

## THE LYRE: A BRIEF REVISITATION

*A Lira: uma breve revisitação*

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### Abstract

Music is considered the oldest form of human communication and has the ability to evoke meaning, imagination, creativity and innovation. The lyre is a very old musical instrument and it is associated with the imaginary and mythological world of Ancient Greece. Its qualities elect it as one of the instruments of poets, philosophers, educators. In addition to being a vehicle for the convergence of the celestial and human plans, the lyre is an educational, cathartic and soul-purifying instrument and symbolizes peace and deep silence. Revisiting the lyre was one of the most sublime experiences, not only because of its symbolic weight in the collective western imaginary, but also because of the ocean of possibilities it offers in this contemporary world so full of vicissitudes and setbacks and where freedom appears as the incessant search for human fulfilment. Searching and retrieving the lyre for educational purposes is the goal of this article.

### Resumo

A música é considerada a mais antiga forma de comunicação humana e tem a capacidade de evocar significação, imaginação, criatividade e inovação. A lira é um instrumento musical muito antigo e surge associada ao mundo imaginário e mitológico da Grécia Antiga. As suas qualidades elegem-na como um dos instrumentos dos poetas, dos filósofos, dos educadores. Para além ser um veículo de convergência dos planos celestial e humano, a lira é um instrumento educativo, catártico e purificador de almas e simboliza a paz e o silêncio profundo. Revisitar a lira foi das experiências mais sublimes não apenas pelo seu peso simbólico no imaginário ocidental coletivo, mas também pelo oceano de possibilidades que oferece neste mundo contemporâneo tão repleto de vicissitudes e contrariedades e onde a liberdade surge como a busca incessante da realização humana. Revistar e resgatar a lira para fins educativos é o propósito deste nosso artigo.

**Keywords:** *Lyre; Education; Learning; Musical harmony; Silence*

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the dawn of his existence, the human being has been trying to understand the world surrounding and challenging him, questioning it from different perspectives aiming at giving meaning and existence to his experience. In this never-ending quest, man becomes a real builder of reality, an architect, an hermeneutic. The world becomes what can be said, told about, experimented, set to music. The manifestation of the look, thought, imagination and creativity, turns the human being into a multifaceted artist.

Music is considered the oldest form of human communication. According to Mann (1982, p. 13) music developed “(...) *from the main rhythms and vibrations of our planet – sounds of wind and water, air and fire*”. Music is the art that symbolically represents that creative ownership setting up the union of Heaven and Earth. As a fertile territory of 'travel narratives', music offers us the search for a deep interiority and, simultaneously, a mystical elevation. Music has the ability to evoke meaning, guide imagination and renew creativity generating affective and sublime spaces. “*The idea of divinely inspired creativity is that all living things somehow emanate from a divine force which may be either one God or multiple Gods*” (Niu & Stemberg, 2006, p. 20).

The myth is a narrative form of apprehension of the real by the human imaginary. It is a story founded essentially on man's experiential, affective and emotional relationship with his outer self, with the adverse environment, with the mystery of the Universe.

Despite having entered the cradle of Ancient Greece through Asia Minor (Koumartzis, Tzetzis, Kyratsis, & Kotsakis, 2015), the lyre is associated with the imaginary-mythological world of Ancient Greece. Recovered by the Greek culture, the lyre appears as an instrument of the divine sphere presenting itself as a vehicle for the convergence of the celestial and human realms. Its primacy postulates its value and summons it, with distinction, to the field of education of young citizens. Referred to as an instrument that purifies souls, the lyre metamorphoses space and time in search of cosmic harmony. Its tonal purity sings and (en)chants beings and allows Love to emerge, eternalizing it.

This way the History of the lyre is consistent with the History of civilization, its myths, rites and practices. Its qualities elect and classify it as poets, philosophers and educators' favourite instrument. By promoting the nourishment of the spirit and of the heart, the lyre generates affective spaces full of varied meanings, polarizing cosmogonic,

moral and social emphasis. The lyre projects itself into a cosmic dimension. As a constellation of the northern celestial hemisphere, its exposure, in outer space, is presented in a constellation with the same name, polarized by the brightest star, Vega (*Alpha Lyrae*). Endowed with ethical-pedagogical value, the lyre acquires throughout classical antiquity a cathartic function that made it an hermeneutic, symbolic and aesthetic art in man's relationship with the surrounding reality. To that extent, the lyre performs a therapeutic function emerging as an open window to the immensity of cosmic infinity. The lyre appears as an apology for the primacy of peace.

With this article we intend to highlight the importance of the lyre, revisit its meaning and symbolic representation in the collective imaginary and rescue it as a fundamental instrument in the quest for the high Greek designs of happiness, justice, well-being and freedom. By providing it with a liberating essence, the lyre can be a means (vehicle) that soothes the tensions of life and death, their antagonisms and varied vicissitudes. Its symbolism can represent *per se* the very myth it is based on (myth of Orpheus). Recovering the beauty and the symbolic-mythological Love that surrounds the lyre, turning it into an unconditional archetype of renewal of life itself will be the challenge we propose to develop with this article.

### **The Story of the Lyre and the Myth of Orpheus**

On the shell of the turtle Hermes spread the skin of one of the oxen that he had stolen from Apollo and fixed there two horns from where the gut cords parted (Servier, 1970, p. 170).

The lyre appears in the collective imaginary associated with the myth of Orpheus.

The myth is one of the first narrative creations of Man. It tells about an event that took place in a primary time before the time of History. As a structure of meaning, the myth is an ontic-phenomenological narrative incomparable to any other genre. Both for ontology and phenomenology, the act of sensitive knowledge ensures a specific, particular, unique contact with reality, stating the primacy of experience over conceptual speculation. As an appeal, as an intention, as a search, the myth provides interpretive possibilities for the occurrence of phenomena. Through the myth, Man orders the world, structures himself as a social being and integrates a certain cultural order. The intersubjective encounter with the other promotes knowledge, the conscious relationship

with reality, openness (the being-there and the being-with), the possibility for the singular being to find himself in the collective dimension of the “us”.

We 'are' and 'ex-sist' in full, at a given moment, inserted in the world of experience which is built and rebuilt as we exist together – with the world not limiting (the singular being) to subjectivity (Dutra, 2002, p. 377).

Mythical or intentionally fictional narratives provide intelligibility to successive generations, to the course of History, to the modulation of cultures. This is the way “(...) *we are building an individual journey made up of intersections of stories we experienced or that we heard of*” (Galvão, 2005, p. 328).

The lyre is considered to be a divine creation (Mann, 1982). Created by god Hermes, the lyre is built out of the shell of a tortoise and tendons or gut of animal origin. Its shell (soundbox) represents the Earth and its leather cover, the Sky. The blow of the wind coming through the stretched tendons emits sounds in varied tones proportional to the length of cords. This is the way distinct sounds emerge in an ‘ecstatic’ scale. The shorter the tendon the higher the sound (Servier, 1970; Mann, 1982).

The tortoise, a terrestrial animal, is symbolically associated with Mother Earth and calls for stability, longevity, resistance, fertility and wisdom. This instrument, covered by fertile sacredness, able to extract the purest sounds and tones of nature, harmonizes the Cosmos and soothes the antagonistic and tempting effects of Mother Earth, leading Man to his immeasurable aspiration to merge in the power of the one. Making the lyre vibrate is to make the world vibrate (Servier, 1970) especially silence, its most harmonious part. The lyre is, in the words of that author, a symbolic altar and an object representing a myth (Guterres, 2016, p. 144)<sup>2</sup>.

Hermes, the messenger of the gods of Olympus, son of Zeus and Maia, offers his lyre to Apollo, god of arts, music, poetry and medicine. Son of Zeus and Leto<sup>3</sup>, Apollo is the patron god of musicians, the guardian and inspirer of the Arts. Apollo marries Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry (Zwilling, 2015), and from this union Orpheus is born. Bearer of the arts, from his father's side, and the ability to extract the enchanted sounds

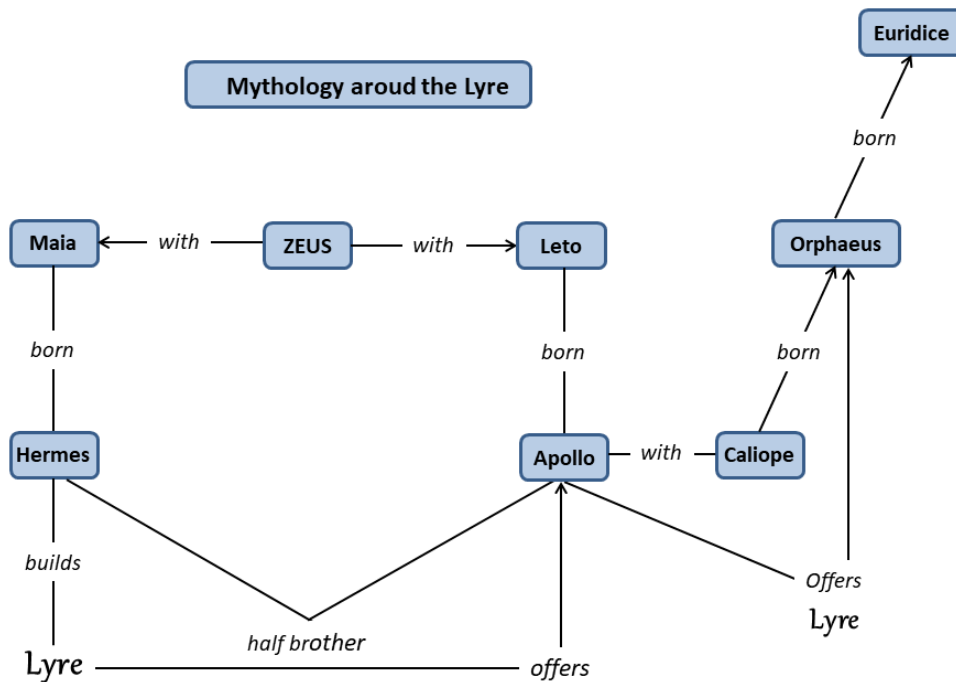
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<sup>2</sup> For Guterres (2016, p. 145), quoted by Scheid and Svenbro (2014, p. 102), “The tortoise occupies an important position of symbolic interest between the animal and the mineral world”. Starting with its paradoxical character: it is a living being that inhabits an inanimate being, similar to a stone in all its silence. This same shell can be used in the construction of a lyre, an instrument directly linked to poetry, directly linked to sound.

<sup>3</sup> Leto was the daughter of the Titans Ceos and Phoebe.

by his mother, a muse, Apollo offers Orpheus his lyre and he becomes an expert player, an enchanter and singer, a traveller who carries and transmits harmony and peace. Just like María Zambrano (1994, p. 43) says that the “‘I’ doesn't walk alone. It attracts a procession of experiences (...)” and the story of Orpheus (con)fuses with the narrative of the creation of the lyre itself and the myth it is associated with.

Fig. 1- The family heritage of Orpheus (own authorship)



The lyre becomes Orpheus's musical instrument and is thus associated with poetry, Love and union. Orpheus becomes the great interpreter of the gods representing the duality of the sacred and the profane (Partridge, 2014).

There is not much information about Orpheus. In Ancient Greece mythology, Orpheus appears as a participant in the expedition of the Argonauts that accompanied Jason, commander of Argo, the ship, on the journey to Colchis. The purpose of the journey was to find and bring back the Fleece or the Golden Fleece. Orpheus's role in this quest lay in establishing a rhythmic cadence of sounds and vocal tones that accompanied rowers' syncopated movement. When plucking his lyre, Orpheus sometimes sang with his sublime and enchanting voice. Such an attribute allowed him to renew navigators' energy and, simultaneously, to appease the fury of the oceans. In this context, music emerges as an attribute of the good that helps the hero's journey determined to achieve

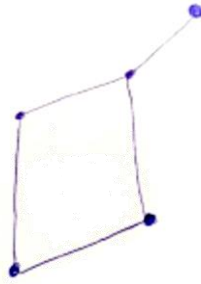
his goal, reconciling conflicts (Miranda, 2002). The lyre thus becomes the tool for peace and harmony. Its power will persuade and enchant other paths, other demands.

After that journey, Orpheus returns and spouses Eurydice. Shortly afterwards, he loses her. On a walk in the countryside, his beloved is bitten by a viper and dies, becoming part of the underworld ruled by Hades.

Orpheus is in love with Eurydice. Non-resigned with her death, he starts wandering around in order to bring her back to life. Overcome with grief, Orpheus ventured himself into Tartarus (Graves, 1990), the land of the dead. The risks increased. At every danger faced, Orpheus strummed his lyre overcoming all the obstacles he encountered on his journey to the Tartarus world. The chanting of sublime melodies allows him to calm down the dark forces of the underworld. He succeeds in charming the dog Cerberus which, intoxicated and enraptured by the sounds of the lyre, slows down his vigilance, allowing Orpheus to approach Hades. Delighted with the sound of the lyre played by Orpheus, Hades agrees to let him meet Eurydice again. However, Hades sets one condition: upon leaving the land of death, both Orpheus and Eurydice were forbidden to look back until the opening into the light. The couple climbed up towards the opening into the land of the living, and Orpheus, seeing the Sun again, turned back to share his delight with Eurydice. Orpheus climbs up towards the opening into the land of the living filled with turbulent, anxious and anguished feelings. He longed to be with Eurydice again and such anxiety rushes him to look back when he sees the Sun. In that moment Orpheus loses her again but now forever and ever. In despair, he tries to return to the world of the dead but he sees his entrance barred. Orpheus finds himself ensnared in a fog for having neglected his strength, his self-confidence. In suffer with his loss, never leaving his lyre behind, he begins a journey without direction or purpose. He ends up being killed by the Thracian maidens for daring to despise them. After Orpheus's death, Zeus sends an eagle to recover his lyre that had fallen into the river and places it in the sky, in memory of Orpheus, as a constellation close to the Swan and the Eagle constellations.

The origin of the Lyre constellation is therefore ancient and is intrinsically associated with Greek culture. As an instrument quite common in classical antiquity, its stellar configuration is seen as follows:

Fig. 2- The Lyre Constellation (own authorship)



The myth of Orpheus is a tribute to Love. Orpheus, in Greek mythology, is a hero of peace. The lyre symbolizes the bridge that joins Heaven to Earth together and personifies healing power and cosmic harmony. The lyre imposes order on chaos becoming a movement that generates deeply transformative catharsis, metamorphosis and liberty (Paniagua, 2017).

According to Santoro (2020, p. 18), Sappho (630/1? BC - 570 BC), the famous Greek poet and philosopher associated with Orphism, who became notorious in her writings, precisely through the poem entitled “A Hymn to Afrodite”, often resorted to the lyre to adorn her poetry. Sappho shared teachings with her elite about the importance of the lyre in education, stating,

(...) shall us love the ‘clear song of the lyre’. The lyre, the art, is that what can save us. Saving not from oldness, impossible to do. It is though what can save us in oldness. I, a lyre teacher, am no longer capable of being the beautiful dancer, but I am even more beautiful in the clear singing of the lyre. Music does not grow old, music remains beautiful and makes me more delightful as I play it and surrender, the more I improve my wisdom and my art (Santoro, 2020, p. 18).

The perennial essence of beauty itself (re)conciles itself through wisdom, which “(...) proposes the cathartic action of art, of music and of the lyre to overcome the tragic, that is, the destiny of the human condition (...)” (Santoro, 2020, p. 21).

### **Music in Athenian education**

Music assumes a prominent position in Greek culture and education. Athenian education integrated gymnastics (exercise the body) and music (elevation of the spirit and knowledge) as chosen disciplines for the constitution of a Paideia. Plato (428/427 BC - 348/347 BC), Socrates’s disciple, lived in a historical circumstance that cultivated the active participation of citizens in the Greek polis. This would be the inducing entity of shared civic communication and music, as a noble discipline, allowed the development of a pedagogy of search and contemplation of beauty and truth.

The supreme achievement of Greek beatitude appears with striking evidence in Plato's Republic in a kind of inner search for ideal perfection. The Platonic desideratum advocated that the man-citizen should aim at the idea of absolute Good and, for that purpose, should have practical and continuous learning of the rules of virtuous conduct through music and gymnastics of a simultaneously individual and social nature.

According to the idea expressed by Maria Helena da Rocha Pereira in the introduction to the book "The Republic" by Plato, (1980, p. xxii) music emerges as "the art of the Muses", and poetry (the word) as the vehicle for the fusion of sound, harmony and rhythm. Rhythm, in the words of Mann (1982), configures a basic human activity apprehended, at the beginning of time, from evidence and natural variations. Music, thus, is structured to the rhythm of pulsations or beats on a time scale. Rhythm is related to the human perception of time and allows the link between phrases and melodic compositions. It involves core dimensions one of which is the compass.

Compass is measured in time according to metrics and systems of strong and weak *tempos*. Compass is, therefore, intrinsically associated with the rhythm and, in music, it plays a primordial role in the search for silence. Compass is the architecture of the harmony of sounds. Silence is a suspended mode of rhythm whereas compass is a founding inspiration. Silence will be the moment that allows reaching the true contemplation of Beauty and Justice. Silence emerges from a system of aligned spheres and transports us to an ultimate dimension, the unity, the essence. Silence, "*in addition to working as a signifier, founding, producer of meanings can also be taken as introspection (...)*" (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 73).

Plato supported the idea that the Athenian male-citizen should scrutinize and develop, based on his own life experience, the meaning of true happiness. The notion of musical harmony resulting from the vibration of four tones (Plato Book III, 400a, p. 130) and the conception of rhythm (400c, p. 131) produced, "*(...) melody is composed of three elements: words, harmony and rhythm (...). And, certainly, harmony and rhythm must agree with words*" (The Republic, Book III, 398e, p. 127), led the Athenian man to full contemplative awareness of intelligible life. Individual existence, based on the search for truth, provided collective existence with unity when making justice.

In short, "*each Harmony represents an ethnos, a certain physic disposition*" (Morão, p. 1039). Beauty thus depends on good or bad rhythm. This way the rhythm and harmony are adjusted to the word and, in turn, to the quality of the character. Plato



assumes that, for his ideal city, music is the art of perfection. Thus “(...) *education through music is capital, because rhythm and harmony go deeper into the soul and affect it more significantly, carrying perfection with it*” (The Republic, Book III, 401e, p. 133).

Not all musical instruments were part of the educational plan in Ancient Greece. However, among the stringed instruments, the lyre claims a prominent position visibly expressed in Plato's work "The Republic": "- *You are left with the lyre and the zither to use in the city*" (Plato, The Republic, Book III, 399d). In his Book III of the Republic, Plato resumes the importance of introducing music and gymnastics in the education of the Athenians, making it perfect for their ideal city, highlighting the lyre as one of their chosen instruments.

The influence of music on the Greeks' instruction and its correlation with soulful and intelligible formation distinguishes it as a core element that should be part of the process of building a complete citizenship. It will be consecrated by the inter-influence of the study and practices of an holistic, moral, aesthetic and civic education (Koyré, 1988, pp. 96-97). For Plato, soulful disposition comes from music (virtue and good feelings) and it is fulfilled with word and poetry. Out of this reunion great art and great Beauty arise. Temperance, courage, generosity, justice, happiness, wisdom, freedom and greatness of the soul are virtues nourished by the knowledge of music and gymnastics. The educational potential of the lyre makes order prevail in chaos as one of the transmitting and propelling vehicles of knowledge and wisdom. In Plato's time, music is thus given an ontological, ethical, political and eudemonistic sense, a perfect art aiming at happiness and the lyre the instrument of elevation that makes getting into the intelligible world possible.

Aristotle (384-233 BC), Plato's disciple, stems from the same Hellenistic cultural background, but diverges from his master's line of thought regarding the ideal of contemplation and the eternal forms of ethical-moral qualities. According to Aristotle, the association of music with Good and Justice and, in turn, to virtue and happiness results not from an ideal and contemplative apprehension, but from the ethical, active and relational conduct within the polis. That is, it incorporates the transcendent into the immanent, highlighting the primacy of practical virtue. The practice of virtuous precepts is crucial to achieve happiness.

Music gains an axiological sense and fits in the thought of this Hellenist philosopher in the sphere of leisure. For Aristotle, this concept does not have a pejorative connotation. In his book “The Politics”, he states that idleness is a virtue that should be cherished. Human nature cannot do without this noble virtue because “(...) *it contains pleasure, happiness and fortune*” (Book viii, 1338a). The Athenian philosopher assures music is happiness, an end in itself.

According to Aristotle, music is liberal, formative, educational (Book VIII, 1338a). Learn by doing how to handle and pluck its strings in order to preserve the gifts of harmonic sounds makes the world fairer, more beautiful and freer. These might be the goals of Greek education, in general, and making music part of Athenian daily life, in particular.

The lyre, musicians and poets’ conciliator, plays in Classical Antiquity a decisive role in the construction of noble virtues, decisive vehicles for leading a better world. In the process of teaching it combines pedagogical elements and assures to develop and consolidate more easily the process of children's learning in a playful way. The relevance of these teachings and its small size make it a musical instrument to be revisited these days to awake curiosity, trigger creativity in the youngest citizens and value ethical and moral principles. The lyre, a musical instrument, thus brings together the ideal conditions to achieve happiness, well-being, the harmony of the spheres and their vertical alignment from the immanent to the transcendent.

### **The characteristics of the lyre**

In general, musical instruments have evolved over time and were improved aiming at the best sounds and harmonies. The lyre is a chordophone. It is a stringed musical instrument whose sound results from the vibration of a string in tension. This musical instrument has remained virtually unchanged since classical antiquity living up to the symbolism it carries. The lyre became an instrument from a long-gone time, part of the noblest human aspirations.

On the one hand its small size facilitates transportation and on the other hand it allowed the young Athenian citizen to learn how to strum with both hands from an early age, mastering his physical movements in accordance with the nobility of the art of playing, “*With his left hand he pressed the strings with the pulp of his fingers, while his*

*right hand plucked the strings with the help of a plectrum*” (Zwilling, 2015). At the same time, the young Athenian citizen grasps the essential teachings to build a complete education focused on the ideal of Beauty and Love. The music accompanies the word and fills the learning spaces. The lyre is, in itself, an exegetical aggregation of sacredness *mundis*.

Initially the number of strings varied from three or four (Zwilling, 2015); however, it evolved to seven (7) strings. Its seven (7) strings correspond to seven planets in their cosmic revolutions. Although it ended up in seven strings, the lyre had had twelve, a number matching the twelve (12) signs of the zodiac (Chevalier, 1986).

Strings were attached to the yoke and to a transverse wooden projection (bridge) at the lower end placed next to the wooden soundboard (rectangular, trapezoidal or concave) which transmitted the vibrations of strings.

The lyre shown in the figure below was built by Luís Paniagua who sold it in 2013. It is made of beech – which symbolizes the Earth – and its belly of goat skin – which symbolizes Heaven. The concave shape of its soundbox enables it to reach a pure tone that spreads a crystalline sound *ad infinitum*. Strings are made of Carbon.

Fig. 3 - The iconographic representation of the instrument preserves the 7 strings built by Luís Paniagua in 2013 (own authorship).

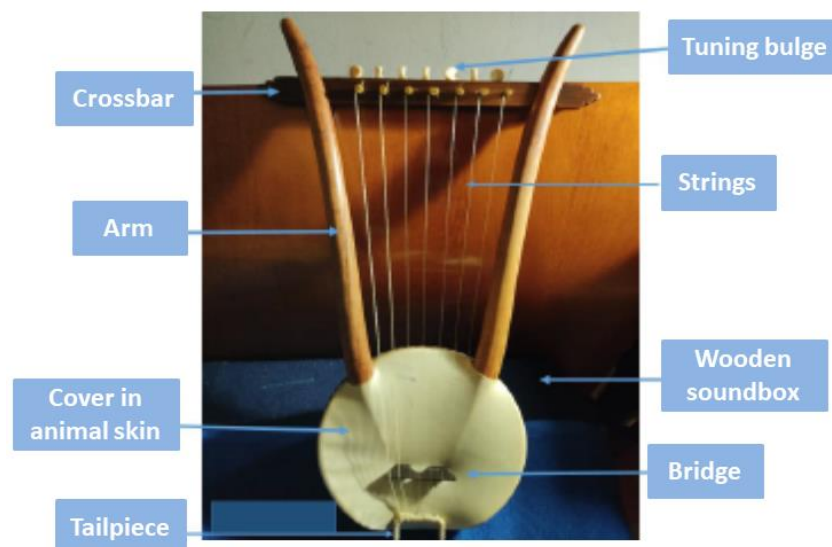


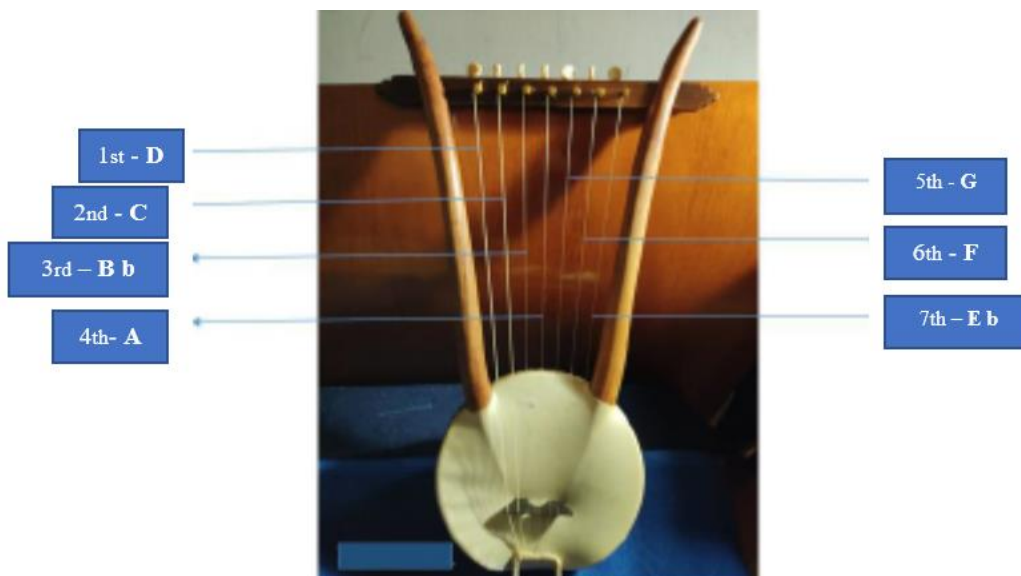
Fig. 4 - Representation of the back part of the lyre. Source: own authorship  
The soundbox concave shape



Tuning the strings is worth enhancing. It is a technical process that enables the necessary adjustments for tonal refinement by increasing or reducing the tension of the strings. Tuning is an instrumental technique that determines tonal precision to reach for the ideal harmony of the production of sounds. It requires an auditory sensitivity as well as an aptitude for the acoustic phenomenon. The musical richness of tuning an instrument like the lyre makes human beings capable of revealing the harmony of their own inner spheres and ascend to spiritual completeness. Tuning allows joining micro and macrocosm together.

The seven (7) strings that make up the tonal sound of the lyre have the following tuning:

Fig. 5 - The tuning of the strings of the lyre. Source: Own authorship.



After tonal tuning, it is crucial to create a space/context to start the process of interacting with the instrument. There are four dimensions we must emphasize in order to enjoy a melody on the lyre, transversal to all the other instruments, namely: i) physical posture; ii) breathing; iii) technique; iv) inner predisposition to awakening. The pooling of these factors may lead both to revelation and to inner-outer self-alignment. To that extent, we can say that plucking the strings of a lyre is being aware of the act of creation that symbolically represents it.

Starting an inner self journey promoted by the harmony of sound enables the individual to relax mind and body resorting to the syncopated use of respiratory movements (short inhalation and long exhalation). In this specific case of a musical instrument of 'divine origin', one must take great care to avoid the opposite result. It is a form of initiation rite taking advantage of the dimension of spirituality (of the transcendent) to reach cosmic harmony. Tune body and mind in search of the perfect sounds. These four dimensions are, therefore, structuring to start the journey to the centre of us and get to the completeness of cosmic mystery.

### **Rescuing the lyre by the hand of Paniagua**

“Each one of us has to find a way to reach our peak.”  
(Paniagua, 2007)

In 2007 Aldai interviewed Luis Paniagua, a musician from Madrid and lyre player. The interviewee states that through the lyre he can play harmonious notes and melodies. However, above all he looks for the experience of silence. Apart from rescuing this elegant instrument based on the ancient Mediterranean model inspired by Greek mythological descriptions, Paniagua believes that this musical instrument is a (trans)forming element that allows reaching moments of pure meditative internalization by enabling and feeling the disconnection of the human being in his daily life, under the aegis of deep inner peace: the search for silence. In the path of absolute interiorities, multiple constellations emerge and will (re)configure the dimension of the existential and the knowable. In this ontophenomenological path “*Each one has to find the way to get to the highest point of himself*” (Paniagua, 2007) in a transparent and open way to merge into a collective, into an “us”. The lyre has some magical substance that connects us to the dream of experiential beauty where there is neither space nor time, only emptiness.

María Zambrano, a contemporary philosopher of Spanish origin, tells us in her book “Os sonhos e o tempo” (“Dreams and time”) that “(...) *experience is the transparency of the subject who observes his own life (...). The experience is thus endless (...) because life is always someone's life (...)*” (Zambrano, 1994, p. 43).

This way reality is built upon the relationship with others. The view of the world implies giving meaning to the experiences occurring in contexts of pure interiority. The lyre (trans)forms both phenomena and realities. The lyre (re)tells the intentionality of a real story and structures the performer's harmonic order. The performer becomes an active participant and co-creator of possible and intelligible meanings. There is a demand and simultaneously an exegesis. One seeks to (de)code and (re)shape the mystery of the cosmos.

The lyre is a mystical and human instrument. Full of symbolic meaning, the lyre represents the many ideals that fall within the sphere of happiness. As it represents this unifying power, the lyre must be rescued and revisited in education and in individual and social learning nowadays. The silence it aims at is nothing but cosmic fullness. The happiness it returns is a real ocean of peace.

Nowadays the influence of culture in literature on creativity positions creative potential, according to Glaveanu (2010), in the archetypal conception of the “Us”, exploring this way the importance of context, of the group and the relationship with the other in the process of creation. If in classical antiquity creativity is viewed as a divine trait, nowadays this competence emerges from the sphere of culture that owes contextual, individual and social interdependencies (Niu & Stenberg, 2006). Both music and creativity are constructs taking place in cultural contexts and they become real in the relationship with the other (us). To this extent we can say that the lyre also symbolizes the culture of the 'us'.

Luís Paniagua, in rescuing the lyre for the present, transforms himself into a kind of contemporary 'Orpheus', eternalizing it as an archetype. Paniagua gives life back to it, setting it free from the bottom of the river of human existence, creating a flow of constellations that encourage the pursuit of happiness, beauty, silence and emptiness.

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