
The Oriental classical music in the Romanian Principalities during the time of Dimitrie Cantemir. The *tanbûr* on the Romanian territory

EDUARD RUSU, PhD
Romanian National Opera House from Iași
Metropolitanate of Moldavia and Bukovina
ROMANIA*

Abstract: The Oriental classical music represents a cultured music specific to the Oriental area and encountered at the Court of different political rulers. It appears as a “salon” music at the princely and noble Courts and it is intended for the political and social elite. Its emergence and development corresponds to the Western symphonic music. In the Romanian Principalities the Oriental classical music – Ottoman and Persian – appears as guided by the same coordinates, being taken from Constantinople by the Romanian political rulers. Thus, it represents not just another kind of music which can be listened at the princely court on special occasions, but also a manifesto of political power. The connection between this type of music, Dimitrie Cantemir and the Romanian Principalities resides in the fact that the Moldavian ruler and writer has had a very important role in the development of Ottoman classical music in a time when it was emerging from Persian ‘guardianship’. Dimitrie Cantemir was not only an excellent performer of the *tanbûr*, one of the instruments specific to this music, but also a composer, collector and a theoretician of Oriental classical music. Through the present material, we will try to show how the Oriental classical music developed in the Romanian Principalities and to observe the presence, circulation and importance of the *tanbûr* in these territories.

Keywords: Dimitrie Cantemir, Oriental classical music, Ottoman classical music, Persian music, Romanian Principalities, *tanbûr*.

1. Introduction

Generically named Oriental classical music¹ and having as subspecies the Persian and the Ottoman classical music, this musical category represents a stylish music genre of the social elite, an equivalent of the European

*eduard.rusu91@yahoo.com

¹ The term “Oriental classical music” is more historically and musically appropriate than “Ottoman classical music”, a term that we have used until now (see Rusu, 2021, pp. 321-347 & Rusu, 2022, pp. 161-180), especially since we are referring generally to this kind of music that was present in the Romanian Principalities. Both Ottoman and Persian classical music have coexisted on the Romanian territory, at least until the middle of the 18th century. Also, the primary sources we have used for this study have made a clear distinction between the two musical categories.

symphonic music. It has appeared as a courtly music of the powerful political class from the Near East, mixing different traditions and musical influences of all the peoples living in the area. For a good period of time it was the common music of all the Near East. In the Ottoman Empire, the Oriental classical music was basically of Persian inspiration, with specific musical influences of other peoples that were part of the Empire: Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Syrians and others. But with the 15th century, this music is developing as a Turkish-Persian one (Popescu-Judetz, 1973, p. 31).

The differentiation between Ottoman and Persian classical music happens with the second half of the 17th century, when several changes have happened within the Ottoman Empire, especially cultural ones. This is the time when the Ottoman classical music separates from the Persian one becoming a specific one, a distinct musical genre, developing more than the Persian classical music (Popescu-Judetz, 1973, p. 35).

The geopolitical context of the Romanian Principalities has led to a growing influence of the Ottoman Empire in the Romanian territories. During the fanariot ruling period the mark of the Empire was not only extremely visible in the political area, but also in the Romanians' lifestyle and their daily life. In this context, starting with the reign of Vasile Lupu (1634-1653) and his Wallachian homologous Matei Basarab (1632-1654), the general musical landscape starts to transition from having a majorly Occidental influence to being an Oriental one. Although the Romanian Principalities have known since the 15th century the Oriental music, at that time these influences were registered only in military and ceremonial music called *mehterhane* (Rusu, 2021, pp. 145-252; Rusu, 2022, pp. 262-287). This music was given to the Romanian rulers also as a sign of their dependency on the Ottoman political power. Starting particularly with the reign of Vasile Lupu, but also of his Wallachian counterpart, Matei Basarab, the soundscape begins to change, gradually moving from a mostly Western musical influence to an Oriental one. This aspect is visible in the written primary sources of those times, but also on the churches' mural paintings where this musical evolution may be observed by analysing the instruments depicted there, but also where we can see what such Oriental music looked like physically.

The timeframe for this analysis (around the lifespan of Dimitrie Cantemir) is only indicative: before the birth of the Romanian ruler and writer (1674) (Gorovei, 2013, pp. 249-357), and after his death (1723) in order to observe during this period the beginning of this musical genre on the Romanian territory, as well as its evolution until the middle of the 18th century when the Oriental classical music was already well established in the Principalities. Also, it is quite important to know and to show how significant this music was for Dimitrie Cantemir until he left for Constantinople (where he lived between 1690-1691, 1693-1699, 1700-1710) (Eşanu & Eşanu, 2008, pp. 165-191),

firstly as a guarantee of his father's loyalty to the Ottomans, then as a exiled ruler but also as a diplomatic representative (*kapukehayas*). Due to his staying there he mastered the Oriental music. It is also of great importance to understand if he was already initiated into this music since he was at the Court of his father, Constantin Cantemir (1685-1693).

Another reason for making this study is shown in its title: firstly, to examine written and mostly visual sources, the paintings of the churches, and discover the presence of the *tanbûr* and all its variants on the Romanian territory. Secondly, to prove that Dimitrie Cantemir was familiar with this instrument before his departure to Constantinople due to the fact that it was the favourite instrument of the Romanian musician who based his famous Ottoman classical music treatise on the *tanbûr's* sound structure and musicality. He even created the most complete (until then) musical notation for this music (Popescu-Judetz, 1973; Wright, 1992; Wright, 2000).

2. The presence of Oriental classical music in the Romanian Principalities

As mentioned before, the Oriental classical music arrives in the Romanian Principalities as a consequence of their forced political orientation towards the Ottoman Empire, which was the dominating political force. The 17th century represents the period in which a large number of the Romanian rulers are foreigners that came from other Ottoman dominated regions. One of them is of Albanian descent, Lupu Coci, who becomes ruler of Moldavia under the name of Vasile Lupu after having different political and administrative assignments in this state. In this context, more Oriental influences are inevitably penetrating into the Romanian Principalities, some of them concerning the music. It is important to remember that at that time, the courtly music all over Europe, represented an asset of the political power and a way for the monarch to publicly display his authority and dominance. The music and especially the official one was exclusively the right of the monarch, no other person having the right to have and to use it for his personal purposes. That is why all courtly music, either local or foreign, had the purpose of increasing the pomp, embellishing the ceremonies and highlighting the monarch in front of his subjects, but mostly in front of the foreigners present at the Court for different purposes. The same general reasons facilitate the entry of an Oriental classical music into the princely court of the Romanian Principalities; the more diverse and exotic the music was, the more it displayed the political and financial power of the ruler, patron and supporter of it.

The first chronological evidence is found in the writings that precede the period proposed for this study and it leads to identifying an Oriental classical music in the Romanian Principalities. The source refers to the wedding of Maria, the first daughter of Vasile Lupu, in 1645. One of the distinguished guests and witness states that, at that wedding that lasted for twelve days,

“Turk musicians that have been sent from the sultan’s court for this occasion have entertained the gentlemen guests. Comedians have come here, magicians or jugglers, acrobats, fistfighters and sword fighters, sword dancers and many others like them that knew how to show all sorts of joyous productions. One could have seen all kinds of bizarre jumps and wonderful games of Turk men and women that were from Circassia” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, pp. 647-648). From a single fragment we can observe the pomp and the multitude of entertainments at a princely wedding, especially since this wedding takes place at the Court of Vasile Lupu, the one characterized by the chronicler Miron Costin as: “a man of high and imperial character, more than princely” (Costin, 1944, p. 100). This aspect can be seen from the luxury that characterized his Court, visible in the fragment above, but also in the following information. Returning to our subject, the oriental classical music is represented by Turkish musicians, specially sent from the sultan’s court. Thus, a musical group belonging to the sultan plays at Vasile Lupu’s court; this is a particularly important aspect that needs to be remembered. Moreover, the description of all the games performed at this event corresponds to those that were performed in the Ottoman Empire.



Fig. 1 Ottoman classical music band. Levnî, *Surname-i Vehbî*

In this sense, a very useful evidence for us are the illuminations from Levni's work, *Surname-i Vehbî*, made during the reign of Sultan Ahmed III (1703-1730), which depict these games in many poses, all accompanied by musical bands (Fig. 1), mostly performing Oriental classical music. Moreover, if we let aside the music, the story tells us that all comedians and magicians also came from the Ottoman Empire, leading to the conclusion of a grand Oriental musical environment. Also referring to this wedding, Miron Costin says that there were "sayings, dances both from the country and from abroad" (Costin, 1958, p. 121), he too confirming the musical cosmopolitanism of this event.

A few years later, in 1652, at the wedding of Vasile Lupu's second daughter, Ruxandra, with the Cossack Timuș Hmelnițchi, the Moldavian ruler came out to meet the groom with a customary procession in which "military music sounded like all other music, especially that of the Turks and the Gypsies" (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, p. 474). From this account we can see the distinction made by the author between "military music" and the others, from this second category noting that of the Turks. From our point of view, it is clear that the music of the Turks is an oriental, cultured one, even if the Turks also sang in the ruler's *mehtherhane*, the military and ceremonial music. Also, mentioning the music of the Turks and that of the Gypsies in the same category indicates that they had a similar character. The same information is also evident from the continuation of the story relating to Ruxandra's wedding when, in the context of one of the feasts offered by Vasile Lupu, "the Moldavian and Turkish fiddlers sang and the Turks performed all kinds of magic tricks and acrobatics" (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, p. 475). Again we can see the joining of Moldavian fiddlers – who are not called Gypsies anymore² – with the Turkish ones, a fact that makes us consider that both musical ensembles were similar in terms of musical character and that they were perfectly suited to the context, especially since the Turks, other than those who sang, performed all kinds of games, specific to similar circumstances in the Ottoman Empire.

In 1647 Marco Bandini attended the ceremonies held at the Court of the same Vasile Lupu on the occasion of the Epiphany, describing all the manifestations produced for this event. In the narrative of what he saw, he states regarding the time of the Great Blessing of Waters that the entire Court participated in this religious service, each having a specific place and role, mentioning also the "trembiters/trumpeters [rom. 'trâmbițași'], drummers, different pipers and musicians playing other instruments", all of them being

²To be noted the difference that the same author is making between 'Gypsies' and 'Moldavian fiddlers'. Is it possible for the 'Moldavian fiddlers' to be musicians that sing a local or even a Western music? The evidence we have until the reign of Vasile Lupu make us believe that they are differentiated by the Gypsies who certainly played a local music, because they were a band that was playing Western music.

positioned on a high pedestal, from where they “dominated the rest of the gathering” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, p. 338). Again a distinction is made between the musical categories described here. Trumpeters and drummers belong to the music of the city or the military, both of which are not absent from such manifestations at the princely court. Next, the different players from ‘nai’, in the Romanian translation, or ‘fistulatores’ in the original Latin, who participated in the event, refers primarily to those who play the panpipe or to flute players, regardless of its species (Guțu, 2007, p. 263; Scoditti, 2010, pp. 80-81). Therefore, there is the probability that the author had both variants in mind, especially since the Oriental classical music bands included both panpipe (musikâr) and ney players, a species of Oriental whistler. Moreover, the term “musicians” in the phrase “musicians playing other instruments” has the correspondent “lyricines” in Latin and refers *stricto sensu* to lyre players, but *lato sensu* it refers to musicians who play stringed instruments (Scoditti, 2010, pp. 107-109). Therefore, the use of the term “musicians” can refer to all those who played stringed instruments, regardless of their nature, i.e. *kanûn*, *santûr*, *tanbûr*, *sâz* and others. Thus, the probability that Marco Bandini refers to an Oriental classical music band is extremely high, especially if we correlate this information with others that clearly indicate such a presence at Vasile Lupu’s Court.

The information presented also by Paul of Aleppo is very important for the present study. He describes in detail what he saw in the Romanian Principalities during his long journey as the archdeacon and companion of the Patriarch Macarius III of Antioch. Thus, during their stay at the Court of Vasile Lupu, they attend several festivities and ceremonies, which he describes. One of these events, a great feast, is described as “[...] imperial feast. When the trays were being brought from the kitchen, they were beating the drums and playing *trembitas* [trumpets] and whistles. It was a great joyous day, with princely fiddlers and constant Turkish music until the evening” (Paul of Aleppo, 2020, p. 380). We do not know whether Paul of Aleppo, by the phrase ‘Turkish music’ meant the *mehterhane* or an Oriental classical music band, but we are inclined to believe that he had the latter category in mind since, during the feasts, the *mehterhane* and the musicians of the city were playing outdoors when a new dish was brought in and, especially, when giving a toast (Rusu, 2021, pp. 483-502), just as the author himself suggests in his story. If we take into account the size of these musical bands, but also the loud sounds they produced, they were incompatible with a closed space.

Remaining in the same atmosphere of princely guests, Paul of Aleppo also offers us information about the music at the Court of Matei Basarab, during the last year of his reign. Here, at the courtly feasts, the Syrian archdeacon speaks about the presence of music by using the term ‘tarafurile’ (fiddler bands), meaning both “the singing of the fiddlers” and those who “beat

the drums and sounded the nagaras, blow the whistles and *trembitas*”, that is about the *mehterhane* and probably the musicians of the city, as it refers to the act of bringing the dishes to the table (Paul of Aleppo, 2020, p. 424). The separate reference to ‘fiddler bands’ and ‘fiddler music’ leads us to believe that there was also another kind of music at the Court of the Wallachian ruler, namely the ‘chamber’ music, which was different from that of the fiddlers called uniquely ‘taraf’. That is why we do think that the author refers to an Oriental music, in accordance with the custom of that time.

Still present in Wallachia during the first reign of Constantin Șerban (1654-1658), the successor of Matei Basarab, the same Syrian traveller refers again to the music performed during the courtly feasts, stating the difference between the Oriental classical music and the other musical categories: “the fiddler bands and all the fiddlers played the santur [sic!] and the nagaras and they were all playing together, in one voice” (Paul of Aleppo, 2014, p. 322). However, we know that the santûr and the nagaras (küdümlü) were instruments specific to Oriental classical music (Popescu-Judet, 1973, p. 39). During another feast at the Court of the same ruler, “the fiddlers with drums, whistles, *trembitas* and tambourines [sic!], also jesters, Turkish players and masked people all stood under the portico where the feast was taking place” (Paul of Aleppo, 2014, p. 276). In this case, the music is described in more detail, helping us to better distinguish the participating bands, as well as the role of each one of them. Thus, the first musical group consists of fiddlers, but who play the drums and whistles, probably of different species, but also *trembitas* and *tanbûrs*; only the *trembitas* were not specific to Oriental classical music, but they were still used in such contexts, replacing probably of *neys*, as we can see below and on the wall paintings³. The jesters come next and the second musical group, known literally as “Turkish players and jesters”. As we can see from the illuminations present all over the Ottoman Empire, they perform an Oriental classical music, which accompanies the dance of the jesters, i.e. the buffoons (Paul of Aleppo, 2014, p. 276, note 613; *The Travels of Macarius...*, 1836, p. 154), in a broader sense, known in the Ottoman world as ‘köçekçe’ (Fig. 2). Returning to the term ‘fiddlers’, in the English translation of the

³ The absence of *neys* from Romanian descriptions is extremely curious. The stories regarding the Oriental classical music in the Romanian Principalities lack in references about *neys*, and, in most cases, these instruments do not appear even in the mural paintings. Furthermore, in both categories of primary sources, the *neys* are replaced with *trembitas* that have a completely different sonority (stronger and louder) than that of *neys*. At this moment, we do not know the exact explanation of this fact. Regarding to the mural paintings, the scenes that capture the music in its various contexts sometimes illustrate verses of the psalms (e.g. psalms 148-150) that refer specially on *trembitas* and sometimes *zurnas*, and not on instruments with a sonority like that of *neys*. However, there are some known cases in which the *ney* also appears in the mural paintings, as in Colțea and Schitul Maicilor, both located in Bucharest.

Journal the used term is ‘musicians’⁴ (*The Travels of Macarius...*, 1836, p. 154), without a clear reference to any specific category. Therefore, there is a probability that the author had in mind several distinct musical groups, as we have mentioned before. Also, unlike the Romanian translation, the English version does not mention anything about ‘trembitas’, ‘tanbûr’ or ‘jesters’. Thus, by comparing the texts, it is difficult to distinguish what exactly the author is referring to; by mentioning the term ‘drum’, there is the possibility of a *mehterhane* and the music of the city, but also of an Oriental classical music, even if the Turkish (Oriental classical music) players are also being mentioned in the next part of the phrase. They being mentioned highlights the obvious fact that they were present at that feast.

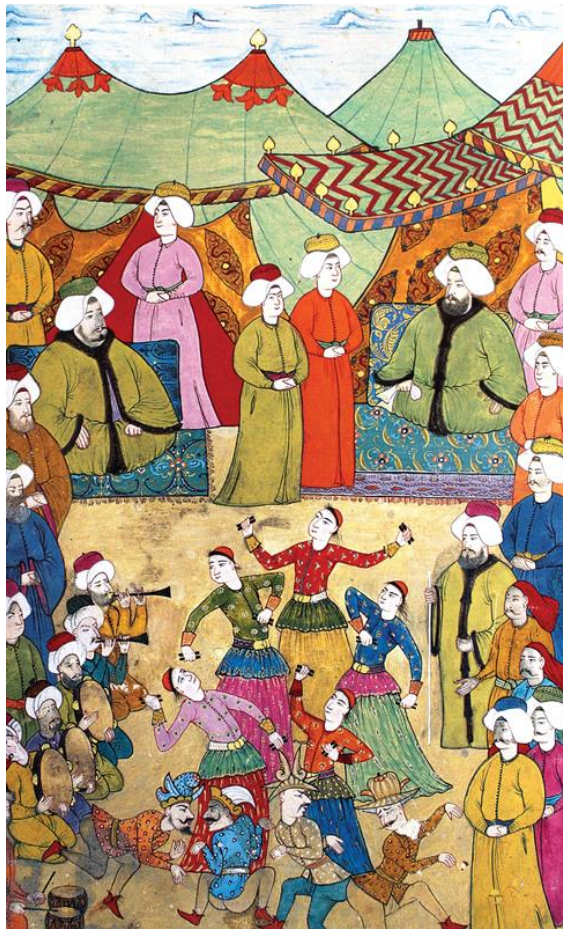


Fig. 2 Köçekçe

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Musicians_and_dancers_from_ottoman_empire.jpg

⁴ The entire phrase is the following: “As to the musicians, the pipers and the drummers, and the Turkish singers, together with the buffoons.”

In the same travel journal and also referring to Wallachia, Paul of Aleppo describes the customs of the country for the day after the Epiphany: “all magicians, fiddlers and players, with drums, whistles, nagaras and *trembitas*, as well as the Turkish and the Wallachian fiddlers have sung carols at the houses of the rich people. Here are being mentioned all the categories of courtly music, as well as those magicians, called in our documents ‘players’, but also ‘Turkish fiddle bands’ that were always mentioned using the plural, a fact which makes us wonder if, in addition to the classical music band following the model practiced at the Sultan’s Court, there was also a Persian music band, as suggested by the Church Golia’s painting (Rusu, 2023), a band that also came from the Ottoman capital. We think this hypothesis is a plausible one, at least if we consider Paul of Aleppo’s written details.

Also during the reign of Constantin Șerban in Wallachia, we note from the story of a Swedish emissary (1657) on his way to the Ottoman Empire, that during a feast at which he was invited by the Romanian ruler, at the moment of raising the glasses before a toast, skripkas, alpenhorns, drums were played, drums (rom. ‘țimbale’, that is, a species of Oriental drum – nagaras) and other Turkish instruments playing together and making a great noise (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, p. 611). At first glance, it seems that the author of the story enumerates all musical instruments present at that feast, but analysing as well the English version of the text: “music of harps, violins, pipes, drums, keettle-drums and several other Turkish instruments” (Rolamb, 1732, p. 678), we notice that the name of the instruments certainly refers to an Oriental classical music group, which we know existed from the accounts of Paul of Aleppo at the Court of Constantin Șerban.

Constantin Brâncoveanu also had musical diversity at his Court, comparable in splendour with the Court of Vasile Lupu. Luigi Marsigli, a diplomat of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, involved in the peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire, passes through Wallachia in 1691, where he is received and honoured by Constantin Brâncoveanu. The guest recounts the great feast to which he was invited, describing the musical atmosphere as “though divided into Christian, Turkish and Persian music, it was nevertheless pleasing in its diversity” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1983, p. 56). We can thus note, that at the Court of Wallachian ruler, there was not only Christian music, which may consist of several musical genres, including church music (Rusu, 2021, pp. 255-272, pp. 483-502), but also Turkish and Persian music. Furthermore, we can also observe the distinction made by the narrator between the two Oriental types of music, understanding that, although a stranger to the Oriental culture and not too knowledgeable of the specificities of this music despite the time he spent in the Ottoman Empire, he is able to differentiate between the two groups. This makes us understand that the musical bands sounded distinct from one another and that they used

different instruments. Moreover, it seems that the classical music transformation process happening in the Ottoman capital and its separation from the ‘guardianship’ of the Persian music that had begun in the middle of the 17th century, was in an advanced stage as these two types of music were already distinct from one another by the end of the century. Moreover, we can be almost certain that a ruler of Constantin Brâncoveanu’s the rank and financial and political power was always up to date with the latest music, his Court always adopting the latest fashionable standards from the Ottoman Empire. This aspect can be observed in the mural paintings of the churches built by Brâncoveanu or painted during his reign. Thus, in the Princely Church of Târgoviște, dedicated to the “Assumption of the Mother of God”, built by Petru Cercel (1583-1585) and repainted during the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu in 1698 (Iancovescu, 2014, p. 159; Stan, 2012, p. 97), in the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” scene (Fig. 11), we can very well observe how a princely feast looked like and what was the music that was performed. Musical instruments with oriental specifics are visible and based on this depiction, we can safely affirm that the musical group represented here is an Ottoman classical music group. But, as we will see next, there are other mural paintings of religious scenes made during Brâncoveanu’s reign in which musical instruments are being represented.

A few years later, in 1698 Georg Franz Kreybich, passing through Wallachia during one of his business and diplomatic trips, attended the wedding of Ilinca, one of the daughters of Constantin Brâncoveanu, who married Scarlat Mavrocordat, the son of Alexandru Mavrocordat Exaporiton (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1983, p. 125). Recounting the event, Kreybich describes, among other things, the musical atmosphere as follows: “and many games were played and all kinds of dances, Turkish, Arabic, Chinese, Tatar, French, Spanish, and Polish, and lasted all night long, until the morning; I cannot describe all of them” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1983, p. 128). This listing of seven dances covering very large geographical and cultural areas, from France to China, shows nothing but the great financial power and also the wide cultural openness of Brâncoveanu and those around him. Moreover, we can ask ourselves: how can dances exist if there is no accompanying music? How can such stylistically different dances be performed if there is no suitable band or musical instruments to play such diverse music? We believe that this testimony is proof of the cosmopolitanism that characterized not only Brâncoveanu’s Court, but those of the Romanian rulers in general. This is a proof that the Romanian Principalities have always been geographically and politically at the junction of two worlds.

Similar situations were also encountered at Moldavia’s Court. Thus, from the 1755 description of Jan Karol Mniszech’s journey, a Polish emissary, towards the Sublime Porte, we find out that he passes through Matei Ghica’s

Court (1753-1756). We learn from him that “after the meal, coffee was offered and the ruler ordered the dancers to come and play all the Oriental dances, according to their music” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1997, p. 366). From this Moldavian example we also notice that there were not only Turkish (Ottoman) dances, as we would have expected judging by the historical timeframe, but all kinds of Oriental dances, all accompanied “according to their music”. A logical conclusion would be that these dances also had related musical bands, even if we can also admit that an Oriental music group could play several types of music coming from different areas.

In 1712, at the Court of Nicolae Mavrocordat in Moldavia, the musical instruments that are part of the procession with which the ruler welcomes a Polish emissary are described: “the Moldavian musicians surrounded us playing on whistles, zurnas, *trembitas* and drums and the janissaries beat tactfully the drums (rom. ‘darabane’); skripkas, cymbals [*nagaras* (Rusu, 2022, pp. 401-405)], drymbas and mandoras were completing the concert given by the Gypsies” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1983, p. 594). Whistles, *trembitas*, drums and janissaries beating the drums represent the military music of the country and the music of the city, as well as the *mehterhane*. Along with the fiddles, zurnas, *nagaras*, drums and mandoras, which completed the music of the Gypsies, these can only be the instruments of an Oriental classical music since they represent the missing element from Court’s specific soundscape, even if their naming is inaccurate because it was made by someone not so knowledgeable about Oriental music.

Even towards the middle of the 18th century, when it is assumed that the Ottoman classical music was already consolidated, at the Court of Grigore II Ghica the chronicler Ion Neculce mentions “hagimești” (Neculce, 1982, p. 725) mean Persian(dexonline.ro) songs. For this reason, we must be very careful when we indicate the Oriental classical music present at the Courts of the Romanian Principalities. It must not be considered as being entirely Ottoman, even if this music was already perfect in terms of form and style because, there is evidence that, concomitantly, there was also a Persian music and the differences between the two were visible enough that even those who describe the Ottoman music and the Persian one were able to notice them.

3. History and characteristics of the *tanbûr*

Long-necked lutes appear among the many musical instruments used by the Persians, at the Sassanid Court. The Persians were also the first people who use them. The original version of the instrument called ‘*tunbûr*’, which had two strings, became for the Arabs the instrument called ‘*tanbûr*’ until today, being taken from the Persians and diffused along the Silk Road. The term ‘*tunbûr*’ refers to a ‘*pandora*’ (ancient instrument of Egyptian origin), one of the many varieties of long-necked musical instruments, generally distinguished from the

lute by its small resonator box and long neck. With this stage, numerous variants of it were developed, more or less close to the prototype. The *tanbûr* is characterized by an oval, pyriform or round resonator box and a long, thin and fretted neck or fingerboard with two or more strings, sometimes double or triple. Each variant of the instrument has its own sonority, as well as a specific interpretation technique and a distinct repertoire (Farmer, 2000, p. 624; de Zeeuw, 2022, p. 18).

The *tanbûr* entered Anatolia with the Seljuk Turks in the 11th century. It is difficult to specify its origin and development until the end of the 17th century because the graphic representations of the instrument became numerous starting with the 18th century, when we notice that its physical form is very close to the modern one (Feldman, 1996, p. 143). ‘Tanbûr’ is the most common name given to the species of long-necked lute (long fingerboard lute) in the medieval Muslim world. In the area of Persian influence, the *tanbûr* is named according to the Persian term corresponding to the number of strings: ‘târ’ for instruments with a single string; ‘dutar’/‘dotâr’, for those with two; ‘setâr’ for those with three: ‘çâtâr’ and ‘seştâr’ for those with four, respectively five strings etc. (Feldman, 1996, p. 143). The general shape of the modern Persian or Iranian setâr (six-stringed instrument) can also be seen in the 16th century Safavid illuminations, with the mention that the modern instrument has a smaller size than that one represented in the illuminations (Feldman, 1996, pp. 143-144). In the same *tanbûr* family are the instruments called: ‘sâz’ or ‘bağlama’, ‘dömbra’, ‘damburâ’ and ‘tambura’ (de Zeeuw, *The Turkish Long-Necked Lute...*). Also, differences appear depending on the variant of the instrument used in different areas of a larger region, such as Transaxonia, Kashmir or Khorasan, all of which having most likely as a descendant the Khorasanî *tanbûr*, described in the 10th century by al-Farâbî. Another variant of this instrument is the Levantine ‘buzuk’, which has two or three strings, plucked with a plectrum (Farmer, 2000, p. 626).

The Persian term ‘sâz’ translates as ‘musical instrument’ and represents another name under which the instruments of the family of long-necked lutes circulate. The sâz is also known as a long-necked pandora, a Turkish musical instrument used by Turkish minstrels (Farmer, 2000, p. 626). About the other name, ‘bağlama’, its exact origin remains unknown, but it is assumed to come from the Turkish ‘bağlamak’, which means ‘to bind’, referring to the binding of the instrument’s specific frets. The sâz-bağlama correlation to refer to the same musical instrument dates back to the 18th century and originates from some Western works that also address aspects of Eastern music. The bağlama individualizes however by having a smaller size than other instruments from the large family of long-necked lutes (Farmer, 2000, p. 625; de Zeeuw, *The Turkish Long-Necked Lute...*).

None of the modern Central Asian *tanbûrs* are particularly related to the Ottoman *tanbûr*, neither in terms of the construction of the resonator box, nor in the relationship between the body of the instrument and its neck. Their dimensions or method of plucking the strings are also different. The common feature of all *tanbûr* variants is that they all have frets (Feldman, 1996, p. 144).

Regarding the form of the Ottoman *tanbûr*, it is quite difficult to establish a unique one due to the multiple variants in use throughout the Muslim world, as well as the dependence (up to a certain extent) of the Ottoman classical music on the Persian music. The Ottoman *tanbûr* (originally pandora) underwent some modifications in the 17th century in order to be used for the most faithful interpretation of the intervals specific to Oriental music, which are sometimes smaller than the semitone (commas). These changes were overlooked by Western historiography, which included the *tanbûr* in the category of ‘other lutes’, instruments used in folk music (Erkut, Tolonen, Karjalainen & Välimäki, 1999, pp. 345-346). The most reliable physical form of the Ottoman *tanbûr* is the one offered by Dimitrie Cantemir in his treatise, *The Book of the Musical Knowledge According to the Letters*, written around the year 1700 (Fig. 3).

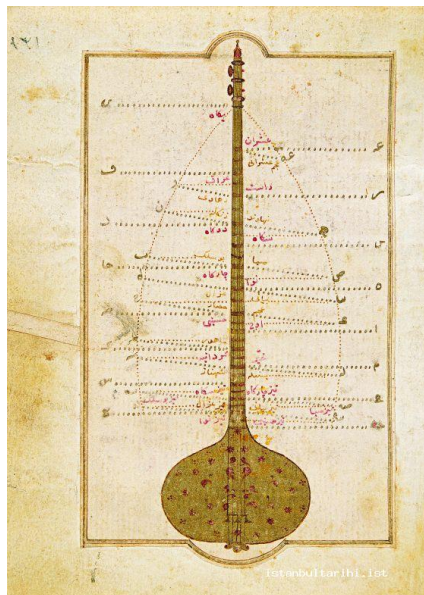


Fig. 3 The *tanbûr* from Dimitrie Cantemir’s work (Pekin, *The Sounds of Istanbul...*)

The absence of illustrations for the first half of the 17th century, when the shape of the instrument probably crystallized, is quite problematic. The Ottoman *tanbûr* from the end of the 17th century is a different instrument even from the Turkish lutes (Feldman, 1996, p. 146). In the absence of some images, according to Walter Zev Feldman, Bobowski’s 1665 description of the *tanbûr*

is somewhat astonishing. The *tanbûr* is described as a small three-stringed brass guitar with a very long neck that contains a large number of frets to mark tones and semitones. The strings of the instrument are not plucked with the fingers, but with a tortoise shell plectrum or a feather (Feldman, 1996, p. 146). Analysing the depiction of the *tanbûr* in the mural paintings of the Romanian churches, do they not correspond to a certain extent to the description made by Bobowski? Could the Romanian paintings not be a good source of information precisely for the period when the images representing the *tanbûr* are missing in the Ottoman Empire? Persian (Safavid) iconographic evidence indicates nothing similar to the Ottoman *tanbûr*, so if the Ottoman *tanbûr* and the Persian *sheštâr* were related, as some sources do imply, the physical form of the Ottoman *tanbûr* in the early 17th century did not resemble to the later Ottoman *tanbûr* (Feldman, 1996, pp. 147-148). Therefore, based on the 17th century representations of the *tanbûr* on the wall paintings in the Romanian Principalities, we strengthen our hypothesis that the *tanbûr* had until the beginning of the 18th century a relatively different form from the one in Cantemir's treatise (beginning of the 18th century).

The integration of the *tanbûr* in the Ottoman classical music starts at the middle of the 17th century as a result of the process of delimitation between the Ottoman and Persian classical music. Up until that moment the *tanbûr* was not part of this group, even if it was known for a very long time to the Ottoman musical environment for it was an accompanying instrument for vocal singers (Feldman, 1996, p. 127). Towards the end of the 17th century, the *tanbûr* consolidated its position in Ottoman classical music groups (*fasıl*) and it even replaced other instruments from the lute family, such as the *'ûd* and the *kopuz*, which had a long tradition in these musical ensembles. According to Evliya Çelebi, during the first half of the 17th century there was a wide variety of short-necked and long-necked lutes (*'ûd*, *şeshâne*, *tanbûr*, *şestâr* and *çârtâr*). These were used in 'makam' repertoires of the Court, and, by the time Dimitrie Cantemir spent his years in the Ottoman capital, all instruments in the lute family have disappeared, except for the *tanbûr* that was still being used (Feldman, 1996, p. 142-143). During the 18th century, the known lute players from the Ottoman Court are only *tanbûr* players, therefore the *tanbûr* was continuing its instrumental dominance until the 19th century (Feldman, 1996, p. 143).

The transformation of classical music (musical art) during the 17th century in the Ottoman Empire occurred as a result of multiple factors. This has led to the creation of new modal structures, a new series of musical genres, a more extensive cyclical performance, a new relationship between the composed elements and the creation of musical and artistic performance, as well as of a new instrumental ensemble. All these have generated a new face of Oriental classical music, with well-defined stylistic elements (Feldman, 1996, p. 46). If at the end of the 17th century Dimitrie Cantemir saw the Ottoman classical music as

a whole, at the beginning of the same century his predecessors, Evliya Çelebi and Ali Ufkî Bey (Wojciech Bobowski), distinguish between musical art (the refined, classical music) and the music of the people (folk music) called “türkü”. This aspect prompts us to understand that during the 17th century a series of changes took place regarding the “Ottoman musical art” (Feldman, 2015, p. 111). Knowing this and having also in mind both written and visual information about the Oriental classical music in the Romanian Principalities, we understand very well the unrest and the evolution of this music, as the available information, as disparate and insufficient as they are, reflects this dynamic. This is the reason why it is very difficult to search through all categories of sources, for example, to locate and identify at the Court of the Romanian Principalities an Ottoman classical music band similar to what a band has become at the Ottoman Court during the 18th century.

4. Dimitrie Cantemir and the *tanbûr*

Before proceeding to identifying the *tanbûr* in the Romanian written and visual sources, it is important to see what was the relationship between the musician Dimitrie Cantemir and the musical instrument called “tanbûr”. Even before Cantemir’s first departure to Constantinople, we believe that he certainly had good contact with the Oriental classical music present at the Court of the Moldavian rulers, but also in Wallachia, when he stayed for a while at the Court of Şerban Cantacuzino (1678-1688) and became engaged to his daughter Casandra (Eşanu & Eşanu, 2008, p. 162). These aspects should not be overlooked when referring to the musical training of Dimitrie Cantemir because, even if we do not have accurate data, we can safely say that he listened to oriental classical music at the Court of his father, Constantin Cantemir, but also at the Court of his future father-in-law, Şerban Cantacuzino. Also, we do not believe that he acquired his excellent skills in Oriental music only during his stays in the Ottoman Empire. He indeed became famous at the sultan’s court, writing a treatise on Ottoman music and inventing a musical notation, but we believe that the foundations of his excellence in Ottoman classical music were placed in his childhood, at his father’s Court.

Usually, for a musician to become famous in playing a certain musical instrument, his study must start early, in his childhood. Moreover, for a “foreign” music to the country in which you were born to become so “intimate” that you are able to compose it, to write a treatise about it, making it better known to others, especially to those raised in this musical culture, requires a phenomenal talent but also a large degree of familiarity and study from an early age. Regarding Cantemir’s roughly 22 years in Constantinople, we know that he studied Ottoman music with several teachers such as: Tamburi Angelos, Tanburi Eyyubi Mehmed Çelebi, Kemani Ahmed, Kemani [Neyzen] Ali Hoca, Buhurîzâde Mustafa Itrî and Çömlekçîzade Receb (Feldman, 2015,

pp. 97-99). He studied the *tanbûr* with the famous Greek teacher Tanburi Angeli (Ghilaș, 2008, p. 391; Răileanu, 2016, p. 3), perfecting his knowledge and interpretative technique. About this aspect, the chronicler Ion Neculce says that the Moldavian ruler knew how to play the *tanbûr* better than any native of Constantinople (Neculce, 1982, p. 509). Cantemir himself states the following regarding the Ottoman classical music and his contribution to its study and development: “I could have wrote extensively and show a lot about the music of the Oriental countries, which may not be known even to those countries (do not count this as vain glory), because I have worked more than twenty years in practical and theoretical Oriental music” (Cantemir, 1987, pp. 546-547). Then, in another writing, referring to the *tanbûr*, Cantemir says: “it has been said that the *tanbûr* is the most perfect and complete of all the instruments that we have ever known or seen because it renders entirely and without fault the sound and the song that comes out of the mouth of man” (Popescu-Judet, 1973, p. 193).

5. The *tanbûr* in the Romanian Principalities

Regarding the written evidence that attests or at least indicates the existence of the *tanbûr* on the Romanian territory, the first chronological proof is that of Niccoló Barsi, who travels through Moldavia in 1633 and observes a certain musical instrument he called “lute with three strings” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, p. 77). This instrument is justly catalogued by Gheorghe Ciobanu as a *tanbûr* (Ciobanu, 1974, p. 225), especially since, if we refer to the original text, we notice that the instrument is not called a lute, but “collascioni con tre corde” (Giurescu, 1925, p. 302). The ‘colascione’ was a popular musical instrument in Southern Italy, reaching its peak in the late Renaissance period and early Baroque; it derives from the oriental *tanbûr* and is the instrument of the European lute family with the longest neck, similar to the original *tanbûr*, but different in terms of the resonator box and the fingerboard peg system, which are similar to those of lutes. Also, ‘colasciones’ exist in two, three or four string variants (Hipkins, 1921, p. X; Rolfhamre, 2016, pp. 52-63; Sachs, 1940, p. 257).

We do not think that Niccoló Barsi saw a “colascione” in Moldavia, but an instrument from the *tanbûr* family, but he called it this way by associating it with an instrument he knew. Moreover, the ‘colascione’ was an instrument of European classical music, generally used at Court, while the one observed in Moldavia seems to belong, according to the story, more to the music of the common people. It is also possible that Barsi may have seen it in an aulic context as he does not make any additional commentary on this regard, and its mention refers to the description of musical instruments used by the Moldavians: “[...] and when they want to start the dance, they first play different instruments like violins, bagpipes, whistles, drums, three-stringed lutes [*tanbûr*]” (Holban, Bulgaru & Cernovodeanu, 1973, pp. 76-77).

The second reference to the instruments belonging to this category pertains to Evliya Çelebi, a Turkish traveller in the Romanian Principalities between 1651-1659, who describes the music he hears at a fair in Focșani: “in every corner, singers and musicians from different countries sing with their mouths and organs [musical instruments], as well as fiddlers play *trembitas*. Several thousand women ... sing different arias with their mouths and with instruments called saz [sic!], feasting thus in all parts of the fair” (Ghenea, 1965, p. 101). However, in the translation of the same text from the series of volumes *Călători străini despre Țările Române (Foreign travellers about the Romanian Principalities)* (Bulgaru & Mehmet, 1976, 731), the *sâz* is no longer mentioned or replaced with another term for that musical instrument, the translator completely and silently eliminating the name of the instrument that Evliya Çelebi referred to. Nevertheless, Çelebi’s testimony represents another evidence of the existence of this instrument in the Romanian Principalities. The fact that the author of the account was not only Turkish, but also a connoisseur of Oriental music, gives us the certainty that he was not mistaken or that he had any doubt in identifying the musical instrument he saw.

A third reference in written primary sources about the presence of the *tanbûr* in the Romanian Principalities during the considered timeframe, is the one we have previously mentioned regarding a feast at the Court of ruler Constantin Șerban: “the fiddlers with drums, whistles, *trembitas* and *tanbûrs*, also jesters, Turkish singers and masked people all stood under the portico where the feast was taking place” (Paul of Aleppo, 2014, p. 276). There is a clear differentiation between fiddlers and Turkish singers; curiously, the fiddlers are those who use the *tanbûr*. In this case we can ask ourselves if they really used such an instrument or if the term “fiddler” in this translation actually refers to a “musician”, as we have seen in the English translation of Paul’s of Aleppo’s *Journal*. Therefore, these musicians could have been even Turks, despite them being mentioned separately in that text.

The reason the *tanbûr* is not mentioned in official Romanian documents as other musical instruments are is almost certainly due to the fact that it was always included lutes category regardless of their subspecies. For this reason, fiddlers are mentioned more often in documents than other instrumentalists, as they were numerous and diverse.

Unfortunately, these are the only written testimonies known at this moment that attest or indicate the presence of the *tanbûr* and other instruments from its category on the territory of the Romanian Principalities. Fortunately, we can add to these testimonies the more numerous visual ones, which complete the perspective on the *tanbûr*. Thus, the first appearance we know of the *tanbûr* or of its variants in the mural painting of Romanian churches during the considered timeframe is the one in the painting of the

church dedicated to the “Holy Apostles Peter and Paul” and belonging to Cetățuia Monastery from Iași (Fig. 4). The church was founded by Gheorghe Duca and painted in 1672 (Grigoraș, 1966, p. 6, p. 17). In the composition inside the porch there is a part preserved from the original painting, a scene illustrating the psalms 148-150. Among the painted instruments, adapted according to the texts of the psalms and to the music existing at the princely Court during the time of the painting, we notice two *tanbûrs* that seem to be different, if we analyse the end of the neck of each one of them and the size of the resonator box. Also, the one on the left side has four strings, its resonator box is larger than the other on the right side which has a loop or a curvature at the end of its neck. This is a noticeable detail that we will notice on other *tanbûrs* painted in Romania.



Fig. 4 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the church painting “Holy Apostles Peter and Paul” Cetățuia Monastery

Continuing our chronological exposition, we pass to Wallachia bringing into attention the painting of the “Three Holy Hierarchs” Church in Filipeștii de Pădure, Prahova County. The church was founded in 1688 by Bălașa Cantacuzino, the wife of Agha (rom. ‘aga’) Matei Cantacuzino, and her son, spătar (army chief) Toma Cantacuzino, and painted in 1692 by Pârvu Mutu (Tzigara-Samurcaș, 1908, pp. 30-36).

In the composition inside the porch there is an illustration of the same psalms 148-150 (Fig. 5) containing a *tanbûr* or a related instrument. Its physical details are difficult to observe because of the small dimensions of the entire scene.



Fig. 5 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of “Three Holy Hierarchs” Church in Filipeștii de Pădure

The painting of “Saints Constantine and Helen” Church of Hurezi Monastery, the foundation of Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) was finished in 1694 (Iancovescu, 2008, p. 47). Here, several musical instruments from the *tanbûr* family are visible. Thus, in the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” scene (Fig. 6), painted in the nave of the church, we can see in all its splendour a *tanbûr* with four strings plucked with the fingers; the instrument has a very long neck, ending in a curvature, just like the one painted in Cetățuia Monastery in Iași.



Fig. 6 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” scene from the painting of the “Saints Constantine and Helen” Church of Hurezi Monastery

Still in the nave, in the “Mocking of Christ” scene (Fig. 7), we can observe with some difficulty because of the degradation of the painting, another *tanbûr* that seems to have the same physical characteristics as the previous one we have mentioned. There are also three more *tanbûrs* in the painting of the porch, in the section illustrating the same psalms 148-150 (Fig. 8).



Fig. 7 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the “Mocking of Christ” scene from the painting of the “Saints Constantine and Helen” Church of Hurezi Monastery



Fig. 8 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Saints Constantine and Helen” Church of Hurezi Monastery

The first two *tanbûrs* have the same characteristics as those painted at the Cetățuia Monastery; the one on the left has the smaller body and the neck ending with that curvature, and the one on the right has the larger body and the straight neck. In a smaller scene on the porch (Fig. 9), we can also see a variant of *tanbûr* that cannot be properly examined because of its reduced visibility and the small dimensions of the scene.



Fig. 9 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Saints Constantine and Helen” Church of Hurezi Monastery

In the painting of the “Assumption of the Mother of God” Church of Hurezi Monastery Infirmary, painted between 1696-1699 (Popa, 2008, p. 124; Epure, *Bolnița mănăstirii Hurezi...*), we notice another variant of *tanbûr* represented in the “Wedding from Cana Galilee” scene (Fig. 10). The instrument here is most likely a *bağlama* or a variant of *sâz*, as its dimensions are small compared to those of the *tanbûr*.

In the painting of the Princely Church in Târgoviște we see two other variants of instruments from the *tanbûr* family. The first scene, the one representing the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” (Fig. 11), illustrates an entire Oriental musical band, with a variety of the *tanbûr* or more precisely, a *dotâr* or a

bağlama, since it has two strings that are being plucked with a plectrum. In another scene, “The Mocking of Christ” (Fig. 12), we can see a small-sized *tanbûr* variant, probably also a *bağlama*, with a small resonator box and a long, thin neck.



Fig. 10 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” scene from the painting of the “Assumption of the Mother of God” Church of Hurezi Monastery Infirmary



Fig. 11 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” scene from the painting of the Princely Church in Târgoviște



Fig. 12 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the “The Mocking of Christ” scene from the painting of the Princely Church in Târgoviște

The “Dormition of the Mother of God” Church in Râmnicu Sărat, Buzău County is another foundation of Constantin Brâncoveanu, built between 1691-1697 (Lupu, 1994, p. 269) and painted in 1699 (Negrău, 2019, pp. 159-160). This is another church where we can see the *tanbûr* painted on its walls. In the “Wedding from Cana Galilee” scene (Fig. 13), there is a *tanbûr* that has the same physical characteristics as the one painted in the same scene inside the Monastery of Hurezi.

The Church Colțea dedicated to the “Three Holy Hierarchs” was founded by the spătar (political dignity) Mihai Cantacuzino, the uncle of ruler Constantin Brâncoveanu, between 1698-1699, according to some researchers, or between 1700-1701, according to other opinions. It was painted by Pârnu Mutu in the same period (until November 18th 1702 (Ilieș, 1969, p. 8, p. 22; Dorojan, 2012, p. 163)⁵, when it was consecrated) and it shows the painting of another *tanbûr*. Thus, in the illustration of psalms 148-150 we see, just as before, a dance scene whose music is performed also by the *tanbûr*. The instrument is most certainly a *tanbûr* and it can be observed on the right side of the scene (Fig. 14).

⁵ It is very important to underline the fact that Aurora Ilieș also states that the inspiration source for the scene suggested by psalms 148-150 is the daily newspaper of the beginning of the 18th century. This affirmation is based on identifying several elements specific to that period, such as the attire of the women dancing to the music of the instruments. Thus, logically, Pârnu Mutu and all painters, in general, were also inspired by everyday life when they created certain frescoes. (Ilieș, 1969, pp. 22-23)



Fig. 13 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the “Wedding from Cana of Galilee” scene from the painting of the “Dormition of the Mother of God” Church



Fig. 14 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Three Holy Hierarchs” Colțea Church

Continuing with the churches build by Constantin Brâncoveanu, there is also the “Holy Trinity” Church of Cozia Monastery, painted between 1704-1705 at the command of the same ruler by the Romanian painters Preda, Ianache, Sima and Mihail, with the Greeks Andrei, Constantin and Gheorghe (Davidescu, 1966, p. 7, pp. 17-18; Negrău, 2018, p. 119). On its porch, there is the illustration of the same scene of psalms 148-150, where we can observe for the first time a species of *tanbûr*, the *sâz* or *bağlama* (Fig. 15). Thus, on the left side of the image we can notice a musical instrument with a small resonator box, continued with a long and thin fingerboard, characteristic to this category of musical instruments, but ending with a loop similar to the *tanbûr* varieties we have seen at Cetățuia, Hurezi and Râmnicu Sărat. So, according to all its depictions, this instrument combines some features of the *bağlama* family of instruments with those of the *tanbûr* variant we just mentioned. This combination can only lead to another variant of instruments belonging to this great family of long-necked lutes.



Fig. 15 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Holy Trinity” Church of Cozia Monastery

Another available example for the topic we have approached here, is the instrument painted in the “Annunciation” Church from Vernești, Buzău County (Fig. 16). The church was founded by Jipa and Lefter Vernescu, built between 1714-1715 and painted in 1721 (Filitti, 1932, p. 9). In the illustration of psalms 148-150, there is an instrument with a small resonator box and a long and thin

neck, which seems most likely to be a *sâz* or *bağlama*, as in other previous examples.



Fig. 16 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Annunciation” Church from Vernești

Finally, the last example we have brought here is the painting of the porch of the Kretzulescu Church in Bucharest, dedicated to the “Assumption of the Mother of God”, founded by Constantin Brâncoveanu’s son-in-law, the chancellor (rom. ‘logofăt’) Iordache Crețulescu, during 1720-1722. The original painting is only preserved inside the porch, the rest of the church being repainted by Gheorghe Tătărescu between 1859-1860 (Cojocaru, 2015, p. 163; Roșulescu, *Biserica Kretzulescu...*). Thus, in the illustration of the well-known scene for churches painted in this period, the psalms 148-150, we can observe in two distinct smaller scenes, two variants of *tanbûr* or *bağlama*, both being played, along with other musical instruments, to produce dance music for the group of women performing a particular dance. In the first image (Fig. 17), on the left side of it, we can hardly distinguish because of the low visibility, a *tanbûr* that is very similar to the one painted at Filipeștii de Pădure. On the right side of this first image, but also on the same right side of the second image (Fig. 18) we notice an instrument with a smaller body than the previous one and with a thin fingerboard, similar to the one from Vernești, which makes it a variant of the *sâz* or *bağlama*.



Fig. 17 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Assumption of the Mother of God” of the Kretzulescu Church



Fig. 18 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of psalms 148-150 from the painting of the “Assumption of the Mother of God” of the Kretzulescu Church

6. Conclusions

From the images presented so far, we could have noticed that the first visual attestation of the *tanbûr* comes from Moldavia, which is the only example here, all others belonging to churches in Wallachia. But, the situation can somewhat change for Wallachia as we have not researched all the churches that might have paintings containing some musical instruments, maybe even *tanbûrs*, before the earliest visual attestation, the painting of Cetățuia Monastery in Iași.

Another important aspect that must be mentioned here refers to the higher density of churches in Wallachia compared to those from Moldavia dating from this period that have well preserved its original paintings. This is due to notable personalities, such as Constantin Brâncoveanu, but also members of the Cantacuzino family, who were also remarkable as great church founders. Regarding Constantin Brâncoveanu, he also had a longer reign compared to those of his contemporaries in Moldavia, allowing him to develop the art and the culture of his time from several perspectives.

Returning to the discussion regarding the poverty or even the lack of *tanbûr* images for the 17th century in the Ottoman Empire and to the discussions concerning the physical appearance of this instrument, we reinforce our consideration that the paintings from Romanian churches can represent a good source of information and the visual ‘recovery’ of the physical aspect of the *tanbûr*. No scene painted in Romania offers the close resemblance of the *tanbûr* illustrated in Dimitrie Cantemir’s music treatise. The specialists consider this *tanbûr* to be the variant used from the 18th century onwards, a variant preserved almost unchanged until today. Furthermore, our *tanbûrs* might refer more to the appearance of the Persian ones, such as the *setâr*, the *sâz* or the *bağlama*, or they can look as the Ottoman *tanbûr* circulating in 17th century. We support our statement on the fact that the *tanbûr* underwent some modifications at the end of the 18th century in order to better reproduce the musical intervals characteristic of the newly formed Ottoman classical music (Erkut, Tolonen, Karjalainen & Välimäki, 1999, pp. 345-346). These features were not necessary before because the Ottoman music had not fully emerged from the ‘guardianship’ of Persian music.

In this context appears the musical treatise of Dimitrie Cantemir about which he says was a necessity, since the new Oriental classical music, especially the Ottoman one, had somewhat new musical and sound features. That is precisely why Cantemir has used the *tanbûr*, an evolved instrument in form and sonority, to exemplify musical intervals (the makams). All this argumentation becomes more credible if we observe how the *tanbûr* is represented in the Romanian space during the second half of the 18th century. Thus, in the illustration of the novel *Erotocrit*, made in 1787 by the chancellor Petrache (Fig. 19), we can see the *tanbûr* represented in a version much closer

to the one proposed by Cantemir compared to those we have observed in the painting of churches from the second half of the 17th century. Also, in another primary source from the middle of the 18th century, we observe that the *tanbûr* (Fig. 20) is very similar to the one in *Erotocrit*, as well as to the one we use today. This aspect prompts us to believe that the *tanbûr* crystallizes its form starting with the second half of the 18th century.

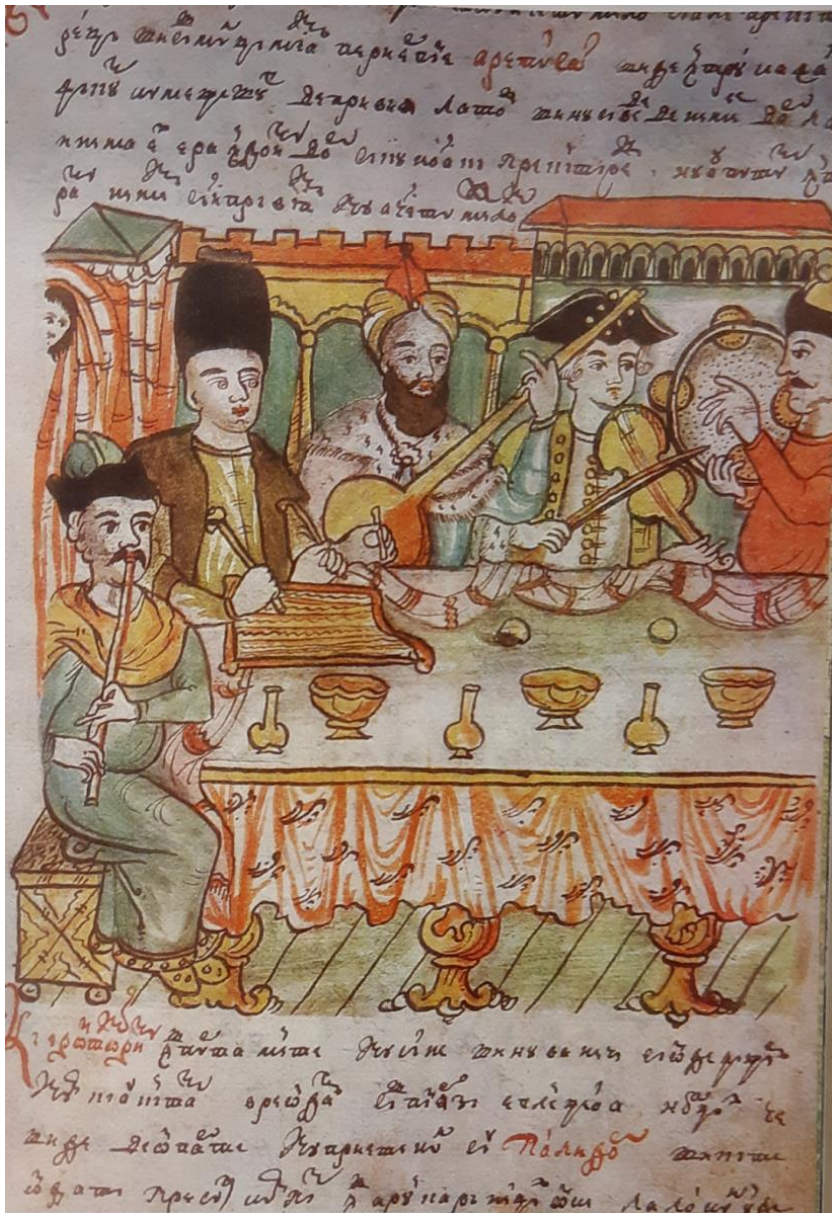


Fig. 19 *Tanbûr* in the illustration of the novel *Erotocrit*, made in 1787 by the chancellor Petrache



Fig. 20 *Tanbûr* painted around 1740 by Jean-Étienne Liotard, <https://gallerix.org/storeroom/2719006409/N/2078519795/>

References

Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, M. M. & Mehmet, M. A. (Ed.) (1976). *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travellers about the Romanian Principalities], vol. VI. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.

Cantemir, D. (1987). *Sistemul sau întocmirea religiei muhammedane* [The system or preparation of the Muhammadan religion], traducere, studiu introductiv, note și comentarii de Virgil Cândea. Text rus îngrijit de Anca Irina Ionescu. In Cantemir, D., *Opere Complete*, VIII, tomul II, ediție critică publicată sub îngrijirea lui Virgil Cândea. București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România.

Ciobanu, G. (1974). *Circulația tamburei în Țările Române în perioada medievală* [The *tanbûr* in the Romanian Principalities during the medieval period]. In Ciobanu, G., *Studii de etnomuzicologie și bizantinologie*, vol. 1 (pp. 224-229). București: Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor.

Cojocar, C. (2015). *Iconografia pronaosului în bisericile de secol al XVIII-lea din zona București-Ilfov* [The iconography of the pronaos in the 18th century churches in the Bucharest-Ilfov area]. In Bedros, V. & Sabados, M. (ed.), *Spicilegium: studii și*

articole în onoarea Prof. Corina Popa [Spicilegium: studies and articles in honor of Prof. Corina Popa] (pp. 161-179). București: Editura UNArte.

Costin, M. (1944). *Letopiseșul Țării Moldovei dela Aron Vodă încoace* [The Chronicle of Moldavia from Aron Vodă onwards], ediție critică de P. P. Panaitescu. București: Fundația Regală pentru Literatură și Artă.

Costin, M. (1958). *Letopiseșul Țării Moldovei* [The Chronicle of Moldavia]. București: Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă.

Davidescu, M. (1966). *Mănăstirea Cozia* [Cozia Monastery]. București: Editura Meridiane.

de Zeeuw, H. (2022). *The Ottoman Tanbûr. The Long-Necked Lute of Ottoman Art Music*. Summertown: Archaeopress Archaeology.

de Zeeuw, H. *The Turkish Long-Necked Lute or Bağlama*. Retrieved from <https://archaeopress.wordpress.com/tag/tanbur/>

Dorojan, M. (2012). Durabila biserică a Colței [The durable church of Colțea]. *București – materiale de istorie și muzeografie, XXVI*, 162-177. București: Editura Muzeului Municipal București.

Epure, F. *Bolnița mănăstirii Hurezi: vindecare prin credință și medicină, în urmă cu peste trei secole* [The infirmary of the Hurezi Monastery: healing through faith and medicine, over three centuries ago]. Retrieved from <https://historia.ro/sectiune/general/bolnita-manastirii-hurezi-vindecare-prin-credinta-566710.html>

Erkut, C.; Tolonen, T.; Karjalainen, M. & Välimäki, V. (1999). Acoustical Analysis of Tanbur, a Turkish Long-Necked Lute. *Sixth Int. Congr. on Sound and Vibration Lyngby, 1*, 345-352. Lyngby.

Eșanu, A. & Eșanu V. (2008). Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723). Viața și activitatea politică [Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723). Life and political activity]. In Eșanu, acad. A. (coord.), *Dinastia Cantemireștilor. Secolele XVII-XVIII* [The Dynasty of Cantemirești. XVII-XVIII centuries] (pp. 156-252). Chișinău: Editura Știința.

Farmer, H. G. (2000). Țunbûr [Tanbûr]. In Berman, P. J. & Bianquis, Th. & Bosworth, C. E. & et al. (Ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, volume X, T-U, (pp. 624-626). Leiden: Brill.

Feldman, W. (1996). *Music of the Ottoman Court: Makam, Composition and the Early Ottoman Instrumental Repertoire*. Berlin: VWB, Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung.

Feldman, W. (2015). The Musical “Renaissance” of Late Seventeenth Century Ottoman Turkey: Reflections on the Musical Materials of Ali Ufkî Bey (ca. 1610-1675), Hâfiz Post (d. 1694) and the “Marâghî” Repertoire. In Grave, M. (Ed.), *Writing the History of “Ottoman Music”* (pp. 87-138). Würzburg: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission.

- Filitti, I. C. (1932). *Biserici și ctitori*, extras din «Biserica ortodoxă română», Febr.-Martie [Churches and founders, excerpt from “Romanian Orthodox Church”, February-March]. București.
- Ghenea, C. C. (1965). *Din trecutul culturii muzicale românești* [From the past of Romanian musical culture]. București: Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor din R. P. R.
- Ghilaș, V. (2008). Dimitrie Cantemir și arta muzicală (teoretician, compozitor, instrumentist și pedagog) [Dimitrie Cantemir and musical art (theorist, composer, instrumentalist and pedagogue)]. In Eșanu, acad. A. (coord.), *Dinastia Cantemireștilor. Secolele XVII-XVIII* [The Dynasty of Cantemirești. XVII-XVIII centuries] (pp. 389-428). Chișinău: Editura Știința.
- Giurescu, C. C. (1925). Le voyage de Niccolò Barsi en Moldavie (1633) [Niccolò Barsi's journey to Moldavia (1633)]. *Mélanges de l'Ecole Roumaine en France*, première partie, 280-320. Paris.
- Gorovei, Ș. S. (2013). Addenda et corrigenda. Din nou despre data nașterii lui Dimitrie Cantemir [Addenda et corrigenda. Again about the date of birth of Dimitrie Cantemir]. *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* [Middle History Studies and Materials], XXXI, 349-357. București.
- Grigoraș, N. (1966). *Mănăstirea Cetățuia* [Cetățuia Monastery]. București: Editura Meridiane.
- Guțu, Gh. (2007). *Dicționar latin-român* [Latin-Romanian dictionary], ediție revăzută. București: Editura Humanitas.
- Hipkins, A. J. (1921). *Musical Instruments: Historic, Rare and Unique*. London.
- Holban, M. & Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, M. M. & Cernovodeanu, P. (Ed.) (1973). *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travelers about the Romanian Principalities], vol. V. București: Editura Științifică.
- Holban, M.; Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, M. M. & Cernovodeanu, P. (Ed.) (1983). *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travelers about the Romanian Principalities], vol. VIII. București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică.
- Holban, M.; Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, M. M. & Cernovodeanu, P. (Ed.) (1997). *Călători străini despre Țările Române* [Foreign travelers about the Romanian Principalities], vol. IX. București: Editura Academiei Române.
- Iancovescu, I. (2008). Mănăstirea Hurezi [Hurezi Monastery]. In *Repertoriul picturilor murale brâncovenești, I. Județul Vâlcea* [The repertoire of Brâncovenesti mural paintings, I. Vâlcea County] (pp. 44-102). București: Editura UNArte.
- Iancovescu, I. (2014). Biserica Domnească din Târgoviște. Pictura de secol VI [The Princely Church of Târgoviște. VIth century painting]. In *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei* [Art History Studies and Research], Artă Plastică, serie nouă, 4 (48), 159-181. București.

Ilieș, A. (1969). *Biserica Mănăstirii Colțea* [The Church of Colțea Monastery]. București: Editura Meridiane.

Lupu, E. (1994). Date arheologice privind Mănăstirea „Adormirea Maicii Domnului” din Râmnicu Sărat, județul Buzău (secolele XVI-XIX) [Archaeological data regarding the “Assumption of the Mother of God” Monastery in Râmnicu Sărat, Buzău county (16th-19th centuries)]. *Mousaios*, 4 (1), 269-309. Muzeul Județean Buzău.

Neculce, I. (1982). *Opere. Letopisețul Țării Moldovei și O samă de cuvinte* [Works. Chronicle of the Country of Moldavia and A number of words], ediție critică și studiu introductiv de Gabriel Ștrempel. București: Editura Minerva.

Negrău, E. (2018). Menologul de la Cozia. Monografie și inscripții. *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei* [Art History Studies and Research], Artă Plastică, serie nouă, 8 (52), 119-148. București.

Negrău, E. (2019). Addenda et Corrigenda. Câteva inscripții brâncovenești inedite. *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei* [Art History Studies and Research], Artă Plastică, serie nouă, 9 (53), 159-159. București.

Paul din Alep (2014). *Jurnal de călătorie în Moldova și Valahia* [Travel diary in Moldavia and Wallachia], studiu introductiv, ediția manuscrisului arab, traducere în limba română, note și indici de Ioana Feodorov. București-Brăila: Editura Academiei Române, Muzeul Brăilei-Editura Istros.

Paul din Alep (2020). *Jurnal de călătorie. Siria, Constantinopol, Moldova, Valahia și Țara Cazacilor* [Travel diary. Syria, Constantinople, Moldavia, Wallachia and the Land of the Cossacks], traducere din limba arabă, studiu introductiv și note de Ioana Feodorov, cu colaborarea Yuliei Petrova și a lui Mihai Țipău. Brăila: Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei „Carol I”.

Pekin, E. The Sounds of Istanbul: Music in Istanbul in the Ottoman Period. In *History of Istanbul from Antiquity to XXI. Century*, vol. 7. Preluat din <https://istanbultarihi.ist/598-the-sounds-of-istanbul-music-in-istanbul-in-the-ottoman-period>

Popa, C. (2008). Bolnița Adormirea Maicii Domnului [The Infirmary of the Assumption of the Mother of God]. In *Repertoriul picturilor murale brâncovenești, I. Județul Vâlcea* [The repertoire of Brâncovenesti mural paintings, I. Vâlcea County] (pp. 123-144). București: Editura UNArte.

Popescu-Judetz, E. (1973). *Dimitrie Cantemir. Cartea Științei Muzicii* [Dimitrie Cantemir. The Book of Music Science]. București: Editura Muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor.

Răileanu, C. (2016). Tradition and Innovation in the Musical Compositions of Dimitrie Cantemir. In Țăpârlea, M. & Ciobanu, V. (coord.), *Dimitrie Cantemir – Bridge of Knowledge Between the Orient and the Occident – Studies and Articles* (pp. 1-33). București: Editura Pro Universitaria.

Rolamb, N. (1732). A Relation of a Journey to Constantinople [...], translated from the Copy printed in Swedish at Stockholm. In *A Collection of Voyages and Travels Some Now First Printed from «Original Manuscripts», Others Now First Published in English in Six Volumes*, vol. V. London.

Rolfhamre, R. (2-16). A Case Study of the Colascione from an Idiomatics Perspective. *The Lutezine*, 120, December, 52-63. Lute Society.

Roşulescu, V. *Biserica Kretzulescu (Creţulescu) – Bucureşti* [Kretzulescu Church (Creţulescu) – Bucharest]. Retrieved from <https://vladimir-roşulescu.blogspot.com/2017/10/biserica-kretzulescu-cretulescu-bucuresti.html>

Rusu, E. (2021). *Muzica și puterea politică în Moldova și Țara Românească, secolele al XV-lea – al XVIII-lea* [Music and political power in Moldavia and Wallachia, 15th–18th centuries]. Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” din Iași.

Rusu, E. (2022). The Ottoman Classical Music in the Romanian Principalities. *Journal of Ethnography and Folklore*, 1-2, 161-180. Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Române.

Rusu, E. (2022). Traduceri și identificări greșite ale instrumentelor muzicale în izvoarele narative din limba română [Translations and misidentifications of musical instruments in Romanian narrative sources]. *Revista Istorică* [Historical Magazine], serie nouă, XXXIII (4-6), Iulie-Decembrie, 391-414. Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Române.

Rusu, E. (2023) *Instrumentele muzicale din pictura bisericii „Înălțarea Domnului” a Mănăstirii Golia din Iași* [The musical instruments from the painting of the “Ascension of the Lord” church of the Golia Monastery in Iași], comunicare susținută în cadrul Simpozionului *Artă și civilizație medievală*, ediția XXVIII (on-line), cu tema *Lucrurile și cuvintele. Obiecte ale cotidianului în Țările Române*, organizat de Muzeul Național al Bucovinei, Suceava și de Universitatea „Ștefan cel Mare”, Suceava, Facultatea de Istorie și Geografie, Suceava, 1-2 noiembrie 2023 (under publication).

Sachs, C. (1940). *The History of Musical Instruments*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc. Publishers.

Scoditti, F. (2010). *Musicae Latinae Glossarium*, prefazione di Aldo Luisi. Roma: Aracne.

Stan, Preot Dr. I. (2012). Biserica Curtea Domnească [The Princely Court Church]. In Boriga, jr. G. & Moțoc, prof. H. (coord.), *Enciclopedia orașului Târgoviște* [Encyclopedia of the city of Târgoviște], ediția a II-a revăzută și adăugită. Târgoviște: Editura Bibliotheca.

The Travels of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch: written by His Attendant Archdeacon, Paul of Aleppo, in Arabic, (1836), Volume I, translated by F. C. Belfour. London: A. M. Oxon. M. R. A. S.

Tzigara-Samurçaș, Al. (1908). *Biserica din Filipeștii de Pădure* [The Church from Filipeștii de Pădure]. București.

Wright, O. (1992). *Demetrius Cantemir: The Collection of*. Volume 1: Text. London: School of Oriental and African Studies.

Wright, O. (2000). *Demetrius Cantemir: The Collection of Notations*. Volume 2: Commentary. Farnham: Ashgate.