [who handles the instrument].'
8.	<i>The Scriptorum Historiae Augustae, with an English Translation by David Magie, PhD., V.II</i> , translated by David Magie (London/New York: William Heinemann/G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1924), 32.8, pp. 168-171.	<i>Ipsē cantavit, saltavit, ad tibias dixit, tuba cecinit, pandurizavit, organo modulatus est.</i>	'He [Emperor Heliogabalus, r. 218-222 CE] could sing and dance, play the pipes, the horn and the <i>pandura</i> [sic], and he also performed on the organ.'
9.	Martianus Capella, <i>Martianus Capella</i> , edited by Adolfus Dick (Stuttgart/Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1925), IX: 906/12, p. 480; IX:924/10, p.491;  W. L. Stahl, R. Johnson and E.J. Burge, <i>Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts</i> , 2 vols. (New York 1977), v. 2, p. 351.	<i>Panduram aegyptios attemptare permisit ipsisque me pastoralibus fistulis uel cantus auium uel arborum crepitus uel susurros fluminum imitantibus non negauit.</i>  <i>Uerum per medium quidam agrestes canorique semidei, quorum hircipedem pandura, Silvanum harundinis enodis fistula sibiliatrix, rurestris Faunum tibia decuerunt.</i>	'The Egyptian <i>pandoura</i> strives to mimic, to me, the shepherd's reed pipe or musical utterance of the solitary bird, or trees rustling or whispering, I do not deny.'  'In the middle were some rustic and tuneful demigods, playing on appropriate instruments, the Goat-Footed one [Pan] on a <i>pandura</i> , Silvanus on a reed pipe smoothed of knots, and Faunus on a rustic flute.'
10.	John Malalas, <i>The Chronicle of John Malalas: A Translation</i> , translated and edited by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys and Roger Scott, et. al. (Melbourne 1986), 7:7., pp. 95-96.	<i>Οἱ οὖν ἑκάστου ἀριθμοῦ πανδουροὶ ἀπο ἑσπερας ἀπιόντες εἰς τοὺς οἴκους τῶν καλεσάντων αὐτοὺς ἐπ' ἀριστῶ εἰς τὴν ἐξῆς ἠγλοῦν πρὸς τὸ γινῶναι ἐκεῖνον, ὅτι παρ' αὐτῶ</i>	'The <i>pandoura</i> -players from each military unit went in the evening to the houses of those who had invited them to dine the next day and played, so that the unit should know that they would be entertained by that

		<i>τρεφονται αυριον.</i>	person the following day. This custom of the Brumalia has persisted in the Roman state to the present day.’
<b>#</b>	<b>Bibliographic information</b>	<b>Greek/Latin text</b>	<b>English translation</b>
<b>11.</b>	Derek Krueger, <i>Symeon the Holy Fool: Leontius’ Life and the Late Antique City</i> (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1996), §1;  Leontios of Neapolis, <i>Léontios de Néapolis, Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre</i> , edited and commentary by A.J. Festugière & Lennart Rydén (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1974), 153.18-20 (1721 B), p. 87	<i>Ελαβεν ως ην εις το φουσκαριον εν μια πανδουριν και ηρξατο αυλειν εις εν στενορομιν, οπου ην πνευμα ακαθαarton. Ηυλει [ηυλει] δε και ελεγεν την ευχην του μεγαλου Νικωνος, ινα αποδιωξη εκ του τοπου το πνευμα.</i>	‘One day while he was in the phouska-seller’s shop he picked up a <i>pandora</i> [sic] and began to play in an alleyway, where there was an unclean spirit.’
<b>12.</b>	A. H. M. Jones, ‘Inscriptions from Jerash’, <i>Journal of Roman Studies</i> 18 (1928), pp. 144-178, p. 144.	<i>μνημα Θωμα πανδοΥ-ριστοΥ (πανδου-ριστου)</i>	‘In memory [of] Thoma, pandoura-player.’
<b>13.</b>	<i>Suidae Lexicon</i> , v. 3 (1705), p. 18; also found at: < <a href="http://www.stoa.org">http://www.stoa.org</a> > ; accessed on: 2 June 2016.	<i>Πανδούρα: μάχαιρα κρεωκόπος. ή πηκτίς. ζήτει έν τῷ πηκτίς. Latin: Culter culinarius, quo earnes secantur. Item instrumentum Musicum, quod etiam πηκτίς dicitur. Vide in v. Πηκτίς.</i>	‘[Meaning a] meat-cutting knife. A harp. Look under πηκτίς ( <i>pīktis</i> , 'harp')’
<b>14.</b>	Isidore of Seville, <i>The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville</i> , edited and translated by Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, et. al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), III.20.5-8, p. 97	<i>Pandorius ab inventore vocata. De quo Vergilius (Ecl. 2, 32): Pan primus calamos cera coniungere plures instituit, Pan curat ovis oviumque magistros. Fuit enim apud gentiles deus pastoralis, qui primus dispartes calamos ad cantum aptavit, et studiosa arte conposuit.</i>	‘The pandorius took its name from its inventor, and Vergil says (cf. Eccl. 2.32): Pan was the first to teach joining many reeds together with wax, Pan whose concern is the flock and the keepers of the flock. For among the pagans, Pan was pastoral god, who was the first to fit together reeds of different lengths for the purpose of song, and put them together with diligent art.’

Appendix 6: Πανδούρα, Tanbūr and Metathesis Theory

Farmer's et. al. metathesis argument is severely undercut by three factors. First, there is the unfortunate fact that there were relatively few Greek loanwords into Parthian and Middle Persian<sup>924</sup> and the majority of them are military, political and philosophical terms that evince none of the phonemic shifts required for /pandoyra/ > /tæmbʊ:r/ > /ʔʊnbʊ:r/.

Second, the late 13<sup>th</sup> century Arab lexicographer Ibn Manzūr in his *Lisan al-'Arab* stated that it was actually a Persian loanword into Arabic.<sup>925</sup> *Pandoura* has to date never been given a satisfactory Greek etymology<sup>926</sup> and Arab manuscripts never use the term; nor do any 'transitional' forms appear that might link the Greek word to a version of *tanbūr/ʔunbūr*.



*Pl. 0.2: Sheep's tail, dumb-i-bara.*

<sup>924</sup> Philip Huyse, 'Greek Loanwords in Middle Iranian Languages', *Iranica* 11/4 (2002), pp. 360-361.

<sup>925</sup> Worrel, 'Notes', p. 66, cites Ibn Manzūr, *Lisan al-'Arab*, (ed. Cairo, 1882/1290 CE) but unfortunately does not provide further bibliographic information for this 20-volume edition.

<sup>926</sup> See entries 'πανδούρα' in Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Grecque Histoire des Mots* (Paris: Editions Klincksieck, 1968), p. 855; Émilie Masson, *Recherches sur les plus Anciens Emprunts Sémitiques en Grec* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1967), pp. 90-91. The consensus is that most Greek instrument names were loanword from Anatolian and/or non-Indo-European languages, including *lyre*, *barbitos*, *kithara*, *piktis*, and *skindapsos*, a rare word for chordophone that actually means 'a whatchamacallit' (Chantraine, pp. 165, 530, 651, and 1019).

On the other hand, the authoritative Medieval Arabic dictionary *Lisān al-‘Arab*, compiled around 1290-1300 CE,<sup>927</sup> states that *ṭumbūr*, defined as an LNL, is an Arabicized form of the common Persian term *dumba-i-bara*, ‘i.e. it resembles the buttocks of a ram’ (*Pl. 5.4*).<sup>928</sup> The 1892 edition of F. Steingass’s Persian-English dictionary, which relies in part on the *Lisān*, lists a number of derivations from the Persian *dumb|a*, ‘a tail, especially of a sheep’.<sup>929</sup> The semantic fields of these derivations include ‘tail’, ‘arrow shaft’, and ‘tailed’ things such as a ‘comet’. *Dumba-bara*, ‘lamb’s tail’, often contracts to *dumbara*, rendered by Steingass as ‘guitar’ so signifying a stopped, plucked handle lute.<sup>930</sup>

This semantic domain thus provides a descriptive term for the LNL as a ‘tailed lute’ and hints at its provenance among nomadic pastoralists, continuing the tradition of the earliest Mesopotamian lutes. It also relates back to the archetype of the shepherd king and through this figure to the development of the epic hero of Return songs.

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<sup>927</sup> Worrell, ‘Notes’, p. 66.

<sup>928</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>929</sup> Francis Joseph Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English dictionary, including the Arabic words and phrases to be met with in Persian literature* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1892), pp. 536-537.

<sup>930</sup> While the sheep’s tail-musical instrument connection may have been a folk etymology, it is noteworthy that the Kazakhs call their two stringed LNL a *dombra*; although Kazakh is an Altaic language related to Mongolian and Turkic, *dombra* has no Turkic etymology and thus is probably an Iranian loanword. It was perhaps adopted at an early stage via intercultural exchanges between nomadic pastoralist communities and the name retained in an archaic form while Iranian-speakers began using *dutar* for their similar instruments.

In Afghanistan a *dambura* is played by Uzbek musicians, often to accompany performances of the Turko-Persian epic cycle of the hero *Gurogli/Kuroghli*; while the *dutar* is the preferred term around Herat and uses a tuning based on the Persian *dastgah* system, the Uzbek *dambura* players speak a Turkic language. *Dambura* then, like *dombra*, may represent an older name for the two stringed LNL in Central Asia that became preserved in Turkic languages as an Iranian loanword.

The old Herati *dutar* was ‘rare in Herat...[but] according to native informants...[it] came back to Herat from the village of Khaf in Iran south of Tayebad’ and may be a descendant of the *tambūr* of Khorasan in northeastern Iran near the Afghan border (Lloyd Clifton Miller, *Aspects of Afghan Music, with Special Emphasis on the Music of Herat from 1970 to 1975* (Dissertation, University of Utah Dept. of Languages, 1976), pp. 38-39, 44, and 61-62). See also Hiromi Lorraine Sakata, *Music in the Mind: the Concepts of Music and Musician in Afghanistan* (Washington D.C./London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002), pp. 28 and 57-58.

Greek form Transliteration IPA	Phone changes	Hypothetical transitional form	Phone changes with metathesis	Middle Persian form	Phone changes	Arabic transliteration form
<i>πανδουρα</i> <i>pandoura</i> > /pandoyra/	$\pi$ /p/ > $\beta$ /b/	<i>bantour-</i> > /bantoyr/	<i>bant-</i> /bant/ > <i>tanb-</i> /tæmb/	$\text{تانبور}$ <i>tambūr</i> > /tæmbʊ:r/	$\text{ت}$ /t/ > $\text{ط}$ /tʰ/	<i>ṭunbūr</i> /tʰʊnbʊ:r/
	$\delta$ /d/ > t /t/		$\nu$ /n/ > $\text{م}$ /m/		/æ/ > /o/	
	$-\alpha$ > $\emptyset$		$\alpha$ /a/ > <i>a</i> /æ/		/m/ > /n/	
			<i>ov</i> /oy/ > $\bar{u}$ /ʊ:/			

Table: Phone changes and metathesis for *πανδουρα* > *ṭunbūr*.<sup>931</sup>

Third, it is difficult to justify the trail of phoneme changes necessary to derive *ṭunbūr* < *πανδουρα* (Table 5.1). In Farmer's theory, the  $\pi$ - /p/ and  $-\delta$ - /d/ of *πανδουρα* /pandoyra/ changed, in Arabic (which has no /p/- phoneme), to, respectively,  $\beta$  *bā'*, /b/, and the Arabic  $\text{ط}$  *ṭā'*, /tʰ/.<sup>932</sup> The latter proves especially hard to relate, as Arabic possesses both /d/ and /t/ phonemes, represented by the letters *dā'*  $\text{د}$  and *tā'*  $\text{ت}$ , respectively, and  $\text{ط}$  *ṭā'* is a rare sound outside of Semitic languages. The two consonants then metathesized at some point, with the final  $-\alpha$  eliding, and the Greek diphthong  $-\text{ov}$ - /oy/ becoming the Arabic long vowel *wā'*,<sup>933</sup>  $\text{و}$ ,  $\bar{u}$  or  $\bar{o}$ , /j/ to give the Arabic transliteration of *ṭunbūr* /tʰʊnbʊ:r/.

Aside from issues of phoneme change this argument also assumes that the Greek term was the original one, was adopted by Arab writers before the 10<sup>th</sup> century and then metathesized, and then became their standard term for a Mesopotamian and

<sup>931</sup> For ancient Greek > IPA, found at: <<https://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/greek.htm>>; accessed on: 12 Oct. 2018. For Pahlavi/Middle Persian > IPA, see Carl Faulmann, *Das Buch der Schrift Enthaltend die Schriftzeichen und Alphabete Aller Zeiten und Aller Völker des Erdkreis* (Vienna: Druck und Verlag der Kaiserlich-Königlichen, 1880), pp. 90-91. IPA chart is Kiel, 2015, found at: <<https://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org/content/full-ipa-chart>>; accessed on: 12 Oct. 2018.

<sup>932</sup> Arabic and Persian dictionaries and lexicons typically spell *tanbūr* with an initial *t-*, *ṭā'* (IPA /tʰ/; Arb.  $\text{ط}$ ), in Arabic a pharyngialized emphatic consonant. In Persian, however, this letter represents a voiceless alveolar stop, a hard *t-* (IPA /t/).

<sup>933</sup> The Arabic letter *wā'* as /j/ represents a long vowel; as a short vowel it is not written out. *Wā'* is also used as a consonant, where its IPA value is /w/.

Iranian family of lutes. This overlooks that the original Parthian or Middle Persian form of *tanbūr* was already by the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries CE *tambūr*, /tæmbʊ:r/, and so would have had to have been adopted into Parthian from Greek before it entered Arabic, and altered by the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. In addition, the Pahlavi **𐭌**, *-m-* /m/, would have had to also change, for some reason, into Greek *-v-* /n/.<sup>934</sup> Therefore, it is doubtful that ‘any historical linguist would consider this anything more than a far-fetched hypothesis.’<sup>935</sup>

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<sup>934</sup> To be fair, Farmer drew on a scholarly tradition already established by Spanish composer and ethnomusicologist Francisco Salvador-Daniel (1831-1871) and A. J. Hipkins’ 1904 article on *pandora* [sic]. See Farmer, ‘Notes on Arab Music’, in *The Music and Musical Instruments of the Arabs, with Introduction on how to Appreciate Arab Music, by Francisco Salvador-Daniel*, translated, edited, and commentary by Henry George Farmer (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons/London: William Reeves, 1915. Reprint by Andesite Press), p. 182; A. J. Hipkins, ‘Pandora’, in *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Vol. III, edited by J. A. Fuller-Maitland (New York: The MacMillan Co./London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1907), pp. 613-614.

<sup>935</sup> Personal communication with Alan Ernest Hogue, PhD. In linguistics, University of Arizona at Tucson, 5 Dec. 2018.

## Appendix 6: List of Printed Texts of Aga Imer

Text Rhizome	Version	Date Collected	Title	Collection	Singer	Village (Albanian, Macedonian names)	Location
T1	Text I	1970-1992	<i>Imer Aga na ishte martu</i>	Hafezat Osmani, <i>Epikë Popullore Shqiptare</i>	Daut Beqiri	Xhepçisht Цепчиште	~3 km. NE of Tetovo
T5	Text II	1970-1992	<i>Ç'ka Ymer që s'je t'uj këndue</i>	Osmani	Fuat Iljazi	Sellcë Селтсе	~4-5 km. NW of Tetovo
T2	Text III	1970-1992	<i>Imer Aga na bani darsëm</i>	Osmani	Seadin Galip	Gurgurnicë Гургурнитса	~25-30 km. SE of Tetovo
T5	Text IV	1970-1992	<i>Aga Imer n'kamë na u çue</i>	Osmani	Zulqfli Shabani	Sellcë Селтсе	~4-5 km. NW of Tetovo
T5	Text V	1970-1992	<i>Ymer Aga ç'na u martu</i>	Osmani	Adil Emini	Brodec Бродетс	~15-20 km. N of Skopje
T2	Text VI	1970-1992	<i>Aga Imeri na u martu</i>	Osmani	Musaedin Seadini	Pallçisht I Eperm/ Долно Палцхисхте	~2-3 km. SW of Tetovo
T2	Text VII	1860-1880	No title given	Thimi Mitko, <i>Mbledhës të Hershëm të Folklorit Shqiptar</i>	No singer listed	No provenance given	Location unknown
T2	Text VIII	1950-1954	<i>Aga Ymeri</i>	Haxhihasani, <i>Kenge Popullore Legjendare</i>	No singer listed	No provenance given	Location unknown
T2	Text IX	Before 1982	<i>Kënga e Ymer Agos</i>	Haxhihasani, <i>Balada Popullore Shqiptare</i>	No singer listed	Nivan, Gjirokastër district, Albania	47 miles NE of Gjirokastër, Albania

<b>Text Rhizome</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Collected</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Collection</b>	<b>Singer</b>	<b>Village (Albanian, Macedonian names)</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>T1</b>	<b>Text X</b>	1950-1954	<i>Ymer Aga</i>	Qemal Haxhihasani, <i>Kenge Popullore Legjendare</i>	No singer listed	Dërdushë, Pogradec district, Albania	Lake Ohrid, Albanian- Macedonian border
<b>T2</b>	<b>Text XI</b>	2002-2003	<i>Ago Ago, Ymer Ago</i>	CD <i>Vranisht/Kenge Polifonike Labe</i>	Vranisht ensemble	Vllorë, Albanian coast	
<b>T2</b>	<b>Text XII</b>	1994-1995	<i>Ago Ago, Ymer Ago</i>	CD <i>Polyphonies Vocales du Pays Lab: Ensemble Vocals de Gjirokastër</i>	Vocal Ensemble of Gjirokastër	Gjirokastër, Albania	

## Appendix 7: List of Video Performances of Aga Imer

Melodic Rhizome	Video Title	Performers	Instrumentation	Provenance	Length
<b>M1</b>					
	‘Gjon Frroku-Aga Ymeri’	Gjon Frroku,	<i>Çifteli, sharki</i>	Lezhë, Dibra, Albania; 39 km S of Shkodra	7:16
	‘Aga Imeri’	Rrahman Hasani, Abdyl Babatinca	Three <i>çiftelis</i> , one <i>sharki</i>	Llapi, Kosova, 1.2 miles north of Prishtina	7:00
<b>M2</b>					
	‘Mirak Ukaj and Gjergj Ukaj-Aga Imeri nau Martu’	Mirak and Gjergj Ukaj	<i>Sharki, çifteli</i>	Gjakova, Kosovo; 40 km NW of Prizren	10:14
	‘Afrim Gashi, Pren Ukaj, & Mic Koca-Aga Imeri’	Afrim Gashi, Pren Ukaj, Mic Koca,	Two <i>sharki-s</i>	Prizren, Kosova	9:24
	‘Afrim Gashi, Pren Ukaj, & Mic Koca-Aga Imeri’	Afrim Gashi, Mic Koca, Pren Ukaj	<i>Çifteli</i> , two <i>sharki-s</i> , <i>saz(?)</i> , violin, accordion	Prizren, Kosova	9:53
<b>M3</b>					
	‘Halit Gashi-Aga Imeri’	Halit Gashi	<i>Sharki</i>	Mitrovica, Kosova; 40 km NW of Prishtina	19:36
	‘Ibish Broja-Aga Imeri ½ & 2/2’	Ibish Broja (Mulaku)	<i>sharki</i>	Drenica, Kosova; 20 km W of Prishtina	10:42
	‘Jeton Fetiü-Aga Imer’	Jeton Fetiü, Hashim Kongjeli	<i>Sharki</i> , violin	Kamenica, Kosova; 40 km SW of Prishtina	20:40

Melodic Rhizome	Video Title	Performers	Instrumentation	Provenance	Length
<b>M4</b>					
	‘Mahmut Ferati-Aga Imeri’	Mahmut Ferati, singer	<i>Iso</i> singer, electronic keyboard, clarinet, <i>tappan</i> , electric guitar	Tetovo, Macedonia; 40 km W of Skopje	5:52
	‘Ibrahim Kasami-Aga Imeri’	Ibrahim Kasami, singer	<i>Iso</i> singer, electronic keyboard, <i>zurna</i> , <i>derbuka</i>	Gostivar, Macedonia; 25 km S of Tetovo	7:22
<b>M5</b>					
	‘Pjeter Matusha-Ago Imeri’	Pjeter Matusha	<i>Lahutë</i>	Northern Albania(?)	8:57
	‘Albanian Legend, Aga Ymeri of Ulqini’	Not given	<i>Lahutë</i>	Northern Albania(?)	9:27
<b>M6</b>					
	‘Rexh Gashi Imer Aga’	Rexh Gashi	<i>Sharki</i> , accordion	Tetovo, Macedonia(?)	26:12
<b>M7</b>					
	‘Augustin Ukaj (Aga Imerit 1) origjinale’	Augustin Ukaj	<i>Çifteli</i>	Gjacova, Kosova; 40 km NW of Prizren	10:18

Appendix 9: Aga Imer Themes & Theme Correspondence Table

Strophe	Theme	Event
<b>1</b>	<b>Absence</b>	<b>Marriage, Call to War and Letter/Pledge</b>
	wedding	Aga marries, receives summons on wedding night;
<b>2</b>	summons	The letter or conversation about the pledge to wait nine years;
		Aga's farewells and lament.
<b>3</b>	<b>Devastation</b>	<b>Prison and Music Scene</b>
	capture	Story of his imprisonment;
	shouting	He eats, drinks and make merry with his lute;
	dream	His dream or realization his nine years have come due;
	silence	He stops playing;
	intercession	Çika asks why;
		He tells her of his dream or of his pledge.
<b>4</b>		<b>The Pledge and Release</b>
		Aga asks leave to return home;
	oaths	Çika releases him and they make besa or <i>din e iman</i> ;
		She demands nine purses of coins, or;
	release	She grants him three days/nights before he must return to prison, or;
		She grants him an entire Ramazan month.
		Her father imprisons her;
<b>5</b>	<b>Return</b>	<b>First Encounter and Donning Disguise</b>
	disguise	Aga returns home and encounters mother, disguises himself, says 'Aga is dead', or;
	deceptive story	Encounters <i>çoban</i> 'herdsman' or elderly elegist;
		He inquires about passing wedding party;
		He's instructed to wait under pear tree;

<b>6</b>		<b>Encounter with Wedding Party</b>
	disguise	Aga encounters the wedding party <i>krushq</i> , in disguise, tells of Aga's 'death';
	deceptive story	He tells them of 'Aga's' message for bride;
		He speaks with bride;
	recognition	He asks how she would recognize him, she responds 'by birthmark' <i>nishan</i> ;
		He reveals his identity;
		She leaps on his horse;
	<b>Retribution</b>	
	blessing	Aga pronounces jilted groom his 'best man/godfather' <i>kumbar</i> ;
		(Aga questions bride about his letter/pledge);
		Goes with bride to his parents' house, or;
		He announces he must return to prison to fulfill his <i>besa</i> ;
<b>7</b>	<b>(Wedding)</b>	<b>Return to Prison and Release</b>
	lesser return	The king and his daughter converse and/or she's being readied for execution;
		She defends Aga's honor, he returns at last minute;
		Aga speaks to the king;
		The king releases Aga and daughter, or;
		The king releases Aga and his companions in prison;
	(Wedding)	Aga returns home to his bride.

Strophe	Theme	Frroku /Llapi	Text I	Text II	Text III	Text IV	Text V	Text VI	Text VII	Text VIII	Text IX	Text X	Text Ferata	Text M. Ukaj	Text A. Gashi
	<b>Absence</b>														
1	wedding	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆			◆	◆	◆
	summons	◆	◆			◆	◆	◆		◆			◆	◆	◆
2		◆	◆			◆		◆		◆			◆	◆	◆
		◆	◆			◆	◆	◆		◆			◆	◆	◆
3	<b>Devastation</b>														
	capture	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆*			◆	◆
	shouting	◆	◆	◆				◆		◆	◆		◆	◆	◆
	dream	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆		◆	◆			◆	◆
	silence	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆		◆				◆	◆
	intercession	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆		◆*	◆	◆	◆
		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
4															
		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
	oath		◆	◆		◆					◆		◆		
		◆						◆		◆				◆	◆
	release	◆	◆	◆		◆				◆	◆	◆		◆	
					◆										
					◆				◆						
5	<b>Retribution</b>														
	disguise	◆							◆	◆	◆		◆		◆
	deceptive story		◆	◆				◆						◆	
		◆	◆	◆				◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆
		◆								◆				◆	◆
6															
	disguise	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

Strophe	Theme	Frroku /Llapi	Text I	Text II	Text III	Text IV	Text V	Text VI	Text VII	Text VIII	Text IX	Text X	Text Ferata	Text M. Ukaj	Text A. Gashi
	deceptive story	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆			◆	◆
		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
	recognition	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
	<b>Retribution</b>														
	blessing	◆	❖	◆	◆	◆	◆		❖	◆	❖	❖		◆	◆
				◆						◆					
						◆	◆								
<b>7</b>	<b>Wedding</b>														
	Lesser return	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆		◆			◆	◆	◆
		◆		◆	◆	❖	◆	◆		◆			◆	◆	◆
		❖		❖	◆		❖	❖					❖		
										❖				❖	❖
	Wedding				❖										

Table: Thematic correspondences between 14 texts of Aga Imer.

Key: ◆ = theme present in text

❖ = end of text

\* = text begins in medias res

### Language Pronunciation

This multi-lingual pronunciation chart shows those signs and phonemes that vary from standard English pronunciation. Signs not shown are pronounced the same as the English letter in that respective row or do not occur in the language. English letters shown for Arabic signs are standard transliteration forms. Byzantine Greek signs are given only when substantial phonemic shift occurs from Ancient Greek signs.

Sumero-Akkadian, Assyrian (Sux-Akk)	Iranian Languages (MPer, Pal, Prt)	Arabic (Ara)	Turkic languages (Tur, Tuk)	Albanian (Alb)	South Slavic (Sla)	Ancient Greek (Grk A)	Byzantine Greek (Grk B)	IPA	English letter or transliteration	English equivalent (American)
		ا	A a	A a	A a			/a:/	Ā ā	father
	A a					A α		/æ/	A a	cat
		ب				B β		/b/	B b	boy
			K k	K k	K k	K κ	K κ	/k/	C c, K k	cut
S s				C c	C c			/ts/~tʃ/	Ts ts	fits
	Č č		Ç ç	Ç ç	Č č			/tʃ/~tʃ/	Ch ch	cherry
				Q q	Ć ć			/tʃ/~tʃ/	Ch ch	itch
		د				Δ δ		/d/	D d	dog
						E ε		/e/	E e	edge
			Ë ë	Ë ë				/ə/	Ë ë, U u	sun
							φ φ	/f/	F f	fine
Ǧ ġ			G g			Γ γ		/g~/j/	G g	goat
							Γ γ	/ɣ/~/j/	Ǧ ġ	yellow
			Ǧ ġ					Ø	Ø	Lengthens preceding vowel
		ه		H h	H h			/h/	H h	horse
			İ i			I ι		/i/	I i,	bin,

Sumero-Akkadian, Assyrian (Sux-Akk, Ass)	Iranian Languages (MPer, Pal, Prt)	Arabic (Ara)	Turkic languages (Tur, Tuk)	Albanian (Alb)	South Slavic (Sla)	Ancient Greek (Grk A)	Byzantine Greek (Grk B)	IPA	English letter or transliteration	English equivalent (American)
				I i	I i			/i:/	Ī ī	machine
			I ı					/ɯ/	I i	ugh
				I i		H η		/ε:/	Ī ī	machine
Ĝ ĝ			C c	Gj gj	Đ đ*			/dʒʔ~/dʒ/	J j; Dj, dj	judge
			J j	Xh xh				/dʒ~/ʒ/	J j	jour (Fre)
						X χ *		/k <sup>h</sup> /	Aspirated k	~cough
H h ħ	X x	ح		Ch ch			X χ	/x/~/ç/	Kh kh Ch ch	loch ich (Ger)
				L l		Λ λ		/l/	L l	light
				Ll ll				/ʎ/	L l	cold
					Lj lj			/ʎ/	Lj lj	Amelia
						M μ		/m/	M m	ham
						N ν		/n/	N n	noon
				Nj nj	Nj nj			/ɲ/	Nj nj	canyon
				O o		O o		/o/	O o	more
								/o:/	Ō ō	food
			Ö ö					/ø/	Ö ö	König (Ger)
						Π π		/p/	P p	paint
						φ φ		/p <sup>h</sup> /	Aspirated ph	~hiccup
						Ψ ψ		/ps/	ps	lapse
Q q		ق						/q/	Q q	No English equivalent
		ر	R r	R r	R r			/ɹ/	R r	race
				Rr rr		P ρ		/r/	Rr r; rr	trilled r
						Σ σ -ς		/s/	S s	snake

Sumero-Akkadian, Assyrian (Sux-Akk, Ass)	Iranian Languages (MPer, Pal, Prt)	Arabic (Ara)	Turkic languages (Tur, Tuk)	Albanian (Alb)	South Slavic (Sla)	Ancient Greek (Grk A)	Byzantine Greek (Grk B)	IPA	English letter or transliteration	English equivalent (American)
Š š		ش	Ş ş					/ʃ/	Sh sh	<i>shook</i>
	T t	ت				T τ		/t/	T t	<i>too</i>
		ذ		Dh dh			Δ δ	/ð/	Th th Dh dh	<i>that</i>
							Θ θ	/θ/	Th th	<i>thin</i>
						Θ θ		/tʰ/	Aspirated t	<i>~taught</i>
		ط						/tˤ/	Ṭ ṭ	No English equivalent
				U u		Y υ		/u/	Ū ū, Ō ō	<i>food</i>
			Ü ü	Y y				/u:/~y/	-yu	<i>tu (Fre)</i>
								/v/	V v	<i>vision</i>
						Ω ω		/ɔ:/~o:/	W w	<i>saw food</i>
						Ξ ξ		/ks/	X x	<i>fox</i>
				Jj	Jj	<v>-ι		/j/	Y y	<i>yes, why</i>
Z z				X x				/d͡z/	ds	<i>adze</i>
								/z/	Z z	<i>zoo</i>
						Z ζ		/zd/	sd	<i>wisdom</i>
	Ž ž			Zh zh	Ž ž			/ʒ/	Zh zh	<i>leisure</i>
‘		ء						/ʔ/	‘	<i>glottal stop</i>
		ع						/ʕ/	‘	No English equivalent
H h ħ		ح						/ħ/	Ġ ġ Gh gh	<i>~knight (MEng)</i>

## Glossary

This glossary covers primarily foreign and technical terms. For terms relating to musical instrument nomenclature, see *App. 2*.

*Abzu, apsu* (Sux, Akk) In Sumero-Akkadian mythology, the primeval, subterranean ocean from which the cosmos was formed, realm of god Enki, god of wisdom.

*Adab* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian god of storms, flood, war and justice.

*Aheng* (Alb < Tur *aheng/-k*) Literally ‘harmony’; in Albanian it denotes musical revelry, vibrant social gatherings and the ensembles that play at them.

*Akritīs, akritai, ακριτης* (BGre) Byzantine frontier soldiers, irregular troops, sometimes bandits.

*Alaca Höyük* (Tur, Hit) Neo-Hittite ceremonial center in current northwest Syria, c. 1100-800 BCE.

*Anat* (Sux, Akk) Ugaritic goddess of war, wife and lover of storm and war god Ba’al.

*Anu* (Sux, Akk) Head of the Mesopotamian pantheon, elemental deity and among the oldest.

*Anzû* (Sux, Akk) Mythical Mesopotamian bird who stole the Tablets of Destiny from heaven.

*Apelatai, απελατας* (BGre) Byzantine mountain bandits, typically former *akritai*.

*Arundo donax* Giant, rhizomatic reed plant native to East Asia but grows widely in the Mediterranean. Used to make Turkish *ney* flutes.

*Aşık, aşiq, ashik, asheq, Aşyk* (Tur, Azr, Alb, Afgh) Literally ‘lover’ but also minstrels, sometimes attached to religious sect, who sing love songs with a level of spiritual meanings.

- Aššur* (Ass) Head Assyrian god, comparable to Sumerian Anu or Greek Zeus.
- Aštoret(h)*, *Astarte* (Sux, Akk) Ugaritic and Canaanite goddess, wife of Ba'al and cognate of *Inanna/Ištar* and Anat.
- Aulos*, *αυλος* (AGrk) Ancient Greek double-pipe played in theater music and Dionysian rituals, mythologically a favorite of Greek satyrs.
- Ba'al* (Can) Head Canaanite god of storms, floods, war, cognate with Adab and Marduk.
- Bagşy* (Trk) Turkmën bard who plays *dutār* and sings epic songs like *Crazy Harman*.
- Bajrak*, *bajraktar* (Alb <Tur *beyrek*) Literally 'banner', in Albanian the holder of the clan or family banner, a chief.
- Besa* (Alb) The sworn vow, cornerstone of the highland oral *kanun*-s, codes of law.
- Bey*, *beg*, *bej* (Tur >Alb) A regional leader, tribe or clan chief, in Ottoman context a provincial governor. Also used as respectful term of address; 'sir, lord'.
- Bie•* (Alb) To fall, sink; to reprimand; to strike, knock on; to strike or play a musical instrument.
- Cladistics*, *cladogram*, *clade* Graphic representations of relationships between members of a biological taxa.
- Čang* (MPer) Ancient angle harp, first played in Mesopotamia in 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE, adopted by Iranians and played in Persian, Central Asian and Turkish court music until the 17<sup>th</sup> century CE.
- Çika*, *bija* (Alb.) 'Girl, daughter; cream; "the best part"'.
- Daf* (Ara) Frame drum, usually round and sometimes with jingles. Primarily a woman's instrument in Mesopotamia and modern Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa.
- Deseterac* (Sla) Epic meter used by singers in former Yugoslav nations. 10 syllable

line with a caesura between syllables four-five.

*Devşirme* (Tur) Lit. ‘collecting, taking’. Ottoman practice of levying sons of Christian subjects for Ottoman military and administrative posts, especially in the Balkans.

*Dilmun* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian name for kingdom in Persian Gulf.

*Din e iman* (Arb < Tur < Ara) ‘Faith in God’; religious faith. A part of vows sworn between people in blood-siblinghood rites.

*Dyzen* (Alb) A pair of something, doubled, twinned.

*Elam* (Sux, Akk) Ancient kingdom in southwest Iran with *Susa* as its capital.

*Emesal* (Sux, Akk) Dialect or register of Sumerian language used by priestesses and *gala* priests in laments, funerary rites, and in poetry to signify when a goddess is speaking.

*Entu* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian caste of priestesses of Inanna.

*Ëndërr i keq, andërr* (Alb) ‘Dream of awfulness’, a terrible dream.

*Familles par enchainment, indefinable families* (Fra) Taxonomical family in which the component genera can be clearly defined but the greater family cannot.

*Familles par groupe, definable families* (Fra) Taxonomical family in which familial traits can be easily defined but those of genera cannot.

*Fis, fisnik* (Alb) A clan, tribe, or familial relation; noble family; greater family or household.

*Gala, gala-mah* (Sux, Akk) Priestly class dedicated especially to Inanna; performed funeral laments in emesal, a ‘women’s language’.

*Galla* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian underworld demons with no sex organs and who cannot eat or drink.

*Gandhāra, Gāndhārī* (Pra) Kingdom in northern Afghanistan and Pakistan’s Swāt

Valley ruled by Hellenistic Greeks from c. 300-200 BCE; site of Irano-Hellenic Buddhist kingdom 100- 500 BCE under the Kušan-s.

*Geg* (Alb) North Albanian and Kosovar dialect of Albanian language.

*Geštinanna* (Sux, Akk) Sister of Dumuzi.

<sup>ġiš</sup>*gu-di* (Sux, Akk) ‘Loudly sounding wood’; a musical instrument, a lute.

*Gōsān* (MPer) Parthian and Middle Persian term for minstrel.

*Gusle, guslar* (Sla) One stringed bowed lute used to accompany epic songs in Balkans; player of *gusle*.

*Ĝulām* (Ara) Lit. ‘servant, boy, youth’; in Ottoman usage denoted a slave soldier bound to the Sultan, a regular troop or professional soldier.

*Ĝāzī, ghazi* (Ara > Tur) Lit. ‘raider’; Ottoman soldiers skilled in the art of raiding, originally signified a ‘holy warrior’ or fighter for a religious cause.

*Haiduk* (Sla) Mountain bandits in Ottoman Balkans who formed the subject of many heroic songs sung to *gusle*.

*Hārītī* (Pra) Goddess in Gāndhārī and Himalayan pantheon. Originally goddess of smallpox but later worshipped as goddess of prosperity, motherhood, wealth.

*Hemistich* The first metric half of a poetic line. In *deseterac* the first four syllables mark the line’s first hemistich.

*Homology* In biology, characteristic derived among many species from common ancestor that has evolved in different directions, such as birds’ wings and dinosaurs’ forearms.

*Hurrian* Language-isolate culture in northern Mesopotamia that ruled a confederation of kingdoms until mid-late 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium.

*Isimu, Usmû* (Sux, Akk) Attendant and advisor to Mesopotamian god Enki.

*Kanun, kanun i Lek* (Alb < Tur) In Albania, a *kanun* was a body or orally transmitted

highland law.

*Karadüzen, karadyzen* (Tur > Alb) Lit. ‘black tuning/arrangement’. A reentrant tuning, *g’g’d a’a’* on a *sharki*’s five strings; name of type of *çifteli*.

*Karkemiš, Carchemish* (Hit, Tur) Neo-Hittite city state in current southeastern Turkey near Syrian border.

*Krushq* (Alb) An Albanian wedding party with women attendants and men who bring bride to her new husband’s family and to wedding celebration.

*Kärn* (Tch B) ‘To strike, knock; to play a musical (string) instrument’.

*Këngë* (Alb < Lat *canto*) A song, music with singing, specialized sense of epic or heroic song.

*Kinnor, knr* (Sem) A type of lyre or possibly harp played at important religious rites and ceremonies in eastern Mediterranean and associated with particular deities.

*Kithara, κιθάρα* (AGrk) Greek concert lyre with seven to nine strings, sacred to god Apollo, god of science, art and music.

*Kitāb, kitabı* (Ara > Tur) ‘A book’.

*Klangideal* (Ger) Aspects of a sound or tone quality that make sound distinctive to a region or era; used to describe tone of a musical instrument and of musician’s ‘touch’ .

*Klea andrōn* (AGrk) ‘Fame of heroes’, renown of great men. *Klea andrōn* was the essential theme of Greek heroic and epic songs.

*Krouō, κρούω*, (AGrk) ‘To knock, strike, hit; to play a (string) musical instrument.’

*Kudurru* (Sux, Akk) Boundary markers inscribed as legal document to mark possession or bequeathing of land or territory in Kassite era in Mesopotamia.

*Kullë* (Alb > Tur) Lit. ‘tower’, more broadly a rural Albanian highland house of two or more stories, protected entranceways and narrow windows designed for

shooting from; designed with defensive purposes in mind.

*Lab, Labë* (Alb) Dialect of Tosk Albanian spoken in southeastern Albania.

*Lagenaria siceraria* (*L. siceraria*) (Lat) The bottle gourd. Native to South and Central America, cultivated in Middle East and Anatolia sometime between 1000 BCE-1000 CE. Often used as resonator for chordophones like the *sitar* or West African *kora* harp-lute.

*Lahutë, lahutar* (Alb) Cognate with ‘lute’ or ‘laout’; north Albanian equivalent of Slavic *gusle*.

*Lavouto, λαβουτο* (BGrk) Greek term for lute, ‘laout’; < Arabic *al-‘ūd*.

*Levend, levendâne* (Tur) Irregular, usually unmarried troops in Ottoman military.

*Magur* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian royal barge that a king or a god rode the waterways in when engaged in royal tours or major religious rites.

*Makam, maqām* (Tur > Ara) Lit. ‘road, path, way’; the system of modes and their performances in Arab and Turkic music.

*Malësia* (Alb) Mountainous region in northern Albania and parts of Montenegro and Kosovo.

*Me-s* (Sux, Akk) ‘Divine decrees’, divine laws ordaining the proper nature, behavior, and treatment of all arts of civilization and society in Mesopotamian mythology.

*Mizrāb, midrāb* (Ara) A plectrum, often made from horn or feather quills.

*Motif* In iconography, a compositional ‘set piece’ that expresses an ideational *theme*; that image viewed as pictorial element before interpretation.

*Nafs* (Ara) Lit. ‘breath, wind’; in Sufic thought, the lower self of the animal appetites.

*Nanna, Sīn* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian moon god.

*Nar* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian singer, generally of hymns performed in temples.

*Nu-gig, qadištu* (Sux, Akk) Class of Mesopotamian priestesses who also served as

midwives.

*Ozan* (Tur) Old Turkic term for a minstrel or bard who performed, generally, with the *kopuz* lute.

*Pana, bana, pān* (Sux > Akk) Lit. ‘bow, arch’; in Mesopotamian literature denotes an archery bow or, less often, a geometric form. Possible origin of Sanskrit *vīṇā*.

*Pandoura, πανδουρα* (AGrk) Term used in Hellenistic manuscripts for a lute, probably of Anatolian provenance. No known etymology.

*Paşa, pasha* (Tur) Ottoman administrative official, governor of a *sanjak*, district smaller than a *vilayet*.

*Paşalık* (Tur) Territory ruled by a *paşa*, more commonly used by European commenters.

*Phenetics* Mode of classification in which common traits between organisms as they are are foregrounded; distinct from *phylogenetics*.

*Phorminx, φορμιγγα* (AGrk) Ancient four stringed lyre played by Greeks to accompany epics and heroic songs up to c. 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE when the *kithara* supplanted them.

*Phylogenetics* Theory used in biological science to delineate categories of organisms according to evolutionary descent from a common ancestor.

*Phyloörganology* Term coined by Ilya Tëmkin et. al.; the application of phylogenetic principles to musical instrument organology.

*Pitnu* (Sux, Akk) Lit. ‘twisted cord, sinew’; string of a musical instrument; to play a string musical instrument.

*Pobratim, pobratimstvo* (Alb < Sla) Sworn siblinghood performed through a sworn vow and exchange of a few drops of blood. Custom common to Albania, Montenegro and surrounding areas of Balkans.

- Pronoia* (BGrk) Land grant given by Byzantine Emperor to irregular, foreign or mercenary soldiers such as the *akritai*.
- Rhapsode, rapsode* (AGrk > Alb) Ancient Greek epic singer, usually accompanied with a *kithara*. In Albania it signifies a singer of heroic songs accompanied by *çifteli* and/or *sharki*.
- Reticulation* In biology, a process of transfer of genetic material and information horizontally across genera, families or, as with some viruses, unrelated taxa.
- Rhizome* Biologically, a plant that grows asexually from a tuber or bulb and spreads via tendrils from the root stock or by splitting as with bulbs. In other contexts it describes a cultural or conceptual phenomenon that spreads through networks of information exchange in a ‘horizontal’ manner and resists strictly genealogical analysis.
- Rob i zan* (Alb) A landless serf or peasant, prisoner (of war); miserable person.
- Sa-eš, šalašim* (Sux-Akk > Sem) Lit. ‘three stringed’; a three stringed lute.
- Sebēttu* (Sux, Akk) Lit. ‘the seven’; seven demon warriors who fight for or against deities and mankind, associated with the Pleiades star cluster.
- Sipahi, spahi* (Tur) Ottoman cavalryman with privileged rank, sometimes an irregular, endowed with an estate or regional administration.
- Sisiktu, šîšîth* (Akk > Heb) Knotted or fringed cord or tassel on the hem of a garment and given legalistic significance in treaties or religious supplications.
- Şelpe* (Tur) 20<sup>th</sup> century finger-tapping playing technique of Turkish *aşık*-s on *bağlama sazı*.
- Šu-kār* (Sux, Akk) Term for a Mesopotamian lute of unknown specifications.
- Thampourin, θαμβουρίν* (BGrk) Greek transliteration of Iranian *tanbūr* or *tambura*; first attested in Medieval Greek epic cycle *Digenis Akritis*.

*Theme* Building block of oral narrative poetry; an episode, event, or idea within the greater storyline.

*Tigi* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian chordophone, a harp or lyre, performed in temple ceremonies and divine marriage ceremonies; part of some rulers' educational curriculum.

*Tigidla* (Sux, Akk) Term for Mesopotamian lute of unknown specifications, although a number of variants are attested for different regional-specific lutes.

*Tīmār, tīmārlar* (Tur) Land grant given by Ottomans as reward for military or administrative service. A *tīmār*-holder was a *tīmārlar*.

*Tingull* (Alb) Noise/sound made by something; bright, ringing sound, as of metal strings on an instrument being struck.

*Tosk* (Alb) Primary dialect of southern Albania, spoken in several sub-dialects from c. Elbasan in central Albania to southwestern Macedonia and south Albania.

*Utu, Šamaš* (Sux, Akk) Mesopotamian sun god and brother of Inanna.

*Vilayet* (Tur) Late-Ottoman administrative district initiated in second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century.

*Vīṇā* (Skt) Name originally denoting an Indic bow-harp; c. 1<sup>st</sup> century CE used as generic term for lute and by 7<sup>th</sup> century came to mean a large, ornate stick zither used in north Indian classical music.

*Vizier* (Tur) Ottoman administrative official, closest advisor to the Sultan.

*Yeni-çeri* (Tur) Lit. 'new forces'; elite corps of Ottoman military, in European languages known as *janissary*'.

*Zamāru, šir* (Sux, Akk) 'To sing'; a particular type of singing, possibly in temple hymns, accompanied by eponymous harp or lyre.

*Zandan* (Tur) 'Prison; place of misery and abandonment'.

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