



MANDOLAS

by Hugo Strötbaum

ODD & EXTINCT (2) : MANDOLAS

I know next to nothing about *mandolas*.

I guess a mandola is a kind of oversize *mandolin* with a louder sound.

And there existed and even bigger type which was called *mandolocello*.

Mandolocellos are jumbo size *mandolins*.

Mandolas and *mandolocellos* no doubt were tuned lower than a mandolin.

This is what Fivos Anoyannakis has to say on these two instruments in his book *Greek Folk Musical Instruments*:

The mandolin and the guitar, as well as the mandóla and the mandolocélló (the last two instruments are rarely used in folk song) were formerly made by the same craftsmen who made the lute-type members of the popular *instrumentarium*, the laghoúto and the various kinds of tambourás. Nowadays, the mandóla and the mandolocélló are no longer manufactured in Greece; only guitars and – very rarely – mandolins are still made in the country.

On page 292 of the above-mentioned is a picture of a *mandolin* and a *mandola* (illustration 141).

It looks as though a mistake was made in the caption, as the *bigger* instrument is called a *mandolin* (61.5 cm long), while the *smaller* one is called a *mandola* (86 cm long). This, of course, should be the other way round.

On page 296 is a picture of a *mandolocello* (illustration 145). Its length is 96 cm.

The instruments shown in Anoyannakis' book all have four pairs of strings.

The instruments in the mandola slide show also have four pairs of strings, except for the instrument S. Makrís is holding in pictures **4a** and **4c**, which has *five* pairs of strings.

If we look up the notion *mandola* on the internet we find string instruments in various shapes and forms, but they all seem to be considerably smaller than the instruments which are shown here.

I welcome your comments!