

# **Archaeology of Ritual in Western Greece: Performing Music and Dance in Cave Shrines**

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## **Introduction**

As a virtually universal human activity, music making is an essential social and cultural behaviour, playing a fundamental role and providing an indispensable function in rituals and sacred manifestations in almost every ancient society.<sup>1</sup> While music practice in the sacred sphere should be considered as an aspect of the actions that contribute to the effectiveness of the ritual, it is also necessary to consider it as more than a mere accompaniment or means of filling various phases of the ceremony with sound: musical practice is an important aspect of rituals through which musical messages are transmitted to an audience within a precise context and sonic event. Indeed, musical performance must not only consider the instruments involved or what the musicians, dancers or singers are accomplishing, but also the relationships between space, performance and environment. Furthermore, the relationship with the audience and the behaviour of the audience itself must be taken into consideration in order to fully understand the role of music and dance in rituals and ceremonies, which have religious and social implications. As a material presence within the lived acoustic experience of cult and as ritualised sound, music (alongside other non-musical sounds) evokes certain sensorial and behavioural responses in both the worshippers who perform and those who listen.<sup>2</sup>

As Catherine Bell has argued, performance communicates on multiple sensory levels, usually involving highly visual imagery, dramatic sounds and other tactile, olfactory and gustatory stimuli.<sup>3</sup> Music and dance, two components that are inseparable in the sacred sphere, strengthen the power of performances. At a time when appropriate individuals acted during events, musical and choral performance in cult could be considered a favourite means of communication with the gods and an offering to the deities completed in the framework of the ritual ceremony. Furthermore, music, sound and voices, as well as natural sounds and sound objects, improved sensory experience and enhanced social interaction through the construction of a sacred environment and sacred soundscape.<sup>4</sup> From

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<sup>1</sup> Pasaodolos, Till, and Howell 2013, pp. 17-23; Garcia-Ventura, Tavolieri, and Verderame 2018, pp. 2-4; Bellia 2018, pp. 89-91.

<sup>2</sup> Power 2019, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Bell 1997, pp. 159-164.

<sup>4</sup> Miles 2016, p. 185.

this perspective, terracotta figurines provide strong visual evidence of various acts of worship and rituals involving music and dance performances. Ritual activity took place in a special location, the sanctuary, which was deemed closer to the other world and distant from this world;<sup>5</sup> this setting produced a sensorial and behavioural response in worshippers and a feeling of connectedness. The figural decoration of sacred architecture, along with all the images related to cult (including terracotta figurines), may have contributed to achieving the goal of ritual performances using music, dance, sacred verbal formulas and the offerings of material gifts to the gods to induce a sense of the numinous in the participants. Thanks to their low cost, the terracotta figurines representing musicians and dancers made for perfect religious offerings. Indeed, people who took part in musical and dance performances customarily dedicated personal objects to divinities.<sup>6</sup> In many cases, the figurines are the only visual documentation of musical and choral performances in cults and rituals.<sup>7</sup>

Within this context, the terracotta figurines with musical and choral representations found in cave shrines connected with springs and water sources in the Western Greek world (where archaeological research has verified the ritual use of grottoes from the prehistoric period) offer important information in terms of the association between performances and “natural deities”.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, these figurines allow us to understand which musical instruments and dances were best suited to different ritual acts.

The presence of springs and water sources, their closed entrances and liminality made caves and grottoes particularly attractive as sanctuaries of these deities, the Nymphs, who were members of the so called ‘minor pantheon’ and divinities connected with the female rites of passage.<sup>9</sup>

### **Epiphanic Sounds in the Cave**

In Magna Graecia and in Sicily, cities celebrated spring Nymphs as emblems of the community.<sup>10</sup> They were worshipped with rituals and offerings into the waters and in the caves during festivals celebrated in their honour. Particularly in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, there was an increase in the number of grottoes evidenced by the establishment of shrines devoted to the cult of the Nymphs and Pan: as in Attica and the rest of the Greek countryside, in Magna Graecia and Sicily their cult was connected to dance and music.<sup>11</sup> The historian Timaeus<sup>12</sup> stated that it was customary throughout

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<sup>5</sup> Marconi 2007, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Angliker 2018, p. 32

<sup>7</sup> Bellia 2016, pp. 191-192.

<sup>8</sup> Burkert 2003, pp. 95-98; Larson 2001, pp. 8-11.

<sup>9</sup> Burkert 2003, pp. 337-339.

<sup>10</sup> Larson 2001, pp. 211-225.

<sup>11</sup> Borgeaud 1979, pp. 115-135; Amandry 1984, pp. 395-425.

<sup>12</sup> Timaeus, *FGrHist* 566 F 32, Athenaeus, VI, 250a.

Sicily for worshippers to go from house to house and offer sacrifices to the Nymphs, spending the night in a drunken condition around their cult images (*agalmata*) and dancing around the goddesses' statues.

The Caruso cave at Locri (**fig. 1**) was consecrated to an important cult of the Nymphs:<sup>13</sup> this *polis* was one of the most important Greek settlements in the West during the Archaic and Classical periods. Excavated by Paolo Enrico Arias in 1940, the shrine was located outside the walls of the city (**fig. 2**), indicating that the sacred place had a rural and agrarian character (**fig. 3**).<sup>14</sup> As Jennifer Larson highlighted,<sup>15</sup> the earliest votive objects found at the site, terracotta figurines of a seated female, date back to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. BCE (**fig. 4**).<sup>16</sup> During this period, the shrine was probably used as a water source by the locals for daily life activities.<sup>17</sup> It might have begun as a small natural grotto, but it received extensive artificial embellishment (**fig. 5a-b**): first an ornamental façade, then improvements to facilitate the supply of water, and finally, a large semi-circular basin with steps leading into the water (**fig. 6**). It is probable that in the centre of the large *loutròn nymphikòn* the statues of the divinities were collocated, and it was around these statues and their altar that the celebrations took place (**fig. 7**).<sup>18</sup>

The terracotta models of the grotto, dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BCE, are very interesting (**fig. 8a-c**)<sup>19</sup> since we can infer that terracotta artisans wished to convey the essence of the place and to evoke its charm and scenic shape. Ritual considerations probably also played a role in the design, since several of the examples were designed as working models with reservoirs for liquid, possibly for libations.<sup>20</sup>

During the excavation, a large collection of terracotta figurines was recovered at the Caruso cave. A distinctive terracotta style is the triple herm, of which about 200 examples dating to the 5<sup>th</sup> c. BCE were found.<sup>21</sup> This consists of a broad pillar or base at the top of which are three female heads wearing low *poloi*.<sup>22</sup> We can be fairly confident that the three figures represent the cultic images housed in the Caruso grotto and that they are connected to the female rituals of purification and fertility, apparently in conjunction with the cults of Persephone and Aphrodite.<sup>23</sup> Besides the examples with

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<sup>13</sup> Costabile 1996, pp. 22-25; Costabile 1991, pp. 95-114; Pizzi 2012, pp. 221-234; Parisi 2017, p. 300.

<sup>14</sup> Arias 1941, pp. 177-180; Arias 1946, pp. 138-161.

<sup>15</sup> Larson 2001, p. 251.

<sup>16</sup> Costabile 1991, p. 94, figg. 161-164.

<sup>17</sup> Arias 1977, pp. 507-512; Sabbione and Schenal 1996, p. 78; Leone 1998, pp. 76-77; Barra Bagnasco 2001, pp. 29-32.

<sup>18</sup> Pizzi 2012, p. 228.

<sup>19</sup> Costabile 1991, pp. 45-56.

<sup>20</sup> Larson 2001, pp. 251-257.

<sup>21</sup> Sabbione and Schenal 1996, p. 78.

<sup>22</sup> Arias 1941, pp. 177-180.

<sup>23</sup> Torelli 1979, p. 91; Pizzi 2012, p. 230.

triple heads receiving offerings (**fig. 9**), there are some terracotta figures representing a female figure playing the *aulos* near a *trapeza* with three bowls (**fig. 10**).<sup>24</sup>

As with the other dedications found in the shrine, such as drinking vessels, miniature hydriai and *pyxides* to be used as incense burners, these figurines seem to evoke the ritual acts in the grotto where the Locrian maidens took part in the sacrifices and offerings, as well as banquets, in honour of the Caruso cave divinities. In the representation, the presence of a female *aulos* player is perhaps a “visual” representation of the sacred song performed in honour of the Nymphs and of the sound that accompanied their epiphany in the caves.<sup>25</sup> This explains the fixity of the Nymphs in contrast to the lively movement of the instrument players and dancers, some of which are masked and were placed near to the herms or under the triple heads.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, other variations on the triple herm show an ancillary scene on the base of the herm: often a symbolic grotto is represented. Inside the grotto, a female *tympanon* player and lively dancer is depicted as if on a stage (**fig. 11a-b**).<sup>27</sup>

The triple herm of the Nymphs is not unique to the Caruso cave. Despite there being little evidence of cult images of the Nymphs, the few clear examples belong to Magna Graecia and Sicily. One of the most important examples comes from Syracuse: it is a votive relief that provides some idea of how the images once appeared. On the relief (dating to the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>th</sup> c. BCE) three carved Nymphs stand in an identical frontal pose wearing *poloi* and grasping the borders of their *himatia* in their hands (**fig. 12a-b**).<sup>28</sup> They are flanked by two small representations of Pan, each playing the *syrinx*. The frontal positioning of the three figures suggests that the votive relief is a reproduction of a group of cult images around which a musical performance took place. Since a votive relief such as this can be considered as *agalmata*, it might have served as focal point for the celebration and for recalling the epiphany of the Nymphs in a sacred space. Furthermore, the visual representation of the performances around the cult images of the Nymphs can be recognised in the terracotta busts of these goddesses, which were found at Morgantina (**fig. 13a-b**)<sup>29</sup> and Syracuse:<sup>30</sup> dances and musical performances are depicted during a sacrifice near to an altar. In addition, a coin dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> c. BCE, thought to be Sicilian, shows the busts of three Nymphs standing on an ornamented base, before which Pan plays his *syrinx* (**fig. 14**).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Bellia 2012, p. 96, fig. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Bérard 1974, pp. 75-87; Calame 2001, p. 110.

<sup>26</sup> Burkert 2003, p. 226.

<sup>27</sup> Costabile 1991, p. 99, figg. 174 (inv. 317); 175 (s.i.); Bellia 2012, pp. 98-99, figg. 6-8.

<sup>28</sup> Bellia 2009, p. 141, n. 348.

<sup>29</sup> Bell 1981, pp. 140-141, n. 106, tavv. XXVII-XXVIII. See also Pautasso 2007, p. 216, n. 5; Greco 2013, pp. 62-63, fig. 33.

<sup>30</sup> Portale 2012, p. 234, tav. XII, 6, fig. 10. Taking into account the political and social relationship between Syracuse and Locri, thanks to the marriage of Dionysos with the Locrian Doride, it is possible that similar rituals were celebrated at Locri. Pautasso 2008, pp. 289-291.

<sup>31</sup> Portale 2012, p. 228, figg. 3a-b.

It is interesting to note that there are other interesting variations on the Locrian triple heads on the base of the herm: inside the symbolic grotto, Pan is playing the *syrinx* (**fig. 15**);<sup>32</sup> the god is standing or sitting on a rock. Other statuettes representing Pan playing the *syrinx* or the *kymbala* have also been found in the rural Locrian shrine (**fig. 16**).<sup>33</sup> Pan is a deity connected to natural sounds, echoes and loud noise; sound is an important component of his cult. Echoes and natural sounds<sup>34</sup> belong only to Pan sounding the wind and percussion instruments – musical instruments connected to the Dionysiac religious sphere – in the cave with the Nymphs. Other figures related to the Dionysiac sphere were found in the Caruso cave: they include Silens playing *aulos*, dancing maenads, comic actors and grotesque musicians.<sup>35</sup> These figurines seem to recall the noise performances of ritual re-enactment that included costumed and masked actors: the use of material images in dynamic motion as media of expression and communication can be considered as a necessary condition of theatricality in a sacred ritual setting.<sup>36</sup>

In homage to Pan's love of noise, a ritual performance dedicated to Pan and the Nymphs involved various sounds and a particular sacred soundscape. It is likely the aural qualities of the caves and their effects on these sound signals would not have passed the worshippers by unnoticed. In order to approach this God the ritual demanded noise, and the resulting resonating and echoing effects of the caves would have been regarded as signs of his divine presence. Furthermore, during a ritual dedicated to Pan, the participants, through noise-making, dancing, playing music, feasting, drinking and simply having fun, were forming a system of ritual action, transforming themselves into agents of God's epiphany.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, as Rebecca Ammerman pointed out, the association of Pan with the *syrinx* and the bridal sphere is underscored by artistic and textual evidence from the Archaic and Classical periods: this evidence indicates that the *syrinx* could have been played to accompany the singing and dancing that animated nuptial celebrations for both gods and mortals.<sup>38</sup> It is worth noting that in the Locrian cave the cult of Pan and the Nymphs appears connected with wedding rituals: these rituals had an erotic character, and were celebrated by the maidens before marriage. Considering the large quantity

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<sup>32</sup> Costabile 1991, p. 100, fig. 176; p. 156, figg. 253-254; Bellia 2012, pp. 101-102, figg. 11-13.

<sup>33</sup> Costabile 1991, p. 153, figg. 250, 245; p. 155, fig. 251; p. 162, fig. 261; p. 163, fig. 264; p. 165, fig. 263; p. 168, fig. 271; Bellia 2012, pp. 102-109, figg. 14-24.

<sup>34</sup> Homeric Hymn, *Pan*, XIX, 22.

<sup>35</sup> Bellia 2012, pp. 92-120.

<sup>36</sup> Inomata and Coben 2006, p. 15.

<sup>37</sup> For the epiphany of Pan, see Platt 2011, pp. 55-56.

<sup>38</sup> Ammerman 2016, pp. 120-123.

of nude or semi-nude figurines found in the Caruso cave (**fig. 17**),<sup>39</sup> some scholars have suggested that the maidens offered their youth to Pan<sup>40</sup> as a sort of *ius primae noctis*.

### Musical and Choral Performances in the Grotto

Numerous votive offerings – especially reliefs, clay *pinakes* and terracotta figurines – discovered in caves throughout ancient Greece and elsewhere in the Greek countryside depict the circular dance of the Nymphs either around the musician or inside a cave around an altar, while they listen to the music played by Pan. These offerings are evidence of a continuous ritual practice that lasted for many centuries and was spread across a broad geographical space and a wide chronological spectrum in the ancient Greek world.<sup>41</sup>

In the Locrian grotto, several single female *aulos* players (**fig. 18a-c**)<sup>42</sup> and terracotta plaques representing the Nymphs as girls performing music and dance have been found (**fig. 19a-d**).<sup>43</sup> The groups of female figures show the *choroi* formed variously by three, four or five maidens who are dancing and playing wind, percussion and string instruments, and wearing jewellery and transparent clothes.<sup>44</sup> These two-dimensional representations with a general impression of choral movement seem to be the replacement for the clay circular models of dancers, and were widespread on the Greek mainland in the Archaic period.<sup>45</sup> These figurines help us in understanding the different roles of the female musicians and dancers depicted in the terracotta *choroi*.<sup>46</sup>

The female *lyra* player has the most important role (**fig. 20**):<sup>47</sup> she is taller than the other figures. Furthermore, she has a particular hairstyle belonging to the *parthenos*: two long braids falling down onto her chest (**fig. 21**).<sup>48</sup> Considering that before marriage the maidens offered their braids and objects of childhood to the goddesses,<sup>49</sup> it seems likely that the *lyra* player is the bride. Indeed, stringed instruments associated with female figurines were emblems of the prenuptial status of girls ready for marriage. In this case, the musical string instrument is a symbol of her beauty and *charis*: she is able to arouse erotic desire by performing music.<sup>50</sup> Conversely, the *auletris* is lower than the

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<sup>39</sup> Costabile 1991, pp. 103-105; 114-121, fig. 190.

<sup>40</sup> Herbig 1949, p. 47; Borgeaud 1979, p. 228; Costabile 1991, pp. 178-179.

<sup>41</sup> Bellia 2016, pp. 191-195.

<sup>42</sup> Costabile 1991, pp. 185-187, figg. 296-298; Bellia 2012, pp. 114-116, figg. 31-35.

<sup>43</sup> Costabile 1991, pp. 180-195, figg. 286-294; Bellia 2012, pp. 111-113, figg. 25-30.

<sup>44</sup> Larson 2001, pp. 114-115.

<sup>45</sup> Liveri 2008, pp. 2-6; Albertocchi 2015, 13-15.

<sup>46</sup> Bellia 2012, pp. 115-119.

<sup>47</sup> Bellia 2012, p. 118, fig. 36.

<sup>48</sup> Bellia 2012, p. 118, fig. 37.

<sup>49</sup> Bruit Zaideman 2009, pp. 403-404.

<sup>50</sup> Calame 2001, p. 72 and pp. 159-160.

other figures playing instruments: her role seems appear secondary in the representations. The female figures without musical instruments probably represent singers; the dancers are most often depicted playing percussion instruments, *tympanon* or *kymbala*, for accompanying corporal movements.

In addition, the terracotta figurines representing musicians provide important information for identifying which instruments were best suited to the particular rituals celebrated in the Caruso cave. Whilst percussion instruments were chosen to represent the exciting noise accompanying the rhythmic gestures made by the dancers, the musicians are predominantly depicted playing the *aulos*, since this was the instrument most likely to have accompanied the processions and dances to the sacred place; the *aulos* was played during sacrificial rituals performed at ceremonies that required a large number of performers.

Taking an archaeological approach to dance performance in the wedding sphere, the exact nature of the dance itself remains unknown as no amount of inference will ever recreate the dance exactly as it was practised. However, it is worth mentioning that the circular dance embodies two fundamental moments in the maidens' lives:<sup>51</sup> rituals of initiation into puberty and marriage, encompassing all the stages from abduction to the wedding celebration. It seems the circular dance in a collective performance was considered an ideal moment to display the qualities of girls who were preparing to leave their family home to join the grooms' *oikos*. Indeed, as Alan Shapiro pointed out,<sup>52</sup> dance was an integral part of ritual performances marking stages and transitional phases, such as the initiation of girls into adult maturity and marriage, and enabling girls to be seen in public, at their most graceful and attractive.

As Malcom Bell has argued,<sup>53</sup> the dancing Nymphs provide music and sounds for the wedding of the archetypical bride, perhaps recalling local marriage customs in Magna Graecia and in Sicily: during these wedding celebrations, almost every element could be accompanied by dance performances and sonic events. The Locrian terracotta plaques have close parallels to examples from the sanctuaries near the water sources of San Biagio at Agrigento (**fig. 22**);<sup>54</sup> Fontana Calda at Butera, near Gela (**fig. 23**);<sup>55</sup> the Hellenistic Fountain at Morgantina;<sup>56</sup> and those at Reggio Calabria (**fig. 24**)<sup>57</sup> and Lipari (**fig. 25**).<sup>58</sup> They too seem to have nuptial connotations, and a connection with female divinities and water sources. These terracotta figurines highlight how sounds and rhythmical

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<sup>51</sup> Smith 2011, pp. 88-93.

<sup>52</sup> Shapiro 2004, pp. 310-311.

<sup>53</sup> Bell 1981, pp. 92-93; Larson 2001, p. 220; Bellia 2012, pp. 150-152.

<sup>54</sup> Bellia 2009, pp. 32-33, n. 28.

<sup>55</sup> Adamesteanu 1958, col. 639, fig. 260; Bellia 2009, pp. 126-127, nn. 315-319.

<sup>56</sup> Bell 1987, p. 117, tav. XXXVIII, fig. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Bellia 2014, p. 25, fig. 6.

<sup>58</sup> Bellia 2009, pp. 70-86, nn. 100-166.

movement were closely allied with ceremonies involving rites of passage and initiations, as well as nuptial rites and rituals of social transformation.

As at Locri, the cults of Persephone and Aphrodite were closely intertwined in these sanctuaries, and Aphrodite's cult begins to be well attested at the caves in Southern Italy and in Sicily around the time the nude "nuptial" terracotta figures appear.<sup>59</sup> In many cases, these terracotta figures also incorporate the same particular nuptial gesture of *anakalypsis* through one of the figures in the *choros* (**fig. 22**);<sup>60</sup> through this gesture, performed during the nuptial rites, the maidens showed their readiness for sexual maturity and welcomed the new status of the bride.<sup>61</sup> It is a ritual act in which a bride unveils her face before her husband.

### Ritual Performances and Sound Experiences

The Nymphs who presided over the Caruso cave were the "nymphs" par excellence: they safeguarded mortal brides and their waters were essential in the performance of rites such as the prenuptial bath. From archaeological evidence, the various acts of worship that took place in the sacred rural shrine emerged: this was where the Locrian maidens celebrated their nuptial rites, perhaps during the night. It is possible to speculate that ritual acts included the carriage of sacrifices, vessels of wine, offerings and torches,<sup>62</sup> while the crowd of musicians approached making noise and playing music; it is plausible that the ceremony reached its climax with the dance performances, which were rituals accompanied by music and songs.

On the basis of the architectural characteristics of the Caruso cave, we are now able to form a hypothesis detailing specific moments of the celebrations. First, there was a procession of girls who went into the cave playing, dancing and singing. Secondly, there was the ritual in which the girls gave offerings to the divinities; positioned around their cult images or statues, the maidens awaited their epiphany.<sup>63</sup> Music announced the presence of the divinities in the grotto, which were perhaps personified by masked and costumed actors in the sacred setting.<sup>64</sup> Finally, the maidens bathed in the large semi-circular basin of the grotto for purification before marriage. This was a rite of passage with

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<sup>59</sup> Costabile 1991, pp. 114-127.

<sup>60</sup> Bellia 2009, pp. 45-47.

<sup>61</sup> Pautasso 2008, pp. 285-291.

<sup>62</sup> An interesting example of these ritual acts are in the *Dyskolos* (the Grouch) (vv. 419-423), the only play written by Menander in the 4<sup>th</sup> c. BCE that survives almost in its entirety. They are celebrated in the sacred cavern of Pan and the Nymphs in Attica, where a number of festivities in honour to these deities were performed.

<sup>63</sup> For the epiphany of the Nymphs, see Platt 2011, p. 42.

<sup>64</sup> Burkert 2003, pp. 225-229.

a strong symbolic significance: after that moment they were ready for sexual maturity and to assume the role of *gyné* in the community.<sup>65</sup>

In the Locrian sanctuary, the combination of the peculiar acoustics deriving from a mixture of natural and human-made sounds echoing in the sacred spaces; the alternating between silence and sound;<sup>66</sup> the interplay of darkness and light; the excited dances and music around the cult images; the extraordinary behaviour of water moistening, leaking, flowing or dripping; the mild temperatures; the smell of burning incense; and the tasting of wine would have would have created a multi-sensory and exciting experience for the celebrants who were taking part in such a ritual.<sup>67</sup>

## Conclusion

Among the various acts of worship, the rituals performed in the Caruso cave included the consecration of figurines to the Nymphs. The maiden might incorporate a figurine into the ritual as an offering to the goddess of the cave or as a tool for illustrating proper behaviour during the rituals. For this reason, the notion that that figurines from the grotto might “participate” in these ceremonies cannot be discounted. Furthermore, the act of dedicating these special offerings would be a way for the community to remember the importance of the events and rituals performed in the Locrian cave, and would have involved musical and dance performances associated with the cult’s activities at the shrine.

Taking into account this perspective, these dedications could represent the devotion of worshippers and, possibly, musicians and dancers; their offerings were associated not only with a specific ritual and sound experience in the cave but also an explicit preservation of their memory.<sup>68</sup>

The representations of music and dance on terracotta figures and votive reliefs related to the Nymphs and Pan found in the Locrian cave confirm the use of wind instruments in combination with percussion, and possibly clapping, to accompany circular dances or dancing processions. The appropriate musical instruments for such a ritual performance in the cave were the *aulos* or the *syrinx*; they were probably accompanied by percussive sounds performed on *tympana* and *kymbala* held by dancers, or by the clapping of the audience. The sound of wind instruments in conjunction with the percussive noise would have formed an auditory arena with particular sonic qualities in the underground chambers. Music and clapping combined with the sound that was made by the dancers’

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<sup>65</sup> Smith 2011, pp. 88-93.

<sup>66</sup> Gautier 2015, pp. 183-192.

<sup>67</sup> Youtisos 2014, p. 70.

<sup>68</sup> Bellia 2018, p. 95.

feet on the ground would have probably been distorted by the hollow cave walls, sometimes resonating in the interior and producing a sonorous noise suitable for rituals in the cave.

Musical and choral performances that took place during these rituals are key to understanding both the symbolic meaning and the rich, original production of terracotta figurines found in the springs and water sources of the Western Greek colonies.