

THE DANCERS OF APOLLONIA

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Abstract

This study examines a bronze figurine, and aims to create a complete account of the object in question. The small bronze figurine is 9.7 cm high and is a stray find from Apollonia (Albania). Its current repository location is in Archeological Museum of Tirana. It should be noted that the process of corrosion has severely damaged the individual traits of the figurine. The bronze shows a female figure presented in the act of dancing. She is dressed with a long chiton, down to the feet, over which wears a feline skin, nebris. The dancer, which is used by the ancient Greeks in various religious ceremonies, was one of many ways to honor and bring homage to the divinity, in fact, this was an integral part of the ritual and accompanied by musical instruments which punctuated the rhythm of the movements. In particular, in the cult of Dionysus the dance plays a decisive role. There is abundant comparable figurative material on this particular subject, which is mostly attributed to the Attic ceramists and considering their movement style, the representations of maenads are more numerous in vase paintings than in sculpture. Regarding the stylistic analysis, dating, function and the origin of figurine, this paper is based mainly on research undertaken in the library and archeological storerooms. Hence analogies are provided with similar figurines presented in different object categories like vase paintings or sculpture. As a conclusion the figurine is presented in accordance with the Archaic figurative principles, so it should date to the first half of the VI century BC, and seems to be a local productions which is greatly influenced from the Corinthian style. She had a decorative function, an ex-voto in order to decorate a votive table in sanctuaries.

Keywords: *Maenads , Dancing , Apollonia , Figurine , Bronze*