

Hans Brandeis



**THE BOAT LUTES
OF THE
PHILIPPINES**

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The present paper is based on the work-in-progress by the same author,
The Singing Crocodile – Boat Lutes in the Philippines,
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The title page shows a Higaonon musician from the Talakag area, Bukidnon, playing his boat lute *kutiyapi* (Photograph by Elson Elizaga, 2006).

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Construction Features of Boat Lutes	8
The Process of Making a Boat Lute	11
The Origin of Southeast Asian Boat Lutes	12
Indigenous Names for Boat Lutes	13
Distribution within the Philippines	16
A Preliminary Typological Classification of Philippine Boat Lutes	24
Ethnographic Summary	50
Symbolic Meaning	53
Playing Technique	59
Performance Practice	63
Final Words	65
Acknowledgments	66
Bibliography	67

Introduction

Boat lutes have been fascinating me ever since I started researching the traditional musical instruments of the Philippines in 1975, during my university studies. On my first field trip, visiting the Higaonon of Agusan del Sur, in 1976-77, I didn't even see a single one of these instruments [Brandeis 1981]. That happened only in 1982, when I was able to purchase my first *kutiyapì* of the Higaonon (incidentally one of the most beautiful Philippine boat lutes I have ever seen). In the early 1980s, I had two *piyapì* of the Higaonon made especially for me, but never found anybody who could master them. At least, I documented Talaandig Datu Kinulintang playing his *kutiyapì*, as well as two Tigwa Manobo musicians playing their *kuglung*. During these years, I systematically searched for musical instruments in the antique shops of Metro Manila, and I was lucky to find six of the last *kutiyapì* of the Maranao. Later on, I never saw a single Maranao *kutiyapì* for sale anymore, anywhere, and I never heard one played, despite my many efforts to find a *kutiyapì* player. This is especially amazing because the *kutiyapì* of the Maranao is clearly the most decorative of all Philippine boat lutes. Nevertheless, my findings resulted in a number of publications, in which boat lutes are mentioned [Brandeis 1993, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2004].

This obvious lack of research possibilities led me to the conclusion that the boat lute traditions of the Philippines had more or less died out; researching them did not seem to be very promising. In 1993, however, I visited two settlements of the Tigwa Manobo in southern Bukidnon to conduct a general survey of their musical culture, and I found a rich and vital boat lute culture in this area [Brandeis 1995]. This experience changed my mind, as I thought: if the traditional boat lute music is so very much alive in these places, the same should be true for other areas of Mindanao. From the year 1997 on, I systematically tried to visit all the places in Mindanao and Palawan where boat lute music was still practiced. Until 2011, I was able to document, at least partly, boat lute performances of the Agusan Manobo, Higaonon, Talaandig, Western Bukidnon Manobo, Maguindanaon, Obo Manobo, Ata, Matigsalug and Tigwa Manobo, Subanun, Blaan, Tboli, Ubo, Dulangan Manobo, Tasaday, Mangguangan, Dibabawon, Mandaya, Pala'wan and Batak. All in all, I was able to personally collect 56 boat lutes from the Philippines as well as to document many lutes in museums and private collections.¹

When I visited St. Petersburg in December 2016, I was excited to find *Kunstammer* as one of the few museums in Europe with a focus on Philippine culture. However, this focus seemed to be mainly directed on the mountainous areas of northern Luzon where boat lutes are not now, and probably never were used. As a consequence, *Kunstammer* possesses very few musical instruments from the southern part of the islands, including the xylophone *gabbang* from Tawi-Tawi island and the mouth harps *kubing*. Most importantly, there is not a single boat lute. It is, therefore, not surprising that Maria Stanyukovich, in her paper on Philippine musical instruments [Станюкович 2002], did not elaborate on the traditional boat lutes. This is unfortunate, as boat lutes represent the most sophisticated musical instruments in the Philippines:

¹ All in all, 253 boat lutes, including those 57 instruments collected by the author, will be described in detail in his work-in-progress [Brandeis 2019].

- Their design and construction show the most complex technology of all traditional musical instruments in the Philippines
- They are constructed from a variety of materials, more than any other Philippine instrument (different kinds of wood, bamboo, rattan, fern, beeswax, hemp, steel nails, guitar strings, among others)
- Philippine boat lutes show a wide range of designs, depending on their culture of origin, and their sizes vary between 90 and 250 cm of length.

In this respect, the present paper hopefully fills a gap and act as a stimulus to include Philippine boat lutes as another field of research at Kunstkammer, St. Petersburg. It will focus on the traditional instruments and leave out modern developments, such as the use of boat lutes in the urban context, in world music or by neo-ethnic bands.²

Construction Features of Boat Lutes

This chapter lists and explains the main features of Philippine boat lutes, which are important for determining the origin and the cultural affiliation of the instruments. However, there are many more details that cannot be included here.

- First of all, all Philippine boat lutes, including all the decorative carvings extending the upper and lower ends of the instruments, are carved out of one solid log of wood. The **resonating body** is usually hollowed out from the back and covered with a thin wooden board. (An exception are the lutes of the Subanen, which are hollowed out from the top) This **back cover** is often tied to the body by means of rattan, rope or metal wire, or simply fixed with nails or glue.
- Mostly in their middle, many of these back covers show **sound holes**, which are round, oval, rectangular, or in the shape of an hourglass. There are also **patterns of small sound holes** in the shape of a cloverleaf, a cross, or a circle, among others.
- Protruding from the head and from the lower end of their resonating bodies, most lutes are decorated with additional carvings, usually showing heads of animals (which we call **head extension** and **body extension**). The lutes of the Bukidnon and Maranao, for example, often represent crocodiles, those of the Manobo monitor lizards, with carved heads of these animals as body extensions. The head extensions on the lutes of the Agusan Manobo, Mandaya, Mansaka, Mangguangan and others are carved into highly stylized heads of a rooster, those of the Maguindanaon usually into the head of a heron. (This topic will be discussed below, in the chapter “Symbolic Meaning,” in more detail.)
- As a rule, the lutes have two **strings**. (The one-stringed lute of the Alangan Mangyan of Mindoro is the only exception). One string, with underlying frets, is used for the melody, while the other one, without frets, produces a drone and provides the rhythmic accents. Today, guitar steel strings are generally used, or, in the case of the big lutes, for which guitar strings are too short, steel wire for fishing is needed. In former times, strings had to be produced from certain vines (*bislig*) from the rainforest, hemp (*abaka*), rattan or other plant fibers.

² Some information on the aspect of acculturation can be found in another article by this author [Brandeis 2001].

- Boat lutes have two **tuning pegs**, round sticks with handles that are inserted into holes on both sides of the head. (Exception: the Alangan Manobo of Mindoro use only one tuning peg for their one-stringed lute, of course.) The tuning pegs are usually laterally inserted (with two exceptions: the Tigwa Manobo in one single village in Bukidnon as well as some Teduray use tuning pegs that are inserted from the backside of the head). The tuning pegs are usually inserted at right angles, those of the Manobo lutes, however, are oblique and intersecting inside the head (Plate 1).
- The **stringholder** also functions as a bridge. It is carved out from the top of the instrument, often in the shape of an elongated narrow bulge. It can vary in size, from very small to almost covering the whole lower half of the soundboard.
- The ends of the strings are attached to the stringholder and head by using almost the same technology. In both cases, one can see a rectangular cutout (at the head, we call it **nut cutaway**, at the stringholder **saddle cutaway**), in the corners of which the strings enter small holes or channels (Plate 1) that have been burnt through by means of a red-hot needle or nail. The strings emerge on the sides of the head and stringholder. At the head, the ends of the strings are attached to the tuning pegs, at the stringholder, they are held in position by small pieces of wood or cloth tied to them so that they will not slip back through their guiding channels. At the front edges of both, nut and saddle cutaway, the strings usually run over a **string support** made from a strip of rattan or wood, a nail or metal wire (Plate 1).

These special structures of nut and saddle cutaway are typical for Philippine boat lutes and have not been observed in any other boat lute tradition of Southeast Asia. Therefore, they constitute a very important feature for identifying the origin of a specific lute. However, lutes from Mindoro and Palawan often lack nut cutaway and saddle cutaway.

- The **frets** are mostly positioned under the melody string; on just a few lute types are they under both strings (Agusan Manobo, Subanen). The player presses the strings down on the frets to produce different pitches. The big lutes possess rather high frets that are made out of clots of black beeswax as their bases, into which strips of bamboo, pieces of coconut shell, fernwood or buffalo horn are inserted (Plate 2). The frets of the small lutes are often made of bamboo or wood; in these cases, the black beeswax is only used to glue the frets on the neck or soundboard (Plate 3).
- Apart from the playing-frets for fingering, boat lutes have an additional fret that is placed in front of the first playing-fret. The melody string rests on this fret when the empty string is vibrating. This is what a guitar player would call a “nut.” We will call it **fret zero** or **zero-fret**. In some boat lute traditions, zero-frets look almost the same as playing-frets, e.g. with the Tboli, Blaan, Ubo, Ata, Matigsalug and other Manobo groups (Plate 3). In the case of the big lutes, the zero-frets are considerably bigger than the playing-frets, and they are carved into some decorative shape (Plate 2). In some cases, the zero-frets simply consist of steel nails that are hammered into the wood.

There are basically three types of **fret arrangements**, depending on the position of the zero-fret. The small lutes have their zero-fret near the head and the playing-frets on the neck and parts of the body. On the bigger instruments, all the frets can exclusively be found on the soundboard. In this case, the zero-fret is located at the neck-base, where the neck is connected to the body (Plate 3), without a single fret attached to the neck itself. In the case of the third



Plate 1: Head of a *kuglung* of the Obo Manobo, with slanting friction tuners, nut cutaway and string support made from a slice of plastic.



Plate 2: Zero-fret and playing-frets on a *kusiyapi* of the Pala'wan.



Plate 3: Transition area between neck and body of a *kuglung* of the Ata Manobo, steel clamp for guiding the melody string, zero-fret, first playing-fret.



Plate 4: Thumb rest at the body-neck transition of a *kuglung* of the Tigwa Manobo, with the backside carved round.

third fret arrangement, only found in Palawan, the zero-fret is located right in the middle of the neck.

- There are different **methods for fine tuning** the melody string, although not all Philippine lutes show this feature. The Maguindanaon use a thread as a tuning loop that is slung around neck and melody string; by moving the loop, the player can adjust its pitch. The Ata, Matigsalug and other Manobo groups often use rattan rings, in a similar way. The Tboli and neighboring people use a rather sophisticated method of fine tuning: in front of the zero-fret, which is close to the head, a hole is drilled through the neck, coming out on the backside. A loop of thread, slung around the melody string, passes through this hole. On the backside of the neck, both ends of the thread are tied to a tassel. By turning the tassel, in one or the other direction, the loop is tightened or loosened, thus changing the pitch of the melody string.
- Many boat lutes show intricate **decorations**, which are typical for certain regions or ethnic groups. Some of the Maranao instruments have extensive filigree carvings that are painted in green, red, yellow, black and white. The Tboli, primarily, but also some Manobo groups color their instruments black and cut geometric ornaments in the dark surface, like on a lino-cut. Many lutes of the Tboli, Blaan and Manobo are decorated with thick tufts of horsehair, mostly on their heads, but also on the backside of their necks.

Looking at the whole inventory of boat lute designs in the Philippines, taking the different sizes, shapes, zoomorphic carvings, coloring, additional decorations etc. into account, it is clear that each instrument represents a specific cultural background and a specific ethnic group. Therefore, boat lutes are important “cultural identifiers.” If a lute player will visit another village or a festival in the city, his boat lute will serve as a “badge” telling the audience where the musician most likely comes from. The same, however, does not apply to other musical instruments in the Philippines. For example, bamboo flutes or tube zithers can be found almost identically constructed in different regions of the Philippines so that they are not suited as cultural identifiers.

The Process of Making a Boat Lute

The author witnessed the process of building a boat lute several times. If a lute maker continuously works on an instrument, the whole process lasts between two and four days. However, in reality, this is never the case, as people make their instruments only during their free time, after finishing their daily work, such as working in the fields, or other occupation. Aside from that, after roughly hollowing out a wooden block for a new instrument, the wood will still have to dry for some time so that it will not break. The whole process of making a boat lute will, therefore, last for about six weeks or even longer.

First of all, the building of a boat lute is not a continuous process, in the sense that it proceeds, step by step, until all the necessary operations have been completed. Instead, the building is a process of repeatedly going back and forth, of trial and error. All this is merely based on visual control, and, as a rule, without any measuring of sizes and distances. Instead, the instrument makers usually have a very clear idea of the final product, its proportions and aesthetics. Therefore, whenever a lute maker changes the size and shape of a certain part of the instrument, the overall proportions will change, and the craftsman will have to adjust other parts of the instrument. In that way, he continuously goes back and forth and slowly approaches the perfect shape.

The lute makers usually use several tools, like bolos and knives of different shapes and sizes, a chisel, hammer, nails and so forth. Boat lutes are carved out of a single log of wood. After cutting the wood in the forest, it will be dried for a couple of weeks. When the lute maker finally starts the construction of the lute, he works out the basic shape by cutting off major portions of the wooden log, thus roughly shaping all the formal parts of the instrument. Then, he hollows out the resonating body from the back of the lute. For this work, he uses different big bolos and the chisel. This tiring work consumes the majority of the time of the whole construction process. After this, a wooden board for covering the hollowed-out back of the resonating body is shaped and nailed or tied to the body. After the rough shape of the instrument is finished, all the parts of the lute are refined by using a small knife or a big pointed bolo, holding it near its tip.

The holes for the tuning pegs are burned, as well as the holes or channels where the strings pass through for attachment at the head and stringholder. Some resonating holes are also burned into the body. Now, all the smaller parts are made, such as the tuning pegs or the rattan strips supporting the strings, at both ends. Depending on the specific subtype of boat lute, the frets are made by pressing flat pieces of wood or bamboo into clots of black beeswax, which then are glued on the neck and resonating body, or they are carved as a whole and then just fixed on a track of beeswax used as a glue. The final step consists of assembling everything.

The Origin of Southeast Asian Boat Lutes

Where now do the Philippine boat lutes originally come from? Nobody knows... The only evidence we have at hand is, firstly, the etymology of the term *kutiyapi*; secondly, the features of the instrument's construction in comparison with other string instruments in Asia; and thirdly, the instrument's present area of distribution in relation to past migration movements within this area.

The term *kutiyapi* and similar names of lutes all derive from the Sanskrit word *kacchapa*. One of its meanings is "turtle," and as such it might relate to a turtle shell that is used as a resonating chamber for string instruments. However, there are no string instruments in India which use the shells of turtles as resonating bodies. There is a lute called *kacchapi vina*, but it's a relative of the Northern Indian *sitar*, which has a resonating body made out of a kalabasa [Sachs 1915: 124-125]. The Southern Indian *vina* has a body, which, although made out of wood, also imitates the shape of a kalabasa. The bowl-shaped bodies of these and many other Indian instruments are very different from the elongated bodies of boat lutes. German musicologist Curt Sachs, one of the fathers of the discipline of ethnomusicology, pointed to the fact that *kacchapa* or *kaccha* is also the name of a certain tree, *Cedrela Toona*, which produces one of the favorite kinds of wood for Indian string instruments [Ibid.: 125].

The possible origins of boat lutes in India are supported by certain features in the instruments' construction. The listener of boat lute music is immediately reminded of Indian music when hearing the contrasting sounds of *a melody and a drone string*. Typical for Indian string instruments are also the *movable frets* made out of beeswax and the *plectrum tied to the index or middle finger* of the strumming hand.

These construction features of Indian string instruments might have been brought to insular Southeast Asia by crossing the areas now known as **Burma/Myanmar**, **Kampuchea** and **Thailand**. Curt Sachs believes that derivatives of the word *kacchapa* spread towards Southeast Asia at the end of the first millennium [Ibid.: 124].

In these regions, we can nowadays find zither instruments (Myanmar: *mí-gyaùng*, Kampuchea: *takhe*; Thailand: *chakhe*, *jakeh*, *jakhay*), which appear to be closely related to the boat lutes by showing the most important features of boat lutes: a resonating body, which is hollowed out from the back, lateral pegs for three (instead of two) strings, the melody-and-drone principle, movable frets and a plectrum tied to one finger of the plucking hand. Like the boat lutes of some Philippine peoples, the zither of mainland Southeast Asia are also associated with the symbolism of the crocodile: think of the crocodile zither of Myanmar, which shows the realistic design of a crocodile, and also the names for the zithers in Thailand, Kampuchea and Laos, which, despite of the stylized shape of the instruments, simply mean “crocodile.”

Probably from these countries, the boat lute-related instruments spread to insular Southeast Asia, where they developed into different types of boat lutes used nowadays: in parts of **Sumatra** (*hasapi*, *kucapi*, *kecapi*, *kulcapi*, *kussápi*, *kutjapi*), **Borneo** (*sape'*, *sapeh*, *sambé*, *sansape*, *sundatang*, *sendatong*, *gagayan*, *kecapi*, *tapi*, *sekafe*, *blikan*, *biula*), **Sulawesi** (*kasapi*, *kacapi*, *kusapi*, *katapi*, *katiapi*, *kétjapi*), **Sumba** (*jungga*), and the **Philippines** – as the northernmost area of distribution of boat lutes showing the greatest diversity of lute types compared to the other areas [cp. Brandeis 1998: 61-62].

Indigenous Names for Boat Lutes

The names for boat lutes used by the different indigenous peoples in the Philippines are very often similar. However, as the following list clearly shows, two categories of names can be distinguished:

The first category comprises all those names that are modifications of the Sanskrit word *kacchapa* (from which many names of musical instruments in Southeast Asia derive, some of which are not even boat lutes, but zithers).

The second category comprises names that usually end with the syllable *-lung* or *-long*, like *kuglung*, *kudlong*, *hegelung* etc. All the names in this category are exclusively used in the Philippines. In the case of the *kudlongan* of the Pala'wan, the suffix *-an* has been added. The name *fegereng* that is used by the Teduray also belongs into this category, as in Philippine languages, the sounds <l>, <d> and <r> are, to a certain extent, interchangeable, as well as the sounds <u>, <o> and <e>.

As a rule, we can state that, even if the same names are used by several ethnic groups for their specific boat lutes, these names usually do not refer to the same types of lutes, but might be used for instruments of rather different designs.

Table: Names of Philippine Boat Lutes

Indigenous name (with alternative spelling)	Ethnic group [region]
<i>kutiyapi</i> (<i>kotiyapi</i> , <i>kutiapi</i> , <i>kutiape</i> , <i>ko-tyapi</i> , <i>kutyapi</i> , <i>kotiape</i> , <i>kudyapi</i> , <i>kudiapi</i> , <i>kudyapiq</i>)	Maranao, Maguindanaon, Higaonon, Bukidnon, Western Bukidnon Manobo, Arumanen Manobo [Mindanao], Iraya Mangyan [Mindoro], Pala'wan [Palawan]
<i>kudjapi</i>	Alangan Mangyan [Mindoro]
<i>kusiyapi</i> (<i>kusyapiq</i> , <i>kusjapi</i>)	Pala'wan [Palawan]

<i>ketyaphi</i>	Teduray (Tiruray) [Mindanao]
<i>katiyapì</i>	Talaandig Bukidnon [Mindanao]
<i>kutapi (kotapi)</i>	Subanen [Mindanao]
<i>tiyapi</i>	Bukidnon [Mindanao]
<i>piyapì</i>	Higaonon, Bukidnon [Mindanao]
Historical names for small lutes, which were probably not boat lutes: <i>codyapi (cutyapi, cutiapé, kudyapì, kudyapî)</i> <i>coryapi (kuryapì, kuryapî)</i>	Used on the island of Luzon, according to sources from the 17th and 18th centuries.
Name for a small lute, which is not a boat lute: <i>kudyapi</i> ’	Hanunoo Mangyan [Mindoro]
<i>kuglung (kuglong, coglong, zuglum)</i>	Ata Manobo, Matigsalug Manobo, Tigwa Manobo, Obo Manobo (Manuvu’), Bagobo Tagabawa, Kulamanen Manobo, Tinananen Manobo, Tagakaulu (Kalagan), Mamanwa [Mindanao]
<i>hegelung (haglong, hagelung, hagalong, heglung)</i>	Tboli [Insel Mindanao]
<i>faglung (faglong)</i>	Koronadal Blaan, Tagakaulu (Kalagan), Ubo [Mindanao]
<i>fuglung (feglung)</i>	Sarangani Blaan, Blit Manobo, Tasaday [Mindanao]
<i>peglung</i>	Dulangan Manobo [Mindanao]
<i>kudlung (kodlong, kudlong)</i>	Mandaya, Mansaka, Mangguangan, Dibabawon, Blaan, Umayamnon, Agusan Manobo (smaller instrument), Bagobo (smaller instrument?) [Mindanao] Tagbanwa, Batak, Tau’t Batu (subgroup of the Pala’wan) [Palawan]
<i>kudlungan (kudlongan)</i>	Pala’wan [Palawan]
<i>kudiyung</i>	Agusan Manobo [Mindanao]
<i>fegereng (fegrong)</i>	Teduray (Tiruray) [Mindanao]
<i>benadian</i>	Said to be used by Bagobo or Jangan, but might be used by Bagobo Tagabawa (bigger instrument?) [Mindanao]
<i>bin-ihaaan or bin-iyaan</i>	Agusan Manobo (bigger instrument) [Mindanao]
<i>aydluing (aidluting)</i>	Mamanwa [Mindanao]

Just like Westerners name the parts of their guitars or other instruments after parts of the human body (head, neck, body etc.), so do the indigenous peoples of the Philippines. The author was always highly interested in that topic, for two reasons: first, the indigenous terminology reflects the cultural mindset of the musicians and the symbolic meaning of the instruments; second, the use or non-use of specific terms closely reveals linguistic ties between the ethnic groups under study. The author was able to document the terminology for the individual parts of boat lutes as they are used in the following indigenous languages: Bukidnon, Higaonon, Talaandig, Western Bukidnon Manobo, Subanen, Agusan Manobo, Tigwa Matigsalug and Ata Manobo, Maguindanaon, Tboli, Blaan, Dulangan Manobo, Tasaday, Blit Manobo, Mandaya, Pala'wan, and Batak. Because of the limited space in this article, only one example shall be mentioned here:

Names for the parts of a *faglung* of the Blaan:³

Body	<i>lawa</i> (“body”)
Neck	<i>sigal</i> (“arm”)
Head	<i>ulu</i> (“head”)
Body extension	<i>kwang</i> (“end,” e.g. the butt of a human)
Fret	<i>tûtû</i> (“nipple”)
Inlays of beads	<i>slah nilol</i> (“string of beads”)
String	<i>lambri, alambri</i> (“wire”)
Stringholder	<i>fusad</i> (“navel”)
String support	<i>sangal</i> (“lock, shutter”)
Sound hole	<i>sol</i> (“hole”)
Back cover	<i>sangab</i> (“cover”)
Tuning peg	<i>klîngê</i> (“ear”)
Cavity of the hollowed-out body	<i>sol delam faglong</i> (“the hole inside the <i>faglung</i> ”)
Attachment of the back cover with resin	<i>litak turí</i> (“thick sap from the <i>turí</i> tree,” called <i>gaway-gaway</i> in Ilonggo/Cebuano, <i>katuray</i> in Tagalog)
Plectrum	<i>akbit</i> (“touch, hit,” e.g. hit the shoulder of a person to attract his or her attention)
Rattan (of the plectrum)	<i>luas</i> (“wild vine mainly used for tying”)
Retaining cord (for the <i>faglung</i> and also for the plectrum)	<i>ikat</i> (“thread or rope used for tying,” made of <i>abaca</i> fibers, etc.)
Painting, decoration	<i>batak</i> (“design, pattern, inscription”)
Act of tuning	<i>fansiyun unin</i> (“to make the sound good”)

³ From an interview with Barangay Captain Rudy Ante (Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato), 1997. Additional information from Josephine Turner.

Distribution within the Philippines

The boat lute, in all its variety of different styles, is one of the most sophisticated and artistic musical instruments that exists among the tradition-oriented ethnic groups of the Philippines. Up to the present, boat lutes are still used all over the islands of Mindanao and Palawan, even though they are now very rare. Each design is typical for one, sometimes for several, ethnic groups using it so that the origin of any given instrument can easily be determined, in most cases.

There are at least 25 distinct subtypes of boat lutes used among at least 38 ethnic groups in the Philippines (cp. Plate 5). On the island of Mindanao, aside from the Islamic Maguindanaon and Maranao, boat lutes can be especially found among the peoples of the Manobo language family (Bukidnon, Talaandig, Higaonon, Matigsalug, Tigwa and Ata Manobo, Tagakaulo, Agusan Manobo, Bagobo, Dibabawon, Mangguangan, Tasaday and Blit Manobo) as well as among other ethnic groups – the Tboli, Blaan, Ubo, Mandaya, Mansaka, Teduray, Subanen, and probably still others that have not been documented yet. On the island of Palawan, they are used among the Pala'wan, Tagbanwa and Batak. The Alangan and Iraya Mangyan on the island of Mindoro also used to have their own boat lute traditions, in the past. These latter instruments show structural features, which point towards a relationship with the boat lutes of Palawan rather than with those of Mindanao. However, among the Maranao, Tagbanwa, Batak, Alangan and Iraya Mangyan, boat lutes are now almost extinct.

During the Spanish colonial period, boat lutes were also used in parts of the Visayan Islands. In a manuscript by the Spanish historian Francisco de Alcina from the year 1668, it is mentioned that a kind of boat lute was used on the island of Panay, at that time [Alcina 2005]. The term *kudiyapi* is also known in the Tagalog language, where it is used as a flowery, archaic-stylish sounding term for the guitar. However, as far as the sources from the colonial times indicate, there was never any kind of boat lute used in the Tagalog-speaking areas or on Luzon, not now or earlier. Those instruments, which the Tagalog call *kudiyapi*, were most probably small lutes with half a coconut shell as a resonating body, a short neck and four strings, similar to the *kudiyapi* or *gitara* used by the Hanunóo Mangyan in Mindoro, still in use now [Brandeis 2012].⁴

In the following list, the ethnic groups using boat lutes are not sorted in alphabetical order, but in accordance with their cultural and linguistic similarities as well as geographical closeness.

⁴ Many instruments related to these small lutes, mostly in the shape of small guitars are stored in Spanish museums [Ibáñez 1999, 2001].

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1 Agusan Manobo | 19 Maguindanaon |
| 2 Alangan Mangyan | 20 Mamanwa |
| 3 Ata Manobo | 21 Mandaya |
| 4 Bagobo (Jangan) | 22 Mangguangan |
| 5 Bagobo (Obo Manobo, Manuvu') | 23 Mansaka |
| 6 Bagobo (Tagabawa Manobo) | 24 Maranao |
| 7 Banwaon | 25 Matigsalug Manobo |
| 8 Batak | 26 Pala'wan |
| 9 Blaan | 27 Subanen |
| 10 Blit Manobo | 28 Tagakaulu (Kalagan) |
| 11 Bukidnon | 29 Tagbanwa |
| 12 Dibabawon | 30 Talaandig (Bukidnon) |
| 13 Dulangan (Cotabato Manobo) | 31 Tasaday |
| 14 Higaonon (Bukidnon) | 32 Tau't Batu |
| 15 Iranun | 33 Tboli |
| 16 Iraya Mangyan | 34 Tigwa Manobo |
| 17 Kulamanen Manobo und
Tinananon Manobo | 35 Teduray (Tiruray) |
| 18 Livunganen-Arumanen
Manobo | 36 Ubo |
| | 37 Umayamnon Manobo |
| | 38 Western Bukidnon Manobo |

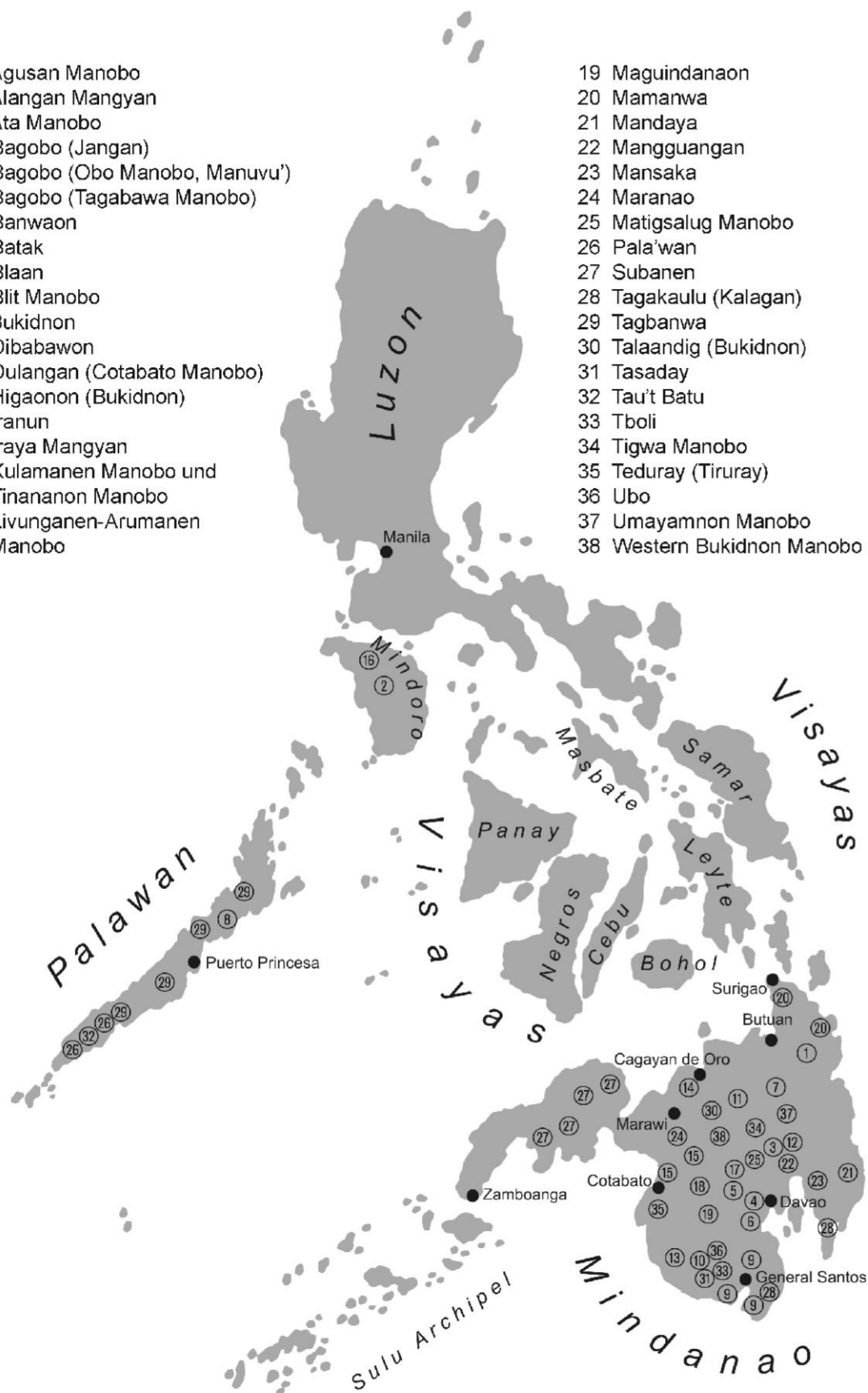


Plate 5: The distribution of boat lutes in the Philippines.

Mindanao

Higaonon (Plates 6-7)

Settlement area: Provinces of Misamis Oriental, Lanao del Norte and Bukidnon, Northern and Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kutiyapì*.

Type of boat lute: 1.1.1

Symbolic meaning: crocodile, monitor lizard or fantasy creature with beak.

Talaandig

Other names of this ethnic group: **Higaonon**.

Settlement area: Bukidnon, Northern and Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *katiyapì*.

Type of boat lute: 1.1.1

Symbolic meaning: crocodile, monitor lizard or fantasy creature with beak.

Bukidnon (Plate 12)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Higaonon**.

Settlement area: Provinces of Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon, east of the highway, towards Agusan, Northern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *piyapì*.

Type of boat lute: 1.2

Symbolic meaning: crocodile, monitor lizard or monitor lizard.

Banwaon

Other names of this ethnic group: **Banuwaon, Banwa-on**.

Settlement area: Agusan del Sur, Northeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: unknown.

Type of boat lute: unknown; this lute might be similar to those of the Bukidnon, Umayamnon Manobo or Agusan Manobo.

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Western Bukidnon Manobo

Settlement area: Bukidnon, Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kutiyapì*.

Type of boat lute: 1.1.1

Symbolic meaning: crocodile.

Maranao (Plates 8-9)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Meranaw**.

Settlement area: Lanao del Sur, Northern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kutiyapì* / *kotiyapi* / *kutiapi* / *kotyapi* / *kutyapi* / *kotiape* / *kudyapi* / *kudiapi*.

Type of boat lute: 1.1.2 and 1.1.3

Symbolic meaning: crocodile.

Maguindanaon (Plate 10)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Magindanaon**.

Settlement area: Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kutiyapì* / *kudyapi* / *kudyapiq*.

Type of boat lute: 1.1.4

Symbolic meaning: heron or peacock.

Note: It should be mentioned here that the Maguindanaon style of playing the *kutiyapi* represents the highest virtuosity of all boat lute styles in the Philippines.

Iranun

Other names of this ethnic group: **Ilanon**.

Settlement area: Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kutiyapì* (?)

Type of boat lute: 1.1.4 (?)

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Note: The boat lute of the Iranun has not been documented yet.

Ilianen Manobo (Plate 11)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Livunganen-Arumanen Manobo**.

Settlement area: North Cotabato, Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kutiyapì* / *kutyapi*.

Type of boat lute: 1.1.5

Symbolic meaning: crocodile.

Mamanwa

Settlement area: Surigao, Northeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kuglung* / *coglong*.

Type of boat lute: 1.4.1; borrowed from the neighboring Agusan Manobo

Symbolic meaning: probably monitor lizard / horse.

Umayamnon Manobo

Settlement area: Agusan del Sur and Bukidnon, Eastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kudlung*.

Type of boat lute: 1.4.1

Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Jangan Manobo

Other names of this ethnic group: one of the three so-called **Bagobo** groups.

Settlement area: Davao del Sur, Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kuglung* / *benadian*?

Type of boat lute: 1.4.1

Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Bagobo Tagabawa (Plate 13)

Other names of this ethnic group: one of the three so-called **Bagobo** groups.

Settlement area: Davao del Sur, Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kuglung* / *benadian*?

Type of boat lute: 1.3 and 1.4.1
 Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Obo Manobo (Plate 1)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Manuvu**⁷; one of the three so-called **Bagobo** groups.
 Settlement area: Davao City and Cotabato, Southern Mindanao.
 Local name of boat lute: *kuglung*.
 Type of boat lute: 1.4.1
 Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Ata Manobo (Plates 3, 14-16, 41)

Settlement area: Davao City, Central Mindanao.
 Local name of boat lute: *kuglung*.
 Type of boat lute: 1.4.1
 Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Matigsalug Manobo

Settlement area: Davao City and Bukidnon, Central Mindanao.
 Local name of boat lute: *kuglung*.
 Type of boat lute: 1.4.1
 Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Tigwa Manobo (Plates 4, 17-18)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Tigwahanon**.
 Settlement area: Southern Bukidnon, Central Mindanao.
 Local name of boat lute: *kuglung*.
 Type of boat lute: 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 (limited to the settlement Kibongkog, Southern Bukidnon).
 Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Kulamanen and Tinananon Manobo

Other names of this ethnic group: these two small neighboring groups are probably subgroups of the **Matigsalug Manobo**.
 Settlement area: North Cotabato, Central Mindanao.
 Local name of boat lute: *kuglung* / *kuglong*.
 Type of boat lute: 1.4.1
 Symbolic meaning: monitor lizard / horse.

Subanen (Plate 24)

Other names of this ethnic group: there are subgroups **Central Subanen, Northern Subanen, Lapuyan Subanun, Kolibugan Subanon, Western Subanon**.
 Settlement area: Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay, Northwestern Mindanao.
 Local name of boat lute: *kutapi* / *kotapi*.
 Type of boat lute: 2.1.6. It is not verified that the above mentioned five subgroups of the Subanen are using the same type of boat lute.
 Symbolic meaning: duck or heron.

Koronadal and Sarangani Blaan (Plates 20-22)

Other names of this ethnic group: The spellings “**Bilaan**” and “**B’laan**” suggest that there is a vowel “i” after the “B,” which is not the case. The formerly often used name **Bilaan** is highly derogatory and decidedly rejected.

Settlement area: South Cotabato, Davao del Sur and Sarangani, Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *faglung* (Koronadal Blaan) / *faglong* / *fuglung* (Sarangani Blaan) / *feglung* / *kudlung*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.2 and 2.1.4

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Tboli (Plates 19, 43-44)

Other names of this ethnic group: The spellings “**Tiboli**”, “**T’boli**” and “**TBoli**” suggest that there is a vowel “i” after the “T,” which is not the case. The formerly often used name **Taga-bili** is highly derogatory and decidedly rejected.

Settlement area: South Cotabato, Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *hegelung* / *hagelung* / *hegalong* / *heglung* .

Type of boat lute: 2.1.1

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Ubo

Settlement area: Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *faglung*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.2

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Tagakaulo

Other names of this ethnic group: **Kalagan**.

Settlement area: Sarangani and Davao del Sur, Southeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *faglung* ?

Type of boat lute: 2.1.2

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Dulangan Manobo

Other names of this ethnic group: **Cotabato Manobo**.

Settlement area: Sultan Kudarat, Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *peglung*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.1

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Tasaday and Blit Manobo

Other names of this ethnic group: **Cotabato Manobo**; the Tasaday are a splinter group of the Blit Manobo, and both are subgroups of the Cotabato Manobo.

Settlement area: South Cotabato, Southern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *feglung*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.1 and 2.1.2

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Teduray (Plates 33-34)

Other names of this ethnic group: **Tiruray** (old spelling).

Settlement area: Maguindanao, Central Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *fegereng* / *fegrong*.

Type of boat lute: 2.3.6 / 2.3.7

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Agusan Manobo (Plate 28)

Settlement area: Agusan Valley, Northeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kudiyung* or *kudlung*, depending on the area. These two different names probably stand for two different types of boat lutes. The name *kudlung* might refer to instruments similar to the *kudlung* of the Mandaya, Mansaka, Dibabawon Manobo and Mangguangan, or perhaps to the *kuglung* of the Ata, Matigsalug and Tigwa Manobo.

Type of boat lute of *kudiyung*: 2.3.1

Symbolic meaning of *kudiyung*: rooster.

Dibabawon Manobo

Settlement area: Davao del Norte, Southeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kudlung* / *kudlong*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.5

Symbolic meaning: rooster.

Mangguangan

Other names of this ethnic group: **Manguangan**.

Settlement area: Davao del Norte, Southeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kudlung* / *kudlong*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.5

Symbolic meaning: rooster.

Mandaya (Plate 23)

Settlement area: Davao Oriental and Davao del Norte, Southeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kudlung* / *kudlong*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.5

Symbolic meaning: rooster.

Mansaka

Settlement area: Davao del Norte, Southeastern Mindanao.

Local name of boat lute: *kudlung* / *kudlong*.

Type of boat lute: 2.1.5

Symbolic meaning: rooster.

Palawan**Pala'wan** and **Tau't Batu** (Plates 2, 25-27, 31-32, 40)

Other names of this ethnic group: The **Tau't Batu** are a subgroup of the **Pala'wan**.

Settlement area: Southern Palawan.

Local name of boat lute: *kusyapì* / *kusyapiq* / *kusjapi* / *kudyapi* / *kutyapi* / *kudlongan* / *kudlungan* / *kudlung* / *kudlong* (Tau't Batu).

Type of boat lute: 2.2.1 / 2.2.2 / 2.2.3 / 2.3.4

Symbolic meaning: human body.

Batak (Plate 26)

Settlement area: Central Palawan.

Local name of boat lute: *kudlung* / *kodlong* / *kudyapì*.

Type of boat lute: 2.3.3

Symbolic meaning: alligator.

Note: most probably extinct.

Tagbanwa

Other names of this ethnic group: **Tagbanuwa**.

Settlement area: Central and Northern Palawan.

Local name of boat lute: *kudyapì* / *kudlung*.

Type of boat lute: unknown.

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Note: most probably extinct.

Mindoro

Alangan Mangyan (Plate 29)

Settlement area: Occidental Mindoro.

Local name of boat lute: *kudjapi*.

Type of boat lute: 2.3.2

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Note: most probably extinct.

Iraya Mangyan

Settlement area: Northern Mindoro.

Local name of boat lute: *kudyapi*.

Type of boat lute: unknown.

Symbolic meaning: unknown.

Note: There are no details known about this boat lute tradition. It was only mentioned in one publication [Maceda 1998: 249]. Jonas Baes, an expert on Iraya Mangyan music, never heard about the use of boat lutes among the Iraya Mangyan.⁵

⁵ Personal communication between Jonas Baes and the author.

A Preliminary Typological Classification of Philippine Boat Lutes

Every musical instrument is a unique item, in its own right so that it is not always easy to group lutes together with other instruments which are just similar, but never the same. A typology of Philippine boat lutes, like the present one, should therefore only serve as a working basis to sort the instruments in a way that it is easier to define specific elements of construction and to identify the instruments' connection with specific ethnic groups. Typologies, therefore, are never made for eternity, and they keep on changing, in the course of time.⁶

Regarding their overall shape, there are three types of boat lutes:

- Instruments with bodies in the shape of a slender boat.
- Instruments with bodies of a rectangular box-type shape.
- There are lutes with mixed features: their bodies show a smooth, organic transition between neck and body, but a square, box shape at their lower end.

There are three different ways of positioning the frets that define the three main groups of these instruments:

- The big lutes have most of the frets attached to the resonating board of the body, with their first fret in the **transition area between neck and body**. These are used, for example, by the Maguindanaon, Maranao, Bukidnon, and most Manobo groups.
- The small instruments have most of their **frets on the neck**, with their first fret near the head. This type of lute is used by the Tboli, Blaan, Ubo, Tagakaulo, Tiruray, Mansaka, Mandaya, Dibabawon, Mangguangan, Agusan Manobo, Subanen, and others.
- Those instruments with their first fret in the **middle of the neck** constitute the third main group of Philippine boat lutes. These are exclusively used by the Pala'wan on Palawan island.

The big lutes, of course, produce deep sounds and a slower kind of music, while the smaller lutes have a higher pitch and produce faster and more lively tunes. There are also different patterns how the frets are placed, which produce different scales and tonalities. The use of more than one scale is documented among the Maguindanaon, Subanen [Maceda 1988: (6)], Ata and Tigwa Manobo on Mindanao as well as among the Pala'wan people. The musicians change from one scale to the other by moving certain frets to different locations. The following typological classification, however, is only based on differences in design.

⁶ A much less elaborate preliminary typology of Philippine boat lutes has been presented by this author in a previous paper, written in 1995 [Brandeis 2004].

1 Lutes with frets on the soundboard

1.1 Boat shape;

Large; neck narrowing towards the head

1.1.1 Body extension carved in the shape of a crocodile, monitor lizard or mythical animal head; back cover gently bent in a convex curve; no resonating hole at the neckjoint

kutiyapi.

Higaonon (Misamis Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Bukidnon / Mindanao), Western Bukidnon Manobo (Bukidnon / Mindanao).

katiyapi.

Talaandig Bukidnon (Bukidnon / Mindanao).



Plate 7: Higaonon playing the *kutiyapi*.

Plate 6: The *kutiyapi* of the Higaonon. Dansolihon, Cagayan de Oro, Misamis Oriental (1982/83).

- 1.1.2 Complete instrument in crocodile shape; back cover gently bent in a convex curve; round resonating hole at the neckjoint

kutiyapì / kutyapi / kudiapi

Maranao (Lanao del Sur / Mindanao).



Plate 8: The *kutiyapì* of the Maranao in crocodile design. Lanao del Sur (1989).
[Cultural Center of the Philippines.]

- 1.1.3 With triangular head and body extensions; back cover gently bent in a convex curve; round resonating hole at the neckjoint

kutiyapì / kotiyapi / kutiapi / kotyapi / kutyapi / kotiape / kudyapi / kudiapi.
Maranao (Lanao del Sur / Mindanao).



Plate 9: The *kutiyapì* of the Maranao in *panolong* design. Lanao, Mindanao (1985/86).

- 1.1.4 With a head extension in the shape of a bird head (partly hastate); flat back cover; rectangular resonating hole at the neck joint

kutiyapì / kudyapì / kudyapiq.

Maguindanaon (Maguindanao and Cotabato, Mindanao).



Plate 10: The *kutiyapì* of the Maguindanaon. Sultan Sa Barongis, Maguindanao province (around 1910-1930).

- 1.1.5 With a hook-shaped head extension; flat back cover; rectangular resonating hole at the neckjoint

kutiyapì / *kutyapi*.

Arumanen Manobo. (North Cotabato / Mindanao).



Plate 11: The *kutiyapì* of the Arumanen Manobo. Pikit, North Cotabato, Mindanao (1990s). [Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music.]

1.2 **Box shape;**

Large; body extension carved in the shape of a crocodile, monitor lizard or mythical animal head; step-shaped neckjoint; long neck of square cross-section

piyapi.

Higaonon (Misamis Oriental / Mindanao).

Bukidnon (Bukidnon / Mindanao).



Plate 12: The *piyapi* of the Higaonon. Dinagahan, Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental (1983/84).

1.3 **Boat shape;**

Medium-sized; hook-shaped head extension; tuning pegs inserted at right angle; without widening section near the neckjoint

kuglung.

Bagobo or Tagabawa Manobo (Davao del Sur / Mindanao).

benadian.

Allegedly Bagobo or Jangan, but possibly Bagobo Tagabawa (Davao del Sur / Mindanao).



Plate 13: The *kuglung* (*zuglum*) of the Bagobo (Tagabawa Manobo), collected in 1881-82 in Sibulan, near Mt. Apo, by Alexander Schadenberg. [Museum for Ethnology, Vienna.]

1.4 **Mixed shape:**

Medium-sized; lower end of body box-shaped, upper end showing smooth transition towards the neck; waisted neckjoint followed by a widening of the neck

1.4.1 Bilateral, oblique and, thus, intersecting tuning pegs; two steel strings

kuglung.

Bagobo or Tagabawa Manobo (Davao del Sur, Mindanao)

Obo Manobo or Manuvu' (Davao City and Cotabato / Mindanao).

Ata Manobo (Davao City / Mindanao).

Matigsalug Manobo (Davao City and Bukidnon / Mindanao).

Tigwa Manobo or Tigwahanon (Bukidnon / Mindanao).

kudlung.

Umayamnon (Bukidnon / Mindanao).

kuglung / kuglong.

Probably Kulamanen or Tinananen Manobo (North Cotabato / Mindanao).

kuglung / coglong.

Mamanwa (Surigao / Mindanao).



Plate 15: Oblique, intersecting tuning pegs of a *kuglung*.



Plate 16: "Waisted" neckjoint of a *kuglung*.

Plate 14 (left): The *kuglung* of the Ata Manobo. Paquibato District, Davao City, Mindanao (2010).

1.4.2 Rear tuning pegs; melody string from nylon, drone string from steel

kuglung.

Tigwa Manobo or Tigwahanon (Bukidnon / Mindanao).



Plate 17: Special *kuglung* design with rear tuning pegs used by the Tigwa Manobo of Kibongkog, San Fernando, Bukidnon. The *kuglung* is usually played together with a bamboo zither *saluray*. These Manobo are carolling during Christmas time.

Plate 18: Head of the *kuglung* with rear tuning pegs.



[Photographs by Elson Elizaga, 2007.]

2 Lutes with frets on the neck

2.1 Boat shape;

From small to medium-sized; neck slightly narrowing towards the head; long and narrow necks can also show constant width

2.1.1 With block-shaped head extension; back cover oftentimes bent in a concave curve *hagelung*.

Tboli (South Cotabato / Mindanao).

peglung.

Dulangan Manobo (Sultan Kudarat / Mindanao).

feglung

Blit Manobo (South Cotabato / Mindanao).



Plate 19: Ganay Delikan dances and plays the *hegelung* of the Tboli. Lake Sebu, South Cotabato (1997).

2.1.2 With head extension tilted backwards or rounded; in most cases flat back cover

faglung / *feglung* / *fuglung* / *kudlung*

Blaan (South Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Sarangani / Mindanao).

faglung ?

Tagakaulo or Kalagan (Sarangani Province, Davao del Sur / Mindanao).

faglung.

Ubo (Southern Mindanao).

feglung.

Manobo Blit and Tasaday Manobo (South Cotabato / Mindanao).



Plate 20: Three *kudlung* of the Blaan. Sitio Kablala, Malandang, Malungon, Sarangani Province (1975). [Photographs by Fekke de Jager.]

- 2.1.3 With a head extension that is structured in several steps, almost like a plant or tree;
in most cases flat back cover

faglung / *kudlung*

Blaan (South Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Sarangani / Mindanao).

feglung

Blit Manobo / Tasaday (South Cotabato / Mindanao)

?

Tagakaulu (Kalagan) Davao del Sur / Mindanao)



Plate 21: The *faglung* of the Blaan. Davao region, Mindanao (2014).

- 2.1.4 With long, straight head extension; extremely dense decoration with hair on the back side of the head; in most cases flat back cover

faglung / faglong

Blaan (South Cotabato / Mindanao).



Plate 22: The *faglung* (?) of the Blaan. Cotabato, Mindanao (before 1997).

- 2.1.5 With half-rounded, sickle-shaped head extension; from very small to small-sized; in most cases flat back cover

kudlung / *kudlong*.

Mandaya (Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte / Mindanao).

Mansaka (Davao del Norte / Mindanao).

kudlong.

Manguangan (Davao del Norte / Mindanao).

kudlong.

Dibabawon (Davao del Norte / Mindanao).



Plate 23: The *kudlung* of the Mandaya. Sitio Lukatan, Pichon, Caraga, Davao Oriental, Mindanao (1997).

- 2.1.6 Resonating body hollowed out from the top; frets inserted into slits on the neck; back cover flat or slightly bent in a convex curve

kutapi / kotapi

Subanen (Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay / Mindanao).



Plate 24: The *kotapi* of the Subanen. Zamboanga, Mindanao (1970).
[University of the Philippines, College of Music.]

2.2 Box shape

2.2.1 Very large instrument; sickle-shaped head extension; very small nut and saddle cutaways; long, narrow neck of constant width

kusyapì / kusyapiq / kusjapi / kutyapi ? / kudlongan / kudlungan.
Pala'wan (Southern Palawan).

kudlong.

Tau't Batu (Subgroup of the Pala'wan) (Southern Palawan).



- 2.2.2 Very large instrument; board-shaped head extension with filigree carvings; very small nut and saddle cutaways; resonating box with a fin-shaped lower extension; long, narrow neck of constant width

kusyapì / kutyapì / kudlongan.
Pala'wan (Southern Palawan).



Plate 26: The *kusyapì / kudlongan* of the Pala'wan. Sitio Kumahos, Panalingan, Rizal, Southern Palawan (1995).

- 2.2.3 Medium-sized instrument; sickle-shaped head extension; short, narrow neck of constant width

kusyapì (?)

Pala'wan (Brooke's Point, Aborlan / Palawan).



Plate 27: The small *kusyapì* (?) of the Pala'wan. Sofronio Española, Brooke's Point, Southern Palawan (around 1998).

2.3 **Mixed shape:**

Very small to medium-sized; lower end of body box-shaped, upper end showing smooth transition towards the neck

2.3.1 With flat head extension in the shape of a rooster; short neck; flat back cover

kudiyung.

Agusan Manobo (Agusan del Sur / Mindanao).



Plate 28: Diego Boca plays the boat lute *kudiyung* of the Agusan Manobo. Tag-oyango, Sibagat, Agusan del Sur, Mindanao (2004).

- 2.3.2 One-stringed; one single diagonally inserted tuning peg; with no nut or saddle cutaway; frets carved out from the neck

kudjapi.

Alangan Mangyan (Occidental Mindoro).



Plate 29: The *kudjapi* of the Alangan Mangyan. Calamintao, Occidental Mindoro (1970).
[University of the Philippines, College of Music.]

- 2.3.3 With block-shaped head; partly with no nut or saddle cutaway; small to medium-sized *kudlung*.
Batak (Central Palawan).



Plate 30: The *kudlung* of the Batak, Zentral-Palawan (1907-1908).

- 2.3.4 With elongated board-shaped head extension; trapezoid, fin-shaped body extension showing T-shaped bracing; with notched or stepped nut and saddle cutaways

kudlungan / kutyapi / kutiyapi / kudyapi

Pala'wan (Rizal, Quezon, Sofronio Española / Central Palawan).



Plate 31: The *kutiyapi* (?) of the Pala'wan. Probably from the Municipality of Quezon, Southern Palawan (1997). [Museum for Ethnology, Vienna.]

2.3.5 With rounded head extension; with no nut or saddle cutaway; flat, leaf-shaped body extension showing T-shaped bracing

kudyapi ?

Pala'wan (Quezon / Central Palawan).



Plate 32: The *kudyapi* (?) of the Pala'wan. Probably from the Municipality of Quezon, Central Palawan (2006). [Palawan Museum, Puerto Princesa.]

- 2.3.6 With block-shaped head extension; bilateral tuning pegs; trapezoidal body extension, without T-shaped bracing

fegereng / fegrong.

Teduray (Maguindanao / Mindanao).



Plate 33: The *fegereng* of the Teduray. Probably from the area around Upi, Maguindanao, Mindanao (before 1997). [University of the Philippines, College of Music.]

- 2.3.7 With flat head; rear tuning pegs; trapezoidal body extension, without T-shaped bracing
fegereng / fegrong.
Teduray (Maguindanao / Mindanao).



Plate 34: The *fegrong* of the Teduray. Upi, Maguindanao, Mindanao (1998). [Collection Ramon Santos.]

Ethnographic Summary

Taking a look at the complete picture, we can state that there are “cultural complexes,”⁷ “cultural areas” or “cultural clusters” sharing closely related boat lute types that, however, do not fully coincide with the linguistic evidence.⁸

1. ***Kutiyapì* complex [1]:** Big lutes, boat-shaped, all of them called *kutiyapì* deriving from the Sanskrit word *kacchapa* and often associated with the crocodile or monitor lizard symbolism.

Maguindanaon
 Maranao
 Bukidnon
 Talaandig
 Higaonon
 Western Bukidnon Manobo
 Ilianen (Arumanen) Manobo

Comment: The Islamic Maguindanaon and Maranao speak closely related languages (Danao family of languages), which do not belong to the Manobo family of languages. Their instruments, and probably also their style of lute music, are very similar. However, while the lute of the Maranao represents the crocodile, the one of the Maguindanaon shows the heron. All the other ethnic groups playing this type of lute, the Bukidnon, Talaandig, Higaonon, Western Bukidnon Manobo and Arumanen Manobo, belong to the Manobo family of languages. It is quite obvious that the distribution of these big lutes is a result of the geographic proximity of these peoples.

2. ***Kutiyapì* complex [2]:** Big lutes, box-shaped, also called by a name deriving from the Sanskrit *kacchapa* and partly associated with the crocodile or monitor lizard symbolism.

Higaonon (*piyapì*)
 Pala’wan (the big lutes *kusiyapì*)

Comment: The lutes of these two peoples are the only Philippine boat lutes with a body in the shape of a box. The Higaonon and Pala’wan are living far apart, on the islands of Mindanao and Palawan, respectively. However, there must be some historical connection. It should be noted that the *sundatang* lutes of the Rungus people of northern Borneo show almost the same design as the big lutes of the Pala’wan, although they are considerably smaller. As the southern part of Pala’wan, for a long time, was under the rule of the Sultanate of Brunei, it seems to be more probable that the box-type lutes spread from northern Borneo to Palawan, and from there to Mindanao, than vice versa.

⁷ The term “complex,” in this context, should be understood as “a group of obviously related units of which the degree and nature of the relationship is imperfectly known” [Merriam-Webster 2017], in analogy to the field of biology where “a species complex is a group of closely related species that are very similar in appearance to the point that the boundaries between them are often unclear” [Wikipedia 2017]. A complex might only comprise two different types or species, and it is usually the name of its best-known member that is used for the name of the whole complex.

⁸ Classification of Philippine languages according to Lewis, Simons, Fennig [2016].

3. **Kuglung complex:** medium-sized lutes, all with a mixed lizard-horse symbolism.

Matigsalug Manobo
 Tigwa Manobo
 Ata Manobo
 Tinananon / Kulamanen Manobo
 Bagobo (comprising Obo Manobo, Bagobo Tagabawa and Jangan Manobo)
 Umayamnon Manobo
 Mamanwa (*aydluing*, *aidluting*)

Comment: All these ethnic groups, except for the Mamanwa, belong to the Manobo family of languages, particularly to the Central and South Manobo languages, and they all call their instruments *kuglung*.

The Mamanwa, on the other hand, are the only “pure” Negrito group living on Mindanao. Their language seems to have come “under the influence of Dabawenyo languages before being influenced by South Bisayan languages in even more recent times” [Lobel 2013: 78], and it is not counted among the Manobo languages. It is not known whether boat lutes actually are part of the traditional Mamanwa culture. The author only saw one photograph of a boat lute collected among the Mamanwa.⁹ The instrument on this photograph looked just the same as the *kuglung* of the above mentioned Manobo groups. We can assume that this specific instrument was imported from a neighboring area.

4. **Hegelung-faglung complex:** relatively small lutes showing a slender boat shape, with frets on the neck, mostly with names related to the name *faglung*.

Tboli (*hegelung*)
 Ubo (*faglung*)
 Koronadal Blaan (*faglung*)
 Sarangani Blaan (*fuglung*)
 Tagakaulo/Kalagan (*faglung* ?)
 Tasaday Manobo (*faglung*)
 Blit Manobo (*faglung*)
 Dulangan Manobo (*peglung*)

Comment: Tboli, Ubo, Koronadal Blaan and Sarangani Blaan (Bilic family of languages) are, linguistically speaking, rather different from Tagakaulo/Kalagan (Western Mansakan branch of Central Philippine languages) and Tasaday Manobo, Blit Manobo and Dulangan Manobo (South Manobo languages). The general outline of their boat lutes, however, is very similar. Again, we can state that features of boat lute construction clearly crossed language boundaries.

5. **Kudlung complex:** relatively small lutes showing a slender boat shape, with frets on the neck, usually with names related to the name *kudlung*, with rooster symbolism.

Mandaya
 Mansaka
 Dibabawon
 Mangguangan
 Agusan Manobo (*kudiyung*)

⁹ Seen at Retrato Photo Archive of the Filipinas Heritage Library, Ayala Foundation, Makati, Manila.

Comment: Although the languages of the Mandaya and Mansaka (Easter Mansakan languages) as well as Dibabawon, Mangguangan and Agusan Manobo (East Central Manobo languages) show considerable differences, their lutes are very similar, regarding names and construction. Only the *kudiyung* of the Agusan Manobo stands out, in a very interesting way, as it fuses characteristics of three different boat lute cultures: basically, it is designed after the *kudlung* lutes, including the rooster symbolism; however, it shows a box-shaped lower end of the body that seems to have been borrowed from the *kuglung* lutes of the Manobo; and, finally, there must be some connection with the *kotapi* of the Subanen because, like the *kotapi*, the *kudiyung* is the only lute in Mindanao with frets under both drone and melody string, and it is played with the bare fingers, without the use of a plectrum, similar to the playing style of the Subanen (cp. below. under *kutapi-kudiyung complex*).

6. *Fegereng complex*: small and medium-sized lutes with a body extension in the shape of a fish fin or bird's tail; symbolic meaning unknown.

Teduray (*fegereng, fegrong*)

Pala'wan [small lute] (*kudlungan, kutiyapi*)

Comment: The *fegereng complex* is a similar case as the *kutiyapi complex* [2]. The Teduray and Pala'wan live far apart, on the islands of Mindanao and Palawan, respectively, but their lutes are the only Philippine boat lutes with a body extension in the shape of a fish fin or bird's tail. There must be some historical connection, which is still unknown. However, the lutes of the Teduray and Pala'wan also show significant differences, a fact due to their differing ethnographic environment: the lutes of the Teduray show some typical features of the neighboring *heglung-faglung complex*, those of the Pala'wan some characteristics of the big box-type lutes of the Pala'wan. The language of the Teduray belongs to the Bilic group of languages that also includes Blaan, Tboli and Jangan Manobo, while Pala'wan or Palawano belongs to the Palawanic branch of the Greater Central Philippine languages so that the linguistic relationship between both languages is rather remote.

7. *Kutapi-kudiyung complex*: medium-sized lutes with frets under both strings that are played with the bare fingers; rooster symbolism among the Agusan Manobo, heron or duck symbolism among the Subanen.

Subanen (*kutapi*)

Agusan Manobo (*kudiyung*)

Comment: All the six Subanen languages together form the Eastern Subanon language family, while Agusan Manobo belongs to the quite distinct East-Central Manobo languages. The two common features mentioned above, however, suggest that there has been an exchange of cultural traits between the Subanen and the Agusan Manobo, in the past, although these two groups live far apart, on the eastern and western part of Mindanao, respectively, separated by the territories of the Higaonon and Bukidnon where completely different types of boat lutes are used. The *kudiyung* lutes of the Agusan Manobo have many traits in common with the instruments of the *kudlung complex*. On the other hand, the *kutapi* of the Subanen, with its resonating body that is hollowed out from the top, stands rather unique among the Philippine boat lutes. It is not known whether there are differences in the design of the *kutapi* lutes used by the six Subanen groups.

8. **Palawan-Mindoro complex:** lutes of different sizes, designs and names that, in contrast to the lutes from Mindanao, usually do not show head and stringholder cutaways and usually seem to be played with the bare fingers.

Pala'wan
 Batak
 Tagbanwa (?)
 Alangan Mangyan
 Iraya Mangyan (?)

Comment: Pala'wan, Tagbanwa and Batak all belong to the Palawanic languages of the Greater Central Philippine languages, while Alangan and Iraya Mangyan are classified as North Mangyan languages of Mindoro. The lutes of all these ethnic groups are relatively heterogeneous, but the fact that they have no head and stringholder cutaways is an eye-catching common feature, as well as the fact that they all seem to be played with the bare fingers. To be honest, though, it is completely unknown whether the lutes of the Tagbanwa and Iraya Mangyan belong into this group of instruments, as absolutely no boat lutes from these two peoples seem to be available for study.

Symbolic Meaning

The symbolic meaning of boat lutes is rather complex and ambiguous.¹⁰ If you want to make valid statements, in this respect, you are moving on shaky grounds. If you will ask your informants why a specific boat lute has a specific design, they will make statements like: “It has always been like that!” “It’s the tradition!” “It just looks beautiful!” “The lute has just the same size as this animal!” Or, simply: “I don’t know!” This means that much of what is written in the following chapter is a patchwork of pieces of information from different sources that, nevertheless, gives us an idea of the invisible world of symbolism that surrounds Philippine boat lutes.

First of all, we have to be aware of the fact that symbolic meanings are relevant on two distinct psychological levels: On the first level of the awareness of reality, the symbolic meaning of a musical instrument is clearly defined through tradition and, as such, verbally communicated; on a second, more or less subconscious level, symbolic meanings develop out of similarities between specific lutes and other existing objects or living beings, or they are associated with experiences in the past or specific social contexts. Both aspects seem to play important roles and will be discussed here, shortly.

Boats and Buildings: To begin, it should be mentioned that the term “boat lute” is not an indigenous term, but was applied by ethnomusicologists to a group of lute instruments of similar shape and construction, which can be found in several areas of Southeast Asia.¹¹ In reality, boat lutes have nothing to do with boats or ships; they are merely called so, because their shape, in most cases, reminds of a slender boat or canoe. Instead, they are usually patterned

¹⁰ The symbolic meanings and associations of Philippine boat lutes are discussed in detail in another paper of this author [Brandeis 1998].

¹¹ Information on when the term “boat lute” was first used and who coined it, can barely be traced back. It might have been used for the first time in a printed source by Curt Sachs in 1915 when he mentioned a “Celebische Bootlaute (*kasapi*)” [“boat lute *kasapi* from Celebes”] in his book on the musical instruments of India and Indonesia [1915: 134, Plate 93].

after animals, for example, crocodiles, lizards, horses, or birds. We will discuss some of these symbolic meanings later.

Nevertheless, we can assume that there is a subconscious association of the lutes with boats. The *kutiyapì* of the Maranao show extended triangular carvings at both ends, which are identical in design with the so-called *panolong*, literally meaning “prows” [Saber, Orellana 1981: 52]. However, the term *panolong*, first of all, refers to carved wooden boards that protrude from the houses of royal families (*torogan*) where they symbolize the “power and leadership of the houseowner” [Ibid.].

Crocodile and Lizard: According to the traditions of some ethnic groups in the Philippines — the Binukid speaking peoples (Bukidnon, Higaonon, Talaandig; cp. Plate 35), as well as the Maranao, Maguindanaon, Western Bukidnon Manobo and Ilianen (Arumanen) Manobo — their two-stringed lutes represent a crocodile (*buaya*). Bukidnon, Higaonon (cp. Plate 13) and Talaandig, as well as several Manobo peoples, Ata, Matigsalug, Tigwa, Obo (Manuvu’), Bagobo Tagabawa, Jangan, Umayamnon, Kulamanen, Tinananon Manobo and others, also consider their lutes to represent a monitor lizard (cp. Plates 35 and 37). The Binukid speakers distinguish two different kinds of monitor lizards: The bigger ones are called *palaes* and are always mentioned in connection with boat lutes. They are living inside the forest, while the smaller monitor lizards, called *ibid*, are living near the rivers. It should be noted that, in comparison with a Western guitar, the terminology for the parts of a *kutiyapì* is reversed: the crocodile head is attached to the lower end of the resonating body, while what a Westerner might call the “head” and “neck,” the Binukid speakers actually consider as the tail of the crocodile.

The crocodile symbolism of Philippine boat lutes is clearly an evidence for a historical connection between the Philippine boat lutes and the crocodile zithers of mainland Southeast Asia. The names of these instruments — *mí-gyaùng* (*magyaun*) in Burma, *chakhe* in Thailand and *takhe* in Kampuchea — all mean “crocodile.” The Burmese zithers are usually carved into the shape of a crocodile, showing many realistic details of this animal. The zithers from Thailand and Kampuchea are also said to have been shaped like crocodiles in former times. Nowadays, however, their stylized form does not show any similarity anymore.

The crocodile is a very old Southeast Asian symbol dating back to a time long before boat lutes reached the Philippines. Crocodiles are often associated with the ancestors. In the Philippines, there are many myths about the origin of crocodiles and lizards. In many of these stories, humans are transformed into crocodiles or lizards, as a punishment for wrong behavior. Generally speaking, crocodiles and lizards seem to be surrounded by an aura of evil, representing a constant threat.

Turning the negative connotation of reptiles into something positive, crocodiles also represent the power of royalty, especially in connection with boat lutes. Among the Bukidnon, Higaonon and Talaandig (cp. Plate 6), the crocodile (*buaya*) plays an important role during the most important *kaligà* ceremonies, especially during the *Tagulambung hu Datu*: A piece of skin (also called *buaya*) in the shape of a crocodile is cut out from the side of the sacrificial pig. In a later part of the ceremony, this piece of skin is cut into small pieces, which are then distributed among the celebrants of the ceremony, similar to a communion. This *buaya* symbolizes an enemy, who, by eating him is defeated and whose power is then transferred to the participants of the ceremony.

As a symbol of power, the crocodile might have been connected with the positions of political leaders (*datu*) and religious leaders (*baylan*) of the Bukidnon, Higaonon and Talaandig. It is remarkable that, out of four documented *kutiyapì* players, three men were *datu*s and the fourth one a *baylan*.

In this respect, the *kutiyapì* of the Maranao is an especially interesting case. In former times, Maranao lutes showed a quite realistic crocodile design, similar to the instruments of the neighboring Bukidnon, Higaonon and Talaandig. And, just like these, Maranao lutes symbolized political and royal power. However, with the advent of Islam in Mindanao, the whole scenario changed. Islam did not allow the realistic representation of living beings, including crocodiles, anymore. For that reason, both ends of the Maranao *kutiyapì* were now carved into the shape of the *panolong*, those wooden decorations identifying royal houses. This means that one identifier of royalty was substituted by another identifier of royalty, thus keeping the old symbolic meaning of the *kutiyapì* alive. Nowadays, even after this remarkable change in design, the *kutiyapì* of the Maranao is still considered to represent the crocodile (*buaya*). We can therefore distinguish a pre-Islamic type of *kutiyapì* of *buaya* design and an Islamic type of *panolong* design. There are no sources, though, about this development, but the evidence clearly suggests these conclusions: aside from many *kutiyapì* in *panolong* style (cp. Typology 1.1.2; Plate 9), the author was able to document two *kutiyapì* in *buaya* style (cp. Typology 1.1.3; Plate 8), as well as one *kutiyapì* in a mixed style, with a crocodile head as the body extension, and a *panolong* carving as the head extension, thus documenting the transition point between the pre-Islamic and the Islamic *kutiyapì* style.

The importance of the crocodile as a symbol of royal power is deeply rooted in the mythology of the Maranao, as it has been preserved in the Darangen epic. One of the three most important mythological kingdoms mentioned in the Darangen epic is Iliyan a Bembaran, which is located at the seashore. The first ruler of Bembaran was Diwatandaw Gibon. He had been born with a twin-spirit, a most frightening creature that protected Bembaran against enemies. As this spiritual being could take different shapes, it was called Pinatola i Kilid or Pinatola a Tonong, for *pinatola* means “different colors”: in the sea, it took the shape of a crocodile (*buaya*), on dry land, it was a giant (*tarabosaw*) that would eat humans and animals, and in the air, it was an eagle (*garoda*). The Darangen epic also mentions the shape of a dragon. When Pinatola i Kilid was born, together with his human twin Diwatandaw Gibon, he was just a very small lizard. While the human twin grew into a man, the twin-spirit grew into a crocodile [Folklore Division MSU 1983: 27, 1985: 97, note 12]. In this story, the connection between lizards and crocodiles becomes clear.

Significant for the purpose of this study is the fact that the boat lute *kutiyapì* is directly mentioned in this context: when Pinatola i Kilid will appear on the scene, in the shape of the crocodile, the chanters of the Darangen epic will often not speak out his actual name, but will refer to him as “Here comes the *kutiyapì*...”

Dragon and Snake: Although the carved motifs on the present-day *kutiyapì* of the Maranao seem to be born out of an aesthetic desire and are not explicitly meant to transport some specific symbolic meaning, it seems to be worthwhile to examine the carved motifs themselves. The *naga* motif, one of the typical *okir* motifs of the *panolong*, is of special interest. It represents a dragon or snake. As symbols of power, the dragon/snake motif and crocodile motif are, to a certain degree, interchangeable, as can be seen on the fighting sword *kampilan* of the Maranao: “The handle of the *kampilan* — carved usually from wood — is almost always in the form of the head of a *naga* or crocodile (*buaya*) with jaws open” [Gowing 1979: 152].

In three settlements of the Talaandig and Higaonon (Songco, Lantapan, Bukidnon; Balongkot, Dansolihon, Misamis Oriental; Rogongon, Iligan City, Lanao del Norte), the author found lutes with carved animal heads extending their bodies that showed strange beaks



Plate 35: Crocodile head of a *kutiyapi* of the Higaonon (Rogongon, Iligan City, 1986)



Plate 36: Beaked head of a fantasy animal at the lower end of a *kutiyapi* of the Talaandig (Songco, 1982/83).



Plate 37: Lizard head at the lower end of a *piyapi* der Bukidnon (Guilang-Guilang, Manolo Fortich, 1983).



Plate 38 (above): Head of a *kutiyapi* of the Maguindanaon in the shape of a heron bird.



Plate 39 (left): Head in the shape of a rooster on a *kudlung* of the Mandaya (1905-09).



Plate 40 (right): Horse head on a *kuglung* of the Ata Manobo (probably from Paquibato District, Davao City).

(cp. Plate 36). They do not remind one of crocodiles or lizards at all. Similar animal heads can be found on two Bukidnon lutes documented by Fay-Cooper Cole around the year 1910 [Cole 1956: 156, fig. 53]. These animal heads might be connected to the naga motif.

Roosters and Other Birds: There are at least five ethnic groups on the eastern part of Mindanao island, in particular the Mandaya (cp. Plate 39), Mansaka, Dibabawon, Manggangan and Agusan Manobo (cp. Plate 28) whose lutes clearly show representations of stylized roosters. John M. Garvan was the first anthropologist who reported that the lutes *kudlung* of the Agusan Manobo have a head that is “rudely carved into a remote suggestion of a rooster’s head” called *minanúk* (from *manuk*, “chicken”) and that the body extension too shows “an ornamental piece carved into a semblance of the favorite fowl head” [1931: 131].

Chicken play an important role as sacrificial animals during the rituals and ceremonies of many traditionalistic ethnic groups in the Philippines. Cockfights are also very popular all over the Philippine Islands. And there is the *sarimanok* of the Maranao. This is a kind of mythological bird with widespread wings. One of its claws is standing on a fish, while it is holding another fish with its beak. In some cases, this fish can also take the shape of a dragon or *naga*. It is, therefore, not surprising to find the symbolism of the rooster on Philippine boat lutes. And the connection with the other symbolic meanings, discussed above, is obvious.

As the Maguindanaon are culturally closely related to the Maranao, one might expect that the symbolic meaning of their boat lutes *kutiyapì* might be the same. However, this is not the case. Maguindanaon informants told me that the head of their *kutiyapì* is carved into the shape of a heron, maybe a gray heron or a purple heron (cp. Plates 10 and 38). Maguindanaon call this bird *beguk* or *baguk*. The late *kutiyapì* master Samaon Solaiman, on the other hand, said that this carving represents a kind of peacock or paradise bird (*nuni*), a bird that, according to the tradition of the Maguindanaon, is said to have directly come from heaven. In heaven, the souls of humans are surrounded by the sounds of the *kutiyapì*, which they can breathe in like the air. In that sense, the presentation of the paradise bird on the *kutiyapì* of the Maguindanaon and the playing of *kutiyapì* music during lifetime anticipates paradise. According to Samaon Solaiman, the *kutiyapì* was also the favorite musical instrument of Radja Indarapatra, the hero of an epic of the Maguindanaon and Maranao, of the same name.

Examining the heads of a number of Maguindanaon *kutiyapì*, we can state that there is a range of differing degrees of abstraction, from rather realistic representations of the *beguk* bird to very abstract designs that in no way remind one of an animal. Again, we can guess that those *kutiyapì* with realistic *beguk* birds represent a pre-Islamic style of Maguindanaon *kutiyapì*, while those with abstract and ornamental bird designs represent an Islamic style of *kutiyapì*, although the transition from one style to the other was obviously not as radical, as we could observe it with the *kutiyapì* of the Maranao.

It should be mentioned that the *kutapi* lutes of the Subanen are also said to represent an egret or heron, although nothing is known about the context of this symbolic meaning in Subanen culture.

Human Body: Whenever people from European cultures are talking about the head, neck and body of, for example, a violin or guitar, they clearly associate the parts of the instrument with a human body. Similar views can partly be found among the indigenous peoples of the Philippines. The only ethnic group comparing their lutes *kusiyapì* as a whole to a human body, particularly to the body of a male, are the Pala’wan. They call the head of their *kusiyapì* (cp. Plate 25-27) “head” (*ulu*), the frets “breasts” (*duruq*), and they talk about “chest” (*däbdäb*), “hips” (*balibang*) and “penis” (*utin*); the connection between neck and body is called “ear”

(*talinga*), etc. [Revel, Maceda 1992: 41]. One *kusiyapi* collected by the author even shows the carving of a complete human figure as its head extension.

Other indigenous peoples might also call parts of their lute instruments after parts of the human body, speaking of “hand” (for the head), “arm” (for the neck), “body” (for the resonating body), “elbow” (connecting body and neck), “nipples” (for the frets) and so forth. However, it should be noted that they use this terminology independently from the general symbolism of their instruments.

Horse: The introduction of horses to the Philippines took place via two different routes: in the south by Islamic traders, in the north by the Spanish colonizers. As part of the Spanish conquest of the Philippine Islands after 1565, horses were imported to the northern and central Philippines, mainly from Mexico. They were the product of crossbreeding between horses from southern Spain, with origins in northern Africa and the Arab territories, and animals of the bigger and stronger northern European stock. Those horses introduced to the southern Philippines, passing through the Sulu Islands, came from Sumatra, Borneo and Malacca, around the middle of the 15th century. Later on, horses from China and Japan were also introduced to meet the high demand. During the subsequent centuries, all these different pedigrees interbred “to create the native horse as a distinctive breed, though those in the south were less affected by the subsequent importation of animals in comparison to those in the north, and retained more of their distinguishing characteristics” [Bankoff 2004: 9].

There are about 10 indigenous groups on Mindanao using lutes called *kuglung* that show a mixed symbolism of monitor lizard and horse. These are particularly the Matigsalug, Tigwa (cp. Plates 17-18), Ata (cp. Plates 14-16), Umayamnon, Tinananon and Kulamanen Manobo, Bagobo (comprising Obo Manobo, Bagobo Tagabawa and Jangan Manobo; cp. Plate 13) and Mamanwa. A hint for the Malay origin of their horses is their common use of the Malay word *kuda* (“horse”) [Bankoff 2004: 19, note 9]. While the lizard symbolism, as a variety of the crocodile symbolism, is probably very old, the horse symbolism must have developed some time during the past 500 years. We can assume that the lizard symbolism existed, long ago, and that the horse symbolism was added much later.

Horses in island Southeast Asia were usually associated with the royal courts. One of their main purposes was to represent prestige and royal status, although they were also connected to ceremonies and warfare. In the course of time, horses in Southeast Asia increased in number so that their importance as status symbols, at the same time, declined. In the 18th century, the role of horses became more and more mundane [Bankoff, Swart 2007: 13]. Nevertheless, when the Southeast Asian horses were introduced to the southern Philippines, the air of high social status and royalty must still have surrounded them.

The American anthropologist Laura Watson Benedict documented the ethnography of the Bagobo around the years 1906-1908. At that time, the wealth of a Bagobo man was measured by the number of domestic animals in his possession, not only water buffaloes (*karabaw*), cows and goats, but also horses [1916: 73]. The Bagobo believed that horses, like any other large animals, had two souls [Ibid.: 64] and that they could see the invisible bad spirits (*buso*) [Ibid.: 41]. As the Bagobo loved horse races, they also had magical necklaces that should help the horses to run faster [Ibid.: 215]. The most important belief, however, refers to the mystical horse Kilat. It was said to be of huge size, jumping and running around in heaven. Whenever it would shake its brightly shining mane, lightning would occur, and whenever it neighed, rolling thunder could be heard [Ibid.: 48-49].

On the other hand, it seems that the development of the horse symbolism in Philippine boat lutes is also a result of practical rather than of mythological considerations. Firstly, the

head of a *kuglung* (cp. Plate 40) is universally shaped as a hook that is meant for hanging the instrument on a roof beam. This shape suggests refining into a horse head. Secondly, horsehair offers itself as a very useful material for decorating a lute. Thirdly, horses play an important role for entertainment purposes during any kind of festivity or social gathering, as horse fights are very popular. In that sense, among the Manobo in general, the horse symbolism seems to stand for happiness and a sense of community and solidarity. On the other hand, lutes of the Bagobo that were collected between 1881 and 1911 (referring to instruments in museum collections) hardly show any signs of horse symbolism, neither in the shapes of their head extensions nor in their decoration with animal hair, which – if there is any – consists of goat hair. There is, therefore, a high probability that the horse symbolism on the boat lutes of the Bagobo and related Manobo groups might only have developed in the second half of the 20th century.

It is important to mention that, with the lutes, lizard and horse are presented oppositely: When a *kuglung* of the Manobo is considered to be a representation of a lizard, the head of the animal is meant to be located at the lower end of the resonating body, while neck and instrument head are considered as the tail of the animal. When a *kuglung* is meant to represent a horse, then the head is the head, the neck is the neck, the resonator is the body, and the body extension is the tail.

According to informants, the *hegelung* of the Tboli and the *faglung* of the Blaan are not explicitly associated with any kind of symbolism. However, it is eye-catching that many Tboli and Blaan lutes are heavily decorated with horsehair (cp. Plate 22). Among the Tboli, horses are of special importance during the wedding ceremonies. Horse fights are part of these festivities. One group of fighting horses represents the family of the groom, the other one the family of the bride. The horses fight in pairs, each pair, again, representing groom and bride. Before the fights, the horses of the groom are brought to a special wedding house built by the family of the bride and tied there to honor the bride's family, thus avoiding the breaking of taboos [Casal 1978: 77-78, 84-86]. According to Casal, there is a polarity between groom and bride and, therefore, we might further assume, between male and female genders. The boat lute *hegelung* of the Tboli is played on different occasions, during the wedding ceremonies, e.g. during the dressing up of groom and bride, as well as during the preparations for the festivities. Considering the important role of horses during the wedding ceremonies, the decoration of the lutes with horsehair might easily be associated with the pleasant memories of a wedding, all the more so, since the use of metaphors, among the Tboli, is crucial for communicating symbolic meaning [Mora 2008: 231]. However, as Mora suggests, the attribution of gender seems to be more important, an aspect that will be discussed, later on.

In conclusion of this chapter, we can state that the symbolic meaning of boat lutes, even within one single ethnic group, is often represented in clusters of several different meanings, which are sometimes related, sometimes not. The different layers of these mixed concepts have usually developed at different stages in the historical development of these instruments. For the Tigwa Manobo, for example, their *kuglung*, at the same time, represents a monitor lizard (old symbolism) and a horse (more recent symbolism). For the Maranao, their *kutiyapi* was originally made in the shape of a crocodile. After the conversion of the Maranao to Islam, the design was changed by using the *panolong* (“prow”) design that can be found on the royal houses of the Maranao. Therefore, on the surface level, we are reminded of a crocodile, a boat and a house, while, in fact, all these three symbolic layers stand for power, prestige and royalty. These are just two examples.

Playing Technique

A boat lute can be played in a sitting position, while standing and dancing, or while squatting on the floor. If a player is standing, he mostly uses a strap so that the instrument will hang in front of him, similar to a Western guitar. It can often be observed that this strap is not slung over the head, on the opposite shoulder, but loosely hangs on the shoulder next to the instrument. However, some boat lute players, especially Tboli *hegelung* players, are famous for their virtuoso “show-off” performances, by playing their instruments in all kinds of weird positions: holding them far away from their body, behind their back, on their neck, while dancing, spinning round and turning on their own axis [Jager 1977: 47, Plate; Maceda 1998: 259-263, Plates 374-389].

Most Philippine boat lutes are played by means of a plectrum, which is tied to the index or middle finger of the player’s strumming hand. The plectrum is usually made out of a slice of rattan, bamboo, fern wood, or simply a slice of plastic from cup or container. To its upper end, some kind of thread is tied. In former times, *abaka* thread was used, nowadays, it’s usually plastic thread from rice sacks (*saku*). The main movement of the strumming hand is upwards, not downwards, as is the case with a Spanish guitar.

However, there are exceptions to the rule, as the Pala’wan, Agusan Manobo and Subanen play their lutes with their bare fingers, without using a plectrum. As the Pala’wan have two different kinds of lutes, a big and a small one, their respective playing techniques also differ. The big *kusiyapi* or *kudlungan* is always played with the small finger of the strumming hand, the fingernails of which are kept long, to achieve a sharp sound. This playing technique is quite unusual, as the small finger is always the weakest finger of the hand. The small *kudyapi* of the Pala’wan, on the other hand, is played with the bare index finger.

The *kudlung* of the Batak, the *kutapi* of the Subanen and the *kudiyung* of the Agusan Manobo are plucked by the bare thumb. It was all only among the Agusan Manobo that the author observed the occasional fingering on the drone string. This is possible because the frets of the *kudiyung* are wide enough to cover the complete width of the neck and are, thus, positioned under both, the melody and the drone string, while nearly all the other Philippine boat lutes have their frets positioned under the melody string alone.

In many boat lute traditions, the strumming hand uses a special technique where the player occasionally, sometimes regularly hits the soundboard of his instrument with his thumb, thus imitating the sound of a drum. The Maguindanaon and Maranao occasionally also use a real drum played by a second musician for providing a simple rhythm. A second playing technique of the thumb consists of rhythmically dampening the vibrations of the drone string.

As the typology of Philippine boat lutes shows, there are small lutes with most frets located on the neck and big lutes whose first fret can be found at the transition area between neck and body so that almost all the frets are located on the soundboard. These two essentially different designs require quite different playing techniques for the left hand. While lutes with frets on the neck allow the player to position the thumb of their left hand at the back of the neck, this is not possible with lutes that have their frets located on the body. In this case, the thumb of the left hand has to be bent sideways so that the whole left hand can be positioned on the soundboard. For a Western guitar player, this is a rather uncomfortable playing position, because the fingering hand has almost no support. For making the playing of the *kuglung* of the Manobo easier, all these lutes have a specially shaped transitional section between neck and body. It is “waisted” so that the thumb can rest there while playing, most of the time (Plate 4).



Plate 41: Casiano Olandag (*kuglung*; Matigsalug Manobo) and Gina Manyawron (*salurey*; Ata Manobo) play, sing and dance. Davao City, 1997.



Plate 42: Trio of the Pala'wan, consisting of two *kusyapi* (Maging Dandallo, 52 years, and Mugi Dandallo, 50 years) and a *pagang*, a heterochord bamboo tube zither with the tuning pegs (Filmia Apol, 62 years). Sitio Tabud, Barangay Saraza, Brooke's Point, Palawan (2006).



Plate 43 (above): Tboli *hegelung* player Mâ Fil accompanies dancer Ye Gas who is miming a story.



Plate 44 (right): Synchronized dancing and playing of two Tboli women on one single boat lute *hegelung*.

The fingering hand, usually the left-hand, usually uses the index finger as the dominant finger that changes playing positions by gliding on the melody string. The finger is usually placed right on top of the fret, and not between two frets, as guitar players would do. The reason for this might also depend on the desired sound quality, as a short and slightly dampened sound and not a sustained and bright sound seems to be preferred. In any given playing position, the middle finger is used for melodic embellishments, mainly by using hammer-on and pull-off techniques. These hammer-ons are especially interesting because they don't produce melodic sounds, but soft click sounds, by dampening the vibrations of the melody string. These click sounds can hardly be heard in audio recordings, but can often only be recognized with the help of video. Nevertheless, they play an important role in the rhythmic structure of boat lute music and in the overall acoustic impression.

Performance Practice

In most boat lute traditions in the Philippines, the instruments are almost exclusively used for solo performances, without accompaniment by any other musical instrument and without any singing, e.g. among the Bukidnon, Talaandig, Higaonon, Agusan Manobo, Mandaya, Tasaday, Blaan and Tboli. The most impressive virtuoso style can be heard among the Maguindanaon of Cotabato. However, there are also ensemble performances. The simplest ensemble consists of one lute player and one dancer, e.g. among the Tboli, Blaan, Mandaya and Mansaka (Plate 43).

Several Manobo groups, namely the Ata, Matigsalug, Tigwa and related Manobo groups have a preference for combining one of their lutes *kuglung*, always played by a man, with a polychordal bamboo tube zither called *saluray* or *salurey*¹² played by a woman (Plate 41). While performing, the woman is usually the singer, sometimes also the man, or both are singing stanzas alternately. During the interludes, between the stanzas, both performers start dancing, side-by-side and moving in a circle. The singing style is often characterized by interspersed short yodeling melodies, sudden changes between chest and head voice. These performances are clearly meant for an audience, and songs with instrumental accompaniment and dancing represent the favorite musical entertainment of the Manobo..

It should be mentioned that these Manobo groups have separate repertoires for solo and for duet playing, and the solo repertoire is, furthermore, divided into an "old" and a "new" repertoire using two different scales, the "old" hemitonic *kalindaan* (*karaan*, *kinaraan*) and the "new" anhemitonic *baligen* (*bag-u*, *binag-u*) scale [Brandeis 1995: 105; 2000: 196]. The repertoire for the *kuglung* and *salurey* duets, however, always uses the modern *baligen* scale.

In a similar way as the Manobo, the Pala'wan often combine two big lutes *kusiyapì* with one heterochord bamboo tube zither with steel strings and tuning pegs, which is called *pagang*. There is no dancing, as the size of the very big lutes would not allow this, but there is generally the singing of a soloist (Plate 42).

The Mansaka also seem to occasionally combine a lute *kuglung*, played by a man, with a polychordal bamboo zither *takul*, played by a woman, although the lute is usually played as a solo instrument. Unfortunately, there is no information on this part of the tradition available.

Among the Tboli, limited to the *seguyun* repertoire of courting songs, there are also performances combining the *hegelung* lute with the *sludoy* polychordal bamboo zither. The gender-specific implications of these performances have been described by Manolete Mora

¹² In former times, these bamboo zithers used to be idiochord. Nowadays, they all seem to be heterochord, using steel strings and sometimes even tuning pegs.

[2008]. We may assume, in other Philippine ethnic groups, gender relationships and their impact on musical practice are just as complex as with the Tboli. This is why we will discuss Mora's findings here, in more detail.

In general, the "dialectic relationship between gender construction and music-making" [Ibid.: 226] is of crucial importance in the musical culture of the Tboli. In Tboli society, gender-specific differences between men and women are generally understood within the framework of two main aesthetic categories: *lembang* ("large" or "broad") and *lemnek* ("small" or "tiny"). *Lembang* describes the activities of men in public life, such as political leadership, the performance of rituals, or the trading of material goods with other men. *Lemnek*, on the other hand, refers to the activities of women within the family, such as cooking, homework, the bringing up of children or the production of *tnalak* fabric [Ibid.: 228]. This association of the female role model with the family context, however, does not mean that women cannot play important roles in public life. For example, the late *hegelung* virtuosos Mendung Sabal and Ganay Delikan enjoyed the highest recognition and prestige [Ibid.: 230].

As the worldview of the Tboli is generally expressed in the form of analogies and metaphors, the specific acoustic qualities and aesthetic attributes of musical instruments as well as their social functions are also seen as analogous to the affective, symbolic and social attributes ascribed to men (loud and big, public) and women (soft and intricate, private) [Ibid.: 231]. In that sense, for example, the big hanging gongs *slogi* or the drums *tnonggong* (loud and played with gross motor movements) are considered as male and *lembang*, while the boat lutes *hegelung*, together with zithers, one-stringed violins, mouth harps and flutes (soft and requiring intricate and finer motor movements) are thought to be female and *lemnek* [Ibid.: 232]. "However," Manolete Mora clarifies, "it should be noted that the categorisation of instruments according to gender attributes does not determine the actual gender of the performers ... In this sense, Tboli women and men do not 'occupy separate expressive spheres' in music-making..." [Ibid.: 233]. The reason for this lies in the fact that *lembang* and *lemnek* are merely aesthetic categories that do not oblige men and women to follow gender-specific role models. Aside from that, the Tboli believe that each male object also has female aspects, and each female object, male aspects, in the sense of a male-female complementarity. Therefore, although the boat lute *hegelung* and the bamboo zither *sludoy* both belong to the female sphere, it is still possible that the *hegelung* is played by a man and the *sludoy* by a woman.

During the performance of *seguyun* courting songs, the intimacy and privacy of a love relationship, belonging to the female sphere, are made public and thus enter the male sphere. However, both musicians retain their gender-related independence: while performing the same composition, they are not playing in unison, but heterophonically, without showing consideration for matching either the tunings of their instruments or a specific key in which a certain *seguyun* tune should be played [Ibid.: 239]. Nevertheless, it is considered important that a piece is played as "one," by coordinating the tempo of both musicians, which is called *sesotu utomle*, "to unite the message" [Ibid.: 240].

Most Philippine boat lute traditions use only one scale for all the musical pieces of their repertoire, a few of them, however, use two or even three pentatonic scales. Apart from the above-mentioned Manobo groups, distinct repertoires based on two different pentatonic scales can be heard among the Maguindanaon (hem. *binalig*, anhem. *dinaladay*) [Maceda 1963: 111, 114f; 1988: (7)], Pala'wan (hem. *kulilal*, anhem. *bagit*) [Maceda 1988: (6)], and Subanen [Ibid.]. The way how the melodic patterns are permuted on the boat lutes is similar to the way this is done on the horizontal gong chimes *kulintang*.

In rare cases, there are also combinations of a boat lute with a *kutet* (one-stringed violin) or *tumpang* (duct flute). The Maguindanaon and Maranao occasionally use their *kutiyapì* in combination with a drum, the Maranao also with a bamboo jaw's harp *kubing* [Aquino, Basat, Pamintuan 1966: 26, lower Plate]. An ensemble of four can consist of a lute, a jaw harp, a violin and a flute [Maceda 1980: 647].

In the past, the Maranao cultivated an ensemble for serenading young ladies, which included five different instruments: a boat lute (*kutiyapì*), a bamboo ring flute (*insî*), a bamboo jaw's harp (*kubing*), an idiochord bamboo zither with two strings connected by a freely vibrating platform (*sirongaganding*) and a little brass bowl (*tintik*). The activity of serenading while going from house to house at nighttime was called *kapanirong*, from the word *sirong* meaning "to go under or beside the house" [Saber 1980: 111].

In some traditions, two musicians play the same instrument together at the same time and are, therefore, included in this chapter on ensemble performances. These unusual renditions clearly belong to the "show-off" playing styles mentioned above. Among the Tboli, two players synchronize their playing on one single *hegelung*: one strums the two strings, while the other one presses the frets on the fingerboard (Plate 44). The Tboli, Blaan and Tagakaulo share a performance practice where one musician plays the lute in the usual way, while another one is kneeling in front of him, rhythmically hitting the strings of the same instrument with two thin bamboo sticks. This manner of playing results into producing some softly clicking rhythm sounds, while rhythmically dampening the vibration of the strings of the lute. It seems that the *hegelung* player is usually a man, while the person hitting the strings is a woman.

As boat lutes are mainly solo instruments, it can be stated that they are basically instruments for self-entertainment, played as a pastime. Nevertheless, lute performances are always welcome during any kind of social gathering, be it village festivals, cultural presentations, weddings or just family parties. For the Maranao, their lute *kutiyapì* represents royal power and, as such, it was used during important official events. But, despite its association with royalty, the Maranao also used the lute for serenading adored young ladies in the past. However, boat lutes don't seem to be connected with any ceremonies, as far as we know, and they are not used in connection with epic singing, although these two contexts represent the most important musical activities in tradition-oriented Philippine societies.

Final Words

Many of the Philippine boat lute traditions, although mentioned in this paper, have not yet been documented in detail. Among the traditions waiting for documentation are those of the Umayamnon, Kulamanen, Tinananon, Arumanen, Jangan, Bagobo Tagabawa and Blit Manobo, Maranao, Banwaon, Dibabawon, Mangguangan, Mansaka, Tagakaulo (Kalagan), Teduray, Mamanwa, Tagbanwa, and others... However, there is now an immense time pressure. In the settlements that I visited, many musicians and informants have already since passed away. The same must be true for the remaining boat lute traditions. The tradition of the Batak, for example, is definitely gone forever. I was told by two Batak men that, in their community of about 200 members, all players of the *kudlung* have already died. In Aborlan, the center of Tagbanwa culture, I asked the elders of a tribal council about the traditional boat lutes *kudyapì/kudlung*. However, even these elders were wondering about this instrument; they had never heard of it before... Among the Maranao too, hardly any *kutiyapì* player seems to be alive anymore. Despite continuous research and inquiries, since the 1980s, I was not able to find a single Maranao *kutiyapì* player. In the 1980s, Bukidnon and Higaonon craftsmen

were able to carve two of the rare lutes *piyapi* for me, but nobody knew how to play them, and I haven't heard of any player, since then, despite my repeated inquiries. These are just some examples...

At least, there is still hope. During the past years, there has been a growing interest in traditional Philippine music, and especially in boat lutes. In 1993, the *National Commission on Culture and the Arts* (NCCA) honored Samaon Sulaiman (†2011), a Maguindanaon barber and *imam*, but first of all a virtuoso player of the *kutiyapi* with the “Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan” (“Living National Treasure Award”), subject to the obligation to teach young students the art of the *kutiyapi*. This mark of distinction had a strong impact on creating a new, nationwide interest in boat lutes. There is now a growing number of boat lute collectors. There are also many neo-ethnic performance groups using boat lutes, even though they don't play them in the traditional style, but strum them like guitars, usually accompanied by a couple of *djembe* drums. And together with Josephine “Arjho” Turner, a Blaan friend, I set up two websites online, focusing on the boat lutes of the Philippines [Brandeis, Turner 2015a and 2015b]. In collaboration with visitors of these websites, we supported livelihood projects for boat lute makers in Mindanao, and the demand for new instruments was simply amazing. So, there is hope... but a long way to go...

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