

The Study of Musical Performance in Antiquity:

*Archaeology and Written
Sources*

Edited by

Agnès Garcia-Ventura,
Claudia Tavolieri
and Lorenzo Verderame

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE AULOS AND THE TRUMPET: MUSIC, GENDER AND ELITES IN IBERIAN CULTURE (4TH TO 1ST CENTURY BCE)¹

RAQUEL JIMÉNEZ PASALODOS²
PETER/PIPPA HOLMES³

The Iberians developed an Iron Age culture which flourished in the Iberian Peninsula between the 6th century BCE and the Roman Conquest. A non Indo-European people, they occupied the central and Eastern parts of modern Andalusia, and the Levantine quarter of the Iberian Peninsula. They show a complex social organization, alphabet and intense influences and cultural exchanges with other Mediterranean cultures such as the Phoenicians and Greeks in earlier periods, and Punics and Romans later on, and also the Celtiberian and other Iberian Celts in the West.

Despite the impossibility, due to the lack of organological remains, of reconstructing their musical instruments or of delving more-deeply into the sound world of the Iberians, the music iconography is, nonetheless, abundant and rich in information, and can tell us many things about the cultural function of music in Iberian societies, and, furthermore, about some symbolic concepts and cultural behaviours (Merriam 1964). It can also provide some clues which enable us to interpret how music may have been *historically constructed, socially maintained and individually applied* (Rice 1987: 469-488) as well as inform about the performance of the genders in Iberian culture and their roles.

¹ The use of the terms “trumpet” and “horn” in this paper are used descriptively in this paper and not intended to carry any organological significance, such as whether their tubing is cylindrical or conical.

² Universidad de Valladolid.

³ Middlesex University.

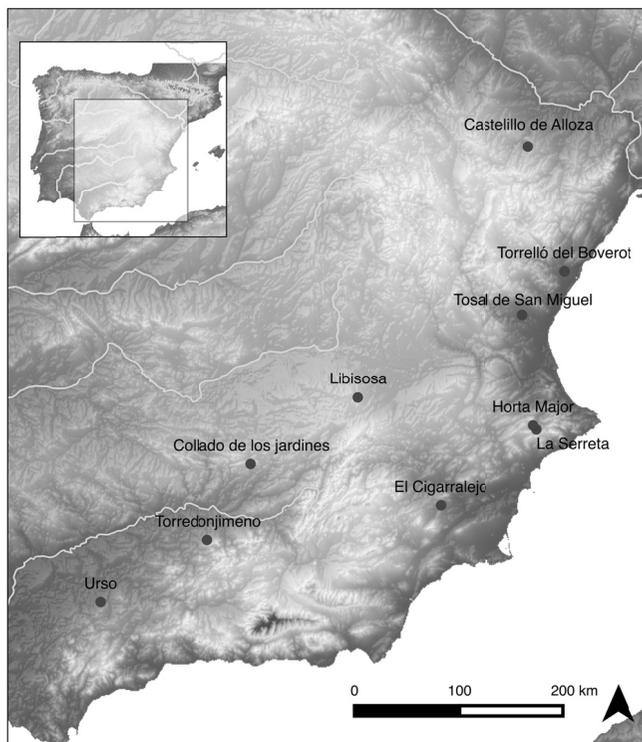


Fig. 8-1: Map with the location of the main Iberian settlements discussed in the paper.

The Sources

The Iberian music iconography studied here is dated from the 3rd century BCE onwards. We have gathered a total of twenty-five music or dance scenes, all made locally by Iberian artisans, discarding the Greek vases imports. Twenty of these native pieces contain representations of musical instruments, with or without a dance element. The majority appear in the figurative indigenous pottery (twelve), and the rest are sculptures or reliefs on stone (five), terracotta statuettes (five) and bronze or silver products (two). Most of the sources are dated to the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE with some of them having later chronologies, of around the 1st century BCE and

only one with an uncertain dating of the 4th century BCE, the funerary monument of Alcoi.⁴

The Instruments

Despite the diversity of representations, the musical instruments are mostly limited to two types of aerophones: double pipes and trumpets.⁵ The latter appears in two different shapes, long and straight or short and curved, resembling a small version of the Roman *cornu*. There are sixteen double pipes represented, along with eight horns and four lyres. From the bias of the representations, it seems that the double pipe was the most important instrument among Iberians.

The iconographic depictions are, for the largest part, too schematic to yield organological conclusions, but we can at least assert that the instrument had reeds, probably double ones, like in other double pipes from the Mediterranean basin, such as the Greek aulos. The Mediterranean parallels and the importance of the instrument within cultures in close contact with the Iberians such as Phoenician-Punic and Greek communities point in this direction. Furthermore, there are some indicators in the local iconographic record that may prove the existence of reeds. The first of them is the depiction of the *Krater of the Warriors* (Fig. 8-2f), from the Necropolis of El Cigarralejo, in Mula (Murcia), where one of the musicians is playing a double pipe. Despite the schematic nature of the representation, we can acknowledge the intention of the painter to depict a *phorbeia*, a leather strap tied around the player's mouth to enable the performer to generate the necessary pressure to sound the instrument. Furthermore, in a relief of a funerary Monument from Urso (Osuna, Sevilla) a young *aulétris* is clearly introducing the pipes into her mouth and inflating her cheeks, which is the playing technique of a reeded instrument (Fig. 8-3d). Also, we can even see that the mouth end of the instrument is slightly narrower than the rest of tube, indicating that a reed was probably inserted at its top end. The majority of instruments represented seem to have a cylindrical bore, with two pipes of the same length and in some occasions, an amplifying bell with different shapes in one or two of the tubes, such as in the *Pithos of La Serreta* (Fig. 8-2d) and in the *Kalathos of the Bastetanian Dance* (Fig. 8-2a) respectively. They also seem to have been relatively long, except for the example of the *Vase*

⁴ Almagro Gorbea 1982: 161.

⁵ For a comprehensive description of all known Iberian musical scenes see Pericot 1936 and 1961: 647-649; García Bellido 1943: 59-85; Uriel 1946: 95-110; Blázquez 1976: 3-10; Castelo Ruano 1989: 8-18, 1990a: 35-43 and 1990b: 19-42.

of the *Monomachy* from Libisosa (Fig. 8-2g).⁶ The absence of the instrument in archaeological contexts could be taken to indicate that maybe the materials were not preserved because they were made of wood or cane.

The horns are the second most-represented instrument. Although not as numerous as the double pipes, it seems that they too were essential in some Iberian musical and cultural practices. These aerophones have different shapes. Four of the examples depicted on the pottery seem to have been long straight horns with a very pronounced conical bore or a cylindrical bore which terminated in a large curved bell. Instruments of these forms could be found in Central Europe and the Mediterranean basin, such as in the Celtic or the Etruscan sphere and known as *carnyx* and *lituus*, straight horn or trumpet-like brass instruments with a pronounced bell.⁷ Again, their absence from the archaeological record could mean that the instruments were made of organic materials as in the case of some Greek *salpinges*, or that if they were of metal, the metal was perhaps recycled at the end of the instrument's playing life. The second type of Iberian horn looks like a small, simpler version of the Roman *cornu*, as it is depicted in the funerary box of Torredonjimeno, Jaén (Fig. 8-3e), a pottery fragment from el Castelillo of Alloza, Teruel (Fig. 8-2i), and the *cornu* player (Fig. 8-3c) from the Funerary Monument B of Urso (Osuna, Sevilla).

⁶ Uroz Rodríguez 2012: 315-321.

⁷ Holmes 2012: 73.

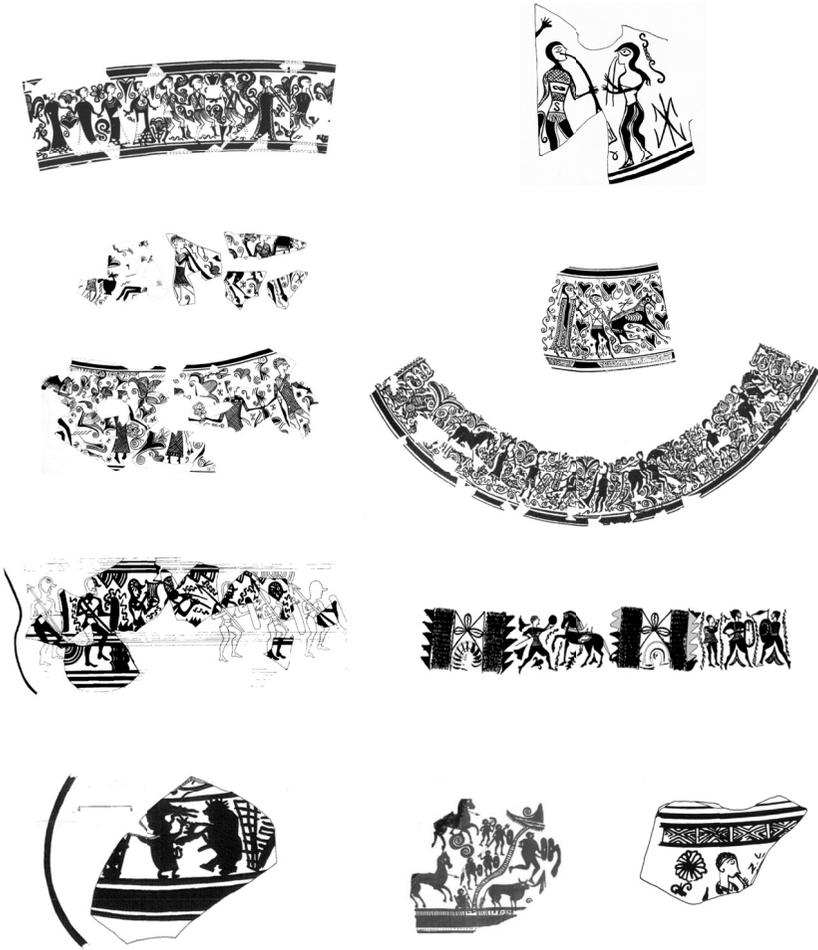


Fig. 8-2 (from left to right and from top to bottom): a. Kalathos of the Basetanian dance (after Ballester Tormo 1934, lam. VIII a); b. Detail of musicians from Vase 113 from El Tossal de Sant Miquel (after Ballester Tormo 1934, lam. VII a); c. Lebes of the Situla (After Ballester Tormo 1954: 62-64, fig. 48-54); d. Pithos of La Serreta (after E. Cortell. Museu Arqueològic Camil Visedo Moltó, Alcoi, Alicante); e. Lebes of the Warrior Dance (after Ballester Tormo 1954: 59, Fig.44); f. Krater of the Warriors of El Cigarralejo (after Cuadrado 1982, 288 fig. 1); g. Krater of the monomachy (after Uroz 2012: 318 fig. 247); h. Fragment of Torrelló del Boverot (after Clausell et al. 2000: 93 fig. 12); i. Vase of El Castellillo de Alloza (after J.A. Minguel in Pastor Eixarch 2010: 8, fig. 1e); j. Fragment from El Tossal de Sant Miquel (after García Bellido 1943: 70, fig. 4).



Fig. 8-3 (from left to right and from top to bottom): a. Plaque of la Serreta (Photo: Crespo Colomer. Archive: Museu Arqueològic Camil Visedo Moltó, Alcoi, Alicante); b. Terracotta from El Cigarralejo (Photo: Museo de Arte Ibérico de El Cigarralejo, Mula, Murcia); c. Funerary Monument of Osuna B (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid. Photo: Foto: Fernando Velasco Mora); d. Funerary Monument of Osuna A (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid. Photo: Foto: Fernando Velasco Mora); e. Funerary box of Torredonjimeno (after García Serrano 1968: 234, fig. 1); f. Bronze of El Collado de los Jardines (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid. Photo: Arantxa Boyero Lirón. N.I. 29234); g. Funerary Monument of L'Horta Major (Photo: Crespo Colomer. Archive: Museu Arqueològic Camil Visedo Moltó, Alcoi, Alicante).

The Musical Scenes

We can identify three main types of performative contexts, these here being interpreted as a warrior/hero masculine sphere, a civic/public mix gender sphere and a religious sphere, mainly feminine.

For the first type, the most well-known one is the *Lebes of the Warrior Dance* (Fig. 8-2e). In the centre of the representation are two warriors with swords and shields who are performing a ritual single combat or a warrior dance surrounded by two musicians: a female character playing a double pipe and a man playing a long horn. Next to them, a horse is contemplating the scene. Other warriors, on horses or on foot, complete the imagery of the vase. A second vase with a marked warrior character is shown in the *Vase 113* from compartment 11 of TSM.⁸ The central decoration consists of two warriors on horseback and other two persons, maybe their squires. The characters are not dancing and the musicians appear in a secondary position (Fig. 8-2b). A third vase comes from the Sanctuary village of la Serreta (Alcoi, Alicante). This *pithos* (Fig. 8-2d) depicts a female double pipe player accompanying a scene of a warrior hunting a wolf, followed by scenes showing warrior activities of the men of the upper classes, such as riding, hunting and single combat.⁹ There is also a double pipe accompanying a duel on a Krater from the oppidum of Libisosa.¹⁰ Very close to the previous representation, the figures illustrate different warrior activities, such as a monomachy or single combat, and a combat between a knight and soldier. The monomachy is again accompanied by an aulos player, this time a masculine figure (Fig. 8-2g). There is one more fragment of a male character playing the aulos, probably from a *Lebes*, found in a domestic space in TSM (Fig. 8-2j). There is no performative context but it is possible that it would have been a single combat, as with all the male aulos player depictions at this period of pottery manufacture. Finally, there is a fragment of a *kalathos*, from el Castellillo of Alloza (Teruel), dated to the 3rd-2nd centuries BCE (Fig. 8-2i), showing the same kind of scene but in a different representational style. This time the single combat takes place in a delimited space, in what it looks like a closed stage. Several warriors, ready to fight, seem to be waiting outside. With them, another masculine figure is standing, playing a small horn with a support bar,¹¹ seemingly like a very small *cornu*. A bull is also on the stage, maybe as a sacrificial victim or as part of the

⁸ The site of Tosal de Sant Miquel.

⁹ Olmos / Grau 2005: 79-98.

¹⁰ Uroz Rodríguez 2012: 315-321 and 2013: 51-73.

¹¹ Pastor Eixarch 1988: 111.

games. A man, sitting on a throne and holding a *baculum*, is witnessing the scene. Maybe he is the judge of the combat or the person in whose honour the fighting is taking place.

Different in conception and context, although still related to warfare and the masculine world, is the well-known representation of the *Krater of the Warriors* (Fig. 8-2f) from the necropolis of El Cigarralejo, in Mula, Murcia, dated also to the 3rd or 2nd century BCE. On this occasion, five fully-armed warriors seem to be dancing to the music performed by two characters of smaller size (sometimes interpreted as dwarfs or children) playing a lyre and a double pipe.¹² They all appear to be wearing masks, leading to an interpretation of this scene as a funerary ritual,¹³ and the ‘s’ signs which surround them have been interpreted as representing their frenetic movement, the music, and the sound of the weapons,¹⁴ recalling the quote of Titus Livy of the funerary dances that Hispanic warriors performed while fighting at Hannibal’s side in Italy.¹⁵

There are also these kind of performative scenes in funerary monuments. The two best-known representations are the limestone reliefs from Urso (Osuna, Sevilla). The first one, from Monument A (Fig. 8-3d) and dated to the 3rd century BCE shows a young girl¹⁶ who is richly dressed¹⁷ and playing a double pipe. In the other side of the ashlar, a man, interpreted as the deceased, is wearing a long tunic and cape. In other parts of the same monument, there are reliefs of adult women with offerings, a knight riding a horse and an infantryman holding a shield, probably as a representation of achievements during the deceased warrior’s lifetime. Also, Monument B (Fig. 8-3c), dated to the 1st century BCE, shows a man playing a horn, a small version of a Roman *cornu*, maybe similar to the one from the vase of Alloza, probably performing music to accompany the acrobatics shown in other parts of the monument, or as another symbol of masculine warlike activity.

¹² Cuadrado 1982: 290; Blázquez 2001-2002: 172; Olmos / Chapa Brunet 2004: 56; González Reyero 2008: 75.

¹³ Blázquez 2001-2002: 172.

¹⁴ Pastor Eixarch 1988: 111 and 2010: 473-484.

¹⁵ “Some relate that he was buried in the Roman camp by his own men, others — and this is the prevalent report — that by Hannibal’s order a pyre was erected directly outside the gate of the Carthaginian camp, and that the army defiled under arms, with dances by the Spanish troops and such movements of weapons and bodies as were customary for each tribe, while Hannibal himself honoured the obsequies with every tribute in act and word” Liv. 25.17.4.

¹⁶ Chapa Brunet 2002: 130.

¹⁷ Izquierdo Peraile 2008:130.

Finally, there is also a musical scene related to masculine activities in the funerary box of Torredonjimeno, in the province of Jaén.¹⁸ Although it is very degraded, we can see, on the one side, a typical pair of musicians, both male characters, playing in duo a double pipe and a curved horn. An amphora stands between the musicians, and this may be related to wine consumption (Fig. 8-3e). On the other side of the amphora, two horses are shown, maybe with a chariot,¹⁹ something very closely associated with the activities of the masculine upper classes as attested by fragments found in the necropolis which belong to princely tombs or in rich warrior sepulchres.²⁰

Even though not showing a musical instrument, a bronze votive offering from El Collado de los Jardines (Fig. 8-3f) of a headless warrior in a dancing or marching position and with a hand, seemingly holding something at the height of the mouth, has been interpreted as a possible horn player.²¹ He could also have been holding a wooden spear, although the rather non static position and the way he is holding the rest of the weapons largely differentiates it from the rest of this Iberian warrior's bronze votive offerings.²² Some Gallic bronze statuettes from the Musée historique et archéologique de l'Orléanais, dated to the 1st century BCE have also been interpreted as musicians or dancers, and one of them, seems to be holding a horn, as in the Iberian example.²³

The second type of scenes are those showing performative contexts where masculine and feminine characters, other than musicians, are participating. From these scenes, there are only two depicting musical instruments. The most remarkable finding is the *Kalathos of the Bastetanian dance* (Fig. 8-2a), on which a pair of musicians is leading a mixed-gender procession or dance (The "S" signs on the foot of the males seem to indicate movement, according to Pastor Eixarch 2010: 473-484). The masculine character is playing a long trumpet, followed by a feminine character, richly dressed and playing a double pipe. The other fragment of this kind of performative context is from the *Lebes of the situla*, from TSM (Fig. 8-2c). Although very fragmented, it is also interesting. One scene presents a male character seated on a throne with a *baculum* while another masculine character is presenting him with a *situla* or cauldron. In another fragment, a male musician is playing a long trumpet, providing the

¹⁸ García Serrano 1968: 230-234.

¹⁹ Marín Ceballos 1982: 271-273.

²⁰ Santos Velasco 1996: 124.

²¹ García Bellido 1943: 77-80 and 85.

²² See for instance the different types of votive offerings in Prados Torreira 1996.

²³ AAVV 1993-1994: 83.

music for a mixed-gender dance similar to the previous one, although only one masculine character is preserved. It is probable that the fragment with the double pipe is missing. Horses and a knight with a flower instead of a spear complete the scene. Both vases were found in a sanctuary, in a large chamber with a central monolith, which could have a cult meaning, and it is linked with a votive well. These representations could indicate that other depictions of characters holding hands could be representing dancers, even if the musicians are missing, as in the *Relief of the Bastetanian Dance* where a group of three female characters hold hands with four male characters,²⁴ or the fragment from El monastil (Elda, Alicante), where a male and female characters are shown holding hands.²⁵

As a final note, we have to include the fragment of a Lebes (Fig. 8-2h) from the site of the Torrelló del Borevot (Almazora, Castellón), dated to the 2nd century BCE.²⁶ This small fragment has been interpreted as a double piper and a dancer, maybe playing some kind of idiophone,²⁷ but we could also interpret it as a double piper and a trumpet. Even if the poor quality of the scene makes identification difficult, the double pipe player seems to be a female character, as we can see her tunic, the prominent chest, the belt and the cape, while the other figure seem to be a male, maybe even of an ithyphallic character.

Finally, the third type of representation is related to the religious or ritual sphere. Even if Iberian art often represents masculine and feminine characters during important moments in the life of the elites, as a way of consolidating their prestige and ruler role in the eyes of the rest of the social strata,²⁸ some representations which lack a iconographic context can be better understood as having a religious character, and these appear to be votive offerings of apotropaic character both in sacred or funerary contexts. The most outstanding and well-known example, which was found in the same room of the *Pithos of la Serreta* (Alcoi, Alicante) is the *Terracotta Plaque of the Iberian Mother Goddess* (Fig. 8-3a), dated to the 2nd to 1st century BCE. A female divinity, breastfeeding two babies, is in

²⁴ This relief, found in the site of Atalayuelas (Jaén) and now in the Archaeological Museum of Jaén, dates to the end of the 3rd century BCE and was interpreted as a dance by Blázquez (1993: 67-72). This representation has also been seen as a “family portrait” and not a dance, as it appears to show characters of different age groups (see Chapa Brunet 2001: 131).

²⁵ Poveda Navarro 1995: 186.

²⁶ Clausell et al. 2000: 92-98.

²⁷ Clausell et al. 2000: 92-98; Bonet and Izquierdo 2001: 283; Bonet / Izquierdo 2004: 84-87.

²⁸ Santos Velasco 1992: 193 and 1996: 124.

the centre of the scene on this vessel. This fertility mother goddess²⁹ is a common icon in the Iberian world and has clear parallels with the Phoenician-Punic goddesses Astarte and Tanit. To either side of her, there is a pair of one adult and one child standing facing the spectator. The pair at the left of the goddess is playing double pipes. To one side of the goddess there is a bird, a symbol of the divinity.

The rest of the findings are strictly related to the funerary sphere. This is an important factor as even if there is no iconographic context shown, the funerary setting could be an indication of a real-life practice. The fragments of the funerary monument of Huerta Mayor, in Alcoi, show sculpted reliefs with female characters. One of these characters is part of a high-status woman, holding in her left hand a double pipe (Fig. 8-3g) while another is of a female character who is tearing her hair out,³⁰ in a gesture recognisable as that of a female mourner, common in other Mediterranean areas.³¹ Also found in the necropolis are the terracotta statuettes of El Cigarralejo and of La Albufereta (Alicante). The first statuette shows part of the body of a female double pipe player and the rest of a probable second character, maybe also a female musician (Fig. 8-3b). Although some scholars suggest that there could have been a third character³² such as in the votive musical trios from the South of Italy,³³ and even though there is an empty space between both characters, the absence of a third pair of feet lead us to think it would not be the case. The fragment of la Albufereta³⁴ shows again a high-status female character playing a double pipe, but is very fragmented and does not reveal further information, although is very similar to the ones from Magna Graecia and the Eastern Mediterranean.

All this iconography leads to the conclusion that the double pipes and horn played an important role in Iberian society and they were linked to both the feminine and the masculine world, and also both to the sphere of the living and the sphere of the dead.

Giving Life to the Images

Iberian scholars have proposed diverse interpretations of the scenes in question, from providing direct parallels and comparisons with better-

²⁹ Prados Torreira 2007: 55.

³⁰ Almagro Gorbea 1982a.

³¹ Almagro Gorbea 1982b.

³² González Reyero 2008: 75.

³³ Bellia 2008.

³⁴ González Reyero 2008: 78, fig. 5.

known Mediterranean cultures to proposing new readings of the scenes from local perspectives.³⁵ These interpretations must be the basis for understanding some of the concepts and behaviours linked to Iberian music and also some of its social and cultural implications.

The reading of the images has also been made at two different levels: as a representation of real life practices or as depictions of afterlife, religious or mythical scenes.³⁶ Although it is impossible to assert which level of interpretation the Iberian artisans were aiming for in the scenes, there are some written sources that can back up the hypothesis that some of them represent real-life practices. A clear example is the quote by Strabo in the Third book of his *Geography* that in Northern Iberia, "... they dance to the sound of the aulos and trumpet, springing up and sinking upon the knees. In Bastetania women dance promiscuously with the men, each holding the other's hand" (Str. 3.3.7).³⁷ It is interesting that the author, at least two centuries later, described this curious pair of musicians that is not found anywhere else in the Mediterranean world, but that it is often depicted on Iberian iconography. Also, the mixed-gender dances are a testimony to the existence of the type of dances mentioned in the source.

Iberian scholars acknowledge that these complex decorated vases may portray important cultural practices and hold symbolic meanings:³⁸ a sign of the wealth of the owners who were enhancing their familial or personal status by immortalizing life moments and those rites which entitled them to claim public prestige, through the execution of the expected performative acts and the passage rites normative to both genders.³⁹ Music seems to have been, as in many cultures throughout time, an important element for the maintenance of an individual's social status and the perpetuation of symbolic values. However, in order to better understand the uses and functions of these musical practices we need to dig deeper into the meaning of the performative contexts in which the musicians are situated.

Different interpretations have been proposed for the scenes depicting musicians in portrayals relating to the masculine sphere of combats and warriors. For some authors the scenes where the musicians appear to be directly accompanying two fighters facing each other would be a reflection

³⁵ Olmos 1996a: 56.

³⁶ Olmos 1996a: 56; Perea 1996: 64-65.

³⁷ Revised translation by the authors, after *The Geography of Strabo* (see references).

³⁸ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 119.

³⁹ Rueda Galán 2013: 353-380.

of ritual combats.⁴⁰ The musicians are an important marker for the duel context, identifying it as part of a ritual or a game in which young Iberian warriors would be proving their abilities and braveness, engaged in the acquisition of masculine prestige while preparing themselves for real battle. Some of these scenes however could also be understood as masculine passage rites, since certain vases with single combat scenes also show other activities such as hunting or horse riding. These scenes could be recording that the owner (or an ancestor) had successfully accomplished the Iberian ideals of the masculine gender roles.⁴¹ This idea of the accomplishment of gender ideals could also be gathered from a different interpretation of the second type of performative contexts. In these scenes, characters of male and female gender participate, dancing holding hands to the sound of the double pipe and the trumpet. The characters are the gender ideal of the Iberian elites: high status adult women, dancing together with warrior-like male characters in what appears like public performances.⁴²

The musical duo, which plays in both of the scenes (a trumpet or horn and a reeded double pipe), is noteworthy, as it does not appear anywhere else in the Mediterranean Antiquity or in Northern and Central Europe. In this duo, a brass like instrument is invariably played by a male character. These types of instruments have been shown in the hands of male warriors in ancient times all over the Mediterranean (such as the Greek *salpinx* or the Roman *cornu* and *tuba*),⁴³ and also in Central and Northern Europe (such as the Celtic *carnyx* or the Bronze Age Baltic *lurs*).⁴⁴ In the Etruscan world, the *lituus* and the *cornu* are also always in the hands of men.⁴⁵ It is not surprising then that horn or trumpet music was played in ritual combats or games, which were a display of masculinity and warrior character.

The double pipes, however, seem to have had a more ambiguous character, although Iberian female double pipers may have been more common than men, as ten out of fifteen double pipes representations are in the hands of women. This is very significant especially considering that, all in all, from the twenty-two iconographic representations discussed, there are fourteen male performers and eleven female performers. However, it is still a very important number if we consider that the Iberian

⁴⁰ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 89-96.

⁴¹ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 90.

⁴² Aranegui Gascó 1997: 105-106; Santos Velasco 1996: 119-130.

⁴³ Holmes 2006.

⁴⁴ Holmes 1986.

⁴⁵ Holmes 2009.

gender roles seem to situate the women in a domestic sphere, in a dichotomy with the male warriors, as we can see in several artistic manifestations, such as in the stelae of La Albufereta.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, it seems that at least from the 3rd century BCE onwards females participated in public life and in the establishment of aristocratic lineages. We see them dancing in public, attending public festivities, being enthroned and even according to some interpretations, attending funerary or ritual banquets.⁴⁷ These important real female characters appear at a time when there was an increase in the number of aristocratic elites and women probably played a role in the *oikos* or transmission of the legitimacy of aristocracy.⁴⁸ However, female Iberian musicians do not only play in the mixed-gender civic or public festivities such as is seen in strong patriarchal societies with a significant gender separation (for instance, in the little-Arabized Amazigh Riff communities, it is only during weddings that women can dance, sing and participate with a freedom of expression which is not allowed publically in any other contexts). In Iberian culture, however, it seems that women have participated in public rituals with an important masculine character.

On the one hand, if we consider the mixed gender scenes, the choice of instruments or musicians could be a representation of a gender binary conception of the world: the male trumpet player and the double pipe female player stressing and reinforcing the gender division of Iberian culture. This argument is strengthened by consideration of some of the scenes, which have been interpreted as marriage celebrations,⁴⁹ a key passage rite for women.⁵⁰ By fulfilling their gender expectations, those of marriage and reproduction, they became an important component of Iberian society. In this case, an identification of the masculine-feminine dichotomy in both musical instrument and their possible symbolic meaning could be plausible. This consideration could be also extended to the nature of sound. The long conical tubes of the horns or trumpets would not generally be able to produce pitches as high as their reeded counterparts.

But how can we explain this female presence in the masculine scenes which depict moments of heroism and prestige, the fulfilment of ideals of Iberian masculinity, in a society with such division of gender roles and the

⁴⁶ Griñó Frontera 1992: 200; Olmos 1996a: 96.

⁴⁷ Such in a fragment of la Alcudia of Elche, see Santos Velasco 1996: 122, fig. 43.

⁴⁸ Santos Velasco 1996: 121.

⁴⁹ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 94-97.

⁵⁰ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 134.

relegation of women to the domestic sphere?⁵¹ One possible answer could be found in the nature of the ritual combats. It is likely that these competitions were not an isolated event, but that they would have taken place during funerals. The scenes could be then read as funerary games in honour of the dead, a ritual which would be accompanied by mourners, sacrifices and wine consumption. This proposition is supported by the funerary context of some of the scenes. Together with combats, the display of masculinity in honour of the dead would include different types of warrior display, such as single combat, horse-riding, acrobatics or warrior dances. We can see scenes of this kind in the funerary monument B from Osuna, where a horn player (Fig. 8-3c) is taking part in a scene with warriors and acrobats. The same type of ritual combat accompanied by a horn could be seen in the fragment (Fig. 8-2i) of El Castellido of Alloza,⁵² where a seated man could be the judge ensuring that combat rules were adhered to, or the symbol of the deceased witnessing the scene.⁵³ The tied bull also gives a further clue in this direction, as it is probably the future victim of a sacrifice or the prize for the victor. Also, in the funerary box of Torredonjimeno (Fig. 8-2e), there is a representation of an amphora between two musicians, which could be read as the prize for the winner of the chariot race depicted on the other face or a testimony of the wine consumption during the funerary games.⁵⁴ The scene on the *Krater of the warriors of El Cigarralejo* (Fig. 8-2f), which was found in a necropolis, has also been interpreted as a funerary warrior dance.⁵⁵ Such funerary games seem to have been important events, where ritual and music had the crucial function of legitimising social values and norms, with the public praising, and maybe elevating to an heroic status, those who had followed the cultural path established for the two Iberian genders, these being symbolically represented by the sound of the trumpet and the aulos, and, in some cases, by the female double piper and the warrior trumpet player. Music could have been a symbolic representation of these two highest ideals of gender roles, the mother and the warrior, ensuring the social cohesion, sexual and social reproduction, the transmission and perpetuation of cultural values and the legitimisation of the ruling elites by the enhancement of the prestige of the rulers of both genders.

One source pointing in this direction is the example of the music and dances used in Nyakyusa funerals. These performances not only have an

⁵¹ Olmos 1996b: 96; Aranegui Gascó 1997: 100-106; Santos Velasco 1996: 119.

⁵² Pericot 1979: fig. 418; Lucas Pellicer 1995: 889.

⁵³ Fuentes Albero 2009: 80-82.

⁵⁴ García Serrano 1968-1969: 230-238.

⁵⁵ Blázquez 2001-2002: 171-176.

important function in the releasing of emotional tensions, but also in sexual reproduction. The Nyakyusa are an ethnic group from Southern Tanzania and Northern Malawi. According to the interpretation by Metcalf and Huntington (1993: 34-42) of the funeral festivities described by Godfrey Wilson in 1939, they consisted mainly in sacrifices, feasting, music and dances. The wailing, done by women, begun at the time of death, continued until the deceased was buried, three or four days later. While the wailing decreased, the dances and music became more and more significant. Young men, dressed in special customs, wearing ankle bells and holding spears, performed these dances, which were done in the way of the traditional warrior dance. There were also women around the dancing youths, raising a war cry and cheering the dancers. Although there seemed to be no signs of grief, the Nyakyusa consider that they are mourning the dead. Nyakyusa men said that they dance to honour the deceased, who was also great warrior, a powerful man of the spear. If the deceased was a woman, they said that she gave birth to warriors. But the funeral dances have an important sexual component. The movements expressed the virility and courage of the dancers themselves. Male strength and courage were emphasized in contrast to female fear, and violent incidents were common. This music and dance was not only a way of expressing and liberating strong emotions or an act of honouring the warlike qualities and virility of the dead man, but also a display of the masculinity of young Nyakyusas in front of the large audience which was made up of young women from several villages (as everyone over ten years must attend, or they would be accused of being responsible for the death by witchcraft). The ritual was, therefore, a perfect occasion for the choosing of future mates while increasing the virile prestige of certain young men among the Nyakyusa community.

However, other explanations can be found for the presence of woman in funerary or masculine contexts. In order to have a deeper understanding of these female musicians, we must try to answer to the question of who were these female performers by looking at Mediterranean parallels and other types of Iberian iconographic evidence.

Female Characters and Double Pipes

The percentage of the representations which depict female musicians in Iberian products is very relevant and must be taken into consideration, together with the fact that all ten female musicians in Iberian depictions are playing a double pipe, while there are five men playing the instrument out of the fifteen male musicians represented. Although Greek cultures

had important influence in artistic productions and in other aspects of Iberian society, the role of female musicians in Greece is not an easy source for comparison or analogy. In Greece, the vast majority of female performers were private professional musicians who had the status of courtesans, playing in banquets and other private social events.⁵⁶ This is especially true when it comes to *aulétris* or female double pipe players, their instrument becoming a symbol of the very profession of courtesans. Moreover, there are no female musicians performing in public or in musical competitions (with some remarkable exceptions well after the Classical period), and, as in the theatre, they were not allowed to have artistic public roles once married.⁵⁷ However significantly, it is attested through inscription that, even if rare, some female aulos players were hired in the temples of certain cults, being permanent staff at the temples. There are inscriptions in the Delos sanctuary, dating to the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE, which tell of the existence of female musicians with specific salaries. In some cases, it is shown that some female players were exercising their profession within the temple for twenty years. Inscriptions at the Pergamon Sanctuary dated to the 2nd century BCE also attest the presence of such players for the cult of the goddess Athena, and also at Sardis for the cult of Artemis.⁵⁸ Moreover, in Magna Graecia, there are important numbers of finds of terracotta female musicians, both alone or playing in duos or trios, quite similar to the slip-cast plaques found in Iberian contexts (unlike the hand-made goddess of la Serreta). For instance, at Gela, forty-two offerings of clay statuettes representing female *aulétris* were identified, together with other types of musicians, at the Sanctuary of Fontana Calda. These “votive offerings”, dated from the 6th to the 3rd centuries BCE, are connected to a ritual practice in relation to female activities (as is also shown by the other types of material record), especially for young women, and could have been linked to passage or initiation rites such as marriage, fertility, protection during pregnancy and growth. It has also been suggested that these cults were connected to female divinities, and hence to Artemis and Nymphs from the 4th century BCE.⁵⁹

An even closer source of comparisons is the iconography of female aulos players from the Phoenician-Punic world. The dates of the representation of female figures playing double pipes and frame drums in the Levant, range from the 10th to the 7th centuries BCE, and are especially

⁵⁶ Bélis 1999: 41-43.

⁵⁷ Bélis 1999: 50-53.

⁵⁸ Bélis 1999: 41-42.

⁵⁹ Bellia 2008: 231-232 and 234.

abundant in Phoenician contexts.⁶⁰ These figures have close connections with other types of terracotta statuettes portraying a mother-goddess or *Dea nutrix*, maybe Astarte, often represented holding her breasts, or pregnant women holding children or birds. It is true, however, that the presence of double pipes among these figurines is less frequent in comparison to that of the frame drums, but their representations are strikingly similar to some of the Iberian examples. They are associated with the Astarte cult, and in connection with fertility, sexuality and the practice of sacred prostitution in the temples.⁶¹ These figures are not considered deities, but objects with other significance, which reflected the probable existence of female musicians. They would have a function in the temples as musicians and performers of the sacred marriage through the practice of ritual intercourse. Although it is problematic to assert in the Iberian context that some representations could be interpreted as a possible hierogamy between a hero and a goddess. In the reliefs of Pozo Moro⁶² the sexual intercourse between a hero and a goddess could be a symbolic representation of a religious act similar to that in Mesopotamian and Levantine practices. There, ritual intercourse might have been performed between the male elites and the temple musician priestess, a cultic practice related to Inanna or Ištar, the goddess of love, fertility and warfare, a deity similar to Astarte. In the Iberian Peninsula, the famous *puellae gaditanae*, Iberian female professional dancers and musicians, famous throughout the Roman Empire, could be interpreted as a continuation of the institution of the sacred prostitution of the cult of Astarte in Gadis.⁶³

In the Western Mediterranean, the presence of female terracotta musicians in Phoenician-Punic contexts is even more interesting. A total of 68 figurines holding musical instruments coming from Iberia, Ibiza and Carthage have been analysed recently.⁶⁴ From them, 66 represent females and the other two satyrs.⁶⁵ In total, there are 27 double pipers (25 of them females), for a total of 36 percussionists.⁶⁶ Eighteen figurines (dated from the 5th-to the 3rd centuries BCE), have been recovered in Ibiza,⁶⁷ coming

⁶⁰ Braun 2002: 118-145.

⁶¹ The practice of sacred prostitution has been questioned in the extensive work of Budin 2008. Nevertheless, the author does not deny the existence of ritual intercourse in the temples in the Near East, but with the use of the term, its wide acceptance and its implications.

⁶² Olmos 1996c: 111.

⁶³ Olmos 1991: 100-109.

⁶⁴ López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2016.

⁶⁵ López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2016: 45.

⁶⁶ López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2016: 46.

⁶⁷ López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2012: 395.

mainly from the cemetery of Puig des Molins and the shrines of Es Culleram and Puig d'en Valls. In contrast with the Levantine findings, in these Western contexts there is a more even representation of frame drums and double pipes (ten female tambourine players to eight double pipe players).⁶⁸ According to López-Bertran and Garcia-Ventura,⁶⁹ these votive offerings are interpreted as representations of real-life female practices, in the light of some written references and archaeological contexts of female musicians. A high-rank tomb in Carthage, probably of a priestess buried with her pair of cymbals, along with inscriptions on the cymbals that indicate a music-cultic practice in honour of Astarte was practised there, the cymbals and inscriptions being two key indicators of the veracity of this proposition. It is likely as well that music was performed in the cave shrines, such as Es Culleram, during rituals, in probable association with the fertility cults, as is attested by the important number of female figurines. But what is even more interesting for our case study is the presence of these figurines also in the necropolis at Puig des Molins, which could indicate the existence of funerary processions, where music and dance were performed by female musicians accompanying the female mourners.

The connections between these Phoenician practices and the ones shown in Iberian contexts seem clear, not only for direct analogies due to similarities in the material remains and their chronologies, but also because of long cultural contacts between the two societies. The existence of a prominent *Dea Nutrix* or Mother goddess in the Iberian world, her intimate connection with Astarte and her attributes such as birds, children or fertility symbols is widely asserted. Moreover, the findings at Puig des Molins demonstrate a direct link between mortuary practices and female players, such as existed in the Iberian world; evidence of a bond between these ritual practices. Even more striking is the fact that the presence of male players in Ibiza is reduced to two satyrs or dwarfs playing the double pipes in a funerary context and this can be compared to the child or dwarf playing a double pipe in the warrior dance with masks from the Krater from the cemetery of Cigarralejo (Fig. 8-2f). Masks were also an important component of Punic funerary rituals,⁷⁰ and this representation could be a direct indication of shared ritual practices between Phoenician-Punic and Iberian communities.

⁶⁸ López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2012: 396.

⁶⁹ López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2012: 398-402 and 2016: 51-52.

⁷⁰ Blázquez 2001-2001: 172; López-Bertran / Garcia-Ventura 2008: 27-36.

However, there is a remarkable peculiarity in the Iberian world, which is the total absence of frame drums in the iconographies.⁷¹ Even if certain cultural practices seem to have been shared with their Punic-Phoenician neighbours and other indigenous peoples from the Western Mediterranean such as in Magna Graecia, Iberians kept a clear cultural identity by choosing only the double pipe as their characteristic female instrument. This adds to the curious pair mentioned above, formed by the male trumpet player and the female double pipe player, which is, as we have mentioned, also exclusive to Iberian contexts.

Priestesses and Musicians?

As in the Greek, Phoenician and Punic worlds, both in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, these players could be linked to some kind of female priesthood or sacred role such as officiants of a female deity.⁷² The possible existence of such priestesses is not excluded in Iberian scholarship.⁷³ This female priesthood could have been connected with specific cultic spaces or rituals dedicated to the Mother goddess. According to Griño,⁷⁴ maybe some young women belonging to the aristocracies would serve in the temples for some time, and were immortalised in the form of the sitting *Damas* of high status, elevating themselves to parity with the figure of the goddess. After their time serving the temple, they would marry and return to private life. But considering the range of ages that we see in the female players, this probably was not the case, as they would have acquired a valuable skill which could not be easily substituted. Moreover, with the exception of one of the Osuna reliefs (Fig. 8-3d), the Iberian *aulétris* are represented as adult women. Iconographically, the priestess can be detected by high status elements in clothing⁷⁵ and from particular objects linked to cultic activities such as the aulos. They commonly wear long tunics, frequently

⁷¹ Recently, Carmen Aranegui Gascó (2014: 320-323) has interpreted certain shields present in musical scenes as frame drums. In our opinion, the identification is not pertinent. On the one hand, the very image of men with frame drums in the Mediterranean basin would be a remarkable exception with no historical or cultural explanation. On the other hand, the “frame drum” players are holding weapons in the other hand, it thus being impossible to perform on the instrument.

⁷² Prados Torreira 2007: 59; Izquierdo Peraile / Prados Torreira 2004: 255.

⁷³ Chapa Brunet / Madrigal Belinchón 1997; Prados Torreira / Izquierdo Peraile 2002-2003: 17-19; Izquierdo Peraile / Prados Torreira 2004: 257.

⁷⁴ Griño 1992: 213.

⁷⁵ Aranegui Gascó 1996: 107-118.

with bells, collars, earrings, capes, and cape and bonnet to cover their hair when they are adults.⁷⁶ The high social status of the Iberian *aulétris*,⁷⁷ which stress their probable association with a sacred role or priestly cast, is defined by the finest characters and garments of aristocratic Iberians, the ones of the *Damas*, which were representations of the ideal Iberian female model. We cannot know if these professional priestess and musicians were married but, married or not, their garments and attitude are markers of the highest rank and prestige of Iberian society, thus identifying them as the idealized women of Iberian culture.⁷⁸

In fact, the representation which more clearly points to the sacred role of the double pipe player is to be found in the terracotta plaque of la Serreta (Fig. 8-3a). It has been interpreted as two female adults and two young children being presented to the goddess, maybe a ritual of *symtrophia* (male children having the rite the same day, and taking the same milk of the goddess are *symtrophoi*). Thus the social inclusion of the two young men is being extended beyond mere family ties, increasing the social cohesion of the group.⁷⁹ However, another interpretation is possible as it could be seen as an exclusively feminine religious event. The children also seem to be wearing long tunics and that would not be the case for male children if we accept the interpretation of the *Danza Bastetana* relief as a family portrait with different age groups being represented.⁸⁰ The iconography could be showing women and female children in front of a goddess. It would not then be symbol of the mother presenting her children to the protective Mother-Goddess, but rather the initiation of the young girls to the sacred profession of double pipe player. It is considered that the life expectancy of Iberian women was between 21 and 30 years⁸¹ and that young unmarried girls also had the skills to perform in public rituals. This is suggested in the *Aulétris* of Osuna, who still has her hair and head uncovered, thus not having undergone the rite of passage into adulthood. Young ladies probably became adult around the age of fifteen,⁸² through marriage or maybe with the onset of puberty, so they probably started playing at an earlier age, as the reeded double pipes are remarkably difficult to play. These girls then, entering the service of the

⁷⁶ Rueda Galán 2013; Rueda Galán et al. 2016: 25-31.

⁷⁷ Aranegui Gascó 1996: 108-110.

⁷⁸ Rueda Galán 2013; Rueda Galán et al. 2016: 39; Izquierdo Peraile 2008: 127-128.

⁷⁹ Olmos 2000-2001: 366.

⁸⁰ Olmos 1996b: 94.

⁸¹ Aranegui Gascó 2012: 111.

⁸² Rueda Galán 2016: 24.

goddess, would be trained to play the instrument during childhood⁸³ and become accomplished performers as young girls, still playing into adulthood. This scenario would identify the sacred character of the *aulétris* and establish her connection with some kind of priesthood or goddess cult. These girls, probably belonging to the aristocracies, could have been associated with sanctuaries since childhood, where they learnt the art of playing the aulos and acquired the other knowledge needed to become officiants. Once that knowledge was acquired, they could participate in public rituals, such as festivities or marriages, funerary games or ritual combats, and probably perform also in daily religious activities in the cult of the Mother goddess.

The Uses and Functions of the Double Pipers: Mix Gender Dances, Masculine Contexts and the Afterlife

How may this connection between the female double pipers and the Iberian Mother goddess explain the presence of female double pipe players in different public contexts? Firstly, if these female players are priestesses or are initiates in the sacred service of the Mother goddess, their presence in the public mixed-gender dances, may be in the context of marriage celebrations, an invocation of the fertility of the earth for the new couple seems to be a likely inference. Performing together with a horn-playing male musician, who embodied the masculine, both worlds, feminine and masculine would be brought together, thus encapsulating the central ideals of Iberian female and Iberian male, these being symbolized in the instruments, their sound, as a sacred union echoing the gender-binary Iberian world. It could even be a symbolic translation of sacred intercourse between the masculine hero and the goddess, the trumpet being a masculine instrument, connected to warfare and masculine fertility in many parts of Europe.⁸⁴

In addition, there is a connection which serves to deepen our understanding of the presence of female priestesses playing double pipes in masculine contexts, probably connected to a deceased character or funerary games. The Iberian goddess is, principally, a nourishing mother who ensures fertility for womankind and protection for children. However, as were her Phoenician counterparts Astarte and Tanit, she is closely connected to the dead, which explain why this feminine divinity was important not only for the female Iberians, but also for males, as it is

⁸³ Chapa Brunet 2002: 130.

⁸⁴ Holmes 1986, 2006 and 2009; Jiménez Pasalodos 2013.

evidenced in funerary contexts and cave shrines and sanctuaries, where both female and male votive offerings are present.⁸⁵

As we have seen, in the Iberian world there is also a clear association between double pipes and the mortuary sphere. The funerary monument of Alcoi (Fig. 8-3g), the terracotta *aulétris* statuettes from the necropolis of el Cigarralejo (Fig. 8-3b) and la Albufereta and the *aulétris* of the funerary monument of Osuna (Fig. 8-3d) are the clearest evidence of this connection. Also confirming this link is the Patera of Santiesteban del Puerto (Fig. 8-4), a magnificent silver libation Patera, which combines Hellenized elements together with local features.⁸⁶ It appeared as part of a treasure with an uncertain chronology of around the 2nd century BCE. This has been interpreted as having a funerary significance due to the appearance of the warrior who is portrayed being engulfed by a wolf and spiders. The afterlife landscape contains a cortege of centaurs, which seems to have a funerary significance such as one sees in southern Italian iconography. One interesting characteristic is that many of these Hellenistic centaurs are female, some of them playing musical instruments such as the frame drum and the aulos. Such female centaur musicians are not a common iconographic motif in the Classical world. Moreover, this connection of female performers and funerary contexts can be also asserted a century earlier in the Iberian world, not only in the monuments discussed, but in an important group of Greek vases which appear in funerary contexts.

Most of the iconography discussed belongs to the end of the 3rd-1st centuries BCE, with only the funerary monument of Alcoi belonging to an earlier period, but this being without clear provenance. However, one Century before this time, Iberian elites were importing Greek vases and other products with musical depictions and this can help us better understand the importance of female double pipe performers among the Iberians. Even if we can talk of a regular trade from the second half of the 5th century BCE, the majority of imported Greek vases date to the second quarter of the 4th century BCE, when there is a remarkable increase of Greek pottery in Iberian sites, especially in princely graves with large quantities of imported vases. It seems that these vases became very popular and that is why they appear in high quantities in Iberian archaeological contexts.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Izquierdo Peraile / Prados Torreira 2004: 253.

⁸⁶ Jaeggi 2004: 55-58.

⁸⁷ Domínguez / Sánchez 2001: 434.



Fig. 8-4: Patera of Perotito (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid.
Photo: Antonio Trigo Arnall).

One of the most abundant types of such vases, after Red-Figure cups, are the Attic Bell Kraters. These vases, different kinds of attic vases with red and black figures, were made in Greece especially to supply the Iberian market. The quality of the vases and their depictions is inferior to the products that are found in Greece and other areas, but Iberian elites were eager to accept these products. According to Carmen Sánchez,⁸⁸ the majority of bell-kraters found in the area of Andalusia depict Dionysian and Symposion scenes, followed, but in very low numbers, by *Amazonomachiai* (Amazon battles) and *Gryphomachiai* (battles with griffins) and a very scant scattering of mythological subjects. Iberian elites seem to have chosen kraters with specific scenes which are mainly Dionysiac (50%) and symposions with musical scenes (30%). All in all, 80% of the vases that they were importing show musical scenes. The scenes lack of narrative intention and the characters are commonly unrecognisable, with ambiguous attributes.⁸⁹ They are more likely representing atmospheres of festivity, maybe subscribing to the image that Iberians held of their afterlife.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Domínguez / Sánchez 2001: 433-441.

⁸⁹ Domínguez / Sánchez 2001: 439.

⁹⁰ Sánchez Fernández 1996: 75-80.

The scenes lack, in the largest part, those common attributes needed to decode the characters or the narrative, as they were made for the Iberian market, which was not *au fait* with Greek subjects and were facilitating an 'Iberian reading'.⁹¹ From the 4th century BCE, the kraters are very present in funerary contexts, as an exogenous and prestige element, which loses its use and original meaning. The krater is commonly used as funerary urn, like in Baza or Tutigi in Granada, with a symbolic reformulation of the materials and of the iconographic content. The presence of Greek vases alongside funerary goods indicates the existence of a banquet or wine consumption in funerary contexts, maybe represented in the *symposion* scenes. Women appear to participate in these ritual banquets together with men,⁹² and maybe also as musicians. If we take into account the particularities mentioned above and the archaeological contexts, we have to agree with Sánchez Fernández's suggestion of a clear reinterpretation of the scenes through the medium of Iberian cultural practices.⁹³ Most of the contexts are funerary ones and Iberians sometimes acquired vases to use them in ritual spaces, as grave goods or as cinerary urns.

The Greek vases had a funerary function in the Iberian world and a defined social prestige. Dionysiac scenes are, as we have seen the most common, and, according to Sánchez Fernández (1996), seem to have, as in Etruria and Campania, mortuary significance. Maenads and satyrs dance and play instruments such as *tympanon* and cymbals. *Symposion* scenes also cannot be interpreted as the simple incorporation of an everyday event in Iberian life, but may have also had a funerary meaning in the Iberian world, again as in Southern Italy, reflecting maybe an Afterlife landscape or mortuary ceremonies celebrated to honour the dead, as they also have in Etruria and Campania. They are an image of hero creation and reflect social status.

More interestingly, on the bell-kraters which contained the most complex scenes that Iberians were acquiring, there is an important display of women dancing or playing double pipes (hetairas and maenads). What all these scenes have in common is that the music is one of the main protagonists. In the *symposion*, the female double pipers stand in the middle of the scenes as central characters and, in Dionysian corteges, maenads dance to the rhythm of cymbals and *tympana*, and sometimes the aulos. From all the Greek representations of musicians, Iberians are choosing scenes with female performers. The function of this pottery is varied and not fixed, and we find the same shapes of vessels in

⁹¹ Domínguez / Sánchez 2001: 457.

⁹² Rueda Galán et al. 2016: 39.

⁹³ Sánchez Fernández 1996: 75-80.

necropolises, temples and domestic spaces, but they are products designed to satisfy the demand from the urban elites who acquire pieces with decorative value, probably made specifically for them.⁹⁴ However, the figurative vases are rare, in comparison with those with floral or geometric decoration. If the Iberians were not reading the banquet and Dionysian scenes like the Greeks did, they were, maybe, interpreting them as part of their funeral festivities, like the ones represented in the Iberian products mentioned above. The Dionysian cortege could signify dances and music in honour of the dead, and the *symposion* scenes the funerary banquets accompanied by the double pipe player, as it is likely that the Iberians also feasted during funerals and that women participated in these activities.⁹⁵

If these female players were priestesses or mediators of the goddess their presence in funerary games and rituals, scenes that praise the conquests of the deceased, funerary monuments and grave goods is even more explicable. The feminine double pipes playing either together with the masculine trumpet or on its own, both accompanying the funerary games or the deeds of the defunct heroes, performed the symbolic union between the goddess and the warrior. This performance may have been understood as a symbol of the deceased's special connection to the divine hierarchies (and in consequence, that of his lineage). This could be the case on the *Pithos* of la Serreta (Fig. 8-2d), where different warrior and aristocratic activities or passage rites are accompanied by the sound of the double piper and the probable presence of the goddess represented as a bird. We could also apply this interpretation to other depictions where the musicians seem not to be associated with the combat scenes, as in the *Vase 113* of TSM (Fig. 8-2b). Not only may the aulos be read here as a sign of mythologization or hero-worship of the past,⁹⁶ but also as an embodiment of the symbolic conceptions associated with the instrument and its sound. The aulos playing would not only bring prestige to the deceased, but would connect him and his lineage to the sacred sound of the goddess, who would praise the life of the dead man for his fulfilment of the gender role assigned to him in Iberian society, and thus, ensuring the continuity of the cultural values linked with masculinity and warfare.

Finally, these female players were probably not only involved in the Iberian rituals of life and death, but, through their images, they accompany the deceased in the tomb, both as a symbol of female or male model lives and achievements and as a symbolic representation of the protection of the

⁹⁴ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 143.

⁹⁵ Santos Velasco 1996: 121 and fig. 43.

⁹⁶ Aranegui Gascó 1997: 94.

goddess herself⁹⁷ with an apotropaic meaning related to the elites of both genders, as mothers and protectors of the aristocratic lineages or as warriors.

Conclusions

Music was present in the circle of life and death for the Iberians, and female performers had an important symbolic role, which reinforced social cohesion, the transmission and perpetuation of cultural values and the legitimisation of the ruling elites.

The images of female characters participating in public rituals as musicians and probably, officiants or priestess of some of the Mother goddess' cults, demonstrate the existence of a feminine cultural role outside the domestic space. These women, even if only a minority in the Iberian world, had a prominent social responsibility and seem to have been present in some of the most important moments of the individuals and of the community, ensuring the continuation of culture and the maintenance of Iberian social structure. Their musical instrument, the double pipes, became symbolically associated with these roles, religious beliefs and ceremonial practices. Despite their connections with other practices from the Mediterranean basin, Iberian music and cults highlight indigenous cultural practices with a strong local cultural identity. The double pipes appear together with the trumpet and horn, in a combination unknown in any other context in antiquity, and can be understood as a representation of the ideals of gender roles in Iberian society, those that only the aristocracies could fulfil.

The pair of musicians is perhaps pointing to a binary worldview, transmitted through all those cultural manifestations which ensured the continuity of moral and social values and the perpetuation of Iberian elites, and thus, the continuity of social reproduction. However, in masculine scenes, the playing of the double pipe is not universally the prerogative of female musicians as males are sometimes depicted as performers on this instrument.⁹⁸ The duality masculine-feminine, or hero-goddess, may have

⁹⁷ Almagro Gorbea 1982: 181.

⁹⁸ Nevertheless, we can make yet another interpretation of the portrayals of masculine double pipe players. In the Punic-Phoenician findings in Ibiza, female characters with the exception of the two played by satyrs, all play the double pipes. If we interpret the musicians of the Krater of El Cigarralejo as children or dwarfs (Cuadrado 1982: 172), this could indicate some kind of cultural practice where certain males were also dedicated to the religious service of the goddess. Perhaps, these masculine double pipe players were men particularly unfit for combat,

been, regardless of the gender of the performers, represented through the musical instruments themselves. This pair of musical instruments and, consequently their sound, were the very manifestation of the ideology of the elites. Their timbres blended together, in a music which was not only used to accompany their ritual dances but that may have been seen as converging the two universes, the feminine and the masculine, crucial to the very success of Iberian culture. The mother and the warrior as the two axes of the ideal world was embodied in the sound of the double pipe and the trumpet.

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