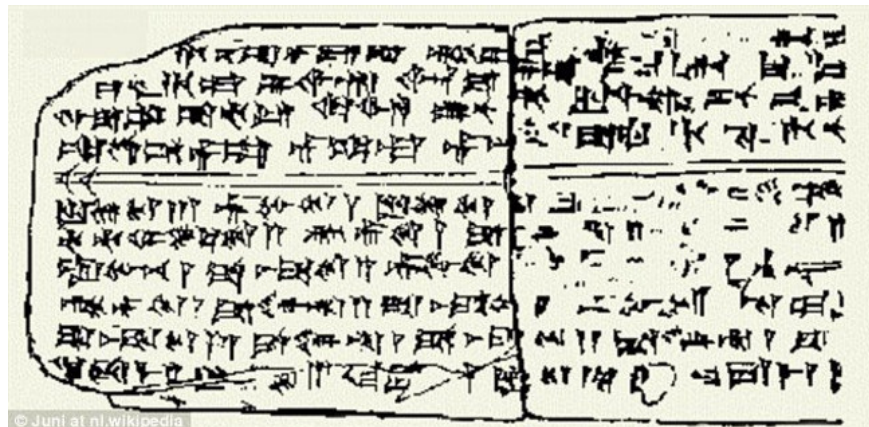


The mesmerizing melody comes from the 3,500-year-old ancient music

The world's oldest melody will take you into a distant, mysterious period in the Middle East almost 3,500 years ago.

In the early 1950s, archaeologists found **burning clay tablets** at the Royal Palace in Ugarit (today Ras Shamra, Syria). On terracotta boards carved with cuneiform symbols are thought to guide music in the language of **the ancient Hurrian people** .

A total of 29 terracotta boards were found during the archaeological process, but only one board was intact, enough for researchers to "*translate*" again.



Ancient musical characters are engraved on a block of clay to retain the melody.

This song was named "**Hurrian hymn to Nikkal**" by researchers, which means "**Hurrian hymns offered to the goddess Nikkal**", which were used in religious ceremonies. In the ancient culture of people living in the Middle East, Nikkal is a goddess of protection for their orchards.

With musical symbols in this hymn, there are many experimental ways in modern music. In 1972, Professor Anne Draffkorn Kilmer, who specializes in Middle Eastern culture, at the University of California (USA), began to translate wedge-shaped characters on intact terracotta boards into phonetic languages. modern music. From this "translation" version, there were many melodies that were born.



Entrance to the Royal Palace in the ancient city of Ugarit, where terracotta boards are found.

Later, Professor Richard Dumbrill, an expert in archeology - studying Middle Eastern culture, teaching at the University of London, also tried to translate the terracotta board.

The video below is an experiment Michael Levy, an English musician specializing in research and performance with ancient instruments, melodies, and techniques. For him the *"bringing the beautiful lyre of ancient times into the world of bland and lifeless modern music"* is his mission.

Until now, no one has been able to know for sure the melody was recorded on these ancient terracotta boards. We can only guess based on the signs and imagination of the "translator".

The tunes engraved on terracotta boards in Ugarit are considered **the oldest**, oldest known music in human civilization, dating back to about 1400 BC.

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