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Distinctions among Canaanite, Philistine, and Israelite Lyres, and their Global Lyrical Contexts

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Bathyah Bayer, in memoriam

For several millennia after 2500 B.C.E. lyres were confined to a few archetypes. Each had clear territorial affinities, and those belonging to the East (the Fertile Crescent) were distinguishable from those of the West (the Aegean).

Palestinian lyres found in Canaanite/Phoenician (ca. 1400–800 B.C.E.) and Philistine (ca. 1000–800 B.C.E.) contexts had Eastern and Western characteristics, respectively. Information from later periods is scarcer, but one lyre from ca. 800 B.C.E. at Kuntillet 'Ajrud in the Negev is Eastern in shape. Lyres shown on Bar Kochba coins (133 C.E.) were closely patterned on Roman models. All lyres had wide geographic spread, and none was unique to Palestine.

The territorial spread of the main Eastern lyre (the “thin lyre”) coincides with the distribution of the term kinnārum, which is likely to have been the ancient name of the thin lyre. The biblical kinnōr, a late form of the term, was given to the thin lyre during the final centuries of its life. The demise of the lyre came during the Hellenistic period after nearly three millennia of stability.

INTRODUCTION

Of all ancient musical instruments, lyres may be the most gratifying to study. There is an extensive corpus of representations, although there are few extant examples outside Egypt, and lyres usually display more details than other ancient instruments. Recent surveys of lyres, harps, and Mesopotamian musical instruments have been presented (Lawergren 1996a; 1996b; 1997). The details enhance differences among types and facilitate classification even when the representations are poorly drawn. As has been shown previously, the lyres fall into a very small set of categories, and these belong to an even smaller parent set that only distin-

guishes between Eastern and Western types (Lawergren 1993). The chief marker was the shape of the lower edge of the lyre: Eastern and Western lyres had flat and round edges, respectively. Since the Levant lies on the East–West border, it is interesting to see if the distinction is present in the corpus of Levantine types.

An East–West division has already been noticed among other Levantine artifacts, such as pottery. Eastern types belonged to the indigenous Canaanite population that had descended from Amorite tribes who inhabited Northern Syria and Mesopotamia at the beginning of the second millennium. For the next 500 years their material culture remained close to that of their northeastern neighbors (Mazar 1990:

192). When Egypt captured the Levant ca. 1550 B.C.E., Levantine culture came under Egyptian pressure, e.g., Canaanite mayors were educated in Egypt (Redford 1992: 198) and returned with Egyptian customs. Canaan remained in the Eastern fold regardless of the northern or southern direction of the cultural influence. The Phoenicians, who arose in northern Canaan during the 11th century B.C.E., largely continued the Canaanite traditions (Mazar 1990: 537).

Western influences were brought to Palestine with the arrival of the Philistines ca. 1200 B.C.E. The initial pottery style (Mycenaean IIIC: 1b) was similar to types found on Cyprus and the Cilician coast, which in turn had been inspired by models from mainland Greece and the Dodecanese (Mazar 1990: 260–64; Kling 1984: 33; 1989). Later, a bichrome style was added to the repertoire in Philistia, presumably by local Philistine potters. Small amounts of such pottery outside Philistia (in the central hill country and the Jezreel Valley) were probably the result of trade or military invasion (Mazar 1990: 317).¹ Other Aegean traditions are discernible in Philistine artifacts such as figurines from Ashdod (Mazar 1990: 323) and freestanding hearths (Mazar 1990: 319).

Philistine pottery reached its apogee 1150–1025 B.C.E., after which it gradually assimilated local Canaanite ware (Dothan 1982: 96). But in spite of Israelite expansion during the United Monarchy (1000–925 B.C.E.), much of Philistia, including Ashdod, remained independent (Mazar 1990: 328, 531) until the Babylonian conquest of the region at the end of the seventh century B.C.E. The material culture during the late Philistine period continued without a break, and the people maintained a distinct ethnic identity (Stone 1995: 23), but they also accepted foreign influences in many fields. An example in the musical sphere is the Egyptian *sistrum* found at Ekron (Gitin 1992: 31).

Later, in the first millennium B.C.E., Palestine experienced strong cultural shifts when it became part of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Hellenistic empires. This ended the long period of neatly segregated Eastern and Western lyre shapes.

The Bible mentions lyres (*kinnôr* and *nēbel*) but is uninformative about their shapes although it gives interesting glimpses of the use and societal position of instruments. Since those subjects are not considered here, we shall have little use for biblical texts. However, an extrabiblical analysis of the geographic and temporal distribution of the term *kinnôr* pro-

vides a tool that determines what instrument corresponds to the term.

GLOBAL SURVEY OF ANCIENT LYRES

Figures 1–6 display most lyres known from ancient representations. Players are included to indicate the scale and the realism of the drawing. In an effort to make some sense of lyre sizes, all players are scaled to heights of 165 and 155 cm (male and female, respectively),² but stylistic differences and poor draftsmanship interfere with the aim. The least accurate pictures come from early seal engravings (figs. 1a–g, 5a–e), while relatively late vases and large wall paintings (e.g., figs. 1j, 4k, 5ee) seem most realistic. The stylistic traits of Egyptian art, although highly refined, tend to make lyres small. This is due to disproportionately tall players (e.g., fig. 1m, t) whose height reduces the size of the lyres excessively. Some sizes are completely unrealistic, e.g., the lyre in fig. 5i is taller (ca. 180 cm) than the player and equal to the accompanying bird which, in reality, must be less than a third of the drawn size.

A particularly unreliable element is the depiction of strings. Drawn lines are proportionally many thicker than actual strings, and this prevents large numbers of strings from being shown. Comparisons of strings on extant Egyptian instruments and on representations usually show the latter with many fewer strings than the former (Lawergren 1994; figs. 1, 7). Despite their unreliable nature, depicted string counts are often quoted in the literature. A classic example of this questionable methodology is Deubner's attempt (1929) to demonstrate that Aegean lyres of the Geometric period had four strings, as Hellenistic writers maintained (Burkert 1972: 356, nn. 28–29).³ Another example is a crudely drawn lyre with seven strings on an Aegean Geometric vase fragment (fig. 8h). Although it does not seem to be accurately drawn, it has been identified as a precursor of the seven-stringed lyre that became common during the Classical period (Akurgal 1968: 204; Boardman 1980: 97).

In the absence of extant material we have to resort to representations. Considering the uncertainties associated with artistic renderings,⁴ valid classifications must be based on features simple enough to survive rough draftsmanship. Such a feature is the shape of the bottom edge. It reveals the East–West dichotomy that lasted from ca. 2500 until 700 B.C.E.

when exceptions began to appear with increasing frequency.

Eastern Lyres

Extant lyres from Egypt fall into two groups—thick and thin types—and both have flat bottom edges (fig. 9).⁵ The groups differ in several other ways, as well, such as number of strings (seen on extant lyres) and playing technique (seen on representations; Lawergren 1993: table 1). Thick lyres had 10 to 13 strings while thin ones had 4 to 8 (Lawergren 1996b: fig. 2, “Ägypten, tiefe Leiern” and “Ägypten, flache Leiern,” respectively). The former were plucked by the fingers, and the latter struck with a plectrum. On thick lyres the strings were tied to a prominent “box bridge” made of thin wood, but on thin lyres the string holder was a looped metal wire. On thin lyres the bottom surface was an open hole; on thick lyres the bottom was a solid plate supporting the curved walls.

The two types of lyres are also shown on Egyptian representations, but only in frontal views. However, these are consistent with frontal views of the extant lyres. Because of this consistency, representations that resemble the Egyptian archetypes are assumed also to resemble their three-dimensional structures. This article will discuss thin and thick lyres, even in cultures that have left no extant examples.

A previously popular classification scheme—symmetrical vs. asymmetrical lyres—is not based on clear differences, since handmade instruments are very seldom perfectly symmetrical, and does not correlate with any geographical, temporal, or culturally conditioned parameters. Symmetry is not a useful basis for classification.

Thick Lyres. On Egyptian representations, thick lyres were held with vertical strings by standing players. That was also true among the Hittites, the only other culture to adopt thick lyres. No doubt, all six lyres on the İnandık vase (fig. 4a–f) are of the thick type because the instruments have the following characteristics: large size, tiny feet under the sound box, animal heads on the arms below the yoke, animal heads on the yoke (see the Deir el-Medina lyre, fig. 4l), and large box bridges. The protruding box bridge is shown in the modeling of the relief (see oval insert in fig. 4).⁶

The lyre from Boğazköy (fig. 4g) is too fragmentary to allow precise determination of its type, but

its dimensions are typical of thick lyres. The pair in fig. 4h resembles thick lyres in size and playing position but disagree with other features.⁷ It is given here for reference rather than as a confirmed example of a thick lyre.

With its imposing size, many strings, bulging walls, and playing position and lack of plectrum, the thick lyre may be said to resemble the bull lyre played by the Sumerians during the third millennium (Lawergren 1996b: 1012–14).⁸ However, there are also major differences such as the absence of an animal head on the side of the lyre box, and the presence of a box bridge. It is hardly a simple Mesopotamian derivative, nor is it uniquely Anatolian (*contra* Özgüç 1988: 98).

Thin Lyres. The lyres in fig. 1 have a number of common features besides flat bases: sound boxes are fairly small (ca. 35 cm high), arms curve slightly outward, and angles of play vary with the strings between 0° and 90° to the ground. The examples portrayed by fig. 1a, l, and q are crudely rendered and probably should be given little weight. Given its long duration and wide geographical spread (fig. 2), some differences in playing position may be expected; but the various angles may be due to a musician’s natural tendency to move the instrument as it is played. Such movements would probably affect light (thin) lyres more than heavy (thick) ones.

Only a few players are shown with plectrum (figs. 1j, m, dd), but the item is small and hard to represent. Most likely, plectra were used on all thin lyres. The (right-handed) player’s left hand was lodged behind the lyre, where it would damp some strings. When the plectrum was scratched across all strings, the undamped string would sound. The rear hand rested in a sling attached to the right arm of the lyre, and this arrangement held the lyre in place. Slings are shown in figs. 1u, dd; 5g, h, v, y, ff; 8d, g, and on most lyres drawn on Attic vases (fig. 8k).

Besides lyres with curved arms, a simplified type is discernible in fig. 1. Its straight arms and perpendicular yoke form a rectangular outline. Figure 3 shows the lyres (copied from fig. 2 with additional examples). This rectangular lyre became increasingly common during the Iron Age, and contributed to the demise of the thin lyre. Hellenistic terracottas suggest that rectangular lyres had thin, shallow bodies. There are no three-dimensional representations (or extant samples) of earlier rectangular lyres but they probably were also thin. Spring-like features,

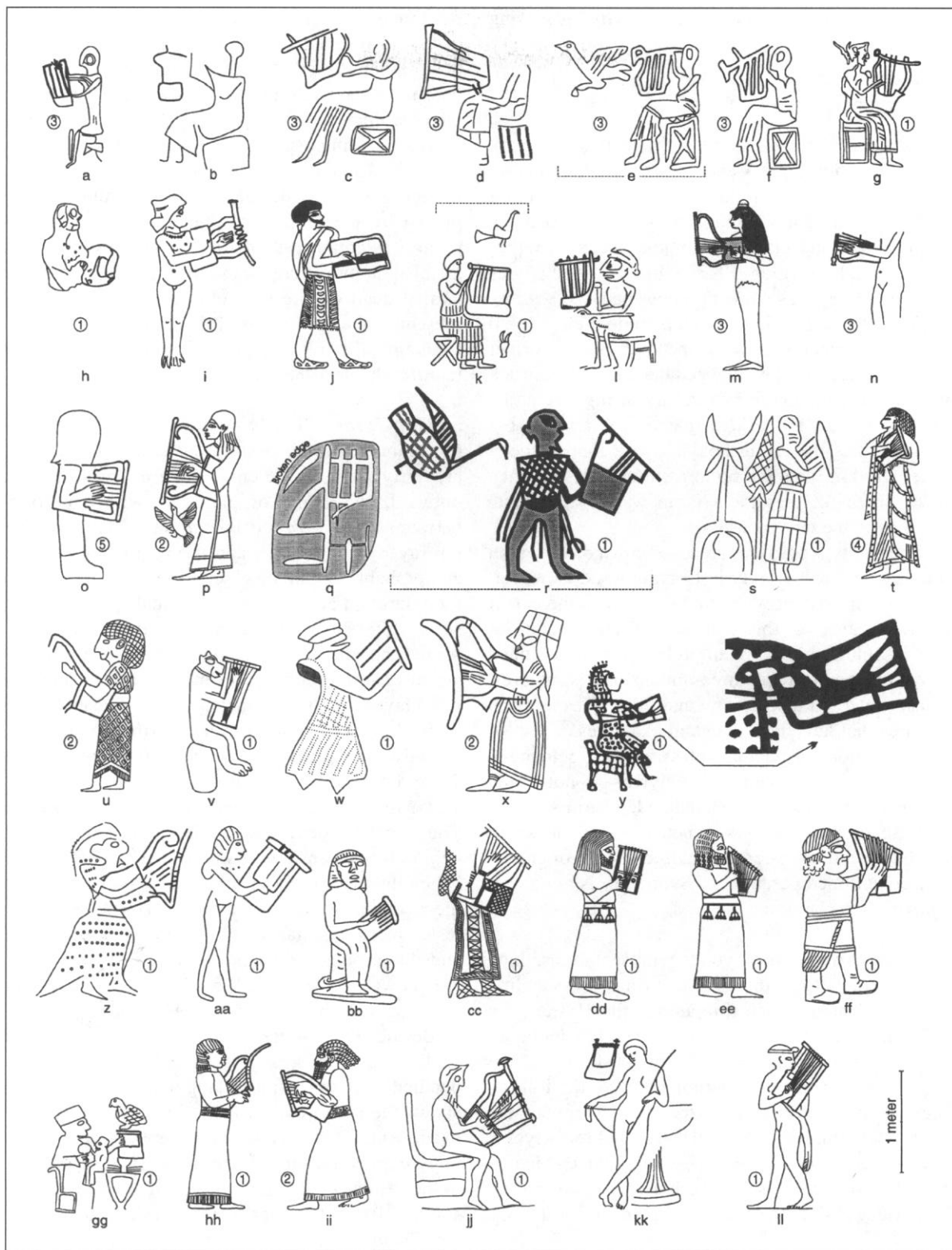


Fig. 1. Thin lyres.

which had once been functional parts of the concert *kithara*, were often added as ornaments on the inside of the lyre arms of late rectangular lyres (see the Roman lyre at Villa Boscoreale [Lehmann 1953]). When and where rectangular lyres originated is hard to determine since most early representations reveal few details (figs. 3s, w, aa, bb), and the dates are uncertain. Of the 13 rectangular lyres in fig. 3, the first 9 could all have been made ca. 700 B.C.E. Since most of these come from northern Syria or Phoenicia, rectangular lyres probably arose in that region (*contra* Braun [1990–1991: 19,

24], who cites only the Palestinian examples; see also West 1992: 56, nn. 31–32).

Because of the prevalence of rectangular lyres, it is rather startling to find a traditional thin lyre in Samaria (fig. 1jj) as late as ca. 350 B.C.E. Its curved arms resemble many of those in fig. 1 (e.g., fig. 1c–g, i–k, m, x) dated 500–2000 years earlier. In that period Samaria had a mixed population, with immigrants drawn from various eastern countries (Ahlström 1993: 899). Evidently, some of them still favored their traditional lyre.

Fig. 1. Thin lyres. Key to type of monument: relief, (r); seal impression, (s); figurine, (f); painting, (p); sculpture, (sc); extant lyre, (x). The numbers in circles refer to the following: (1), front view of lyre (right-handed player seen from his/her right side); (2), rear view of lyre (right-handed player seen from his/her left side); (3), front view of lyre (right-handed player seen from his/her left side); (4), front view of lyre (left-handed player seen from his/her left side); (5), front view of lyre (right-handed player who looks towards her left side).

- a) Mesopotamia or Syria, 2600–2300 B.C.E., after Sotheby 1992: no. 64; (s).
- b) Syria, 2500–2400 B.C.E., after Moortgat-Correns 1955, pl. 1, 2; (s).
- c) Carchemish, North Syria, 2500–2300 B.C.E., after Amiet 1980: no. 1160; (s).
- d) Mozan, North Syria, 2300–2200 B.C.E., after Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995–1996: figs. 13–16; Weiss 1994: fig. 19; (s).
- e) Oylum Höyük, Anatolia, 2300–2000 B.C.E., after Özgen 1993: fig. 4; (s).
- f) Oylum Höyük, Anatolia, 2300–2000 B.C.E., after Özgen 1993: fig. 4; (s).
- g) Southern (?) Mesopotamia, 2200–2100 B.C.E., after Sotheby 1992: no. 92; Rashid 1984: fig. 43; (s).
- h) Tell ed-Dēr, Mesopotamia, 2050–1950 B.C.E., after Rashid 1984: fig. 48; (f).
- i) Babylon (?), Mesopotamia, 1950–1539 B.C.E., after Rashid 1984: fig. 59; (f).
- j) Beni Hasan, Egypt, ca. 1900 B.C.E., after Shedid 1994: 60; Erman 1894: 253; (p).
- k) Syro-Cappadocia, 1900–1800 B.C.E., after Porada 1958: no. 61; (s).
- l) North Syria, 1900–1700 B.C.E., after Porada 1956: fig. g; (s).
- m) Thebes, Egypt, ca. 1400 B.C.E., after Manniche 1991: fig. 21; (p).
- n) El-Amarna, Egypt, ca. 1350 B.C.E., after Manniche 1991: fig. 52; (r).
- o) Kamid el-Loz, Phoenicia, 1350–1300 B.C.E., after Hachmann 1983: no. 1; (f).
- p) Megiddo, Palestine, 1200–1150 B.C.E., after Loud 1939: pl. 4; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1986: no. 9; Mazar 1990: 270; Collon 1997: fig. 3; (r).
- q) Tel Batash, Palestine, 1180–1000 B.C.E., after Kelm and Mazar 1982: fig. 18; Keel 1994: no. 7; Braun 1990–1991: fig. 1; (s).
- r) Megiddo, Palestine, 1050–1000 B.C.E., after Dothan 1982: fig. 28:1; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1986: no. 75; (p).
- s) Mount Nebo, Transjordan, 1000–700 B.C.E., after Saller 1965–1966: fig. 7; Braun 1990–1991: fig. 4; (s).
- t) North Syria (?), 900–700 B.C.E., after Moorey 1975: 74; (r).
- u) Phoenicia (?), 900–700 B.C.E., after Pritchard 1969: fig. 796; (r).
- v) Tell Halaf, North Syria, 900–700 B.C.E., after Bossert 1951: no. 473; (r).
- w) Tell Keisan, Palestine, 900–600 B.C.E., after Braun 1990–1991: fig. 6; Briend and Humbert 1980: pl. 89, no. 23; Keel 1980: 278–79; (s).
- x) Idalion, Cyprus, 850–825 B.C.E., after the original in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MMA 74.51.5700; Markoe 1985: Cy3; (e).
- y) Kuntillet ^cAjrud, Palestine, 850–750 B.C.E., after Gorali 1977: no. 113; Mazar 1990: fig. 10.28; (p).
- z) Kourion, Cyprus, 725–675 B.C.E., after the original, MMA 74.51.4557; Markoe 1985: Cy6; (e).
- aa) Phoenicia (?), 720–660 B.C.E., after Meyer 1987: 167–80, fig. 2; Gubel 1983; (r).
- bb) Phoenicia (?), 720–680 B.C.E., after Meyer 1987: fig. 3; (sc).
- cc) Assur, Mesopotamia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Andrae 1939: fig. 2; (r).
- dd) Zincirli, South Anatolia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Orthmann 1971: pl. 63g; Pritchard 1969: fig. 199; Gurney 1977: pl. 7; (r).
- ee) Zincirli, South Anatolia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Orthmann 1971: pl. 63g; Pritchard 1969: fig. 199; Gurney 1977: pl. 7; (r).
- ff) Karatepe, South Anatolia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Orthmann 1971: pl. 18c; Pritchard 1969: fig. 797; (r).
- gg) Maraş, South Anatolia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Orthmann 1971: pl. 46d; Bossert 1942: fig. 810; (r).
- hh) Nineveh, Mesopotamia, 704–681 B.C.E., after Rashid 1984: fig. 145; (r).
- ii) Nineveh, Mesopotamia, 668–627 B.C.E., after Rashid 1984: fig. 150; (r).
- jj) Samaria, Palestine, 375–323 B.C.E., after Meshorer and Qedar 1991: 55, no. 58, pl. 9; (r).
- kk) Apulia, South Italy, ca. 340 B.C.E., after Trendall 1989: no. 189; (p).
- ll) Memphis, Egypt, 304–30 B.C.E. after Manniche 1991: fig. 63; a similar lyre appears in Williams 1918: pl. 39c; (r).

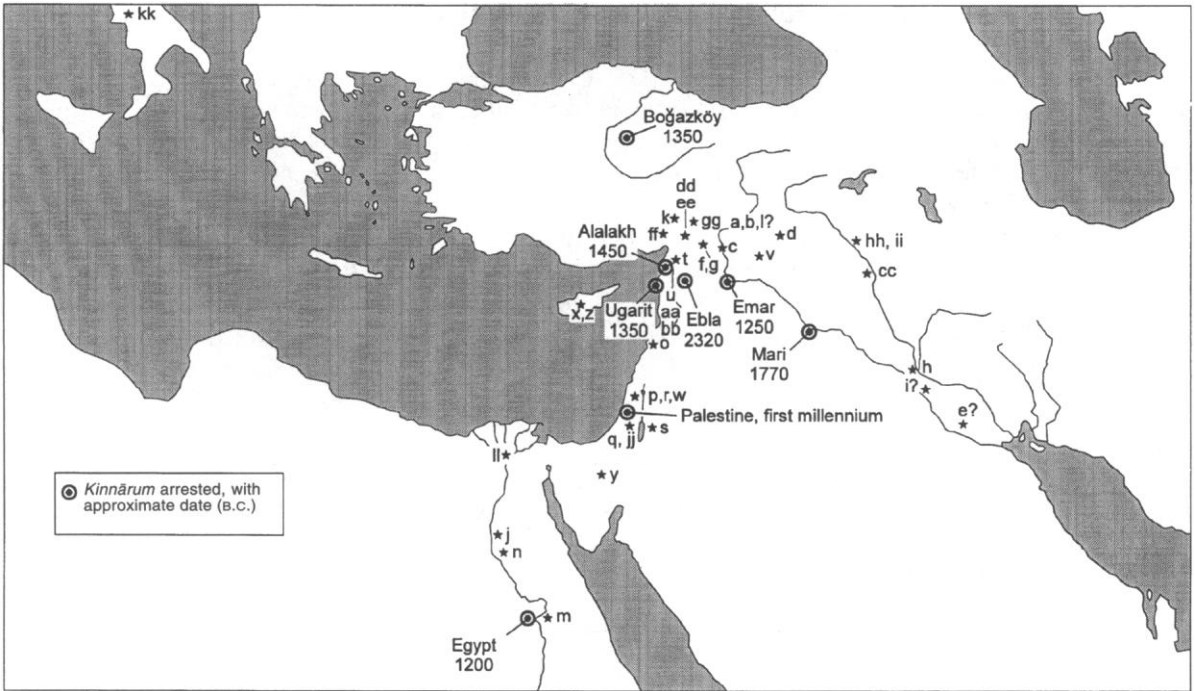


Fig. 2. Geographical distribution of thin lyres.

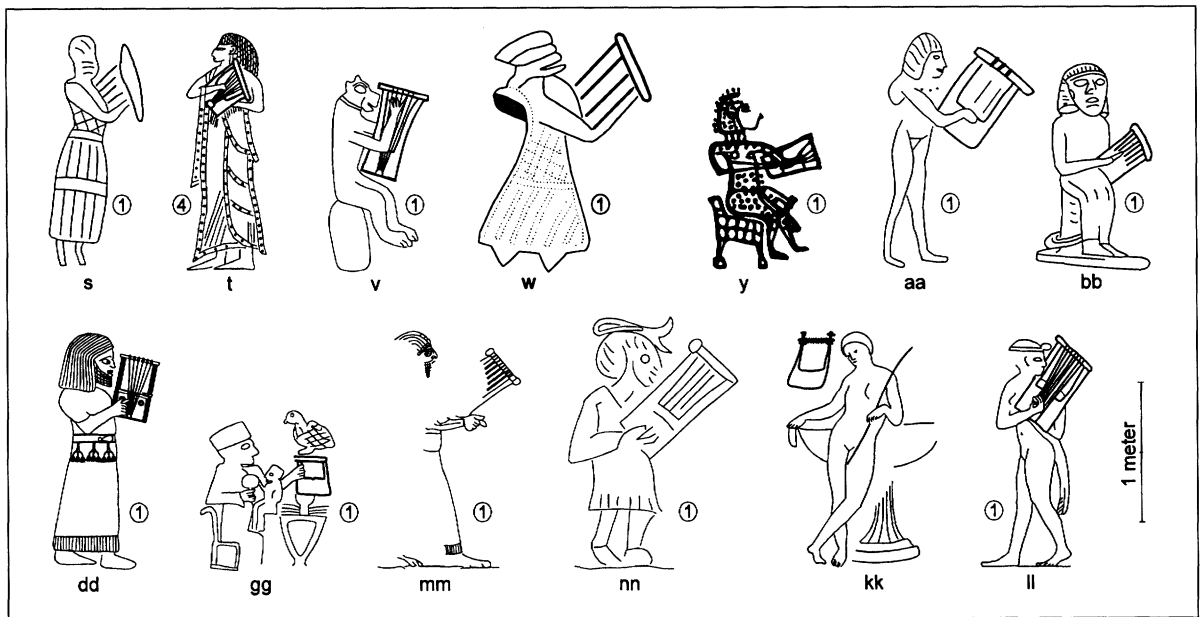


Fig. 3. Rectangular lyres, a subgroup of thin lyres. Most are taken from fig. 1 except for mm Nineveh, Mesopotamia, 668–627 B.C.E., after Rashid 1984: fig. 150; Pritchard 1969: fig. 202; (r); nn Egypt, 550–500 B.C.E., after Shore 1965: pl. 9; (r).

Recent archaeological finds have clarified the emergence of thin lyres and pushed the origin back to pre-Sargonic times (fig. 1a–c). Most third millennium examples come from sites near the northern Syrian border—in particular Carchemish, Mozan (Urkesh), and Oylum Höyük (fig. 1c–f)—which was presumably the birthplace of the lyre.

A historically interesting lyre is painted in a tomb at Beni Hasan, Egypt, ca. 1900 B.C.E. (fig. 1j; Shedid 1994: 60). The player is a member of a group labeled Aamu (Newberry 1893: 69), a West Semitic-speaking people who inhabited Palestine (Redford 1992: 32; Rainey 1994: 81). The artist may have portrayed the moment when thin lyres first entered Egypt from the north. The artist's unfamiliarity with the instrument apparently caused him to draw a double set of strings.⁹ Thin lyres became very popular there five centuries later.

After Egypt conquered Palestine in the second millennium B.C.E., some Levantine thin lyres may have been imported from Egypt, while others were made locally or were brought from the north. None entered the Aegean.

Kinnārum: Coincidence of Geographic and Linguistic Distributions. The term *kinnārum*, or its cognates, is attested in several regions that had thin lyres (fig. 2; see also Discussion, below). The term is known to designate a lyre (Sachs 1940: 106–7) and, since no other type is found throughout this vast region, *kinnārum* is likely to be specifically the thin lyre. The term is West Semitic, perhaps a reflection of the fact that the earliest lyres originated in Syria (figs. 1a–d, 2). Previous attempts to identify the biblical *kinnôr* have considered only the Palestinian corpus. When a wider ensemble is included, the identification with the thin lyre gains more credibility.

Western Lyres

Figure 6 shows the distribution of the round-based lyres given in fig. 5.¹⁰ Although there are some examples in the East, the overwhelming majority belong to the Aegean. Some types are spread across large areas, e.g., approximately 25 examples drawn on Geometric pottery from the eighth and seventh centuries (figs. 5z, 6z), and about 50 cylinder *kitharas* (defined by Lawergren 1984; 1993) from the sixth to the fourth centuries (figs. 5bb, ff; 6bb, ff; 7). The former are entirely Aegean, but the

latter cover a wider Western area including Greece, Etruria, and Anatolian sites influenced by the Ionians (Lawergren 1984: 166–68).

The lyre player seals were made ca. 740–720 B.C.E. (Boardman 1990b: 1), and spread over a wide region (Boardman 1990b: fig. 20) partly outside the Aegean. Based on the drawing style and the type of stone, Boardman concluded that the seals probably were made in northern Syria and brought to the Aegean. Since the Syrian engraver chose to depict round-based lyres, their date of manufacture signals the end of the strict East–West lyre segregation. This late eighth century B.C.E. phenomenon is confirmed by the round-based lyre from Karatepe (fig. 5x).¹¹ However, for many centuries round-based lyres remained mostly an Aegean phenomenon. Few entered the East before the Hellenistic period.

Round-based lyres were well established on Crete and in Greece during the Late Bronze Age (figs. 5f–j), but only the Ayia Triada and Pylos paintings look realistic (but even on these paintings there is an unrealistic element [Lawergren 1993: 63, n. 52]). As noted earlier, the Kalamion lyre is shown too big, and realism was equally unimportant to the artist who drew the Nauplion lyre; visual clarity may have been the artist's chief aim. This lack of realism also affects the placement of the lower string attachment on the Nauplion, Kalamion, and Eretria lyres. All are displaced from the usual position at the lower end of the lyre box.¹²

About 150 round-based lyres (including the total corpus of cylinder *kitharas* and lyres depicted on the lyre player seals) are reproduced in fig. 5, and the five earliest ones (fig. 5a–e date to ca. 1800 B.C.E. [Collon 1987: 43, correcting the date of 1200 B.C.E. in Porada 1956: 204]). These examples do not come from the Aegean. Because of poor draftsmanship, it is not absolutely clear that these lyres have round bottoms. But whatever the situation, no round lyres are shown outside the Aegean after ca. 1800 B.C.E. and before the end of the East/West segregation in the eighth century.

In addition to the round bases, an elaborate arm structure stands out in fig. 5. It is clearly seen on Crete (fig. 5f, g, i) and one follows it via Greece (fig. 5h), Cyprus (fig. 5n, p), Etruria (fig. 5y), the international Cylinder *kitharas* (fig. 5bb, ff) to Classical Greece (fig. 8k), where it becomes an important feature. But the trait began already at Tarsus and Mardin (fig. 5d, e) before its association with the Aegean, i.e., this trait was integral to round-based

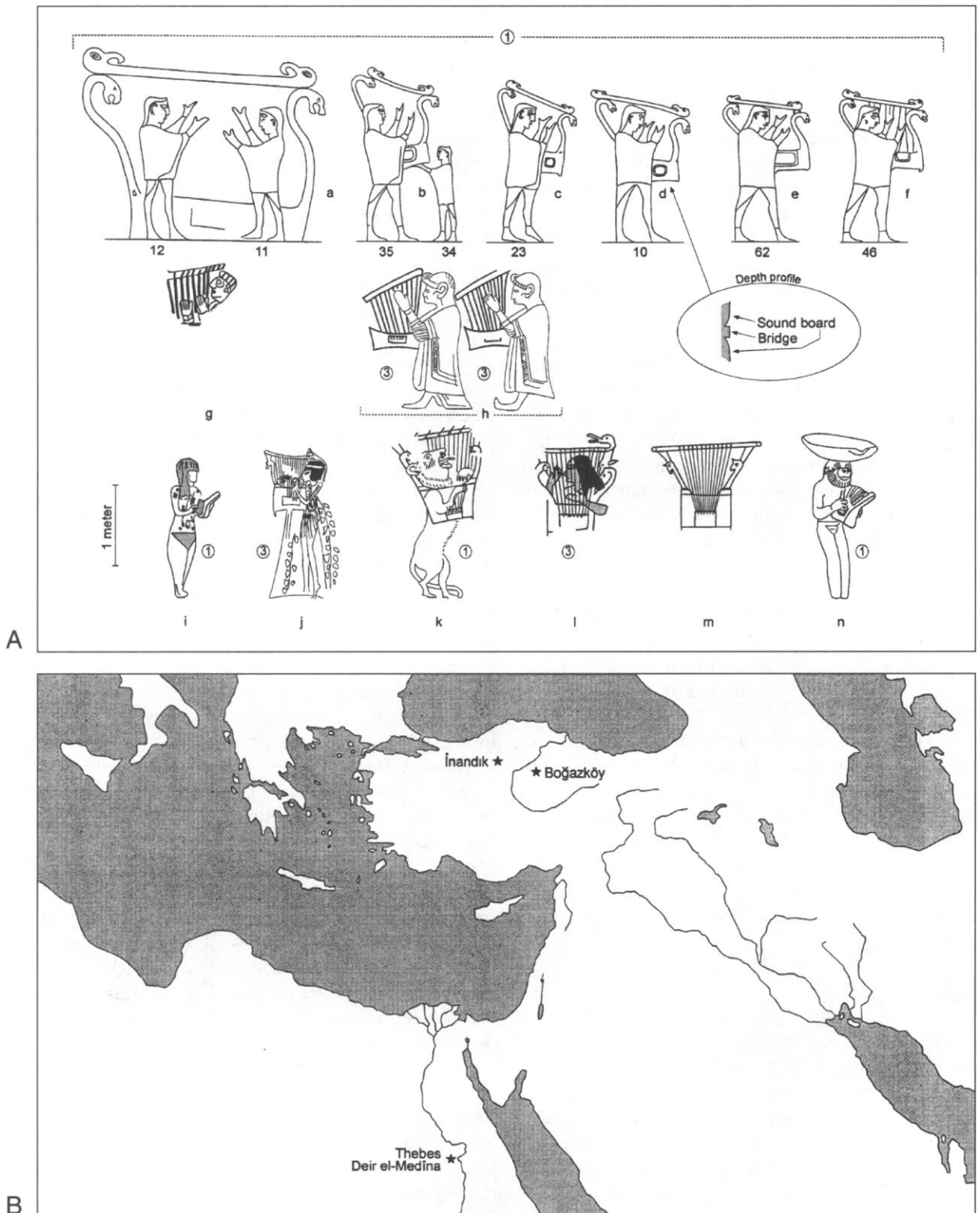


Fig. 4. A. Thick lyres; B. Distribution of thick lyres.

lyres at their very inception. It is hard to know if the straight arms shown on some lyres (fig. 5a–c, j, l–m, r, t) are real or schematic renderings of elaborate arms.

Like the thin lyre, this type seems to have been played with a plectrum, and some are shown in fig. 5g, x, y, dd, and ee.

Unique Lyres

A few lyres do not fit readily into the simple groups given here. In some cases this may be due to poor drawings (e.g., figs. 8a–b, g–j)¹³ or partially preserved views (fig. 8c), but some depart radically from our archetypes.

The best-known example is the concert *kithara* (fig. 8k), the most prestigious instrument of Greece (ca. 625–375 B.C.E.). Its flat base breaks the earlier norm of Aegean lyres. But at this late date, the East/West segregation had ceased, and there was a spirit of experimentation and individualism among instrument makers (Lawergren 1993: 55–56).

The lyre depicted in fig. 8f (704–681 B.C.E.) has often been assumed to belong to Jewish captives led away to Mesopotamia (Rimmer 1969: 34), but the ethnic identification is uncertain. The lyre probably has a flat bottom, but borrows elements from several archetypes. The animal heads on the yoke resemble those on thick lyres (figs. 4a–f, l), its long, straight arms derive from rectangular lyres (fig. 3), and the oblique angle of the yoke is inspired by late thin lyres (fig. 1ee–ff, hh–ii). Such mixed ancestry may be expected at this late date. All elements are borrowed from the Eastern sphere.

With a slight adjustment to the contour, the Karatepe lyre (fig. 8g) could join the round-based lyres, although it clearly differs from its cousin in fig. 5x.

Figure 8a is scratched on a pavement stone. The held object has been called a lyre (Bayer 1963: 26;

Spycket 1972: 168; Collon 1980–1983: 579), but it would more easily fit into instrument history as an arched harp, since these were known at this time (3300–3100 B.C.E.; Lawergren 1996a: fig. 1a, p. 51), while lyres were not (Lawergren 1996b: 1011–13; Stauder 1972–1975: 115). This reclassification would result if the two left-most (nearly parallel) lines of the instrument did not represent a rigid wooden piece but long curved strings. This interpretation is possible since the short strings are drawn as straight lines while the longer ones become increasingly curved, the picture has a jumble of lines difficult to interpret, and the right-most double lines show the typical S-shape of the rod of third-millennium arched harps (Lawergren 1996b: fig. 8a).

Cypriot Lyres

The lyres of Cyprus deserve special mention. Like Palestine, Cyprus had both Eastern and Western lyres. Round-based lyres flourished ca. 1100–800 B.C.E. (fig. 5k, n, p, q) in the wake of Aegean influences. The tomb in which the Palaepaphos lyre was found had Proto-White Painted ware, which is held to be slightly later than Mycenaean IIIC pottery (Kling 1989: 174), and had a “shape which recalls the Mycenaean chamber tombs . . . introduced by the last wave of Achaean colonists to Cyprus” (Karagheorgis 1967: 4).

The round-based lyres were followed by thin lyres (fig. 1x, z) as a result of Phoenician influences beginning ca. 850 B.C.E.,¹⁵ but a few Western lyres continued through this period (fig. 7p, q). Strong Greek influences reemerged in the second half of the sixth century B.C.E. (Reyes 1994: 5), and a very large number of round-based lyres were represented during the fifth century (e.g., Hermary 1989, nos. 791–98, 995–96; Yon and Caubet 1988: no. 10; and Lawergren 1984: fig. 2). A round-based lyre is also played by

Fig. 4. A. Thick lyres. The numbers in circles are explained in fig. 1.

- a–f İnandık, ca. 1600 B.C.E., after Özgüç 1988: fig. 64. The number under each person refers to that figure; (p, r).
- g Boğazköy, ca. 1600 B.C.E., after Boehmer 1983: no. 24; (p, r).
- h Anatolia, ca. 1400 B.C.E., after Güterbock and Kendall 1995: parts of their fig. 8; (r).
- i Egypt, 2040–1640 B.C.E., after Breasted 1948: pl. 83b; (f).
- j Thebes, Egypt, 1200–1100 B.C.E., after Manniche 1991: fig. 30; (p).
- k Thebes, Egypt, ca. 1150 B.C.E., after Omlin 1973: pl. 11; (p).
- l Deir el-Medina, Egypt, ca. 1100 B.C.E., after Manniche 1975: 87, fig. 38; (p).
- m Thebes, Egypt, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Sachs 1921: no. 72; (x).
- n Egypt, 300–30 B.C.E., after Fischer 1959: 233–72; (f).

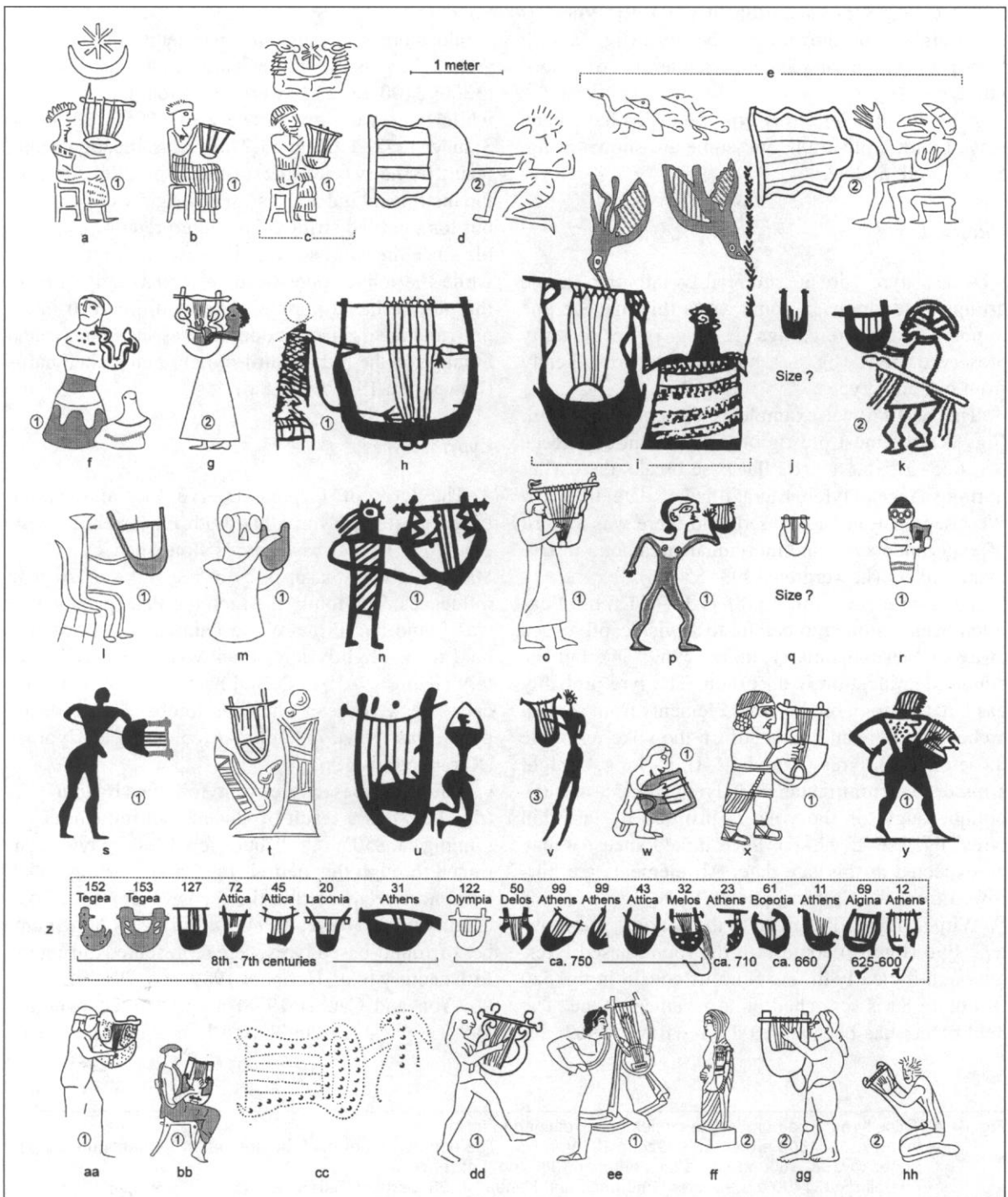


Fig. 5. Lyres with round bases. The numbers in circles are explained in fig. 1.

- a Kültepe, Anatolia, 1900–1800 B.C.E., after Porada 1956: fig. i; (s).
 b Kültepe, Anatolia, 1900–1800 B.C.E., after Larsen 1977: fig. 10; (s).
 c Kültepe, Anatolia, 1900–1800 B.C.E., after Porada 1956: fig. h; (s).
 d Tarsus, Anatolia, 1900–1750 B.C.E., after Porada 1956: fig. j; Dothan 1982: fig. 28:2; Collon 1987: no. 148; (s).
 e Mardin (?), Southeast Turkey, 1900–1750 B.C.E., after Rimmer 1969: fig. 6, pl. VIIIa; Dothan 1982: fig. 28:3; Collon 1987: no. 148; (s).

terracotta figurine seated inside a model of a sanctuary (seventh to sixth century B.C.E., Karageorghis 1993: 86–88, pl. 38). In Boardman's view the group shows eastern influences (Boardman 1971: 41), but we find the instrument typical of the Aegean tradition. There are divided opinions about the identity of the lyre player. Perhaps he is a rhapsode or a divine minstrel in the Homeric sense (*Θεῖος ἀοιδός*, *Od.* 8.539), as Boardman suggests. Alternatively, he may be a priest-king descendant of the legendary ruler of Cyprus, King Kinyras (Młynarczyk 1983: 112). The lyre in fig. 5ff is a cylinder *kitharas*, a type that originated in Ionia ca. 540 B.C.E. and spread to parts of western Anatolia, Athens, Etruria and, evidently, Cyprus.

This Hellenic period has left a large number of terracotta figurines with rather featureless round lyres (Young and Young 1955: pls. 4:120–21, 8:562; Meerschaert 1991: pl. 44c). A votive statuette at Ayia Irini shows a small group of ring-dancers encircling a lyre player on a platform (Karageorghis, Styrenius, and Winbladh 1977: pl. 45). It was placed

at the front of 200 terracotta figurines that formed a semicircle around an altar (Winbladh 1992: 82).

PALESTINIAN LYRES

There are nine lyres from Palestine. Six have a flat base (nos. 1–6, below) and three have a round base (nos. 7–9). The former were found in Eastern (Canaanite/Phoenician) contexts, while the latter came from Western (Philistine) ones. In addition, three late lyres are illustrated after the end of lyre segregation. They fall outside the scope of our main argument, but I conclude with a brief discussion of their construction and contexts (nos. 10–12).¹⁶

Eastern (Thin) Lyres

1. *Megiddo, 1200–1150 B.C.E. (fig. 1p)*. The lyre is shown in rear view. Since the strings run down the front of the sound box, their lower parts are invisible (fig. 9).¹⁷ The image is carved on an ivory handle belonging to a treasury in which the

Fig. 5. *Cont.*

- f Palaikastro, Crete, 1400–1300 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1993: fig. 9F; (f).
- g Ayia Triada, Crete, 1400–1300 B.C.E., and Pylos, Greece, 1300–1220 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1993: fig. 9A; (p).
- h Nauplion, Greece, 1300–1200 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1993: fig. 9E; (p).
- i Kalamion, Crete, 1300–1220 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1993: fig. 9D; (p).
- j Amyklai, Greece, 1200–1140 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1993: fig. 9G, Demakopoulou and Konsola 1981: pl. 57; (f).
- k Palaepaphos, Cyprus, ca. 1100 B.C.E., after Karageorghis 1976: fig. 190; (p).
- l Ashdod, Palestine, ca. 1000 B.C.E., after Dothan 1971: fig. 76.1; Shuval 1990: no. 77; (s).
- m Ashdod, Palestine, 1000–900 B.C.E., after Dothan 1970: 310–311; Dothan 1982: 250; (f).
- n Kaloriziki, Cyprus, 950–900 B.C.E., after Dikaios 1936–1937: fig. 7; (p).
- o Kôm Firin, Egypt, 900–700 B.C.E., after Bakir 1943: pl. 1; (r).
- p Vartivouras, Cyprus, ca. 900 B.C.E., after Yon 1976: fig. 80a; (p).
- q Cyprus, 850–750 B.C.E., after Caubet and Yon 1974: pl. xix.1; (p).
- r Ashdod, Palestine, Dothan 1971: fig. 62.1; after Dothan 1982: pl. 35; (f).
- s Athens, Greece, ca. 750 B.C.E., after Wegner 1968: no. 156; (p).
- t Syria, Levant, Aegean, and Italy, "Lyre Player Seals", ca. 730 B.C.E., after Porada 1956: fig. 9 (from Lindos); Buchner and Boardman 1966; Boardman 1990b: fig. 20; (s).
- u Eretria, Greece, ca. 710 B.C.E., after Boardman 1990a; (p).
- v Boiotia, Greece, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Wegner 1968: no. 74; (p).
- w Crete, ca. 710 B.C.E., after Wegner 1968: no. 90; (f).
- x Karatepe, Anatolia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Pritchard 1969: fig. 797; (r).
- y Etruria, 700–600 B.C.E., after Simon 1995: fig. 1; (p).
- z Lyres after Wegner 1968: U69–U85 to which the numbers refer; they are not scaled properly, and some lyres are not held in playing position; nos. 152–153 also appear in Voyatzis 1990: 201; other Geometric period lyres appear in Ahlberg 1967: pl. 2a–c and Ahlberg-Cornell 1987: figs. 2b, 3b, 15; mostly (p).
- aa Xanthus, Anatolia, ca. 530 B.C.E., after Demargne 1958: pl. 13; Akurgal 1961: fig. 86; (r).
- bb Ionia, Athens, and Etruria, "Cylinder *kitharas*," 520–300 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1984: fig. 6; (p).
- cc Eastern Alps, 600–500 B.C.E., after Pauli 1984: fig. 96; (e).
- dd Etruria, ca. 500 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1993: fig. 11; (r).
- ee Tarquinia, Etruria, ca. 480 B.C.E., after Fleischhauer 1964: fig. 10 (*Tomba dei Leopardi*); (p).
- ff Cyprus, 450–425 B.C.E., after Hermary 1989: no. 793; (sc).
- gg Aquarossa, Etruria, ca. 400 B.C.E., after Lawergren 1984: fig. 10; (p,r).
- hh Sachnovka, Scythia, 400–300 B.C.E., after Rolle, Müller-Wille, and Schietzel 1991: 281, 379, no. 99 (Sachnovka lies on the river Dnepr, ca. 120 km southeast of Kiev); (e).

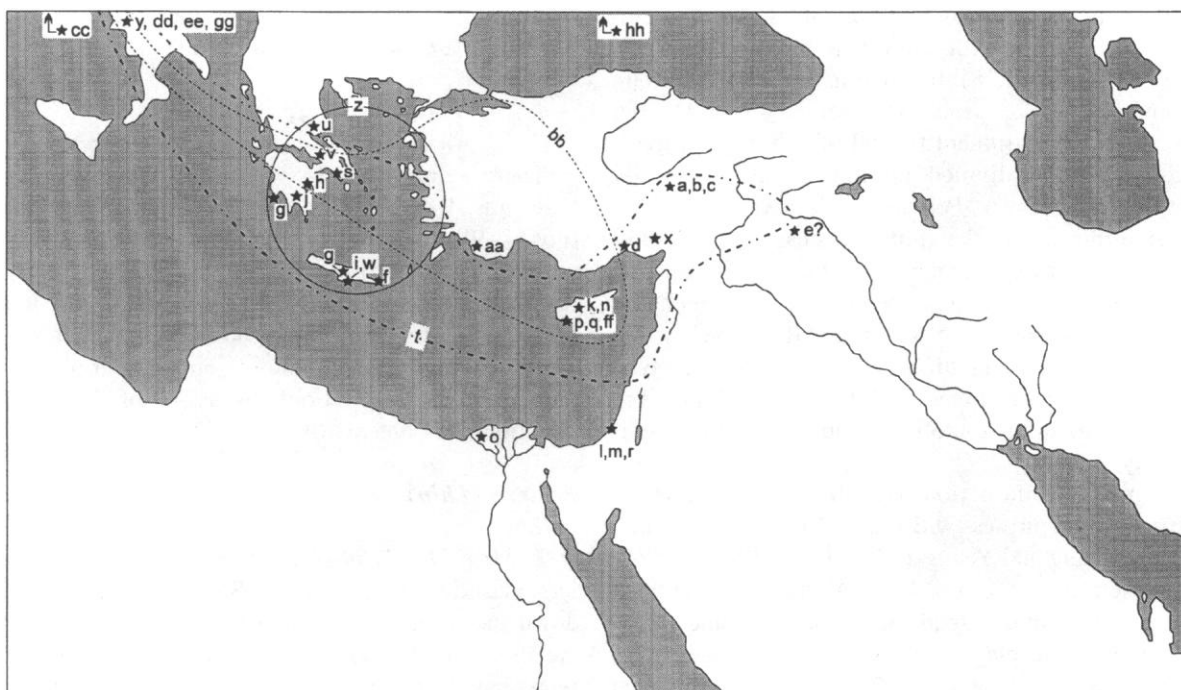


Fig. 6. Distributions of round-based lyres. Letters indicate findspots for the lyres, as described in fig. 5. The elliptical region marked z contains the 18 lyres in fig. 5z. The areas called t and bb contain more than 50 “Lyre Player Seals” (t) and about 50 Cylinder *kitharas* (bb), respectively.

latest object dates from the first half of the 12th century B.C.E. This period precedes the date of a destruction level (Stratum VIB) that marks the arrival of Philistines. Being a treasury, the ivories may have been collected for generations (Mazar 1990: 269), and the lyre picture may be older than the date assigned here. At any rate, it belongs securely to the Canaanite period at Megiddo. This cultural alignment is confirmed by the content of the ivory scene (Mazar 1990: 270), in particular a solar disk, about which Gonen has written, “This motif, along with the general character and composition of the scene, suggests considerable Egyptian influence on this Canaanite creation” (Gonen 1991: 255).

The closest relative to the Megiddo lyre is the Canaanite lyre from Kāmid el-Lōz, less than a century older. The arms of the lyres differ, but one cannot know if that indicates a difference between instruments or artistic styles.

2. Tel Batash, 1180–1000 B.C.E. (fig. 1q). According to the excavators, the engraving on this stamp seal shows a seated person holding a lyre (Kelm and Mazar 1982: 19). If so, the lyre consists of the lines

in the upper right corner, which give a fairly straight bottom edge; but the whole figure is by no means clear. Given the engraver’s preference for straight lines, the flat base of the instrument may equally well correspond to a flat or a round model. To complicate matters, the published pictures disagree: some of the small details drawn by Shuval (1990: 157) are invisible on photographs of seal impressions (e.g., Kelm and Mazar 1982: 19; Keel 1994: 24; Braun 1990–1991: 14). Figure 1q is based on a photograph in the last-cited reference.

The seal was found in a Philistine stratum (Kelm and Mazar 1982: 19), and its pyramid shape is typical of Philistine seals. If the lyre is, indeed, flat-based, it would deviate from the observed trend of Philistine lyres, although the seal maker may not necessarily have intended to show a Philistine lyre. As Kelm and Mazar (1982: 19) indicate, the Philistines probably constituted only a small fraction of the population at Tel Batash. The engraver may have intended to show the lyre used by the majority of the local population.

The situation is confused, and this supposed lyre picture is of limited value.

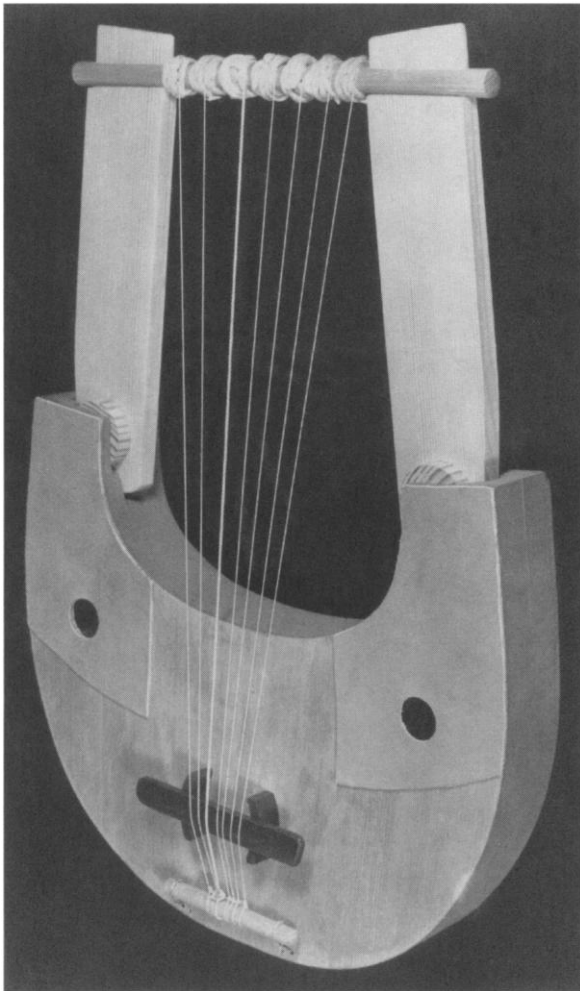


Fig. 7. Cylinder *kithara*, reconstruction (Lawergren 1984: fig. 18).

3. Megiddo, 1050–1000 B.C.E. (fig. 1r). The cultural affinity of this “Orpheus Jug” is debatable. At the time of its manufacture, Canaanite culture had been revived at Megiddo after a Philistine interlude (Kelm and Mazar 1982: 356). The revival lasted into the tenth century B.C.E. (Kelm and Mazar 1982: 502), during which time Philistine settlers probably constituted only a small minority among the Canaanite population. However, the jug is considered a Philistine work because of the artistic conventions of the drawing, such as the color schemes, the cross hatching of surfaces (Kelm and Mazar 1982: 356), and the narrative content of the scene (Dothan 1982: 150).

A closer examination of the scene reveals an unusual subject—a complex procession of animals

led by the lyre player. Humans, in general, are rarely shown on pottery at this place and time. The closest parallel, in T. Dothan’s view, is on Megiddo pottery dated 1200–1150 B.C.E. which shows a human image in Canaanite style; but she considers the *topos* of animals and music to be Aegean in view of the Orpheus legend. As she points out (Dothan 1982: 152), there are, however, perfectly good parallels on Eastern seals from Tarsus and Mardin at much earlier dates. Like the Megiddo jug, these seals show lyre players (fig. 5d–e) surrounded by a variety of animals.

In fact, the Orpheus legend is a late Aegean manifestation of an Eastern *topos* with ancient roots in Egypt and the Near East. Here birds were frequently shown with lyres (figs. 1e, k, p, gg; 5c, e, t; 8e, h, i),¹⁸ and mammals are also common. A palette from Hierakonpolis, Egypt (ca. 3300 B.C.E.) shows a jackal (?) playing a long bamboo flute for desert animals (Quibell and Green 1902: pl. 28; Kemp 1989: fig. 14). Another set of mammals (ca. 1150 B.C.E.) play lyre, harp, pipe, and percussion on a papyrus (Omlin 1973: pl. 11). In Mesopotamia the *topos* began in the third millennium when it was a subject on seals (Rashid 1984: figs. 30–31) and a decoration on bull-lyres (Rashid 1984: figs. 2, 8). It continued in the second millennium with a monkey playing the flute (Rashid 1984: fig. 90). In the first millennium an Assyrian wall relief (ca. 650 B.C.E.) shows a lion walking tamely beside a lyre and a harp player (Rashid 1984: fig. 148). From Tell Halaf, Syria (ca. 700 B.C.E.), comes another stone relief of a lion, a horse, and smaller animals playing the lyre, drum, and cymbal (?) and dancing (Oppenheim 1955: pl. 100).

The myth of Orpheus is first attested in the sixth century B.C.E. (Gantz 1993: 721) and most Greek references are relatively late (Bell 1995: 5).¹⁹ As Guthrie (1966: 45) writes, Orpheus “was originally a Hellene, and transformed into a Thracian by a tradition which was only gaining ground in the fifth century B.C.” The *topos* of “animals and music” began in the East long before Orpheus saw the light of day.

The jug was probably made with Philistine technique to illustrate a subject well known to the Canaanite majority. For this purpose the potter chose their Eastern lyre.

4. Mount Nebo, Iron Age II, 1000–700 B.C.E. (fig. 1s). The bottom edge of this lyre is not shown, but the proportions indicate it is a thin lyre. No Philistine



Fig. 8. Unique and late lyres. The numbers in circles are explained in fig. 1.

a Megiddo, Palestine (lyre or harps?), 3200–3000 B.C.E., after Collon 1980–1983: fig. 5; (r).

b Karachamb, Armenia, 2000–1900 B.C.E., after Tiratsian 1992: 39; (e).

c Thera, Aegean, ca. 1620 B.C.E., after Marinatos 1984: 114; (p).

d Caucasus, 600–400 B.C.E., after Väisänen 1931: fig. 12b; Miron and Orthmann 1995: 163; (f).

e Boğazköy, Anatolia, ca. 710 B.C.E., after Bittel 1963: Taf. 8; (sc).

f Nineveh, Mesopotamia, 704–681 B.C.E., after Rimmer, 1969, pl. 11; (r).

g Karatepe, Anatolia, ca. 700 B.C.E., after Gurney 1990: fig. 29; (r).

h Bayraklı, Anatolia, ca. 650 B.C.E., after Boardman 1980: fig. 111 (photo); Akurgal (1968: 211) gives an incorrect figure; (p).

i Gordion, Anatolia, ca. 600 B.C.E., after Kohler 1995: frontispiece, 68–69; (p).

j Çandarlı, Anatolia, ca. 600 B.C.E., after Akurgal 1968: 211; (p).

k Greece, 620–350 B.C.E., after Beazley 1922: 74; (p).

l Palestine, 132–135 C.E., after Meshorer 1967: no. 172; said to have a “sack corpus” (Bayer 1963: 29); (r).

m The previous lyre (l) with string holder moved; (r).

n Palestine, 132–135 C.E., after Meshorer 1967: nos. 209, 212 (rear view); said to have a “bucket corpus” (Bayer 1963: 29); (r).

presence was found at Mt. Nebo, a site east of the Jordan River. The pottery associated with the seal includes Cypro-Phoenician juglets (Saller 1965–1966: 225–31) and other ware associated with the Phoenician East.

The seal displays another Eastern trait, namely the cult image of the moon god *Sîn*.²⁰ It is a crescent-shaped moon attached to the top of a vertical pole mounted on a pedestal. Spycket (1973; 1974) has discussed such representations and demonstrated

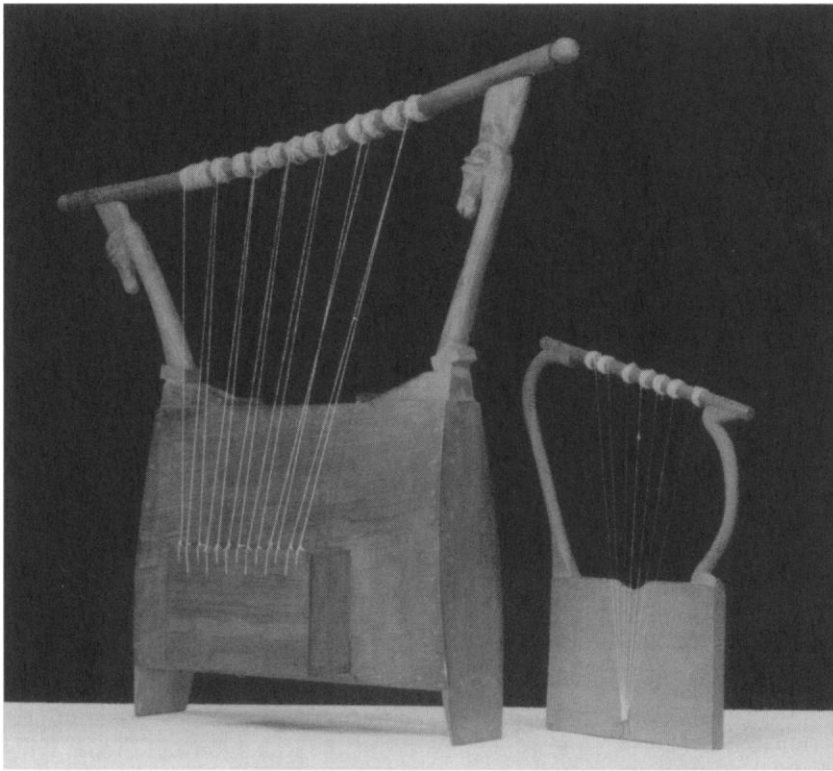


Fig. 9. Thick and thin lyres. Reconstructions of ancient Egyptian instruments based on extant instruments in Berlin (Sachs 1921: pls. 6–7) and Leiden (Boeser 1910: pl. 22, fig. 18).

the popularity of the deity in the East, but without introducing lyres in the argument. This deity's main cult center was at Harran in northern Syria and the thin lyre falls squarely in the Eastern tradition.

5. Tell Keisan, 900–600 B.C.E. (fig. 1w). As in the previous example, the bottom of the Lyre is obscured, but the general shape resembles the thin lyre. At the time this site in northern Palestine was influenced by Phoenician culture (Mazar 1990: 537). Its pottery was Cypro-Phoenician (Briend and Humbert 1980: 132) and the context Eastern.

6. Kuntillet 'Ajrud, 850–750 B.C.E. (fig. 1y). The shape of this lyre needs to be reexamined since it often is shown in a modern line drawing²¹ (Mazar 1990: 447; Kenyon 1987: 125) that does not quite match the photograph (Gorali 1977: no. 113). On this drawing both corners of the base are slightly rounded, but on the photograph one corner (near the player's armpit) forms a sharp angle whereas the other corner is slightly rounded (perhaps caused by the difficulties of drawing). The sharp corner indicates that the lyre had a flat base, i.e., it is Eastern.

The jar on which the lyre is drawn was made at the time of the Divided Monarchy. It shows influences from both the northern (Israel) and southern (Judah) kingdoms (Mazar 1990: 449). The jar itself was manufactured in the latter region (Jerusalem), but the inscription—and presumably the drawing—has Israelite terminology. Indeed, the northern part of the Divided Kingdom had strong Phoenician influences at this time (Mitchell 1991: 440), and this regional context fits the flat-based lyre well.

Its size is smaller than most Eastern lyres, and it appears to lack details. Perhaps this borrowing from Eastern models is analogous to the beginning of Israelite pottery. The latter derived from Canaanite designs but was produced with poor quality (Kempinski 1992: 7).

Eastern (Thick) Lyres

It is desirable to find more types of lyres in Palestine since the Bible mentions two string instruments (*kinnôr* and *nēbel*) which were probably both lyres.²² Most likely the thin lyre is the *kinnôr*, but there is little agreement about the *nēbel*. It was

played from the time of the Judges to the end of the Second Temple. The Hebrew Bible specifies the number of strings (10) on some *nēbel*-instruments (Ps 33:2), and later Flavius Josephus (first century C.E.) asserted that the *nēbel* and *kinnōr* had 12 and 10 strings, respectively (Josephus *Ant.* 7.306). According to him, the *nēbel* required no plectrum whereas the *kinnōr* did. Based on Josephus' statement, Bayer has suggested that the Roman lyres in figs. 8l and 8n are the *nēbel* and *kinnōr* (Bayer 1968: 130–31), although this could have been true only for the late Second Temple period when these coins were minted.²³ The *nēbel* was introduced to Greece ca. 320 B.C.E. and was said to have come from Phoenicia (s.v. *nabla*, Michaelides 1978: 219; West 1992: 77). Unfortunately, the Greek description (“throaty sound”) does not help to identify it.

If the *nēbel* indeed had 10 to 12 strings and lacked a plectrum, the thick lyres shown in figs. 4 and 9 would fit the description. They had 10 to 13 plucked strings, whereas thin lyres had only 4 to 8 strings and usually required a plectrum (except in 1 Sam 16:23, which refers to David, who “played [the *kinnōr*] with his hand.” Unfortunately, no thick lyre has been found in Palestine, although they are attested north and south of the region during the second millennium (fig. 4B). My suggested equation *nēbel* = thick lyre remains speculative until thick lyres are found in Palestine.

Western (Round-bottomed) Lyres

7–9. Ashdod, ca. 1000 B.C.E., Tenth and Ninth Centuries B.C.E. (fig. 5l, m, r). These lyres have been widely publicized but not always accurately described.²⁴ On the whole, they are crudely modeled,²⁵ but the shapes of their bottom edges are clearly given. On the other hand, the number of strings and the details of the arm structures cannot be deduced, e.g., lyre no. 7 is shown with only two strings, but it must have had many more (*contra* Shuval 1990: 156).

As already discussed, the Philistines who arrived in Ashdod shortly after 1200 B.C.E. had brought Western traits. The city was rebuilt several times during the next two centuries, but an enlarged metropolis arose towards the end of the 11th century and it lasted for four centuries (Mazar 1990: 308, 531–34). Although the kings of the United Monarchy annexed the northern part of Philistia in the tenth century, Ashdod and several southern cities

maintained power until the Assyrian conquest at the end of the eighth century B.C.E. The fact that round-based lyres survived in an unbroken sequence until the ninth century exemplifies the tenacious survival of some Philistine traditions while Philistia was undergoing acculturation.

Late Lyres

10. Samaria, 375–333 B.C.E. (fig. 1jj). One conspicuous feature of this lyre (drawn on a coin) is the upward bend of the upper arm (figs. 1d, i, m, p, x, z). This feature had disappeared from contemporary lyres and, as stated above, represents an archaic Eastern element.

11. A Lyre from the Time of the Bar Kochba War, 132–135 C.E. (fig. 8l). At this late time lyres had had a long history and artistic techniques were advanced. One would hardly expect to find lyres that fail to make acoustic sense, but such is the case here. The strings do not reach the sound box and terminate in a large bulbous object placed above it. Perhaps the coin maker worked on the same principle as the painters of the Kalamion and Eretria lyres (fig. 5i, u): he wished to add visibility to the string attachment and moved it to the top of the box. With the bulbous object brought down to the bottom of the sound box (see the proposed correction in fig. 8m), the lyre makes acoustic sense. It now looks like the regular Roman instrument similar to those on contemporary *Musensarkophage* (Wegner 1966: pls. 40, 53, 68) of similar date.

12. Another Bar Kochba Lyre, 132–135 C.E. (fig. 8n). This type, too, is directly patterned on Roman lyres, e.g., one painted on a wall in the Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor, Boscoreale, ca. 45 B.C.E. (Lehmann 1953: pl. 1). Both lyres are tall and narrow, and are shown in rear view. The sound box rises to a ridge in the middle and shows small curved braces inside the joint of the box and the arms. Both features recall the Classical Greek concert *kithara* shown on Attic vases during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. (fig. 8k; Lawergren 1996b: fig. 12), but the features have undergone considerable changes. On concert *kitharas* the features probably consisted of functional springs and hinges (Lawergren 1996b: fig. 13), but here they have atrophied into decorative braces.

This neo-Grecian type of lyre fits Roman sensibilities well. They admired the music of Classical

Greece, but adopted a lyre that had been greatly modified by the passage of time.

DISCUSSION

Palestinian lyres between 1300 and 800 B.C.E. show consistent cultural affinities. There are nine authentic lyre representations, and all fit a simple scheme: Eastern (flat-based) lyres correlate with Canaanite and Phoenician contexts, while Western (round-based) lyres correlate with Philistine contexts. Note, of course, that depiction of lyres was not a Philistine monopoly (*contra* Shuval 1990: 112).

At first sight, two Philistine depictions (flat-based lyres nos. 2 and 3) seem to be aberrant, but each site had a majority of Canaanites and their Eastern taste may have influenced the designs. Alternatively, one might say that all Palestinian lyres are Eastern (Canaanite or Phoenician) except those made by Philistines in Ashdod, which are Western. At the time of the Ashdod lyres, round-based lyres were also common on Cyprus (figs. 5k, n, p); but they had existed before, and were continued afterward on Crete and in Greece.

Intercultural View of Lyres

This article shows that lyres fit international distributions that stretched across large regions and spanned long durations. None of the thin lyres were unique to Palestine, nor were they unique to Egypt, Syria, or Mesopotamia. Presumably, the whole area had such intensive traffic in lyres (and musicians?) that regional differences disappeared during the second millennium B.C.E.

Unlike Bayer (1963: 41), I find no indigenous Palestinian forms.²⁶ Of course, the representations may look different from one lyre to another; but the draftsmanship is often so crude that one cannot trust the details. As an example, consider fig. 1o, p, r, and t. All look different, but the same physical lyre could have stood as model in all cases. Since Bayer believed that specifically Palestinian lyres existed, she warned against efforts to use material from neighboring regions to illustrate "ancient Jewish music." But lyres from neighboring regions provide just as convincing material as those from Palestine itself. Nor is there any reason to match periods exactly. In an effort to find the most likely candidate for "King David's lyre," Bayer selected that in fig. 1r, but this lyre is probably no more realistic than the player

himself. He is shown with a greatly distorted eye and ear, no mouth, two stick-like arms, a head larger than his trapezoidal chest, and pointed shoulders. In reality, David's *kinnôr* is likely to be some composite of all second millennium lyres shown in fig. 1.

Some area specialists tend to view the music of their own region as unique, but the intercultural perspective corrects this notion. For example, Max Wegner thought that the cylinder *kitharas* were a local Attic phenomenon (Wegner 1949: 30–32; fig. 5bb, ff here). We now know, however, that this type of lyre originated in Ionia and was most popular in Etruria (Lawergren 1984: 168–70). Such tendencies are sometimes also shown by scholars working on ancient Palestine. Avigad (1978: 150) believed that "the basic shape of this instrument [the thin lyre] . . . developed especially in the Canaanite cultural sphere." Gubel, an expert on ancient Phoenicia, thought that the thin lyre "sera transmise par les Phéniciens à l'Occident et à l'Égypte" (Gubel 1992: 305). In reality, figs. 1–3 prove that thin lyres had spread across the whole Fertile Crescent by ca. 1700 B.C.E. There was no need for Phoenician help, and the known Canaanite examples have relatively late dates. In the same vein, Braun's attempts to claim precedence also lack justification (Braun 1990: 19, 24).

Although there may have been genuine local differences among lyres, the currently known representations are not detailed and reliable enough to tell us. One may hope to find local differences, but these will only emerge when similarities have been ruled out by Occam's razor.

Longevity of Thin Lyres, 2500–700 B.C.E.

As shown, Canaanite lyres changed little between 1900 B.C.E. (if we assume fig. 1j came from that region) and 800 B.C.E. (as in fig. 1y). All were typical thin lyres. An even longer duration of stability comes into view when we look back to the north Syrian origin ca. 2500 B.C.E. Considerable tenacity is also evident in the survival of the Western lyre at Ashdod. All considered, musical instruments appear to be subject to strongly conservative forces. One is reminded of Plato's report on the laws governing Egyptian music:

Clinias: How, then, does the law stand in Egypt?
An Athenian Stranger: . . . It appears that long ago they determined on the rule . . . that the youth of a State should practice in their rehearsals postures and

tunes that are good: these they prescribed in detail and posted up in the temples, and outside this official list it was, and still is, forbidden . . . to introduce any innovation or invention . . . in any branch of music *Laws* (656 D).

For the thin lyre, very few innovations, indeed, were introduced during its two millennia of existence.

Rapid Changes of Lyres During the Graeco-Roman Period

After the long period of stability, Hellenism and Roman rule brought changes with startling rapidity in Palestine. One type of lyre, the *lyra*, new to the region but common in the Aegean (Lawergren 1996b: 1031), had a round box derived from turtle carapaces and arms shaped like animal horns (fig. 8m). The other new type had a body with a central ridge (fig. 8n) at the rear copied from the Classical Greek concert *kithara* (Brommer 1977: pls. 48, 60, 61), and intricate details placed near the elbows of the lyre arms. The two types were taken directly from Graeco-Roman models. The source of inspiration swung from East to West when Palestine was made part of the Greek and Roman empires.

With the radical Hellenistic changes in mind, we conclude that Josephus must be read with great caution. In the first century C.E. he asserted that the *kinnôr* had ten strings, but this string count is unlikely before the radical Hellenistic changes, e.g., at the time of King David. Yet, Josephus is often cited (Sachs 1940: 107, 115; Braun 1994: 1517, 1520) as if his statement was relevant to the *kinnôr* in general.²⁷

Equating the Thin Lyre with the *Kinnārum*

Most likely, the *kinnārum* was a lyre. Several scholars have already concluded as much using only biblical sources as evidence. Since the Bible does not describe the instrument, the identification seems more reasonable than convincing. In this article, the evidence is drawn from nonbiblical texts from the western parts of the Fertile Crescent, whose dates and geographical distribution match the distribution of the thin lyres portrayed in figs. 1 and 2. No other types (thick lyres, giant lyres, and harps) have such a close match.

Since the Bible has by far the most numerous references to *kinnārum* (i.e., *kinnôr*), it is ironic that it does not provide the most convincing evidence for

the *kinnārum* equation. That evidence is a byproduct of our intercultural approach.

Documenting *Kinnāru(m)* (Fig. 2). The texts containing the term *kinnāru(m)* spread over a long period and wide region.

Ebla, 2340–2300 B.C.E. A bilingual lexical text (Pettinato 1982: 264, no. 572) has the equation

$$b a l a g = G I - n a - r u _ { 1 2 } - u m / r \acute{u} m / l u m$$

The right hand side is clearly the *kinnārum*,²⁸ but the equation is unclear, for *balag* is most likely a drum (Black 1991: n. 39), or—less likely—an arched harp (Kilmer 1995: 464). Perhaps the confusion arose because Sumer had few thin lyres at this time, when bull-lyres (*algar?*; Lawergren and Gurney 1987: 42) flourished.

Mari, ca. 1770 B.C.E. The term *kinnārum* (in the oblique plural form *ki-in-na-ra-tim*) is used in a text about two carpenters who supplied lyres for king Zimri-Lim (Dossin et al. 1964: no. 20; Dalley 1984: 56; Ellermeier 1970: 77).

Alalakh, 1500–1400 B.C.E. The term ^{LÚ}*ki-in-na-ru-ḫu-li* is attested in Alalakh tablet Al.T. 172, line 7 (Dietrich and Loretz 1966: 192).²⁹ It is composed of the lyre loan word and the Hurrian word *ḫu-li*, which designates a profession, i.e., the term means either “*kinnāru* player” or “*kinnāru* maker.” The loan word probably entered from a neighboring West Semitic region, e.g., Ugarit (fig. 2).

Hattusas, 1500–1200 B.C.E. The term ^{LÚ}*ki-nir-tal-la* is given on a Hittite language tablet from Boğazköy.³⁰ The *kinir*-part of the term has long been considered a cognate of the biblical *kinnôr* (Hrozný 1917: 52, n. 1; Friedrich 1952: 110) and *talla* indicates the player of the instrument. Apparently, the thin lyre was known in the Hittite capital, although representations have not yet been found anywhere in the Hittite territory. (The instruments in fig. 4h can hardly be thin lyres since their sound boxes are too wide and their yokes are attached without characteristically curved arms.) On the other hand, thick lyres are well attested (fig. 4), but these were probably called *zinar* (Gurney 1977: 34; Güterbock 1995: 57).

The large thick lyre was the *hunzinar* and the small one was *ippizinar*. *Zinar* has long been considered a Hattic word (Laroche 1955: 73; Puhvel

1991: 384). The words *zinar* and *kinir* differ little beyond the shift (*k*- > *z*-). Since such a shift is exhibited by some Luwian words derived from Hittite (Morpurgo Davies and Hawkins 1988: 177–82), one might suspect the *zinar* is not Hattic but Luwian. However, this cannot be the case since both *hunzinar* and *ippizinar* can have the suffix *-nu* (Laroche 1955: 74), which does not occur in Luwian. Most likely, the *kinnor* was loaned into Hattian and underwent the same shift there, although there is no known example of it in that language (O. R. Gurney, personal communication).³¹

Ugarit, 1400–1300 B.C.E. The terms *knr* (in alphabetic cuneiform) and *ki-na-rù* (in syllabic cuneiform) are attested in several texts, two of which are given by Caubet 1987: nn. 7–8 and one by Gordon 1965: 421, no. 1274 (Ellermeier 1970: 77; Brown 1981: 386).

Emar, 1300–1300 B.C.E. The term *kinnāru* (*ki-in-na-ru*) is used (Arnaud 1987: no. 545, line 392) in a local copy of the Sumeru-Akkadian lexical list *HAR.ra=hubullu* known from Mesopotamia (Landsberger 1958: 113–36). The term is put after the entry *zannaru* (Landsberger 1958: 123, line 81),³² which is known to be a lyre (Lawergren and Gurney 1987: 41). The original Mesopotamian list lacks any reference to the *kinnāru*, suggesting that the term was unknown outside the West Semitic language area.

Egypt, ca. 1200 B.C.E. The term *knnr* (or *k-(i)n-nu-ru*)³³ is attested only once, and the date is relatively late, ca. 1200 B.C.E. (Gardiner 1937: 47f, no. 18, line 12:3). The instrument was played by a dispirited scribe who received the following rebuke:

... You have been taught to sing to the pipe, to chant to the [*w(š)r*] instrument, to intone to the lyre [*knnr*] and to sing to the [*ntḥ*].³⁴ Now you are seated in the house, and the harlots surround you,

now you are standing and bouncing . . . now you are seated in front of a wench, soaked in ointment-oil, your wreath at your neck, and your drum upon your belly. Now you stumble and fall over your belly, anointed with dirt" (Caminos 1954: 182).

An earlier word, *ḏšḏšt* (Lawergren 1996a: 57), was used in the "Admonitions of Ipuwer," ca. 2200–2100 B.C.E. (Redford 1992: 66, n. 47). It probably meant lyre; but this term seems to have shifted meaning a millennium later, when it refers to large harps in the tomb of Ramesses III (Wilkinson 1854: I, 108–9). By that time *knnr* had become the name of thin lyres.

Hebrew Bible, First Millennium B.C.E. The *kinnôr* is mentioned 42 times in the Hebrew Bible (Sendrey 1969: 267).

Summary of Textual Evidence

The *kinnāru(m)* in Syrian cuneiform and the *kinnôr* of the Bible are essentially the same terms. They differ in the vowel-shift *ā* > *ō* which Moscati showed to be a West Semitic phenomenon during the latter half of the second millennium (Moscati et al. 1969: 51 §8.83). The *m*-ending was dropped at Ugarit and Emar; this loss of mimation towards the end of the first half of the second millennium is also a well-known phenomenon.³⁵ The lyre term is, then, consistently connected with West Semitic languages.

Since the thin lyre flourished mainly before the first millennium, I adopt *kinnārum* as the generic term. Of course, the biblical *kinnôr* is better known, but it is an anachronistic form for the main corpus of this lyre.

The geographic correlation between sites with *kinnārum* texts and with thin lyre representations is quite strong, and we conclude that these entities are one and the same.

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a Cypriot sanctuary. Eva von Dassow provided a reference to Dietrich and Loretz 1966, which helped in my discussion of the Alalakh tablet Al.T.172. Samuel Paley and Baruch Brandl kindly commented on an early version of this article.

NOTES

¹Megiddo, centrally located in this valley, was destroyed and briefly occupied in the second half of the 12th century, but was rebuilt by people with mainly Canaanite affinities and some Philistine traits (Mazar 1990: 355).

²These illustrations, obtained from Wells (1970: 458–60), agree well with the skeletal lengths at Ur (mid-third millennium B.C.E.) published by Keith (1934: 400–409; 1927: 239). Biesel and Angel (1985: 197–209, table 2) give similar data from Mycenae (late second millennium B.C.E.), and Rudenko (1971: 51) found that commoners and chiefs averaged 156 cm and 177 cm respectively at Pazyryk (early fourth century B.C.E.).

³The latter often had an overt agenda of drawing analogies with four seasons and four elements, and may have simplified matters to fit their thesis.

⁴Aign (1963: 379) has presented a sequence of lyre shapes which, supposedly, represents a historic development. But his documentation is suspect, made up entirely of poorly understood details drawn on coarse Geometric pottery. Nevertheless, it is occasionally cited (e.g., Dragona-Latsoude 1977: fig. 4).

⁵The bull-lyres of the Sumerians are not discussed here. They were mostly confined to the third millennium and Mesopotamia. With their large sizes and animal heads (Lawergren 1996b: 1012–14) they represent an earlier strain distinct from the lyres discussed here. There were other, later, types of giant lyres in Mesopotamia and Egypt (Lawergren 1996b: 1019–20). Since those at Akhenaten's court in el-Amarna are shown played by people wearing Canaanite dress (Redford 1992: fig. 7:5), giant lyres may have been present in the Levant ca. 1340 B.C.E., but none is depicted there.

⁶De Martino (1997: 484) calls the İnadık instruments erroneously “Zither/Lyra.” Zithers are ruled out, since these are defined to have strings that stretch between two ends of the solid resonator body (Sachs 1940: 463); here parts of the strings pass across an empty gap where both hands are visible. Nor can the instruments be lyras, a type of lyres with round resonator bodies (West 1992: 50).

⁷This may be distorted due to the difficulties of making a relief on the curved surface of a silver glove.

⁸Most bull lyres found at Ur were much larger and thinner than thick lyres. However, the thickness of bull lyres shown in museums is largely guesswork. The surviving metal skin of a lyre accurately shows the shape as seen from the side, but it reveals nothing about the thickness since it had been squashed flat by the soil. The thickness near the edge of the sound box could be determined by surviving side plaques. The only complete thickness information is given by the Plaster Lyre (Rashid 1984: pl. 7), but it was an atypically small instrument.

⁹One set, seen at the bottom of the lyre, points in the wrong direction. It has been omitted in fig. 1j, but all other reproductions of this popular scene retain the double-set (for example, Manniche 1991: fig. 20; Braun 1994: fig. 3; Aign 1963: 82).

¹⁰The collection includes many subgroups, i.e., cylinder *kitharas* (fig. 5bb) and lyras (See). Round-based lyres from the time of Homer (fig. 5s, u–w, z) are sometimes called *phorminx*, but Homer also had other names for them, and they hardly form a unified subgroup. Most are inexpertly drawn and, since details cannot be discerned, their construction remains unclear although all possess round bases.

¹¹Although lyre players seals are common, their impact on the question of lyre shapes should not be exaggerated, since the whole production could have been made by a few enterprising individuals and carried in a single sack across the region (Boardman 1990b: 10). Perhaps they selected a lyre shape likely to please their predominantly Aegean clientele.

¹²The former has two rings below the lyre body, while the latter two have large semicircular attachments placed above the lyre box—where it makes no acoustical sense.

¹³The lyre from Kôm Firîn (fig. 5o) could be an exception to the rule, but it is also aberrant in other ways. One way is that its yoke terminates in bird heads and its right arm looks like a pillar with a small straight part of the top; both of these features are copied from thick lyres, e.g., fig. 4l. In addition, the base is not circular like most round-based lyres, but looks like a flat-based lyre with bottom corners smoothed off. Its unique design may simply be due to bad draftsmanship. Moreover, it may be as late as 700 B.C.E. that the East/West segregation gradually ceased.

¹⁴Note that the Bayrakli lyre faithfully includes the plectrum hanging from a string; the inside crosses may represent details inside the lyre arms, although probably are not as elaborate as the structures inside the arms of concert *kitharas* (fig. 8k). Unfortunately, no photo of the Çandarli lyre has been published (the line drawings by Akurgal [1968: 211] are all unreliable), but the diagonal lines at the base of the lyre may also represent a hanging plectrum.

¹⁵The Phoenicians settled at Kition ca. 850 B.C.E. and they are still attested on Cyprus in the fourth century B.C.E. (Reyes 1994: 18–19, 138, 147). Most of the Cypriot bowls with lyres show flat-based models, but one has a round-based model; appropriately enough, it was found at Olympia, Greece (fig. 5z; Markoe 1985: 204 [G3]).

¹⁶A number of other depictions are known on seals, but the authenticity of some has been questioned. The so-

called Ma²adana lyre (Avigad 1978) may be a modern forgery for the six reasons listed by Braun (1990–1991: 22). Its authenticity was first questioned by Bathyah Bayer in a paper presented at the Third International Meeting of the ICTM Study Group on Music Archaeology in Hannover, 16–21 November 1986.

Some of the other Iron Age seals listed by Braun also look suspicious since they lack documented provenance and closely mimic the design of well-known excavated seals. This applies to Braun's seal no. 5 (labeled KhD3, in The Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University; it is nearly identical to no. 4) and no. 7 (private collection; it is nearly identical to no. 6).

¹⁷This point was misunderstood by several scholars who made reconstructions based on this well-known lyre. They tied the strings to eyelets screwed into the upper edge of the box.

¹⁸Carter (1995: 292–300), noting the examples of lyres and birds given in figs. 1p, 5f, i, proposed that “birds summoned by lyre-players in Bronze Age art, are visualizations of divine presence” (Carter 1995: 307). Given the much older and wider occurrence cited here, however, the *topos* must be more universal than divulged in Homeric sources. For obvious reasons, birds may simply have signified the presence of music. Carter speculates interestingly on the function of lyres at banquets, but unfortunately the argument missteps on Cyprus when it calls angular harps (her figs. 18.10D, 18.10E) lyres.

¹⁹The name Orpheus is not attested in Linear B texts (Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 125–29).

²⁰Called “Ba^aal of Harran” at Zincirli (Giveon 1978: 119).

²¹The line drawing has a U-shaped object attached left side of the lyre. Such a detail has no precedence on any known lyre, and is likely to be part of an object that falls outside the jar fragment and partly overlaps the lyre. It is removed from fig. 1y.

²²Seidel (1994: 445) calls it a harp, but Braun points out that harps are absent from archaeological finds in Palestine before the Hellenistic period (1994: 1521).

²³Since Palestinian lyres underwent radical changes during the Hellenistic and Roman periods (below), it is risky to draw conclusions about early lyres from evidence based on late ones.

²⁴For example, Dothan (1971: 127) writes, “The lyre is square and has either three or four strings.” One cannot draw reliable conclusions about actual string counts on the basis of representations.

²⁵Mazar's assessment (1990: 533) that “clay figurines from Philistia are vivid and individually rendered, and display great skill” hardly fits the rough modeling of the lyre in fig. 5 here.

²⁶Nor is the angular harp from Marissa, ca. 250–200 B.C.E. (Bayer 1963: 32) particularly characteristic of Pal-

estine. It has generic shape and could have come from any part of the Hellenistic world. According to Josephus, Marissa was indeed thoroughly Hellenized (Tcherikover 1970: 105).

²⁷Marcus compared Josephus' string count to that of lyres on “Jewish coins” (e.g., those in fig. 8m–n) that have “three, five, or six strings” (Josephus 1926–1965: vol. 5: 523 note c). But the string counts on these pictures are unlikely to reflect real usage.

²⁸The logogram GI could be pronounced in several ways including /ki/; the forms *kinarum* and *kinalum* were equivalent since /r/ and /ll/ could be interchanged (Moscatti et al. 1969: 32 §8.26).

²⁹Laroche (1967–1977: 148) and Foxvog and Kilmer (1986: 440) cite Wiseman 1953 as the source, although Wiseman did not give Al.T. 172.

³⁰The term is a hapax in a broken piece of a lexical vocabulary. The opposite column is lost, but it appears to be equivalent to the ^{LU}NAR directly above it. Clearly, from this it denotes *any* musician. The term does not occur in any connected context. Hittite scribes always used NAR, the logogram. There is no way of dating this vocabulary, since the colophon is lost.

³¹At festivals the king would call out: “zinar” (or “zimir”) when he wanted music played on that instrument. A typical ritual scenario is given by Gurney (1990: 129, where *zinar* has been translated as “music”).

³²Landsberger's reading is incomplete, but the line has been restored as ^dInanna = *zannaru* (Gurney and Lawergren 1988: table 1). Gurney and Lawergren renumber the line as 63 to conform with Kilmer (1980–1983: 573).

³³The term consists of ten hieroglyphic signs (including the wood-determinative). Previous transliterators rendered most of the signs, e.g., *kníwír* (Erman and Grapow 1982, vol. 5: 132) of *kníwr* (Hanning 1995: 884); the former version often is cited by musicologists. We now recognize that some signs form groups that attempt to render the vowels of Semitic words. By examining the total corpus, Hoch (1994: 12) established that the group of signs that formerly was rendered *íníw* (or *íw*) should be read *nu₂*, and the complete word should be *k—n - nu₂ - ru₂*, where the subscripts distinguish between homophones defined by Hoch (1994: 508) and the em-dash substitutes for an unknown letter, most likely *i* (Hoch 1994: 324, n. 44). Because of uncertainties in transliteration, Caminos wrote *knnr*, keeping only the letters known with confidence (O. Goelt, personal communication).

³⁴All three instruments are unique to this text. The hieroglyphic spelling of the first and last are given by Erman and Grapow (1982, vol. 1: 252; 1982, vol. 2: 366). Hoch (1994: 198) considers the latter to render the West Semitic term *na-ti-ḥi*, which may have been vocalized as *nasiḥi*.

³⁵I thank Ronald Wallenfels for clarifying these points.

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ERRATUM

In the Reference list for the article, “The Central East Jordan Valley in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages,” in *BASOR* 302 (1996): 51–74, by Eveline van der Steen, please note that A. J. Fremdo’s 1986 Ph.D. dissertation, *The Stratigraphic and Ceramic Changes at Tell Deir ‘Alla Towards the End of the Second Millennium B.C. and a Possible Explanation for Them*, was submitted to the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, not to the Rijksuniversiteit Leiden.