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# MUSIC IN ART

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR MUSIC ICONOGRAPHY

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## EDITOR

ZDRAVKO BLAŽEKOVIĆ

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## THE RECEPTION OF HELLENISTIC MUSICAL ICONOGRAPHY IN THE IBERIAN ART: THE PATERA OF SANTISTEBAN DEL PUERTO

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**1. THE PATERA OF SANTISTEBAN DEL PUERTO (ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT).** The Patera of Santisteban del Puerto constitutes one of the most magnificent examples of silver-smithing in Hispanic ancient art.<sup>1</sup> It was fortuitously found in the county of Jaén (ancient Oretania) in 1917 by farmers working in the fields of a state named Perotito. This ceremonial bowl is part of a “treasure” composed of different pieces of jewellery and silver cups, which attracted the scholarly attention, since it was the biggest and the best preserved object.<sup>2</sup> Treasures such as this one, are usually an intentional accumulation of hidden and buried objects, probably due to an imminent danger, a practice quite widespread in the upper Guadalquivir. The patera is an exceptional artefact for its theme and stylistic singularities: it constitutes a key work to understand the late Iberian world and its iconography, as well as the use of a plastic language that merged purely Iberian aspects with features from other Mediterranean cultures. In short, the patera displays the most outstanding Greco-Iberian cultural symbiosis on a work of art known so far.

The patera is decorated with a mixture of Iberian and Hellenistic motifs, what has puzzled scholars since its discovery [fig. 1]. The omphalos has a motif of local roots (a wolf devouring a human head surrounded by snakes) encircled by two friezes separated by a band of bead-and-reel. The first frieze, of smaller proportions, presents nine hunting scenes divided by stylised *tropea* in which *putti* seem to be interacting with hounds and hares. The second frieze shows nine centaurs separated by trees in a procession or *thiasos*, represented in a clockwise direction. Four of the nine figures play musical instruments: one centauress blows the aulos, another one hits the cymbals and a third one is holding a *tympanum*, while a centaur strikes the lyre with a *plectrum*. The rest of the figures hold in their hands a tray of fruits, a crater, a torch and a patera. The rim of the object is decorated by a wave band and a line of dots, both of them highlighted in gilded silver, as well as some of the figures.

There is a lack of consensus among scholars regarding the chronology of the patera. The earliest studies concerning the object dated it to the Roman times, and especially to the Augustan period.<sup>3</sup> However, as it was later discovered, it is an Iberian patera, dated to the second or first century BC on the basis of a small Iberian graffiti that has been interpreted to be the initials of its owner, although the patera itself could have been made earlier, around the third century BC, as it has been indicated in the catalogue of the Museo Arqueológico Nacional in Madrid. The patera was made from a sheet of silver, shaped by hammering from the reverse side to possibly replicate an imported ritual object that the local craftsman used as a mold, probably with the intention to mimic the foreign artefact.<sup>4</sup>

Although the context of its discovery (concealment) does not allow us to establish provenance or a specific function, the characteristics of the object led authors to consider it to be luxury goods associated with funerary libations.<sup>5</sup> This hypotheses are currently being revised. In any case, the refined technique shown on this silverware should be undoubtedly placed in relation to an individual or individuals of the highest hierarchy in the Iberian society.



1. Patera of Santisteban del Puerto, obverse (Iberian culture, 250-76 BC). Silver,  $\varnothing$  = 17.2 cm; height = 2.8 cm; weight = 197.74 gr. Madrid, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, 1917/39/1. Photograph by Antonio Trigo Arnal.

**2. SOME THOUGHTS ON THE IBERIAN ICONOGRAPHIC REPERTOIRE.** Ancient Greeks named “Iberians”, in a generic sense, were the civilised peoples who occupied the territory that today is still called the Iberian Peninsula; strictly speaking, the designation corresponds to the settlers of different origins who occupied the south and east of the peninsula, and developed a heterogeneous urban culture that had close contacts with Greeks, Carthaginians and finally merged with the Roman culture. According to Martín Almagro Gorbea, the Iberian world experienced an evolution comparable to that of other Mediterranean cultures: although its peculiarities reflect Phoenician, Greek, Punic and Roman influences, its own social and aristocratic structures survived for a long time.<sup>6</sup>

Since Iberian writing system has not been deciphered yet, the best way to get close to ancient culture of this region is by analysing its funeral world, cemeteries and grave goods.<sup>7</sup> Male sculptures, series of real and fantastic animals, battle scenes, and myths abound in Iberian works of art associated with the underworld. In many cases, the presence of music can be perceived in the depiction of musical instruments, especially the *auloi*, with people playing it and dancing to its sound.





2. Patera of the Wolf, Treasure of Tivissa (Iberina culture, 250–195 BC). Silver,  $\varnothing = 32$  cm; height 16.3 cm. Found in 1927 at Castellet de Banyoles (Tivissa, Ribera d'Ebre, Catalonia). Barcelona, Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya, MAC BCN-019445.

The representation of animals – real and fantastic – was a frequent topic in the Iberian art, appearing in different media (ceramics, stone sculpture, terracotta figurines, metal, coins).<sup>8</sup> The Iberians came to worship a series of fantastic beasts through their contacts with Greeks and Phoenicians: griffins, sphinxes, sirens and anthropomorphic bulls, such as the so-called “Bicha de Balazote”.<sup>9</sup> According to Juan A. Santos Velasco, the Iberian imagery used animals in their “iconographic code to construct allegories about human behaviour”<sup>10</sup> and forged archetypes or metaphors of gender and role among the members of the elites.

Among the naturalistic representations of animals in the Iberian repertoire, important were canids. Wolves, generally of fierce appearance, were often depicted in confrontation with man, scenes that have been interpreted as a heroic fight, and not hunting episodes.<sup>11</sup> The representation of the battle between man and wolf, and its main iconographic formulas, show the triumph of the hero against the monster allowing him to demonstrate its qualities (strength, courage, fierceness, speed, sagacity) that are also representative of the warrior elite.<sup>12</sup> To convey these aspects, artisans used a series of aesthetic resources, such as the oversized dimensions of the animal or the inclusion of hyper-realistic expressions, such as the way wolves open the jaws and other hyperbolic anatomical details.<sup>13</sup>

The wolf as a motif in the Iberian iconography has been usually associated with funerary contexts, similar to the role of the lion in the Greco-Roman world.<sup>14</sup> It was used as a funerary image (in tombs and grave goods), as an emblem of belonging to a certain ethnic group (on shields, pectoral and coins) and it highlighted the value of the animal in the Iberian set of rituals, possibly as an evocation of the priest-shaman in



3. Patera of the Carniseer, Treasure of Tivissa (Iberian culture, 250/225–195 BC). Silver and gold,  $\varnothing = 17.3$ ; height 3.7 cm. Found in 1927 at Castellet de Banyoles, Tarragona. Barcelona, Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya, MAC-BCN-19449.

charge of carrying out initiatory rites.<sup>15</sup> The patera of Santisteban del Puerto would be linked to the funerary world, being an icon of apotropaic nature that protects the grave and, therefore, is associated with death and the life cycle. “The wolf is, thus, a figure related to the afterlife, as a funerary animal, associated with the world of the dead and guardian of it. In the initiation rituals, the master-wolf receives young people who must die to a previous life in order to reach another position or status within the social group they belong to. These ceremonies could have been carried out in caves, as symbolic entrances to the underworld, full of potential risks.”<sup>16</sup>

Ceramics found in La Alcudia present numerous images of wolves' heads and protomes, occasionally accompanied by birds: the warrior from La Alcudia shows in his torso a pectoral piece with a fierce wolf protome in the centre.<sup>17</sup> The motif has a long tradition in the Iberian world, as can be seen in the decoration depicted in the falcatas of Cabecico del Tesoro (Verdolay, Murcia) and the so-called “bronzes from Máquiz”.<sup>18</sup> Most scholars consider that wolves should be interpreted as a symbol of the warrior's bravery or as an emblem of a family clan.<sup>19</sup> The animal has its negative and positive qualities (wild and dangerous/strong and fierce).<sup>20</sup> It has been also linked with a goddess in Elche at the southeast of the peninsula.<sup>21</sup> When depicted in the same size as a human being or when appears as a winged creature (then called “carnassier” or butcher) the animal acquires a fantastic nature.<sup>22</sup>



4. Patera of Medusa from Titulcia (350-220 BC). Embossing and engraving in silver and gold,  $\varnothing$  = 18 cm. Museo Arqueológico Regional de la Comunidad de Madrid. Photograph by Mario Torquemada.

In addition to the wolf, the dog (another canid) had also a significant role in the Iberian society, since prehistory. Dogs were present in Phoenician-Punic rituals, especially in the context of the dead and those performed by the aristocratic elite. They were considered to be guardians of houses, sanctuaries, storage, lineages, tombs and cattle. Wolves were a danger to herds while dogs were the protectors, establishing a symbolic dichotomy of good/evil, an ambiguity expressed within the same animal genus.<sup>23</sup> While it seems clear that dogs are present in artistic representations that show a domestic context or a hunting scene, it is difficult to differentiate between the two canids in other cases, due to the already mentioned life/death duality. This is particularly problematic in ritual and funerary contexts, where the theme acquires greater semantic complexity and its interpretation can be susceptible to dubious analysis.

In the ideological discourse of the Iberian aristocracy, the warrior stands as a defender against Evil (war, hunger, natural disasters, and social upheavals), and a symbolic figure that overcomes ancestral fears.<sup>24</sup> This premise explains the emphasis on violent struggles between warriors and, above all, the confrontation of man and wolf, as evidenced by the sculptural group from El Pajarillo de Huelma (Jaén) or the vases from San Miguel de Liria (Valencia). In the second century BC, the “fight against evil” was embodied by the dark forces of Nature, including wolves and hybrid beings that became more frequent in artistic representations.

The role of music and its iconography in the Iberian world has been analysed from different points of view.<sup>25</sup> Archaeological studies have highlighted the social function of music as a vehicle that allowed passing



1a. Patera of Santisteban de Perotito. Central section: Wolf devouring man.

on the collective memory of a human group and as an expression of its values.<sup>26</sup> Iberian iconography offers us a vision of music as a plural act, in which numerous characters intervene, enabling the development of collective rituals and processions in which women played an important role.<sup>27</sup>

The recent doctoral dissertation by Fernando Guarch i Bordes offers an overview on the subject of music in the Iberian world, approaching the topic from the perspective of musicology, including a broad catalogue of musical representations and artefacts associated with ritual music performance.<sup>28</sup> The author raised here some interesting questions concerning the size of instruments in comparison with the musician holding it; the position of the hands on the instruments; the use of different artistic resources to portray music in a variety of media and techniques; and the association (or discrimination) of a specific instrument with a gender (male or female). However, he has not mentioned the Patera of Santisteban del Puerto or the centaur-musicians that decorate it, possibly because its style and iconography seem closer to the Greek world.

In Jorge García Cardiel's work on *auleteres* that he calls "Iberian flutists" he states that music could have been an effective vehicle of integration or exclusion in the society.<sup>29</sup> He concludes that the great number of female players of *auloi* in Iberian art may have alluded to their role as "transmitters of social memory through their songs and music".<sup>30</sup> Although we agree with the author's view on the role of these musicians as promoters of cohesion in the community, we fail to see the aerophone as the most appropriate instrument to perpetuate the collective memory.<sup>31</sup> If their role would have been similar to that of the Greek Muses (Mnemosyne's daughters) or to that of the professional *aoidos*, the most suitable instrument for this purpose would have been a chordophone. In our opinion, the female Iberian musicians could have contributed to the sacralisation or ritualization of certain moments and collective celebrations, and would have probably been linked to a social behaviour inherited from previous generations, despite not being analogous to a Greek rhapsodes or *aoidos*.



1b-f. Patera of Santisteban del Puerto, details: Eros hunting; centaur playing the double aulos; centaur playing cymbals; centaur playing the kythara; centauress playing the tympanon. Photographs by Antonio Trigo Arnal.

**3. THE PATERA OF SANTISTEBAN DEL PUERTO: ICONOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS.** The patera shows a mixture of Iberian and Hellenistic motifs which have disconcerted scholars since its discovery. Hence, it is a *unicum*, an extraordinary object for its iconography that raises many questions regarding its interpretation, especially since its archaeological context has been lost. Griñó and Olmos have researched the patera for many years, and pointed out that its iconographic programme was used to describe the blessed and happy life of the dead nobleman in the underworld, which would include hunting, banqueting, music, wine, festive conversation, and occasional drunkenness.<sup>32</sup>

**3.1. IBERIAN MOTIF: THE CANID AS CENTRAL EMBLEM.** As mentioned above, the recurrent presence of wolves in Iberian iconography appears in a diversity of media and its interpretation, although subjected to a plurality of archaeological contexts, has been linked to the funerary world.

The central umbo of the Patera de Santisteban del Puerto shows a complex, hybridised and triform image (wolf-man-snake) for which we lack an iconographic parallel and whose ultimate symbolism is still obscure. The closest examples might be two other *paterae* from “Tivissa’s Treasure” (Tarragona)<sup>33</sup> and the patera from Titulcia (Madrid) [figs. 2–4]. In all cases, however, there seems to be the same funerary function, with the omphalos displaying a fierce beast.

A canid is the central motif in two out of four of the *paterae* found in Castellet de Banyoles (Tivissa).<sup>34</sup> The so-called Patera of the Wolf presents the canid in high-relief, with pointy ears and open jaws in a threatening attitude.<sup>34</sup> Its head is surrounded by a band of ropework and acorns, while the rest of the bowl lacks decoration. In the other patera of the same treasure, known as the Patera of the Carnisser,<sup>36</sup> there is the head of a great animal possibly a wolf – in the omphalos, with its mouth opened, showing teeth and fangs. Its frontal vision and the corners of the jaws evoke the image of the Greek *gorgoneion*, especially in the Etruscan interpretation that presents a fiercer attitude.<sup>37</sup> The rest of the bowl depicts an allegorical scene with offerings and sacrifices, including a hunting episode and the presence of a centaur, motifs that match the iconographic programme present in the Patera of Santisteban.

The bowl popularly known as the Medusa from Titulcia was exhumed in 2009 at El Cerrón, a Carpetanian site located on the outskirts of Titulcia, in the community of Madrid.<sup>38</sup> It has been dated to the fourth and third century BC and the omphalos shows the head of a monster or a fantastic beast – considered a feline by scholars, perhaps a lion<sup>39</sup> – with a hieratic and calm attitude, surrounded by snakes that seem to emerge from its mouth. Although it is not a canid, the analogy of this representation with the decoration of the Patera de Santisteban del Puerto is quite evident, and possibly in both cases, the motifs refer to chthonic forces or the underworld. Besides the presence of snakes, the frontal vision of the head points directly to the *gorgoneia* decorating Greek vases, whose symbolic function was, above all, apotropaic.

There is no doubt that the central image of the Patera of Santisteban is loaded with deep symbolism. Its predominant position in the bowl deserves to be considered as the key to understand the artefact: the powerful iconography depicted in high-relief (which contrasts to the bas-relief of the outer friezes) contributes to underline its importance. The first issue addressed by researchers has been the identification of the scene in the omphalos: is the wolf devouring/regurgitating the man who shows his raised palms, or is the human figure actually wearing an animal’s mask (as a shaman, seizing the beast’s qualities and hence becoming a werewolf)?

Some scholars have pointed out the similarity of this icon with the “devouring monsters”,<sup>40</sup> a group of fantastic creatures that inhabited the imaginary of many ancient cultures. They eat with their mouths open, showing what they are devouring, which have been understood as a symbol of death and the transit to the afterlife. These ferocious and infernal images are expressions of liminal nature, of death and rebirth, very popular in the Mediterranean world. The snakes surrounding the group clearly allude to the underworld, to the depths, to the beginning and end of everything that exists. Following Olmos’s interpretation, the Patera of Santisteban depicts the image of a transformed man, already reborn.<sup>41</sup> Hence, the head of the animal with empty eyes and opened jaws, could be interpreted as the “mouth-entrance” of the underworld, the place that mediates between the realm of the living and the realm of the dead.

The funerary “box” from Villagordo (Villatorres, Jaén) presents a good iconographic parallel: its lid shows the head of a wolf from which human arms emerge, which seem to be protecting the interior of the

container due to the position of the open palms. Teresa Chapa states that in this image “the wolf appears as the protagonist, after the act of devouring the deceased. The arms and hands, clearly human, have the possibility of opening or closing the lid.”<sup>42</sup> In any case, it is a devouring carnivore, related to the transit of the deceased to the beyond.

### 3.2. HELLENISTIC MOTIFS: HUNTING PUTTI AND CENTAUR-MUSICIANS ASSOCIATED WITH SYMPOSIUM.

There is a frieze of small dimensions encircling the base of the omphalos, which depicts nine hunting scenes separated by *tropea* in bas-relief. These scenes, however, do not represent a heroic deed, since the activity is being carried out by little winged putti, who are dynamically portrayed running after small preys, probably rabbits, while assisted by hounds [figs. 1a & 1b]. From the artistic point of view, these are graceful figurines, captured in full motion while interacting with nature, as inferred by some landscape elements. Its naturalistic and vivacious style denotes certain familiarity with the Hellenistic world – probably being a copy of another artefact. The inclusion of *tropeia* to separate scenes (frequently found in Hellenistic coins) could have symbolically evoked the idea of victory.

Hunting rabbits or hares was associated with fertility, given the reproductive abilities of these animals. Unsurprisingly, they have been considered as symbols of nature, the Great Mother and regeneration.<sup>43</sup> In antiquity, rabbits were offered to Aphrodite and Eros and when given alive, they were regarded as a love gift.<sup>44</sup> Somehow, hunting was also symbolically conceived in ancient Greece as an erotic battle or persecution, as it is revealed in many myths.<sup>45</sup> It should be noted, nonetheless, that the theme of hunting proliferated in the iconography of funerary containers, especially in the fourth century BC in eastern Greece. The presence of mythical hunters (in this paper, Eros himself) could have symbolized the heroization of the deceased and, while this scene seems to depict a children’s game, it could have evoked deeper concepts such as love, death, victory and regeneration.<sup>46</sup>

The outer frieze of the patera, bigger than the interior one and separated from it by a band of bead-and-reel, shows nine centaurs (six male and three female) divided by trees. The mythical protagonists of the ensemble, associated with banquet and music, are dynamically portrayed galloping clockwise. The movement is represented by the agitation of their mantles and ribbons fluttering in the wind, following Hellenistic-styled parameters. Out of the nine figures, four are characterised as musicians, playing wind, percussion and string instruments. Starting with the upper central image: (1) centaur holding a tray of food; (2) centaur playing the double aulos with his hair adorned with ribbons (as a symposium participant) [fig. 1c]; (3) centaur looking back while holding a large cup or crater; (4) centaur performing a libation with a small patera and an olpe; (5) centauress or Kentaurid holding a burning torch and an arm bent over her head (a usual gesture of abandonment and surrender that characterises Ariadne’s iconography); (6) centaur playing cymbals according to the position of the hands [fig. 1d]; (7) centaur playing the kithara of six or seven strings (morphology from the Classical period) [fig. 1e]; (8) centauress strumming the tympanos (or circular shield) [fig. 1f]; (9) centauress squeezing her breasts with her hands, looking straight to the viewer. Finally, the rim is decorated with wave band and a line of dots, both of them highlighted in gilded silver, as well as some of the centaurs.

According to ancient sources, centaurs (κένταυροι) were hybrid beings of both human and equine nature that inhabited the forests and mountains of Thessaly, the Peloponnese and Cyprus.<sup>47</sup> They are usually depicted as creatures with a human head, torso, and arms but equine lower limbs. This is the most popular prototype of centaurs as generic beings, profusely disseminated throughout Greek pottery, in black and red figures alike. The face usually appears grotesque, similar to satyrs, with a snub nose, wide forehead and animal ears. Although frequently depicted as males, centauresses (κένταυριδες) are also present in Greek iconography: they present a female torso with animal ears, a prototype originated in the Hellenistic world that especially interested Philostratus and Ovid.<sup>48</sup> These creatures were in antiquity usually associated with barbarism: drunkenness was the cause of their improper behaviour at Pirithous and Hippodamia’s wedding, which led to the Centauromachy, the battle of Lapiths against centaurs. This subject would symbolise the opposition between man and beast, order and chaos, Greeks and Persians. Despite these negative connotations, centaurs became the guardians of the Underworld, too.<sup>49</sup>

Although the Centauromachy links creatures to wine, they were not associated with Dionysus in the archaic or classical Greek art. It was not until the fourth century BC when their hybrid nature, their wild cha-

acter and their fondness for the precious nectar turned them into occasional participants of Dionysus's entourage, next to satyrs and maenads. Centaurs's presence in this context became increasingly frequent in the Hellenistic period and survived in the Roman repertoire. These images were firstly disseminated by Greek ceramics traded around the Mediterranean, especially from 375 BC onwards. Researchers have wondered if this repertoire had an orgiastic symbolism in Iberia as it did the Greek world, or if it acquired a new meaning, possibly associated with the funerary world, in the east and southeast of the Peninsula.<sup>50</sup> Their musical vocation goes back to the teachings that the wise Chiron offered to his pupils, usually heroes.<sup>51</sup> In the Hellenistic period this idea was extended to his peers too, the other centaurs: their iconographic models developed human instead of bestial traits, representing them increasingly as devoted to amorous idylls and music. In time, the once-savage beings became interpreters and lovers, wounded by Eros's arrows or sharing love idylls to the sound of music with their female counterparts, as exemplified by numerous Roman artistic representations, especially in the decoration of luxurious tableware and sarcophagi.<sup>52</sup> The instruments they play are not reduced to percussion and wind, as is customary with other members of the *thiasos*, but they also appear with kithara, lyres, krotala, *tympanoi*, *auloi*, almost every musical instrument known in the ancient world.

Centaur-musicians are a recurrent motif in ancient luxurious tableware, as the Berthouville hoard shows. Dated from the first century CE, these magnificent cups (*skyphoi*) are part of a trove of one hundred silver objects discovered in Berthouville, near Evreux, in 1830. The inscriptions evidence that the silver was offered by Q. Domitius Tutus in a small shrine dedicated to Mercury Canetonensis. The group is composed of a mix of tableware pieces manufactured in Italian (first century CE) and Gallic workshops (second century CE). These vases depict mourning centaurs and centaresses with erotes while holding kithara, tympanum and krotala in an eminently Dionysian context, a suitable theme for the container they decorate.<sup>53</sup> Jon van de Griff carried out a detailed analysis of the Berthouville treasure, searching for iconographic parallels and highlighting the contrast of passions (joy, suffering, ecstasy and tranquillity) identified in the centaurs' expressions. He suggested that the use of Dionysian iconography in private contexts at the beginning of the Imperial era responded to the same ideology reflected by the poets of the time.<sup>54</sup> Their writings expressed a certain moralization of the subject, which should be understood as the reflection of the dual nature of Dionysus (Dionysus Dicothomus), whose power is associated with life and fecundity. "The baffling profusion of Bacchic images does not represent some haphazard revel but instead a carefully orchestrated allegory concerned with the two-fold nature of Dionysus. The leading players in this entertaining drama are the centaurs. The contrasting demeanor of each couple demonstrates the frenzied freedom and painful enslavement induced by the god's peculiar nature."<sup>55</sup> In our opinion, however, the dual Dionysian nature is evident not only in the expressions of the centaurs, but also in the variety of cordophones, aerophones and idiophones associated with them.

This rich iconographic repertoire of Bacchic motifs was to be perpetuated in Roman art, being one of the most popular themes in the decoration of sarcophagi from the third century CE onwards. This phenomenon has been linked to the syncretism between the concepts of Bacchic regeneration and their role of guardians of the gates to the underworld.<sup>56</sup> Centaur-musicians decorate multiple sarcophagi, also partaking in the marine *thiasos* as *ichthyocentaurs* (human head and torso with equine body that ends up in a fish fin) carrying the image of the deceased in a clypeus while playing music.<sup>57</sup> The hybrid beast were in charge of transporting the soul of the dead to the great beyond, making this voyage a pleasant one, as it was accompanied by music, offering a happy image of death and its transition, reducing the sorrow while favouring liberation.

**FINAL REFLECTIONS.** As we have already stated, the Patera de Santisteban del Puerto is an unparallel example of Iberian-Greek cultural synthesis, a *unicum*. Its style and iconography express a double origin: the Iberian motif of the omphalos evidences an indigenous, local style, while the external friezes denote certain knowledge of Greek models, possibly due to the copy a foreign artefact.

The interpretation of this complex iconographic programme has been linked to the funerary world, as already revealed by some scholars. Uroz Rodríguez points out that the encoded message of the patera should be read from the rim towards the omphalos, but we fail to see the ultimate point of this theory.<sup>58</sup> We believe, however, that the analysis should be done in the opposite direction: from the omphalos to the external friezes. Thus, the man would be reborn in the afterlife from the wolf's jaws (the door to the underworld) and



would accomplish his own regeneration (hunting scene) and eternal bliss in the nocturnal banquet, full of music and happiness (centaurs). The circular disposition of the friezes could be understood as an allusion to life cycles, uninterrupted and eternal, especially evidenced by the centaress squeezing her breasts with her hands, a clear reference to life and rebirth. The rim with the wave band could also be considered as a reference to the limes that mark the world beyond earthly life, the immortal realm.

Despite the complexity of the iconographic programme and its obscure interpretation, the selection of centaur-musicians as an iconographic motif shows a clear intention to emphasise the conception of liminality between the realms of life and death: these hybrid beings were not only the guardians of the underworld, but they also symbolised victory over death. The fundamental symbolism of centaur-musicians is the significant role of music, crucial to the release of human emotions, from anger to joy, favouring catharsis and the exaltation of human beings, able to attain eternity. Centaur-musicians were frequent participants in bacchanalian processions, and in this context, their representations permeated the funerary art to express a blissful afterlife: the sweet music they played served the purpose to escort the deceased to their final resting place, an allusion to the eternal happiness and pleasant journey to the afterlife.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid, inv. 1917/39/1. The patera has the following dimensions:  $\varnothing$  = 17.2 cm; height = 2.8 cm; weight = 197.74 gr.

<sup>2</sup> The treasure consists of forty-five objects and fragments, with full luxury tableware: patera, jug, cup and bowls.

<sup>3</sup> José Ramón Mélida, *Adquisiciones del Museo Arqueológico Nacional en 1917: Notas descriptivas* (Madrid: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, 1918), 11-14; Antonio García y Bellido, *Esculturas romanas de España y Portugal* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1949), 465-467; Francisco Álvarez-Ossorio and Farfán de los Godos, *Tesoros españoles antiguos en el Museo Arqueológico Nacional* (Madrid: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, 1954).

<sup>4</sup> Salvador F. Pozo, "Recipientes y vajilla metálica de época pre-romana (fenicia, griega y etrusca) del sur de la Península Ibérica", *Antiquitas* 15 (2003), 5-50.

<sup>5</sup> Libation constitutes a complex ritual. It is a universal sacred gesture present in every culture in the Mediterranean since the Bronze Age: with each offering is expressed a rite of passage of entry/exit in/of the divine sphere. Isabel Izquierdo Peraile, "La ofrenda sagrada del vaso en la cultura ibérica", *Zephyrus* 56 (2003), 117-135.

<sup>6</sup> Martín Almagro Gorbea, "Ritos y cultos funerarios en el mundo ibérico", *Anales de prehistoria y arqueología IX-X* (1993-94), 107-133; Juan Maluquer de Montes, "El peso del mundo griego en el arte ibérico", *La baja época de la cultura ibérica: Actas de la mesa redonda celebrada en conmemoración del décimo aniversario de la Asociación Española de Amigos de la Arqueología, Madrid, marzo 1979* (Madrid: Asociación Española de Amigos de la Arqueología, 1981), 203-218.

<sup>7</sup> Antonio Blanco y Freijeiro and Lorenzo Abad Casal, "Los iberos", *Historias del viejo mundo* 16 (1988), 92.

<sup>8</sup> Teresa Chapa Brunet, *La escultura zoomorfa ibérica en piedra* (Ph.D. diss., Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 1980); eadem, "El uso de la escultura como elemento definidor del territorio", *Coloquio iconografía ibérica, iconografía itálica: Propuestas de interpretación y lectura* (Roma: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas), in press.

<sup>9</sup> The Bicha de Balazote was found in the borough of Balazote in the Albacete province. It is kept in Madrid, Museo Ar-

queológico Nacional, inv. 18529

<sup>10</sup> Juan A. Santos Velasco, "Género y metáforas con animales en la cerámica ibérica pintada (siglos IV-I a.C.)", *Complutum* XXIX/2 (2018), 381-386.

<sup>11</sup> Ramón Grande del Brío, *El lobo ibérico: Biología y mitología* (Madrid: H. Blume, 1984).

<sup>12</sup> Teresa Chapa, "El increíble monstruo creciente: El tema del combate entre el héroe y el lobo en la iconografía ibérica", *La fibula de Braganza* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2011), 189-203. This aspect has been also pointed out in Martín Almagro Gorbea, "Ritos y cultos funerarios", 109-120.

<sup>13</sup> Teresa Chapa "El increíble monstruo creciente", 189-203. The exaggeration of size in some figures or objects is fairly frequent in Iberian iconography. Occasionally it applies to a certain part of the body (hand in human figures; heads in birds) or to an object in its full depiction. It is probably a common expressive resource in primitive cultural stages, which seems to magnify the symbolic character of the represented objects/subjects. Christa Sütterlin, "Ethological Aspects of Apotropaic Symbolism in Art", *Sociobiology and the Arts*, ed. by Jan Baptist Bedaux and Brett Cooke (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 129-157.

<sup>14</sup> Teresa Chapa, "Influjo griego en la escultura zoomorfa ibérica", *Iberia Graeca* 2 (1986), 181-183.

<sup>15</sup> Leandro Vilallonga, "Las monedas de Iltirida con el lobo en el reverso", *Ampurias XXXI-XXXII* (1969-1970), 259-271.

<sup>16</sup> Teresa Chapa and Ángel L. Rodríguez Alcalde, "Meterse en la boca del lobo: Una aproximación a la figura del 'Carnassier' en la religión ibérica", *Complutum* 4 (1993), 169-174. Wolves also appear in Iberian ceramics. Pedro A. Lillo, "Una pareja de lobos en la cerámica pintada ibérica", *Anales de prehistoria y arqueología* 4 (1988), 137-147.

<sup>17</sup> Teresa Chapa and Ángel Rodríguez Alcalde, "Meterse en la boca del lobo", 174.

<sup>18</sup> Martín Almagro Gorbea, *El rey lobo de la Alcudía de Illicita* (Alicante: Fundación Universitaria de La Alcudía, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> José Miguel García Cano and María A. Gómez, "Avance al estudio radiológico del armamento de la necrópolis ibérica del Cabecico del Tesoro (Verdolay, Murcia). I: Las falcatas", *Gladius*

(2006) 61-92; Julio González Alcalde, "Totemismo del lobo, rituales de iniciación y cuevas-santuarios mediterráneos e ibéricas", *Quaderns de prehistòria i arqueologia de Castelló* 25 (2006), 249-269.

<sup>20</sup> Consuelo Mata and Lucía Soria, "¿Que viene el lobo! De lo real a lo imaginario: aproximación a la fauna ibérica de la Eda del Hierro", *Animales simbólicos en la historia* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2012), 47-77.

<sup>21</sup> Juan A. Santos Velasco, "Género y metáforas con animales", 364; Ricardo Olmos, "Iconografía griega, iconografía ibérica: Una aproximación metodológica", *Revue des études anciennes* LXXXIX/3-4 (1987), 283-296; Teresa Chapa and Ángel Rodríguez Alcalde, "Meterse en la boca del lobo", 170; Martín Almagro, "Lobo y ritos de iniciación en Iberia", *Iconografía ibérica e iconografía itálica propuestas de interpretación y lectura*, ed. by Ricardo Olmos Romera and Juan A. Santos Velasco (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1997), 103-128; Consuelo Mata and Lucía Soria, "¿Que viene el lobo! De lo real a lo imaginario: Aproximación a la fauna ibérica de la Eda del Hierro", *Animales simbólicos en la historia* (Madrid: Síntesis, 2012), 47-77.

<sup>22</sup> Trinidad Tortosa, "Tipología e iconografía de la cerámica ibérica figurada en el enclave de La Alcudia (Elche, Alicante)", *Anejos de Archivo español de arqueología* XXX (2004): thematic issue *El yacimiento de La Alcudia: Pasado y presente en el enclave ibérico*, ed. by Trinidad Tortosa, 71-222; Pedro A. Lillo, "Una aportación al estudio de la religión ibérica: La diosa de los lobos de la Umbría de Salchite, Moratalla (Murcia)", *Crónica del XVI Congreso Arqueológico Nacional: Murcia-Cartagena 1982* (Zaragoza: Universidad de Zaragoza, 1983), 769-788; Antonio Blanco Freijeiro, "El carnassien de Elche", *Homenaje a Alejandro Ramos Folqués*, ed. by Alejandro Ramos Folqués (Elche: Fundación Cultural de la Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo, 1993), 85-97; Juan A. Santos Velasco, "Género y metáforas con animales", 364.

<sup>23</sup> Arturo Oliver Foix, "Perros en el culto, la economía y el prestigio de los iberos", *Quaderns de prehistòria i arqueologia de Castelló* 32 (2014), 43-61. The Berthouville hoard is preserved in the Cabinet des médailles of the Bibliothèque National de France.

<sup>24</sup> Jorge García Cardiel, "El combate contra el mal: Imaginarios locales de poder a través de la conquista romana en el levante ibérico", *Complutum* XXV/1 (2014), 159-175.

<sup>25</sup> Encarnación Ruano Ruiz, "La danza en la antigüedad hispánica y el mundo clásico", *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Amigos de la Arqueología* 8 (1977), 44-47; Raquel Castelo Ruano, "Aproximación a la danza en la antigüedad hispana: Manos entrelazadas", *Espacio, tiempo y forma* II/3 (1990), 19-42; Gerardo Clausell, Isabel Izquierdo and Ferran Arasa, "La fase del Ibérico Final en el asentamiento del Torrelló del Boverot (Almazora, Castellón): Dos piezas cerámicas singulares", *Archivo español de arqueología* LXXIII/181-182 (2000), 87-104; Carmen Aranegui, *Damas y caballeros en la ciudad ibérica* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1997).

<sup>26</sup> Susana González Reyero, "Música y comportamiento social en la Contestania ibérica: El caso de El Cigarralejo (Mula, Murcia)", *Complutum* XXV/1 (2014), 159-175.

<sup>27</sup> María Isabel Izquierdo Peraile, "Arqueología, iconografía y género", *Verdólay* 11 (2008), 121-142.

<sup>28</sup> Fernando J. Guarch i Bordes, *Organología en los pueblos prerromanos del Mediterráneo Occidental: Los instrumentos musicales en la cultura ibérica* (Ph.D. diss., Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 2017).

<sup>29</sup> Jorge García Cardiel, "Las flautistas de Iberia: Mujer y transmisión de la memoria social en el mundo ibérico (siglos III-I a.C.)", *Complutum* XXVIII/1 (2017), 155-174.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>31</sup> The need to establish rhythmical organisation not only in music, but also in any aspect of human communication, social integration and interaction could have favored the early development of percussion instruments, since rhythm organises temporally acoustic, verbal and kinetic material. Repetition and synchronism set rhythmic patterns, facilitating interaction, allowing group participation and bonding, leading to the ritualization and sacralisation of collective behavior. Bruce Richman, "How Music Fixed 'Nonsense' into Significant Formulas: On Rhythm, Repetition and Meaning", *The Origins of Music* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000), 301-314.

<sup>32</sup> Beatriz de Griñó and Ricardo Olmos, *Estudios de iconografía del Museo Arqueológico Nacional. I: La patera de Santisteban del Puerto (Jaén)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, Dirección General de Bellas Artes, Archivos y Bibliotecas, 1982); Ricardo Olmos, "Modos iniciáticos mediterráneos en la iconografía ibérica: Una relectura de la pátera de Santisteban del Puerto", *Tranquillitas hommage Tran Tan Tinb: Université Laval* (1994), 435-447; Ricardo Olmos and Carmen Rueda, "La Pátera de Perotito (Santisteban del Puerto, Jaén)", *Jaén, tierra ibera: 40 años de investigación y transferencia*, ed. by Arturo Ruiz and Manuel Molinos (Jean: Universidad de Jaén, Servicio de Publicaciones e Intercambio, 2015), 339-345.

<sup>33</sup> The so-called Treasure of Tivissa was fortuitously found in the Iberian settlement of Castellet de Banyoles (Tivissa, Rivera Tarragona) in 1927 and became part of the Museo Arqueológico de Cataluña, Barcelona, in 1936. It is considered to be the best example of goldsmithing in Catalonia. Its dating is also subjected to debate: Although the Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya has dated it to the third or second century BC, some authors believe it could be even older. Cf. Othmar Jaeggi, "Vajillas de plata ibero-helenísticas", *La vajilla ibérica de época helenística: Siglos IV-III al cambio de era*, ed. by Ricardo Olmos Romera and Pierre Rouillard (Madrid: Colección de la Casa de Velázquez, 2004), 49-62; José María Blázquez, "La interpretación de la pátera de Tivissa", *Ampurias* XVII-XVIII (1955-1956), 111-140.

<sup>34</sup> <[www.macbarcelona.cat/Col-leccions/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Tresor-de-Tivissa](http://www.macbarcelona.cat/Col-leccions/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Tresor-de-Tivissa)>.

<sup>35</sup> <[www.macbarcelona.cat/Col-leccions/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Patera-del-llop](http://www.macbarcelona.cat/Col-leccions/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Patera-del-llop)>.

<sup>36</sup> <[www.macbarcelona.cat/Col-leccions/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Patera-del-carnisser](http://www.macbarcelona.cat/Col-leccions/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Tresor-de-Tivissa/Patera-del-carnisser)>.

<sup>37</sup> Etruscan terracotta gorgoneion, made in Campania, the fifth century BC. The British Museum, 1856.1226.333.

<sup>38</sup> The "Medusa from Titulcia is preserved at the Museo Arqueológico Regional de Alcalá de Henares. At the time of its discovery, the object was inside a building, probably a temple, in a small pit dug in the subsoil and sealed by an adobe pavement, which seems to indicate that it could have been part of the founding rite of the construction and sacralisation of this space. María del Carmen Valenciano Prieto and José Polo López, "Phiale de plata del oppidum de Titulcia", *Complutum* XXVIII/1 (2017), 163-184.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

<sup>40</sup> Ricardo Olmos, "Imágenes del devorar y del alimento en la cultura ibérica", *Ilu: Revista de ciencias de las religiones* XII (2004), 61-78.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>42</sup> Teresa Chapa, "La caja funeraria de Villargordo (Villatorres, Jaén)", *Jaén, tierra ibera: 40 años de investigación y transferencia* (Jean: Universidad de Jaén, 2015), 297-304.

<sup>43</sup> Laura Rodríguez Peinado, "Los conejos y las liebres",

*Revista digital de iconografía medieval* III/5 (2011), 11-21.

<sup>44</sup> Judith M. Barringer, *The Hunt in Ancient Greece* (London and Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

<sup>47</sup> P. P. 2.33 ff; Philostr. *Im.* 2.3.; Verg. *georg.* 3. 115ff.

<sup>48</sup> Philostr. *Im.* 2.3 and *Ov. Met.* 12.210.

<sup>49</sup> María Isabel Rodríguez López and Claudina Romero Mayorga, "Centaur-Musicians in Classical Iconography", *Greek and Roman Musical Studies* VI/1 (2018), 26-50.

<sup>50</sup> Ricardo Olmos, "Orgiastic Elements in Iberian Iconography?", *Kernos: Revue internationale et pluridisciplinaire de religion grecque antique* V (1992), 153-171.

<sup>51</sup> X. Ages. 1; Philostr. *Ep.* 9.2; Pi. P. 9. 65

<sup>52</sup> Ricardo Olmos, "En los umbrales de la muerte: Itinerarios del Más Allá en la imagen ibérica", ; *Hombres o dioses? Una nueva mirada a la escultura del mundo ibérico* (Madrid: Museo Arqueológico

Regional de Alcalá de Henares, 2011), 109-129.

<sup>53</sup> Jon van de Grift, "Tears and Revel: The Allegory of the Berthouville Centaur Scyphi", *American Journal of Archaeology* LXXXVIII/3 (1984), 88, 377-388.

<sup>54</sup> Such as Diodorus Siculus, Horace, Propertius and Rufinus.

<sup>55</sup> Jon van de Grift, "Tears and Revel", 385.

<sup>56</sup> Verg. *Aen.* 6.287 ff; Sen. *Her. F.* 773 ff; Stat. *Theb.* 4.536 ff; Stat. *Silv.* 5.3.260 ff.

<sup>57</sup> Andreas Rumpf, *Die Meerwesen auf den Sarkophagreliefs. Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs V/1* (Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1969).

<sup>58</sup> Héctor Uroz Rodríguez, *El programa iconográfico religioso de la "Tumba del orfebre" de Cabezo Lucero (Guardanar del Segura, Alicante)*. Monografías del Museo de arte Ibérico del Cigarralejo 3 (Murcia: Comunidad Autónoma de la Región de Murcia, Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 2006), 85-87.