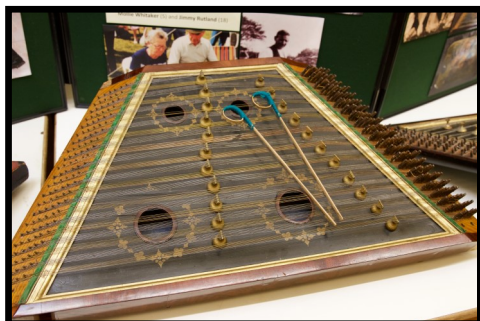


The Hammered Dulcimer



A hammered dulcimer from East Anglia

The hammered dulcimer around the world is the same basic shape - *trapezoid* - but each instrument can vary in **size, tuning, layout, playing position and number of strings per note.**

This means that, for example, a hackbrett player cannot easily play a yang qin...

From 1500BC: The origins of the (hammered) Dulcimer have been lost in the mists of time, but some sources believe it is an instrument that was known and played in Ancient Greece. There are carvings from 1500BC of similar instruments being played with small wooden beaters.

Over the years the dulcimer became known in many parts of the world, with different countries adapting its size and tunings to suit their musical style.

From 15th-18th centuries it was quite a popular instrument in England and was played at Prince Arthur's marriage to Catherine of Aragon in 1501.



Greek santouri



Babylonian Santur players...?

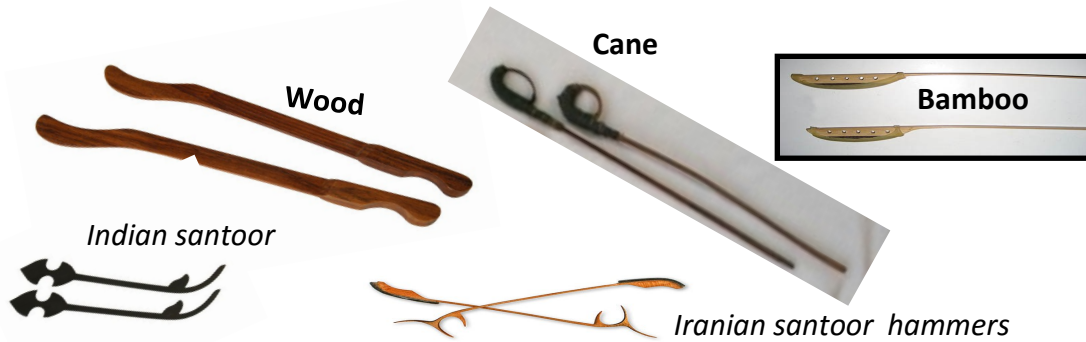
However, **in the 18th century** the invention and development of a fantastic new instrument, based on the dulcimer itself, led to a huge decrease in the dulcimer's popularity in much of Western Europe . . .

The piano took over! It gradually became a major instrument in homes large & small. The dulcimer was pushed out onto the streets in European cities and tourist hotspots where it was often played by travellers and buskers.





The hammered dulcimer can be quiet or loud depending on several factors, one of them being the type of 'hammers' used. They come in various shapes & sizes and are traditionally (but not exclusively) made from...



The 'playing' ends might be covered with e.g. leather, rubber, wool or cotton (soft sound) or left uncovered (harder sound).

