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Yannick Wey<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (Lucerne, Switzerland)

# Observing the Cultural Development of the Hammered Dulcimer in the Alpine Region through its Crafting, Materials, and Secrets

## Abstract

The makers of hammered dulcimers in the Appenzell (Switzerland) and Salzburg (Austria) regions are considered artisans of their very specialized craft. A trapezoidal wooden case with a bridge, the instrument is beautified with ornaments and symbols of religious and popular belief. Its sound is produced by a process mediated through several materials: the player uses small hammers struck by hand on several strings, the vibration of which is transmitted to a resonating body.

In contrast, historically, the hammered dulcimer had strikingly negative associations: It was 'devalued to a dance instrument'; 'disgusting because of the great noise of sounds'; it 'should be nailed to the houses of ill repute' and '[he] who [...] is in the habit of playing on the dulcimer, may be a regular thief and robber'. Such rebukes – some of which notably addressed directly to the object, not to the players – contrast with contemporary perception and raise questions about relationships between the material object, its properties, and their relationship to perception.

Through the detailed inspection of historical and contemporary specimens and their stories, we trace the transformation from the once shunned object to the artisanal work and carrier of cultural heritage. Dulcimers as 'sensual objects' (Harman) that transformed themselves and together with their associates: players, makers, and the sound environment. We trace the different allusions around the hammered dulcimer as objects to the crafting material, the stories from makers, and the artistic and symbolic emanation of the ornamentation. This further demands a critical reflection on the status of the craft and the material objects that exist to this day without digital technologies and in non-digital spaces.

**Keywords:** dulcimer, instrument making, Alpine region, ornamentation, music of Switzerland.

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**Introduction.** Musical instruments as material objects are connected to their musical tradition – notably under the umbrella of ‘intangible’ cultural heritage – while holding tangible qualities that withstand or relate to changes in their environment. Some retain their shape and mechanics over centuries while undergoing multiple transformations in their symbolic cultural meaning, their role and status in society and musical stylistics. Others are changing under the pressure of time: new technologies, new social challenges, new ideologies. Some even disappear for centuries or stay hidden and nearly forgotten to be uncovered one day and restored for scholarly or artistic needs. Underlying these developments are tensions between the object itself and its perception, as well as the tensions of the material object between the sacred and the profane, or the turn towards a past heritage or future endeavors. Societal change drives these tensions and becomes an agent for both changes in and preservation of instruments as a tangible symbol of music traditions. Further transformations may be driven by technological innovations. The previous century saw various technological advancements that had significant implications across all areas of musical practice. Within the sphere of music production, the development of phonography, electrification, digitalization, and increased connectivity led to the creation of numerous new musical instruments [Hardjowirogo, 2017, p. 10].

Dating back to antiquity, the hammered dulcimer can trace its roots to various regions across the globe, including the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. There is the attempt to trace its origin through migration and trade routes, some postulate an origin from Persia, from where the instrument spread to Europe and Asia. Nevertheless, a “polygenetic” history with independent developments in different regions can be assumed as well. The hammered dulcimer in the Central European Alpine region is organologically related to the Hungarian cimbalom, the trapezoidal psaltery documented in medieval sources, and the mentioned Persian santur. An assumed “tree” of relations between the various traditions is provided by Gifford [Gifford, 2001, p. 8] in his standard monograph on the dulcimer. However, there are varying typologies, and in the European context, the fretted cither is distinguished from the “psaltery-cimbalom group” [Baines, 1960, p. 12].

The hammered dulcimer is made of a trapezoidal or, in some cases, rectangular wooden frame adorned with horizontally stretched strings. Types of wood used

for the body of the instrument are mainly made from native spruce and maple, in fewer cases other woods such as pear, walnut and cherry. The instrument is played using handheld hammers made of various materials, such as wood, metal, or leather, which strike the strings to create a unique blend of melodic and percussive tones. The hammered dulcimer's adaptability across different musical genres has contributed to its cultural significance and popularity throughout history. Its versatility is evident in its application within traditional folk music, classical compositions, contemporary world fusion, and even elements of modern popular music. In the past, dulcimers were often built by the players themselves [Engeler, 1894, p. 158], however, this is no longer the case today.

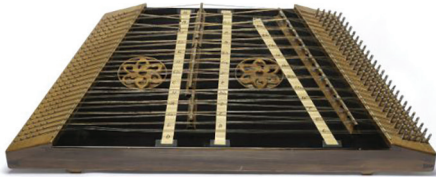
Throughout various historical periods, the hammered dulcimer has held cultural importance. Its evocative resonance and delicate timbre have been employed to express a wide array of emotions and communicate narratives in both joyous gatherings and solemn ceremonies. In recent times, there has been a resurgence of interest in the hammered dulcimer, attracting musicians of diverse backgrounds and skill levels. This renewed attention is partially attributed to the instrument's accessible playing style and its potential for creative expression.

In the subsequent chapters, we explore the dulcimer tradition in Northeastern Switzerland, examining the instrument as a concrete subject of ethnomusicological study. Our focus shifts to the instrument's materiality and the ways it is perceived. Concrete observations are then followed by a reflection, in which we focus in particular on Object-Oriented Ontology [Harman, 2001, p. 2018] to investigate the intrinsic and perceptual qualities of objects, using musical instruments as a case study to explore their autonomous existence, their qualities and the tensions between the object itself and its perception, as well as the tensions of the material object between the sacred and the profane.

**The dulcimer tradition in Northeastern Switzerland.** In the vicinity of the Alpstein Massif in Northeastern Switzerland, the hammered dulcimer holds significance within the region's musical tradition, serving as both a solo instrument and an integral part of the ensemble known as "Appenzell string music". This ensemble typically includes instruments such as the cello, violin, and double bass. Some of these ensembles gained acclaim beyond the local confines and utilized music as a means of livelihood. While the fame of the hammered dulcimer predominantly stems from its association with "Appenzell string music" ensembles during the 19th century, historical sources trace the instrument's existence back several centuries. Notably, financial records from 1567 in Appenzell make the earliest mention of the hammered dulcimer [Manser, 2010, p. 29]. However, records from the 17th and 18th centuries reveal that the instrument was often linked to individuals of low social status and itinerant musicians, leading authorities to view them with suspicion [Gifford, 2001, p. 68]. In contemporary times, the practice of playing the hammered dulcimer, along with its instruction and instrument craftsmanship, continues to thrive as a living cultural heritage in various regions.

Additionally, innovative efforts have been undertaken to further advance the instrument's capabilities and possibilities.

Dulcimers have in common a trapezoidal box, the top of which is made of spruce inserted into a frame of harder wood. [Figure 1](#) shows a dulcimer from the workshop of Johannes Fuchs, built in 1990. We see the trapezoidal resonance box over which the strings are stretched. The sides are attached to the left and right and are interrupted by bridges.



[Figure 1](#). Hammered dulcimer by Johann Fuchs, Appenzell, made in 1990

My field research and exploration of the music of the Alpstein region ([see Fig. 2](#)) began in 2018 with studies on yodeling. The hammered dulcimer emerged as central to a project that aimed to digitize and evaluate bequests in the archive of the Roothuus Gonten, Centre for Appenzell and Toggenburg Folk Music in the period throughout 2021 and 2022. There I had access to the extensive archival resources at the local folk music center as well as the opportunity to establish contacts with musicians and instrument makers. The collection of several thousand pages of music notation, in addition to hundreds of recordings and miscellaneous material poses challenges which all archives face today: how to preserve, organize, and digitize the large material in a sustainable and accessible way. My research focused on two collections, the first by the Ethnomusicologist Margaret Engeler (1933–2010) and the second by the local musician and collector Linus Koster (1906–1985). Engeler's legacy turned out to be particularly intriguing. The collection comprises audio recordings made between the late 1970s and early 1990s, mainly as part of Engeler's ethnomusicological research in the Appenzell region.



[Figure 2](#). The red spot marks the center of the Alpstein massif, where the tradition of playing the hammered dulcimer of the Central European Alpine region is particularly lively today. Source: <https://map.geo.admin.ch/> [18.09.2023]

These recordings include interviews with Appenzell musicians, live music recordings, scientific lectures and recordings of thematically relevant radio programs. Her field notes offered insights beyond her published works (Engeler 1984), and the recordings include the sole preserved interviews with eminent dulcimer players from the local musical tradition. This discovery spurred an in-depth study of the instrument, raising fascinating research questions for several reasons: while the hammered dulcimer is known in numerous regions and cultures globally, it possesses a distinctive local flavor; moreover, its construction demands sophisticated craftsmanship and a nuanced understanding of musical acoustics.

In 2023, only two dulcimer makers will still be active in the Appenzell region of north-western Switzerland. One of them is Werner Alder who trained in antique and cabinet making, but for many years primarily has focused on dulcimer construction. His product ranges from basic dulcimers for beginners to more complex concert dulcimers for professional musicians. Coming from the Alder family known for traditional music, Werner Alder actively performs in various groups and as a solo dulcimer artist. Insights into his workshop will be discussed later in this article.

**The instrument as a tangible object of ethnomusicological research.** Musical instruments, while tangible, are not just tools for producing music but are also artistic artifacts. They represent a blend of craftsmanship and artistic expression, satisfying aesthetic needs both visually and audibly. De Oliveira Pinto explains: "If music is of intangible nature, musical instruments are not. They are touchable as artifacts, as final outcomes of knowledge, skills, and mastery in handcraft. Musical instruments are a visible object-like human product, through which music is performed and reproduced as sound. [...] The most extraordinary thing is that musical instruments are more than artifacts of music alone, they often represent pieces of fine art in their own right. As true art objects, musical instruments fulfill the deepest aesthetic needs of people, visually and audibly at the same time." [De Oliveira Pinto, 2018, p. 115]. Musical instruments – defined by Hornbostel and Sachs as any object with which sound can be produced intentionally [De Oliveira Pinto, 1933, p. 129] are often the most valued possession of musicians and how they identify themselves: as "violinists", "drummers", "accordionists". In Aristotle it is said that "men become builders by building and lyre players by playing the lyre" [Ross, 2002, p. 18]. According to Elschek [Elschek, 1970, p. 51], the instrument is an extension of the human body and its functions; the "instrumental idea" arose as a "quantitative increase in the possibilities of one's own organism". The resonating body of an instrument, for example, forms an augmentation of the body cavities and allows for louder and differently colored sounds.

Today, the ability to master an instrument (or one's own voice) for the purpose of music also serves as a criterion to distinguish musicians from sound production and reproduction by purely digital means. Alperson [Alperson, 2008, p. 38] writes: "It is hard to overestimate the importance of the idea of the musical instrument in our appreciation of music and our understanding of musical practice. We think of music



as a performing art and, typically, we think of the performer as performing on a musical instrument. The notion of the musical instrument, as an object with sonic and musical possibilities and limitations and with its own history of development, shapes our understanding of the taxonomy and genres of music." The history of the instrument itself is interwoven with cultural and environmental change, and various instruments are related to each other, grouped, or linked together as families, species, or genera [Stockmann, 1965, p. 161]. As Dournon [Dournon, 1996; Cance 2017, p. 29] notes, a musical instrument "is not an object as others are; it produces sounds and carries meaning. It includes an additional aspect, due to its functional and symbolic role in society".

In *The Cultural Study of Musical Instruments*, Dawe [Dawe, 2003, p. 175] formulates the thought: "Musical instruments are formed, structured, and carved out of personal and social experience as much as they are built up from a great variety of natural and synthetic materials. They exist at an intersection of material, social, and cultural worlds where they are as much constructed and fashioned by the force of minds, cultures, societies, and histories as axes, saws, drills, chisels, machines, and the ecology of wood." This confluence of tangible and intangible approaches and properties is what makes the study of musical instruments as objects such a complex undertaking.

Stockmann [Stockmann, 2010, p. 9] defines three domains – technical, psycho-physical and aesthetic conditions – for the study of musical instruments as "sound tools":

- a) the material-technical, physical-acoustic conditions and characteristics of the instrument,
- b) the biological, psycho-physical prerequisites and abilities of the player to handle it, and
- c) the tonal-musical ideas and norms of the society in question, which the player realizes with the help of the instrument, and to explore the dialectical interrelationships between the three factors.

These three categories cover in particular the material aspects of the musical instrument. Aesthetic elements of instrument making such as the painting on the body of the instrument or handcrafted ornamentation are not mentioned explicitly. However, we assume here that these also form integral aspects of the instrument as a sound tool and should be included in the investigation. With this extension in mind, the delineation of these domains invites a deeper examination of how musical instruments are not only shaped by their physical and technical aspects but also influence and are influenced by the musicians and the cultural milieu they inhabit.

### **Unraveling the Social Stigma: The Hammered Dulcimer's Historical Journey.**

Today, the dulcimer is an integral part of the local folk music in the Alpstein region and is often presented as its emblematic instrument. However, it is not self-evident that the hammered dulcimer enjoys such acceptance today as part of the cultural heritage and as an art music instrument. If we consult the early sources of its history, it is noticeable that it is rather negatively afflicted. The sources lack an aesthetically pleasing sound. And socially, the instrument is placed near beggars and thieves.

A few examples for such sources from the German-speaking Alpine region and neighboring regions are listed here.

Johann Mattheson wrote in 1713 that the “trifling Hackbretts, except the large and gut-strung [instrument] named Pantalon, which is high-privileged, should be nailed to the houses of ill repute.” [Gifford, p. 68]. At Waldeck, Upper Palatinate, in 1724, court books recorded a man who “is in the habit of playing on the dulcimer, may be a regular thief and robber.” Another 18th century source reads: “The dulcimer is an elongated rectangular instrument with metal strings, covered like a clavichord. [...] However, because it has been so badly abused so far, we do not want to remember it any further” [Eiseil, 1738].

About the social status of the hammered dulcimer and its consequences, folklorist Brigitte Geiser wrote: “As an instrument of the dance musician, the dulcimer was hardly noticed in the past. It was exposed to all kinds of weather and was often thrown away as spoiled and worthless, before it was realized that the dulcimer is also a cultural asset.” [Geiser, 1975, p. 24]. One hypothesis states that the status and function of instruments in society is reflected in their material and its quality. The dulcimer maker Werner Alder clearly denied this question. He suggests that the quality of the craft was high among the players, but that they were treated pejoratively because of rural poverty. On the one hand, this point of view is plausible, on the other hand, it is not verifiable. The preserved specimens from the 18th and 19th centuries are probably a sample of particularly high-quality instruments. A poorly and cheaply built instrument was preserved much less likely. An elaborately worked and artistically designed specimen gives us a distorted impression of history. The broad mass of instruments has not survived and their condition we cannot reconstruct today.

To summarize the argument – albeit in a generalizing fashion –, the social history of the dulcimer in the Alpine region reflects a remarkable transformation. For a long period, its association with lower social classes and negative societal elements overshadowed its musical value. This association extended to criticisms of its sound and musical aesthetics. However, over time, the dulcimer emerged as a symbol of cultural heritage and an esteemed element in art music, especially in the Alpstein region. This shift in perception is partly contrasted by the survival of high-quality dulcimers from earlier centuries, though this may not represent the full spectrum of instruments used historically.

Two elements of the production of the dulcimer we illuminate in more detail below: on the one hand, the ornamentation, and on the other hand, the hidden interior. The latter is reserved for the makers of the instruments, the interior is not shown to outsiders, including buyers and players of the instruments. From both aspects, then, in turn, the implications for the cultural significance and material history of the dulcimer can be read.

**Ornamentation.** The ornaments of the instruments, according to dulcimer makers, are a kind of signature of the makers. Over time, they changed carved symbols,

while earlier generations applied larger paintings sometimes with religious motifs. Alder pointed out that the rose-shaped motif pertains to his family. In addition to this individual aesthetics explanation, it is also noticeable that many instruments exhibit a kind of rose window (see Fig. 3). There are other forms as well, but this one is dominant in both historical and contemporary specimens.

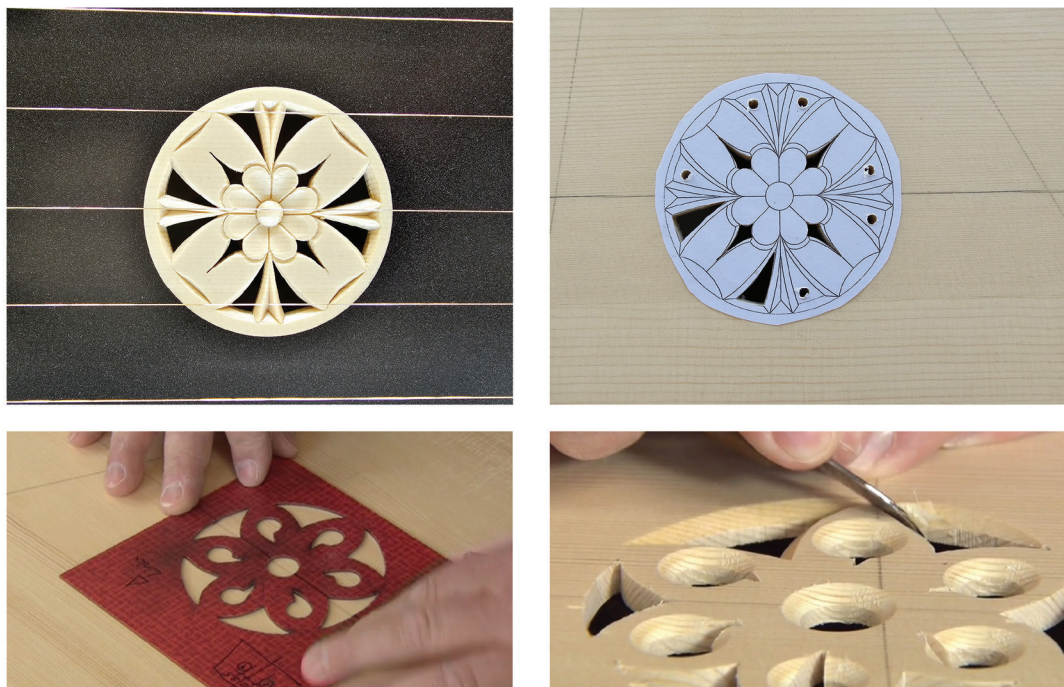


Figure 3. Making of rose window ornaments as “windows” into the resonating body of the instrument

The rose window is historically a symbol related to the Gothic cathedral [Dow, 1957]. The rose window represents the divine light or spiritual enlightenment. It serves as a focal point for light to enter the sacred space, illuminating the interior of the church and creating a transcendent atmosphere. In the case of the dulcimer, this association is not made today. It is, however, quite possible that the instrument makers also tried to enhance the value of the instrument with this symbol.

Here, we can therefore observe a shift from a religious meaning of the materially similar object to an individual, aesthetic meaning.

Historically, we find religious symbolism on many dulcimers. This can be worked into the acoustically relevant parts of the instrument or can be found as a painting on the outside. In Figure 4, we see on the left side a dulcimer documented by the folk music researcher Hanns in der Gand in 1937 in Switzerland [In der Gand, 1938, p. 92], which is decorated with a cross. On the right side, we see a particularly ornate specimen that is kept in the Museum of Musical Instruments in Leipzig, Germany. It shows on the cover a representation of angels, one of which plays a dulcimer.



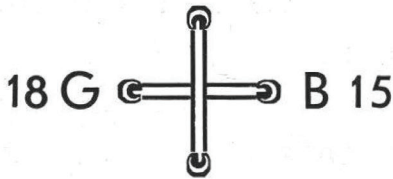
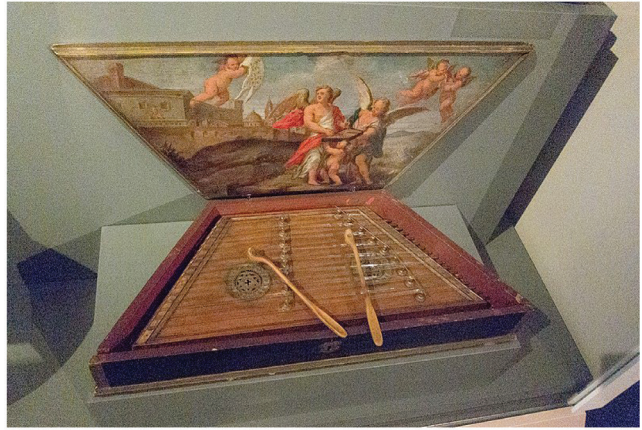


Figure 4. Religious ornaments and paintings on historical dulcimers. Sources: Left: In der Gand [In der Gand, 1938, p. 92]; Right: Museum of Musical Instruments in Leipzig, Germany

**Hidden interior.** In the interior, wooden struts with holes are placed, which change the tension of the wood and the resonance in the interior, and thus the acoustics of the instrument. I cannot show you any pictures of this. I asked Werner Alder, the dulcimer maker, about it. There was a dulcimer under construction laid out in his workshop and he explained the construction to me. But I was not allowed to take a photo of it. I had already been taught that the interior of the instrument is taboo. Even the buyers are not aware of the interior, its inscriptions, and built-in components. When asked what the origin of this rule was, Werner Alder told me that he had already been taught it by his craft teacher. I also asked about the use of religious ornamentation and symbolism and whether these still played a role today. Werner explained to me that although he does not use religious symbols in the ornaments, this is no longer common today. But in the interior of the instrument, he inscribes a Bible verse, a so-called "Losung", a verse that is announced for a specific day, or a year. Thus, the buyers and players of the instruments also do not know whether, and if so, which Bible quotation is in the instrument.

**Aspects of materiality of musical instruments through the lens of object-oriented ontology.** In the preceding pages, we have presented a detailed account of the observations gathered. Moving forward, we will contextualize these findings within the framework of relevant theories. This will allow us to situate the observations in a broader context. Philosopher Graham Harman in *Object-Oriented Ontology* proposes that objects have a withdrawn dimension that remains inaccessible to human comprehension. While humans can perceive and interact with objects to some extent, they can never fully grasp the inner life of an object. Objects always retain aspects that elude the understanding of the observer.

Real qualities refer to the inherent, essential properties or aspects of an object that exist independently of our perception or interaction with it. These qualities are intrinsic to the object itself and are not contingent on how we experience or perceive it. They represent the object’s autonomous existence and characteristics that persist regardless of our knowledge or understanding.

Sensual qualities pertain to the aspects of an object that are accessible to our senses or the way we perceive and experience it. These qualities are the result of the object’s interactions with other objects or with our own sensory apparatus. Sensual qualities include the colors, textures, sounds, smells, tastes, and other perceptible attributes that we associate with an object. They are the qualities that we can perceive, describe, and engage with, forming our subjective experience of the object. We may argue that these theoretical foundations offer certain advantages when studying an artifact such as a musical instrument in relation to its history, changing environment as well as changing social and ecological conditions: Central to Object Oriented Ontology is the notion of an inherent autonomy of objects. When applied to musical instruments, this concept encourages an exploration of these artifacts beyond their functionality or cultural symbolism. It prompts a consideration of the instrument’s materiality, design, and evolution as independent factors, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding of its existence and development. Musical analyses often center around human interaction with musical instruments. In contrast, Object Oriented Ontology enables a non-anthropocentric perspective, urging consideration of the instrument’s existence and interactions beyond its utility to humans. This approach might include examining the instrument’s material composition and its environmental interactions or the implications of its design that transcend human use. Based on these considerations, we can apply the framework of the “quadruple object” to the qualities of the dulcimer (see Fig. 5).

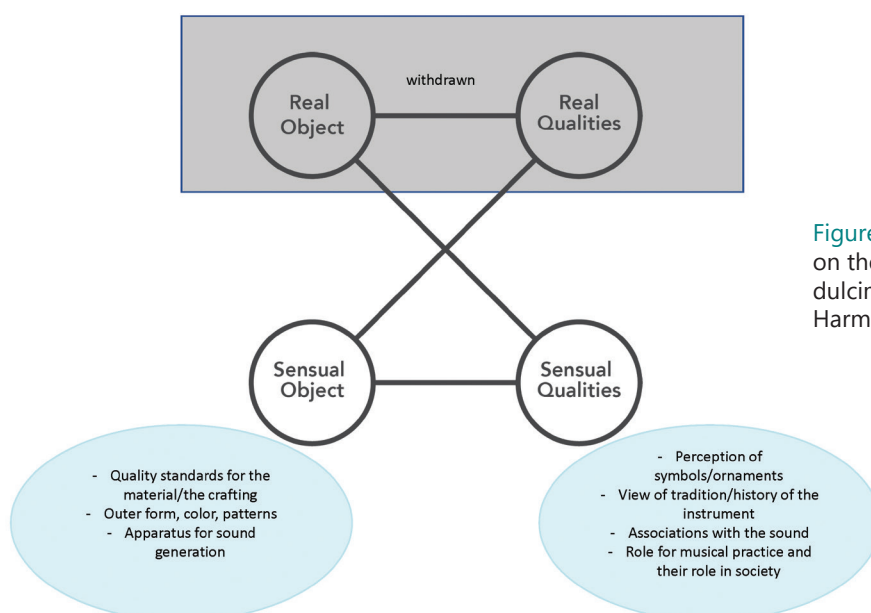


Figure 5. Summary of observation on the materiality of hammered dulcimers fitted to Graham Harman’s “quadruple object”

**Discussion.** Studying the dulcimer in the central European alpine region, we are able to show how the relationship between material and immaterial qualities of the instrument is shaped and transformed. Historically, the instrument was associated with negative connotations, with early sources linking it to an unpleasant sound and its players to beggars and thieves. 18th-century records made derogatory remarks about the dulcimer and its players. Folklorists have highlighted that the dulcimer, once undervalued and discarded, is now seen as a cultural asset. The relationship between material and status remains ambiguous. One hypothesis suggests an instrument's societal status reflects in its material quality, but others believe the poor perception was due to rural poverty, not craftsmanship. Preserved instruments from past centuries might only represent high-quality examples, potentially skewing our understanding of its historical prevalence and overall quality.

Figure 6 presents a conceptual model of the musical artifact, illustrating its multidimensional nature through interconnected components. The continuous loop indicates that these elements are not isolated but rather interact with each other. Visual elements such as ornaments and material surfaces can be integral to the identity of musical genres or specific works and can influence how music is received and understood by its audience. The auditory experience is mediated by the mechanism with which sound is generated but also a social layer of perception, embedded within narratives that might include the instrument's historical roots, the intent of its creator, or its role in society (see Fig. 6).

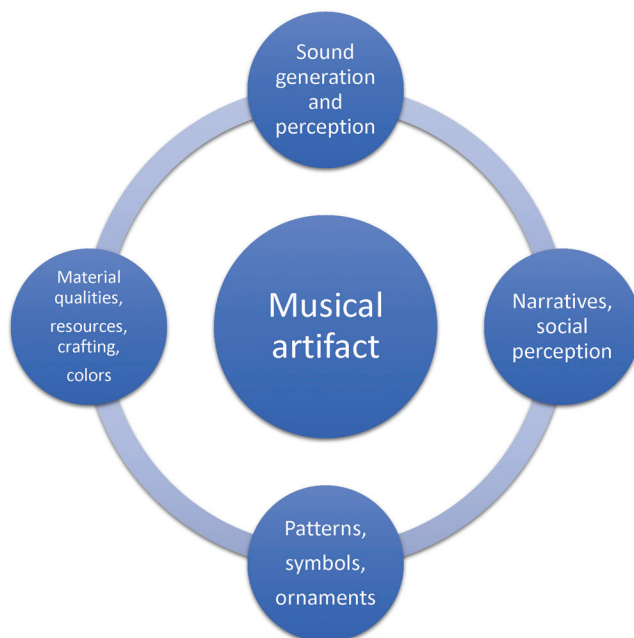


Figure 6. Relationships between qualities of the musical instrument as a musical artifact

While the manufacture of the instrument can respond to societal music aesthetic demands, it does not have to and, in the case observed here, does so only marginally. Apparently, there was little incentive to change a functional and traditional design

[Peterson, 2010, p. 371]. Instead, the meaning of a particular form, symbolism or manufacturing technique transforms. Perceptions and narratives about the material object shift over time. Over time, religious ornamentation is lost in favor of a trademark feature of the manufacturer. At the same time, in the inner space of the instruments, in the invisible interior, still we would find Bible verses. One might argue that this also reflects a retreat of religious faith from the public space in society. In the region under discussion here in Central Europe, compared with the 18th or 19th century, beliefs are less visibly practiced in public and then to be treated individually for oneself and found in their expression in the private space, withdrawn from spectators. An additional layer of interpretation was added by applying the basic principles of object-oriented ontology to the material and intangible aspects of the musical instruments discussed. We may remark that the tensions between the "real object", the "sensual object", the "real qualities" and the "sensual qualities" provide us with further theoretical tools with which we can extend the already existing methods of cultural study of musical instruments.

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## Янник Уэй

Люцерн қолданбалы ғылымдар және өнер университеті (Люцерн, Швейцария)

### Альпі өлкесінің мәдениетіндегі балғалық цимбалдар: дамуы мен қазіргі жағдайы, дәстүрлері, шеберлігі, материалдары мен сырлары

#### Аңдатпа

Аппенцелль (Швейцария) және Зальцбург (Австрия) аймақтарындағы соғылған цимбалдарды өндірушілер өздерінің тар шеңберде мамандырылған қолөнер шеберлері болып саналады. Ішектерге арналған тұғыры бар трапеция тәрізді ағаш шанағы діни және халықтық наным-сенімдердің ою-өрнегімен және нышандарымен безендірілген. Оның дыбысы бірнеше материалдардың өзара әрекеттесуінің нәтижесінде жасалады: орындаушы кішкентай балғалар арқылы ішектерді соғады, ал вибрациясы резонансты корпусқа беріледі.

Оның бүгінгі мәртебесінен айырмашылығы, тарихи соғылған цимбалдардың таңқаларлық теріс ассоциациялары болды. Типтік мәлімдемелер: «сапасыз би аспабы»; «қатты шудың салдарынан жиіркенішті»; оларды «жезөкшелер үйлеріне шегелеу керек» және «...» «цимбалда ойнауды әдетке айналдырған [адам] әдеттен тыс ұры мен қарақшы болып шығуы мүмкін». Кейбіреулері музыканттарға емес, тікелей зерттеу пәніне бағытталған мұндай сындар қазіргі заманғы түсінікке қарама-қайшы келіп, материалдық объектінің, оның қасиеттері мен оны қабылдауға қатынасы арасындағы байланыстар туралы сұрақтарды тудырады.

Тарихи және заманауи мысалдар мен олардың тарихын егжей-тегжейлі зерделеу арқылы автор цимбалдардың мәдени нысан ретінде беделі төмен аспаптан дәстүрлі қолөнердің жауһарына және мәдени мұраның символына айналуын қадағалайды. Цимбалдар «қабылдау объектілері» ретінде (Харман) өздігінен де, қоршаған ортамен де өзгерді: орындаушылармен, жасаушылар және дыбыс ортасымен. Мақалада балғалы цимбалдар айналасындағы әртүрлі тұспалдар объект ретінде қарастырылады: өндіріс материалы, шеберлердің әңгімелері, сондай-ақ ою-өрнектің көркемдік және символдық мәні. Бұл цифрлық технологияларсыз және цифрлық емес кеңістіктерде бүгінгі күнге дейін бар қолөнер мен материалдық объектінің күйі туралы терең сыни ойлауды талап етеді.

**Тірек сөздер:** цимбалдар, музыкалық аспаптар жасау, Альпі аймағы, ою-өрнек, Швейцарияның музыкасы.

**Алғыс.** Аппенцелль және Тоггенбург Халық музыкасы орталығына, материалда және конструкцияда түсінігі үшін балғалы цимбалдар жасаушылары Рутуус Гонтен және Вернер Альдерге, қолжазбаға түсініктеме бергені үшін Валерия Недлинаға алғысымды білдіремін. Пікірлері өте құнды болған екі анонимді шолушыға ерекше рахмет айтамын.

**Ескерту:** Бұл мақала 2023 жылы Легон (Гана) қаласында өткен 47-ші ICTM Дүниежүзілік конференциясында алғаш рет ұсынылған мәтінге негізделген.

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## Янник Уэй

Люцернский университет прикладных наук и искусств (Люцерн, Швейцария)

### Молоточковые цимбалы в культуре Альпийского региона: развитие и современное состояние, традиции, мастерство, материалы и секреты

#### Аннотация

Производители чеканных цимбал в регионах Аппенцелль (Швейцария) и Зальцбург (Австрия) считаются мастерами своего узкоспециализированного ремесла. Инструмент представляет собой трапециевидный деревянный корпус с подставкой для струн, украшенный орнаментами и символами религиозных и народных верований. Его звучание создается в результате процесса, в котором участвуют следующие материалы: исполнитель использует маленькие молоточки, ударяя ими по струнам, а вибрация передается резонирующему корпусу.

В противоположность сегодняшнему статусу, исторически чеканные цимбалы вызывали поразительно негативные ассоциации. Типичными были высказывания вроде: «низкопробный танцевальный инструмент»; «отвратителен из-за сильного шума»; их «следует прибавить к публичным домам» и «[тот], кто <...> имеет привычку играть на цимбалах, может оказаться заядлым вором и грабителем». Подобные упрёки, некоторые из которых адресованы непосредственно объекту исследования, а не музыкантам, контрастируют с современным пониманием и поднимают вопросы о взаимосвязях между материальным объектом, его свойствами и отношением к его восприятию.

Путем детального изучения исторических и современных образцов, а также их историй автор статьи прослеживает трансформацию цимбал как объекта культуры от маргинального инструмента с дурной репутацией до шедевра традиционного ремесла и символа культурного наследия. Цимбалы как «объекты восприятия» (Харман) менялись как сами по себе, так и совместно со своим окружением: исполнителями, создателями и звуковой средой. В статье исследуются различные аллюзии вокруг молоточковых цимбал как объектов: материал изготовления, рассказы мастеров, а также художественное и символическое значение орнаментации. Это требует глубокого критического осмысления статуса ремесла и самого материального объекта, существующих по сей день без цифровых технологий и в нецифровых пространствах.

**Ключевые слова:** цимбалы, изготовление музыкальных инструментов, Альпийский регион, орнамент, музыка Швейцарии.

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**Автор  
туралы  
мәлімет:**

**Янник Уэй** –  
философия докторы (PhD), Люцерн қолданбалы ғылымдар  
және өнер университетінің музыка мектебінің аға ғылыми  
қызметкері (Люцерн, Швейцария)  
*ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2416-1285*  
*email: yannick.vey@hslu.ch*

**Сведения  
об авторе:**

**Янник Уэй** –  
доктор философии (PhD), старший научный сотрудник  
Школы музыки Люцернского университета прикладных наук  
и искусств (Люцерн, Швейцария)  
*ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2416-1285*  
*email: yannick.vey@hslu.ch*

**Author's bio:**

**Yannick Wey** –  
PhD, Senior Research Associate, School of Music,  
Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts  
(Lucerne, Switzerland)  
*ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2416-1285*  
*email: yannick.vey@hslu.ch*