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Images of Gender in Roman Iberia

Lucy Elkerton

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in
accordance with the requirements for award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities.

July 2018

Word Count 71,540

Abstract

The mosaics of the provinces of Roman Iberia depict gods and goddesses, monsters and maidens, revelry and rapture. They were important decorative items, built into the very structure of the house. Thus, they became part of the visual landscape that surrounded the viewer and contributed to his or her sense of identity. This thesis will explore the contribution of these mosaics to the gender identities of the men and women of Roman Iberia.

The research will examine the conception of gender within these societies, analysing the mosaics in regard to their iconographical and contextual information. The physical environment is as important as the images themselves in understanding how gender roles might be enacted in these spaces. Finally, this thesis will discuss the question of the specificity of these mosaics to the Iberian provinces: can we identify a peculiarly “Iberian” conception of gender in these mosaics?

Acknowledgements & Dedication

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Shelley Hales and Dr Louise Revell. Dr Hales has supported me through many breakdowns and weeping sessions in her office, rooted out my misuse of the Oxford comma (all mistakes remaining are my own stubborn fault), and guided and inspired this thesis. Dr Revell is responsible for initiating this whole project and thus should take the blame.

Secondly, I would like to record my gratitude to the SWWDTP for the PhD funding, and contributions towards research trips. ASPROM also kindly contributed to my visits to Spain.

I would not have survived without the support of many friends and colleagues. I would especially like to name Dr Emma Hammond as a constant source of support and friendship. All those who participated in cheese and wine and generally supplied me with wine and gin are to be praised.

Finally, I am incredibly lucky to have the most wonderful family. My mother, my grandmother, and my grandfather proof read all or part of this thesis (again, I reiterate that all mistakes are my own) which helped considerably. All my family supported me emotionally and financially and helped me escape the PhD bubble when needed. Will's support has been immeasurable and absolute.

This thesis is dedicated to Mum, Dad, Harriet, and Will. I could not have done it without you. Thank you.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED:

DATE:.....

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1 INTRODUCTION

In the heart of Seville, Spain, is an often-overlooked museum. The Palace of the Condesa de Lebrija is a fine example of a sixteenth century elite residence which is now filled with a rich collection of Roman artefacts, including several impressive mosaics. The collection was established by Regla Manjón Mergelina, Condesa de Lebrija, who owned the property from 1901.¹ The highlight of the collection is a large mosaic which covers the courtyard floor, conventionally known as the “Lovers of Zeus”.² This second century AD mosaic was originally excavated from the site of Italica, just outside modern Seville, and consists of several figured panels depicting scenes of the god Jupiter (Zeus in the Greek pantheon) in various “romantic escapades”. Many scholars have connected it to stories from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.³ It is in a very good state of preservation, and the expressions of fear and despair on the faces of the objects of the god’s affections can clearly be seen. Even Io in her cow form has a truly melancholy air about her, recalling Ovid’s poignant ‘Alas, alack’ as ‘her tears rolled down’ when perceiving her bovine form.⁴ Despite the euphemisms that shroud this mosaic – especially the modern name – the images themselves remind us that these are images of rape and violence.

¹ <http://www.palaciodelebrija.com/Historia.html> [accessed 09/08/17].

² Blanco Freijero 1978a.

³ Blanco Freijeiro 1978a: 26; Blázquez et al 1986: 110.

⁴ Ovid, *Metamorphoses* l.6.47-51, trans. Melville.



Figure 1: The “Lovers of Zeus” mosaic in the Palacio de Condesa de Lebrija, Seville. The depiction of Io is in the large roundel on the right-hand edge (photo by the author).

This content that feels so unsavoury to modern eyes is the starting point behind this thesis. What did it mean that a Roman patron lavished time and expense on what is, to our perceptions, a series of rapes? The size and the quality of this mosaic speak to the value that was placed upon it: what did that mean for the men and women who saw it each day, and who participated in the society that enshrines such values within the domestic space? This thesis aims to explore ideas of gender within Roman provincial society by using this and other figurative mosaics from the Iberian provinces that would have adorned the floors of domestic residences. It will focus on three questions:

- What can these mosaics tell us about the ways in which the people who built, commissioned, lived with, and interacted with them, conceived of gender and the roles and identities appropriate to men and women?
- What can the context and physical environment of the mosaics tell us about the ways in which these gender roles might be played out in the domestic spaces in which the mosaics were laid?
- In what ways, and to what extent, are these practices and images of gender particularly “Iberian”, especially in relation to epigraphic evidence?

1.1 PURPOSE AND APPROACH

The topic was chosen for this thesis because it addressed a considerable gap in the scholarship. My academic career has focused on the ways in which space was used in the past, and how people moved through and responded to space. A key starting point was Rodgers' paper on the mosaics of Roman Britain from which I identified that there was a potential to apply a gender-focused reading of domestic space using images from mosaics in other provinces.⁵ Rodgers' work examines some representations of women on British mosaics. She argues that, in these images, women are aligned with nature and disorder, and men are aligned with culture and control. This binary thus points to society in which women are devalued and passive. There are a number of problems with these conclusions: the straightforward division into nature and culture is overly simplistic and contradicted in the paper itself. Whereas female images in general are associated with chaos and disorder, the female busts that represent the Seasons are 'benign' and 'represented the orderly cycle of life'.⁶ Though the work in this thesis does not agree with the binary divisions presented in this paper it represented a way of utilising mosaics that could be applied to other provinces.

The focus on the Iberian provinces developed because there was very little work which tackled the social aspects of the mosaics despite the availability of detailed catalogues (as outlined below). My Masters dissertation focused on the site of Italica and demonstrated that the mosaics could be used to discuss the ways in which gender – femininity and masculinity – was conceived of by the people who lived in Italica. It argued that there was clear evidence of patriarchal hierarchy within this society, and that 'the relationship between the genders...is one of dominance and submission; women must be controlled by men because that is the proper and safe form of society'.⁷ Again, this is a rather simplistic approach to gender, which this thesis will argue is more on a spectrum than a clear binary. The Masters dissertation provided a test case for the PhD research which developed into examining the figurative mosaics across the whole of the Iberian Peninsula. The thesis contributes to the existing field by examining the material through previously unused lenses. The scholarship of gender as referred to in this thesis concerns the analysis of the ways in which people conceive of, experience, and construct femininity and masculinity. Drawing on Butler in particular, archaeology and history has attempted to interrogate the past conceptions of gender through the application of theoretical approaches rooted in gender and by asking different questions of the material.⁸ By applying gender theory to the study of Iberian mosaics it demonstrates how this

⁵ Rodgers 1995.

⁶ Rodgers 1995: 180.

⁷ Elkerton 2011: 64.

⁸ Butler 1999. E.g. Doherty 2001; Foxhall 2013; Gero & Conkey 1991; Gilchrist 1999; Koloski-Ostrow & Lyons 1997; Nelson 2006; Stig Sørensen 2000.

approach can inform our understanding of the social structures of Roman Iberia. It draws upon a number of existing strands of scholarship but utilises them in a new arena.

There has been very little gender scholarship in regard to Spanish mosaics. Archaeologists and classicists studying mosaics in Spain have not used them as a tool to explore ideas about masculinity, femininity and the relationship between the two concepts. The key exception is Luz Neira, who has produced an edited volume on *Representations of Women in Roman Mosaics*, though this covers the entirety of the Roman Empire, and generally throughout her career she has consistently used mosaics to explore social themes.⁹ Her approach is important in this thesis in terms of an example of equivalent work, but it does not stray from an art historical viewpoint. Her introductory essay in the 2011 volume suggests that women on mosaics function as wives, mothers, and lovers. She stresses that modern viewers should not deride these mosaics for a lack of knowledge when they seem to use a narrative that is contradictory in our eyes, such as the marriage of Helen. This can be a celebratory image about the importance of marriage because these mythic characters have been translated as stock figures that communicate stereotypical ideas and roles. This is an important point. However, the discussions lack an integrated consideration of the context of the images and how they function as mosaics that are part of a physical space. The edited volume contains no building plans and the reader is left with little conception of how these images exist other than as floating pictures in an imaginary modern gallery.¹⁰ This is indicative of a de-contextualised approach to mosaics which this research wants to challenge, as stated in the second research question. This is difficult because there this is the standard practice. Mosaics are not published with detailed information about their context, including any other finds or decorative elements. The material is highly inaccessible: where reports of excavations are published for example they are often in regional archaeological journals in Spain which are not made available in the UK. Where possible, comments have been made on the context and plans included in this thesis, or it is noted that there is no information available (see Appendix 1).

Spanish archaeology is not alone in lacking an analysis of gender in mosaics, or indeed any social analysis. The standard approach to mosaics is to discuss them in terms of stylistic developments. Smith's chapter in Henig's *Handbook of Roman Art* is a typical example.¹¹ Smith constructs a narrative of diffusion out from a high ideal, in this case the Hellenistic tradition typified by the mosaics of Antioch, to degraded attempts in other areas. For example, when he moves from Antioch to Italy he states that 'To turn from the mosaics of Antioch to these is like stepping out dazzling

⁹ Neira 2011. Other key works include Neira 2003, 2013.

¹⁰ Neira 2011.

¹¹ Smith 1983.

sunlight into shade'.¹² Equally, a mosaic from Merida which will be discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis is described as 'a travesty of the traditional scene'.¹³ Smith focuses on when various styles and scenes became popular in different areas, but always in relation to a better original. This devalues the experience of the people who lived and used the mosaics and tells us very little about their lived significance. Ling's survey of *Ancient Mosaics* similarly focuses on presenting regional development and tracing the changes in patterns and styles.¹⁴ In the final chapter 'Context and Meaning' he does attempt to address this, saying that there is a need to put the mosaics in context. However, the discussion that follows lacks a human view point. Architectural spaces are discussed, as are the ways in which mosaics can create meaning in space, but on a very shallow level. Viewers 'put his or her own construction upon [the mosaics]' but it is 'dangerous to read too much into a patron's intentions in commissioning a pavement'.¹⁵ This is then contradicted a paragraph later by the sentence describing mosaics as 'both works of art to be appreciated in their own right and vehicles which convey something of the concerns and aspirations of the people who lived with them'.¹⁶ Surely we cannot examine the concerns and aspirations of the people without analysing the intentions and constructions that the viewer may have experienced.

These surveys are representative of the approaches to mosaics across the Empire and are replicated in regional studies. The standard presentation for mosaics is in catalogue form, and most provinces now boast published collections of mosaics, making the material accessible for study. However, the style of the catalogue limits the social analysis in particular that can be undertaken. One of the first catalogues that we would recognise as modern was Avi-Yonah's work on the mosaics of Palestine.¹⁷ He catalogued 363 sites and for each one he described the site in architectural terms, described the decoration of the mosaics, their spatial dimensions, colours, any inscriptions, and attempted to date them from stylistic comparisons or the *terminus post quem* of any associated artefact. This is a clear collation of data: he refers to the density of tesserae relating to the function of the buildings, but the focus of the publication is the presentation of the information. Another key example is Levi's monumental *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*.¹⁸ He states that his aim is to 'bring mosaic art as a whole into the wider picture of the history of art in antiquity'.¹⁹ In addition to the descriptions of the mosaics, Levi does include 'all the evidence of the excavation which may prove useful to the

¹² Smith 1983: 95.

¹³ Smith 1983: 133.

¹⁴ Ling 1998.

¹⁵ Ling 1998: 95.

¹⁶ Ling 1998: 95.

¹⁷ Avi-Yonah 1932, 1933, 1934.

¹⁸ Levi 1947.

¹⁹ Levi 1947: 10.

understanding, classification and dating of the mosaics, and provide us with the solid basis of “facts” for a history of their style; and the iconographic study of their representations’. Levi’s work therefore aims to give some context, but the art historical aspect focuses on the development of style, as identified previously. This format would continue as the standard presentation of mosaics. Neal and Cosh have produced the definitive corpus of mosaics for Roman Britain, with the most recent volume being published in 2010.²⁰ Like Avi-Yonah and Levi before them, each entry describes the site, the dimensions of the room and the mosaic, the colours, the size of the tesserae, dating, condition, and location. They also include the history of the discovery of the mosaic and an illustration where possible. The introduction before the catalogue focuses on the ways in which mosaics were created, including the different schools or groups that have been identified in Britain. Their discussion of the images focuses on aesthetic merit, leading to comments that the Romano-British patrons and craftsmen ‘lack[ed] creative flair’ and that ‘one can only suppose that the owner was not particularly discerning’ as, in the eyes of the authors, the goat head of the Chimera under discussion ‘looks more like a duck!’.²¹

Some scholars have introduced socio-economic questions into their regional surveys. Westgate discusses the ways in which the Hellenistic mosaics relate to ideas of wealth and status.²² She argues that the mosaics are an indication of an increase in wealth and other social changes: ‘a profound change in attitudes which made it more acceptable to spend one’s wealth on conspicuous consumption’ and thus exemplify the move from the ‘communal ideals of the Classical *polis*’ to ‘a more individualistic ethos’.²³ Sweetman similarly includes social analysis in her volume on the mosaics of Roman Crete.²⁴ Rather than the focus of the work being the catalogue itself, Sweetman addresses contextual and theoretical issues first and foremost. She states that she wishes the book to be ‘a comprehensive and enlightened view of the nature of society in Crete’.²⁵ She highlights similar issues with traditional studies to those that have been outlined here and sets out the importance of contextual and critically theoretical approaches, which this thesis aims to emulate as this is a clear gap in the current state of the field.²⁶

Scott’s work on the mosaics of Roman Britain is another important influence as it demonstrates a socially informed approach to mosaics.²⁷ In particular her approach to provincial art as a category

²⁰ Neal and Cosh 2002, 2006, 2009, 2010.

²¹ Neal and Cosh 2002: 9, 11.

²² Westgate 1998.

²³ Westgate 1998: 115.

²⁴ Sweetman 2013.

²⁵ Sweetman 2013: xvi.

²⁶ Sweetman 2013: 1.

²⁷ Scott 2000.

was an important underpinning in that it challenges the idea that ‘Provincial art is seen as a poor imitation of traditional classical forms’ and instead argues that it should be recognised on its own merits.²⁸ She states that ‘In the context of Roman provincial art it is important to examine not just what art ‘means’ in the more formal sense, but also to consider how it is meaningful and in what contexts’.²⁹ Scott’s approach to this is to examine the regional ‘schools’ of mosaics, taking regional choices as a basis for her analysis. This then leads into a discussion of architectural style and finally mythological subjects. The conclusion brings together these strands through the lens of social structure. The evidence of the mosaics illuminates the decisions and behaviours of the elite in Roman Britain. It influences the approach in this thesis because of the way it advocates a contextual approach to mosaics and shows how this form of evidence can be used to discuss social questions. In particular, this thesis will aim to consider how the mosaics are meaningful in the context of Iberia, which lacks this type of analysis. There is not an equivalent piece of scholarship in Iberian archaeology.

This thesis is influenced by work on other art forms, such as sculpture. These will be discussed in more detail in the following sections of the introduction. Although there is some very interesting and important work on mosaics, the focus is often on craftsmanship and production, an area which could not be covered in this thesis due to the time and length restrictions on a PhD. Thus, one of the key influences for this thesis is the work of Kampen. Though her research is mainly on sculptural forms, the context and approach were suitable for the questions that were developed for this thesis.³⁰ Kampen combines a theoretical approach based in questions of gender and performativity with a contextual understanding of the images as physical artefacts. The more recent work of Newby and Lorenz have also been integral to this thesis.³¹ Both interrogate ancient art from the point of view of lived experience and consider the ways in which we as scholars can use these images and artefacts in socially informed scholarship.

Finally, this thesis also drew upon the burgeoning body of work that addresses the theoretical underpinnings of Roman provincial archaeology. In particular the work of Revell has been used to critically examine some of the assumptions that can be made about provincial communities, as well as other key pieces from Woolf, Mattingly, Scott and Webster, and Webster and Cooper.³² Melchor Gil and Hemelrijk have raised the suggestion that epigraphic evidence shows considerable provincial

²⁸ Scott 2000: 11.

²⁹ Scott 2000: 15.

³⁰ E.g. Kampen 1995, 1996, 1997.

³¹ E.g. Newby 2016; Lorenz 2016.

³² E.g. Revell 2009, 2016; Woolf 1998; Mattingly 1997, 2011; Scott and Webster 2003; Webster and Cooper 1996.

variation in the balance of the relationships between men and women.³³ This will be discussed in the following sections, but the thesis will consider whether the mosaic evidence supports this theory as well. This is an important inclusion and point of difference with my approach to previous mosaic studies in Iberia and other provinces. Overall, this topic represents a clear contribution to knowledge in drawing upon scholarship of gender, art history, and provincial archaeology and applying these approaches to the previously underused mosaics of the Iberian provinces. It demonstrates that mosaics can inform our understanding of conceptions of masculinity and femininity in the provinces; it adds to our understanding of gender in the Roman world and challenges ancient and contemporary binaries of gender; and it shows how mosaics are divorced from their contextual information, highlighting the ways in which scholarship is still bound by divisions and prejudices established in the eighteenth century.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The material for this thesis will be taken from the corpus of mosaics published in catalogues by the Instituto Español de Arqueología “Rodrigo Caro” del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. The catalogues will be used as the main source of this research, supplemented by excavation reports where possible. The volumes (published 1978 – 1998) focus on regional collections of mosaics, varying from coverage of whole provinces, to specific volumes on individual towns (Merida and Italica), and a special volume on mosaics in the collection of the National Archaeology Museum in Madrid.³⁴ There is no specific date range set on the collection, except that implied by the title ‘Mosaicos Romanos’. The Romans were present in the Peninsula for nearly seven hundred years, from initial trading contacts, to the creation of some of the first overseas provinces, and through to the end of the Empire (approximately 226 BC until 457 AD).³⁵ As with the catalogues for other provinces, these volumes focus on presenting the basic physical description of the mosaics, with limited archaeological context, and an extended discussion upon where the figurative forms have appeared in other mosaics or art forms or literary works.

The themes were formed through the process of the research itself. Building upon my Masters case study of Italica a database was created to collate all accessible information regarding figurative mosaics in the Iberian Peninsula (see Appendix 1). This allowed me to evaluate whether the mosaic was accessible in terms of publication and in terms of having clear and understandable figures. The

³³ Melchor Gil 2008; Hemelrijk 2015.

³⁴ Blanco Freijeiro 1978a and b; Blázquez 1981, 1982a and b; Blázquez and Mezquíriz de Catalán 1985; Blázquez, Lopez Monteagudo, Neira Jimenez, San Nicolas Pedraz 1989b; Blázquez and Ortego y Frías 1983.

³⁵ Keay 1988: 8.

condition of the mosaic and the availability of published information was a key factor in eliminating examples. I then aimed to extract broad overarching themes from the images and create logical groupings that appeared to present a starting point for a discussion on gender. For example, I noticed a number of scenes of men on horseback or hunting scenes and felt that I could develop an argument regarding an idea of masculinity from this initial sample. The resulting chapters were thus shaped by the thematic considerations that appeared to me through this collating process. This seemed to be the best way to let the material guide me, rather than try to impose too many restrictions upon it. In total I have recorded 141 mosaics in my database, with approximately half being directly used within the thesis. This thesis is in no way a complete catalogue of figurative mosaics in Iberia, but I believe that the number used, and the process of selection means that the arguments presented are substantiated and represent a reasonable sample. Where appropriate in the text I have indicated whether I am only using a specific number of examples, but on the whole, I am discussing all the examples of that type that are known to me.

A key limitation of the evidence that must be noted is the access to information and the type of information published about the mosaics. As stated, much of the information is drawn from the CSIC catalogues. However, the entries in these catalogues are focused on the description of the mosaic and other possible archetypes and copies from across the Empire. The information regarding the archaeological context is often limited and almost non-existent when discussing relating finds. This is indicative of the way in which mosaics are approached in Iberian archaeology, and across the Empire. This information would clearly add to the depth of the arguments in this thesis, as well as greater information about the entirety of the decorative programmes in the spaces discussed. I have attempted to supplement this with other publications and with visits to sites. However, this has not been possible for all the examples used and I have noted where I am lacking information. In my conclusion I will consider further how this could impact the arguments I have presented.

1.3 THE MOSAICS OF IBERIA

The Peninsula covers a variety of landscapes and peoples and does not represent a homogenous society and culture. Local influences, and more distant ones, play an important part in the character of these communities that are bound by political and economic links. The following brief discussion will establish some historical context in relation to the idea of Iberian Roman society, and the mosaics.

The pre-Roman make-up of the Peninsula can be described as a 'mosaic of peoples with contrasting origins and cultural traditions'.³⁶ There were several "Celtic" tribes that controlled various regions and lived in tribal and semi-urban settlements.³⁷ On the south-eastern coast especially, a number of trading settlements and colonies were established by other cultures, such as Cadiz under the Phoenicians, and Ampúries (ancient Emporion) under the Greeks. The Phoenician outposts were taken over by the Carthaginians, who maintained a fairly significant presence on the coast. This was the initial motivation for Roman involvement, as the Peninsula became the stage for the Second Punic War and saw a number of important battles in that conflict against the Carthaginians. Following the defeat of the Carthaginian general Hasdrubal Gisgo by Scipio in 206 BC, veterans were settled at the town of Italica, and resources such as the precious metal mines around Carthago Nova and Turdetania were taken over by the Roman Republic. Into the second century BC, the Romans continued their involvement in Iberia, defeated a number of the Celtiberian tribes, and gradually increased their influence across the Peninsula. Forts and supply bases were established as they moved west across the landscape, stamping their control on the peoples. The military campaigns continued until roughly 133 BC, when two-thirds of the Peninsula was under the ad hoc control of the Roman Republic.

³⁶ Keay 1988: 12. The following summary is based on Keay 1988.

³⁷ Bendala Galán 2000.

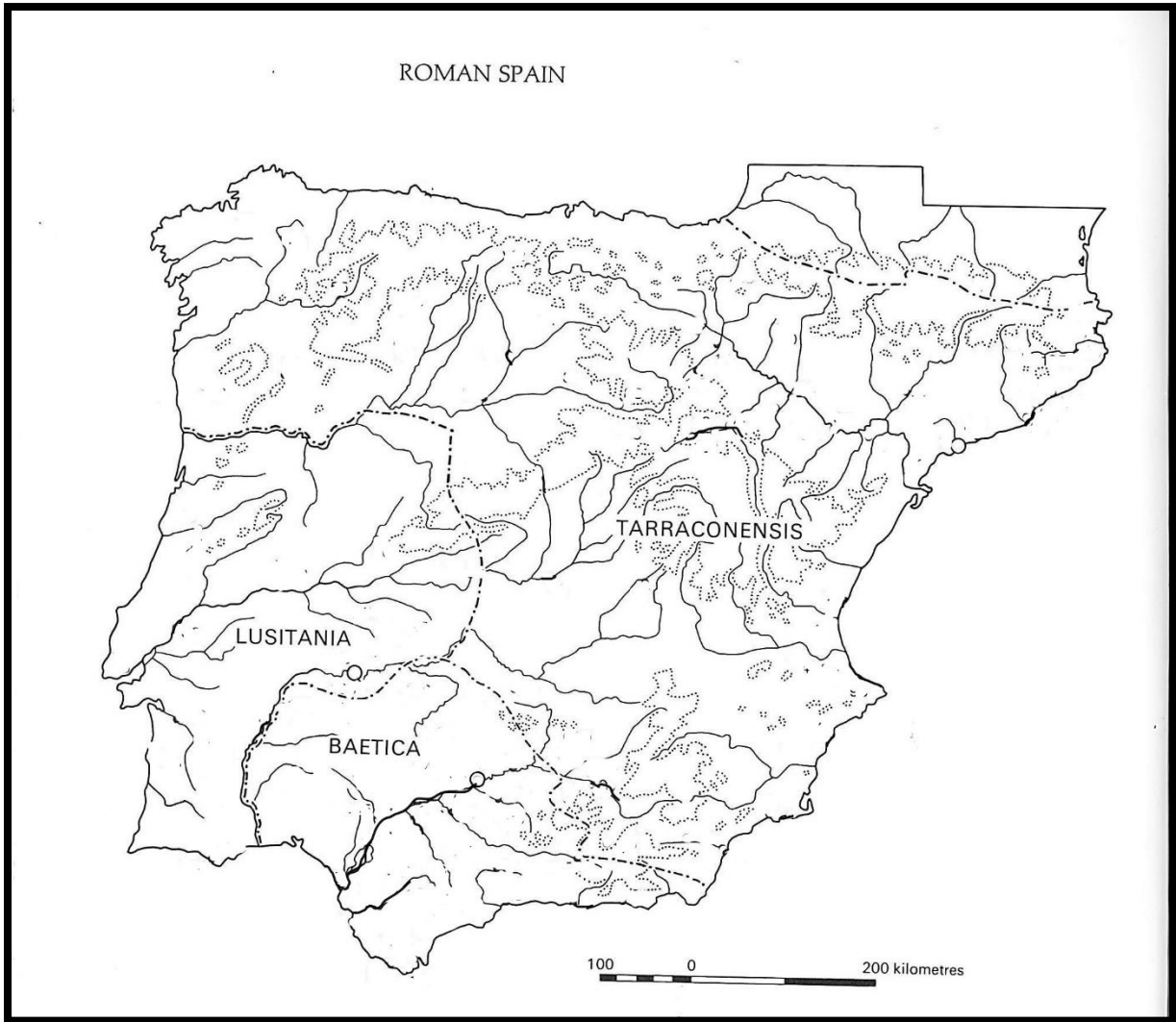


Figure 2: Map of the Augustan Provinces of Roman Spain, adapted from Keay 1988 by the author.

The Iberian Peninsula, divided into the provinces of Hispania Citerior and Hispania Ulterior, then witnessed much of the civil fighting and power struggles of the first century BC. Sertorius was appointed governor of Hispania Citerior in 83 BC and used the resources and armies of the province to attempt to grasp wider power, bringing him into conflict with Caecilius Metellus and Pompey the Great. Following his defeat, Gaius Julius Caesar became governor and again, the resources of the Peninsula saw it dragged into the conflicts and struggles of the Civil War with Caesar fighting Pompey in several battles in the Hispanic provinces. To add to the confusion, some of the Lusitanian tribes (from the area of modern-day Portugal) rebelled against Roman authority and had to be subdued. The Iberian provinces were finally fully subjugated by Augustus by 19 BC. He reformed the two Hispanic provinces which had grown rather large and unwieldy between 16 and 13 BC with the formation of Hispania Baetica, in the south-east, Hispania Lusitania in the south-west, and Hispania Tarraconensis across the northern reaches. The three provinces were settled with colonies of

veterans, crossed with roads and trading routes, and ruled by the civic councils of the urban sites, some of which were newly formed, some developed from existing settlements.

This background highlights the multiple influences and variations in settlement and culture across the Peninsula, the way in which it was integral to the history of the Republic and the Empire for a considerable period of time, and the gradual changes that took place in politics and economics. The second and third centuries increased this trend which began in the first century, with senators and emperors deriving from families with provincial Iberian backgrounds.³⁸ This was not a rural backwater, but a vibrant and connected landscape, with local social and economic structural variations dependent upon the multiple influences and experiences of each community.

The third century saw some changes and disruption from influxes of Moorish and later Germanic tribes.³⁹ The three provinces were reorganised under Diocletian at the beginning of the fourth century AD, with Tarraconensis split into Tarraconensis, Carthaginensis, and Gallaecia, and all five provinces were classed as a diocese with the North African province of Mauritania Tingitania. Traditional narratives talk of decline in this period, with the elite withdrawing from civic society, civil unrest, and declines in industry.⁴⁰ The reality is more likely to have been much more complex, with evidence of continued investment in towns as well as luxurious private houses in both towns and at rural sites, some discoveries of coin hoards but also exquisite mosaics and art objects, and continuing olive oil production, but with changes in the export markets.⁴¹ The coin hoards could potentially indicate a level of anxiety regarding political and financial stability in the region, with wealth being hidden from invaders, but the continued urban and rural investment, and the sustaining agricultural markets point to a more settled picture. The mosaics discussed in this thesis are a key example of continued investment in social practices and culture as in the first and second centuries AD. There were adaptations made in administrative and political areas in the Iberian provinces over the third to fifth centuries. The reorganisation of the provinces is the key one but Kulikowski stresses that the social units where power was administrated remained constant, in particular the format of the conventus (a territorial, political and judicial unit within the province) and their capitals.⁴² He emphasises that any administrative and political changes in the third to fifth

³⁸ The first Iberian senator in Rome was appointed in the 40s BC. The first Iberian Emperor was Trajan in the first century AD.

³⁹ Keay 1988: 173ff.

⁴⁰ E.g. Keay 1988.

⁴¹ Kulikowski 2004; Keay 1988.

⁴² Kulikowski 2005. Brill's definition of the conventus: <https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/brill-s-new-pauly/conventus-e12220860> [accessed 17/07/2019].

centuries were rooted in the experiences of the previous two centuries, in that none of the changes were revolutionary but instead evolved out of earlier practices.⁴³

Chavarría's work on urban and rural villa sites in the fourth century AD stresses the continuity present in these sites, as well as their vitality.⁴⁴ In a wider study, Bowes argues that 'Late antique houses have thus been made to bear the weight of late antiquity itself, a period that allegedly witnessed the slow decline of ancient social habits and the advent of proto-medieval ways of life'.⁴⁵ As with the Iberian provinces the general narrative of this period is decline from a classical ideal, and Bowes uses housing to demonstrate that this is inaccurate. Like Chavarría and Kulikowski, she stresses continuity. For example, she highlights the houses of the Monería in Merida which are continuously occupied elite houses, with no significant changes in design despite evidence of rebuilding.⁴⁶ Such a constancy in design also suggests a level of continuity in social practices, since domestic architecture created the space to enact particular behaviours (which will be discussed in the following section). She argues that there is little dramatic social upheaval but rather 'what is new about late antique social relationships is often their rhetorical garb, rather than any qualitative escalation in hierarchies'.⁴⁷ Overall, the picture is of continuity and broad stability. Some of the social changes will be discussed in terms of the mosaics in the following chapters, as they represent evidence of elite focus and display. Another key change is the introduction of Christianity, with communities established in the Iberian Peninsula by the early fourth century AD. A number of saints were martyred in Iberia, and bishoprics existed across the provinces, with bishops holding positions of some power within political society. The Bishop of Cordoba, for example, acted as religious advisor to the Emperor Constantine at many of the major doctrinal church councils.⁴⁸ Literary sources emphasise the vibrancy of the Iberian Christian communities, and examples such as the life of Maternus Cynegius loom large, and culminate in the career of the Spanish emperor, Theodosius.⁴⁹ The "end" of Roman Spain is generally seen as being marked by the invasion of the Visigoths in 476 AD.⁵⁰ The official control of the provinces by the Roman government was over, and a new group of peoples was absorbed into the Peninsula, bringing more influences and experiences, to be incorporated into the Iberian tapestry.

⁴³ Kulikowski 2005.

⁴⁴ Chavarría 2005, Chavarría et al 2006. Also Bowes & Kulikowski 2005.

⁴⁵ Bowes 2010: 16.

⁴⁶ Bowes 2010: 35.

⁴⁷ Bowes 2010: 82-3.

⁴⁸ Keay 1988: 183.

⁴⁹ Matthews 1967.

⁵⁰ Keay 1988: 202.

In the light of this history, the Iberian Peninsula can therefore be seen as a varied and complex landscape of multiple cultures. It was very much integral to the Roman Empire, but it also maintained local networks and developed as a result of particular practices and influences. The impact of the Romans on the Iberian provinces is most obviously apparent in the appearance of “Roman” domestic architecture, material culture and social practices. The scholarly approach to understanding the provinces of the Roman Empire is as complex and contested as the provinces themselves. The idea of “Romanization” has underpinned research on the provinces since the Victorian period but has changed conceptually from a gently paternalistic process to an imperialist imposition.⁵¹ The understanding of the scale and breadth of the impact of the Roman Empire on the provinces has also changed. Colonial theories have challenged the depth of Romanization and encouraged alternative narratives.⁵² Kampen states that Roman history has been written under an aegis of the nineteenth-century concept of empire, where the centre dominates. Instead she argues for a ‘fragmentation of the dream of hegemony...instead...writing of history based on concepts of community and collectivity’.⁵³ This recognises the provinces as communities that are ‘fluid and dynamic entities constantly interacting with other communities’.⁵⁴ This conception of Empire argues that the provinces are not identikit versions of Rome repeated across the Empire. Instead, they are each hubs of their own “Roman-ness”. Scholars are now understanding the Empire as multi-local, where each community would constantly renegotiate the boundaries between the local and the Empire.

The Iberian provinces are no exception. From the historical overview outlined in this introduction, it is clear that the cultures of the Iberian Peninsula were multiple, complex, and fluid. Each political intrusion brought its own cultural intrusion with it. The culture of Iberia consisted of Celtic, Phoenician, Greek, Carthaginian, and Roman influences at the very least. These can be identified in the material culture of the provinces. Jiménez argues for a state of hybridity in the Iberian provinces. She says that ‘cultural translation is a process of repetition and imitation on the part of the colonized, but in the very same act of domination the language of the master becomes hybrid, because interpretation is never a mere act of communication.’⁵⁵ As the provincial society uses the tools and practices of the centre, they become the tools and practices of the provinces, created anew by the people and society that interpret them. We must also bear this in mind as scholars, as

⁵¹ Mommsen 1885; Haverfield 1915; Collingwood 1932; Millett 1990; Mattingly 1997; Freeman 1997; Woolf 1998; Keay & Terrenato 2008; Mattingly 2004, 2011; Revell 2009.

⁵² Webster & Cooper 1996; Scott & Webster 2003; Gardner 2013.

⁵³ Kampen 1995: 377.

⁵⁴ Kampen 1995: 377.

⁵⁵ Jiménez Díez 2011: 115.

there may be a propensity to impose interpretations based on texts or material from the centre onto the provinces.

These tools and practices may have similar forms, with different meanings, or vice versa, to those across the Empire. There are significant differences in experience here: an elite Iberian who serves on the town council, who meets with the governor from Rome, who owns a luxurious villa outside of town, and imports Falernian wine, will have a different relationship with the Empire and his own province than his client who lives in a more traditional tribal settlement, visits the nearest urban settlement to pay visits to his patron, and may even have folk memories of relatives who were killed by a “Roman” army. Both may use pieces of material culture that modern scholars would designate as Roman, but their experiences and cultural identity will dictate their responses and their behaviours. This is summarised by Hales in her discussion of a tombstone from Noricum, ‘While Catrona’s efforts may look decidedly proto- or even un-Roman, her efforts at self-representation as a Roman citizen added to the debate about what Roman was – and what she added, repeated, and performed became part of an expanding concept of Roman-ness’.⁵⁶ It is the self-representation of the peoples of the Iberian Peninsula to their local audience that we need to explore in relation to these mosaics, and understand that they are communicating something about their relationship with Rome, in whatever form they understand that.

⁵⁶ Hales 2009: 242.

1.4 THE DOMESTIC CONTEXTS OF THE MOSAICS

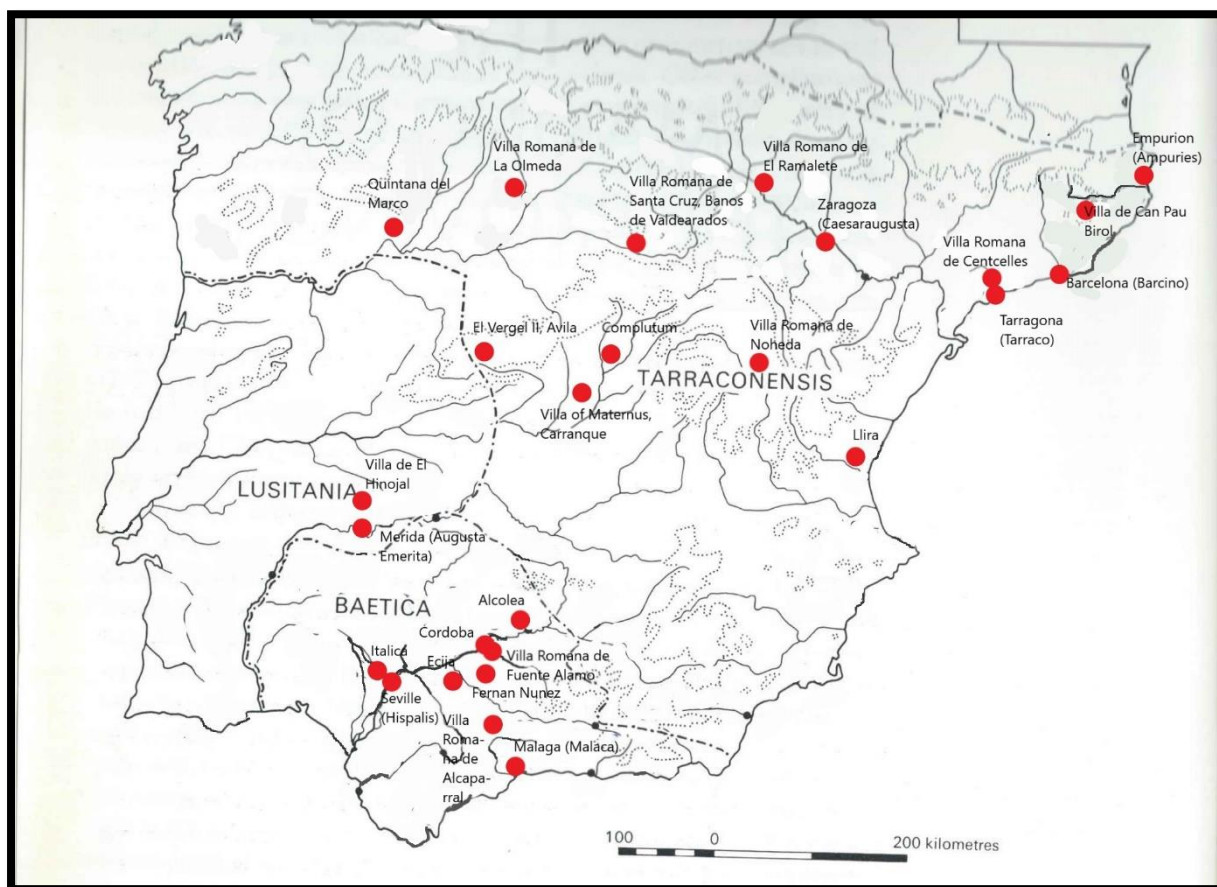


Figure 3: Map showing all the sites mentioned in the text, adapted from Keay 1988 by the author

The mosaics in this thesis were all excavated from domestic contexts, so it is important to understand how these spaces were understood and experienced in the wider Roman world, and in Iberia. The archaeological evidence from the Iberian provinces has uncovered a significant range of domestic contexts, from urban townhouses to rural villas. This is where the people who commissioned and viewed the mosaics lived, and therefore a key site to explore ideas of identity, status, gender, and behaviour. If we are asking questions of identity, including gender, this would seem a highly logical starting point. We can see that the domestic space, “the home”, would be a place where an individual can reveal and explore his or her identity.⁵⁷ Laurence states that houses are ‘one of the primary elements of the human social environment’.⁵⁸ They are one of the key areas where life takes place. They are where we interact with other people, where we make ourselves feel safe and rooted, where we can create an interface with the outside world. In a practical way, they

⁵⁷ Scott 2000.

⁵⁸ Laurence 1997: 7; See also Kent 1990, Samson 1990.

contain things that are important or useful to us in our daily lives. There are differences between modern and ancient domestic usage but there are key commonalities as well.

Wallace-Hadrill stresses that Roman literature from Italy frequently shows a link between the decoration and quality of the Roman house, and the owner's social standing.⁵⁹ Not only is the house itself important but its appearance and form can be taken as indicators of identity. Hales argues that décor is 'a way of asserting yourself and your family's right to be part of Rome' in the provinces as well as in the centre.⁶⁰ The decoration and material culture of the domestic space become markers that demonstrate your ability to perform the correct behaviours of particular identities: for the majority of these domestic spaces, that means elite Roman identities. Another important aspect that Wallace-Hadrill stresses is that the Italian Roman domestic sphere was not a private, insular space but 'a locus of public life. A public figure went home not so much in order to shield himself from the public gaze, as to present himself to it in the best light'.⁶¹ This is because the elite Roman house would be open to peers and dependants and would be the site of political and business transactions. Though this is a feature of domestic spaces in the city of Rome, it is also replicated in the provinces, as far as we can understand from the structures of the civic government and from the remains of elite housing which contain large reception areas that are richly decorated and are interpreted as spaces where the elite can entertain their clients and guests.⁶² The domestic space is therefore the perfect stage set on which to stake one's claim to particular identities, including gender ones. Within the home, the elite Roman can hope to control the impression his performance makes by drawing on the material culture that surrounds him, ensuring the experience of the visitor was one that conforms to his (and society's) ideal.

Across the Empire, the layout of the house can be highly varied. Iberia is no different in the variety of the domestic form, and the mosaics themselves have been found in the whole range of urban and rural sites. Most scholarly discussions of domestic context focus on examples from Rome or Pompeii, and have defined the typical house as the "atrium" model.⁶³ Meyer's work explores provincial housing in the western provinces and attempts to establish an alternative model of the "axial-peristyle" house.⁶⁴ She defines the main features of this house as its large size, the presence of prestigious reception rooms or halls, and a dominating single axis through the vestibule, peristyle,

⁵⁹ Wallace-Hadrill 1988: 44.

⁶⁰ Hales 2003: 3.

⁶¹ Wallace-Hadrill 1988: 46. Also Birk & Paulson 2012; Grahame 1997.

⁶² Laurence & Wallace-Hadrill 1997. See also Smith 1997.

⁶³ Clarke 1991; Ellis 2000; Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 1997; half of Laurence & Wallace-Hadrill's 1997 volume *Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and Beyond* is devoted to Pompeii rather than the beyond.

⁶⁴ Meyer 1999.

and the *triclinium*. An example of this in the Iberian provinces is the House of the Birds, Italica, which Meyer describes as a “perfect” example of the form.⁶⁵ From the entrance of this house, the viewer can see across the peristyle into the *triclinium* on the far side, which is still decorated with elaborate geometric mosaics. In the axial-peristyle model, these three rooms are the most significant rooms in the house and form part of the explicitly public function of the house because a hierarchy of viewing and access can be seen from outside. They would also be the main rooms where entertaining would take place. These important rooms ‘serve prestigious purposes and the self-affirmation of the owner’, directly tying this architectural layout to particular social behaviours, and ideas about identity.⁶⁶ For Meyer, this style of house is proof of the adoption of a Roman elite lifestyle (and presumably identity) in the provinces, and ‘mirrored not only the requirements but also the social standards of behaviour that were valid for occupants and visitors alike’.⁶⁷ There are some houses in the Iberian provinces that fit this particular architectural form: Meyer identified approximately twenty in her study.⁶⁸ Of the houses in this thesis, though not all can be strictly classified as “axial-peristyle” houses, all share a focus on reception rooms that can hold visitors and have an entertaining or social function in some way. Some may be on particular axes that allow vistas into and out of the house but not necessarily. The reception rooms are contrasted with spaces that are more inaccessible, by way of anterooms, and that are smaller and more intimate but could still be used for more prestigious entertaining.

The houses in this thesis were not chosen specifically for their architectural or spatial characteristics but because of the figurative mosaics they contain. However, they do represent a sample of domestic stock, both *domus* and *villae*, from the first to the fourth centuries AD and they cover most of the regions in the provinces, with clusters around the urban centres of Baetica, the capital of Lusitania, and a more dispersed pattern across Tarraconensis, following the river valleys. There is no scope to consider regional variation in this thesis and there is very little work that has been done in this area beyond the basic distinctions of rural/urban. In terms of chronological development, the majority of the mosaics are from the fourth century. Thus, the work of Meyer and Bowes is considered appropriate. As noted above, the houses all tend to contain spaces which, because of their size, decoration and place in the floorplan (where we can tell), suggest they are reception rooms. The fact that they all have figurative mosaics points the fact that they all share similar aesthetic tastes. Furthermore, a figurative mosaic suggests some degree of wealth, and a desire to show it off in a way that conforms to that taste. The presence of reception rooms, which imply the

⁶⁵ Meyer 1999, fig 3A; 104.

⁶⁶ Meyer 1999: 108.

⁶⁷ Meyer 1999: 116; 119.

⁶⁸ Meyer 1999: 115.

presence of guests in the house, indicate that the patrons of these mosaics invited that audience into the house and that, by doing so, were active participants in local society, interacting and competing with their peers. These houses can be considered a group that can be read in the social house model discussed by Wallace-Hadrill in the previous section.⁶⁹

Where known, the domestic context of the mosaics has been discussed in the text alongside the examples, and each chapter contains a map depicting the sites and coded as to their date, so they can be compared. Another argument that has arisen around scholarship on domestic sites in Italy and elsewhere is that the designations of these spaces are not set in stone. Allison's studies of artefact assemblages in Pompeian domestic contexts has frequently stressed that our designation of rooms with particular titles drawn from literature has led scholars to postulate that there is a restriction to particular behaviours in particular rooms, that guests can only be greeted in the *atrium* and that *cubicula* are only for sleeping in. This is not supported by her artefact analysis.⁷⁰

"Kitchenware" may be found alongside "tableware" and loom weights and more high-status artefacts in the *oecus* for example, defying our neat designations of rooms for dining on special occasions, work areas, and bedrooms.⁷¹ This flexibility in usage is likely to be true of the provinces as well, where local and alternative practices interact with this Roman model.

The axial-peristyle model is thus only a conceptual model, and the house plans of the Iberian provinces show considerable variety in their form, whilst retaining and reusing some key features of this model. The domestic sites of Iberia in part reflect the varied past as outlined in the context above, with some of the urban sites developing from Phoenician and Greek trading posts, and some from local pre-urban sites infused with settlers. There is evidence from inscriptions across the Peninsula that civic government through curial bodies was widespread, so we can see the establishment of a public elite class, which can be connected to the model of the social house as they would have used their homes as a form of headquarters for their political activities.⁷²

Townhouses with mosaics, such as those found on the site of Italica, or in the *civitas* capitals of Merida, Cordoba, and Tarragona, were clearly sites where public life could take place. Iberian domestic contexts are social spaces.

⁶⁹ Wallace-Hadrill 1988.

⁷⁰ Allison 2001; 2002; 2007. Also Berry 1997.

⁷¹ For example, see the comment in Chapter 4 regarding the House of Bacchus in Complutum.

⁷² Kulikowski 2004: 27; Wallace-Hadrill 1988 and above for the social house model.

Traditionally, scholarship has told us that this model went into decline in the third century AD.⁷³ In this narrative the urban sites are supposed to fall into decay, and civic life is supposed to cease in the towns. In terms of the Iberian provinces, Kulikowski and Chavarría et al have robustly challenged this model.⁷⁴ Kulikowski sees the decline of the epigraphic habit (a key “symptom” of decline for many) as simply a change in fashion or need, with other evidence for the continuation of participation in civic life: maintenance of public buildings and continuing magistracies. The civic posts interact with the new hierarchies of Christianity and become models for ecclesiastical style government later on.⁷⁵ He and Chavarría stress that there is still wealth and resources being brought into the towns. Chavarría, Ripoll and Arce use examples from Merida, Barcelona (Barcino), and Complutum to demonstrate the ‘vitality of building activity’ in the Peninsula in the third and fourth centuries AD.⁷⁶ The majority of the mosaics come from this vital and burgeoning period: ‘The third century owners of these *domus* made the conscious decision to concentrate their decorative expenditure on precisely those public areas where certain ritualized social activities were enacted’.⁷⁷ The public areas of the elite townhouse become even more important in this period, and replace the earlier public and civic focus on the municipal buildings: essentially the same behaviours are occurring and, in many ways, the arena of the social house is intensifying. However, it is manifested in a different way from those large-scale civic projects that scholars can sometimes focus on as symbols of urban health.

Bowes’ work on Late Antique housing across the provinces is particularly pertinent here as well, since so many of the mosaics in the Iberian corpus date from the later centuries of Roman occupation. She stresses the variety and subtlety of the domestic forms of the period.⁷⁸ She emphasizes the evidence for larger rooms with multiple functions, as supported by analysis of artefact assemblages and highlights the variety in the layout of these houses.⁷⁹ Like the “axial-peristyle” type, there is not necessarily one single “palatial” model that is rigidly copied across the provinces but houses which have been adapted to the local social situation, down to an individual’s needs and desires. She states that ‘To read space simply as a knee-jerk response to social imperatives, as is the current tendency in late antique house studies, is to deny late Roman homeowners the sophisticated and self-conscious visual culture we readily now ascribe to their

⁷³ E.g. Keay 1988. Bowes summarises the scholarly approaches to Late Antique housing in Chapter 1 of *Houses and Society in the Later Roman Empire* (2010). See also Carandini, Ricci and De Vos 1982 for an example of the traditional arguments regarding the changes to the Late Antique domestic model.

⁷⁴ Kulikowski 2004; Chavarría et al 2006.

⁷⁵ Kulikowski 2004.

⁷⁶ Chavarría et al 2006.

⁷⁷ Kulikowski 2004: 53. See also Ellis 2007.

⁷⁸ Bowes 2010.

⁷⁹ Bowes 2010: 39-41.

ancestors'.⁸⁰ Bowes stresses the important similarities and continuities between the periodisations that modern scholars impose. There were commonalities between the Augustan and the Late Antique models of domesticity even if the form changed. Equally, we can identify these common features in provincial spaces as well as the centre. There were particular domestic features in these spaces, such as the large reception rooms, that could be used in a variety of ways (from entertaining to work spaces) and in different layouts but remain connected across a particular group of identities. The range of houses and situations, from urban to rural, from palatial to modest, spoke to the range of social realities they contributed to, and the different levels of status and identity that they could represent.

There was an increase in expansive (and expensive) villas in rural and suburban areas across the Empire and in Iberia during this period. Chavarría et al stress that we should not assume that this offers evidence that towns were in decline and that the elite were retreating away from their civic duties and into luxurious excess.⁸¹ They argue that in all likelihood, the same people were using both the rural and urban sites.⁸² Chavarría also stresses the vitality of these rural sites and the large populations that they seem to have supported: both the sites of El Ramalete and La Olmeda that will be discussed in the main body of the thesis have evidence for homes for dependants and cemeteries on the estates or nearby.⁸³ Both are also close to important urban sites, and are linked with major roads. From this kind of evidence, it is viable to see the villas as an extension of the urban townhouse, and functioning in a similar way in terms of elite display.⁸⁴ They are 'an explicit material representation of dominal power and visual articulation of social status'.⁸⁵ They may have a different tone, and more practically, more space in which to create these stage sets but the role they play in the lives of the elite and the non-elite in regards to their construction and maintenance of social identity is very similar.⁸⁶

There are also of course varying levels of "elite-ness". The owner of El Ramalete could well consider the owner of the House of Bacchus in Complutum distinctly below him on the social scale. The excavated area of the House of Bacchus covers approximately 31 by 28 metres and covers the house and surrounding buildings; the excavated area of the villa at El Ramalete covers 55 by 60 metres and has does not show the entirety of the living space.

⁸⁰ Bowes 2010: 60.

⁸¹ Chavarría et al 2006; Keay 1988.

⁸² Chavarría et al 2006.

⁸³ Chavarría 2005: 526-7.

⁸⁴ Morand & Etienne 1996.

⁸⁵ Chavarría 2005: 539.

⁸⁶ Ellis 2010.

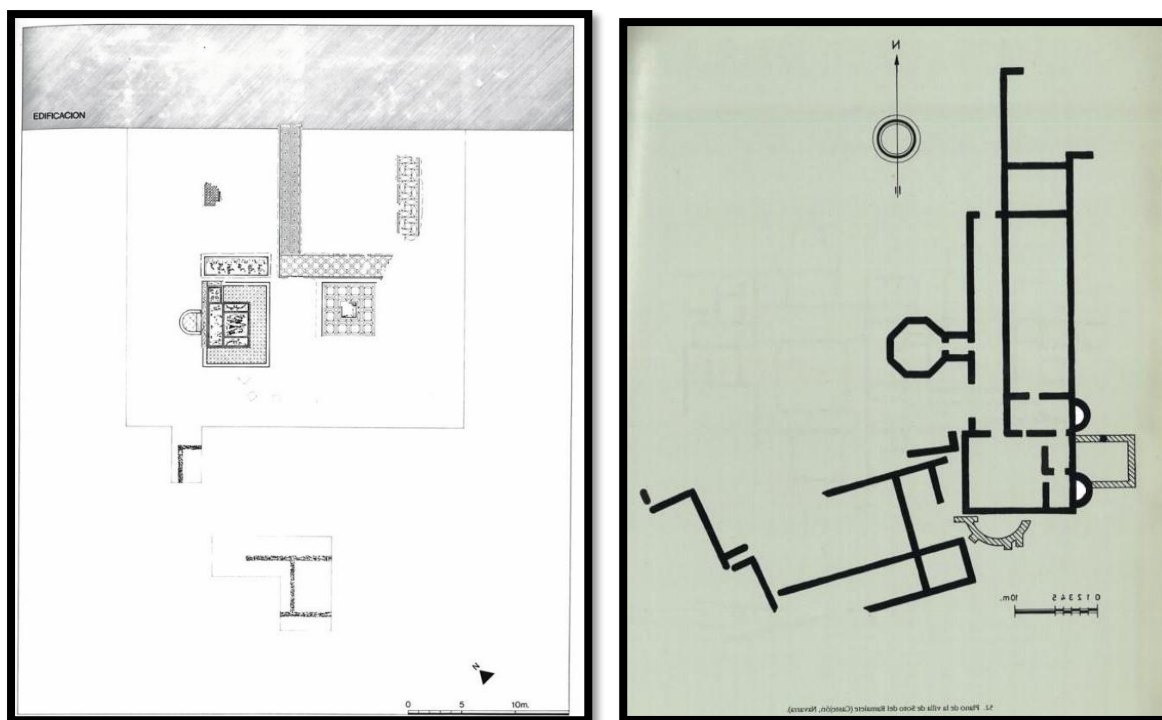


Figure 4: Plan of the House of Bacchus, Complutum (L); Plan of El Ramalete (R). Fernández-Galiano 1984; Fernández Castro 1982.

However, each is a reflection of the other: when the Complutum owner decorates his few small rooms, he is aiming for a similar effect to that of the El Ramalete owner. They exist on the same social spectrum. These points, and distinctions, or lack of, between rural and urban domestic contexts underlie this research. These houses can serve as socio-political documents in which we can try and read the identity of the patron, and possibly those around him.⁸⁷

1.5 VISUALITY IN THE DOMESTIC SPACE

Newby sees the Roman villa, or domestic space, as ‘a place of the imagination’.⁸⁸ She describes how the landscape, the artwork, and the activities that take place there can open up other worlds for the viewer to “see”. We do not simply look at the world around us, we interpret it as having meaning and substance, and this act of viewing helps us understand how it (and we) fit into various social landscapes. How did the men and women of the Roman Empire and the Iberian provinces view and understand their domestic landscape? How did it make sense within the sociocultural context?⁸⁹ As Lorenz states ‘analysing and interpreting pictures...is all about stretching these objects out methodically, turning and twisting them so as to elicit historical knowledge while fully aware of what

⁸⁷ Wallace-Hadrill 1988.

⁸⁸ Newby 2012: 350.

⁸⁹ Lorenz 2016 discusses various approaches to imagery that tackle these questions.

we are doing'.⁹⁰ The questions in this thesis are about 'stretching these objects out methodically', using gender as the tool through which to perform this act of interrogation. Lorenz sets out three modes through which scholars approach imagery, demonstrating the links between theory and practice. Her three modes are iconology, image studies and semiotics. She summarises: 'iconology is concerned with the historical context; image studies with the physical context; and semiotics with reaching into the presentation itself'.⁹¹ This thesis will attempt an interaction between all three modes, as Lorenz herself advocates in order to avoid fragmentation. All three methods bring richness to the interpretation and understanding of the subject.

Holscher's volume *The Language of Images in Roman Art* argues for an approach centred on a semantic system. He states that 'we can no longer approach works of art exclusively from the standpoint of production, as the expressions of arts or patrons, but we must also examine them as forms of communication – that is, as a factor in the collective life of a society'.⁹² This thesis will consider these mosaics as a factor in the collective life of a society by interrogating the ways in which these images can communicate with viewers, and form part of a dialogue. This concept that Holscher has outlined is fundamental to a socially informed reading of the mosaics. The collective life that lived in the domestic spaces that contained these mosaics all interacted with the forms and narratives that these mosaics depict. We must try and access that range of viewers through the questions we ask of the material.

Clarke also suggests three modes in which to approach viewing in his article 'The Philological, the Folkloric, and the Site-Specific: Three Models for Decoding Classical Visual Representation'.⁹³ The philological uses texts to explain the stories or illustrate connections to 'history'; the folkloric sees the images as fables that function as a means of explaining the meaning of life; the site-specific explores the context of the image and how the contemporary viewer might have understood it. Though all will be used, the site-specific in particular encourages questions that consider the multiple viewers, and myriad world views. 'A contextual approach wants to know what the original viewer knew or might have known about the visual representation', how they experienced it as a particular piece of material culture, and in this case, how that relates to a concept of each viewer's own identity.⁹⁴ We must consider strategies of viewing: what did people do when faced with images such as the ones on the mosaics? A common response to this is the concept of *ekphrasis*, the idea

⁹⁰ Lorenz 2016: 1.

⁹¹ Lorenz 2016: 238.

⁹² Holscher 2004: 7.

⁹³ Clarke 2008.

⁹⁴ Clarke 2008: 313.

that images provoke narrative and discussion.⁹⁵ In the practice of *ekphrasis*, a learned viewer expands upon the image by delivering an interpretation of the image with its wider narrative, construction, and connections to other images.⁹⁶ Whilst most domestic viewing may not have been as rigorous as this, it does give us an idea about a mode of viewing, an expectation that images are connected with narrative.

Graham Zanker argues that from the Hellenistic period onward, the style and form of visual art in the Classical tradition, what he terms “visuality”, shows that ‘narrative can be, and is meant to be, extrapolated from the visual clues’.⁹⁷ The way in which images were constructed encouraged the viewer to create these narratives from them: the style of art invited collusion with the viewer. This is important in terms of reading identities from these images as the way in which these narratives would be told, would draw upon the values and norms of the social context. Zanker highlights that the Hellenistic style foregrounds the human aspects of divine figures; the way in which the gods are portrayed brings them into a sphere of humanity, making them easy and relevant models with which to talk about social concerns.⁹⁸ Brilliant also stresses the viability of the visual narrative model in his work.⁹⁹ He suggests that narratives help to ‘integrate [the subject] within a larger context, especially through the operation of memory’: by creating narratives about the images the viewer can situate them in the social context, and draw together the associations that might be linked with that image.¹⁰⁰ For example, images of Achilles can function for the viewer as a metonym for the whole of the hero’s life, the Trojan War, ideas of “Greekness”, ideas of heroism, changing fortune, grief, memory, and masculinity. By exploring the wider narratives and tapping in to connections that arise from such narratives, the viewer can explore their own relationship to the image. ‘Visual images have an almost infinite capacity for verbal extension, because viewers must become their own narrators’: this is one of the most important factors for the study of identity.¹⁰¹ Each viewer is their own narrator and each story is about exploring their own position within the narrative that is created by the image. This position is determined and influenced by larger social structures and formations, but the intersection of those factors is important. When an elite man views the image of Achilles, he may construct a narrative about war and masculinity, about heroism, about his own military training, and a close male companion. His wife may construct a narrative about grief, about a mother’s loss and the female role in war, but also remember her paternal ancestors who were

⁹⁵ For example, the work of Elsner 1995, 1996, 2007.

⁹⁶ Elsner 1995.

⁹⁷ Zanker 2004: 13.

⁹⁸ Zanker 2004.

⁹⁹ Brilliant 1984.

¹⁰⁰ Brilliant 1984: 23.

¹⁰¹ Brilliant 1984: 16.

connected with Greece. As scholars we can suggest these narratives and remember that multiple narratives may be present in one image.¹⁰² We can accept that some narratives are inaccessible. We can look for repeated patterns and motifs that point to a social conception of particular forms of identity that may have meant something to those contemporary viewers.

1.6 GENDER IDENTITIES IN THE DOMESTIC SPHERE

This thesis will focus on the narrative of gender. Thus, in relation to the images on the mosaics, we need to understand the gender identities of the people who lived in the Roman Empire. Texts from the centre and material culture from across the Empire indicate that Roman societies in general did have complex and contested ideas about masculinity and femininity, and non-binary identities.¹⁰³ Many Latin texts discuss the ways in which one can manifest a gender identity, most often in the presentation of the elite male but also in terms of other roles. They often interrogate the relationships between the genders in order to explore what society deemed to be the correct manifestations of masculinity and femininity. A significant body of work has been dedicated to exploring classical texts through a gender lens, including Richlin's study of Roman comedy, James's work on love elegy, and Liveley's work on Ovid. Useful edited volumes such as Zajko and Leonard and Wyke examine a variety of texts.¹⁰⁴ Two illustrative examples show some of the tropes at play. A fragment attributed to Cato the Elder, which concerns adultery shows the extent to which the republican Roman man was made all powerful in his household: 'If you had apprehended your wife in the act of adultery, with impunity you could take her life without a trial; she, if you were committing adultery...would not dare so much as touch you'.¹⁰⁵ The man has the power to punish his wife whereas she cannot even conceive of being in that position. Texts such as these are 'used to police the boundaries of what is expected', allowing Roman men to reinforce roles for society and encourage their audiences to adopt these roles as appropriate to their gender.¹⁰⁶ In the city of Rome, and potentially in the provinces where we have evidence of replicated legal codes as the empire grew, the family, and as an extension, the wider community, was structured around the authority of the male head of the household.¹⁰⁷ The *paterfamilias* was the most important person

¹⁰² E.g. Trimble 2002.

¹⁰³ Most authors in the classical canon can contribute to this discussion, from Cato on adultery (*ORF: FR.222*) to Republican and Augustan poets such as Catullus (61), Ovid (*Ars Amatoria* e.g. 2.683-84), and Martial (10.35, 11.61), to writers on a range of subjects such as Plutarch (*Moralia* 751.4), Pseudo-Lucian (*Amores* 25-28), Cicero (*Pro Caelio*), Sallust (*Cat.* 25.1), Suetonius (*Caes.* 50), and Christian sources like Augustine (*Confessions*).

¹⁰⁴ Richlin 1983; James 2003; Liveley 2005; Zajko & Leonard 2006; Wyke 1998. See also Holmes 2012.

¹⁰⁵ Cato *ORF: Fr.222M*.

¹⁰⁶ Revell 2016: 13.

¹⁰⁷ Gardner 1986.

within that grouping and had power over other members of the family. Beyond the household, men also assumed a similar authority as leaders of the social family (the state, the cult and so forth), and this can be demonstrated by the fact that the emperors, and political statesmen, and governors, in the provinces and in the centre, and leaders in most walks of life were men; the names of individuals that have come down to us through history are predominantly male. Foxhall summarises this idea: 'If you are male there is always someone who can be defined as lower than yourself if they do not count in some degree as a man' because being male seemingly means being higher up the social hierarchy.¹⁰⁸

However, although the social and legal structure make clear the dominance of masculine behaviour and subservience of feminine identities, seeming to set up a binary world of manly men and feminine women, literary texts make equally clear that gender was not that clear cut and that actually people might find themselves placed in various positions within a spectrum of gender, regardless of their biological sex. In order to make sure one was identified, and more importantly treated, in a way that befitted one's sex, then it was important properly to assume one's gender role. Ovid discusses the ways in which men and women should groom their bodies, thus drawing a differentiation with the ways in which each gender should present themselves. Men should 'Keep your nails pared, and dirt-free; don't let those long hairs sprout/In your nostrils, make sure your break is never offensive', with the emphasis on cleanliness and neatness.¹⁰⁹ Women get complex instructions on their hairstyle: 'Long features go best with/A plain central parting...A round-faced lady/Should pile all her hair on top', their dress, their body hair, and make up.¹¹⁰ They are expected to adorn themselves. These instructions can be read as an understanding of the negotiations that this society conducted as to the ideals of gender. Ovid and his readers were exploring how they expected women and men to present themselves in order to be considered attractive by other members of that society, but also to be recognised as performing that particular gender role. This is the key aspect. Gender is a performance, 'a process, a set of behavioural expectations or an affect'.¹¹¹ The ways in which individuals behaved, wore clothes, acted as head of the household, was a way of signalling to the rest of society that they took on the gender roles proscribed. As stated above, men were the visible face of power. Thus, there was a value placed on masculine behaviours and performances. Following Butler, some classicists stress that a performance of masculinity is fundamental to an idea of Roman gender: 'It is not enough merely to be biologically male, one must

¹⁰⁸ Foxhall 1998: 4.

¹⁰⁹ Ovid *Ars Amatoria* 1.519-21. See also Wyke 1994.

¹¹⁰ Ovid *Ars Amatoria* 3.135ff.

¹¹¹ Sørensen 2000: 70-1. Butler 1999.

give out the appropriate signals and play the expected role'.¹¹² As an example of male performance, Gleason discusses the behaviours and physical appearance expected of a man in the public baths.¹¹³ The discussion makes clear a further aspect of Roman gender, that for all its emphasis on the power of the male and powerlessness of the female, there was not only a binary choice of gender roles. Instead, there appears to have been a spectrum of possibilities, ranging between the ideas that modern society deems masculine and feminine. The allocation of identity along that spectrum depended upon the success or perception of one's gender performance. Thus in Gleason's analysis of a man in the baths, the shape of his body, his clothing, his interactions with slaves and peers, can all define him as more or less masculine. Although biologically male, he can be deemed to occupy a space along this spectrum of manliness. At one end of the gender spectrum, men should be public, ideal, masculine, whereas women should be private, Other, and feminine. They have clearly defined roles and ways of expressing identity that are both 'a nexus of symbols and assumptions...and a set of relationships in the "real world"'.¹¹⁴

The spectrum of gender behaviours did allow for value judgments. The public male is idealised as the epitome of behaviour. However, there are more positive constructions that can be put upon this spectrum that allow for positivity in roles other than the ideal male. Hallett stresses that elite Roman women were "structurally central" to the Roman family: that they could act on behalf of the family in important ways.¹¹⁵ Hallett cites several *laudationes funebres* for women that praise their modesty, *probitas*, chastity and wisdom, such as Murdia (CIL VI. 10230 = ILS 8394).¹¹⁶ The *laudationes funebres* (funerary speeches) provide a physical example of the visibility of women. *Laudationes funebres* are to demonstrate the qualities and achievements of the person and the family: there would be no point in performing an oration for a woman if they could not act on behalf of the family and be visible manifestations of the position of the family.¹¹⁷ There was prestige in being an elite Roman woman and there were ways in which they could access power. The important aspect to note is their elite status. The women of the imperial family are the archetypal examples of this unofficial power. In the case of these women, 'it is indisputable that the political impact attributed to them reflects a general image of women as socially significant and often highly visible individuals'.¹¹⁸ However, this is not the same as being equal to men or a visible form of power, such as the civic records of male status, and the hierarchies and distinctions between gender still existed in the background, as well

¹¹² Gardner 1998: 147. Butler 1999.

¹¹³ Gleason 1999: 73.

¹¹⁴ Doherty 2001: 33. See also de Beauvoir 1948 [1997] for the concept of the Other.

¹¹⁵ Hallett 1984: 5.

¹¹⁶ Hallett 1984: 43.

¹¹⁷ See also Hemelrijk 2004 and 2015.

¹¹⁸ Hallett 1984: 12.

as important intersections with status, wealth, ethnicity, and age. Also, these examples of womanhood can function as metaphors which writers could use to think about femininity. Alongside the “virtuous” women who acted for their husbands and as paragons of their family name, there are the terrible women who behaved in ways that exemplified the awful, bestial nature of women. Livia can be taken as an example of both, as mother of the state, the ideal matron who spun Augustus’s shirts despite the couple’s wealth and power, and as the poisoner who ruthlessly destroyed all those who opposed her, and who acted beyond the accepted role of supportive wife and took power for herself.¹¹⁹ When considering gender in the Roman period we must be aware of these ideals and their negative counterparts, and focus on the context of each manifestation. These are the ideals and conceptions of feminine gender roles that exist in Rome and are apparently replicated in the provinces.

There are equivalent examples from the Iberian provinces. We can see the civic structures of the imperial society extant within the province, including the appearance of men in important civic roles, as discussed regarding urban structures. Inscriptions record the munificence of wealthy families, and their uptake of town magistracies, demonstrating the ways in which the social structure of the city of Rome was translated into the provinces. For example, an inscription from Barcino records the large public bath complex built by Lucius Minicius Natalis, a consul and proconsul serving in North Africa (Figure 5).¹²⁰ This inscription could be found in many of the provinces of the Roman Empire and in the city of Rome itself. At the very least, the Latin used is the abbreviated standardised form that would signify power to all those who viewed these inscriptions.

¹¹⁹ See for example Barrett 2002, and more generally Pomeroy 1975.

¹²⁰ Keay 1988: 90; CIL II 4509.

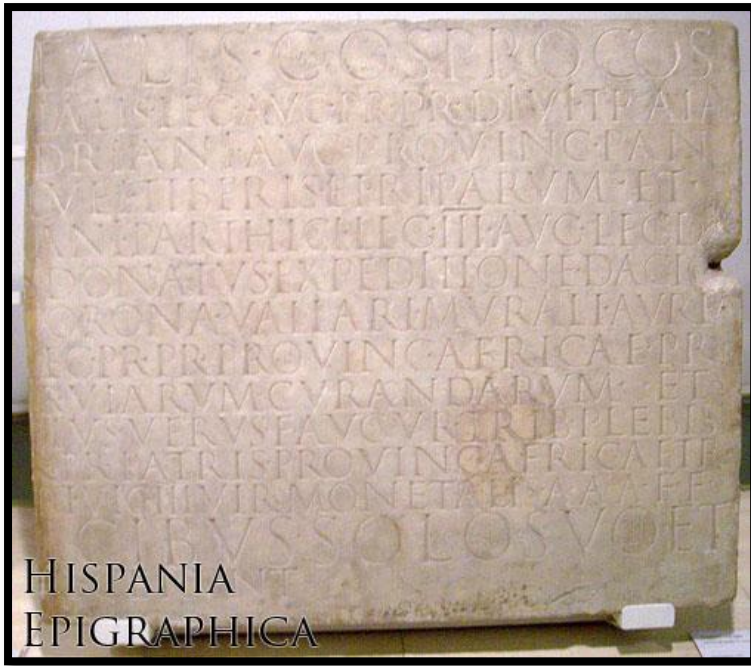


Figure 5: Inscription from Barcino (CIL II 4509) (http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3260/2655521390_303c645de1.jpg [accessed 30.04.18])

These acts of euergetism are part of the performance of the elite male and demonstrate power, wealth, and status. They demonstrate the embodiment of the ideas by Foxhall and Gleason that there was a hierarchy of status, and that identity needed to be physically performed in public in order to be assured.¹²¹ However, there are also differences to the norm established in the Roman texts. Strabo, writing in the first century BC in his *Geographica*, notes some peculiarities about the Iberian tribes, in particular the Cantabrians. He tells us that ‘it is the custom among the Cantabrians for the husbands to give dowries to their wives, for the daughters to be left as heirs, and the brothers to be married off by their sisters. The custom involves, in fact, a sort of woman-rule — but this is not at all a mark of civilisation’.¹²² He talks about their strange headdresses and ornaments, and their courage, and about how the women will work in the fields, turn aside and give birth, and immediately return to work.¹²³ To a certain extent this is part of a narrative tradition: tribes that are barbaric and odd have such opposite customs to the civilised Romans that they even let women rule them. It is a mark of their lack of civilisation.¹²⁴ However, new research into epigraphic and funerary evidence suggests that despite the established similarities something different from the expected models of gender roles in the Roman world may be found in the Iberian provinces.

¹²¹ Foxhall 1998; Gleason 1999.

¹²² Strabo *Geographia* 3.18.

¹²³ Strabo *Geographia* 3.17.

¹²⁴ McCoskey 2005; Potheary 2005.

In their study of the epigraphy of tombstones Saller and Shaw compared the types and variations of the commemorator's relationship to the deceased across various western provinces.¹²⁵ They used these patterns of commemoration to hypothesise about the structures of the Roman family, and the obligations and relationships between those involved. They noted that the nuclear family of mother, father, and children were consistently the key commemorators and that commemoration involved issues of heirship and 'a sense of family duty and affection'.¹²⁶ The paper considers the visibility of particular members of the family (such as parents, siblings, paternal or maternal lines) in this medium, and thus can be used to consider gender roles. The role of the commemorator was a highly visible one. It was about preserving the memory of the dead and making a claim to a relationship with the deceased, specifically that of heir.¹²⁷ Importantly, they also noted that in the Iberian provinces 'women appeared as commemorators noticeably more than in other civilian samples', in their roles as wives and mothers.¹²⁸ They postulated that this is a reflection of Strabo's "women-rule", and possible evidence of women having a more prominent position in Iberian society than in other Roman provinces. Edmundson has produced a more detailed study of the evidence of commemorators on tombstones, focusing only on the province of Lusitania.¹²⁹ His research again shows a preponderance of dedications from the nuclear family, with the mother-father-child nexus forming the most common relationship between commemorator and deceased, and that women were still much more prominent as the commemorator than in other provinces. He goes further in suggesting that towns with a connection to pre-Roman tribal settlement, such as the *civitas* capital of the Igaeditani, shows an even higher proportion of visible female commemorators and commemorated. Here, 68% of the connubial inscriptions are wives commemorating husbands, and 73% of the parent-child group are mothers commemorating children rather than fathers. In Spain as a whole, the husband-wife inscriptions are in the ratio of approximately 53.3% to 46.6%.¹³⁰ Edmundson states that 'women (and especially daughters and mothers) appear to have been more highly valued culturally in Spain than in many other regions of the empire and so in general stood a better chance of receiving an epitaph than women did elsewhere in the western provinces'.¹³¹ The women here had status and value as partners and parents. He also briefly discusses the names used on the inscriptions, highlighting examples of matronymics (rather than the standard Roman patrilineal *tria nomina*) in these areas. The examples are few but with other evidence possibly do

¹²⁵ Saller and Shaw 1984.

¹²⁶ Saller and Shaw 1984: 127.

¹²⁷ Saller and Shaw 1984, drawing on the Digests of Justinian.

¹²⁸ Saller and Shaw 1984: 138.

¹²⁹ Edmundson 2005.

¹³⁰ Edmundson 2005: 202-3 (table 7.3).

¹³¹ Edmundson 2005: 205.

suggest a greater importance placed on maternal kin.¹³² Overall however, he sees these examples as the result of ‘a stronger emotional emphasis being placed on bilateral kinship relations in less Romanised parts of Lusitania and of Spain in general than in other parts of the Roman west, and as a result a greater social valuation of women’. Whilst not being a matriarchal paradise, these two studies suggest that both parents and sides of the family carried value in society, not just the paternal, and that the female members of the family had value in their own right, not simply as incubators for the future male line.

Further work has been done by Melchor Gil on civic inscriptions, in the province of Baetica.¹³³ Again, we see a similar pattern of visibility of women being commemorated. The figures are not quite so startling, but 20.8% of inscriptions and 22.27% of statues from this province relate to or depict female honourees.¹³⁴ They record these individuals as providing public services to the cities and communities in which they lived and to which they clearly contributed. There is no real difference in the reasons for these honours between male and female recipients. Melchor Gil cites the example of Junia Rustica in the town of Cartima, who restored porticoes, erected statues of Mars and Cupid, donated land, a pool and a portico to the local baths, paid a proportion of public taxes, organised a public banquet and games, and erected statues to herself, her husband and her son.¹³⁵ This was a woman who had entered into the public sphere, who was respected as a member of the community, who acted in the socially important world in order to confirm and present her status, and the status of her family. He also cites seven examples where women in the province have received *laudatio* in the forum.¹³⁶ This very traditionally masculine recitation of the deceased’s achievements is used to commemorate women who presumably have taken an active role in the social life of the community. These women, though still few in number, are as visible and as prestigious as the men.

These surveys suggest that the Iberian provinces may have slightly different norms regarding gender roles. They suggest a greater prominence for elite women, who can act in a public fashion, and thus bring prestige to their families. Hemelrijk has surveyed the evidence of civic participation by women in the western provinces as a whole and this can help to put the Iberian evidence into context. The Iberian provinces do stand out as a key area for evidence of female activity in civic life, in particular with regards to the number of public statues that were dedicated to and by Iberian women, as indicated in the figures from Melchor Gil. No other province in the West has a higher number of

¹³² Edmundson 2005: 220.

¹³³ Melchor Gil 2008.

¹³⁴ Melchor Gil 2008: 443; 447.

¹³⁵ Melchor Gil 2008: 448. See also Hemelrijk 2015 for a further discussion of this inscription.

¹³⁶ Melchor Gil 2008: 453. See also Hemelrijk 2004.

these inscriptions, as well as inscriptions recording the giving of public banquets by women.¹³⁷ This could support the ideas about female visibility in this area and indicate that Iberian women could be a visible fixture in the public landscape. It could be a reflection of pre-Roman family structures, but this is very hard to confirm. This evidence also highlights the fact that we must be aware of the difference between the theoretical and the lived reality of the women in the provincial communities. With regards to the mosaics studied in this thesis, it will be interesting to see if we can discern this difference in the images. In this traditionally Roman medium, depicting the narratives from classical myths, do the Iberian elites stress their conformity to the more Roman gender roles, or do they adapt the iconography to explore their own social models? The epigraphic evidence establishes that there is potentially something unusual or individual about gender identity in the Iberian provinces that is unlike the expected behaviours that we see in the texts and material culture from the centre. This thesis will explore whether this difference can be perceived in the iconography as well.

This thesis will approach the idea of Roman and Iberian gender from a position of performance and fluidity. There are ideals which centre around the male figure and a model form of masculinity which requires the performer to enact certain behaviours, poses, and relationships. There is an understanding of a difference between men and women, but biological sex is not a guarantee of a masculine or feminine gender identity. These identities must be claimed and reiterated within various forums. Consequentially, there are those who fail to enact the correct behaviour and do not fit neatly into a modern binary of masculine man and feminine woman (as many modern people do not). When exploring material culture, in particular the figurative images on the mosaics, this conception of gender may be being celebrated, reinforced, normalised, or transgressed. The same image could represent all these categories, at different times and for different viewers. Thus, the context and a consideration of the way in which these mosaics are viewed is essential for this research.

The research questions will be explored in the following three chapters, focusing on three broad themes pertaining to the ideas of masculinity, femininity, and the interaction between the genders. The first thematic chapter (labelled Chapter 2) approaches the idea of masculinity, focusing on mosaics that depict stereotypically “masculine” activities, such as hunting, and those that celebrate masculine heroics. The presentation of the male figure in this iconography appears to align very well with the construction outlined in this introduction: active, heroic, and courageous. This chapter will consider the concept of *virtus* with these images and argue for a conventional, recognisably Roman

¹³⁷ Currently there has been little comparative data available across the provinces, so there are limitations on these studies. Nevertheless, the indication is that the overall trend is accurately reflected. Revell (in press).

depiction of masculinity.¹³⁸ It will consider the location of these mosaics, and the way this can be interpreted in light of the entertaining activities that may have taken place in these rooms. The Iberian aspect will also be considered: though this presentation is essentially Roman, contextual details are still apparent.

The second thematic chapter (Chapter 3) will explore mosaics depicting narratives of metamorphosis and myths of erotic scenes. These mosaics present the opposing roles of masculinity and femininity and use the iconography to present varied encounters between gods and humans, and men, women, and boys. The idea of femininity as a construct defined against masculinity is important here. In contrast to the epigraphic evidence, these images seem entirely in keeping with the centralised visual language: again, conventionality is stressed. Finally, mosaics depicting Bacchic scenes and motifs will be discussed in the last chapter (Chapter 4). Initially, the iconography conforms to the centralised ideas as in the previous chapters, but with the images of Bacchus in his triumph, and with comparisons with North African mosaics, there are some differences that, in the light of the epigraphic evidence, may suggest evidence for local attitudes to gender.

As a summary, Muth's assessment is appropriate here: 'The achievement of the world of images in the Roman house was to project an ideal stage which altered lived reality, concentrated it, broadened it and even shifted it'.¹³⁹ The stage set of the Roman and the Iberian house contributed and shaped the narratives that the viewers constructed about their own gender identities and those of others.¹⁴⁰ This is because the house was used in a particular manner, as a part of a public identity by the elite. The non-elite also participated in the performance of public identity because there cannot be an elite without a non-elite, and thereby formed their own identities in response to the elite public identity (and vice versa). In addition, this theatrical setting developed a mode of viewing that dissolved boundaries between reality and imagery. The viewer is performing within a wider narrative of social structures that coalesce as their social identity, including a conception of gender. This thesis will contribute to the ways in which scholarship approaches mosaics, and will demonstrate the potential for a contextualised, socially informed, viewer-led approach to such material within the provinces.

¹³⁸ *Virtus* is the conception of the 'ideal behaviour of a man' (McDonnell 2006) and will be explored in detail in Chapter 2.

¹³⁹ Muth 1998: 348. Translation from English Summary by Muth.

¹⁴⁰ Beacham 2013 is an extended discussion of the house as stage set.

2 MASCULINITIES – MANLY MEN

The domestic mosaics of Iberia were created in a strongly patriarchal society.¹⁴¹ Men, and in particular elite men, were the most visible actors who performed in these spaces. As discussed in the introduction, domestic spaces such as the villa of El Ramalete or the town houses at Italica and Complutum were not just private retreats but an arena in which to perform one's identity in front of peers, dependants, and family. The construct of the social house is geared towards the social pretensions of the elite male, with the environment, objects and people under his command contributing to his social persona.¹⁴² His family, his clients and his slaves are just as much a part of this as the mosaics: all these aspects work together to confirm or deny the status he wishes to present. Therefore, a logical starting point for exploring gender identities is to examine the manifestations of masculinity within these images.

This chapter will explore mosaics that depict hunting and spectacles. The mosaics were chosen as per the criteria outlined in the introduction. Fourteen mosaics will be discussed in this chapter, out of the approximately fifteen Iberian hunting and spectacle mosaics recorded in Appendix 1. This was a reasonably significant grouping in the database suggesting that the topic is fairly popular in Iberia. There appears to be no regional distribution pattern, as seen in Figure 3. It will explore the way in which images of individual hunters may present an exemplar of masculinity, before moving on to mythical hunters, and lastly, depictions of hunts in the arena, and other arena displays. Hunting and spectacle are appropriate themes in which to explore masculinity because, at the most basic level, they show men doing physical activity. In the introduction, the concept of the active man as a signifier and exemplar of masculinity was discussed: a good Roman man is physically active compared to the passivity of the feminine gender. This is what we would expect from the ideal, but in the light of the epigraphic evidence, how does the Iberian man present his masculinity when women can be as prominent and visible within civic affairs?

This chapter will discuss the ways in which this physicality is connected and interacts with a gender identity, specifically within an Iberian context. In his paper on Homeric mosaics and space in Iberia, Bermejo Tirado argues that these mosaics have multiple readings: 'The communicative side of domestic ornamentation, whether consciously or connotative, can imply several different degrees of

¹⁴¹ See introduction; Gardner 1986.

¹⁴² Wallace-Hadrill 1988.

reading (depending on the circumstances in which they are read)'.¹⁴³ Connecting with these images (whether consciously or unconsciously), can work on a number of different levels. Tirado suggests readings of pleasure, or scholarly learning, 'social prestige...*luxuria* from the Hellenistic tradition...a scholarly or personal interest'.¹⁴⁴ This chapter proposes to add to these accounts of the way in which these mosaics can be understood and incorporated into the world of their viewers. My argument focuses on how these images create and reinforce a conception of masculinity in the eyes of Iberian audiences.

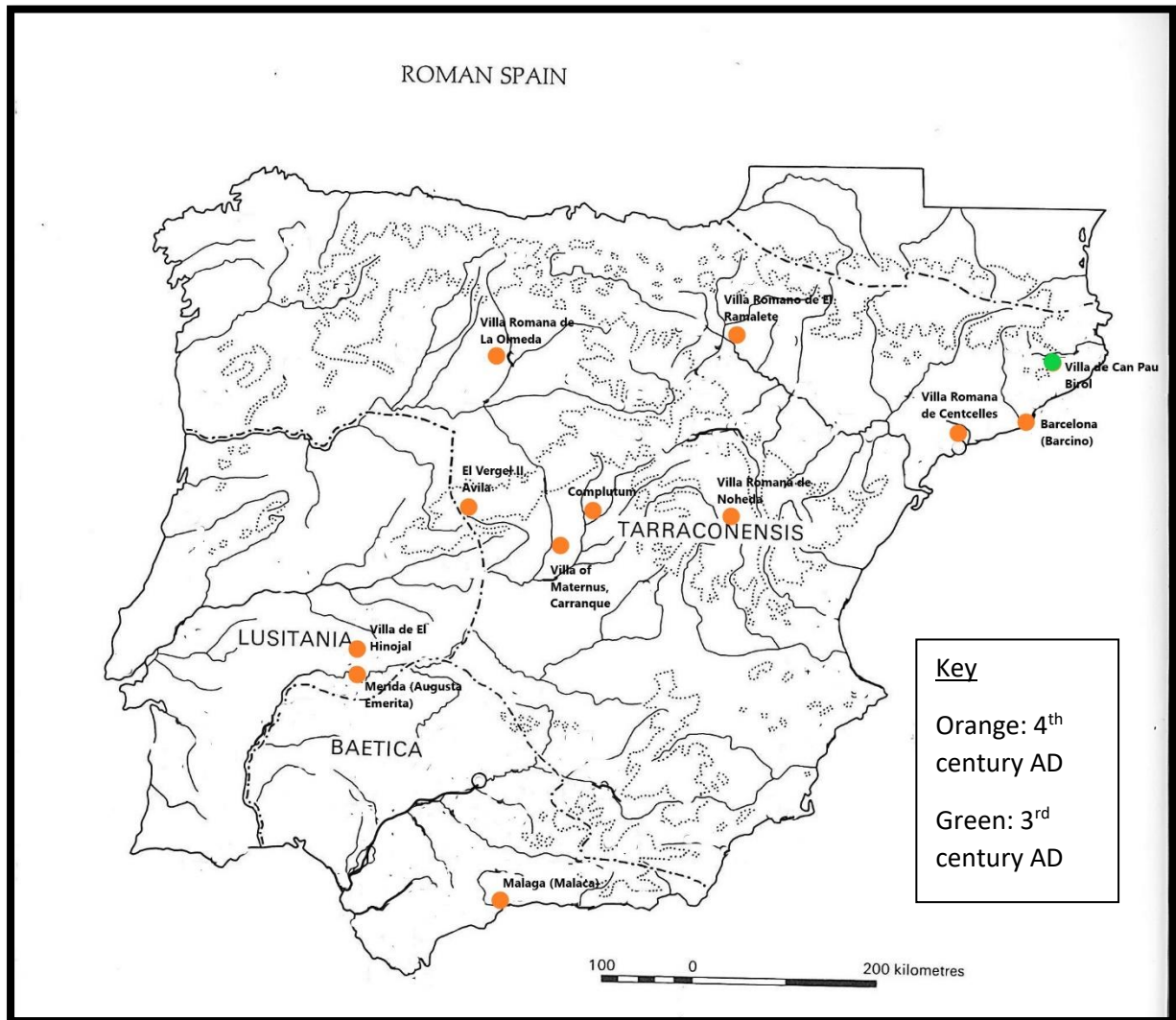


Figure 6: Map showing the sites mentioned in the text, adapted from Keay 1988 by the author

¹⁴³ Bermejo Tirado 2007: 146: 'La vertiente comunicativa, sea consciente o connotativo, de los ornamentos domésticos puede implicar varios grados de lectura (depeniendo de las circunstacias en las que se inscriban)'. English translation by the author (L Elkerton).

¹⁴⁴ Bermejo Tirado 2007: 153: 'prestigio social...la luxuria de raigambre helénistica...un interés personal y erudito'. English translation by the author (L Elkerton)

2.1 HUNTING HEROES

One of the most well-known pieces of mosaic art from Iberia is the “Mosaico de la Habitación Octogonal o de Dulcitius” (Mosaic of the Octagonal Room or Dulcitius). (Figure 7.)

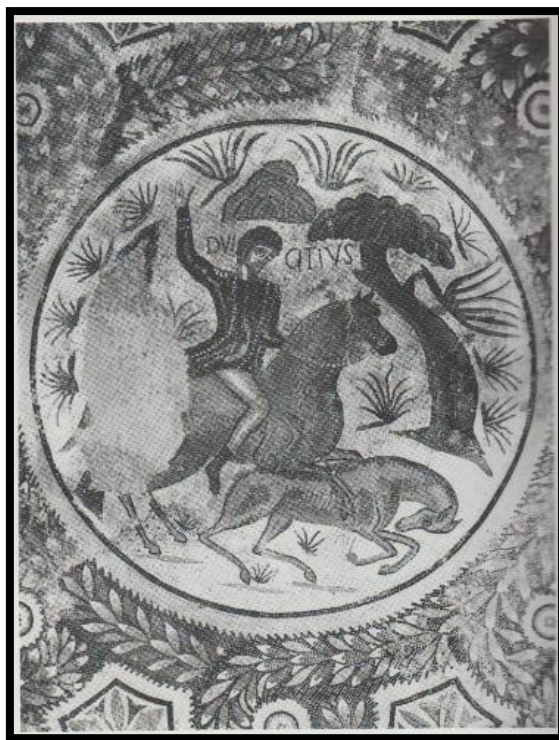


Figure 7: Detail of the central panel of the Dulcitius mosaic, El Ramalete (Photo from Blázquez 1985)

This mosaic has a name inscribed upon it, which has drawn attention from scholars who attempt to identify an individual from this evidence.¹⁴⁵ It depicts a hunter on horseback rearing over his prey, a fallen hind. The landscape is indicated by trees and scrub grasses. The rider's hand is raised above his head, having just thrown the spear which is lodged in the dying deer. Around the rider's head is the inscription DULCITIUS, possibly indicating his name or the name of the horse.¹⁴⁶ He is also wearing a rather distinctive tunic, with stripes, which it has been suggested are reminiscent of African costume.¹⁴⁷ It was excavated from the site of El Ramalete near the modern town of Tudela in north-east Spain. The site was a large villa estate, close to the river Ebro, and there was a possible indigenous settlement nearby. The villa has only been partially excavated so there are some

¹⁴⁵ Blázquez 1993.

¹⁴⁶ Blázquez discusses the use of names in his article 'Nombres de aurigas, de "possessors", de cazadores y de perros en mosaicos de Hispania y África' (1993, pp. 206 – 218).

¹⁴⁷ Taracena et al 1956. The significance of the African costume is that traditionally links are drawn between the Iberian and the African provinces. It has been suggested that either the mosaicists or the patrons have connections with Africa. It reinforces the idea that Iberian mosaics are a poor imitation of African ones. For another perspective, Bianchi-Bandinelli argues that the costume is in fact Sassanian. See Blázquez 1993: 60.

questions about the layout of the site, which has been dated to the fourth century AD, from coin evidence and pottery.¹⁴⁸ The excavated portion (the south-east section of the site) consists mainly of a bath complex, arranged along a corridor. On the opposite side of the corridor is a single room, accessed through a small ante-room (Figure 8).

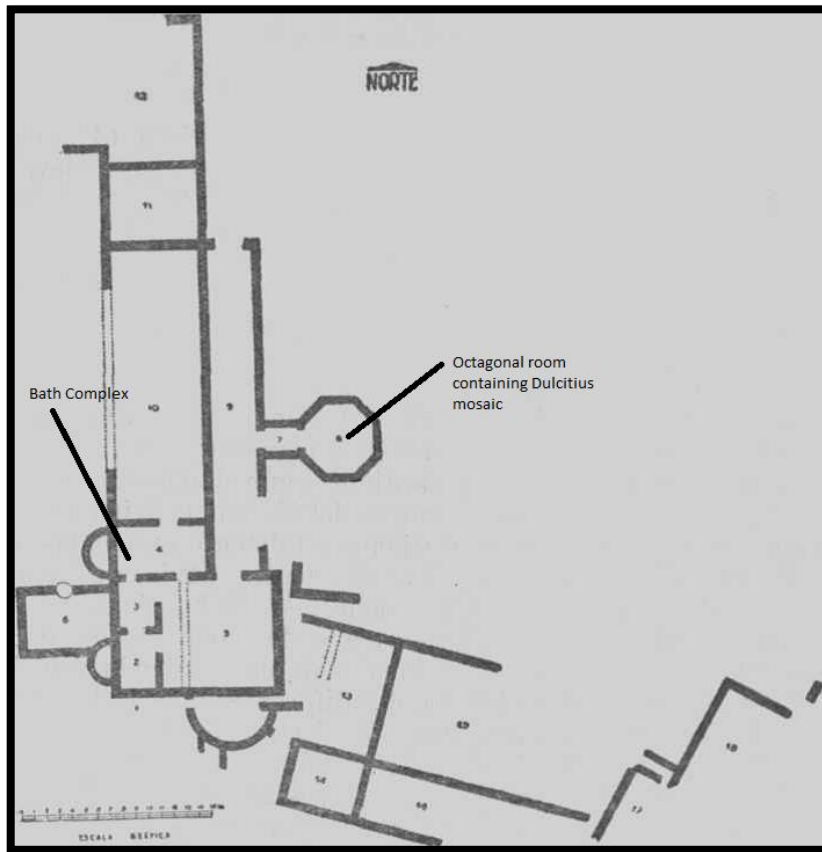


Figure 8: Plan of El Ramalete indicating the site of the mosaic (Photo from Taracena & Vazquez de Parga 1956, annotated by the author)

This is the room in which the Dulcitus mosaic was discovered and it is distinctive because of its octagonal shape. The mosaic covers the whole of the octagonal floor, with a thick border of vine leaves creating a circle. Smaller borders of leaves sub-divide the circle into eight further smaller circles that surround the central medallion (Figure 9). The mosaic in total measures 7.35m across the axis and the central medallion containing the image of the hunter is 1.60m in diameter.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Taracena et al 1956.

¹⁴⁹ Blázquez & Mezquíriz 1985.

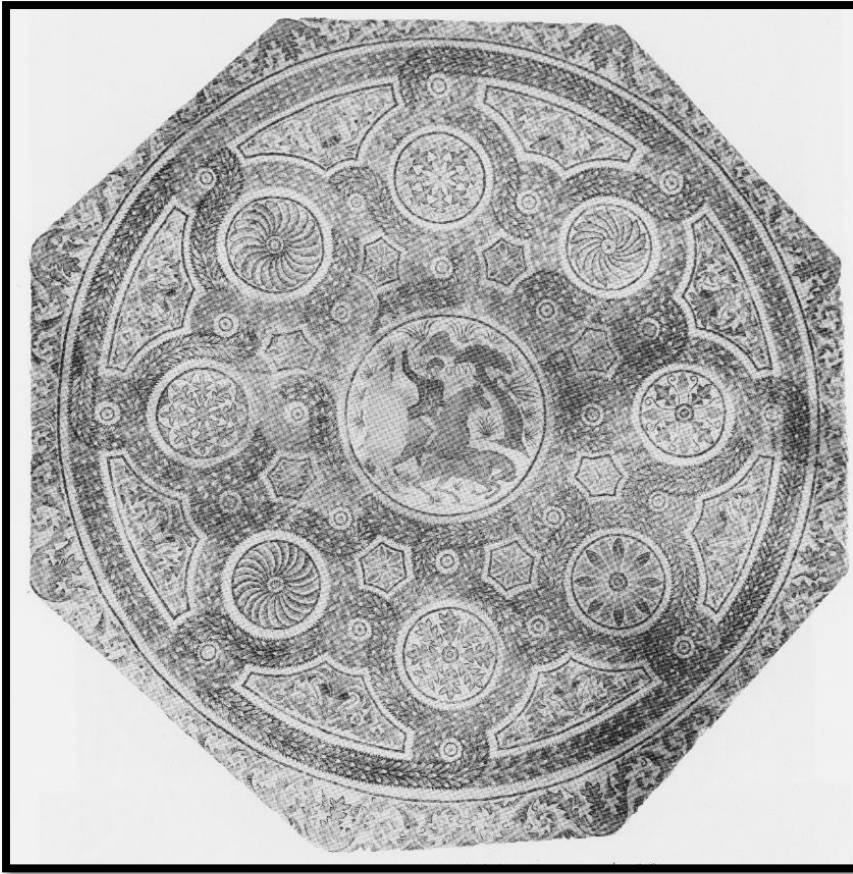


Figure 9: *Dulcitius mosaic, El Ramalete* (photo from Blázquez 1985)

In discussing this image, scholars often suggest that this is simply a specific snapshot of the owner's hunting prowess, a commemoration of a specific occasion on which he killed a deer.¹⁵⁰ Blázquez's approach has been to regard this scene as a memento of a successful hunt, connected with a specific event and individual. The name could refer to the hunter himself, but equally it could refer to the horse. A more generalised association can be drawn with a social identity: the owner, whether he is Dulcitius or not, wants to connect himself with the activity of hunting and the qualities of courage and indicate his ability to those who visit this villa. The important visual aspect for this research is neither the name nor the unusual outfit which appear to individualise the figure because these features could indicate the owner, an ancestor or heritage (through the costume) or even a local mythical figure or a favourite beast. There is not enough information in this image to allocate identity. Instead the whole image of an elite hunter is a general indication or rather a suggestion to other viewers that the villa owner can also claim these skills and strengths. Hunting is something that may have occurred within the landscape of the villa, and may have been performed in front of

¹⁵⁰ See for example Blázquez's article 'Arte y Sociedad en los mosaicos romanos de Navarra' 1993, p. 62ff.

the viewers or something which they would have taken part in themselves.¹⁵¹ When entertaining guests, the owner of the villa may well take them hunting, then encourage them to refresh themselves in the elaborate bath suite, before taking drinks and dinner in these reception rooms, as discussed in the letters of Sidonius Apollinaris, a Gallic aristocrat from the fifth century AD, such as when he discusses a visit to a friend's estate and outlines his daily activities of discussion of philosophy, games, rides, baths and dinners.¹⁵² Though this evidence is slightly later than the date of the mosaics in this chapter, the lifestyle of Sidonius Apollinaris as an example of a man in the provincial elite during the Late Antique period, allows us to postulate parallels with the kind of activities that are relevant for these mosaics. Another elite Roman writer Symmachus, in 397 AD, also recommended hunting as an appropriate practice for young senators.¹⁵³ The rooms of the villas and the landscape of the estates became a stage on which to enact these roles of hospitality and power. The viewers would be able to draw a direct parallel with the image that is on the floor, and the reality of the man before them. The mosaics help to make the connections between the hunting that took place outside, and the move to the more educated, fantasy world of the dining room, where images of myths and histories could be discussed, prompted by these images.

The perceived associations the viewers could draw from the mosaics arises from the social understanding of this activity from the way in which hunting was conceived of by the society in which these artefacts were made. Images of hunting are a fairly common motif in classical art. These include images of men on horseback, like Dulcitius, wounded prey, and the equipment used in hunting, such as dogs, nets, and assistants. The man on horseback with a spear functions as a key motif for hunting scenes. The Greek world specifically associated hunting with training for young men for warfare, 'to install in the young a sense of honour'.¹⁵⁴ The iconography was adapted by the Romans, potentially as a means of connecting the Roman elite male to his Greek "forebears", including the mythical heroes, and thereby staking a claim to his cultural worth.¹⁵⁵ For example, Barringer states 'Hunting and fighting are activities of brave adult men, and they can be done heroically; in other words, heroes hunt and fight, and so do real men. The latter are like heroes when they face extraordinary danger unflinchingly and successfully'.¹⁵⁶ Especially in the later Roman period, in areas like the Iberian provinces which had been successfully settled for several centuries,

¹⁵¹ Anderson 1985.

¹⁵² From the letter to Donidius (II. IX) but also see the letter to Agricola (I. II) which describes the activities of the Gothic king Theoderic, including hunting and dining. (Trans. Dalton 1915).

¹⁵³ Symmachus *Epistulae*. 5.68.2 ff. He was proconsul of Africa, urban prefect and consul of Rome.

¹⁵⁴ Anderson 1985: 19; Barringer 2001. Equally, it could be an Italic inheritance – a considerable amount of Etruscan art depicts hunting – as discussed by Wallace-Hadrill 2008.

¹⁵⁵ For example, in the Hadrianic scenes on the Arch of Constantine where hunting is included on an imperial monument.

¹⁵⁶ Barringer 2001: 43.

hunting could provide an area in which to demonstrate heroic valour at a time when few elite men would have served in the army. The third century AD poem *Cynegetica* by Marcus Aurelius Olympius Nemesianus deliberately mixes the metaphors of battle and hunting. The work talks about the ‘battle of the countryside’, giving advice about rustic matters and hunting in the language of war and fighting.¹⁵⁷ This later Roman conception of hunting allowed it to move away from the specifically militaristic aspects of the Greek world, and become a more general indication of the idea of Roman *virtus*.

Virtus is a concept which imparts certain ideas about the behaviour of the ideal Roman man. It is a complex term whose meaning changed over time; McDonnell’s work focuses on its definition in Rome during the Republic and identifies a fundamental association with courage that stems from a very physical masculine valour.¹⁵⁸ This is not just an innate characteristic of men, but a specific form of behaviour which started as a military value. Over time it mutated to encompass a wider image of masculinity, particularly in the later Empire when this mosaic was laid and viewed. It connoted a particular ideal of male behaviour, which retains a sense of physical valour, but it also suggests superiority and excellence above all others, drawing on the Hellenistic concept of ἀρετή (*arête*), the Greek term for “what is best”.¹⁵⁹ It is important to consider that this is an achieved state: it is not simply the fact of being born biologically male, but an ideal of male behaviour which is performed daily that grants the owner the status of *virtus*. The behaviours are repeated over and over again and supported by the physical landscape consisting of images such as this iconography of hunting which can be used as an additional visual buttress to the elite male claim to *virtus*. The concept is visually expressed in images such as the mosaic of Dulcitus. Hunting mosaics are common across the Empire, which could imply that we are seeing adherence to imperial values across Roman territory here.

The owner of this mosaic wants those who see the floor to draw a parallel between the heroic hunter and the reality of the man that they see before them because both are something to admire. As he walks around the rural landscape of the villa, the viewer is reminded of the owner’s masculine qualities by the recognition of these attributes from the mosaic. There cannot be an assumption that the figure depicted is the owner of the villa. Even if the mosaic was intended as a portrait at the time it was laid, throughout the life time of the occupancy of the villa, the actual identity may have been forgotten or mistaken. This image would surely still have power without the connection to Dulcitus

¹⁵⁷ Nemesianus *Cynegetica*.

¹⁵⁸ McDonnell 2006.

¹⁵⁹ McDonnell 2006: 105. McDonnell refers to the use of *virtus* in Plautus’ *Mil.* 619, 649, 738 and *Truc.* 741, *Pseud.* 726, and *Bacch.* 673, and Terence’s *Adel.* 257 (p. 107), as examples of *virtus* being used in an ethical sense as a synonym for ἀρετή – see also p. 113ff.

(whoever he may literally represent) because of its use of the stock features of the heroic hunter. It loses the specificity because the male elite figure can always lay claim to the potential for these activities in his own person, regardless of the name.

These qualities occur again in two similar mosaics from the villa of El Hinojal, which is approximately eighteen kilometres north-west of the civic capital of Augusta Emerita (modern Merida), in the Roman province of Lusitania (see Figure 6 for relationship of villa to town). The villa was adjacent to the Via Emerita-Olisispo, one of the important transport branches connecting the region. Its location allows us to suggest a connection with the “Romanized” elite of the civic capital. As Chavarría, Arce and Ripoli emphasise, there would have been a strong connection between the inhabitants of the rural villas and the town houses.¹⁶⁰ The town of Merida, and its environs, would be a location with a potentially higher proportion of incomers and settlers, and a key site for the exercise of government in the provinces, where the provincial council and the civic bodies would sit. The villa is of a similar

¹⁶⁰ Chavarría, Arce, & Ripoli 2006.

date to El Ramalete (as depicted in Figure 8), so these images are perhaps contemporary (fourth century AD) (Figure 10).¹⁶¹

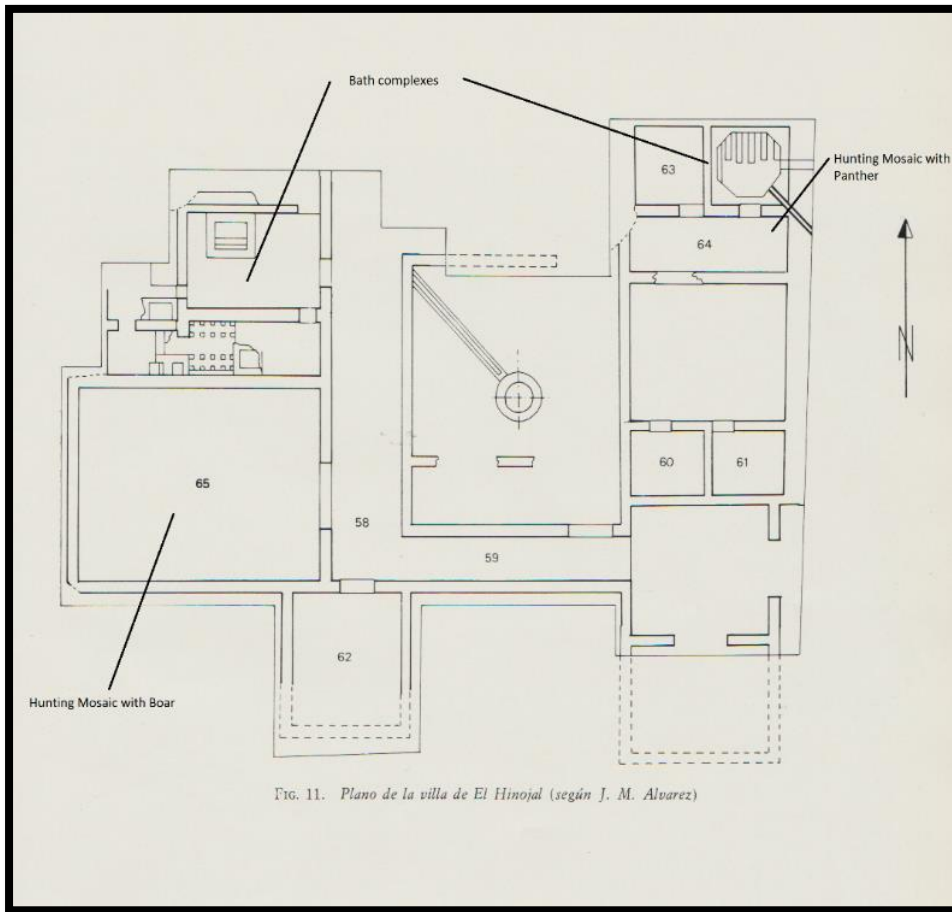


Figure 10: Plan of El Hinojal indicating location of mosaics (Photo from Blázquez 1985, after J. M. Alvarez, annotated by the author)

¹⁶¹ There are 8 other mosaics in the villa (Blanco Freijeiro 1978b), mostly geometric but with a marine scene depicting nereids and other sea creatures as well as the hunting mosaics. There is very little accessible information on either of these villas regarding the other material found.



Figure 11: Panther Hunt, El Hinojal (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photo by the author)

The first panel was situated in a rectangular room at the north end of the villa (the remaining piece measures 4.65m x 2.42m) which leads into one of the bath complexes on the site (Figure 11). It was badly damaged but has been restored and we can see the striking figure of a man on horseback, armed with spear and shield, at the moment he is about to drive his spear into a panther below him. The horse is leaping, with wild eyes, and the panther similarly stares up at the hunter. The man himself is at the moment of action, grasping the spear at the bottom, held downwards to thrust it into his quarry. He is fully dressed in a tunic and leggings with sandals on his feet. To his left is a tree, indicating the pastoral landscape in which this would have taken place. It is a mirror reflection of the composition of the Dulcitius mosaic.

The pose of the hunter on these mosaics is, in many ways, much closer to compositions of cavalymen on tombs rather than other mosaics from other provinces.¹⁶² These tombstones, such as that of Sextus Valerius Genialis in the Corinium Museum in Cirencester, match the composition of the hunt mosaics (Figure 12).¹⁶³ Again we have the man on horseback, his arm raised to thrust his spear into the enemy below, which has been substituted for an animal in the Iberian mosaics.

¹⁶² See the Piazza Armerina mosaic in the section 'Real Hunting' for an example.

¹⁶³ Webster, G., in Henig, M. 1993: Roman Sculpture from the Cotswold Region (Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani Great Britain 1, 7). Oxford, 45-6, no. 137.



Figure 12: Tombstone of Sextus Valerius Genialis (Photo from Webster 1993, no. 137.)

This iconography is consistently used by auxiliary cavalrymen in order to define the deceased by his military skilfulness and celebrate his position within the Roman army.¹⁶⁴ The creation of an iconography of identity for auxiliary cavalrymen mirrors the iconography of the active, ideal, male hunter. This instantly visual recognition of a particular role within a closed group ensured that these men stood out from the other soldiers, and that their specific role was memorialised, and that any viewer would be able to draw conclusions regarding their identity relating to their specific role as cavalrymen. The same iconography is seemingly being used in a similar way with these mosaics to signify an identity of elite masculinity. These images are themselves drawn from the tradition of heroic cavalrymen that stretches back to Greek *stelai* (such as the relief on the cenotaph of Dexileos) and are adopted by triumphant Roman generals and emperors on imperial monuments (Figure 13).¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Hope 2003.

¹⁶⁵ Hurwit 2007.



Figure 13: Grave stelai of Dexileos (plaster cast from the Ashmolean Museum) (photo by the author)

In the iconography of imperial power, this image becomes a presentation of a successful emperor, proclaiming his manly ability and his physicality to all those who view the monument. This historical background of the pose demonstrates a clear association in the elite Roman mind of this particular image and the values of masculinity. Emperors could also show this pose when depicted hunting.¹⁶⁶ The Hadrianic tondi on the Arch of Constantine show Hadrian in this pose, hunting with his companions. The tondi are displayed on the Arch alongside images of Trajan on horseback in war from the Great Trajanic Frieze. This monument specifically juxtaposes hunting prowess with military valour.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Tuck 2005 discusses connections between imperial equestrian statues and hunting imagery and argues that a statue of Domitian currently interpreted as the Emperor riding triumphantly over a fallen enemy is in fact a hunting scene, demonstrating the interplay between these two forms.

¹⁶⁷ Coarelli 2007: 160-161 for a description of the Arch.



Figure 14: Piece of Bronze relief of an Emperor on horseback (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photo by the author)

That such iconography had reached the Iberian provinces is demonstrated by a small bronze figurine that also depicts an emperor in this position, believed to be part of a war scene, and which was found in Merida, Spain (Figure 14). They have a frame of reference for this interaction of imperial fighting imagery which can be visually cross-referenced with the hunting images. The emperor is charging over a fallen enemy soldier rather than an animal, but this outward facing, arm raised, militaristic attitude is similar. It would have been part of the visual narrative of the wider culture to which the men that created and viewed this mosaic belonged.

Another example of this form is from part of a wall painting from a house in Barcelona, probably fourth century AD: it is still a part of this domestic space and decor and very possibly functioned as a partner to the mosaics in this room (Figure 15). We have no direct information on whether it was accompanied by mosaics but from the evidence of other sites, this is highly likely.

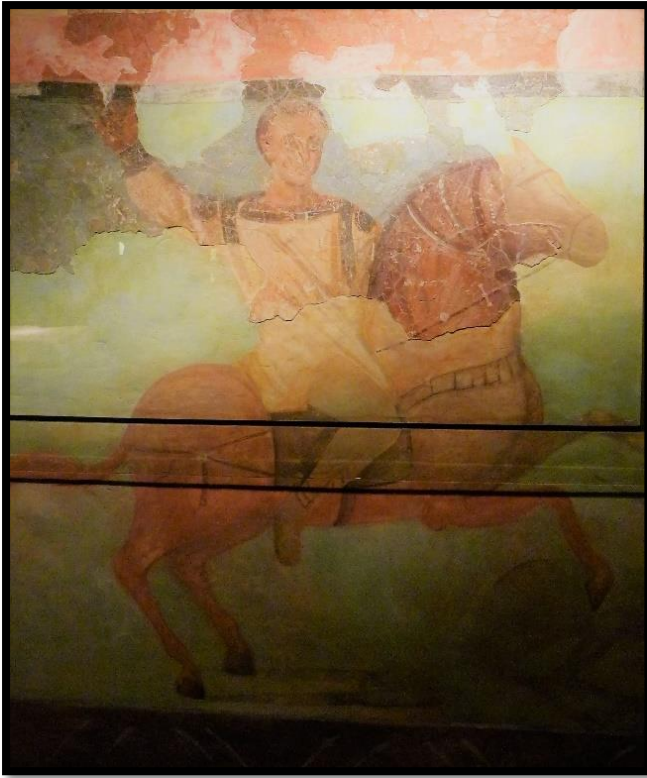


Figure 15: Fresco of a hunting scene (Barcelona City Museum) (photo by the author)

Again, we see the pose of the lone hunter on horseback. The man is the central focus of this image, his arm upraised, presumably about to deliver the fatal stroke. Again, we have the emphasis on the physical power and ability of the man, testing his mettle against an unknown beast. The pose is clearly related to the Dulcitus and the El Hinojal mosaics, and with the aforementioned transmission of this iconography through the cavalry tombstones and the imperial monuments. This image clearly represented a motif that it was desirable for the elite to display within both their urban domestic spaces and the rural villas, allowing them to draw a link between the two, reminding the viewer of their rural wealth when in the urban environment. It is a popular, and presumably, auspicious motif. This is an image with which a wealthy Roman man would want to be associated.

We can contrast this image of the lone hunter with hunting scenes from other provinces. Lavin's article on hunting mosaics in Antioch discusses a number of hunting mosaics from that city and from other provinces, in particular North Africa.¹⁶⁸ Lavin's aim is to present an argument about the development of style, but his collation of this hunting material (approximately 30 mosaics) provides a comparative catalogue with the mosaics compiled in this chapter. None of them have the focus on only one character seen in the Iberian mosaics.¹⁶⁹ Where a lone hunter is seen in other provinces it is

¹⁶⁸ Lavin 1963.

¹⁶⁹ Scott 2004.

much more likely to be mythical, such as Bellerophon in Britain. Instead, there are multiple scenes, similar to the La Olmeda scene below. This would suggest that our Iberian mosaics offer a distinctive approach to hunting, favouring an emphasis on individual heroic *virtus* over communal elite activity.

The second hunting mosaic from El Hinojal is in a much larger room on the opposite side of the villa (as indicated on the plan in Figure 10; the mosaic is depicted in Figure 16). The room measures 10.80m x 8.50m, the largest room in the villa, and its size, its location just off the peristyle, and quality of decoration suggests that it was likely to be an important reception room where guests would have been entertained.¹⁷⁰ The hunting scene consists of a square panel set at the centre of a highly intricately patterned mosaic, known as the “Mosaico con Cazador de Jabali” (The Mosaic of the Boar Hunt).



Figure 16: Boar Hunt, El Hinojal (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photo by the author)

The central panel is surrounded by a further border of vine leaves and the heads of the four Seasons, which have each been named. The main image depicts a man on foot, not on horseback, spearing a leaping boar. They are placed in a pastoral scene with brush below them and a tree behind, creating

¹⁷⁰ Fernandez Castro 1982: 110 – 111.

a depth of perspective within the picture. The man is dressed in a short cloak over his shoulders and a tunic with leggings. He thrusts the spear across his body into the shoulder of the boar which lunges at him. The boar is very carefully realised with the lines of his bristly fur picked out by the mosaicist. Blood gushes from the wound the spear has made, even as the boar continues to push forward. The lush intricacy of the foliage that surrounds the boar hunt image and the dazzling complexity of the pattern add to the sense that this image is something special. The viewer has to fight through the distractions to get through to the moment of clarity at the centre, where time has stopped as man demonstrates his victory over nature at a time of 'maximum danger and excitement' that emphasises the ability of the hunter.¹⁷¹

The mosaics share the use of this particular moment, the moment of life and death when the prey is about to be killed and use it as a demonstration of an ideal masculine behaviour: the balance of the image pits the man against his prey, a true battle of strength and courage, a conquest (which may be implicit or theoretical) which is required if the man is to prove his worth. These mosaics appear to stress the masculinity and courage of the hunter over and above providing a depiction of the hunting activities we might expect to have taken place in the lands of the estate. These Iberian hunting mosaics did not focus on the mundane aspects of hunting but explicitly chose to draw attention to the prowess of the hunter as a figure on his own, without the support of his wealth, only his skill.

We also see an interesting connection between the Iberian provinces and hunting in the written sources. The authors of the *Historia Augusta*, for example, focus on the specifically Iberian character of hunting several times in the text. They recount how Hadrian, whilst in Spain, became so fond of hunting that Trajan had to recall him to Rome.¹⁷² Later, when describing the Queen of Palmyra, the text again connects the province with the sport: 'She hunted with the eagerness of a Spaniard'.¹⁷³ The *Historia Augusta* is a notoriously difficult and unreliable text, but it is important here to show an attitude or commonly held social stereotype. Clearly, during the fourth century AD, the connection between the Iberian provinces and hunting, almost to an excess, was one that would have been readily understood by the elite of the Empire. This suggests a slightly mixed view of hunting, as both positive and negative. The sport distracts Hadrian from the proper business of governing and politics and is associated with that strangest and non-Roman of creatures, the fighting female leader. However, both are elites, and their hunting is part of their display of wealth. It is clear that hunting could be associated (as it clearly was for Trajan) with a lack of moral fibre, an excessive display of *otium*. This text is a product of the centre and is believed to have been written by multiple authors.

¹⁷¹ Brown 1992: 197; Manley 2007.

¹⁷² Anon, *Historia Augusta: Hadrian 2*.

¹⁷³ Anon, *Historia Augusta: The Thirty Pretenders – Zenobia 30*.

It was written in order to shape the past for a particular audience in a specific context so must be treated as such. Nevertheless, it can still be useful in suggesting that these attitudes would have been easily recognised by the Late Antique provincial audiences. However, the Iberian mosaics suggest that, for the elite who commissioned them, there is a clear connection, in the iconography of the hunting images, with martial strength and masculinity.

Even *otium* itself would have had strong connotations of wealth and status, as to indulge in this particular vice, one had to have the time and the income: even by censuring people with this vice you are admitting their status and position. It possibly goes back to the fact the connotations of *virtus*, *otium*, and various ideals of masculinity and status, would have fluctuated over time and in different contexts, exemplified here in the disparity between a public conception of morality, and a more private desire to display the trappings of luxury and leisure. In the particular context of the fourth century villas above, hunting is clearly an acceptable pastime for the elite because they are prepared to depict it in detail and with valuable resources in these mosaics. Varro, in the first century BC, discusses the creation of hunting estates in the *Rerum Rusticarum* and emphasises how these landscapes of fattened animals, caught and looked after specifically for the pleasure of the elite owner and his guests, are part of the trappings of luxury one would expect.¹⁷⁴ In his description of one such game preserve, an actor dressed as Orpheus appears to call the beasts, and the sight is compared to shows in the Circus Maximus.¹⁷⁵ This comparison links this wealthy and luxurious lifestyle to those active and martial and manly behaviours. Hunting can be used to present a positive picture of masculinity and a source of emulation.

2.2 “REAL” HUNTING

The choices that have been made regarding the iconography of this lone hunter are more striking when we compare these lone hunter mosaics with the one “realistic” hunt scene that is extant in Iberia, and the standard hunting compositions popular during this era in Sicily or North Africa. The most famous of these is the ‘Small Hunt’ mosaic at the Villa Romana del Casale in the modern town of Piazza Armerina which shows every aspect of the hunt including the servants and equipment needed (Figure 17).

¹⁷⁴ Varro *Rerum Rusticarum* 3.13.

¹⁷⁵ There is a time difference obviously between Varro and the fourth century AD villas being discussed. However, Varro was consistently cited throughout the fourth century (we know his *Antiquites* only from Augustine’s use of it in the City of God) and was thus still relevant and known; equally, the description of the estates is recognisable still.



Figure 17: Small Hunt Mosaic, Piazza Armerina (photo by the author)

Rather than the courage of the hunter, these mosaics stress the companionship of the elites, the fecundity of estates and the none-too-brave practicalities of actual hunting, with nets and beaters and dogs doing most of the work. Tellingly, only one hunting mosaic in Iberia follows this norm and it comes from a very different context: it decorates a Christian mausoleum rather than a domestic context. The mosaic from the Villa of Centcelles, which is in the modern-day province of Castile and Leon, is a display of the realities of hunting - the nets, the oxen, the many other men who were involved in bringing in the prey. In this context, this hunting mosaic may have been chosen because the creator or patron wished to emphasise themes of companionship and conviviality, and ideas about life and death that would be appropriate to a Christian burial site, rather than the overt masculinity above.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Dunbabin 2003a: 142 – 144.

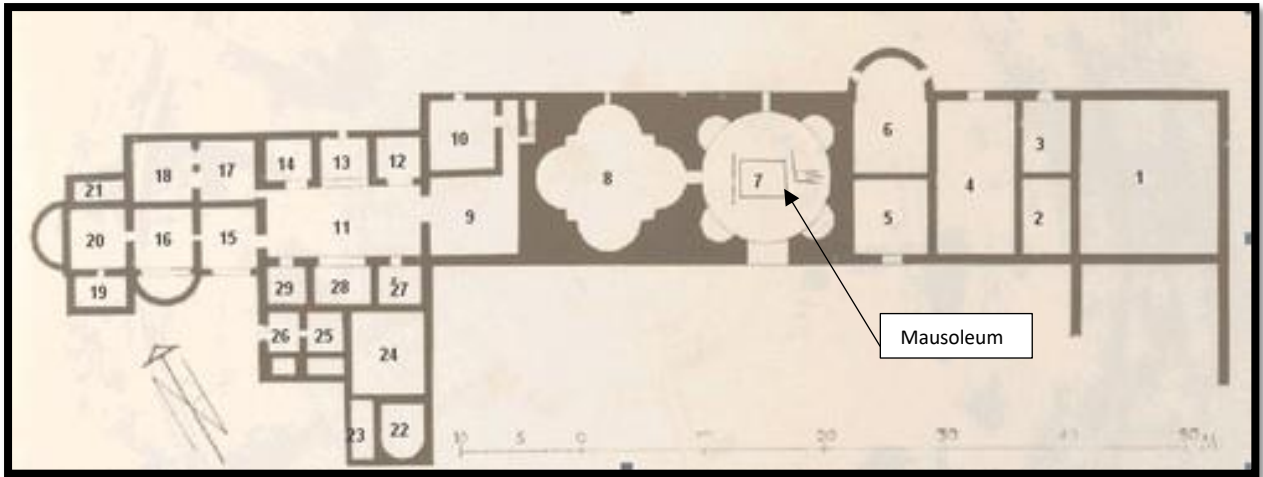


Figure 18: Plan of Centcelles; the Mausoleum is room no. 7 (<http://www.turismo-perromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centcelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0> - plan by H. Schlunk y Th. Hauschild [accessed 18/08/15], annotations by the author)

The mausoleum is located in the centre of the villa, having been adapted in the fourth century from a previous room. The porphyry sarcophagus would have been placed in the crypt at the centre of the room, making that burial the focus. There may have been multiple burials in connecting rooms, but it is not certain that there were any other sarcophagi alongside the porphyry one.¹⁷⁷ The mausoleum is connected to a large reception room, built in a similar style (labelled no. 8 on Figure 18). Both were covered by domed ceilings, with the mausoleum's roof still intact today. This has protected the wall decoration. It consists of four bands of decoration: the hunting mosaics, scenes from the Bible, allegorical scenes of the Seasons and figures that may represent the Tetrarchs; and finally, at the top of the dome, two unknown figures around a central medallion with a geometric design in the centre (Figure 22 shows the bands in relation to each other).¹⁷⁸ The hunting scenes are very detailed and show the elaborate preparations and sheer numbers of people involved in putting on a hunt for the aristocracy. For example, in Figure 20, there are several servants or slaves setting up the nets into which the prey will be driven so that the elite owner and his guests can be guaranteed a kill. Figure 19 shows a man on horseback, rounding up the deer, and Figure 21 depicts the dog handlers. This is a production team creating the perfect stage-managed hunt for the elite hunters.

¹⁷⁷ For discussion of the burials see the Princeton Encyclopaedia entry, and Collins 1998: 111 – 112 which includes a discussion on the possible inhabitants.

¹⁷⁸ Schlunk & Hauschild 1962: the identification of the Tetrarchs is uncertain and is based on the fact that they are four figures dressed in imperial purple.



Figure 19: Detail of hunt scene with deer, Centelles (<http://www.turismo-prerromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0> [accessed 19/06/18])



Figure 20: Detail of hunt scene with nets, Centelles (<http://www.turismo-prerromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0> [accessed 19/06/18])

This is a very different focus from the single heroic hunter in the mosaics mentioned previously. This is not about the “kill”, the dramatic moment over life and death. This is very explicitly about elite

status, as is the whole mausoleum. The different scenes depict different facets of the patron or deceased's identity that he or his family wished to highlight: his wealth and his elite status through the activities of hunting and his claim to acquaintance with those who wear imperial purple (in the image of the Tetrarchs), his knowledge of *paideia* through the allegorical depictions, and his Christian belief. His gender identity is not necessarily as important at this moment or needed to be stressed in the same way as the other mosaics. It may be assumed in his elite identity. It may not have been as essential for the viewers of these images; this is not somewhere to entertain guests and perform the behaviours of masculinity, but instead to remind them of the deceased's elite status and virtues and how his descendants will continue this honourable line. The context dictates the message of identity.



Figure 21: Detail of hunt scene, men and dogs, Centcelles (<http://www.turismo-preromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centcelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0> [accessed 19/06/18])

The hunting scenes contribute to this. The choice of these particular narrative moments emphasises the elite status of the deceased and his family, demonstrating to the viewers that he has the wealth to marshal all these attendants into creating entertainment for his own pleasure, but may also be connected to his Christian values. Dunbabin emphasises that the iconography of this piece stresses conviviality and abundance because it demonstrates wealth and the ability to entertain.¹⁷⁹ Hunting, especially with nets and therefore guaranteed prey, is of course also associated with food and

¹⁷⁹ Dunbabin 2003a.

feasting. A number of examples from other Roman provinces combine hunting scenes with Christian allegory as here, such as the mosaics of Bellerophon hunting the chimera combined with the Chi-Ro symbol in Britain.¹⁸⁰ There is a broader suggestion that the hunt could equally be used to convey Christian ideas about the afterlife. Huskinson argues that hunting scenes were understood as allegories of the victory of the huntsman over death and evil through their faith as the “good Christian”.¹⁸¹ As mentioned above, these scenes also emphasise the communal nature of the hunt. A key example of this is the scene depicted on the Sevso Hunting plate.¹⁸² The plate has a scene of hunters on horseback and on foot, at the centre of which is a communal picnic, at which is served a fish. It is inscribed to Sevso, and the inscription begins with Chi-Ro. This symbol, with the fact that a single fish is being served, suggests that Sevso was a Christian, because the fish is considered a symbol of Christ: this is drawn from the similarity of the shape of the two Greek letters that begin the name of Christ, the Chi-Ro, to the shape of a fish, and to its use in various biblical stories. A single fish at a picnic here may reference the story of the feeding of the five thousand.

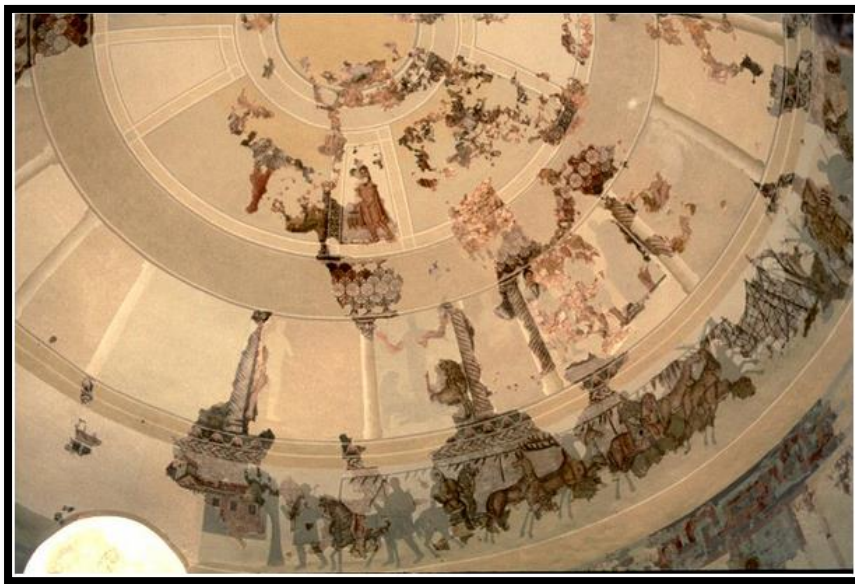


Figure 22: Detail of wider section of Centcelles dome - lower frieze shows deer hunt mosaic (as shown in fig. 18) (<http://www.turismo-prerromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centcelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0> [accessed 19/06/18])

This network of narratives would arise from the viewer reading the image, referencing the deceased’s Christian identity, his relations with the imperial court, and his identity as a land-owner.

¹⁸⁰ Neal 1981.

¹⁸¹ Huskinson 1974: 77.

¹⁸² Part of a treasure collection of disputed provenance but possibly from modern day Hungary ([accessed 19/06/18]).

It is suitable for a funerary context as it considers life, death, and what comes after.¹⁸³ It emphasises particular aspects of the deceased's character that they or their family wished to memorialise, and these do not include his gender as a pre-eminent part of his identity. The stark differences with the lone hunter mosaics reiterate the disparity between these hunting images and the variation in the message or norms which they wish to address. Again, if we refer to several North African hunting mosaics for example, the lone hunter is simply part of a carpet of multiple encounters. The net as a hunting tool features in the majority of the North African hunting scenes: in the mosaics at Le Kef, El Djem, Carthage, Hippo Regis, Constantine, Oglet Atha, Djemila, Henchir M'Riva, Khéreddine, Villélaure, and Khanguet-et-Hadjal.¹⁸⁴ This is a clear symbol of the collective nature of the hunt, and the need for slaves to be involved, in a way that is completely at odds with the lone hunter depiction. The lone hunters are clearly using the idea of hunting and this particular composition to interact with a different set of narratives, demonstrating the range of meanings hunting scenes can hold in iconography. There are multiple examples of the more realistic style of hunting iconography in domestic spaces in other provinces across the Empire, reinforcing the peculiarity of the Iberian choices.

2.3 HEROIC HUNTERS

The earlier section identified various features of the lone hunter mosaic and discussed the conceptual connections that might be made with the images of these hunters, ideas of *virtus*, victory, and masculinity. Fundamentally, these images are designed to be emulated. This idea is made more explicit when they are compared with mosaics depicting mythical heroes taking part in hunts. All these mosaics explore activities that deal with the moment of life and death and demonstrate physicality. The mythical heroes can be used specifically to display the heroic nature of the hunters. A mosaic from the villa of Can Pau Birol, (the modern Torre del Bell-Lloc) near Girona, depicts a scene from the story of Bellerophon hunting the chimera.¹⁸⁵ It is dated to the late third century AD, so it is potentially slightly earlier than the previous examples but bears many similar characteristics. The villa has not been excavated fully and therefore there is little information on the full plan but the Bellerophon panel appears to be part of the peristyle corridor. The image of the hero and the beast is a single panel from a much larger mosaic (17.4m x 3.32m in total) which will be

¹⁸³ Further scenes on the mosaic include biblical narratives such as Lazarus being raised from the dead, Daniel and the lions, and Jonah and the whale. See Huskinson 1974.

¹⁸⁴ Lavin 1963.

¹⁸⁵ Guàrdia i Pons 1999: 154 – 156.

discussed later in the chapter, that would have stretched along the edge of this open space (see Figure 23).

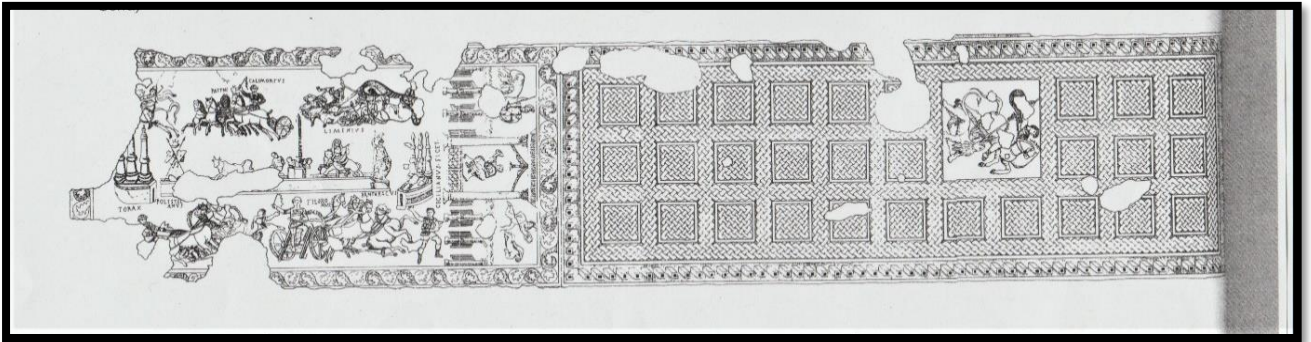


Figure 23: Plan of the Bellerophon and circus mosaic, Villa de Can Pau Birol (Photo from Guàrdia i Pons 1999: 154)

The Bellerophon panel is surrounded by a grid of squares filled with guilloche patterns and is orientated lengthways along the mosaic. At the opposite end is a larger panel with a circus scene. In terms of style the two parts seem mismatched, but there was clearly a connection for the patron between these two sections that made sense and made a point. The supposed location of the mosaic in the peristyle would suggest it was an area where people could move freely through the space, where both guests and visitors would have access, as well as slaves and family members. This was an intersectional point in the house, where guests could pass through to areas of greater intimacy or could remain in an area of more public entertaining. This was a highly visible location therefore, and it is not unreasonable to posit that the décor here relates to the patron's public identity as a man of status.



Figure 24: Bellerophon and the Chimera (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona) (photo by the author)

In the Bellerophon panel, the mighty hero is astride his winged horse and thrusting his spear into the mouth of the ferocious chimera below him (Figure 24). The important characteristics are this exciting composition, paused at the moment of the critical action, and the emphasis on the skill and bravery of the hero. This is emphasized, as in the Boar Hunt mosaic, by making the beast as detailed and prominent as the hunter. This is in many ways a rather non-fantastical chimera. It has a second small goat's head, and possibly a snake head at the end of its tail, but it is mostly lion (Figure 25). It is therefore a recognisably scary beast, something the audiences would have understood as being exotic, but understandably dangerous. It blurs this image into the knowable.



Figure 25: Detail of the Chimera (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia) (photo by the author)

Bellerophon himself is also reasonably ordinary. He is semi-naked, which is a heroic trait, but his body is mostly hidden by the cloak he wears and the wings of Pegasus. He is demonstrating his skill in riding his horse, and in wielding the spear (Figure 26). Guàrdia i Pons argues that his appearance in this mosaic is an indication of the continued popularity of this motif and suggests that 'The assimilation with the figure of the victorious emperor is evident' 'L'assimilació amb la figura de l'emperador victoriós és evident'.¹⁸⁶ She advocates that the image expresses ideas of victory and *virtus*, as we have seen in the lone hunter mosaics. This model is not just imperial or martial but mythical and heroic.

¹⁸⁶ Guàrdia i Pons 1999: 154 – 156: 'L'assimilació amb la figura de l'emperador victoriós és evident'. English translation by the author (L Elkerton).



Figure 26: Detail of Bellerophon (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia) (photo by the author)

A second mosaic again depicts Bellerophon in the same way as Dulcitus or the other hunters above (Figure 27).



Figure 27: Fragment of Bellerophon and Chimera Mosaic, Malaga (Blázquez 1981)

It is a fragment that was found in the gardens of Puerto Oscura in Malaga in 1915. It has suffered quite badly, but the remains show that there is a man on horseback, labelled BELLEREFONS and PEGASUS (the horse), chasing a beast which is mostly lost but is labelled QUMERA. The horse leaps

over the beast, and the remaining limbs of the man clearly indicate that he holds the diagonal pose of a hunter with his spear upraised. The rest of the scene contains another (unnamed) hunter on foot holding a spear, a bird, and a dog chasing a hare. Another fragment found at the same site and believed to be part of the same mosaic shows a hunting scene, depicting a lion and two gazelles, and more exotic palm trees and plants. These images would indicate that this an African landscape (Figure 28).¹⁸⁷



Figure 28: Fragment of African hunting scene, Malaga (Blázquez 1981)

This is an explicit blurring of hunting and myth: Bellerophon has been inserted straight into an African hunting scene. As with the first mosaic, the distinction between the mythological narrative and the “everyday” activity is highly blurred, with the images oscillating between the two states, playing with the viewer, and challenging or creating the idea of the hunter as hero. This image is another example of the everyday and the exotic. The two elements of the myth and the African landscape make this image simultaneously mythical and attainable for an elite few.

The same virile masculinity identified previously is depicted in both mosaics. However, in the Bellerophon scenes the heroic aspect is more explicit. In the most well-known version of the Bellerophon myth, the hero is sent to kill the chimera because of a plot against him. He is falsely accused of rape after rejecting the advances of the King’s wife, and the quest to kill the chimera is supposed to be a death sentence.¹⁸⁸ He is therefore an archetypal hero, defending his honour

¹⁸⁷ Blázquez 1982b.

¹⁸⁸ Kearns & Price 2003; Homer *Iliad* 6. 144 - 221 ff (trans. Lattimore); Hesiod, *Catalogues of Women Fragment* 7 (from Berlin Papyri No. 7497; Oxyrhynchus Papyri 421: 3)

against the perfidy of a lustful woman. This was an ideal hero with whom the elite male owner who had claims to *paideia* might align himself: an example of the most upstanding masculinity. He can do this by encouraging the viewer to draw parallels between the masculine courage and hunting prowess depicted in the mosaic, and in the way he recreates those qualities and performs those behaviours himself. However, the story ends with a warning. Bellerophon tries to fly Pegasus up to the realm of the gods and is punished for his over-reaching ambition or hubris by falling to his death. For the more erudite guest, this knowledge of the whole myth may have caused some amusement when coupled with an over mighty owner. Nevertheless, the interesting point is that the moment chosen out of this whole mythical narrative, and the way it is realised visually, is one that fits very well with the conception of the heroic hunter that appears to represent a popular form of masculinity in the Iberian provinces. Both those who understand the myth, and those who simply see it as a fantastical hunt, could have still related it to a conception of masculinity, making it a potent image for a wide number of viewers and owners. All these forms, hunters, emperors, cavalrymen, and mythic heroes, reinforce a conception of masculinity, building upon each other, increasing the visual associations for the viewers, that shows the active man who displays glory as the ideal.¹⁸⁹

Meleager is another hero who bridges the ideological gap between hero and hunter. A mosaic from a site called 'El Vergel II', in central Spain (near the modern town of Avila) shows Meleager in a similar pose to the Boar Hunt mosaic, helping us trace the connections between these masculine bodies.¹⁹⁰ Meleager is thrusting his spear into the boar, after it has been wounded by the other hunters (Figure 29). He has a heroic nude body and he is demonstrating his hunting skill in the style of the boar hunter, and Bellerophon.

¹⁸⁹ Due to the lack of excavation at both these sites, and the problems of accessing material, there is no real information about the decorative programme as a whole.

¹⁹⁰ Cabero Piquero 2011.

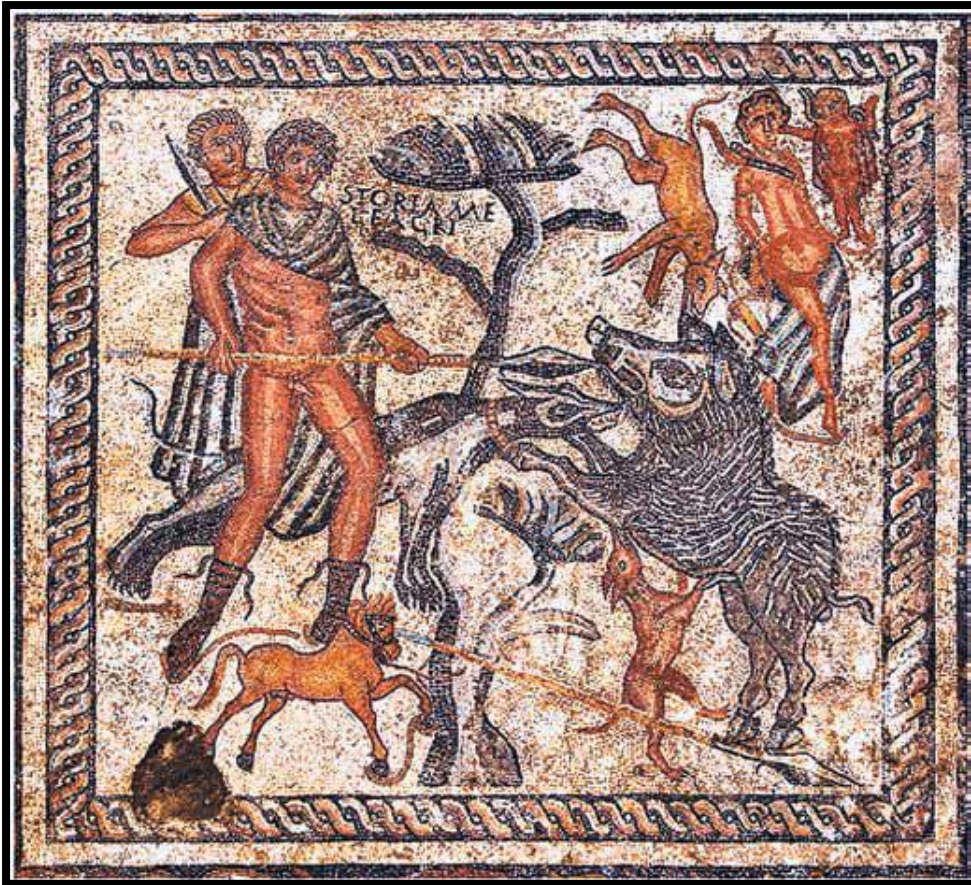


Figure 29: Meleager mosaic (San Pedro de Arroyo) (Cabero Piquero 2011)

The elements of the story of Meleager are all there. In the upper right-hand corner is a female figure, presumably Atalanta, and she is accompanied by Eros to symbolise their love. There is a second hunter behind Meleager as this was a hunting group, and the dogs are equally involved.¹⁹¹ There is even a horse below our hero, an unusual addition. This could be a connection to our idea of heroic hunting on horseback which is so popular in the Iberian mosaics. Keeping horses for sport was a demonstration of wealth and status, like Varro's game parks, and seen as an important part of the education for young aristocrats.¹⁹² We are being reminded that status is always present. However, the body of the hero and his contest with the boar is the most important aspect of this image. The patron or the mosaicist again may be showing off their knowledge of myth, but all of their guests can recognise the celebration of the active masculine here.

Another heroic example is found in a mosaic from the town of Complutum, just outside modern Madrid (possibly 4th century AD). It is a large piece (10.1m x 7.2m) with the majority of the mosaic taken up by a geometric pattern of crosses with busts and figures in the blank spaces between. In

¹⁹¹ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 8. 269 ff. trans, Melville.

¹⁹² Anderson 1985; Varro *Rerum Rusticum* 3.13; Symmachus *Epistulae* 5.68.2 ff.

the centre is a patterned square depicting the hero Achilles about to kill the Amazon Queen, Penthesilea (Figure 30). If the Bellerophon mosaic shows how the mythic and the real hunter may be elided for the eyes of the viewer, depictions of other mythical heroes can equally provide reflections and refractions for prototypes of manly behaviour, even when not hunting animals. Achilles's stance is an example of this.



Figure 30: Achilles & Penthesilea, detail of central square

http://www.museoarqueologicoregional.org/cs/Satellite?c=MUSE_Pieza_FA&cid=1142577656221&language=es&pageid=162525802577&pagename=Museos%2FComunes%2FPresentacion%2FMUSE_galeriaImagenes [accessed 09/10/20]

This is a slightly different pose. It is almost the moment after the dramatic scene we have been seeing in the images above. However, it is still the moment of life and death; the hero's body is very much evident as the focus of the action. Achilles is muscular and naked, just as we would expect the hero to be.¹⁹³ Unfortunately, Penthesilea has been mostly lost so we cannot see the contrast that her female body may have made. However, this still presents a critical distillation of the narrative of the myth. Achilles is demonstrating his manly prowess on the battle field which has been demonstrated can slip into the hunting imagery. The composition of the Achilles mosaic again

¹⁹³ Hallett 2005.

focuses on the point when the hunt, whether against human or animal prey, has been almost concluded and the ultimate moment of power is upon us.

One of the small images inserted into the geometric pattern of squares around the central panel of Achilles and Penthesilea is the figure of a man wearing a toga. The suggestion is that he is the owner of the villa, functioning as an obvious reminder, ensuring that viewers visually connect the hero with the man in front of them.¹⁹⁴ From the ceramics found in this room during the archaeological excavation we can suggest that this room was used for entertaining clients and peers, and displaying the wealth of the household. A number of pieces of *terra sigillata* were found, in particular a bowl type called Dragendorff 37. This is expensive, high quality pottery, adding to the suggestion that this room was considered by the owner a suitable place in which to display and use such items as evidence of his wealth. Further dishes of lesser quality were also found that would have served food. Bermejo Tirado suggests that this evidence allows us to designate this room a *triclinium*.¹⁹⁵ It is debatable whether we can be that definite about this attribution but it is likely that this was a place where the owner of the villa entertained guests.¹⁹⁶ The reconstruction of a room where the owner could display his power and status, surrounded by images that reinforced these identities, and perform his role as a member of the Iberian elite, is supported by this evidence, and is important in assessing the other mosaics in this chapter.

A fourth act of selection and trimming of mythic narrative (and of the hunter himself) in order to focus on the heroic masculine occurs in a mosaic from the fourth century Villa de la Maternus, Carranque (near modern Toledo) (Figure 31).

¹⁹⁴ Blázquez 1989b: 13.

¹⁹⁵ Bermejo Tirado 2007: 131.

¹⁹⁶ For discussions on the naming of rooms and the problems thereof, see Allison 2001.



Figure 31: Adonis mosaic, Carranque (<http://www.parquearqueologico.org/es/el-parque/yacimiento/la-casa-de-maternus> [accessed 09/10/2017])

This mosaic has been interpreted as depicting scenes from the story of Adonis, focusing on his hunting of the boar. It is sited in the *oecus* of this large villa, again one of the most grandiose rooms

where the owner could greet his guests (Figure 32).

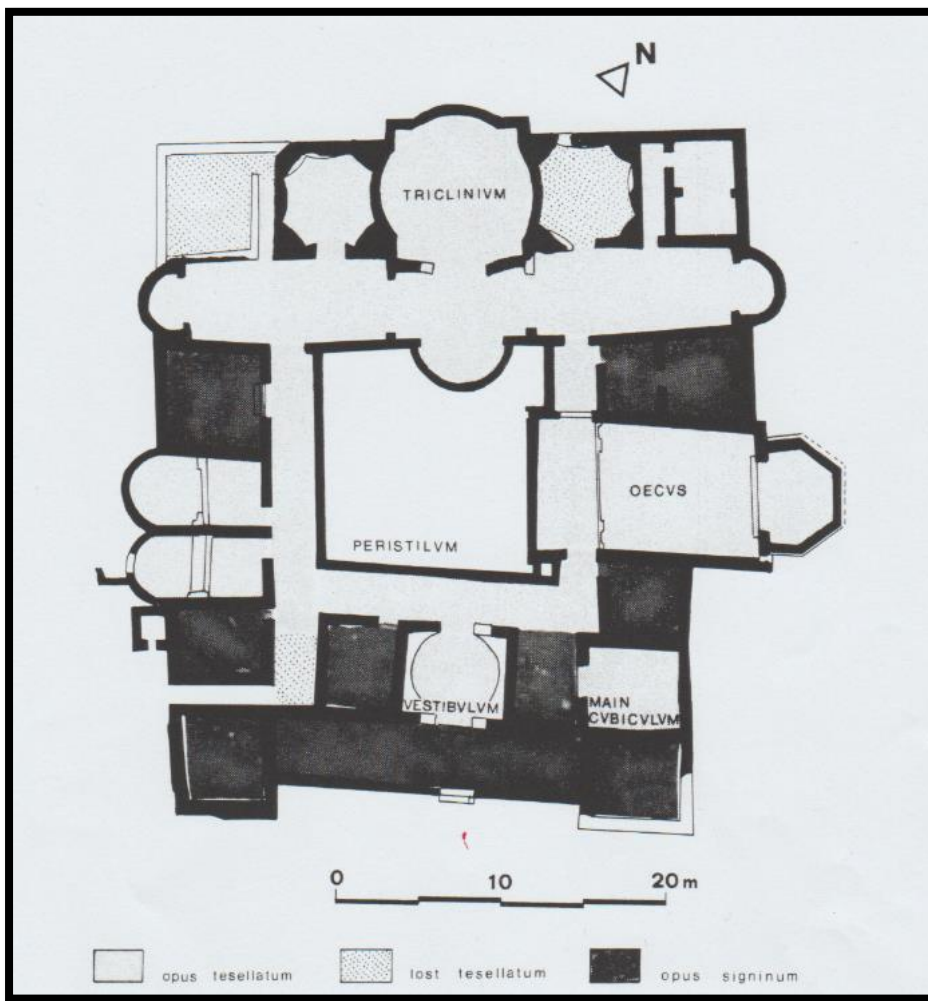


Figure 32: Plan of the Villa de Maternus, residential buildings (Plan from Fernández-Galiano 1994)

Adonis has his back to us as he spears the boar that leaps across the centre of the picture. He is naked apart from a swath of red cloth that is draped over his spear. A second broken spear lies below the boar. The lower register shows two hunting dogs, named as TITURS and LEANDER, both of whom are wounded. A small hare and a bird, and the back end of another boar add to the pastoral scene which is filled out with trees and plants. In the far-left corner stands a male figure, naked but fully armed. He has been labelled as the war god Ares but could also represent Adonis himself in an earlier point in the narrative, before he goes hunting. Next to him, looking towards Ares but with her arms held out towards both male figures, is a female figure dressed elaborately with numerous bracelets. She is typically identified as Aphrodite, and this would be appropriate because she was the lover of both Adonis and Ares. In some versions of the Adonis myth, a jealous Ares sends the boar that Adonis hunts and which kills him.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 10. 522 & 705 ff; version with Ares as the boar - Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 42. 1 ff.

This image is another display of strength and masculine power. This has clearly been a difficult struggle, with the hints of red from the cloaks, and the plants, highlighting the blood that flows from the dogs' wounds. Ares' military garb equally emphasises the parallels between hunting and warfare: the bloodshed in both arenas is significant and both are appropriate places to demonstrate valour. Aphrodite is rather secondary in this scene; she seems unsure, a mere passive spectator to the violence occurring. The important aspect here is the emphasis on the physical body and courage or *virtus* of the hunter. To make this the focus, the mosaicist or the patron has chosen this moment in the mythical narrative that is not normally depicted iconographically. Images of Adonis tend to focus on him in the moment of his death: he is being killed by the boar, whereas the earlier moment depicted here gives the narrative possibility of survival and success.¹⁹⁸ On the sarcophagi Adonis represents a narrative of tragic lost love, and beautiful youth cut down in its prime.¹⁹⁹ This mosaic has shifted the normal focus of depictions of this myth to fit the narrative into the iconography of the heroic hunt.

Bellerophon, Achilles, Meleager and Adonis are all mythical heroes. However, the iconography used to depict them in these mosaics makes them directly comparable to the lone hunters in the hunt mosaics. They use the same visual language, the same narrative composition, to speak about ideas of masculinity. They add another level: they make explicit the connection between the man as hunter and man as hero. As such they contribute to an idea of masculinity that is fundamentally heroic.

2.4 SPECTACLE: THE HIERARCHY OF PHYSICALITY

These are not the only models for masculinity. Hunting and circus and arena mosaics are often treated as a thematic group and thus may also add to a picture of masculinity.²⁰⁰ Mosaics depicting circus and arena events are very popular across the Empire, and in total there are ten mosaics from the Iberian provinces that specifically focus on spectacle.²⁰¹ If we return to the Bellerophon mosaic from Girona, we can consider that it is part of a larger floor that also includes a circus scene. Guàrdia i Pons presents this mosaic as an image of *virtus*, victory, 'a heroic ideal of the owner and his

¹⁹⁸ Kahil, Auge & Linant de Bellefonds 1986; Koortbojian 1995: 22 - 6 'Adonis provided a literal heroic image of death'.

¹⁹⁹ Kahil, Auge & Linant de Bellefonds 1986; Koortbojian 1995: 22 - 6.

²⁰⁰ Blázquez 1993.

²⁰¹ I will not be using the lost Mosaico de Circo from Italica, as it was badly damaged when it was drawn in the 19th century and different images show different reconstructions. I will also not be using the single charioteer mosaics as they are also damaged and have very little information about them and decisions taken with the evidence at the time of writing may not stand up with the benefit of hindsight but form an important part of the journey.

performance', connected with the victorious emperor iconography.²⁰² Therefore, this theme is another opportunity to explore further examples of the masculine body in action. The Bellerophon mosaic will be discussed along with other circus mosaics but I will first examine a mosaic that is traditionally labelled as a hunting scene but that I will suggest is an image of the arena.

The large hunting scene (5m x 2m) from the Villa de la Olmeda, which is situated in the northern part of the Peninsula, removes the focus from the individual heroic hunter and instead depicts a number of vignettes within one composition. Over fifteen mosaics have been excavated from this site (mostly geometric) and the villa was clearly very elaborate. The hunt mosaic comes from one of the largest rooms in the villa, directly off the peristyle (indicated on the plan in Figure 33).

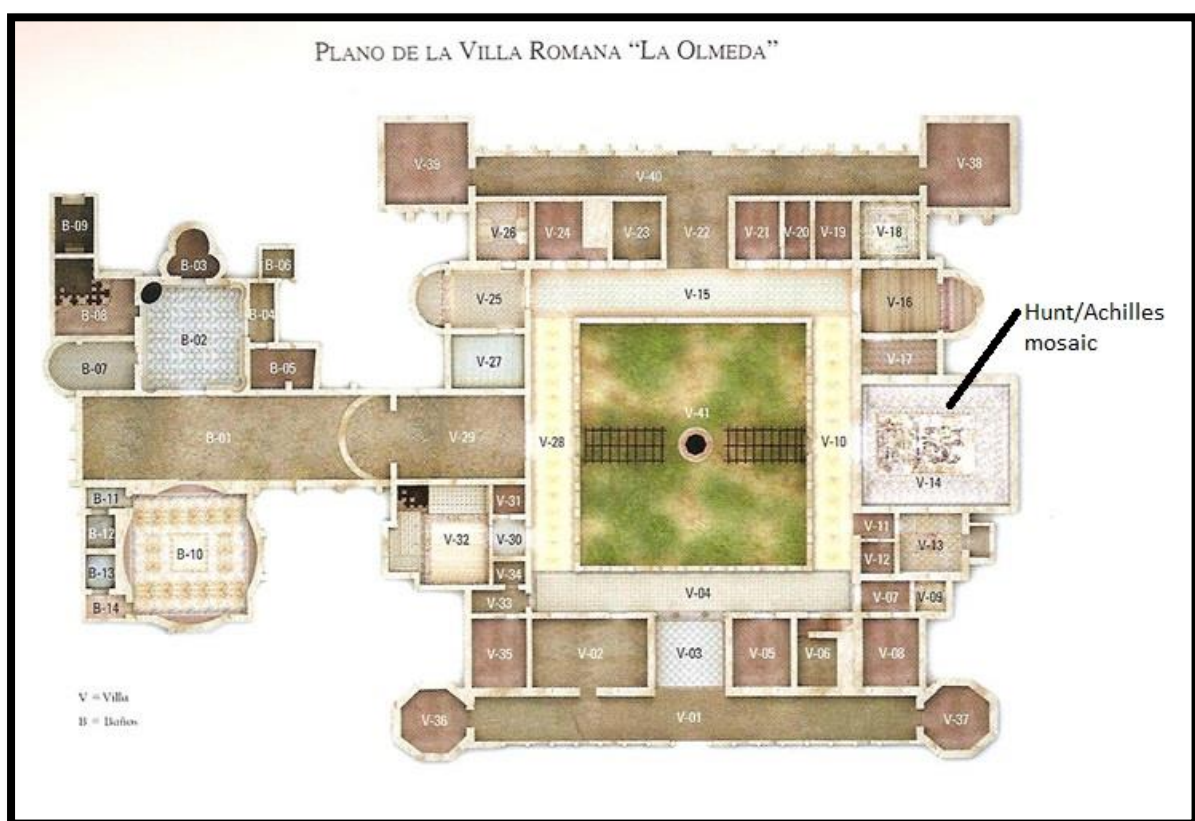


Figure 33: Plan of La Olmeda, with site of mosaic labelled (<https://meetingpoint.wikispaces.com/2-The+romanization+of+the+Iberian+Peninsula> [accessed 13/08/15])

It has been suggested that this room functioned as an *oecus*, a large room for entertaining guests, as in the Villa Maternus above.²⁰³ The floor is made up of two figurative panels, one depicting Achilles on Skyros, and the other the hunting scene, and a large ornamental frieze. The Achilles scene is the larger of the two, and is in the centre of the room, suggesting that it was the focal piece (3.75m x

²⁰² Guàrdia i Pons 1999: 154 – 156: ‘un ideal heroic del propietari l de la seva actuació’. English translation by the author (L Elkerton).

²⁰³ Fernandez Castro 1982: 96.

4.7m compared to 5m x 2m). The surrounding frieze includes portrait heads, potentially providing a link to the owner again as with the Achilles and Penthesilea mosaic. These familial images interact with the mythical scenes, asking the viewers to conflate the two.

The hunting scene is closest to the door, and whereas the ones above focused on a single hunter taking down a foe, a one-on-one battle of strength, this panel is covered with hunters and prey (Figure 34).



Figure 34: Hunt Scene, Villa de la Olmeda (<http://www.villaromanalaolmeda.com/> [accessed 15/02/17])

From the top left a lion kills a gazelle as another leaps away; facing the leaping gazelle is a rearing horse with a hunter, armed with spear and shield; he is looking back towards a rider-less horse who leaps over a writhing panther; at the far right, a man tumbles to the ground as a panther leaps above him, onto his spear. The lower register starts with a man thrusting a spear at a hyena, whilst below him another hunter desperately fends off another panther with his shield. Next to them, a tigress leaps at a hunter on horseback who spears at her; to the right of this is an enormous boar being baited by dogs; finally, in the far-right lower corner a man appears from behind a rocky plateau, spear held out, whilst an injured lion sits in front. These scenes are all arranged against the traditional rocky background, with plants and trees added to the white spaces.

In the multiple scenes on this mosaic the patron or artist has chosen the same narrative moment as the lone hunter scenes above, where he depicts the crucial moment of life and death. In these images however, the hunter is less assured of victory. In the preceding mosaics, the hunter looks

certain to kill his prey and therefore emerge victorious.²⁰⁴ Here, there are a number of different power plays being explored: for example, the man on foot at the upper right-hand corner seems to be very much at the mercy of the panthers. The men are shown on the ground, with the panther physically rearing over them. This scene is meant to represent a kind of fantasy hunt performance that would have been performed in the circuses and theatres.²⁰⁵ The narrative of the arena demands less certainty than the shorthand depiction of victory of the lone hunters. The men displaying masculinity here are not elite men. They are *venatores*, gladiators, slaves and the non-elite. They can use the iconography of the manly body to demonstrate an ideal form of *virtus* that they themselves cannot hold in actuality. They are there to be viewed. It is a heightened experience of the hunt, with the number of ferocious animals, brought from across the empire, increasing the excitement and wonder of the spectacle for the audience.

The men in the arena are props for this display of wealth by the elite man. Like the mosaics that they are depicted in, those fighting in the arena are there to be viewed, and their behaviour can be dissected and used to explore ideas of masculinity. Performers of this sort were considered to be part of the class of *infames*: 'Actors, dancers, and charioteers were all members of the entertainment profession, and (in the eyes of the Church, if not the public at large) all equally undesirable, refused baptism, and in peril of their immortal souls'.²⁰⁶ However, there is still the element of idealisation in these male bodies, a sense that these are to be emulated quite outside this power structure. It was recognised that gladiators and charioteers in particular could demonstrate skills and virtues that were admirable. Cicero and Seneca, among others, used the gladiator as an exemplar for elite men to follow.²⁰⁷ There was a parallel between the skills and the training needed for soldiery as for performing in the arena: 'Everything that Rome demanded of its soldiers, it now required of the gladiators in the arena: *fortitudo* (courage/strength), *disciplina* (training), *constantia* (perseverance/steadiness), *patientia* (endurance), *contemptus mortis* (contempt of death), *amor laudis* (love of glory), and *cupido victoriae* (desire to win), all of which could be expressed in the one word that encapsulated Rome's highest and most desirable moral

²⁰⁴ The only slight deviation from this being Adonis as the hero dies at the end; however, because of the narrative choice above, I don't think this is that important to the mosaicist or the patron, the point is his hunting bravery.

²⁰⁵ Bergmann 2008. For example, she discusses one such event in 248 AD where the Circus Maximus was turned into a wooded valley for a wild beast hunt.

²⁰⁶ Cameron 1973: 158. Tertullian makes this statement in his Apologia 'De Spectaculis'.

²⁰⁷ Cicero uses the gladiator as a positive example in his defence of Milo (*Pro Milone* 92) and his *Orationes philippicae* (335) where he actually uses the phrase '*gladiatores nobiles*' – i.e. they have *nobilitas* which is impossible considering their lack of status. Seneca talks about the bravery of the gladiator in death in *Epistulae morales* (30.08).

quality – *virtus*'.²⁰⁸ Cameron emphasises that the genuine skill of the charioteers is an important part of their attraction.²⁰⁹ This is a fantasy, as much as the mythic heroes are: these are not real men holding *virtus* but models of behaviour.

It is also a show of status because the owner is alluding to his ability to put on spectacles like this in real life, because of his wealth and status. The charter of the *colonia* of Urso (modern Osuna) specifies that the *duumvirs* of the town had to spend a minimum of 2000 sesterces and the *aediles* 1000 sesterces providing games (*munus ludovse scaenicos*) for the town at least once a year.²¹⁰ Kondoleon suggests that these re-creations of temporary events (in the mosaics) would remind viewers of the generosity of the owner and reinforce his identity as a member of the elite: 'By recalling the occasions that celebrated Roman cultural identity, the owner re-created communal experiences and achieved the ultimate control over his self-representation and reception'.²¹¹ This is the ability, and the obligation, of those in positions of power in the provinces to control and restage repeatedly the cultural experiences of others. Elite status is about your ability to put on such large displays for the benefit of the wider community, but also, to be the instigator not the participant. Brown states that arena scenes 'enhanced the distinction between empowered viewers and those they viewed, who could legitimately be killed for entertainment'.²¹² These mosaics demonstrate the ability of the elite class to hold life and death in their hands as a form of entertainment.

These mosaics that depict the elite nature of hunting and display centre on a particular type of man who is not only highly masculine but also wealthy and powerful (even if just relatively so in his own sphere). They suggest that there is a hierarchy of masculinity, a number of different forms of masculinity that are performed in different ways. If we understand this scene as an amphitheatre hunt, the man in the lower centre of the La Olmeda mosaic may be on horseback, and his form may borrow from his master's in order to play out the role of *virtus* at one remove, but his very appearance in this scene denies him the ability to completely own the masculine virtues that we can identify in the lone heroic hunters. He is not in control of his own body, he is merely a spectacle for wealthier men to enjoy. He can never achieve *virtus* as the man who owns the La Olmeda mosaic hopes to, whose portrait sits outside the field of action, as spectator, organiser, controller. However, the performer can display the correct behaviours of manliness for others to admire and emulate.

²⁰⁸ Shadrake 2005: 54.

²⁰⁹ Cameron 1973: 247.

²¹⁰ Keay 1988: 87. Part 70 of the *Lex Ursonensis*.

²¹¹ Kondoleon 1999: 323.

²¹² Brown 1992: 186.

To demonstrate his power, the elite man can restage these spectacles in the mosaics of his house. If we return to the Bellerophon mosaic that depicts the hero fighting the chimera and a circus scene as part of the same mosaic, the heroic hunter is juxtaposed with the spectacle of the circus scene, both showing models of manliness but through different conventions (Figure 35).



Figure 35: Detail of circus mosaic, Villa de Can Pau Birol (Guàrdia i Pons 1999: 154 – 156)

The far-left end of the mosaic has been lost, but four teams are racing around the *spina* in the centre, with crashes and loose horses adding to the drama as well as other characters from the circus such as the *hortator* (outrider) and some attendants (*sparsores*).²¹³ On the right are the gates of the arena decorated with mythological scenes relating to the story of Romulus and Remus. Each team is named with the rider and the lead horse. The statues on the *spina* resemble the ones on the Circus Maximus, apart from the inclusion of an armed female figure. She could be the personification of Roma, which is not a known statue from the Circus Maximus, but with the appearance of the foundation myth of Rome on the gates as well, it does suggest that this is supposed to be a representation of the site in Rome or at least encourage the viewers to make the connection to the centre of the Empire, not just the patron's local interests. Under the gates a seated man is raising his hand with the *mappa* to start the race, presumably the magistrate in charge.

²¹³ Humphrey 1986: 236 – 241.

Guàrdia i Pons stresses that this is an image of victory and triumph, although the winner is not actually very clear.²¹⁴ Humphrey suggests that the chariot in the top left is winning, but there is no obvious indication of this.²¹⁵ He argues that the emphasis is on the race itself, and the patron's generosity in giving such a spectacle, and that the mosaic is a permanent reminder of his gift and his wealth. We certainly have the dramatic male bodies of the charioteers, contrasted with other lesser male bodies such as the attendants who are smaller, dressed only in tunics rather than a kind of armour, and are both under the feet of rearing horses rather than controlling them. However, there is a third male body in this image that completes the spectrum of masculinity that we have discerned. This is the magistrate overseeing the games: possibly the patron of the villa, but regardless of his identity, clearly the elite stand-in in this image. Although there are the physical specimens of masculinity on this mosaic that are dashing and dramatic in their chariots (and at risk as we are reminded by the crashed chariot) they are being controlled and engaged by the masculine figure who is set apart, wearing a toga as a sign of political authority, and raising his arm to initiate the action. He is the puppet master, and the contrast between the outward explicit performance of *virtus* of the charioteers, and his implicit authority is a key facet of this multiplicity regarding the performance of masculinity.

One of the most spectacular circus mosaics from the Iberian provinces is an enormous depiction of a circus race, currently in the Archaeological Museum in Barcelona. It is a large rectangular panel, approximately 9m by 3.6m.²¹⁶ It was excavated from below the Royal Palace in 1860, from a room richly decorated in wall paintings. However, little else is known about the context; the most likely answer is that it came from a luxury townhouse.²¹⁷ There has been some damage to the mosaic since its excavation, but the Museum has stabilised it during its ownership, and currently displays it with an indication of how it would have looked if complete (Figure 36).

²¹⁴ Guàrdia i Pons 1999: 154 – 156.

²¹⁵ Humphrey 1986: 239-241.

²¹⁶ Humphrey 1986: 237.

²¹⁷ Humphrey 1986: 235.



Figure 36: Circus Mosaic, (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona) (photo by the author)

It depicts a chariot race in full flow around a circus. We (the viewers) are sitting on one side of the arena, and we can only see the nearside track, with all four teams (blue, white, red, and green) racing along in front of us. Behind them are several pieces of monumental track architecture, basins and statues and columns. The race has just been won by the green team, and the blue team has crashed at the back. Humphrey suggests that in comparison with other circus mosaics (such as the example in the Piazza Armerina), this composition is quite unusual as it does not really draw attention to the victory.²¹⁸ In the Piazza Armerina mosaic the victorious chariot is being crowned with his laurels in the very centre of the image, ensuring that the viewer's attention is focused on this moment of the race. In the Barcino mosaic, 'the interest of the mosaicist and his patron seems to lie elsewhere, that is, in the detailed representation of the chariot teams and in the detailed depiction of the *euripus* [ditch or canal in the centre of the circus]'.²¹⁹ Humphrey suggests that the focus of the mosaic is actually the horses themselves, as they are inscribed with their names and possibly their stables, so the patron may be involved in breeding racehorses. This would certainly demonstrate elite status and the wealth of the owner. It is also believed that the circus depicted is the Circus Maximus in Rome, again attesting to an elite connection and status reaching to the centre of the Empire. The closest known circus to Barcelona was the one at the provincial capital, Tarragona, approximately sixty miles south along the coast, so there is a possibility that the more local viewers would have experienced chariot racing in reality. Like the Bellerophon mosaic with the African landscape, the multiple references to real places and the names enhances the setting and

²¹⁸ Humphrey 1986: 238: he remarks that this mirrors the Bellerophon circus mosaic suggesting a local style or mosaicist.

²¹⁹ Humphrey 1986: 238.

magnifies the owner's claims to elite status. The viewers, especially those that were his peers, should have recognised his connection with imperial Rome, possibly his role in supplying horses for the Circus Maximus. They may be reminded of characters such as Lucius Minicius Natalis Quadronicus Vetus from Barcino who is recorded as a charioteer as well as a senator in the second century AD.²²⁰ Less well-travelled or well-connected viewers may be reminded of the spectacle of the races that the owner paid for at Tarragona. This is another fantasy image.

The elite associations of this mosaic are clear. However, in terms of the approach of this chapter (and indeed thesis), there is plenty of material for our conception of masculine identities. We have the action, the physical strength of the male body, and the moment of victory (and lurking disaster) that are apparent in the hunter mosaics. There are a number of different masculine bodies depicted on the mosaic, and some interesting contrasts that would invite spectators to consider their own position and possibly enter into this ambiguous discourse of masculine identity. Firstly, the charioteers are the largest and most prominent figures on the image. They stride across the front and centre of the mosaic and are larger than life, wielding their formidable chariots and the horses that drive them (Figure 37).

²²⁰ Keay 1988: 88.

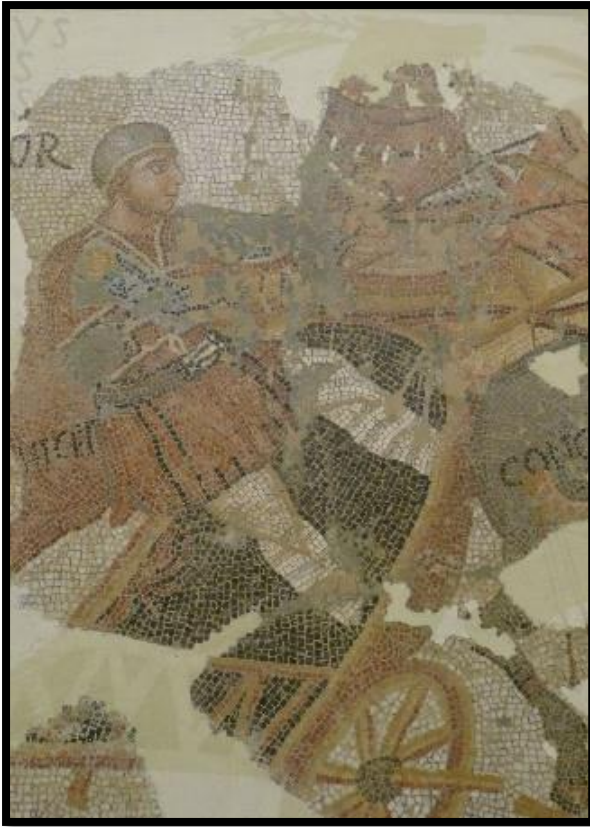


Figure 37: Detail of charioteer from the Circus Mosaic, (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona) (photo by the author)

Figure 37 shows the red charioteer as he pulls up his horses behind the winner. It is a dramatic pose, and the viewer is drawn into the excitement of the race, with the way his legs are braced against the chariot, controlling the force of those magnificent horses. With this physical stance, he and his compatriots are examples of the masculinity described above: active, dangerous, courageous. They correspond to the men on horseback hunting dangerous animals above. This, especially, is another example of a key moment frozen in time, a moment of high danger that signifies the masculine skill that is needed to enact these behaviours. He is to be admired and can be taken as a measure of masculinity for the viewer. We can imagine the patron entertaining guests in this large room, associating himself with the wealth in supplying the horses and the power in his connections with Imperial Rome again. As he performs the roles of elite host, his clients and guests are stimulated by the examples on display below their feet to explore the nuances of masculinity and recognise the physical valour of the charioteers. The viewers can enjoy the masculinity on show that has been provided for them (in reality and iconographically) by the owner. They also see the intersections of status and position that add up within a wider hierarchy of masculinity and power. Other gradations of this complex structure can be seen in a comparison with the other male bodies on this mosaic. This contrast highlights how the bodies of the charioteers are significant. In the background of the

scene are a number of statues that decorate the *euripus* that lines the middle of the track. It is believed that there were statues of Hercules and Apollo on the far left but these have been lost.²²¹ We do have a number of statues of athletes, and a pair of figures who are interpreted as captives (Figures 38 and 39).



Figure 38: Detail of the athletes from the Circus Mosaic, (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona) (photo by the author)

The two statues in Figure 38 are commonly interpreted as athletes. Their graceful and elongated pose lacks the vivid and energetic nature of the charioteers. These are clearly statues and represent a different type of idealised male body. They refer to an artistic heritage: they are works of art in this context, but they also inevitably function as another form of male body in this image. The charioteers are active, courageous, and fundamentally ‘Roman’.²²² By contrast, the athletic bodies of

²²¹ Humphreys 1986: 238

²²² Chariot racing was believed to have been introduced either by Romulus himself, or his successor Tarquinius Priscus who was supposed to have built the Circus Maximus, and thus is intricately connected with the stories of the history of Rome – as a city and by extension, as an Empire. Shadrake 2005: 35.

these statues appear to refer to the Greek tradition, translated through the Hellenistic.²²³ They represent the Hellenic ideals of the youth who trains in the gymnasium, where he learns to be a man and to function as part of a city state. The statue medium, and the way it is depicted on this mosaic epitomises that smooth, youthful ideal, stretched out in athletic prowess. This is an alternative to the realistic Roman bodies of the charioteers.

The second contrast is with the statues of the prisoners (Figure 39).

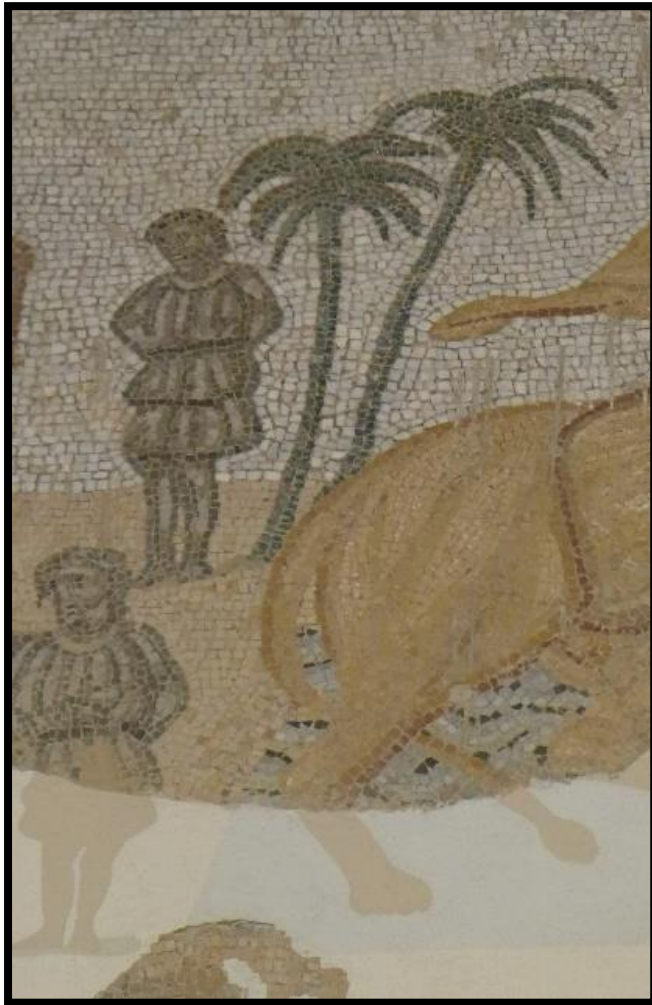


Figure 39: Detail of prisoner statues on the Circus Mosaic, (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona) (photo by the author)

These grey, silent, still figures are a third category of masculinity on this mosaic. They are also clearly not one that is to be celebrated. The contrast in colour and pose makes this very clear to the viewer. The drab grey against the shining yellow of the athletes, and the vivid bright team colours of the charioteers automatically relegates these figures to a position of inferiority in the eyes of the

²²³ Such as the Discobolus of Myron, known from Roman copies such as the Townley version currently in the British Museum, and the Lancellotti type in the Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome.

spectator. Their inactive pose with their hands bound behind their backs and their heads slightly bowed, stresses their inactive state and powerlessness, and therefore their inability to lay claim to any of the masculinity displayed by the other 'men' on this image. They are the example of lost masculinity. They have suffered defeat and even worse, the humiliation of being captive, and therefore subject to another more powerful man's will. This is what men should not be. These three "types" of masculinity on this image conflict and contrast with each other for the viewer, allowing him to reflect on how he himself relates to each one.

The masculinities displayed on the mosaic are supplemented by the elite man who controls and owns the whole image, and thereby the actors within it. The *virtus* they achieve is confined to their activities within that public space of the arena or the circus, and then on the mosaic. It is because they are on show, that they literally are exemplars, that they can temporarily hold *virtus*. Added to this, is the fact that they face genuine danger. A gladiator faces the prospect of death every time he steps into the arena, as does a *venator*. This very mosaic depicts the crash of the blue charioteer, which could well have had fatal consequences (Figure 40). Although it was not an intended consequence of the entertainment, it was indeed a possible one. This possibility returns us to that moment of life and death in the mosaics above and suggests that this moment is what is so powerful and so fascinating to the Roman viewer. By witnessing this moment, by enshrining it on the floor, the viewer, and in particular the patron, of the mosaic can associate himself with the *virtus* that the performer temporarily holds and aspires to emulate it. He demonstrates his masculinity by controlling and displaying the temporary masculinity of others and makes it permanent by building that moment into the structure of his house. Canetti says that 'the moment of survival is the moment of power'.²²⁴ By drawing all these aspects together, the elite male can align himself with the active male on the image, but also stress the intersection of his status.

²²⁴ Canetti 1962: 227.

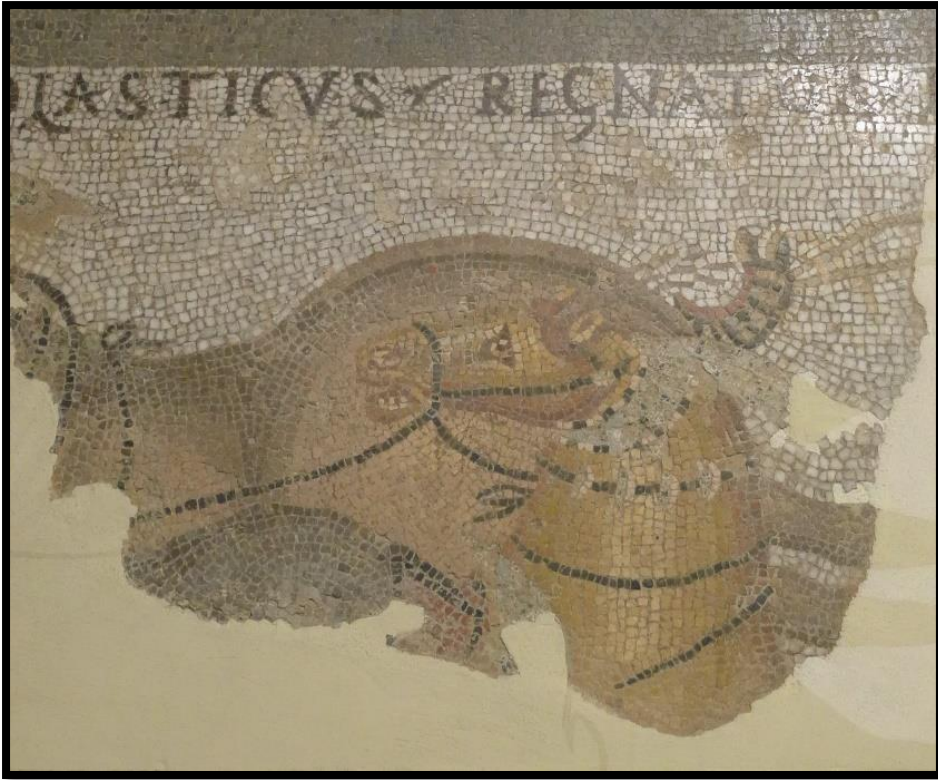


Figure 40: Detail of horses from the crashing chariot, Circus Mosaic, (Archaeological Museum of Catalonia, Barcelona) (photo by the author)

The same composition for a chariot race is also found in a panel of a mosaic at the Villa de Noheda, a site west of modern Madrid, near the city of Cuenca (the monumental stage of the villa when this mosaic was put in starts in the 4th century AD). The other panels depict theatrical, Bacchic, and marine scenes, and a Judgement of Paris. The chariot race panel is the first panel the viewer reaches when entering the room, opposite the eastern exedra.²²⁵ The teams of horses run across the front of the panel. There are only two of them in this mosaic. Behind are the statues and ornaments of the *euripius*. However, this is a mythical scene. It depicts the story of Pelops and Hippodamia. Hippodamia was the daughter of Oinomaos, King of Pisa (the area around Olympia in Greece). Any man who wished to marry Hippodamia had to race the King in a chariot. Unfortunately, the King's chariot was a gift from Apollo, and each man inevitably lost and was killed at the finish line by Oinomaos. The heads of unlucky suitors are displayed in the background of this mosaic as a nicely macabre reminder. Pelops managed to win the race with a chariot which was a gift from Poseidon, and by bribing Oinomaos's charioteer to swop his bronze linchpins for ones of wax, which melted when the chariot got up to speed and caused Oinomaos to crash and die.²²⁶ The mosaic shows both the moment before the beginning of the race, where Pelops is stating his intention to race, and the

²²⁵ See Valero Tévar 2013: Figure 12 for plan of mosaic.

²²⁶ March 2009: 427 – 429; Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* E2. 2 – 10.

end, where Oinomaos's chariot has crashed, and the successful Pelops embraces his bride Hippodamia.

The panel is part of a very large mosaic (this panel alone was 10.8m x 3.05m originally and is one of six of a similar size) that covers a three-apsed room in the villa (Figure 41).²²⁷ It is entered through an antechamber, and the entrance is marked by two columns on plinths and two steps. This was clearly an important room in the house: Valero Tévar suggests that the central apse (of the three in total) would have been reserved for seating for the *dominus* (the owner) and his family and special guests, with lesser visitors in the two side spaces, and the large central space in the main body of the room as an entertainment area.²²⁸ The room was decorated in various coloured marbles, adding to the richness of the display, emphasising the wealth and ability of the owner to decorate his home with exotic and brightly coloured materials.



Figure 41: Panel of Noheda Circus Mosaic, Villa de Noheda (Valero Tévar 2013)

Although this chariot race is a story from myth, it has been given a particular physical location with the *euripius* in the background and it belongs iconographically to the same category as the Barcelona circus mosaic and the Bellerophon circus mosaic but merges the previous distinctions of charioteer and mythical hero. For the viewers, this is an exciting image of a chariot race, filled with the drama of loss and of victory. Those aware of the narrative behind it can add the story to their interpretation but fundamentally all the circus images show the same narratives in themselves, concerned with victory and the danger and excitement of the race. The main male figure here is Pelops. He is dressed in a striking costume, which makes him stand out and helps the viewer identify him in the

²²⁷ Valero Tévar 2013: 309. Also Scott 2000: 143.

²²⁸ Valero Tévar 2013: 312.

two scenes. He wears a long tunic with a circular decoration on the hems. Over the top is a red cloak, and he has a tall red hat on as well (Figure 42).²²⁹



Figure 42: Detail of Noheda mosaic of Hippodamia and Pelops embracing (Valero Tévar 2013)

His manliness is not so much in his body, in comparison to Achilles and Meleager for example, but in his actions. We can see that he has won the race because he is shown being embraced by Hippodamia, who is handing him the victory palm. This image makes clear the spoils of successful manliness: he gets the girl, very literally. This is all part of being a successful man. This panel was placed at the entrance to this grand room. The visitor would see this scene, before looking up to the *dominus* presiding in the central apse at the far end. Clearly, the parallels were being spelt out for them: look at the success of both these highly manly men. There is a double edge to this happy ending with the knowledge of an educated visitor. As a result of his trickery in this race, Pelops is cursed, and his descendants are notoriously dogged by violence and ill-fortune. However, Pelops himself is highly successful in his lifetime and achieves a good life by the standards of the time.²³⁰ Overall, this specialised knowledge only applies to a small number of actual viewers and is not referred to in this context. For the majority of those who entered this room, this is an image of successful manliness. It shows action, heroics, and excitement, the contrast of the broken chariot with the victorious one reminds us of the consequences of losing this race. The position of the mosaic in the room, and the room itself ensures that the patron who sits in the place of power in this

²²⁹ Possibly a Persian style hat.

²³⁰ March 2009: 427 – 429.

room can claim that masculinity by enshrining the moment of victory on the floor, and by inviting the viewer to make the comparison between the examples before them.

The room also contained sculptural fragments depicting one of the *Dioscuri*. These twins, sons of Leda and brothers of Helen, are often listed amongst the archetypal heroes. Apollodorus of Rhodes lists them as part of the crew of the Argonaut and Apollodorus places them with Meleager when he hunts the Caledonian boar.²³¹ The fragment shows that the sculpture focused on the muscular body of the hero, reiterating the celebration of masculinity within this decorative scheme. In this rare example where sculpture has been recorded alongside the mosaics it hints at the way in which other artefacts and forms could add to the visual conversation that is postulated in this thesis.

Figure 43 depicts a chariot from another, now lost, circus mosaic from Seville. This small fragment is not as close up or detailed as the Barcelona or Noheda ones but is significant for the energy and movement it imparts. The chariot flies up behind the leaping horses who dart across the scene. It emphasises the danger that was being drawn out above: we must remember that the scenes of victory come at the expense of action like this. This is the narrative that the viewer is aware of when he sees the end of the race.



Figure 43: Detail of Circus Mosaic fragment, (Archaeological Museum of Seville) (photo by the author)

2.5 HUNTING AND SPECTACLE

This chapter began with a series of mosaics that focused on men on horseback, just at the point they were about to kill their prey. They generally come under the category of “hunting” mosaics in the

²³¹ Apollonius *Argonautica*; Pseudo-Apollodorus *Bibliotheca*, (1.8.2)

various catalogues and articles discussing them.²³² As the chapter has developed, I have shifted this view slightly, to encompass a broader idea of spectacle and display, with an emphasis on physicality. In this light, if we look again at the Dulcitus mosaic, it shows the intermingling of these two categories or themes and can be used as a starting point to consider how these mosaics grapple with the representation of masculinity and status (Figure 44). Multiple masculinities can be explored by opening this narrative to incorporate ideas of spectacle and display.

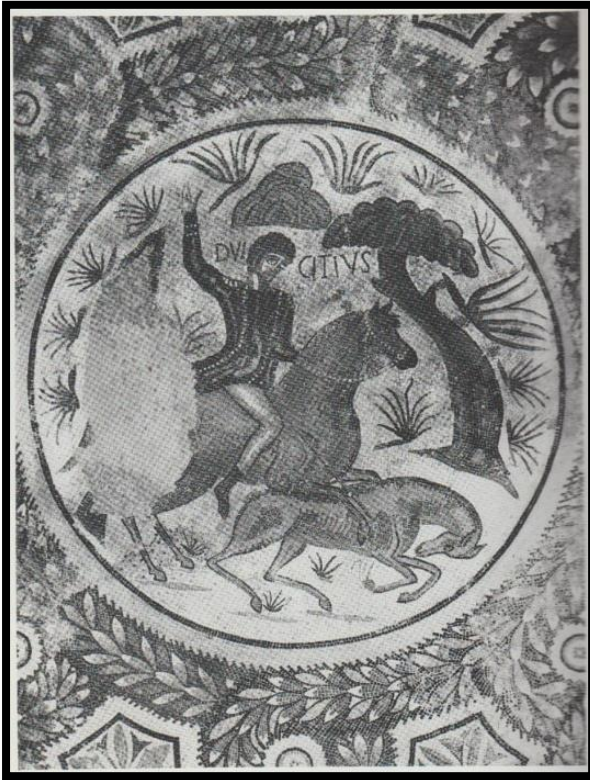


Figure 44: Dulcitus Mosaic (Blázquez 1985)

The name inscribed on this mosaic could signify that instead of being a patron, he is a performer (the rider or the horse). Like the names on the circus mosaics, he is there to remind us of the performative nature of these models of manliness. This is also appropriate for the Boar Hunt mosaic (Figure 45).

²³² See in particular the work of Blázquez such as his articles in his 1993 volume 'Mosaicos Romanos de España' including 'El mosaic de "Dulcitus"' and 'Iconografía de la vida cotidiana: temas de caza'.



Figure 45: Detail of Boar Hunt mosaic, El Hinojal, (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photo by the author).

Clearly the themes of the hunt are still very relevant here. This is a picture of a man killing a boar. In terms of thinking about masculine identity, clearly the viewer is being asked to admire the bravery of the hunter, his strength and physical ability. However, when considered in the context of the spectacle mosaics we can add more to this. If we compare this image with an image of a man fighting a lion on the fresco from the podium of the Amphitheatre at Merida (the closest town to the villa), there are many similarities (Figure 46).



Figure 46: Detail from painting from the podium of the Amphitheatre in Merida, (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photo by the author).

The pose is the same, the costume is the same. The visual language that is being used in both images is the same, and therefore connects them together. Therefore, we can think about the Boar Hunt mosaic as being one scene from a *venatio*, a simplified version of the La Olmeda mosaic. These connections and interplays between the images would surely have been apparent to the contemporary viewers of these mosaics because they are using a particular visual language that would have been used throughout their daily lives. We can draw a comparison across the two different media because the visual construction is the same in both.

The Boar Hunt mosaic therefore references ideas about masculinity that are embedded in the connection with hunting as a “manly” sport. In light of the discussion in this chapter, we can add to these references particular ideas of power that are not apparent if the image is dismissed as just a hunting image and only comprehensible through that theme. Both hunting and circus mosaics represent an attempt to control the spectacle that is being presented. The patron may well be referring to the fact that he put on a spectacular hunt at a recent set of games, but more generally, he is implicitly referring to his ability to be able to do that. He is referring to his ability to enact this spectacle and to be in control of it. His power overrides the body of the hunter/performer who is shown on this image, and therefore the hunter’s *virtus* is the patron’s *virtus*. To return to the idea of context, he can invite the clients into his beautiful reception room with this mosaic and encourage them to draw parallels between himself and the image. He can invite them to remember that he has the power of life and death over another’s body; to remember that he controls the natural world too – especially if you (as a viewer) have just come in from a day of hunting on the patron or owner’s estates. This image is a construction of an ideal masculinity where gender and power are inseparable.

However, the image also comes with a warning. These performances and behaviours must be constantly reiterated in order to achieve them. The performers show a lesser form of masculinity that lacks power, despite seemingly displaying the virtues of courage, bravery, and physical strength. This emphasises the importance of the medium and the context. The elite male patron protects his status because the cost of the mosaic, stressed through material and scale, demonstrates his wealth and power. He owns this floor; he does not feature directly on it. The context also supports this. It is in a grand reception room, next to one of two bath suites, in a grand and impressive villa. These factors all work together on the viewer to construct the role of an elite male.

2.6 CONCLUSION

It is clear that the hunting and spectacle mosaics from the Iberian provinces represent a conception of masculinity. The people who commissioned and made these mosaics chose these images because they fitted the narrative they wanted to tell, and told them a narrative they recognised and understood, and thus they are deliberate and meaningful to their viewers. Therefore, the important question is to ask why this form was chosen. As I have suggested above, these Iberian hunting scenes show closer parallels with the tombstones of auxiliary cavalrymen and triumphant martial emperors than with the more typical hunting mosaics from other parts of the Empire. Hence, the lens of masculinity functions as an appropriate model with which to examine these mosaics. This particular narrative was clearly concerned with qualities associated with masculinity.

The context of the mosaics is also of great importance in understanding these narratives. Again, and again, the lone hunter mosaics are found in reception rooms. Several were close to bath suites. Even without further information on the other decorative aspects of these rooms this is clearly a significant point. From our understanding of the way these rooms were used, we can create a picture of the elite owner entertaining guests and clients in the rooms decorated by these mosaic floors, demonstrating his wealth and knowledge of social niceties, which are made apparent in these contexts and images. The lone hunter is a motif decorating a stage set on which to perform status. Power is therefore part of the narrative of these images. The power to entertain, to own villas (and estates for hunting), the power to dominate others. These images are clearly concerned with masculinity and status.

Mosaics depicting spectacle and display are frequently interpreted as being about the patron showing off his own ability to put on such displays in reality, even commemorating specific events.²³³ This interpretation is perfectly valid, but it functions at only one level. Again, the visual narrative of the images themselves allows them to stand for generic ideas of masculinity, power, physical prowess, and courage, just as the lone hunter images do. The mosaics from La Olmeda and Girona help us to appreciate the fantasy nature of both the lone heroic hunter and the spectacle mosaics. The La Olmeda mosaic is frequently classified as a hunt mosaic, and the individual vignettes do capture the same moment of excitement that the lone hunter ones do.²³⁴ Nevertheless, I think an interpretation as an arena scene is much more coherent. The designation of these mosaics as hunting mosaics needs to be considered more widely than a realistic aristocratic hunt. The Girona mosaic explicitly combines hunting heroes and circus dramas. When compared with the other

²³³ See discussion in Humphrey 1986: 208 – 246.

²³⁴ See the official visitor guide to the Villa de la Olmeda for example, where it is described as a ‘dynamic hunting mosaic’

(http://www.villaromanalaolmeda.com/export/sites/villaromana/otrosContenidos/actividad/2012/documentos_2012/Folleto_VRO_2012_inglxs.pdf).

spectacle mosaics – of the circus, or the mythical realm – we can construct a more complex narrative about these images, and about the masculine identity they seem to portray.

Equally, when compared with mosaics from other provinces, there is a clear act of selection and adaptation for a particular version of this narrative. Lavin says that ‘the North African genre pavements do not give the impression of having served primarily to glorify a hero...They seem intended, rather, as an expression of the salient elements in the existence of the rich, provincial proprietors’.²³⁵ This is somewhat of a false dichotomy as I have argued that these mosaics specifically combine both a celebration of the heroic masculine and the joys of elite status but it is interesting to note that this is not the same in other provinces.

All these mosaics focus on a particular moment: the moment of life and death and the moment of victory. There is clearly something very emotionally powerful in this moment that spoke to the viewers of these mosaics. There was something resonant in the form which is amplified by its repetitions. The lone hunter scenes, the mythological scenes, the chariot scenes all enter into the narrative at a particular point: the scene forever poised at a point where the courage and danger is at its height, where the victory is within grasp. These emphases tell both the viewer, and us, about the ideas of masculinity within this context.

To return to another aspect of the above mosaics briefly discussed, we can consider the mixing of what would traditionally be called mythical and quotidian scenes. When viewed through the lens of masculinity however, this distinction does not seem to be important. In many ways, all of these images are mythical: they are formed to construct a mythical man, an ideal. The scenes that are not recognised as directly related to a story or narrative that we define as myth, are not snapshots of a direct moment of real-life action. Equally, the mythical scenes are readable by those who have no knowledge of the supposed intended story. Both are focused on using this iconography, the poses and the styles, to have a wider viewership that this distinction imposes. All the mosaics are imaginary, because they represent an iconographic view of the world. They are the creation of the patron and the mosaicist, influenced (consciously or unconsciously) by the society they inhabit, and are manifestations of their vision. This is why we can use both to reconstruct ideas about masculinity: the men that are depicted on these mosaics are forms and types that represent values and ideas.

Overall, these mosaics point to a conception of a masculinity that is active, courageous, physically demanding, willing to face danger, and powerful. It is also performative. This power comes from

²³⁵ Lavin 1963: 276.

wealth and position; it also comes from status, in that you have control over your own body, and those of other men (and animals). This is demonstrated through the use of images that celebrate the active man and celebrate in particular the point where he is most in danger. They stress the physical body of the men depicted, and their attributes and abilities in overcoming physical challenges and obstacles. They perform masculinity in this way in order to define ideal masculine behaviours, parallels which the viewer could emulate and refract into their own behaviour. The attention in craftsmanship and materials lavished on these images is clear evidence of the value that is ascribed to these ideas, as is their position in the larger, presumably more important rooms of the houses.

Status is stressed in subtler ways. At some level, it is shown through the autonomy the figures have in the images over their own narrative. They are using their active bodies to push the narrative forward, to kill the boar, or to win the race. For a first reading, this may be adequate. However, for a deeper reading, we can see that whatever power the figures own in that moment, it is not permanent. The bodies of the protagonists in this image are not their own and there is an element of spectacle in this dialogue that brings power and status into play. For the elite male viewer, part of the pleasure in viewing these images, and in measuring his own identity in comparison with them, is his ability to own these images and the conceptions they embody. As argued above, the act of making these images into pavements – making them physical artefacts that exist in the structure of the house – is a way of owning the virtues that they depict. Again, the Canetti quote is apt: ‘The moment of survival is the moment of power’.²³⁶ What is more powerful than being able to capture someone else’s moment of survival and place it within your domestic sphere? Equally, it reminds the elite owner of the constant need to stay in a position of power. It reinforces the social structure because it tells the hunter that he may be strong and physically brave, but that he lacks the power that is needed to be a real man, because he does not own the villa and the trappings of status of which this mosaic is a part. At least, that is what the elite male may hope.

This context is just as important as the image and intersects with it to add to the conception. We also need to be aware of the way that the use of these spaces contributed to a sense of masculine identity. The fact that these images, where the context is known, are repeatedly found in large reception rooms allows us to think about the ideas of the social house, and how elite men would use these spaces to entertain guests and clients and thereby demonstrate their position within society. Thus, we can envisage these mosaics being used as a background to a particular performance of masculinity, supplemented by other aspects of decoration as at Noheda. The lone hunter can be directly contrasted with the elite owner of the household and their behaviours, and their bodies can

²³⁶ Canetti 1962: 227.

be used to understand the performance of masculinity. A client visiting the owner of El Hinojal can see his patron holding audiences on top of the Boar Hunt mosaic. He can remember the time he saw the patron hunting in the estates around El Hinojal. He can remember the time the patron paid for games in the amphitheatre at Merida, for the festival, and when he saw exotic animals being killed by men who were owned by the patron. He can see the power the patron exerts over his household slaves, as he orders them to look after the guests in this beautiful, richly decorated and furnished room. All of these images and behaviours come under the consideration of the client when he is viewing the mosaic and the patron and help to form an ideal of the elite male. Similarly, the slave who serves the guests may recall the times he has assisted in his master's grand hunts, or a fellow slave who disobeyed and ended up facing similar ferocious beasts in the arena. A daughter of the household may recognise her inability to enact the behaviours on the mosaic: that her body is not celebrated for being active and physical in this way, that she cannot take part in the client-patron relationships that are taking place above it, or the political discussions that her father conducts as he hunts or watches his games. She may use this mosaic to understand her difference.

All these viewings are valid and spring from the mosaics that have been discussed in this chapter. They point to a multifaceted, complex idea of masculinity within this provincial society, that has to be constantly reaffirmed and reasserted. It is a public masculinity, tied in with social status, power and wealth. It does not rest on simply being born male, but by repeatedly proving it with behaviours and demonstrations of your position. The manly male in Roman Iberia must match up to the mosaics upon which he walks.

3 MYTHICAL NARRATIVES OF GENDER

The last chapter established that the rooms within provincial villas and domus can be considered as stage-sets where the elite male owners and other occupants aim to perform certain roles that establish or proclaim aspects of identity. In this performance, they are supported (or contradicted if unsuccessful) by the discourse that arises in conjunction with the images that surround the inhabitants, including those on the mosaics. In the previous chapter I have discussed the aspects that the masculine *dominus* may stress when trying to establish himself as an elite male, as a heroic man, and therefore entitled to power, and the ability to wield it within his social circle. In this chapter I turn to a broader collection of mosaics that depict mythical narratives. This chapter will examine fifteen mosaics, all depicting figures or narratives associated with myths. In order to address my stated research questions on gender, I will focus on myths of an erotic nature, and those that show the interaction between masculine and feminine characters: tales of rape, of love, of the relationships between the genders. The mosaics chosen for this chapter all fulfilled the defining criterion that they show an aspect of the relationship between masculine and feminine characters, whether directly in their imagery or in their wider narrative.

Mosaics showing these themes will be used to examine questions about the ways in which images of femininity, masculinity, and possibly other forms of gender relate to the gender identities of the society that created and viewed them. How did the viewers of these mosaics explore gender and identity in these scenes of gods and goddesses, heroes and monsters? Using the model of the social house, these mosaics become part of a social setting in which gender and identity is performed for various viewers. The myths depicted can either be emulated or regarded as warnings about unsocial behaviours. The domestic space in which they are set provides the context for these images to be interpreted and understood: it provides the range of viewers who measure themselves and their gender against these mythical archetypes.

As discussed in the introduction, I draw on the work of scholars such as Wallace-Hadrill, Meyer, Kulikowski, Bowes, and Hales in suggesting that the domestic spaces of Roman Iberia functioned as social houses.²³⁷ By this I mean that the domestic spaces were used in displaying and enacting the inhabitants' identities. They were spaces where they could present aspects of their identity to guests, dependants, employees, slaves, and other family members: to define themselves as Roman, Iberian, elite, non-elite, and so forth, through their behaviours, their ability to perform as society

²³⁷ Wallace-Hadrill 1988, Meyer 1999, Kulikowski 2004, Bowes 2010, and Hales 2003.

expected, and their interaction with the physical surroundings. These domestic buildings had large rooms where these guests or dependants could be received, and therefore could literally view the ways in which the aspiring elite made manifest their status and identity as figures of power within the community.

The art and mythological scenes that are displayed in these areas are a significant part of the construction of these identities. Myth has been recognised as a medium in which cultural values and ideas can be tested, but modern scholars can miss cultural clues by ignoring the contexts of the mosaics.²³⁸ Images of myth are often used to explore questions of culture and society, in a multitude of materials and forms but to explore these questions the physical and ideological context is imperative in finding meaningful answers. Gazda stresses that domestic art must be seen as 'addressing an interlocking set of patronal concerns having to do with decorum, status, wealth, social privilege, and obligation'.²³⁹ The context can unlock these concerns, in the way that they depict and interact with the cultural values of that society. Much scholarship has been undertaken of the display of mythical themes in domestic settings, particularly from Late Republican and Early Imperial sites in Roman Italy.²⁴⁰ Cicero is often taken as a starting point for scholars because he includes in his letters discussions regarding purchasing appropriate material for his house.²⁴¹ In a letter from the middle of the first century BC, and from Roman Italy, he talks about different mythical themes being appropriate for different rooms of the house. He argues that the Muses are suitable for a library, but Bacchic themed statues are not and that as a man of peace, a statue of Mars is entirely unsuitable for his residence. This is a very direct example of linking mythical décor with a presentation of identity and must be considered in its own context, that of Republican Rome. To broaden the scope of this example, we can consider the concept of *paideia*.²⁴² This was the idea that the elite within the Empire shared a common cultural education that was intrinsically linked to Greek and Hellenistic culture. It was not 'a purely private accomplishment, but another status symbol'.²⁴³ Borg specifically stresses that it is about a knowledge of the past.²⁴⁴ Leader-Newby sees it 'as much a training in ways of behaving, in a particular mode of social interaction, as in specific knowledge'.²⁴⁵ As well as being able to demonstrate a knowledge of the history of the Greco-Roman

²³⁸ Barringer 2008.

²³⁹ Gazda 1991: 6.

²⁴⁰ See for example Bartman 1991; Clarke 2003; D'Ambra 1998; Davey & Ling 1982; Elsner 1995, 1996; Fredrick 2002; Gazda 1991, 2002, 2010; Junker 2012; Kampen & Bergmann 1996; Liversidge 1982; Newby 2016; Richlin 1992; Tuck 2015; Woodford 2002, 2011.

²⁴¹ Cicero *Epistulae ad familiares* 7.23

²⁴² Borg 2004; Jaeger 1945, 1961; Leader-Newby 2004: 124; Scott 1997; Van Hoof 2013.

²⁴³ Borg 2004: 169.

²⁴⁴ Borg 2004: 1.

²⁴⁵ Leader-Newby 2004: 124.

world, and thus that they shared its values, the individual's response to these cultural flags contributed to their claim to be a member of the elite. It demonstrated that they understood what was appropriate or at the very least what these images and forms meant or represented. It was a form of cultural currency because it specifically functioned as an asset for that person and their social identity, even a 'prerequisite for the acquisition of any public office'.²⁴⁶ It is apparent across the Roman Empire in the artefacts and the physical spaces, and mosaics are only one aspect of this visualisation of a cultural past. It constituted an important aspect of elite identity, especially for the elite male. One of the behaviours that the inhabitant of the social house might perform would be to demonstrate his *paideia* by discussing the images that decorate the mosaics in his grand reception room.²⁴⁷ He would do so in order to demonstrate that he had been educated in the right manner and that he could use these tools correctly: 'cultural attainments – or at least a professed appreciation of them – won prestige for the aristocrat'.²⁴⁸ Borg, Salzman, and Mathisen all stress the extrinsic value of this shared educational culture.²⁴⁹ This cultural currency, or demonstration of the accumulation of social knowledge, can be seen in the Iberian provinces, in examples such as this head of Alexander the Great, which was found in the town of Italica (Figure 47).



Figure 47: Head of Alexander the Great, Italica, Parian marble, dated to the Hadrianic period, approx. 117 – 138 AD, Archaeological Museum in Seville (photo by the author)

²⁴⁶ Borg 2004: 169.

²⁴⁷ Elsner 1995.

²⁴⁸ Salzman 2000: 353.

²⁴⁹ Borg 2004; Salzman 2000; Mathisen 2003.

It demonstrates a clear link with this Greco-Roman world, which will be echoed in the mosaics discussed in this thesis. This link can be seen in the fact that this is an item of value, because the material which it is made from is valuable at the very least. It is Parian marble, a very fine-grained type from the Greek island of Paros. Also, it demonstrates recognisable characteristics that define this individual type, demonstrating aspirations to a classical style. Alexander's eyes are turned upwards to heavens, a sign of his divine nature, there is a leonine quality to his hair, and a liquidity to his gaze, all traits described by Plutarch.²⁵⁰ This meant it would be recognisable as Alexander the Great in other Greco-Roman contexts; and these recognisable features link it to a history and development of this iconography across the Empire, as used by emperors and other heroes or prominent figures, as well as Alexander himself. This head would be recognisable across the Roman world. Those who display it or discuss it (the context is unknown) are telling other members of this society that they understand who Alexander the Great is, his cultural importance within the wider society, and their ability to incorporate such culture into their own social practices, and a shared understanding of those social practices, and thereby make a claim to social superiority. Not only is it a demonstration of the cultural relevancy of the Hellenistic world in provincial Roman Iberia but is clearly being established as an ideal masculine prototype. This is a man to be admired.²⁵¹

3.1 SEXUALITY

If we are to consider masculine and feminine identities in this chapter, and the way they interact, another aspect that must be considered is the Roman (and Iberian?) idea of sexuality. A projection of modern values sees a binary system of heterosexual and homosexual. However, this research as a whole, and this chapter in particular will draw more upon the idea of penetration in order to define ideas about sexuality, and the relationships between the genders that are being depicted in these mythical narratives. Alston suggests that to be male is to wield power and penetrate others.²⁵² The physical act of being able to assert power through an act of penetration on another's body, helps define the penetrating actor as male, and those being penetrated as non-male. Walters attributes status to 'being able to defend the boundaries of [the] body from invasive assaults of all kind'.²⁵³ Status elides with masculine identity, especially when protecting the body. If a man is penetrated, he is *pati muliebria* or 'having a woman's experience'; an experience directly conflated with a loss of masculinity.²⁵⁴ Parker's structuralist approach to these ideas about penetration is expressed in the

²⁵⁰ Plutarch *Alexander* 2.2.3. (*Greek Lives*, trans. Waterfield.).

²⁵¹ Cohen 2010.

²⁵² Alston 1998.

²⁵³ Walters 1997: 30.

²⁵⁴ Walters 1997.

form of a grid, based on ideas of activity and passivity.²⁵⁵ He argues that there was ‘one normative action’ for the Romans: the ‘penetration of a bodily orifice by a penis’.²⁵⁶ The active participant is the penetrator and this is aligned with the category of masculinity. He defines the grid along active and passive lines and makes it contingent upon the orifice that is being penetrated.²⁵⁷ The designations are based upon the nouns used to describe these actions or the actors taking part (Table 1).

Table 1: Grid showing sexual categories, based on Parker 1997.

	Active	Passive
Man	Normal – <i>vir</i>	Abnormal – <i>cinedus</i> or <i>pathicus</i>
Woman	Abnormal – <i>virago</i> or <i>tribas</i>	Normal - <i>femina</i>

Parker explains that the *vir*, the normal active male can perform three possible sexual actions – to penetrate the vagina, the anus, or the mouth. The opposite of the *vir* is the *femina*. She is the normal passive female and can be penetrated in all three orifices. Parker notes that he finds no separate Latin noun for penetrating a woman – it is *futurere* regardless – and a woman is ‘one who is fucked in the vagina’.²⁵⁸ The other categories in the grid represent abnormalities. The man who is passive and allows himself to be penetrated loses his masculine status; whereas the woman who attempts to usurp masculine power by becoming the penetrator is an even more fearful and despised object. These are ideals though, and the reality is likely to be much more complex and nuanced. However, they represent ideas which can be explored in the images in this thesis. In regard to Roman sexuality, gender is not about with whom you perform sexual relations, but what role you take on.

3.2 MYTHS ON MOSAICS

Scenes of myth are some of the most popular images in the Roman world. They decorate every type of artefact and form a significant part of our visual evidence of the classical past. Barringer states, ‘Myths express and reveal cultural values: they offer messages...[for] the...viewer...[to] decipher or decode’.²⁵⁹ They form a safe space in which to explore ideas about correct gender behaviours, violence and desire that may be difficult to discuss socially or that may be contested.²⁶⁰ The

²⁵⁵ Parker 1997.

²⁵⁶ Parker 1997: 48.

²⁵⁷ Parker 1997: 49.

²⁵⁸ Parker 1997: 49.

²⁵⁹ Barringer 2008: 2.

²⁶⁰ Joyce 2008: 16.

navigation of the controversial issues the images display may be another chance to demonstrate one's elite status and *paideia* by being able to relate these stories to the social values that are prevalent within current society. For example, the story of Ganymede, which appears on several mosaics in Iberia, could be used to explore ideas about sexual relations with the same sex, and when such relationships are appropriate, and in what form. Elsner also suggests that the practice of demonstrating *paideia* is a means of controlling the images; by being able to explain the narrative or the values that underlie the image, the owner, viewer or patron can demonstrate his mastery over these ideas, and thus society.²⁶¹ The images are a means for society, through the viewer, to test what happens when the rules that define social roles are broken or changed. When viewing these images in domestic space, the inhabitants may explore how they themselves relate to or even contradict the behaviours that are depicted. They can contrast the mythical experience with a lived reality.

It is important to consider the depicted myths within this lived reality and their cultural context.²⁶² Previous work on images of myth in the provinces has often focused on how they differ from the canonical stories or are poor provincial copies or muddled interpretations.²⁶³ But by doing this, the intentions and understanding of the original viewers are lost. In order to challenge this type of reading, this chapter will consider these images, and therefore the myths themselves, within their own specific cultural context of the province. This will thereby lessen this focus on whether the story or image is correct and instead open up the possibility of viewing each image as a particular provincial version. Each form of a myth, be it image or text, exists as a discrete form in its own right but is connected in a web of allusions to the other forms of the story. For some viewers, this may not connect to a literary form at all. Whereas the elite *dominus* may utilise his classical education and refer back to a textual source, he may also make a link to a recent pantomime performance, or an oral culture of story-telling.²⁶⁴ The Noheda mosaic which was discussed in the previous chapter may be a direct example of this. As well as the circus panels that were covered, additional panels seem to show pantomime performance specifically.²⁶⁵ Dunbabin sees the images on this mosaic as drawing from pantomime and performance, and being part of a wider visual culture that displayed 'a pattern of visualising myth as a series of striking images' and therefore blurring the lines between the two

²⁶¹ Elsner 1995: 22. Though he also stresses that this control might be an illusion – nevertheless the illusion gives us a sense of how the viewer wishes to present himself.

²⁶² Barringer 2008: 2.

²⁶³ See for example Kondoleon discussing the Villa of Maternus metamorphoses mosaic in Kondoleon 1995. Hales & Hodos 2010; Revell 2016; Scott & Webster 2003;

²⁶⁴ See Heath 2011 for a discussion of the transmission of alternative narratives; Lada-Richards 2004 on the connections between pantomime and art; Dunbabin 2016.

²⁶⁵ Dunbabin 2016 – inscription refers to mime of the Jealous Bridegroom.

forms.²⁶⁶ Importantly, these sources would also be open to those without claims to *paideia*, to the women of the household, and to the slaves for example. It may be that these mosaics display choices that were made to reflect a specific discourse that exists in this context, not simply a lack of knowledge or skill. Those who viewed the myths on the mosaics would have drawn from the images and the stories, those aspects that they knew and held to be important. Modern scholars insist on identifying each image as specific and individual; the ancient viewer might instead have viewed the mosaics, the wall paintings, and the performances together as a collective, generic visual narrative that plays off a theme or particular set of values.²⁶⁷ The images therefore are the key to exploring or accessing these values.

Again, we return to the importance of context and consider these images as part of a physical experience when the viewer moved through the domestic landscape. Newby has explored this problem with her article on the artwork in a Roman villa.²⁶⁸ She presents the villa as ‘a place of the imagination’ where the sculptures that are placed within the grounds of the villa blur the visitor’s experience into a realm between reality and fantasy.²⁶⁹ The viewer is both a voyeur, and with some of the themes, a potential victim, creating a heightened experience.²⁷⁰ Can we see a similar effect with the mosaics? Newby suggests that ‘flatness’ in paintings adds a layer of safety for viewers because it allows them to view these mythical scenes at a distance, and assert their fictionality against the reality of their lived, three-dimensional world.²⁷¹ Mosaics could straddle this divide: they are flat and two-dimensional but they do intrude more into the physical space of the viewer because they quite literally provide the physical support for the viewer to walk upon them. The viewer has to stand on – and hence in those mythical landscapes – and often, in order to see the whole picture, to move around. This may bring him face-to-face (or rather foot-to-face) with the vengeful goddess or the beautiful victim. The creation of a narrative, and the broader developmental nature of narratives in particular, invites this boundary-crossing viewing, and enhance the role of voyeur for the viewer.

These mosaics need to be considered in the context of the wider domestic landscape and the ways in which their physical presence may interact with the surroundings, such as pastoral myths in the landscape of the villa estate. It may be, as Newby says in another article, that these scenes represented ‘the desire of the aristocracy to escape from the duties of everyday life into a fantasy

²⁶⁶ Dunbabin 2016: 113.

²⁶⁷ c.f the way we name each individual piece, following modern artistic convention. Newby 2016: 87ff, discussion on specificity or generic nature of Barberini Faun and Marsyas

²⁶⁸ Newby 2012.

²⁶⁹ Newby 2012: 350.

²⁷⁰ Newby 2012: 350.

²⁷¹ Newby 2012: 382.

world of mythical play-acting and grandiosity'.²⁷² A plethora of scenes could be used to encourage this escapism by making different areas of the domestic landscape refer to different aspects of myth. At particular times, the use of myth within the room may evoke a particular identity, dissolving the boundaries between the mythical space and the physical. Equally, the repetition of various themes could focus the viewers' minds on particular aspects of the mythological world: stories of love and desire could help induce an atmosphere of conviviality to dining spaces for example.²⁷³

Attempting to access the possible responses of all viewers, rather than just the elite male and his knowledge and *paideia* is also important because this research aims to explore the intersection of ideas of gender with these decorative schemes. One of the most prevalent themes of the myths that are depicted on mosaics, wall paintings, and artefacts is the relationship between the genders. The ability of myth to explore topics that would normally be taboo in society, or at least push the boundaries of what is acceptable, makes it a ripe area for ideas about gender, and the relationships between gender behaviours and identity. Muth describes it as an 'ideal stage which altered lived reality', an arena in which to test out these conceptions.²⁷⁴ A consideration of mythical images purely from the point of *paideia* and elite culture can have a tendency to ignore the gender aspect: to consider only the default male. However, because, as Revell has argued, gender intersects with other aspects of identity including status, it can therefore inform our wider understanding of elite society.²⁷⁵ By exploring the manifestations of gender in the images of myth, this chapter aims to gain understanding of its role as a form of identity.

There are a number of mosaics discussed in this chapter for which the domestic context has not been recorded. However, they are included because of their content which connects them to prevalent themes that occur in mosaics that do have traceable domestic contexts. In particular, this chapter will consider the example of the Villa of Maternus. This site, which is now an archaeological park at Carranque in the centre of the peninsula, will be used in this chapter as an example of a fourth century AD rural elite residence. It has several figurative mosaics, covering Homeric subjects, hunting scenes, myths of metamorphoses, and a head of Oceanus.²⁷⁶ We can therefore use it as an example of a domestic space with multiple mythical narratives throughout the building. How do the viewers understand these images as a whole collection? Should they understand them together or apart? With this site, the experience of the mythical narrative as a whole can be explored.

²⁷² Newby 2011: 272.

²⁷³ Bergmann emphasise the effect of repeated grand themes (1994: 246).

²⁷⁴ Muth 1998: 348.

²⁷⁵ Revell 2016.

²⁷⁶ A third mosaic from this site will be discussed in the next chapter.

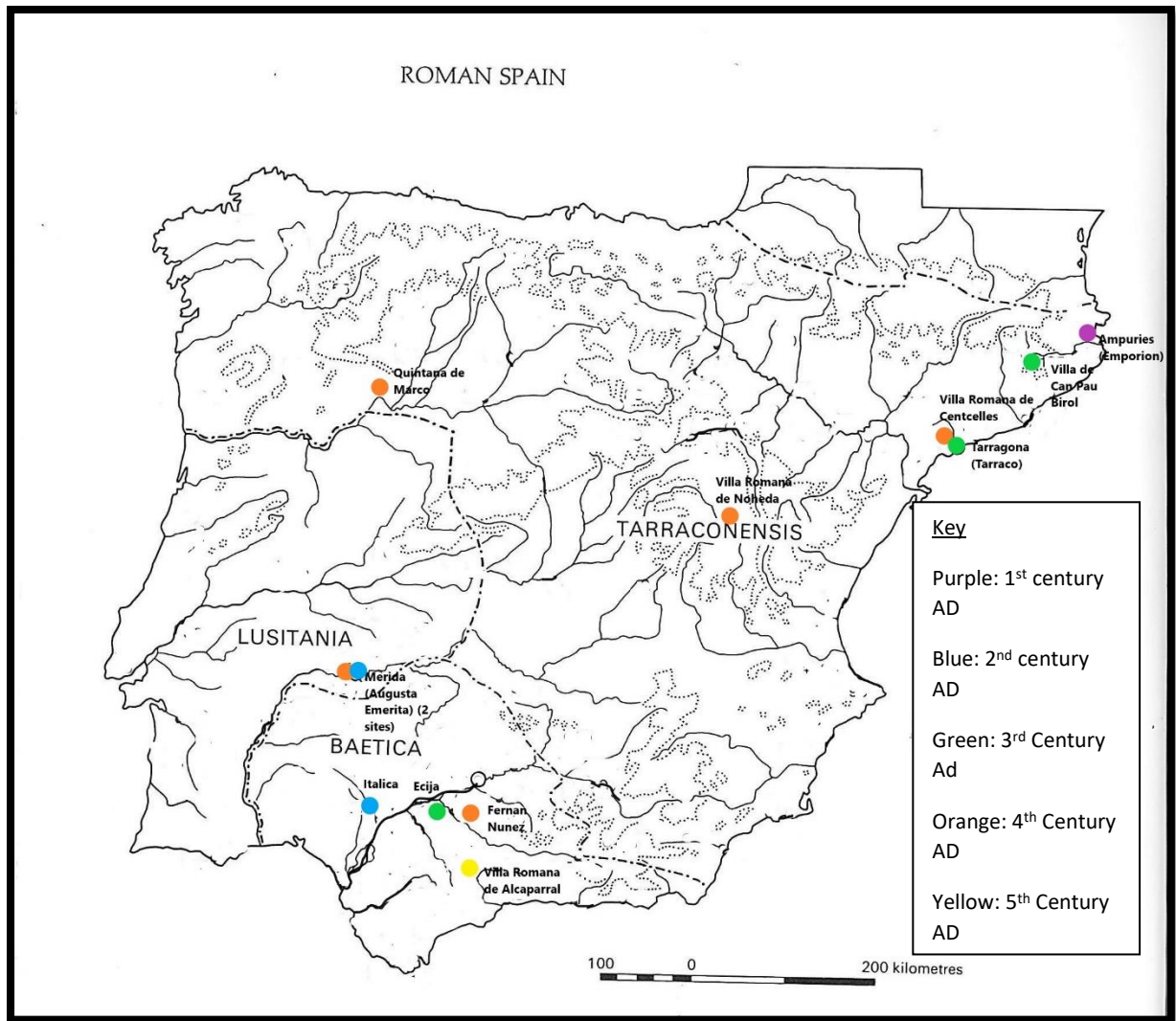


Figure 48: Map showing sites in the text, adapted from Keay 1988 by the author

3.3 THE DUTIFUL WOMAN

The architectural layout of the Villa of Maternus is focused around a garden courtyard. Leading off from this central area, there are a number of larger rooms which could plausibly have functioned as reception rooms, due to their size, the quality of the surviving decoration, and their alignment upon the axis of the house. Other mosaic subjects include Oceanus, hunting, and the myths of metamorphoses, none of which are unique and can be found in iconography across the Empire.

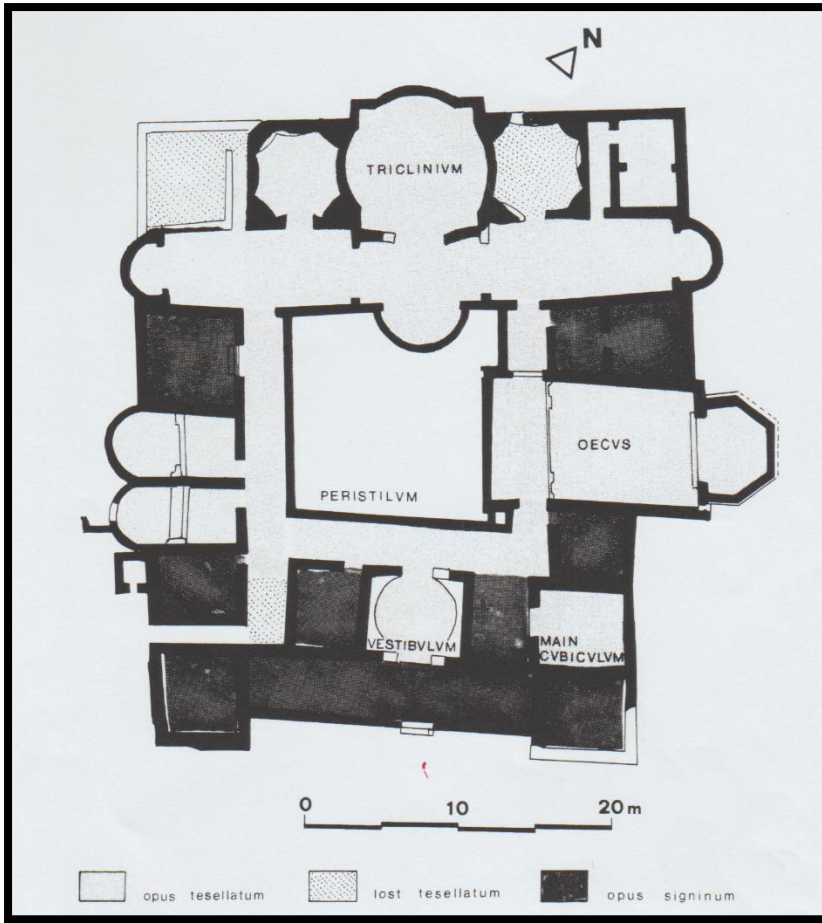


Figure 49: Plan of the Villa of Maternus (Fernandez Galiano 1995, fig 3. p 201)

The room designated the triclinium on the plan is one of the largest in the house and it is reasonable to conclude that it would function as an important reception room within the villa (Figure 49). This is supported by the fact that along with only three other rooms, it is decorated with a figurative mosaic. A second figurative mosaic depicting the head of Oceanus adorns a fountain in the apse opposite, on the same axial alignment, connecting the two rooms and enhancing the grandeur of this space.²⁷⁷

The mosaic on the floor of the *triclinium* depicts Odysseus returning the slave girl Briseis to Achilles (Figure 50). It is orientated towards the entrance of the room and covers an area of approximately 2 square metres.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ Fernández-Galiano 1995.

²⁷⁸ Dunbabin 1999: 155.



Figure 50: Briseis being returned to Achilles, Villa of Maternus, Carranque (photo by the author)

The vivid colours of the border pick up the figurative forms in the mosaic to draw the visitor's eye towards this central panel. There has been some damage to this piece, but the three figures can be discerned. To the left is a female figure dressed in blue, with a veil loosely wrapped across her head. Behind her, moving her forward, is a male figure who has been almost completely lost due to the damage. He appears to be presenting her to the third figure, a male leaning against his shield. The striking feature here is the contrast of the heavily draped woman against the masculine bodies of those around her.²⁷⁹

This is a display of erudite knowledge of Homeric epic, an opportunity for a demonstration of *paideia*, and is presented directly to visitors as they enter the room. The owner presumably wants to make clear that he is a man of education, and of tradition: he may explain to his guests that this is a story from the *Iliad*.²⁸⁰ They may recognise it from other pieces of visual culture or from performances they have seen in the theatre or in other elite homes. This recognisable visual culture is a sign to the guests that the owner aspires to be part of a particular cultural milieu. An equally well-educated guest may identify and thereby judge the owner's identity in relation to his understanding of the visual culture. The guest also has to reconcile his own relationship to this educated world. The narrative chosen from the Homeric epic is one which specifically deals with male control and ownership. It is a narrative about the exchange of property. The slave girl, as war

²⁷⁹ Odysseus does appear to be dressed but the direct contrast is between Briseis and Achilles.

²⁸⁰ Homer *Iliad* 1.

booty, is transferred between two men, without agency of her own through her multiple statuses as woman, slave, and defeated enemy. In the *Iliad*, she is ‘a prize’, ‘booty’, ‘reward’ as Agamemnon and Achilles fight over her; as in this image, she has no volition of her own but is always being led somewhere: ‘even now the heralds went away from my shelter leading Briseis’ daughter, whom the sons of the Achaians gave me’.²⁸¹ In Roman society the woman is frequently the transacted object, both as a slave, and as a bride, if we consider practices of elite marriage where women are bought for their political connections and their financial advantages.



Figure 51: Detail of Briseis and Achilles from the Seven Sages mosaic (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photo by the author)

Both these aspects are emphasised in a second mosaic depicting the same theme from Merida dated to the fourth century AD.²⁸² It is part of a larger mosaic, with this scene forming only a small section at the bottom. The Briseis scene uses exactly the same visual cues as the Maternus one. It is a linear composition, of four figures (Figure 51). From left to right, we have a heroic nude male, with his helmet and spear, his bent leg posed and resting on a box; then two further naked men, possibly a herald and Odysseus. Finally, at the far right is Briseis, again distinguished by her swathes of clothing from head to toe. The interpretation of the identity of the men varies: the museum in which it is displayed has labelled them Agamemnon and two heralds. Blázquez et al on the other hand, sees them as Agamemnon, Achilles and Odysseus.²⁸³ Regardless of the exact designation of the male figures, the clothed woman is clearly distinguished from the masculine, muscly, active bodies of the

²⁸¹ ‘a prize’ – Homer *Iliad* 1.164 (and multiple other occasions); booty – Homer *Iliad* 1.166; reward – Homer *Iliad* 1.167; ‘even now...gave me’ – Homer *Iliad* 1.390 – 392.

²⁸² Bermejo Tirado 1999.

²⁸³ Blázquez et al 1993: 279.

men. It is not just the visual aspect that differentiates them but the experience of the weight of the cloth compared to the freedom of the nude and nearly-nude men. We know, from the experiences of our bodies, that to run, jump, play, and generally be active, an outfit that binds and encompasses our limbs is so limiting. Both of these images confine Briseis within this cloth bandage, limiting her physical presence and the very space she takes up. She is pulled tightly into herself, in contrast to the limbs of the men, which are splayed across the image, as with the Maternus mosaic. She cannot move her arms to perform the gestures that are essential for the performance of rhetoric, her costume physically restricting her from entering into the debate. The confidence of the men and the spaces between their arms emphasises their freedom. Their physical presence makes her less significant, less embodied within the image.



Figure 52: Seven Sages mosaic with Briseis scene at the bottom (l), detail of two Sages, (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (photos by the author)

The upper part of this mosaic depicts the Seven Sages of Greece (Figure 52). These seven eminent men are clothed, and each is carefully labelled in Greek. This clearly brings home the erudite nature of this scene and the desire by the patron to display *paideia* in his home. The men are clothed here because they represent a different type of masculinity: the intellectual or philosopher rather than the manly hero.²⁸⁴ They demonstrate that one of the correct forms of behaviour for the men in this

²⁸⁴ Pollitt 1986 on types.

room is to discuss and interpret the literary and mythological traditions to demonstrate *paideia*, and therefore this “costume” is another sign of membership of the imperial elite.

There are two different claims to manhood in these mosaics. Firstly, the claim to intellectual capacity represented by the sages, and secondly, the physicality of the Homeric heroes. These presentations of masculinity both relegate women from this discourse, both as actors in the world of men, and as critical viewers of the world. They highlight the only parts of myth women are allowed to access, whether as viewers or as participants. A woman cannot be a figure of action or of intellectualism. She is not entirely welcome in the masculine intellectual realm, featuring in the discourse only as an object of desire to be traded between the heroes. When the elite male owner is explaining this image to his guests, the insignificance of the female figure, in terms of space, agency and importance, is emphasised. The women who are in the room can understand their place within both the mythical world on the mosaic and the reality of the domestic space, from this imbalance. Despite any practical status, they are consistently undermined by the popularity of these images.

These Homeric stories were part of the cultural currency of the provincial elite in Iberia, and the iconographic means by which they communicated particular values.²⁸⁵ A third mosaic also depicting a Homeric narrative presents a similar iconography in an *emblema* (dating to approximately the first century AD) from the trading port of Emporion, on the north-east coast of modern Spain (Figure 53).

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²⁸⁵ Bermejo Tirado 2007.

²⁸⁶ This mosaic is earlier than the fourth century Maternus and the Merida mosaics but the consistencies that I highlight between the two suggest a continuity that allows me to compare them as a group.



Figure 53: *Sacrifice of Iphigenia, Emporion* (Dunbabin 1999, page 146, Figure 150)

The *emblema* would have been fitted as a central feature into a much bigger mosaic floor. Dunbabin believes the panel itself was imported from Italy.²⁸⁷ She also suggests that it is based originally on a Hellenistic painting, giving us another direct link between the visual culture of Iberia and the Hellenistic world. However, there is no direct evidence for this, and we must remember that it was viewed in the context of the Iberian provinces and was the result of decisions made by the patron and possibly the mosaicist who may have only had second-hand knowledge of Hellenistic painting.²⁸⁸ As discussed in the introduction, we must remember that this is a different medium, and thus a different viewing experience. The similarities with the lines from the *Iliad* quoted above remind us that there would have been multiple sources for these images. If it was imported from Italy, then like the prominent position of the Briseis mosaic within the Villa of Maternus, the expense involved in transporting it from another province (rather than simply being constructed by local craftsman, which would have presumably been a cheaper option) points to the value that these pieces were perceived to hold, and therefore the meaning in which the elite invested in them. Even without that distinction, it stands out as a well-made piece that represents significant investment on the part of the patron, and it is clear that these were important mosaics that contributed to the ways in which the elite owners presented themselves.

²⁸⁷ Dunbabin 1999: 145.

²⁸⁸ By automatically assigning an item that is judged to be more aesthetically competent to workmanship that is closer to the perceived centre, we devalue provincial choices and ignore the impetus of provincial viewers. It may be that this is from Italy: however, its importance in this thesis derives from its lived context in the province.

The *emblema* from Emporion is rather crowded, and where there are no people, the artist has filled the space with trees or rocks, and a construction of draperies which could possibly indicate a stage set. Dunbabin suggests that this is an alteration from the original painting, and therefore it is plausibly an adaptation to make this scene more comprehensible to the provincial audience, because they would have encountered myth in performance settings.²⁸⁹ Inscriptions from Iberia indicate that *ludi scaenici* were performed.²⁹⁰ We return to the question of context. There was an amphitheatre at Emporion from the early Imperial period and therefore this setting would have been a normal part of the provincial visual landscape.²⁹¹ The construction of this scene (and by implication the others in this chapter) as theatrical is clearly a viable context for the transmission of these images.²⁹² These myths rely on ideas of performance for certain viewers: Dunbabin describes it as a visual pattern of repeated poses.²⁹³ This works very well with our idea of gender identity as a performance. The repeated iconographies of performance translate into patterns of gender behaviour very easily for the viewers, especially in these mythic narratives. The myths become visualised, but also physical, enacted, and embodied.

The image from Emporion focuses on a man leading a heavily veiled female whose garment he grasps tightly in his left hand. Other figures crowd around them, mostly of similarly garbed men; there is a soldier in the background and a small naked slave at the front. The procession is moving towards a rocky outcrop in the foreground with various items lying against it including an animal's skull. The scene is believed to be that of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the female figure being Iphigenia, and the leading male possibly being Odysseus or Agamemnon. Again, the identification of the male figures is not certain, and possibly not pertinent.²⁹⁴ We only need to recognise that they are figures of authority, especially in relation to Iphigenia.

Again, Iphigenia is highlighted in this scene because she is the only woman we can see, and her white cloak contrasts with the tanned and muscular bodies of the men beside her. There is menace in this situation, which is made clear to the viewer through the way Odysseus holds her. Wrapping his hand round the cloth of her robe both emphasises his power, and her powerlessness. It dehumanises her in a way because he does not touch her flesh. This could also be considered correct

²⁸⁹ Dunbabin 1999: 145.

²⁹⁰ See Ceballos Hornero & Ceballos Hornero 2003 for discussion of various inscriptions relating to games in Hispania. The key example is the Lex Urso, *CIL* II2 5 1022 (<https://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD031535> [accessed 25/02/2019]).

²⁹¹ Welch 2007: 96.

²⁹² As discussed in the previous chapter.

²⁹³ Dunbabin 2016: 113.

²⁹⁴ The main source for this story being Euripides *Iphigenia at Aulis*; Ovid also refers to the story *Metamorphoses*. 12.8ff.

behaviour: as the value in her status at this point rests in her virginity, contact with an unrelated man is dangerous. The privileging of her virgin state over her personhood reinforces that dehumanised position. Both Iphigenia and Briseis stand out as figures of cloth not flesh; an iconographical clue to their role within the images. This could tie in with the theories posited by Llewellyn-Jones that veiled and covered women are sexually inviolate in images.²⁹⁵ Again, the woman is bounded by her clothing, her physical body not being allowed to intrude into the masculine world of the public procession. In this visual version of the narrative there will be a happy ending: at the top left, Artemis holds a stag which will replace the girl as a sacrifice and thereby save her life. She will become a priestess of Artemis and maintain this status of inviolability.²⁹⁶ Regardless of this potential ending, the composition of the image, the way Iphigenia is separated and presented to the viewer (and the altar) by Odysseus, reinforces a construction of passive femininity. The place of the woman is again as a part of a transaction. All these mosaics reward the lack of agency in these female characters with happy endings. In these specific stories, that means a return to Achilles, who is the ultimate hero and therefore a desirable partner and exemplified as such, and a reprieve from premature death.

As we have established, these mosaics can be considered valuable pieces, their eminence demonstrated by their position in the house (demonstrated by the example of the Villa of Maternus and if we infer similar contexts for the other mosaics), and the sheer expense and importance shown to them as physical objects. Therefore, there is surely reason to ascribe an importance to the underlying values and social conventions that are being depicted as well as any cultural value deriving from *paideia*. These mosaics are interesting moments of narrative from the Homeric epics that therefore contribute to the impression of the *paideia* of the owner. On a purely visual level however, they speak to a wider range of viewers regardless of education, because they use visual cues, partly stemming from theatrical performances, to enter into a discourse of gender. In these mosaics, the visual cues include the distinction between the men and the women, in their clothing and their bodies. It includes the poses and actions that are being performed, and the distinct lack of agency displayed by the women. They are objects here, being used to achieve something for their male relatives or guardians. The elite male viewer can read these images as an ideal to strive for: a visual representation of the hierarchy he must achieve and control as part of his elite male status. When there are clients in the *triclinium*, he must be able to show that same control over those less

²⁹⁵ Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 122. However, those with knowledge of the myth would understand that this state is temporary – possibly this is about being veiled and covered in the appropriate context, only unveiled by the husband for example, especially in comparison to the women on the mosaics discussed later in this chapter.

²⁹⁶ Ovid refers to this version: *Metamorphoses*. 12.30-8.

powerful than him, to encourage the other viewers to see him as a contemporary Odysseus or Achilles who has the status to rule those around him.

However, if we also consider the discourse with which a female viewer may engage, we may think about the fact that they are being shown that value is placed on duty. When a father entertains his clients and peers in the *triclinium* at the Villa of Maternus, the message of the dutiful female is writ large below all their feet. His pride in it, his demonstration of his *paideia*, demonstrates to her that this is what is valued. The way she can bring value to her father or husband is to act in this way, to replicate the honoured women on these images. Hallett stresses that acting as the ideal daughter, wife or mother is a way in which a woman can achieve prestige.²⁹⁷ Even without the knowledge of the story, she can see that the woman is dressed modestly, and that the heroic male to whom she is being passed is a man of importance.

This works for the slave viewer as well because the power disparity shines out of the visual narrative regardless of previous knowledge. Briseis is a slave, even though this aspect is not necessarily stressed in this image.²⁹⁸ It is potentially more apparent in the Iphigenia panel, where the slave boy is marked as a different body by his size. The differences shown in the stature of each body could indicate the slave boy's youth rather than status, though Iphigenia is similarly supposed to be young in the myth, so it is more likely that slave status is being indicated here, consistent with his non-heroic, inactive nudity. Those less than heroic male viewers who cannot be Odysseus or Achilles also run the risk of suffering this fate of becoming a transacted object. These visual cues are built into the structure of the domestic space. They encourage their viewers to enact and embody these same roles in that space: for the daughter (or wife or dependant or slave) to appear modestly and be dutiful to her father's (or husband's or master's) wishes.

Finally, a fourth mosaic depicts a different Homeric scene. There are similar iconographic conventions in this image and it links both to the mosaics that have been discussed above and the ones that will be discussed in the next sections. The Judgement of Paris is a mosaic from the Villa del Alcaparral, near the town of Casariche in southern Spain, excavated in 1985. It came from the atrium or court-yard hall of the villa and is dated to the early fifth century (Figure 54).²⁹⁹ The mosaic measured 3.65m by 3.20m.

²⁹⁷ Hallett 1984.

²⁹⁸ Homer *Iliad* 1.184: 'I shall take the fair-cheeked Briseis, your prize'; 19.290 – 300.

²⁹⁹ Blázquez, López, Neira, & San Nicolás 1993: 279.

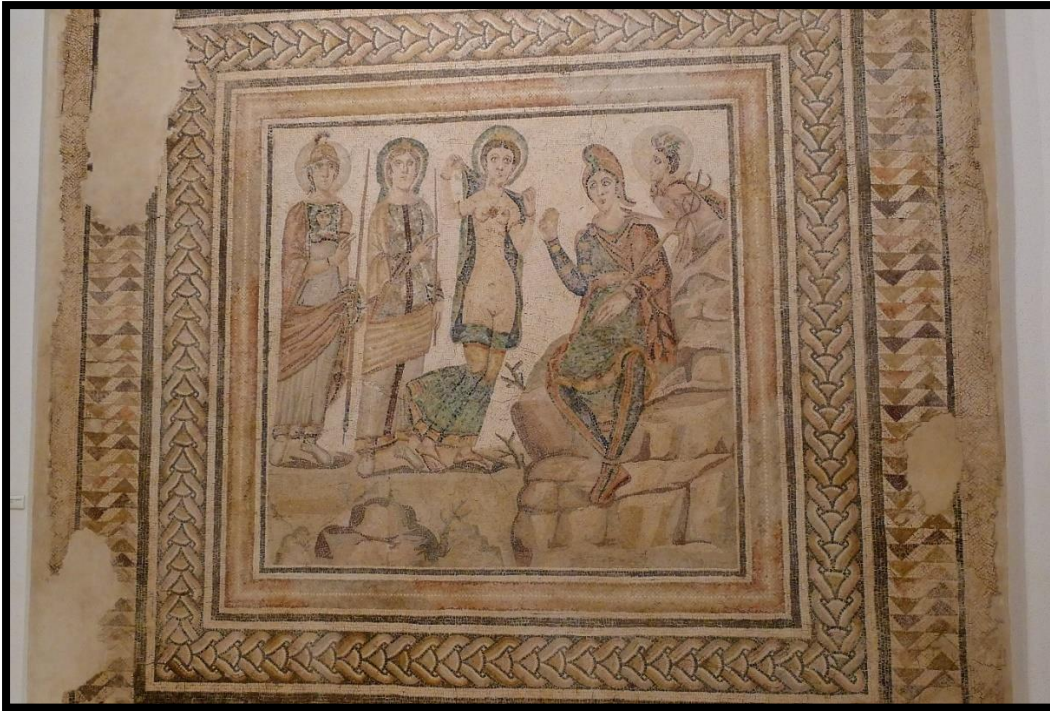


Figure 54: Judgement of Paris, Archaeology Museum of Seville (photo by the author)

The study of this mosaic has mainly focused on the story itself and the fact this design is unique in Spain: there are no other mosaic depictions of this scene. However, this discussion will focus on the bodies that are depicted. From left to right, across the image, we have Minerva, Juno, Venus, Paris, and Mercury. The three women are standing, presenting themselves to the sitting Paris, who is placed slightly further forward in the composition and is being advised by Mercury who is leaning over his shoulder in the far corner. All the figures are angled out towards the viewers, and the composition and action of the image itself draws our eyes to the figure of Venus in the centre. It does this in part because she is the only one moving as she takes off her cloak. This provides another distinction to identify her from the other female figures because she is semi-nude.

Minerva and Juno are both fully dressed, in an appropriate manner for the woman of the time. They are less shrouded than the Briseis and Iphigenia mosaics and are richly dressed. The shimmering material of Juno's dress in particular emphasises her regal nature. Athena wears her helmet and *aegis* but more as symbols of her nature rather than as active weapons, in comparison with Achilles. The contrast here is not with the heroic male, but with another female. Instead of a demure parcel, to be handed across to her master, Venus is unwrapping herself. This is instant gratification for the viewer. Even without knowing that she is a goddess of love, sex, and desire we can see that she is undressed in public, for all to see. This is something a respectable woman would never normally do, and therefore Venus must be available for sexual pleasure. She is revealing her body in a way that by human standards should consign her to the realm of sexual object. All women have the capacity to

become accessible sexual objects, if not guarded carefully. The female viewer has a choice: to be modest and covered, or to be the centre of attention and sexually available. However, Venus can rise above this because she is a divine figure. The options for a mortal woman are more complex. There are particular circumstances where the respectable matron can wear the naked body of the goddess Venus, specifically in funerary statues.³⁰⁰ Discussions range on why it is appropriate in that context, but it could be that the commemorators want to stress the fertility and womanliness of the person depicted.³⁰¹ Outside of this context, we return to the negative connotations of this costume.

In certain contexts, this image could be a celebration of the divinity of the goddess. As stressed previously, these images function with multiple readings depending on the context of the viewing and the viewer. In terms of our focus on questions of gender behaviours, this image must be considered alongside the other images of naked women. Hallett and Bonfante both argue that various types of nudity can be used in Roman art, as was discussed in Chapter 2 regarding male bodies.³⁰² The iconography allows the viewer to use this image to construct arguments about the sexual proclivities of women. Knowledge of the story would immediately tell the viewer that this is an erotic composition, and Venus's nudity is related to sexuality and desire. Those without knowledge of the story can use the visual differences previously mentioned to make a similar distinction. The composition emphasises this structure as well. Both Minerva and Juno are actually pointing at Venus, marking her out. On the other side of the image Paris too raises his arm towards her, whilst Mercury is facing in the same direction. This symmetry draws the eye to her nudity and her difference. The position of Paris also identifies them as a pair within this grouping. Their eyes seem to meet and they lean towards each other.

However, Paris is also differentiated from the women. The difference is not as strong as in the mosaics above and where the semi-nude heroic male bodies radiate power but there is an element of status differentiation in his depiction. Firstly, as stated, he is sitting rather than standing, and placed at the forefront of the image, making him seem larger than the female figures. His pose is confident and assured, and in many ways similar to a divine ruler on a throne. He is holding his *pedum* or shepherd's crook more as a staff of power than as a rustic tool. Similarly, the golden apple is his sphere, being bestowed graciously as if he has the power, rather than their relative positions of

³⁰⁰ Matheson 1996

³⁰¹ D'Ambra 2000: 101-114 summarises this debate.

³⁰² Hallett 2005. See also Bonfante 1989.

shepherd to a goddess. This is especially apparent when compared to another mosaic on this theme, such as the Judgement of Paris from Antioch, for example (Figure 55).



Figure 55: Judgement of Paris, Antioch (<http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/mosaic-judgment-paris> [accessed 22/03/17])

Here the composition places Paris at the bottom of the image with his animals, emphasising his pastoral role, and forcing the viewer's gaze diagonally up to the right to the (clothed) goddesses who are seated in splendour. The Casariche mosaic is a very different composition, so that even if the viewer is aware of the Homeric narrative, the visual clues that make up this image tell a different story that must have been pertinent to these viewers. Here the man is very much the position of power, and he is making his choice between two types of mythical women: the clothed and the naked. The compositional choice is at odds with the overall narrative, as those with knowledge of Homer would know that Paris loses in the end. This may be the final clue for the viewer looking at this image. Venus may be temporarily portrayed in a costume of sexual availability but for mortal men to attempt to use her in that way would be fatal. The viewer can enjoy the image, and even play with the idea of imagining himself in that position, but he cannot ignore the question of status in his desire. Does this image remind the viewer that hierarchies exist for a reason? Divinity trumps mortality, and the male viewer must be careful about desiring those who are too far above him in social terms as well? It is a reminder of the intersection of gender and social identities.

3.4 MYTHIC COUPLES

The different female roles or identities implied by their clothed and naked states are repeated throughout mythological iconography. The concept underlines that women can be clothed, dutiful objects, or unclothed, sexual ones, both of which are the property of men. Under male jurisdiction women may switch between the two depending on the appropriate context: a woman is always naked under her clothes, and thus always potentially sexually available to men.³⁰³ Two mosaics of mythical pairings can demonstrate this ideal masculine response to feminine beauty, and the contrasts between the iconographic models. Perseus and Andromeda appear in a panel from a mosaic from Tarragona (Figure 56).

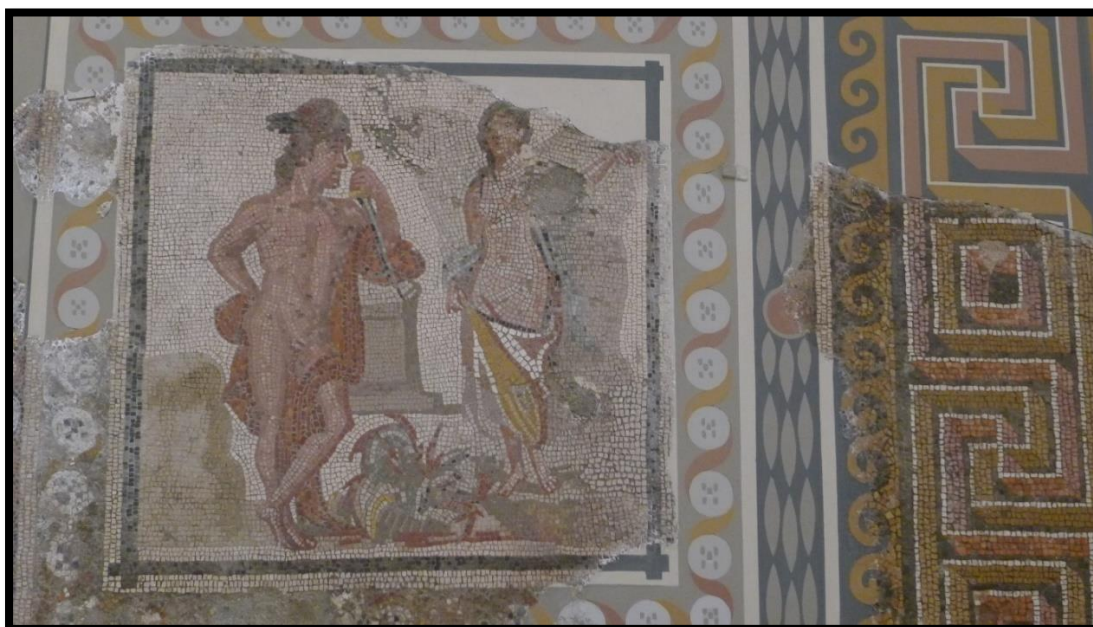


Figure 56: Perseus and Andromeda, National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona, (photo by the author)

Here the contrast between the masculine and feminine body is interesting. At a first glance, they could both be described in similar terms. Both are naked and exposed to the viewer, but the poses, composition, and form of each body sets them apart. Perseus is a hero: he has his red military cloak, he holds a weapon, wears a helmet on his head, and most tellingly of all, the dead monster lies at his feet spurting blood. A second monster, Medusa, is placed in a panel at the centre of the larger mosaic, as an apotropaic device: the female monster subdued by the heroic male bought into the service of the *dominus* to protect his home, and his values.³⁰⁴ Perseus's pose is relaxed (the job is done after all) but his muscles are picked out, and his skin has a ruddy hue that suggests effort and

³⁰³ Bonfante 1989; D'Ambra 2000; Hallett 2005.

³⁰⁴ Rodgers 1995. Medusa being the monster that Perseus kills as part of his heroic deeds.

athleticism. Andromeda, by contrast, is pale and soft, curved in the expected way, and carries no hint of activity about her. She stands, passively, waiting for the hero to come and rescue her. This is emphasised by the fact that she is set back, whilst Perseus stands almost on the border of the mosaic. Also, he is looking at her, whilst she looks out of the mosaic towards us creating lines of sight between the figures and the viewers. Both their bodies are on display, but Perseus again is taking the male role and guiding the viewer to enjoy this feminine beauty waiting for the viewer. His eye line and his body show the viewer the correct direction of their gaze, whereas her body stands open and waiting for the viewers to enjoy it.

A second example of the contrast between masculine and feminine bodies is a scene depicting Mars and Rhea Silvia from the Circus mosaic of the Villa of Can Pau Birol (Girona) which was discussed in the previous chapter. At the far end of the circus panel are two scenes in the painted area above the gates. The right-hand scene depicts the god Mars and a reclining woman, Rhea (Figure 57).



Figure 57: Detail from the Circus mosaic, Villa de Can Pau Birol, Girona (http://www.pedresdegirona.com/separata_biol_1.htm [accessed 02/05/17])

This is from the founding myth of Rome: Rhea Silvia was the daughter of the king of Alba Longa (Numitor), and a Vestal Virgin. She was raped by Mars, because of her beauty, and gave birth to the

twins Romulus and Remus.³⁰⁵ Mars is the archetypal active masculine hero in the image, like Perseus or Achilles. He only wears a helmet, shield, spear, and dagger as he runs energetically towards the woman lying passively on the floor. She is literally reclining, waiting for him to 'ravish' her. This is the expected pose for a sleeping victim, such as Ariadne. It is another costume of sorts, an iconographical clue as to how the viewer should respond to these characters.³⁰⁶ Again, we have his position and gaze directing us towards the female figure, with his running body and his long spear providing extra pointers. Again, she waits passively for the action to happen to her, waiting for the gaze to take in her semi-naked body which is open to our view, and presumably our desires.



Figure 58: Detail from the Circus mosaic showing the twins Romulus and Remus being suckled by the wolf, Villa de Can Pau Birol, Girona (Garcia i Noguera 1999: 155)

To provide a form of incentive for this passive female behaviour, the left-hand panel continues the story (Figure 58). Here we have the wolf suckling the twins Romulus and Remus, watched over by the personification of Rome, the city which they will establish. Again, Rhea has been rewarded for her passivity and beauty by two semi-divine sons who will go on to perform great deeds and through whom she will achieve the highest honour of womanhood which is to be known as a successful mother who births heroes.³⁰⁷ In this case, the heroes literally founded Rome, and are linked to the success of the whole Empire. These gender roles underpin the very structures of Roman society and

³⁰⁵ Plutarch *Life of Romulus* (*Roman Lives*, trans. Waterfield).

³⁰⁶ See for example discussions on the pose of the Sleeping Ariadne (and others including Rhea), McNally 1985.

³⁰⁷ The circus depicted is thought to be the Circus Maximus providing another link to the city of Rome. See previous chapter.

clearly are being exported to the provinces as well. Overall, this image is an explicit version of the message, and social structure, found in the other mosaics.

These mosaics are another variation of the Briseis and Achilles mosaics discussed earlier: they contrast the heroic male and the sexually available woman. Although the figure of the Briseis woman is covered up, fundamentally by virtue of being a woman she is always sexually available to the right masculine man. With marriage will come sexual activity and the prospect of children. This can be celebrated if that activity and sexual potential is performed and controlled by correct patriarchal social values.

3.5 MYTHS OF METAMORPHOSIS

The depictions of women in these mosaics do not stand alone. It is by the building up of multiple facets of this gender discourse that these images have impact. A second figurative mosaic from the Villa of Maternus demonstrates another aspect of this discourse and develops further this idea of gender types.³⁰⁸ It is located in a small room in the north-east corner of the peristyle (marked *cubiculum* on Figure 49, page 107). It is not a large room compared to the other reception rooms (5.4m by 4.6m, compared with approximately 10m x 7m for the *oecus*) which suggests it is a more intimate space, but the fact that it has been specifically decorated with an elaborate figured mosaic does suggest that it may have still been used for entertaining or at the very least is of high status within the villa. There is an inscription placed on the threshold of the room identifying the mosaic workshop, the painter, and a wish for Maternus to enjoy his *cubiculum* (EX OFICINA MA - - - - - NI/PINGIT HIRINIVS/VTERE FELIX MATERNE/HVNC CVBICVLVM) (Figure 59).³⁰⁹

³⁰⁸ Fernández-Galiano 1995.

³⁰⁹ Carucci 2012.



Figure 59: Detail of Inscription from the Villa of Maternus, Carranque (photo by the author)

Although Maternus himself represents only one owner in the life of the villa, this supports the supposition that this was a place for the owner to entertain people on a more intimate basis, to enjoy this richly decorated room, and partake in a level of privacy compared to the larger reception rooms.



Figure 60: Mosaic from Villa of Maternus, known as the Metamorphoses mosaic (photo by the author)

The mosaic itself is arranged around a central medallion depicting a bust of a nimbate female figure (Figure 60). There are a number of interpretations as to whom this figure represents, such as the goddess Venus, a personification of fortune or *Felicitas*, or even a member of the owner's family.³¹⁰ At each corner are more busts, representing Minerva, Diana, and Hercules: the fourth square is lost. Finally, in the remaining space are four semi circles depicting the mythical narratives that give this piece its title.

Below the female bust is a scene of the goddess Diana, caught bathing by the hunter Actaeon who can be seen on the left of the image, with antlers starting to sprout from his head. The goddess is in the centre, assisted by two nymphs. All the figures are nude, including Actaeon. We could consider Hurwit's argument's regarding the different types of nudity here: Actaeon's nudity is suitable because he is a young hero and it symbolises the mythical realm in which this takes place.³¹¹ He is

³¹⁰ See debate in Fernandez-Galiano 1995, p 203, fn 3. The inclusion of a nimbus in the portrait suggests that it is more likely to be a divinity.

³¹¹ Hurwit 2007.

facing away from the viewer, being caught in the act of looking, permanently preserved in that moment of visual transgression for other viewers to look upon. Diana and the nymphs are nude. Their bodies are soft and curving. Diana's body in particular is presented directly to the viewer. There is a real contrast with the other depiction of Diana on this mosaic in the corner portrait panel, where she is fully clothed, regally dressed carrying her quiver, and surrounded by a *nimbus*. This seeming contradiction forces us to confront the tensions in the iconography. There is the powerful goddess, here the sexual object on the same mosaic with the narrative dictating the manifestations of the iconography. Platt discusses a wall painting in Pompeii of the bathing Diana that has the same iconographic conventions: 'She is portrayed according to the visual language of the goddess of desire herself'.³¹² Her nudity is that of Venus, a reference back to the sculptures of the Crouching Venus. It is another costume, signalling to the viewer what his (or her) response should be to this image, a frame of reference in which to place it. However, there is tension here: we may look on Diana with desire, as Actaeon is doing and as the image is seemingly inviting us to do, but we must remember her power. She can assert her divinity which adds a danger for the viewer to this scene. The voyeur can easily become the victim.³¹³ Or, alternatively, is this a safe way of viewing her?³¹⁴ Actaeon stands in as proxy for the viewer: he receives the punishment and the viewer receives the pleasure. The element of danger is the reminder that only in this circumstance, through Actaeon, can the viewer look on the goddess like this. Is this an expression of power from the viewer: is he able to look upon Diana because he has the knowledge, the *paideia*, to understand the limits of this mode of viewing? Does this explain the way that Venus in the Judgement of Paris is a different type of nudity to the costumes of the matrons in the respectable funerary monuments?

Clockwise from Diana and Actaeon is a panel depicting a semi-nude female, stretched across the left-hand side of the panel. To her right is a horse being ridden by a small winged boy, generally taken to be Cupid. The standard interpretation of this scene is that it depicts the rape of the nymph Amymone. She has the same leafy headdress as the nymphs in the Diana panel, and carries a water jug which spills from her hand. The horse may be Neptune, and the fact that it is being ridden by Cupid literally emphasises the lust he feels for the nymph.³¹⁵ Kondoleon compares this scene to one also depicting Amymone and Neptune from Paphos and she emphasises how odd it is that Neptune is not obviously depicted in the Villa of Maternus mosaic. In fact, she states that 'the absence of Poseidon can be explained only as an inadvertent omission or a visual malapropism that was

³¹² Platt 2002. This is a fairly common image format across the Empire: for example, the mosaic of Diana and Actaeon at Timgad, North Africa (Dunbabin 1978) has a very similar composition again.

³¹³ Newby 2016.

³¹⁴ Mack 2002 discusses how images of Medusa stage and resolve the threat of the visual gaze.

³¹⁵ Arce 1986.

common in late antique provincial art'.³¹⁶ It may be an omission or evidence of lack of knowledge, but it could equally be that for the purposes of this artist or patron this composition is entirely adequate: it fulfils the visual needs of the viewers in this context. Amymone acts as the sexual object: her body stretched out across the image draws the viewer's eye, focusing attention on her nudity. Her slightly awkward, twisted pose ensures the optimum view in the image, emphasises her helplessness and reassures the viewer that she cannot run away. For those with a classical education, the horse may well bring to mind Neptune, and therefore assist with the deciphering of the mythic narrative, but it is not necessary to understand the visual shorthand of the image.³¹⁷ Fundamentally, the helpless and sexually vulnerable nymph, the implication of a threat as the horse rears above her as she stumbles, and the inclusion of Cupid, are signs to the viewer that this is a scene of eroticism and of male desire overcoming a passive female. It also means there is no competing male figure to distract the male viewer (which we will see again in the Italican metamorphosis mosaic below). The animal, and Cupid, seem to be initiating the action for the viewer, demonstrating the nymph's availability.

The next panel depicts the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. This myth, known most prominently to modern scholars from the writings of Ovid, has been depicted on a number of wall paintings and mosaics from Pompeii and the eastern Empire.³¹⁸ However, the artist or the patron of the Maternus mosaic has again focused on slightly different elements within this visual construction. This image seems to conflate a number of moments in the narrative. In the centre is the figure of Thisbe, a young girl, dressed in a long white robe, and a yellow scarf. To her right is a lion, who holds a red cloak in its mouth. To her left is Pyramus, a young man, who is wearing a red cloak and is carrying a mulberry tree in his arms. This tree will function as the symbol of this tragic story as its berries will now be stained red from the protagonists' blood.³¹⁹ This is a very interesting visual form of this narrative: when contrasted with the other examples that are known across the Roman Empire, it is unique. For example, the wall paintings from the House of M. Lucretius Fronto in Pompeii show the discovery of Pyramus's dead body by Thisbe; she is semi-nude, portrayed in a similar manner to Amymone or the nymphs in the Diana panel.³²⁰ This is repeated in another painting from the House of Octavius Quartio in Pompeii: clearly this composition is the convention. This iconography would also fit into the overall scheme of the mosaic much better. It would repeat the motif of the available

³¹⁶ Kondoleon 1995: 161.

³¹⁷ Lucian's *Dialogues* state that Neptune called for horses and dolphins to rush to Amymone; he also bore the name Poseidon Hippios in some circumstances.

³¹⁸ Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4.55 – 165.

³¹⁹ Kondoleon again sees the disproportionate size of the tree as indicative of the mosaicist's lack of skill. (1995: 161).

³²⁰ Baldassarre 1990-2003; Lorenz 2008.

female body, stretched out and displayed as a sexual object for the viewer. But the mosaicist or the patron has chosen to show Thisbe fully clothed. In many ways she is simply a respectable young woman. Pyramus is nude, providing some source of erotic frisson for the viewer, but fundamentally this appears to be an image that is structured using different iconographical gender markers. From the other panels on this mosaic, and other examples of Pyramus and Thisbe scenes, the semi-nude, erotic form was an option for the mosaicist but one the craftsman did not choose to take.³²¹ It must therefore have been a deliberate choice. It could be a reflection of the different roles women can take, the different choices in behaviour and action that are open to them within this discourse, as defined by men.

Finally, the fourth panel depicts a scene of Hylas being taken by three nymphs. We return to the conventions established previously: Hylas's body takes up the position of the sexual object, mirroring Amymone's pose in the panel opposite. The nymphs are very similar to the ones on the Diana panel and add further erotic interest. In contrast to the Pyramus and Thisbe panel, the iconographic conventions are very much in evidence here. As discussed by Ling, the composition and style are very recognisable.³²² Hylas strides across the centre, his limbs outstretched in a strong diagonal. In comparison to Amymone he is allowed to show some resistance and be slightly more active, although the outcome is the same. Possibly this is because as a man, there is the chance that he will, if given the right circumstances, grow out of his passive role and into a more masculine one. The nymphs cluster around him at different levels to emphasise the sense that he is being overtaken by them. I will compare this depiction with other Hylas mosaics in a later section of this chapter.

The nymphs, Amymone and Hylas, function as vulnerable sexual bodies: they are the genders that invites the viewer to look and enjoy, to see their bodies and to take what they wish. In particular, Amymone and Hylas, in their pose, their vulnerability, and their lack of other choices have no other role than sexual object in these narratives. The nymphs are subtly different.³²³ In their association with Diana, and their active role in the narrative of Hylas, they are both desirable but also inhuman. In particular, the nymphs attacking Hylas are a warning of the monstrous aspect of this gender: the dangerous unknown quantity in these figures who may appear to be a simple sexual object but can be fatal to the hero. This is even further emphasised with Diana. She may be temporarily wearing

³²¹ The closest parallel is the Paphos mosaic but only in that both these compositions represent alternatives to the death scene of the wall paintings. Thisbe is clothed in the Paphos mosaic, though has a bared breast. Pyramus is represented as a river god, connecting him to the version of the story from Nonnus's *Dionysiaca*. Kondoleon 1995.

³²² Ling 1991.

³²³ Amymone is of course a nymph, but that is not important in this image: her role is as desired object of Neptune, not as a semi-divine woman

the costume of sexual vulnerability, but her power is still formidable: the viewer is reminded of this by her bust in the corner, with all her divine attributes properly in place. In the fourth panel, Thisbe offers yet another way of performing a female gender. By contrasting this depiction with other versions of the image, a choice was clearly made to distinguish her from the other women (and boy) on this mosaic. She is fully clothed and therefore untouchable in a way the other figures are not. Pyramus invites the viewer to look at his heroic body with his strong stance, but there is no similar invitation in this image directing us to Thisbe.³²⁴ The love story of Pyramus and Thisbe, and the central image of the woman can also add a less divisive viewing. This would be a space for a bedroom, and a room where the family could gather. If the central image is of the mistress of the household, in divine form, or more generally a celebration of the divine female, this could be a more positive approach to gender relations. It enshrines her as the mistress of these erotic happenings, softens the distinctions between gender and lines of power. Fernández-Galiano posits that this is the mistress welcoming her husband to this space, linking in with the welcome written on the mosaic itself.³²⁵ His name and her image on this mosaic together could be underlining the partnership between them, though privileging him through the use of his name. This space fluctuates between personal and political, between the privacy of a marriage, and the political dealings of business. Carucci emphasises the way this room has multiple definitions: the ante-room before it suggests privacy, the figurative mosaics link it to the reception areas of the house.³²⁶

This mosaic brings together a range of aspects of gender: the sexual object, the monstrous, the divine, and the socially acceptable. The viewers of this mosaic, whether they be Maternus or his descendant, can organise the world into socially ordered roles by defining themselves and others against these different images. The powerful male can see that he is powerful because he has the ability to use other women or boys in the ways depicted upon this mosaic. The women, and those who are less powerful, who view this mosaic are possibly being encouraged to distinguish between gender behaviours, even if there is no guarantee of a 'safe' outcome, as they can be rewarded by the desire of the more powerful. The mosaic itself forms a safe space in which to construct these ideas, and possibly to challenge them. The busts of the gods around them outside protect and preserve society, provide an erotic landscape in which to play out boundaries and test limits. The appearance of the monstrous feminine plays with the fear of the loss of power, and the upturning of boundaries.

³²⁴ Pyramus's face is damaged and therefore may have been looking at Thisbe, as in the Perseus and Andromeda mosaic but there is no way to tell this, and other indications in the iconography suggest this is a different composition.

³²⁵ Fernández-Galiano 1994: 204 for the identification of the central bust as the *domina*; this is not universally accepted.

³²⁶ Carucci 2012: 218.

This scenario can be explored in this space of the mosaic and the space of the intimate *cubiculum* because it is a confined context. Equally, the theme of appropriate partnership is asserted. The balance embodied by the partnership between Maternus and his wife, and between correct gender pairings demonstrates that these social values stand to help us negotiate these difficult viewings and the benefits of staying within boundaries.

These multiple messages underline the complexity of these images, and how different viewers can construct different narratives from the same visual cues. This mosaic works together with the Briseis mosaic, and the Adonis hunt discussed in the previous chapter. In the first reception room, straight forward roles are presented: Briseis is modest and dutiful and is rewarded with marriage to an attractive masculine hero. This is supported in the second reception room by the active manliness of the Adonis hunt, its celebration of the active male body and relegation of the female, a deliberate choice in mythical narratives that is frequently seen in tales of lost love. Finally, the most intimate room in the house moves us into a more erotic world, where we see the pleasures of the flesh, the sexual side of the gender roles, but also the way that the social values throughout the other mosaics can come together and form a partnership that will result in a harmonious world, both within the villa and without.

3.6 THE “LOVERS OF ZEUS”

A second mosaic from Iberia is also concerned with myths of metamorphoses, but with some interesting differences. The mosaic is commonly known as the “Lovers of Zeus” (Figure 61).



Figure 61: "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic, Italica (Blanco Freijeiro 1978)

The mosaic, mentioned in the introduction, was excavated from a town house in Italica, the ancestral town of Hadrian, and removed to the house of the Condesa de Lebrija in Seville in the 1900s where it is now displayed as part of a collection of antiquities. The site of Italica has a comparatively high proportion of mosaics and other signs of wealth compared to other towns of its size. It is therefore not typical of urban sites across the Iberian Peninsula but still seems to conform to the same iconography which evokes a particular set of social values that would have been enacted in the Villa of Maternus. Although we do not have the house plan for the site at which the Lovers mosaic was excavated, Mañas Romero suggests that it is similar to the House of the "Patio

Rodio" (also in Italica, plan in Figure 62), and that the Lovers mosaic would have been in a similar suite of rooms to the ones on either side of the peristyle in that house.³²⁷

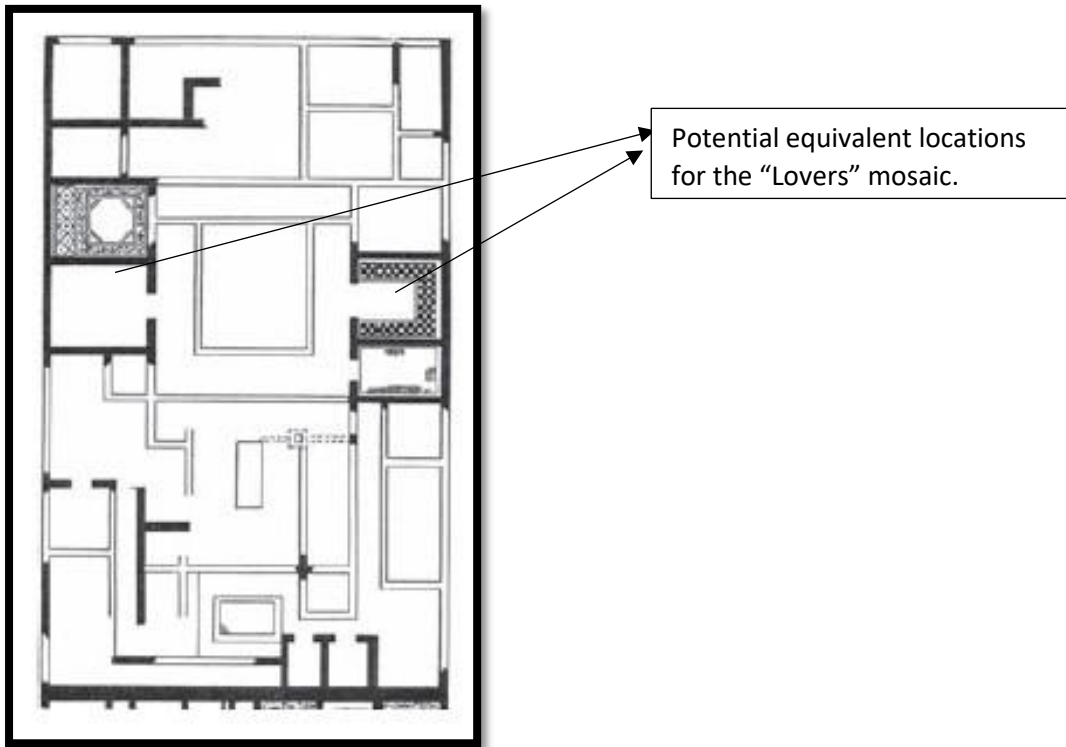


Figure 62: Plan of the House of the Patio Rodio (Mañas Romero 2010, annotated by the author)

From its size (6.85m x 6.88m) and its quality, it is not unreasonable to assume that it would have been situated in a reception room, similar to the ones discussed above. Mañas Romero's suggested position for the mosaic on the plan of the House of the Patio Rodio would fit the profile of an important reception room, reasonably accessible but not on the main axis of the house, giving it slightly more intimacy. These are second century AD contexts, and therefore there are some differences from the Late Antique villas we have seen previously, mainly in the size and scale of the rooms and the houses.³²⁸ Nevertheless, though the form might have changed slightly, the uses and the social behaviours seem to be similar. This is, of course, a hypothetical discussion in relation to the "Lovers of Zeus" as due to its early excavation we have very little information on its direct context. The mosaic contains a central panel divided by rope borders into a number of smaller frames. Seven of the frames depict scenes of abduction or rape, four of busts of the Seasons, one of a river god, and the central medallion shows a male bust holding pan pipes. There is some debate over his identity.³²⁹ However, for the purpose of this analysis, the important aspect is the fact that

³²⁷ Mañas Romero 2010.

³²⁸ Bowes 2010. It is not apparent whether they were still in use in the fourth century AD.

³²⁹ See Blanco Freijero 1978 and Mañas Romero 2010 for interpretations.

his iconography is strongly pastoral. His rustic face, with the hints of satyrm or some sort of beast-like aspect, and his pan pipes connect him to the wild rather than the civilised. To look at this mosaic as a whole, it could be suggested that he is the narrator who tells these individual tales: one of the themes that binds them and could make them into a coherent narrative is the idea that these events happen on the edge of society, out of the safety of urban civilisation. A suitable narrator for these myths is therefore someone who is equally liminal and potentially dangerous.³³⁰ It also reminds us again of the way in which these images would have been recognised. A viewer could display his or her *paideia* by telling the narratives that are depicted in shorthand on this mosaic. He may run the risk of becoming satyr-like himself with this narrative, so there is a hint of danger as in the other images. Is there pleasure in experiencing his animalistic side? This could be another costume that the viewer could explore. The protection from straying too far into the wild, uncivilised world is assuredly his *paideia*, his education and allegiance to that civilised culture and world that he is demonstrating. Other viewers may have understood these myths not through text but through an oral or visual presentation, as stories told or plays performed as discussed in the introduction to this chapter.³³¹ This central image sets the scene for the viewers of this mosaic, reminds them of the narratives that are woven round these images and prompts a retelling.



Figure 63: View of the Lovers mosaic in its current location, the Palacio de la Condesa de Lebrija, Seville - showing the way in which the 'narrator' in the centre is linked to the stories he tells (photo by the author)

³³⁰ Parry 1964 discusses the complexities of the rural settings of Ovid which is relevant here.

³³¹ There are also of course the literary connections such as the pastoral tradition where shepherds function as story tellers, in Virgil's *Ecolgues* for example, the shepherds Tityrus and Meliboeus discuss ideas about love and revolution as commentary on various political events of the time (*Ecolgue* 1). Virgil uses the characters of the shepherds and their rustic location to explore wider ideas and means of narrative creation.

The remaining medallions contain floral designs, and the central panel itself is surrounded by several patterned borders. Scholars have identified the figurative scenes as connected to myths of metamorphoses, in particular as crafted in literary form by Ovid. Whether they are inspired by this particular text or more generally a tradition of such stories, the eight narrative scenes all depict women, or in one instance, a boy, who are about to be, or who have been raped by the god Jupiter.



Figure 64: Detail from the Lovers of Zeus mosaic, Arcas and Callisto (photo by the author)

The figurative panels show Callisto, who has been transformed into a bear, being hunted by her son Arcas (Figure 64); Io who has been transformed into a cow following her seduction by Jupiter (Figure 65); Jupiter, in the form of a satyr chasing the nymph Antiope (Figure 66); the boy Ganymede standing next to Jupiter in the form of an eagle (Figure 67); Europa being led away by Jupiter in the form of a bull (Figure 69); Leda embracing Jupiter in the form of a swan (Figure 68); Danae, seated below a cloud upon which the head of Jupiter can be seen (Figure 70); and a river god.³³²

³³² It is interesting to note that Arcas is posed with his spear upraised, in the same gesture of masculinity as identified in the previous chapter.



Figure 65: Detail from the "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic – Io (photo by the author)

All these scenes present a distilled image, a single scene from which the viewer is invited to construct the narrative from the clues that the image presents. They depict them in a shorthand, focusing on the moments that are key to their identities as mythical figures and gender ones. Unlike the hunting mosaics, we never see the critical moment, rather the moments before or after. Antiope is being chased by Jupiter, her stumble to her knees as she glances back at her attacker suggesting a long chase and attempted, desperate, resistance (Figure 66). The viewers here are voyeurs and the image entices them with the prospect of the rape, as in the Amymone panel previously. It is deliberately tantalising. The prospect of the violence of the hunt for the entertainment of the viewer draws a parallel in particular with the Hunt/Circus mosaic from La Olmeda discussed in the first chapter.



Figure 66: Detail from the "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic – Antiope (photo by the author)

Here, we see the set up for the violence, with the women's bodies displayed as a prize for the god to take and for the viewer to enjoy, but we do not see the act itself. Jupiter is present in the images but not as a directly competing male to the male viewer. He appears as the animals into which he has metamorphosed – the swan, the bull, the eagle.



Figure 67: Detail from the "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic - Ganymede and the Eagle (photo by the author)

His other costume of the satyr is another visual shorthand for animalistic desire. Therefore, there is no directly equivalent masculine body within these images to threaten the male viewer. We have seen from the couples discussed previously that this is another choice. There is clearly an interplay between the ideal viewer as male, and explicitly depicting him within the image. What occurs instead in these mosaics is that the artist, or the patron, invites the viewer to identify with the god, and to move the moment forward, to complete the narrative. They invite the viewer to emulate Jupiter's behaviour, and in doing so, share the prize of the beautiful catch with him. These "prizes" are elaborately displayed. Leda is stretched out across the medallion, her body cradling the swan's body, and following the curve of the panel itself (Figure 68).



Figure 68: Detail from the "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic - Leda and the Swan (photo by the author)

Europa and Ganymede both stand with their hips cocked, their bodies forming a shapely 'S' curve that presents the body frontally to the viewer (Figures 69 and 67 respectively).



Figure 69: Detail from the "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic – Europa (photo by the author)

Danae's pose mimics the austere matron, seated with a veil, but naked and fully exposed in the way a proper *matrona* never could be (Figure 70). In many ways this image is a perversion of what a Roman woman should be, reminding us that this world of myth can demonstrate the extremes, push

the edges of society and social values in order to test them. Jupiter peers over the edge of the cloud above her, encouraging the viewer to mimic him and follow his gaze.



Figure 70: Detail from the "Lovers of Zeus" mosaic – Danae (photo by the author)

They are all naked, standing out vividly compared with the animal disguises of Jupiter. The invitation to gaze at the bodies is part of the narrative that is being constructed: in particular, their vulnerability invites violence and rape. This nudity helps to indicate to the viewer that they are suitable subjects to look at.³³³ It emphasises their role as beautiful objects, to be gazed upon. These images follow the conventions of a patriarchal culture of viewing, which privileges the male gaze above all. The man is at the centre of the mythic and the erotic universe. There is an expectation that beauty is there to be admired, and specifically to be looked at. It is because these women are beautiful, the stories tell us, that they caught the god's eye: therefore, it is right for them also to catch the eye of the viewer. The pose of Europa, in particular, is very similar to 'an icon of female perfection', Praxiteles' Aphrodite of Knidos.³³⁴ The pose of the Aphrodite (in Roman culture the Venus Pudica) was considered a standardised expression of female beauty in the shape of her body, and the emphasis on her curves (although Europa is more open in her posture).³³⁵ Elsner goes so far

³³³ I have drawn on the work of Hurwit (2007) and Hallett (2005) with regards to the idea that nudity functions as a 'costume' that can indicate different characteristics depending on context.

³³⁴ Stewart 2008: 261.

³³⁵ Havelock 2007: 1.

as to call her 'one of antiquity's sexiest...images'.³³⁶ This type was replicated across the Empire and a statue depicting this pose was found in the same town as the Lovers mosaic (Figure 71).



Figure 71: Bronze figurine of the Venus Pudica, found at Itatica, Archaeological Museum, Seville (photo by the author)

We can therefore suggest that this way of viewing female bodies, the cultural lens through which these images are seen, was clearly apparent in Itatica. There are multiple layers of reference in these images, 'depending on the horizon of expectations brought to [the image] by the individual viewer'.³³⁷ Each viewer would respond according to his or her own understanding; however, there was clearly a value attached to each level of understanding. In particular, the male viewer sees himself at the centre of this mythic and erotic world. The elite can claim their educated understanding of a common cultural language which draws them into the spheres of power of the Empire. Multiple references of viewing bring together the idea that this is the height of female beauty: that this image has value, and therefore this behaviour is intrinsic to the female gender.

In all these images, the bodies invite the viewer's gaze because they are beautiful. Their nudity is part of their costume. It is an indication of the patriarchal society in which they exist because these

³³⁶ Elsner 2007: 25.

³³⁷ Kousser 2008: 105.

costumes define these women as suitable to be looked at and are expected to be recognised as sexual objects. The expectation is written into the fabric of the house through the images on the mosaics. As established above, these houses were social spaces where the owner attempted to align himself with the structures of power: with the elite. These mosaics present a particular idealisation of gender roles, which are similar to those we see elsewhere in the Roman provincial world because they use a similar grammar of visual conventions: they tie into an established language. The images do not just reflect reality but also attempt to form reality as desired by the elite male. Jupiter is there to demonstrate to the viewer the ideal masculine response to this feminine beauty, to guide them.

A third recent discovery of a mosaic from Ecija provides another example of the spread of this iconography (Figure 72). Although it has yet to be fully published and analysed, the images clearly show several similarities with the other metamorphic mosaics in this chapter.



Figure 72: Ecija Metamorphoses mosaic in situ, Juan Ignacio Rojano / RCFilms
(http://www.nationalgeographic.com.es/historia/actualidad/descubren-un-esplendido-mosaico-romano-en-ecija_9519/1
[accessed 18/05/17])

This mosaic was found in the archaeological site known as the Plaza des Armas in the town of Ecija, which is about 90 kilometres east of Seville. The mosaic is believed to be dated from around the third century AD, given the associated artefacts and the physical context. It possibly comes from the

dining room of a wealthy townhouse (the room measures approximately 5m x 8m).³³⁸ It consists of approximately fourteen different scenes, with significant damage to the right-hand side of the floor. Apart from the seasons and a Bacchic scene, for the purposes of this chapter the important scenes are those of the god Zeus and his Lovers. As with the Italican Lovers mosaic, we have a series of scenes including Danae and the shower of gold, Europa and the bull, Leda and the swan, Antiope and the satyr, and Ganymede and the eagle (The Leda seen is shown in Figure 73).



Figure 73: Detail of Ecija Metamorphoses mosaics, showing Leda (<http://ecijahistoria.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/los-Lovers-de-zeus-nuevo-tesoro.html> [accessed 18/05/17])

The central scenes, such as Europa, Danae, Leda and Ganymede are all constructed in the iconography that we have come to expect. Europa sits astride the bull, raising up her cloak so that her body is fully nude, and attended by at least two other women. Danae is no longer the matron but more nymph like. She is standing in a field, indicated by grasses and flowers at her feet, and she raises her hands to the rain that comes out of a triangle above her, held open by a Cupid to show Jupiter within (Figure 74).

³³⁸ Reports from Sergio García-Dils, the lead archaeologist for the site, <http://ecijahistoria.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/los-amores-de-zeus-nuevo-tesoro.html> (accessed 18/05/17) and http://www.nationalgeographic.com.es/historia/actualidad/descubren-un-esplendido-mosaico-romano-en-ecija_9519/1 (accessed 18/05/17).



Figure 74: Detail of Ecija Metamorphoses mosaics, showing Danae (<http://ecijahistoria.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/los-Lovers-de-zeus-nuevo-tesoro.html>) accessed 18/05/17

This pastoral scene may link this image to the Bacchic panel of the mosaic. It is a kind of collection of wild fantasy scenes, and it certainly creates a sense for the viewer of an uncivilised place away from the security of society. This is a dangerous space where violence and disruptions to the social norms could happen. Again, as with the Lovers mosaic, Jupiter's image is minimised or disguised in animal form. One of the most significant differences in this mosaic, compared with the mosaics previously discussed, is that, apart from Europa, the bodies of Leda, Danae and Ganymede all face away from the viewer. Thus, although we can see their naked bodies, they are less inviting than previously. The viewer feels more like he is intruding on these scenes. This could be a stylistic decision in order to add depth to the image. It could be a particular preference or choice, as in Hellenistic visual language, the buttocks are highly desirable. It stops the women challenging the viewer with the power of their own gaze. It could be that the image reinforces a divine hierarchy: Jupiter is the main viewer and therefore he gets the best view, and we are only allowed to be the voyeur and look on, not to intrude this time. We may imagine ourselves in the primary position, but we cannot take that role without being the most important person in the room. Especially with Danae, the composition

feels as though we are surrounding her. With Jupiter in front, and with us as viewer/voyeur behind, she is physically trapped within this situation, a permanent beautiful victim.

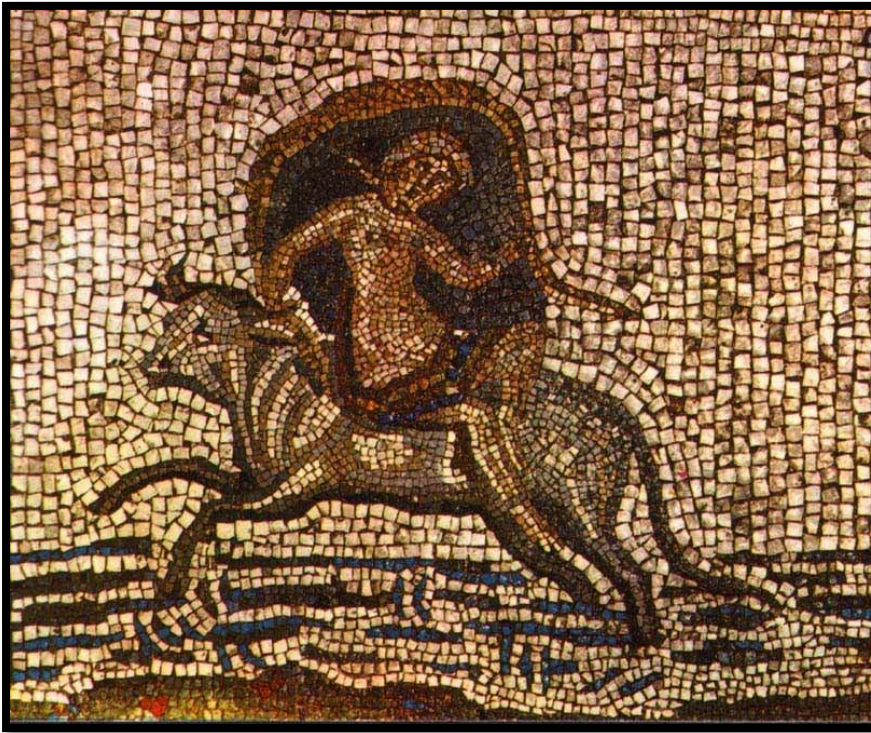


Figure 75: Central panel from mosaic of Europa, Merida (Blanco Freijeiro 1978)

As shown by its inclusion in two of the above metamorphoses' scenes, the rape of Europa is a popular manifestation of this genre and appears as a single narrative on its own as in a richly coloured mosaic from the ancient civic capital of Augusta Emerita (Figure 75). Like the other provincial capitals in Iberia, a number of elaborate mosaics have been found within the town, so there was clearly cachet in spending one's wealth on these floors. As the provincial and civic capital this would have been a locus of political power and therefore a highly competitive environment where it would be important to demonstrate social status. An elaborate mosaic would have signalled the elite owner's willingness to enter this sphere and engage with the mechanics of power. The mosaic was discovered in 1958, in a room excavated in the area of Calle Legio X and the Vía Ensanche. The figurative scene is in a small central panel (0.92m x 0.92m), surrounded by monochromatic geometric patterns that cover the rest of the floor. The room in total measures 4.45m x 2.90m. It has been dated to the second century AD.³³⁹

The panel shows the figure of Europa on the bull, Jupiter's chosen animal costume or disguise in this myth, being carried away across the sea, which is indicated by wavy lines.³⁴⁰ It is similar to the

³³⁹ Blázquez 1978.

³⁴⁰ Ovid *Metamorphoses*. 2.834-75.

Italic version and very similar indeed to the Ecija one, in that the focus is on the juxtaposition of the body of the woman with the animal body of the bull. She is naked except for a multi-coloured cloth across her hips, and a billowing mantle that flows out behind her, almost forming a frame for her body and face. This mantle originally may have been picked out in gold, a clear demonstration of wealth, and possibly indicating Europa's royal status (and the homeowner's pretensions to a similarly exalted status within the urban or provincial world). The lines indicating the sea are in greens and blues, and the bull is carefully formed from white pieces that are much finer than the background. Europa lies across the bull, again displaying her body for all to see. The position itself, with both legs on the same side, would have made it very difficult in reality for the woman to stay on the bull. It is surely not a complete lack of skill that forced the mosaicist into this position because simply to not include the far leg would not have been hard, and therefore this suggests a very clear statement about how this body is presented for the viewer, and that it is to be viewed in totality. With the rich colours and materials of the mosaic, it constructs Europa herself as another luxury to be plucked, owned, and displayed for our pleasure.

The second mosaic on this theme is more dramatic (Figure 76). It is probably later (fourth or fifth century AD) and was excavated from the village site on the estates of the Dukes of Fernán Núñez, south of Cordoba. Like Merida, Cordoba had been the provincial capital and a number of mosaics have been excavated there.



Figure 76: Panel showing the Rape of Europa, Cordoba (Blázquez 1981)

This panel (1.05m x 1.55m) was found in a complex of rooms with a number of other figured mosaics; they covered themes such as busts of the four Seasons, representations of a city and a

river, which have been identified as Antioch and Orontes respectively, and more personalised representations possibly showing the patrons of the villa. This was an important, highly decorated area of the site: unfortunately, we have no real information on how these pieces related to each other and therefore the significance of these collected themes is lost.³⁴¹

The panel depicting Europa is large compared to the other mosaics and may have formed a centrepiece. She is again shown nude astride the bull, with a cloak like garment behind her shoulders. She raises one arm above her head in a gesture that is not easy to interpret, whilst her other holds the neck of the bull. Like the Ecija mosaic she is accompanied by two ladies, who in this scene, raise their arms in a gesture of despair. This gesture is common in scenes of abduction and can also stress the inability of the women to take any action to prevent the violence. These women are also mostly naked emphasising their role as sexual objects for the male viewer. It sets a scene of female harmony disrupted, the safety of the women's enclave that has been rudely intruded on by the masculine virility of Jupiter in his bull form. To the right of the image is the figure of Cupid, a young naked boy. He has a rather angry look and raises what appears to be a *thyrsus* or even a standard of some sort, underlining the menacing aspect of this character. He emphasises again Europa's lack of agency and control: she has no ability to resist what is about to happen to her.

These mosaics also make clear that Europa should not resist. These women are being celebrated for their beauty in a way that privileges male consumption.³⁴² The patriarchal model is upheld in these images even if we consider viewers other than the elite male. If the narrative is completed by the female viewer for example, the 'victims' are all rewarded, most often by giving birth to the offspring of the god: 'A woman imagines herself the beloved of the god, imagines herself the wife or mother of the hero or the ruler, and through the body and its empathetic abilities, she desires and thus participates in the construction of power and its social relations'.³⁴³ Europa and Rhea are clear examples of this: Europa is often seen as a kind of founding mother and her story is interpreted as a myth about the transmission of culture, from her Phoenician heritage to her Cretan, and thereby Greek, heroic family.³⁴⁴ Rhea's reward is explicitly depicted in the Can Pau Birol mosaic: she will be the mother of Rome. These clear examples hint at the more implicit fates that the other women may receive for the female viewer. She is therefore drawn into supporting the discourse of masculinity that the elite male has constructed.

³⁴¹ Blázquez estimates that the total area of the mosaic fragments from this room covers 8.23m x 7.46m so it is a large room (1981).

³⁴² As we saw in the chapter on masculinity, this is a world that privileges masculine viewing.

³⁴³ Kampen 1997: 274.

³⁴⁴ Neira 2011: 28.

These scenes also maintain a narrative of oppression. When Salzman-Mitchell discusses the Arachne story in Ovid, she describes her tapestry which is a patchwork of different narrative moments from women being raped by gods. It is 'an emblem of female rebellion silenced by patriarchal authority'.³⁴⁵ This description also works well for the mosaics. In the mosaics, patriarchal authority is clearly represented by the elite male owner, who finishes the uncompleted narratives on the images. Salzman-Mitchell goes on to suggest that Arachne's reversed narrative might be an access point to female narratives in the text. This is a much harder leap for us to make, with no evidence of female mosaicists implanting this rebellious narrative in the images, but as a means of thinking about female viewers it may be useful. Could the female viewers resist the dominant masculine narrative, and see the circumstances of these myths as more positive for themselves? Or at least, be able to tell the stories of female pain as a way in itself of challenging the happy-ever-after endings perceived by men and presented in these images?

Overall however, the Lovers and the Eciija mosaics, and the Maternus metamorphoses mosaic place the elite male at the heart of this discourse and establish him as the viewer around which the mythic and erotic worlds within the mosaic, and the very real world of power without, rotate. The entire villa of Maternus does this too with its concentration on iconographic messages that privilege his viewing. From the Briseis mosaic in the *oecus*, to the hunt and Achilles mosaics, and finally into the Metamorphoses mosaic in the *cubiculum*, they mark out rooms that are his space, and the mosaics that I have discussed above carefully shape their iconographical messages through this particular discourse. The different spaces of the *oecus*, the *triclinium*, and the *cubiculum* all impart different meanings to these images and build up a pattern of gender behaviours for the viewer to imitate or ignore. There is a refrain of 'the persistent contrast within the house of exposed and confined women', repeated images of the passive woman that persistently impose this world system on the viewers.³⁴⁶ However, these are not the only narratives, and the remainder of this chapter will explore further themes that are interrelated with those discussed so far but focus on different aspects of the world of gender.

3.7 PROTECTING THE HOUSEHOLD

In the mosaics viewed so far, it seems apparent that, when the mortal woman does not conform to this discourse of masculine power, she is punished or becomes monstrous.³⁴⁷ A second mosaic from

³⁴⁵ Salzman-Mitchell 2005: 126.

³⁴⁶ Bergmann 1994: 246 – 250.

³⁴⁷ Goddesses being the exception.

Ecija, in the southern half of the peninsula makes this violence explicit with its depiction of the punishment of Dirce (Figure 77).



Figure 77: Punishment of Dirce, Ecija (<http://www.mosaicosromanos.es/castigodirce.htm> [accessed 18/05/17])

Dirce was the step-mother of Antiope, the eponymous heroine of Euripides's play. Antiope is forced to serve as Dirce's slave after having been raped by Zeus (in the form of a satyr, as depicted above on the Lovers mosaic), and given birth to twins who are exposed by her uncle. After Antiope runs away, Dirce tries to kill her by tying her to the horns of a young bull but is stopped by the twins who inflict the same punishment on Dirce herself.³⁴⁸ This is the moment that is depicted in the mosaic. Dirce's naked body is arranged across the bull in a very similar way to Europa's pose above. The same visual components come together in a different form in order to relay a different message. The mosaicist has depicted ropes across her torso, and she is flanked by two young men who both carry sticks or canes. The figure to the left is leaping with his stick raised to beat Dirce, whilst his brother to the right holds a rope attached to the woman's hand. The open air or pastoral location is indicated by a large tree to the left and there are birds and plants picked out in outline around the border.

The similarities of Dirce's pose with Europa's, such as the juxtaposition of the female body with the bull, underline the gender aspect of this image. Dirce's body is there as a source of titillation, an object to be viewed and enjoyed.³⁴⁹ She is again emphatically feminine, in her nakedness, and in her abject position. Her body is laid out for all to view her punishment. This returns to Parker's idea that 'to make oneself seen, to be open to the gaze of others, to other's evaluations, is to be graded and degraded.'³⁵⁰ In this way we can see how the women previously are also being exposed in a less

³⁴⁸ Euripides *Antiope* (now lost, known from fragments published in Collard & Cropp (ed.) 2008: 170 ff).

³⁴⁹ Joyce 2001 discusses representations of Dirce in Roman art and suggests that she may be a maenad.

³⁵⁰ Parker 1999: 165.

explicit way, for their beauty, and their position as a less powerful gender, regardless of the outcome of the myth. The iconography does not necessarily align with the mythical narrative. Dirce's punishment for trying to oust the rightful woman of the house directly links the myth that is depicted to the domestic space in which it is displayed. This threat is clearly something that the viewers believed could happen in their domestic spaces, and the consequences of threatening the domestic foundations of the power of the man are clearly laid out as a deterrent. It is highlighted through the contrast of Dirce's feminised body with the bodies of Amphion and Zethus (the twins). They are strongly muscular and highly active. The man to the left is leaping with a stride that mirrors that of the bull itself. His brother to the right stands firmly planted with feet apart, again a picture of strength. Dirce's body is soft and curved and in another image this iconography could belong to an innocent victim. The line between eroticism and violence is insignificant in these images. The twins are able to defend both themselves, and the women of their house, through their physical attributes. The good woman is not shown here because in part her goodness comes from her not being on show: she is in the house that is rightly being defended by the male protectors. The transgressive woman is shown, and her punishment is displayed in order to protect the household. This image again reinforces a gender power structure. Every time they walk over this mosaic, or clean it, or perform their womanly duties of spinning or weaving in this space, the women of the house are reminded simultaneously of the consequences of overstepping power, and that they are protected by the men around them.³⁵¹

3.8 BOYS AND MEN

These mosaics reflect and refract the reality of the domestic space in which they exist. The Dirce mosaic forces its viewers to consider their position with regards to the transgressive woman, the 'good' woman, and the manly protector. The range of positions and roles is exemplified in these mosaics, as can be seen in the microcosmic example of the Villa of Maternus. The different mosaics work together to explore different aspects of gender performance. The above sections have mainly considered a binary of male and female, but these myths, and Roman society, is considerably more complex than that.³⁵² The gender that stands in opposition to the manly hero does not just consist of the female sex. Boys and men unable to fulfil that standard were also included. Mosaics featuring these characteristics draw on a particular Romano-Graeco social construction: an idea that young

³⁵¹ A second mosaic on this theme was excavated in Segunto but is quite damaged. As far as is distinguishable it uses similar conventions.

³⁵² Parker 1997.

boys are equally, if not more desirable, than women as sexual partners.³⁵³ Both of these genders are conceived of as weaker than the more assertive, powerful, mature male.

If we return to the “Metamorphoses” mosaic in the Villa of Maternus, Hylas, although a male, is presented in the same costume, the same pose of sexual availability, as the other women on the image (Figure 66, page 134). On the “Lovers” mosaic we see this convention repeated with Ganymede as well (Figure 67, page 135). He is shown as a naked boy, with a soft feminine body that is posed in exactly the same way as Europa, standing next to Jupiter in the form of the eagle who will take him up to the heavens. His narrative fits exactly with the women, because he is no different from them. Those who cannot achieve or have not yet achieved full, active masculinity, the status of *virtus*, become another form of feminised body. They may be too young, or of low status, or are just simply the object of someone else’s desire and unable to defend themselves or their body, and therefore cannot achieve a full masculine state. A second mosaic from the town of Italica depicts this motif (3m x 3m) (Figure 78).



Figure 78: Mosaic with central medallion of Ganymede, Italica, Condesa de Lebrija Palace (photo by the author)

Ganymede is the image in the central medallion of a large patterned floor. He is being grasped by the eagle who almost sits on his back to carry him away. Ganymede is young, naked, and accompanied by a dog who looks up to see his master being abducted. The composition of this image almost makes it look like Ganymede has grown wings as his body and the body of his abductor

³⁵³ As discussed in the introduction. See also Bartman 2002, Green 2015.

seem to form one divine being. Again, we have the curve of his body, emphasising his youthful nature and his beauty. He is literally a decorative flourish on this floor, a motif to finish off the work of art.

Like the women, his beauty marks his availability, and invites the reader to consume it. Ganymede is the 'archetype of the beautiful, sexually desirable male slave'.³⁵⁴ Plutarch specifically recommends taking out sexual excess on ones' slaves as a healthy practice that is good for society and a form of respect for the respectable wife.³⁵⁵ The gender of both Ganymede, and the slave, is aligned with the passive feminine because he is a sexual object: again, Jupiter, in the form of the eagle demonstrates to the active male viewer the ready availability of Ganymede, and thereby anyone who fulfils this subservient role. The slave viewer is reminded of their own position. Although we have little information on the archaeological context, from the quality and size of the second Ganymede mosaic we can postulate that this was an intimate space, but one of importance, possibly similar to the *cubiculum* in the Villa of Maternus. We might suggest that one of the most accessible group of viewers of this mosaic were high status males, as has been throughout.³⁵⁶ These viewers can look from the image of this sexualised boy, taken by the god Jupiter, to the real-life reflections that exist within their world, the slave boys. They can make manifest the power discourse that is at play here. Another group of viewers may have been the slaves themselves, who saw their curious mix of power and powerlessness reflected back at them: they were desirable, and feted as such, but powerless in being able to translate that role into control over any aspect of their life, including their own bodies. Only those with power already can translate myth into reality and choose their roles. Those who are passive can only have the roles enforced upon them. Like the images they were owned, curated, viewed by those more powerful than themselves. The mosaic on the floor, and the slave boy in the house, are testimony to the elite owner's status: 'Like the house itself, slaves reflected the status of their masters; they were human agents who complemented the message of the architecture'.³⁵⁷ As Jupiter can take whomever he pleases, so the elite male who claims an active masculinity can take those who are less powerful than him.

Hylas is often presented as a counterpoint to Ganymede in scholarship and in images, another archetypal 'pretty boy'.³⁵⁸ Muth posits him as the ideal of the erotic lover.³⁵⁹ He was the companion

³⁵⁴ Williams 1999: 56-7.

³⁵⁵ Plutarch *Moralia* (140B); See also Joshel 2015: 151.

³⁵⁶ This is because of the aforementioned discussion of the use of the social spaces of the house to entertain important guests and other men of power.

³⁵⁷ George 1997: 23.

³⁵⁸ For example, in the *Satyricon*, Petronius describes a visit to an art gallery. Ganymede and Hylas are specifically grouped together as two aspects of the same topic (8: 83); Ling 1979: 800.

³⁵⁹ Muth 1998: 124.

of Hercules when he joined the crew of the Argo. The myth tells that he left the crew to drink from a spring when they landed and was abducted by the nymphs of the spring because he was beautiful. Hercules searched for him but couldn't find him and mourned his loss.³⁶⁰ We can see him as the desirable youth in another mosaic from the Villa of Maternus at Carranque, and in a second mosaic from Quintana del Marco, in the north-eastern corner of the peninsula (Figure 66, page 134, and Figure 79, page 150, respectively).³⁶¹

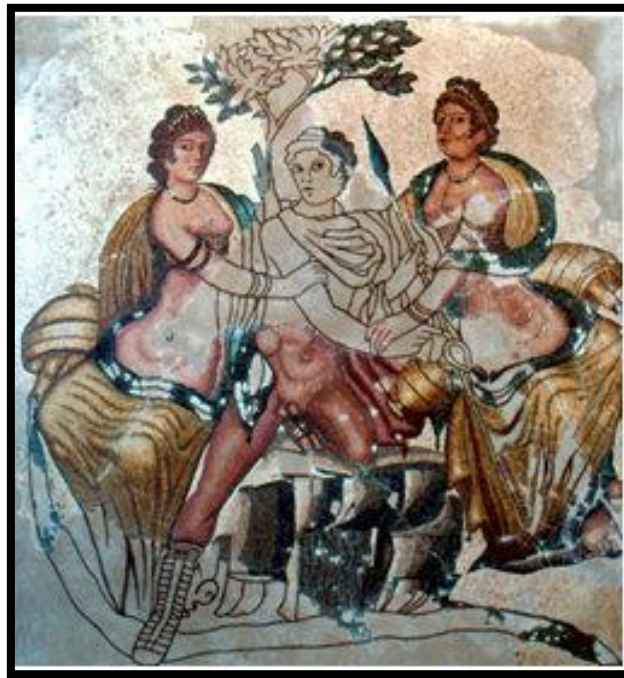


Figure 79: Hylas and the Nymphs, including suggested reconstruction, Quintana del Marco (<http://en.antiquitatem.com/the-abduction-of-hylas-italica-mosaic> [accessed 18/05/17])

Two nymphs sit either side of a beautiful young man. They are reaching for him but also look out at the viewer. They have elaborate hairstyles and are wearing cloaks that leave their upper bodies bare. Hylas's upper body has been lost but he stands in a heroic stance, legs planted widely. His muscles are emphasised. Although the upper part of his body and his head have been lost, from what is left, and the suggested reconstruction, this mosaic is about displaying visual pleasures for the viewer. The two nymphs, and the boy himself are there to be viewed, and for the viewer to take an erotic pleasure from viewing them, even more so when the story is known.

However, in a third Iberian mosaic depicting Hylas and the Nymphs, an altered composition allows us to explore a subtler expression of the gender discourse at play here. It brings together multiple gender performances. The mosaic, like the "Lovers" mosaic, is from a townhouse in Italica (the

³⁶⁰ Apollonius *Argonautica* 1.

³⁶¹ The Villa of Maternus mosaic will be discussed in detail below.

central panel measures 1.12m x 1.12m) (Figure 80) (second century AD). It is in a room that is only accessible through an anteroom, making it a space that is not open to all. Instead, it in fact requires an invitation for guests to enter. The owner must show you in or agree to your presence there, controlling the movement in and out of the space.

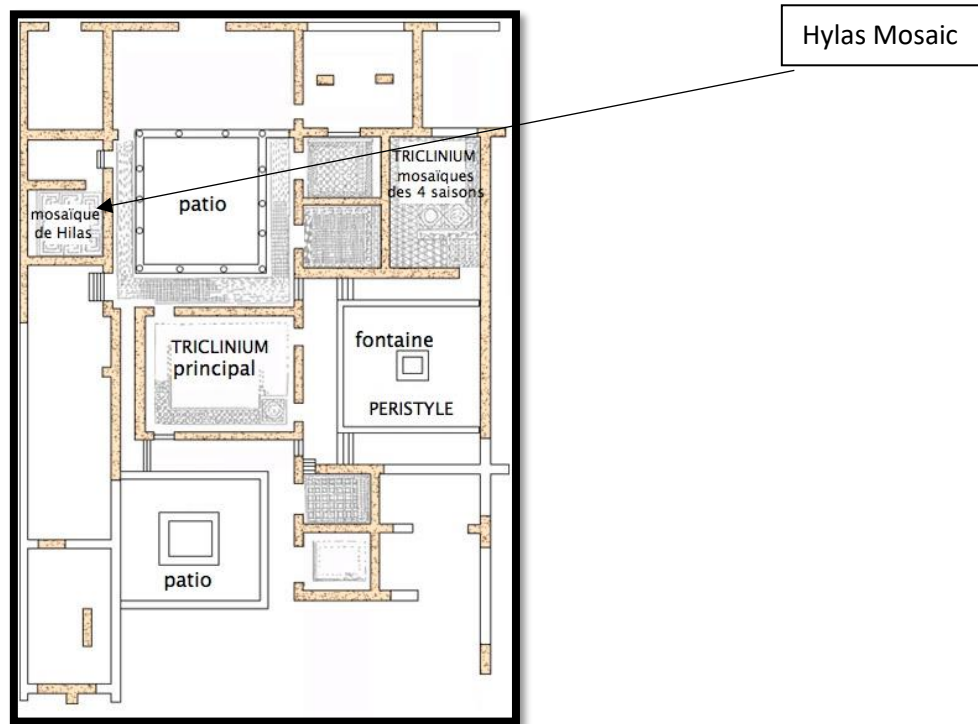


Figure 80: Plan of the House of Hylas, Italica, indicating location of mosaics (captions on the plan by Mañas Romero, annotation by author) (<http://www.arretetonchar.fr/italica-andalousie/> [accessed 21/08/15])

The mosaic depicts two moments from the story of Hylas: both Hylas being taken by the nymphs and, more unusually, Hercules himself as he discovers his loss (Figure 81).



Figure 81: Mosaic panel of Hylas and Hercules, Italica, Seville Archaeological Museum (photo by the author)

Hylas is naked, except for a cloak over his shoulders, and he looks back towards the figure of Hercules.³⁶² The nymphs appear out of the scenery of the background, grasping his limbs as they take him away. Hercules is to the right, a muscular, bearded figure who raises his hand in despair whilst still holding his club in the other. The two male figures look at each other but seem unable to perform any action; the nymphs are the only ones with a sense of movement in the image. Even the trees in the background stand solidly, with bare branches upraised in an echo of Hercules's gesture.

It seems then a contradiction to the earlier constructions of ideal gender roles: Hercules, a symbol of intense physical strength, is rooted to the spot, unable to enact any of his masculine prowess because of the grief of his loss. The nymphs instead are active, almost subsuming Hylas in the way they grasp at him. They are refusing to enact the passive femininity the other women perform and are thereby monstrous. This is a dangerous, frightening image for the elite male: it highlights the dangers of these liaisons. Possibly it is a warning not to get too involved with the erotic or rather the emotional pleasures of such relationships. This is because, as discussed in the previous chapter and the introduction, *virtus* in part rests on staying in control of oneself. To fall completely in love in this way is to lose control of oneself as a man. This leaves room for someone else to step into the position of power. Has Hercules lost that control temporarily, and therefore allowed the monstrous

³⁶² Hercules is also naked; however, this is clear example of the ways in which nudity is a costume and can indicate different attributes depending on the context. Here, Hylas's youth makes his nudity vulnerable and sexually available. Hercules' age lends his nudity an air of heroism. See Hallett 2005.

female to take control, and misery and heartbreak is the result for everyone?³⁶³ Though we have the ingredients of the abduction scenes above, they are displayed with different foci that add a stronger edge of danger to the image. The mosaic does reinforce the idea that the heroic male body is the rightful user of the feminine gender. Hylas is presented as the sexual object, his body and his beauty displayed. Hercules is the masculine hero but is here temporarily unmanned. His pose instead is that of the grieving female in a very similar style to Europa's attendants in the Cordoba mosaic (Figure 76, page 143). It could also be that, as it is appropriate to show Diana in the costume of the Crouching Venus when in an erotic context, Hercules is shown in a costume, or more specifically a gesture that connotes loss. He has to be depicted in this manner as it is the appropriate way of showing grief and despair.

Ganymede and Hylas are just further manifestations of the female gender: within these domestic spaces they present the same poses, the same sexually available body as their female counterparts. Again and again, these mosaics enact a discourse of gender by drawing on certain visual conventions that would be recognised by a multitude of viewers. The narratives that they depict concern themselves with passivity and activity, power and powerlessness, and thereby form a medium by which these concepts can be translated into a domestic context.

3.9 GENDER AND POWER

These scenes of mythic narrative are the perfect place in which these concepts can be explored and domesticated, so to speak. Myth is good to think with: 'a rhetorically powerful virtual world, like and yet unlike reality, and highly charged (with authority, glamour, beauty, and emotive force)'.³⁶⁴ If we return to the Villa of Maternus described previously, we can see how this can potentially play out in a physical space. The mosaics in the reception rooms are supplemented by the grandeur of the architecture which includes stepped apses, double height rooms, fountains, geometric mosaics everywhere and vividly painted walls. The rooms present a picture of an owner who is educated and erudite, a true member of an imperial elite who recognises a heritage going back to the Age of Heroes. He can discuss the epics of Homer and put on an exciting hunt due to his vast estate and resources. Underlying this status is the gender behaviour that supports this social structure. All viewers can recognise the hierarchies that are played out: passive clothed woman vs active male body. The action, the power, is with the heroic man. This conception then interplays with the

³⁶³ Hercules is possibly very suitable for this role as he also features in cross-dressing myths, as discussed in Chapter 4.

³⁶⁴ Dowden & Livingston 2011: 9.

behaviours that occur in that room, such as the owner greeting his guests and clients, ordering his slaves, running the estate, marrying off his daughters, entertaining peers after a hunt. In the *cubiculum* a more balanced, intimate view comes in to play. The public spaces can be left behind and the social strictures relaxed slightly. Both power and gender can be tested in this intimate space. There will still be viewers of this mosaic: guests, family, slaves. But the control over the space allows the introduction of complexity into the images. The *domina* can sit at the centre, presiding over games of erotic love. We can feel the thrill of fear and desire as we see the monstrous feminine, in the form of the beautiful nymphs, lust over the erotic body of the boy Hylas, as slave or as a boy. We can enjoy our forbidden glance at the goddess Diana and enjoy her power as a female viewer. We can mourn with Thisbe and Pyramus over their divided love. But equally we can know that these dangerous outcomes – nymphs abducting young boys, men being turned into stags by goddesses, tragic death, and rape - come from playing with these boundaries of gender and power. This is a space in which it is acceptable to test that structure, but ultimately, these images all come together to reinforce the behaviours that are expected.

In this virtual world ideas that would not be suitable for open discussion or which are only to be understood implicitly can be played with and reiterated. Rather than sitting down each and every woman, man, slave, or child, to explain directly how they should be behaving, these ideas can be woven into their daily lives and domestic space. They are the 'Other' in relation to the heroic manly man of the previous chapter and therefore defined in this context by their relationship to the ideal. The myths in the mosaics highlighted above, because of this inter-relationship, seem to play specifically with sexual misdeeds which in turn adds to the way in which they are powerful in the domestic space.

These mythic narratives also appeal visually and emotionally to the viewer and are therefore rhetorically powerful because they make manifest multiple pleasures of viewing. They are enjoyable to look at first and foremost. There is the erotic pleasure of seeing these bodies and, for some viewers, there is the possibility of completing the narratives to experience the sexual thrills the image promises. There is a sense of wish-fulfilment: both for the powerful male, and if we return to Kampen's quote above, for the dutiful woman rewarded with heroic children and memories of great beauty.³⁶⁵ The slave viewer is less enticed because there is less illusion of agency here as there may be with women. The slave may view the rewards of Ganymede and Briseis in a positive manner. This would require knowledge of the story from performances or elite viewers discussing the images and

³⁶⁵ Kampen 1997.

is less tangible. Not only is Ganymede dead, but he is still a servant. Briseis has achieved wifely status, but as a woman she can still transgress, and be at risk of violence.

Finally, there is the pleasure of *paideia*, the educated viewing that confirms status and entrance into the elite community. Although this chapter has not focused on this aspect, it is still an important part of the interaction the viewer has with the image, especially as these arguments have stressed the importance of the intersection of status with gender identity: the access to education and the ability to display *paideia* is bound up in elite masculine identity, and therefore becomes a matter of gender. It is also had relevance in the wider Empire: by demonstrating *paideia* these provincial Iberian men can stake a claim to the imperial stage, reinforcing the power they hold within their local communities as well, and over elite Iberian women. These aspects all work together. Overall, myth can be used to explore ideas about society that are not explicitly discussed. They are powerful because they draw the viewer in with the multiple ways in which viewing is made pleasurable.

Thus, a discourse is established between the image and viewer and a relationship can be created. This allows us to explore these images as we have done above, considering the ways in which different viewers might respond to different images, and hopefully peeling back the underlying social constructions. If we return to our idea of the collection of mythical narratives in the Villa of Maternus, we can see those different viewers responding and reacting in such ways but all working towards a similar object: the maintenance of the socially acceptable gender and status structure.

At that intersection of status and gender, elite viewers may recognise, through their cultural understanding, a sense of control and power in these images. They have the ability to enact the erotic pleasures before them, with the slave boy who serves wine, just as Jupiter has his serving boy, Ganymede. When viewing these mosaics, the elite both confirm and reinforce their own status. They can re-enact the narratives that take place and demonstrate or indeed mimic the behaviours that show their ease with this realm of myth, power and imperial culture. They can demonstrate their divine-like powers within this microcosm of the domestic sphere. This could be expressed physically by the viewer in a number of actions that demonstrate dominance, sexually or politically. When the elite male owner orders his slaves to fetch his wine, or graciously grants a favour for a dependant, or literally sexually dominates his slaves or his wife, these actions are reflected back from the floor below him, reinforcing and supporting the construction of that identity. For the non-elite, including those smaller power balances such as elite women who are still beholden to men, they are reminded of their passivity, and their inability to exert control, at the very least over their own bodies. If we return to the individual non-elite viewers, they can understand that in the end, their bodies are as powerless as the images on the floor. The slave is at the whim of his or her master. The daughter of

the house may try to focus on, through the example of these images, how she could be celebrated for her beauty and found a dynasty of (local) heroes when she is meeting prospective husbands or leaving the house before her marriage, but she cannot forget that she is enmeshed in this web of power structures. The elite woman may play at being the aggressor, acting out the role of the nymph taking her pleasure with a slave Hylas, but the iconography also stresses that this state is unnatural and that this form of power play is dangerous. This is temporary – the structure will return to normality, and safety – through the reassertion of the power of the hero. The repetition of poses and visual cues in these mosaics normalises this power structure for the viewer and normalises these roles within the domestic space. It may also suggest to the viewer that the boundaries between these roles can easily be crossed and transgressed but that this is an undesirable situation: the images help reinforce and retain these boundaries, for the safety of the community.

The intersection with gender springs from this. In these elite domestic spaces, gender is not a binary of male and female because it is so intrinsically connected with power. As a facet of identity, it is intertwined with the ability to behave actively rather than passively. The hierarchy starts with the powerful male and defines everyone in relation to this ideal. Gender, and the gender behaviours that these myths explore are a visual shorthand for the expression of power and position. The visual cues of the body and what that body can do indicate to the viewer their status within society. The domestic arena is the perfect place to explore and display this, as in these mosaics because it keeps these visuals at the heart of social life, it assigns value to the images through cultural caché, and becomes integrated into the normal. Gender identity and behaviours are writ into the domestic structure physically, just as they are intertwined with power conceptually.

4 BACCHUS: CONFORMITY AND DIFFERENCE

The previous chapter explored the ways in which the mythical narratives depicted on mosaics create or rather reinforce a system of gender difference, whereby masculinity and femininity represent opposing ends of a spectrum or binary. Mythical narratives are a rich source of images that explore this gender spectrum, but another prevalent theme offers another perspective. The imagery of the god Bacchus and his followers – maenads, satyrs, centaurs, Pan or Silenus – are found in multiple forms across the Roman Empire. They are one of the most common motifs on mosaics and represent a body of iconography that appears to be truly Empire wide.³⁶⁶ Ling refers to Dionysus as the ‘favourite’ subject no less than three times in his survey of mosaics.³⁶⁷ Approximately 38 of the mosaics in the database in Appendix 1 have Bacchic themes, making it the largest category. It also one of the most complex: Bacchus as a character is inherently changeable and elusive.

This chapter will consider the range of Bacchic imagery. To start with, a basic summary of this topic will of course centre on images of the god himself. Bacchus is a god of wine, originally of the countryside and therefore associated with a more rustic, wild side of human nature.³⁶⁸ Some of the salient points of his myth are that he was born twice: his mother Semele was the lover of the god Jupiter and was tricked into asking him to appear in his divine state. This killed her but Jupiter snatched her unborn child from her womb and sewed him into his own thigh and from this makeshift masculine womb he was born full term.³⁶⁹ He is also a god much associated with madness: Homer names him ‘*mainomenos Dionysos*’ meaning “mad Dionysus”.³⁷⁰ This madness is associated with his cult, most closely with the ritualistic behaviour of his followers in the mystery cult, and in some of the stories associated with him. One of the most complete and well-known versions for the modern world is probably Euripides’ *Bacchae*. This tells of the god being rejected and not recognised by a mortal, and the madness, or ecstasy of his followers being used to punish those who have scorned him. A slightly later introduction is the story of the god’s invasion of India and subsequent triumph after his victories. Alexander the Great drew heavily on the connections with this mythical

³⁶⁶ Dunbabin’s *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World* (1999) describes mosaics with Dionysiac or Bacchic themes in every geographic chapter: Italy (3); North-Western Provinces (3); Britain (1); North African Provinces (5) (though she also states that ‘Dionysiac imager is almost ubiquitous’ here); Sicily (2); Iberia (4); Syria & the East (5); Palestine & TransJordan (2); Greece in the Imperial Period (9); Asia Minor, Cyprus, Constantinople (7). These date from the first century BC to the late sixth century AD. This is of course dependent upon Dunbabin’s own methodological choices.

³⁶⁷ Ling 1998: 71, 72, 84.

³⁶⁸ Otto 1965.

³⁶⁹ March 2009; Ovid *Metamorphoses* 3.254 – 323.

³⁷⁰ Kerényi 1976: 131; Homer *Iliad* VI 264 – 5.

event in his travels and this Hellenistic connection is an important one to remember.³⁷¹ The Roman writers stress his ambiguous nature, his multiplicity of titles and roles. Petronius refers to a slave playing ‘successively the roles of Bacchus the Thunderer, Bacchus the Deliverer, and Bacchus God of Devotees’.³⁷² The god is also merged with the figure of Liber, a god that was worshipped in Rome from approximately the fifth century BC, and who oversees viticulture and other fertility roles.³⁷³

Another important theme, especially with regard to this thesis, is the recurrence of women associated with Bacchus. He has a retinue (sometimes referred to as a *thiasos*) of various creatures, which include centaurs and satyrs, the god Pan, and a satyr companion called Silenus.³⁷⁴ Lions and tigers are also commonly associated with him. However, women are seen as some of his most visible worshippers, and as maenads or nymphs are often paired with satyrs in Bacchic imagery or occur of their own accord. There is also Ariadne, his wife or partner, who appears in a number of myths herself. Her narrative originates in the stories of Theseus and the labyrinth where she gave him the golden thread and a sword to help him survive and betrayed her family because of her love for him.³⁷⁵ The second collection of myths relate how Bacchus discovered her sleeping on Naxos after Theseus abandoned her, and how she becomes his wife.³⁷⁶ This is probably a merging of two distinct characters. Kerényi, for example, argues that Ariadne was originally a fertility goddess, local to the island of Naxos.³⁷⁷ The character of Ariadne from the Theseus mythic strand and the Bacchic one may not have been the same individual but for later storytellers and traditions they become one.³⁷⁸ In some traditions, following her partnership with Bacchus, she herself is made immortal: ‘She alone is worthy to stand at the side of Dionysus and to become the only one who is raised by him into immortality’ according to Otto, meaning this is one story of metamorphosis that is ultimately

³⁷¹ Curtius Rufus *History of Alexander* 3.12.18.

³⁷² Petronius *Satyricon* 41.

³⁷³ Kearns and Price 2003: 318; Ovid *Fasti* 3.728ff.

³⁷⁴ These mythical characters are understood in this work in the following ways and drawn from various sources. Maenads are ‘both the mythical companions (and antagonists) of Dionysus and their historical admirers’ and will not necessarily be distinguished from Bacchantes or into mortal or immortal woman (Heinze, Theodor (Geneva), “Maenads”, in: *Brill’s New Pauly*, accessed 04 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e716260); Satyrs are half men half beast, usually goats or donkeys – references include Hesiod, *Fragments of Unknown Position* 6 (quoted in Strabo, *Geography* 10.3.19), Ovid *Metamorphoses* eg. 4.25 – 31, 14.636 – 639, and Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 10.209; centaurs are half man, half horse, descriptions of whom are found in Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 4.69.4, as well as their related mythology – Ovid *Metamorphoses*, 206 – 536; Pan is the god of goatherds and shepherds (Holzhausen, Jens (Bamberg), “Pan”, in: *Brill’s New Pauly*, accessed 04/07/17 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e905250); Silenus is one of the satyrs, depicted as old, drunken and bald most frequently (Heinze, Theodor (Geneva) and Bähler, Balbina (Göttingen), “Silen(s)”, in: *Brill’s New Pauly*, accessed 04/07/17 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e1112800) as in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4. 26 – 28, *Fasti* 1.398-400.

³⁷⁵ Eg. Ovid *Heroides* 10.

³⁷⁶ Diodorus Siculus *Bibliotheca Historica* 4.61.5; Ovid *Metamorphoses*. 8.179ff.

³⁷⁷ See discussion by Kerényi 1976: 99 ff.

³⁷⁸ Eg. Ovid *Heroides* 10.

positive for the female character, though she suffers beforehand.³⁷⁹ Equally, the god himself can display female and masculine traits, and his ambiguity is a key feature for the study of gender in this thesis.³⁸⁰

In his study of the vase paintings of fifth century Athens, Carpenter suggests that there are three forms of Bacchic imagery: the mythic, the comic, and the cultic.³⁸¹ There are the stories of myth, from the theatre and traditional tales, that involve the god Bacchus who was born from the thigh of Jupiter and was associated with a female figure called Ariadne. There is the comic, pantomime images of the god, 'a buffoon, probably beardless, who wears female clothing'.³⁸² Thirdly, there is the cultic side, the images of him as a divine being who brings wine and was worshipped through the mysteries. These categories, although referring to a specific medium in a specific context, can be seen to be diffused throughout the subsequent use of the theme in different media through the next millennium. For the specific contexts that we are examining here (mosaics from the Roman provinces of Iberia in the first to the fifth centuries AD) the mythic form is the most prevalent. The visual language of this form has been developed from the Hellenistic imagery of these myths, focusing on Bacchus as a young man (as with other gods in this period), and generally uses less monstrous forms of the god and his retinue than the way the god is depicted in Athenian imagery.³⁸³ However, it must be remembered that these categories are not impermeable. The mythic form may contain elements of the divine form, or Bacchus may switch from a harmless buffoon to a powerful god without warning. As modern scholars we like to impose rigid types, whereas ancient viewers may have been able to view him with a more fluid, multi-layered gaze.

For example, there have been discussions as to whether Bacchic mosaics within domestic spaces signal a desire by the patrons to display their religious leanings. It has been argued that a Bacchic mosaic within the domestic sphere performs a cultic role and is something inherently religious.³⁸⁴ Dunbabin approaches the Bacchic mosaics of North Africa from this angle: she states that 'it can hardly be doubted that the subjects of these mosaics were chosen by adherents of the Dionysiac religion who wished their pavements to allude in a specific way to the ceremony of initiation which they had undergone, or to the basic tenets of their faith'.³⁸⁵ This may well be the case but there is

³⁷⁹ Otto 1965: 182; Eg. Hesiod *Theogony* 947 ff.

'And golden-haired (khrysokomes) Dionysos made blonde-haired Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, his buxom wife: and [Zeus] the son of Kronos (Cronus) made her deathless and unageing for him.'

³⁸⁰ Jameson 1993.

³⁸¹ Carpenter 1997: 105.

³⁸² Carpenter 1997: 105.

³⁸³ Pollitt & Pollitt 1990.

³⁸⁴ Dunbabin 1978.

³⁸⁵ Dunbabin 1978: 178.

very little direct evidence to show this. This study will focus on the iconography and will consider the multiple ways in which viewers might have interacted with them. A viewer might have approached a Bacchus image with religious intention, but there might also be aesthetic, or erotic, or learned responses. These meanings, I would argue, might all have appeared in one mosaic but to different viewers, or at different times of the day. When feeling reflective, an image of the drunken Bacchus might indeed have represented 'a symbol of the bliss which his worshippers can share', or during a dinner party it might have been a cheery reminder of the joys of entertaining or a sobering one of the perils of over-indulging in wine.³⁸⁶

Dunbabin goes on to suggest that when not cultic, these images are about fertility and prosperity, the pleasures of drinking and general well-being for guests and owners alike.³⁸⁷ Frequently, this theme and form of imagery has been strongly connected with dining, and thereby the majority of rooms with Bacchic mosaics have been identified as dining spaces, regardless of other evidence of shape or size.³⁸⁸ A circularity has been created whereby Bacchic themes are associated with dining, so Bacchic mosaics must be in dining rooms, and therefore most possible dining rooms have Bacchic mosaics, thereby proving that Bacchic themes are associated with dining. There is some basic association: Bacchus is the god of wine, and to return to Carpenter's study of Athenian vases, there is a connection between Bacchic imagery and drinking vessels. However, this is not an infallible connection, especially in the broader category of floor mosaics. To assume so is to ignore the other aspects of Bacchic imagery and not really to look at the mosaics themselves in their context.

The Iberian Bacchic mosaics have been seen as derivations of North African mosaics in particular. It is suggested that craftsman worked in both North Africa and on the Iberian Peninsula or moved from one to the other and that there is a clear stylistic connection which distinguishes them from other provinces.³⁸⁹ However, Dunbabin does allow that Iberian mosaics 'retain features that are peculiar to themselves'.³⁹⁰ This chapter will explore this premise. As discussed in the introduction, epigraphic evidence has suggested that there are some differences in the ways in which gender is conceived of, and performed, in the Iberian provinces. The previous chapters have suggested that the mosaics present a reasonably orthodox representation of gender roles. How does the 'wild' aspect of this god, his association with the untamed animalistic side of humanity, interact with the socially expected or allowed behaviours of masculinity and femininity? The mosaics discussed cover a

³⁸⁶ Dunbabin 1978: 185.

³⁸⁷ Dunbabin 1978: 186.

³⁸⁸ Parrish 1995 summarises some of the connections between the dining room and Bacchic themes.

³⁸⁹ Blázquez 1993 'Arte y sociedad en los mosaicos hispanos' for example, pp 15 – 29, and Dunbabin 1999 also has a discussion on influences, p 152 ff.

³⁹⁰ Dunbabin 1999: 152.

significant time period of 400 years but because they show continued use of repeated motifs and iconographic styles they will be considered as a group. They have been chosen because they are accessible to the author, published, relatively undamaged, and relate to the theme of gender. Equally, scholarly approaches regarding Bacchus and his iconography will be drawn from an even wider time scale and geographic spread. Again, this has been done because it is felt that there is relevance to these comparisons despite the differences.

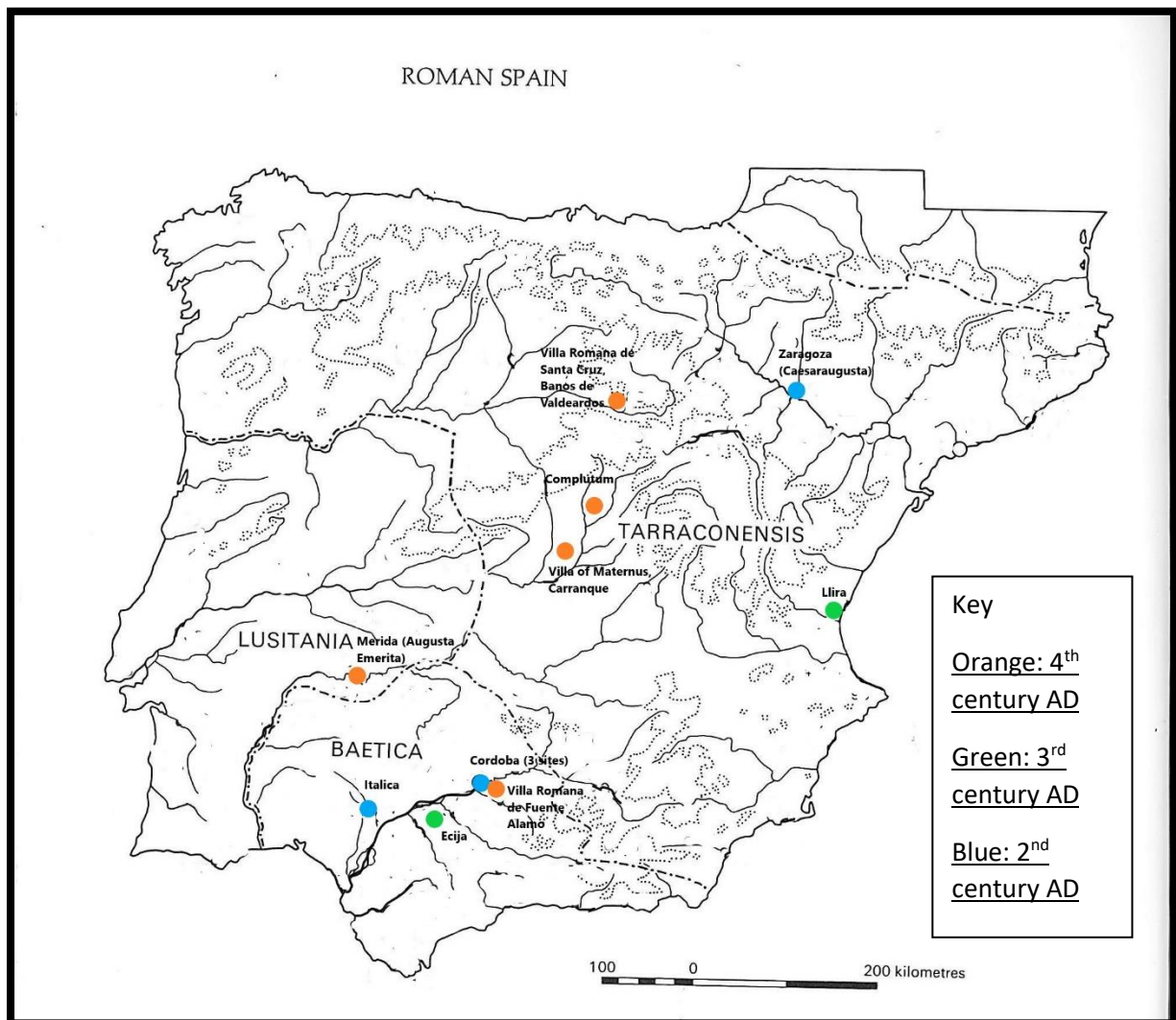


Figure 82: Map showing the sites in the text, adapted from Keay 1988 by the author

4.1 THE GOOD LIFE: DRINKING WITH SATYRS AND MAENADS

A common pattern in these mosaics is the use of associated Bacchic imagery, in particular the members of the Bacchic retinue, rather than the god himself. The characters and associated symbols function as decorative devices and form a standardised motif or range of patterns that can be picked

by the patron or the artist to form a pleasing design.³⁹¹ Apart from the Seasons, there are few other themes that are used in this manner.³⁹² This may be because these Bacchic revellers are linked to conviviality: Bacchus's retinue are often depicted dancing, drinking, and generally enjoying themselves. They are pleasant to look at, even without the mythic and cultic associations modern scholars ascribe to them.

For example, a mosaic from Italica consists of nine squares, each with a Bacchic figure displayed in it (Figure 83). There is no apparent overriding narrative theme, just a collection of figures to form an aesthetically pleasing image. This does not exclude these images from having other meanings, as I will demonstrate below, but an iconographic reading is important.



Figure 83: Image of the Bacchus mosaic from the House of the Planets, Italica (photo by the author)

Moving clockwise from the top left, the squares depict: a centaur galloping, holding a branch; a satyr facing us; a centaur; a tiger 'facing a personification of the evil eye' according to Mañas Romero; a centaur; a satyr holding a *pedum* (a kind of hunting stick used by the satyrs in the Indian invasion); a second tiger; and in the centre, Bacchus himself being held up by Ariadne. The elements focus on the rustic, uncivilised side of the myth, the centaurs and the satyrs who are half man, half beast, and the tigers who are ferocious wild animals, grouped around the drunken god at the centre.³⁹³

³⁹¹ Hales 2008.

³⁹² The Seasons are associated with Bacchus due to his connection to fertility and nature. For example, sarcophagi often combine images of the Seasons with Bacchus. Seaford 2006.

³⁹³ Mañas Romero 2010: 211 although the image is damaged, and I cannot personally tell that the tigers are looking at a personification of the evil eye; the reference to the *pedum* is from the entry in *Brill's New Pauly* (accessed online 16/08/16).

This mosaic is located in the House of the Planets. This is one of the elaborate town houses that has been excavated at this site and has a fairly regular plan around a peristyle courtyard (Figure 84).

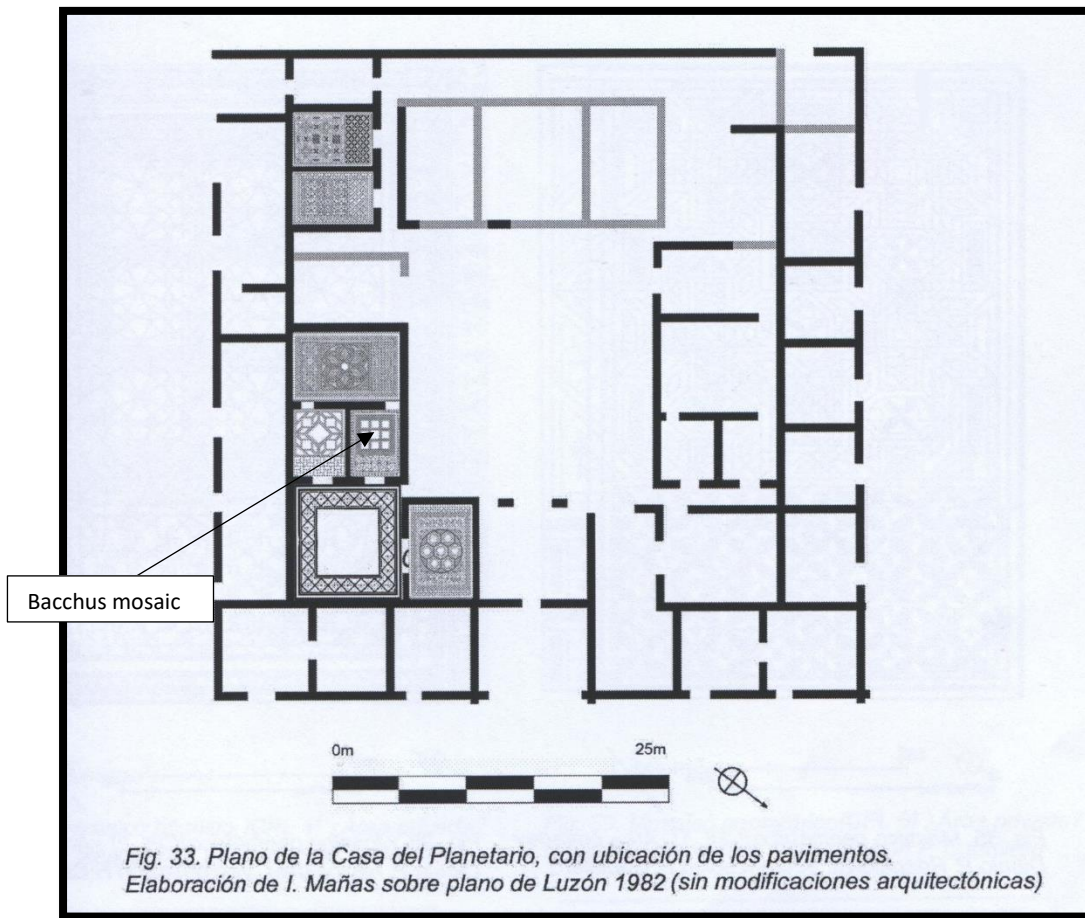


Figure 84: Plan of the House of the Planets, (Mañas Romero 2010, annotated by the author)

The Bacchus mosaic is one of a number of decorative floors in the house, as can be seen in the plan in Figure 84, including depictions of a male god with a cornucopia and a depiction of the seven planetary deities.³⁹⁴ The comparatively small number of figurative mosaics in the house compared to the total rooms highlights their importance. This would suggest that the owner was reasonably wealthy. The house is of medium to small size (1600m²) relative to the other excavated examples suggesting that it is the residence of an aspiring elite family rather than the heights of society.³⁹⁵ The room itself is a smaller room: the mosaic is 4.50m x 3.90m in size and is not accessed directly from the peristyle itself. Along with the room next to it, it provides access into an even more inaccessible room. The room with the Bacchic mosaics is therefore a room that people may move through but

³⁹⁴ Mañas Romero 2010: 210 – 213.

³⁹⁵ Mañas Romero 2010: 67 – Table A. Italica is divided into the *nova urbs* and the *vetus urbs*, with the majority of the houses discussed coming from the *nova urbs* as the *vetus urbs* has been severely under excavated. Mañas Romero has compiled details of the relative sizes of the *nova urbs* houses.

could also be held in and allowed the owner to restrict access to the inner room. It would give glimpses into this more private space but not necessarily encourage ingress. This is not a main reception room, but again, like the rooms housing the Hylas and the Metamorphoses mosaic in the previous chapter, is a smaller more intimate space for privileged guests or family. As with the Hylas mosaic that explores a more 'dangerous' theme, the images here may suggest to the viewers that this a freer space than the larger reception rooms in the rest of the house or a space in which social boundaries can be explored.³⁹⁶ The relation of these Bacchic images to wildness, to an escape from civilisation could give a sense of space from the strictures of society. Bacchus himself invites the viewer to do that: the god is drunk (Figure 85 depicts a detailed view of the central panel of Bacchus and Ariadne).



Figure 85: Detail of the Bacchus mosaic, House of the Planets, Italica (photo by the author)

He is leaning on Ariadne, his body the sinuous curve that we have seen in the images of the lovers of Jupiter in the third chapter. There is softness, revelry, luxury, pleasure in this image. This is very different from the masculine ideals discussed in the second chapter and again points to the fact that this smaller room is a space of more freedom, or intimacy because the god himself, the most powerful figure here, is relatively free from social norms constructed around ideas of masculinity. He is not performing that manly body that we saw in the second chapter. The curves on his body

³⁹⁶ However, it must be made clear that Bacchic mosaics are not only found in smaller spaces, the following example from the Building of Neptune being a case in point. This analysis relates to this specific context, a choice that has been made, not a generalisation about all Bacchic mosaics.

designate him to be sexually available in a way that a masculine man should not be. Is this allowed precisely because of this Bacchic context? It certainly signals the erotic nature of the image. Ariadne mirrors Bacchus's pose with hers and possibly invites female viewers to enjoy the freedom also. I will return to this idea later in the chapter.

However, this is a very conventional form of unconventionality. In another house directly across the *cardo maximus* from the House of the Planets, is the Building of Neptune, which has a very similar series of Bacchic motifs, not in a smaller, relatively inaccessible space but in one of the largest rooms in the town (Figure 86). It consists of 35 squares alternating figurative panels with panels containing roundels of floral designs (6.4m x 4.5m).



Figure 86: Picture of the Bacchus mosaic from the Building of Neptune, Italica (photo by the author)

It depicts similar figures: centaurs leaping across the panel, ferocious lions and tigers, satyrs dancing and playing the flute. It also shows Silenus, Bacchus's companion, drunk and on a donkey, dancing, semi-nude maenads, and Agave holding the head of her son, King Pentheus (both characters from Euripides' *Bacchae*: this moment being the climax of the play).³⁹⁷ This image is a hint of the darker side of these figures: the madness that may go too far, or as an equivalent, the drunkenness that risks the masculine man's self-control or literal bodily integrity, as in the case of Pentheus.

³⁹⁷ Euripides *Bacchae* 1141 – 1148.



Figure 87: Detail of dancing maenad from the Bacchus mosaic in the Building of Neptune, Italica (photo by the author)

To focus on the female characters (apart from Agave), such as the maenad in Figure 87, the most apparent point is that she is not naked like Ariadne in Figure 85 (page 164), but she is clearly not performing the roles of the quiet, modest, feminine figure we saw exalted in the last chapter. The key difference that separates these two images is that here the maenad is moving and is not passive and inactive. She holds a *thyrsus*, and is dancing, but this is for her own pleasure, not for the viewer's, with no internal viewer or eyeline to allow the external viewer into the space. She is not tightly bound in cloth to keep her from taking up too much (masculine) space; in fact, she has her own defined space.



Figure 88: Altars depicting dancing maenad (l), and satyr (r), Italica, Seville Archaeological Museum (photos by the author)

The maenad looks very similar to the images on the Bacchic altars in Figure 88, also found in Italica, near the theatre. This iconography of the maenad, alongside the satyr, is prevalent within the Iberian provinces in these forms, and was clearly known to viewers as a symbol of religious ecstasy and conviviality in both domestic and public spaces.

A third example will demonstrate how clearly these unconventional figures can actually be seen as part of the spectrum of expected behaviours and a sanctioned form of transgression. The mosaic of ‘The Wolf and the Twins (La Loba y Los Gemelos)’ was excavated from a villa just north-east of the town of Cordoba. There is little information on the context, as the villa has only been partially excavated.³⁹⁸ It is a square pavement focused on a central medallion with four semi-circles filling the edges of the square (3.65m x 3.65m). In the gaps between are four heads of Medusa, and at each corner a krater (Figure 89).

³⁹⁸ Fernández Castro 1982; Blázquez 1981.



Figure 89: Mosaic of the Wolf & the Twins (*Mosaico con la Loba y los Gemelos*), Alcolea, Cordoba (Blázquez 1981)

The central medallion depicts the founding myth of Rome with the wolf (here looking rather like a tiger with her stripes) suckling the twins Romulus and Remus, the continuation of the Mars and Rhea scene in the previous chapter. The semicircles each contain a reclining faun or satyr, or a maenad. They carry or are surrounded by various Bacchic attributes including drinking vessels, flutes, and a leopard. This image therefore combines a quintessentially Roman motif with these Bacchic forms. It demonstrates a nicely eclectic selection of content, which brings home the individual nature of these mosaics: the components have not been chosen according to some apparent scheme that modern scholars can instantly categorise, but because each image meant something – aesthetically, emotionally, intellectually, socially – to the patron or mosaicist. The combination of the maenads and satyrs, apotropaic motifs (including Medusa heads) and a Roman foundation myth has become a visually cohesive design. Their understanding may be on a deep or a superficial level as we understand it, as context or time or understanding may dictate. For example, at an elite dinner party where the male guests may have been to Rome, they may read in this image a reminder of the patron's business interests there or as a more complex attempt to align himself with structures of power in the province, whereas the tenant farmer who is paying his rent may simply see a story of good luck, involving important gods and old stories, or be able to reinforce or reject the elite owner's attempts at identifying with this Roman and mythical heritage.

As referred to in the introduction to this chapter, the imagery of Bacchus and his retinue that we recognise in Roman contexts are, for the most part, the inheritance of Hellenistic imagery. This mosaic is therefore a blend of choices that relate to the overtly Roman and the Hellenistic heritage that these motifs draw upon, and thus a product of the Empire itself. It may suggest that this provincial setting provides a context for an image that can draw on multiple artistic traditions in order to create something that is meaningful for its viewers. Equally, Wyler discusses this phenomenon in relation to the Villa Farnesina decoration: 'By means of accumulating, quoting and imitating, to such an extent that it risks reaching saturation, this exuberant eclecticism succeeds in standardising the range of models through a Hellenistic style – conceived of as universal'.³⁹⁹ For the viewers of this mosaic, there is clearly something important about the myth of the wolf and the twins and their associations, and the satyrs and maenads and their associations. This is not unusual: Wiseman has demonstrated the constant integration of the satyr stories with traditional Roman legend in Republican Rome itself.⁴⁰⁰ Marsyas, for example, is the satyr who foolishly challenges Apollo, and the founder of liberty in the Roman state, the ancestor of the plebeian tribe of the Marcii, and inventor of augury.⁴⁰¹ I argue that some of the importance of this myth stems from its exploration of the expression of identity(ies). The owner of this villa, near the provincial capital of Cordoba, wishes to display how *au fait* he is with Roman myths, with the Hellenistic heritage of the Bacchic traditions and thus the educated elite world as a whole. The specific context of these three mosaics is the second century AD, and the town of Italica, which was particularly associated with the emperor Hadrian, as his family supposedly originated from that area. The town benefited from imperial largesse, and the wealth of these elite families may have been as a result of these connections. Hadrian was associated with philhellenism, being acclaimed as a 'New Dionysus' [Bacchus].⁴⁰² His image thus included Bacchic iconography as an integral part of the presentation of a Roman Empire. This was the educated elite world to which the homeowner was attempting to refer. This incorporation of ideas and images that modern scholars can trace as separate traditions – Hellenistic and Roman – would not have been jarring.⁴⁰³ Across the development of the Roman Empire and thereby its associated imagery, this intermingling was constantly apparent. The combination of Bacchic motifs and the foundation myth of the wolf and the twins on this mosaic is part of this tradition and can be read as both a reference to the Hellenistic and Roman heritages, and

³⁹⁹ Wyler 2006: 228

⁴⁰⁰ Wiseman 1998; 2008.

⁴⁰¹ Wiseman 1988.

⁴⁰² Seaford 2006: 38.

⁴⁰³ A number of important works do focus on the role of Greek myth in Roman art, but that very statement suggests that there are two separate traditions. See for example Bergmann 1994, 1996, 2017; Newby 2011, 2016.

the way in which they have been conflated. I suggest that these patrons are potentially using this mix of motifs to identify consciously with an imperial elite that has transformed Bacchus and his retinue into something respectable but still exotic; dangerous but in a bounded way. The focus in these images is of Bacchus as a symbol of conviviality, with this aspect of his character being emphasised above others. These images of satyrs and maenads, potentially free from the gender structures that seem embodied in the images of Briseis, or Dulcitus are in their own way just as indicative of ideas about socially acceptable gender identity.

The maenads are women who are the traditional followers of Bacchus. They are believed to be intoxicated or ecstatic in his worship. They, like the other members of the *thiasos*, are strongly connected with nature, and are situated very much in the world outside of civilised society. Seaford calls this setting or world 'a symbolic reversal of the civilised structure of the polis'.⁴⁰⁴ Maenads are different to the modest, dutiful women who have been celebrated in the mosaics considered previously. There is generally an agency, positive and negative, to the figures in these images that is lacking in those from the previous chapters.

The maenad on the Wolf and Twins mosaic demonstrates these points (Figure 90). If we compare this figure with other images, there are specific characteristics and differences that suggest that the viewer is engaging with a different performance of gender than that demonstrated in the third chapter.

⁴⁰⁴ Seaford 2006: 34.



Figure 90: Detail of maenad from the Mosaic of the Wolf & the Twins (*Mosaico de la Loba y los Gemelos*), Aloclea, Cordoba (Blázquez 1981)

She is reclining with her back to us, semi naked. She is drinking from a libation vessel and a leopard lies next to her. The background is decorated with trailing vines. The curve of her body, and her semi-nudity do invite the viewer to take pleasure in this sight. She is drinking, which can be problematic for the Roman woman, and is away from the safety of the urban environment.⁴⁰⁵ These iconographic factors should indicate that she is available for sexual pleasure. However, this is a very different female body from the women on the 'Lovers of Zeus' or the 'Maternus Metamorphoses' mosaics. There are some similarities with the Ecija mosaic but the panel in Figure 90 lacks the inviting glance that Danae gives us on that image, and the sexual context. Also, in this image, there is no stand-in for the male viewer inviting him in to the picture to continue a narrative of erotic pleasure and violence. Her back, though attractive, excludes the viewer from the scene in many ways. It separates her and allows her to form her own world apart from the viewer. We are intruding on her space, something clearly discouraged by the rules established by the iconography. If we compare it with the scene from the Metamorphoses mosaic from the Villa of Maternus, which also depicts a lady lying down in the countryside half nude, there is no threat here, no danger that renders the maenad vulnerable (Figure 91). In fact, with the leopard at her feet, the danger seems to lie with the viewer for intruding on the maenad.

⁴⁰⁵ Pliny tells us that Roman women were forbidden to drink wine though this clearly was not enacted but does show that there was debate over the relationship between women and wine (*Natural History* XIV: 89); he also says that 'drinking [teaches] debauchery' (*Nat. Hist.* XIV: 142). See discussion p 277ff in Mudd 2015 on various moral associations of women and drinking.



Figure 91: Detail of Amymone from the Metamorphoses mosaic, Villa of Maternus (photo by the author)

There is one jarring aspect to this image however. The square that depicts Agave holding the head of Pentheus on the Building of Neptune mosaic is less celebratory in the eyes of the male viewer. This is a terrifying image for that viewer, an example of the dangers of letting women break out and become too uncontrolled. Her agency has become dangerous and challenging to the male viewer. This image warns the viewer against excess, against taking this behaviour to the extreme. The female figure holding the decapitated male head is a twisted perversion of the Medusa motif that protects the household: this threatens it. However, this is part of the pleasure and excitement, the thrill of this mosaic, and part of the expression of Bacchus's character. There is no pleasure in challenging social structures without consequences, without a frisson of fear that it could all go wrong. It invites the viewers to walk the line between the exciting agency of the maenad, and the loss of control of Agave. This is what entering the Bacchic world means. Bacchus is a vengeful god, as well as a playful one, and his world is not always safe and secure. The viewers must understand the limitations and circumstances of this realm.

With this warning echoing, the image nevertheless does allow for a different relationship between viewer and subject compared to those in the previous chapters. This is echoed in the image of Ariadne in Figure 85 (page 164) who is holding up the drunk Bacchus beside her. She is again semi naked, and there is pleasure in her curves, but these images lack the menace towards the female form that the previous chapters' images do. She is supporting Bacchus, her husband and a god, beside her, almost in partnership. What does this mean for the viewers then, and their understanding of gender in these images? These images of women drinking, or more generally being in this convivial environment, and not being punished for their beauty or their escape from civilisation, adds a more complex aspect to the gender structure that this society supports. It is not

just straightforwardly anti-female or wholly negative towards those of the female gender, expecting them always to be subordinate. The exemplars of these mythic figures are constructions through which the viewer can explore the boundaries that reflect on real life behaviours, including when this fantasy world goes wrong. They are set in the mythic realm because that is a safe medium in which to do so but they are drawn from real challenges. The female viewer may not participate in a drunken orgy with a god, but she may have to consider a social situation with drinking and the promise of sex. She has to consider the mythic and the real outcome. Mapping the ideal onto the actuality is not straightforward but the context can help to guide the viewer. There are particular contexts where she too can celebrate her sexuality and support her partner. The important thing is that this behaviour is appropriate for the context and not to take this freedom to excess, or for granted. In the grand reception space, the female viewer is reminded to be dutiful, be desirable, be subordinate. When in a more intimate space, she too can indulge in the Bacchic good life, with parallels possibly with the ideas explored on the Maternus cubiculum mosaic. The division between the reception space and the more intimate areas of the house is not rigid. As I have discussed in the previous chapters, the same spaces can function as receiving rooms and as bedrooms. Equally, the Building of Neptune mosaic is in one of the largest rooms in the town. However, the meanings that the viewers can draw from these images help give the space its function.

Is this presentation of the maenads unusual in any way? Does this seemingly kinder view towards the female figures relate to the discussion of Iberian gender behaviours? We can explore this with a comparison to North African mosaics. A second century mosaic from Hadrumetum (modern Sousse), a town in modern Tunisia is a good example. It is from a townhouse, with one other mosaic associated with it. It is suggested that the Bacchus mosaic was located in the *cubiculum*.⁴⁰⁶ The square is divided by delicate decorative fronds that form the spaces for the figurative panels. Following damage to the mosaic there are seven panels visible (Figure 92).

⁴⁰⁶ Dunbabin 1978: 270 – 271. Entry 25 (b) in the catalogue.



Figure 92: Satyrs and Bacchantes mosaic, Sousse (Sousse Archaeological Museum) <http://www.soussemuseum.tn/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Oc%C3%A9an-satyre-et-bacchante.jpg> [accessed 28/06/17]

Each contains a satyr and a bacchante. The spaces are also divided by heads of a bearded man and there are various animals and other Bacchic accoutrements around the edge. Like the Lovers of Zeus mosaic in the previous chapter, this mosaic has been described in a euphemistic manner as depicting scenes of seduction.⁴⁰⁷ In three, if not five of the extant scenes the bacchante is clearly trying to escape the amorous satyr. In the top left, she pulls away from a seated satyr, and raises her arm to hit him. Next, the female figure is mostly lost but the satyr is clearly grabbing hold of her. Below that, she is seated whilst he pulls on her arms: she is physically pushing him away. Next, there is a scene of them dancing together, which is not particularly violent. Then, to the right, is one with the female seated on the satyr's lap. This is meant to be her 'giving in' but the way her body leans away from his, in the opposite direction, and her hand returns to his head, as in the ones where she is

⁴⁰⁷ <http://www.soussemuseum.tn/les-mosaiques/?lang=en#1453718768673-92b17852-4797> [accessed 28/06/17].

fending him off, does not really make for an ideal couple. Again, the first image in the final row shows them walking together arm in arm but there is clear distance between the two bodies and she looks away. The final image shows her from behind, supposedly revealing her buttocks to the satyr and the viewer in an invitation. However, following the persistence in the previous scenes, arguably there is little choice about the matter here.

What does the iconography of the bodies say? Firstly, we have the clear visual pleasure because the soft, curving body of the bacchante is always on display to the viewer and to the satyr. The satyr himself is also naked and differentiated from the female figure through his darker colouring and muscular body. I think we can see him in a similar role to Jupiter in his animal forms in the 'Lovers' mosaics: as a representation of male lust and desire, and a guide to the viewer. He signals that this is the correct behaviour with these images. The viewer is supposed to desire her and understand that this is an erotic image. Although the female figure is resisting, there is no negative consequence for the satyr/male viewer. He will be rewarded with her body, as some of the lower scenes may show.

If we compare these forms with the Bacchic images previously discussed in this chapter, there are differences. As a direct comparison with this North African mosaic, the Iberian mosaics that use satyrs and maenads as 'decorative' elements, as Dunbabin describes this mosaic, each of the figures are allocated their own space.⁴⁰⁸ In Figure 90, the maenad is sitting with her back to us and her space is clearly delineated as her own. She excludes the viewer with her back, and the leopard guards her with his open-mouthed, ferocious form. The leopard could be interpreted as protecting her from the dangers that come from drinking or from being in the Bacchic world. When we see Ariadne and Bacchus together, with bodies very like the satyr and bacchante here, there is no threat involved (Figure 85). Their narrative and position and, more importantly, their iconography is different. They are partners who support each other (literally), both visually enjoyable bodies, but no sense of power or violence towards one of the other. In Iberia, Bacchus and Ariadne seem to be the more popular choice for depictions of couples than the more aggressive satyr and maenad coupling. The equivalent of the Sousse mosaic has not been found in these provinces. This image of the supportive couple is articulating different values regarding gender performance.

For the male viewer, the most prominent masculine figure on these images is not actually a man, but a satyr or a centaur, both creatures that are half man, half beast.⁴⁰⁹ Both are mythical beasts, but have a slightly different relevance in this world of images. The traditional art historical approach to satyrs is that they 'invert or deform the rules of culture' and represent 'an experimentation with

⁴⁰⁸ Dunbabin 1978: 174.

⁴⁰⁹ The exception being Bacchus in the House of the Planets mosaic (Figure 85) but he is not a manly man here.

alterity or “otherness”⁴¹⁰. They do this by distorting the ideals that we have seen are enshrined in the images of the heroes and gods. They drink to excess, they are constantly sexually aroused and have excessive appetites but they are also cowardly, demonstrated in the popular motif of the sexually-excited satyr being attacked by a maenad using a slipper.⁴¹¹ Stewart argues that the satyr ‘embodies every man’s fantasy of absolute sexual freedom, of totally uninhibited promiscuity, and thereby validates the need for sexual self-control’.⁴¹² This is another dangerous image in many ways, exploring the consequences of a loss of civilisation, with the loss of the masculine body. In terms of the male viewer then, this substitute could represent the possibilities for sexual freedom and an escape from the strictures of society – in terms of an escape from the strictures of moderation - just as the maenad does for women, and is similarly problematic, and confined to particular contexts. Again, we see the chance for relaxation and a less rigid definition of gender behaviour. As Hughes suggests, the loss of biological boundaries equates with a loss of cultural boundaries: when the human body blurs with animal, human cultural systems are at risk of blurring with animal sexualities.⁴¹³



Figure 93: Detail of satyr from Bacchus mosaic, House of the Planets, Italica (photo by the author)

Figure 93 is a good point of comparison to see this blurring of boundaries. The satyr is nude, but not the heavily muscled nude of the hero because he seems skinny and underdeveloped in places. He is not very obviously animalistic: of the two defining characteristics of the bestial aspects of the satyr, there is little suggestion of a tail (though this might be under the damaged section), and if there are

⁴¹⁰ Lissarrague 1993: 220.

⁴¹¹ E.g. The Satyrs and Bacchantes mosaic from Sousse, North Africa. Plate LXVIII in Dunbabin 1978 and Figure 88.

⁴¹² Stewart 1997: 191.

⁴¹³ Hughes 2010: 103.

ears they are hidden under his unruly hair.⁴¹⁴ This style follows the work of the sculptor Praxiteles, which do not emphasise these characteristics, so this is entirely in keeping with the Hellenistic heritage of this iconography. Despite this, the suggestions of alterity still stand. There is still the distinct contrast with the heroic images from before, because of the particular context of the Bacchic world. These characters may have been sanitised in some ways, easily assimilated into society, and eminently suitable for the dining room. Nevertheless, they are still associated with these ideas of the wild and of a freedom from gender roles because of the details that exclude them from a heroic context and introduce this Bacchic theme. This is still apparent without a specialised knowledge of the ancient myths or of a classical education. The viewer would also be reminded of the satyrs on the altars (Figure 88), building up the array of satiric images that are known. We return to this conventional unconventionality.

The centaur in the panel of the same mosaic seems to be more clearly animalistic (Figure 94). Centaurs also have complex associations as half-men, half-beasts, like the satyrs.⁴¹⁵ They can be ferocious opponents, as in the myth of the Centaurs and the Lapiths, and yet do represent some form of civilisation.⁴¹⁶ They can be teachers: Chiron is famously teacher to many heroes as they grow up.⁴¹⁷ During Ovid's retelling of the battle he describes the beauty and love between two of the centaurs: the male centaur is 'Unblemished...[in] his equine shape, nor less/fine than his man's'.⁴¹⁸ The two parts of the creature, the man and the beast, are equally ideal. These creatures sustain a contradictory and complex iconography, their hybridity allowing them to transcend categories and to mediate between two different states. As King says: hybrids can 'throw into relief what it is to be human; by breaking boundaries, within their bodies as well as their actions, they can show exactly where those boundaries should lie'.⁴¹⁹ That makes them suitable for this world of Bacchic revelry and for testing the ideas of gender identity. The hybridity of the centaur's bodies gives these creatures access to transgressive worlds. The viewer can explore those worlds along with them or see the consequences of such actions. Viewing them within the intimate bounds of the domestic space can be a signal that here is a space that is less tightly controlled in which those boundaries can be tested. However, as humans, the viewers must remember that the consequences for humans are different than for these mythical, divine creatures.

⁴¹⁴ As is typical of Hellenistic satyrs (Perry 1882: 437-8 as the first to comment on this).

⁴¹⁵ See comments previously and Wiseman 1998; 2008.

⁴¹⁶ Stewart 1997: 193.

⁴¹⁷ Hughes 2010 suggests that Chiron is suitable as tutor because he represents two different stages and is therefore appropriate to guide the heroes from boyhood into manhood, the most important transition between two human stages in a man's life.

⁴¹⁸ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 12: 402-3.

⁴¹⁹ King 1995: 143.



Figure 94: Detail of centaur from the Bacchus Mosaic, House of the Planets, Italica (photo by the author)

The centaur on Bacchus mosaic from the House of the Planets is clearly half man, half horse (Figure 94). He is bearded and again has that unruly hair that emphasises his connection to nature, his virility, and uncontrolled sexuality. However, he has a more obviously muscled torso than the satyr. The way in which he is leaping across the panel, indeed almost out of it, suggests his energy and activity, both qualities recognised as positive in the heroes. Altogether, the satyrs and the centaurs are a representation or exploration of a more untamed masculinity, or at least they represent the idea that these concepts can be tested and that the boundaries that define the ideal man can be pushed and tested. They are between man and monster. These images still reflect the guidelines for masculine behaviour we saw expressed in the mosaics of heroes, but they push these guidelines, and even distort them. This world of Bacchic revelry is an appropriate space, contextually and conceptually, for both genders to be freer in their gender performance, as attested by the images.

4.2 TESTING GENDER

A willingness to explore the boundaries of gender behaviour is emphasized by another characteristic of these motifs. A gender ambiguity is a recurrent feature of images of Bacchus, another aspect of his highly changeable and elusive character. Dunbabin refers to him as ‘the almost androgynous god’ and refers to the fact that in the North African mosaics he is frequently dressed in female robes.⁴²⁰ Throughout the empire, and across the history of the images of this god, his depictions play with the

⁴²⁰ Dunbabin 1971: 53.

forms of gender that I have outlined in the previous two chapters. He is not often portrayed with the masculine, ideal body of strength and action of the heroes above, and yet he is clearly respected and admired: the simple fact of being enshrined in the mosaics gives his image value. How is this acceptable? Why should he be so different? Carpenter sees him as a kind of ‘mock-hero’ for the Athenians, a parody of the active hero who fights in battles and is ultra-masculine.⁴²¹ Ovid frequently emphasises his ambiguity in regard to his sex, age and humanity. He is ‘a boy for ever’, with ‘horns’, and a ‘countenance...like a lovely girl’s’.⁴²² In the next sentence he is the hero of the Indian wars. His lovely feminine countenance does not prevent him being a dangerous and vengeful military god. His multiplicity is a constant in his character, especially in relation to his gender behaviour. If we think about Bacchus’s image as a parody, these ambiguous portrayals could be a way for the viewer to be self-reflexive, to gently mock the heroic male body that adorns the other floors of these villas. By recognising the ubiquitous nature of the heroic male body, the Bacchic mockery reinforces its importance within this society but also allows exploration of other performances of gender.

We can also see these traits of effeminacy and ambiguity in the mosaics. When compared to the North African mosaics identified by Dunbabin, in the Iberian Peninsula there is less reliance on female dress to identify Bacchus as the feminine and ambiguous god, and more of an emphasis on his body, and feminine beauty. As demonstrated in the comparison in Figure 95, the pose of Bacchus’s body here is very similar to Europa’s body on the Lovers of Zeus mosaic from Italica.



Figure 95: Comparison of detail from Figure 85 and detail of Europa from the Lovers of Zeus mosaic, Italica (photos by the author)

He is drunk here, a state that allows for a certain dissolution of the boundaries of social intercourse. He is the god of wine and therefore it is appropriate for him to be able to do this. His soft body, with the sinuous curves of the beautiful woman, could remind the elite male viewer of the dangers if they attempt to replicate this loss of control. To do so puts you at risk of losing your powerful male body,

⁴²¹ Carpenter 1997: 29.

⁴²² Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4.24ff.

which is surely anathema to the elite male viewer. It could also be a reminder of the pleasures of drinking. In contrast, a non-elite viewer who does not or cannot normally achieve that elite male status could feel when viewing the mosaic that there is a sense that Bacchus, and his world, is available for them as well. Instead of strict hierarchies and divisions here is a world where all can enter, and all can play at being powerful, even just temporarily? However, we return to context. If the slave is viewing the mosaic, he is likely to be there in a servile capacity rather than as a guest. The slave viewer would surely be reminded that he cannot access that playfulness. Is it rather that a (temporary) lack of a masculine body for those who already own that power, does not mean a lack of masculine power if it is temporarily relaxed?

It must be remembered that playing at being powerless is another sign of power: only the elite can pretend to give up their privilege as they can always take hold of that position again. Slaves are always powerless and cannot play at being powerful or even powerless because they lack agency within themselves. They can be given a temporary respite but that comes from those more powerful than them. This respite for non-slave viewers could mean being drunk, and therefore out of control, but could also mean a relaxation of gender norms. We can also see an example of this specifically in the context of this world of Bacchic revelry in a mosaic of Hercules from Valencia (Figure 96).⁴²³ It is a large mosaic (5.5m x 4.5m), probably third century AD, and excavated from the Casa de Porcar in Liria (the Roman town of Edeta) in 1917, from what was probably a townhouse. Edeta had an extensive municipal bath complex and a temple for worshipping the local water nymphs. It is suggested that this religious site brought wealth and prestige to the town, supplying the resources for the construction of a number of fine mosaics. It is also the site of the largest gold hoard from Roman Spain, another indication of wealth.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ There is a second Hercules mosaic (from Cartema, currently in the Botanical Gardens in Malaga) depicting him drunk but it is not well published, and the current version has been heavily restored. For information see Blázquez 1981: 88 – 92.

⁴²⁴ Aranegui 2011: 23.



Figure 96: Figurative panels from *Hercules mosaic*, Liria (National Archaeological Museum, Madrid) (photo by the author)

The mosaic is a rectangle, divided into two halves, one bigger than the other. The top half is a simple geometric pattern: the bottom is made up of panels depicting the labours of Hercules. The border around the entire piece has a simple decoration of vine leaves, indicating to the viewer that by stepping into this image, they are in the realm of Bacchus and wild intoxication. Figure 96 shows the figurative panels. The ones round the edge show the labours: from top left, clockwise is the belt of Hippolyta (mostly damaged), the Erymanthian Boar, the capture of Cerberus, the cleaning of the Augean stables, the death of Geryon, the mares of Diomedes, the garden of the Hesperides, the Cretan Bull, the Lernaian Hydra, the Nemean Lion, the Stympalian Birds, and finally the Cervian Deer.⁴²⁵ The iconography of these panels is exactly in line with what we would expect from the previous chapters. For example, we can see that the scene of the apples of Hesperides in the bottom right hand corner uses a standard heroic iconography when depicting this myth (Figure 97).⁴²⁶

⁴²⁵ See for example Diodorus Siculus *Library of History*, 4.8 ff for an ancient telling of the labours.

⁴²⁶ Diodorus Siculus *Library of History*, 4.26.2.



Figure 97: Detail of the labour of Hercules, the apples of Hesperides, (National Archaeological Museum) (photo by the author)

We can see Hercules's masculine, active body fully displayed to the viewer, with his most famous attributes of lion skin and club. His pose is active and strong, and contrasts with the weaker, smaller bodies of the Hesperides, who cower behind the tree, guarded by the dragon (looking very snake like here). Indeed, the same few poses of active masculinity are repeated across the panels. They become a repeated motif of heroism, a canon of maleness as in the second chapter.



Figure 98: Detail of central panel of Hercules and Omphale (National Archaeological Museum, Madrid) (photo by the author)

However, in the central panel (Figure 98), Hercules's depiction is at odds with this masculine hero. He is dressed in female costume, carrying the ultimate signifiers of female gender, the spindle and the distaff. This is a depiction of the myth of Hercules and Omphale, where he has been sold into

slavery and bought by the queen of Lydia. He has lost his victorious trophies and connections to the masculine world of violence, and thereby his male identity, and in many stories almost switches places with her for a year by wearing female clothing and performing female duties.⁴²⁷ There is a suggestion that he has fallen in love with her, thereby doubling his servitude.⁴²⁸ He has no status and is in thrall to a foreign woman. In this image, we have Omphale, seated on a throne beside Hercules, and she is dressed in the lion cloak and holding the club, the famous Herculean attributes, that he can be seen wearing in the panels around the outside. Her breasts and torso are nude, reminding us that she is female but her association with attributes that constitute a fundamental sign of masculine identity, creates a confusing image for the viewer. Gender is being played with in a very overt fashion. The educated viewer may see this as a warning against *hubris*: even the mightiest of heroes can be punished in the most humiliating way. However, I would argue this image is more playful. The border of vine leaves is important here because it demonstrates a connection with that world of Bacchic ambiguous gender. Another version of the myth has Hercules escaping or leaving Omphale after a night of revelry in connection with the Bacchic rites and being mistaken by Pan for Omphale because of his female clothing, stressing the connection with this Bacchic world.⁴²⁹ By looking at this image, we can see that playing with alternative genders is possible for those who have power: Hercules demonstrates his masculinity and his status in the panels around the edge that show his labours. He is not permanently unmanned because he only temporarily takes on the female persona in the image and can easily return to the world of masculinity by reasserting his masculine attributes. This image could indicate that this is a space to play with gender ideas, to marvel at the foreign spectacle of a woman in charge and wielding a club but always remembering that these tests can only happen within the confines of this mythical space and context. The homeowner cannot go as far as Hercules. Transvestism is not socially acceptable but maybe he can perform some of his wife's behaviours, he can show affection, take "orders" from her, help her with her wool winding. These small intimate behaviours that are not acceptable as part of a public male persona are appropriate in an intimate, domestic, context. As discussed previously, masculinity and male power must be reasserted to protect the sanctity of the home by reassuming masculine indicators, and by performing male labours.

⁴²⁷ Ovid *Fasti* 2.305 – 331. Also Kampen 1996.

⁴²⁸ Tertullian *De Pallio* 4: 'More degrading still were transfigurations in a man's attire due to lust rather than to some maternal fear. Tertullian is writing from a Christian viewpoint which would make this at the extreme end of the spectrum but still indicative of the time when this mosaic was created and viewed.

⁴²⁹ Ovid *Fasti* 2.305 – 331.

This is seen again in the Achilles on Skyros mosaics at the Villa of La Olmeda. (Figure 99). This mosaic was situated in the *oecus* of the villa. At the far end is a stepped apse, where the owner of the villa could receive guests in state.⁴³⁰

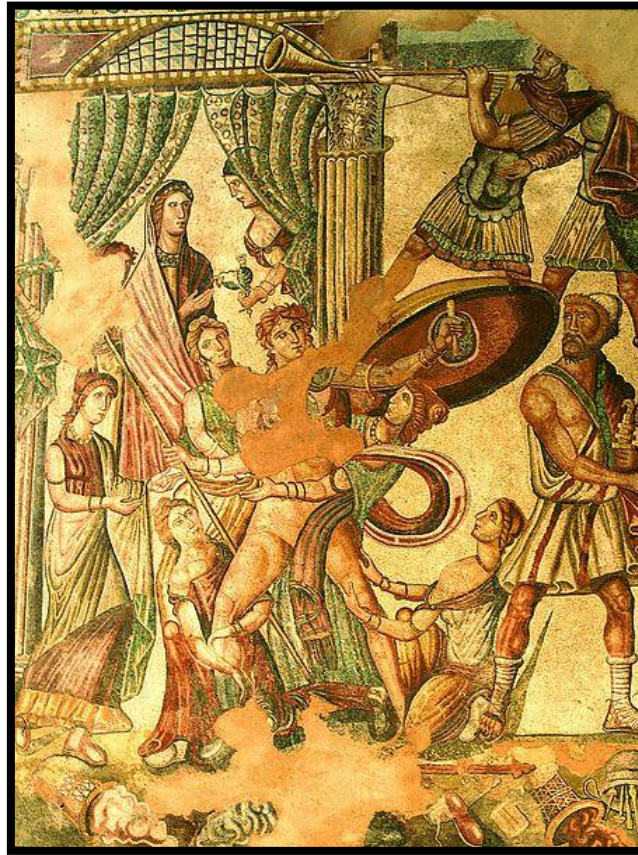


Figure 99: Achilles on Skyros, Villa de la Olmeda (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:05-Mosaico_del_Oecus._Aquiles_en_Skyros_alta.jpg [accessed 19/06/18])

It depicts the hero Achilles at the moment of discovery after he has been hiding on the island of Skyros. His mother has disguised him as a woman and sent him to the island to live amongst the daughters of Glaucos, king of Skyros, in order to protect him from the fate that she knows will come if he goes to war against Troy. Odysseus (presumably the figure on the far right) has been sent to find the hero in order to bring him out of hiding, he has blown a war trumpet. Unable to resist this masculine call to arms, Achilles bursts out of his feminine apparel, and grabs the nearest weapons, despite the efforts of his sisters.⁴³¹ This is the moment shown vividly on this panel. It is full of drama, action, and ideas about gender roles. The whole point of this story is that Achilles, like Hercules, cannot hide from his fate, especially because his innate manliness, his very body, cannot resist the call of war which is the ultimate masculine activity. His gender, despite being put aside for a period

⁴³⁰ Scott 2000: 143.

⁴³¹ Statius *Achilleiad*.

of time, cannot be denied. There is a clear distinction between the bodies of the women who are dressed, elaborately coiffured, smaller, retreating behind the curtain or kneeling at the feet of the hero, and the bodies of the men who are muscly, dressed for war, in strong, active stances, and outside the safe space of the women's quarters. Though not a Bacchus scene, this is another example of a willingness to play with and explore gender performance. Hercules and Achilles dress up in feminine garments in order to perform this role. Bacchus uses other signifiers.

Another example that plays even more with the ambiguity of gender comes from Italica: The Mosaic with the Bust of Bacchus (Mosaico con Bustos Baquicos) (5.30m x 5.12m) (Figure 100). Again, the context is lost but Mañas Romero suggests it is from the same house as the Lovers of Zeus mosaic (see Figures 61 – 70, pages 131 – 8).⁴³² At the centre is a bust with long flowing hair, a wreath around the head, and loosely draped in a robe over the shoulders.

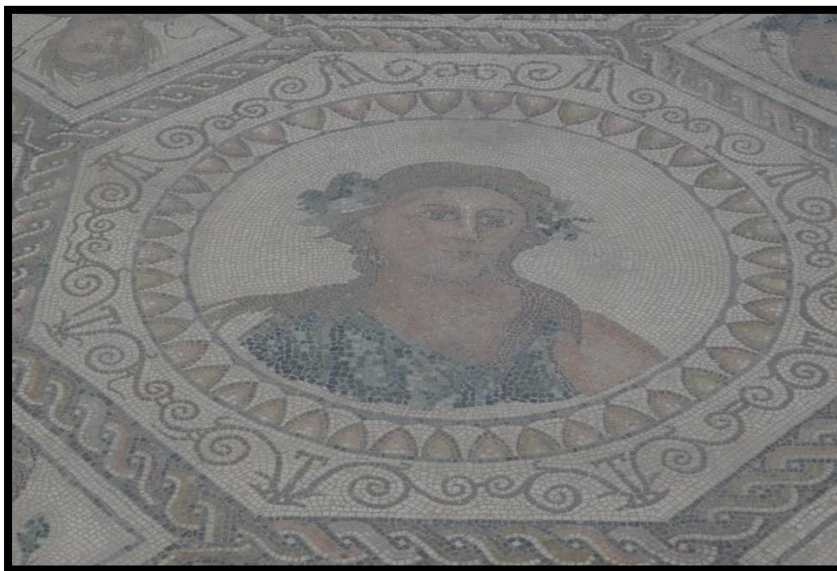


Figure 100: Detail from the Mosaico con Bustos Baquicos, Italica, Seville Archaeological Museum (photo by the author

. The surrounding images of Silenus, tigers and lions, place it firmly within the realm of Bacchus, and the assumption would generally be that this should be the god himself. Yet, according to one of the leading Spanish scholars on Roman mosaics, Blanco Freijero, this feminine visage is too ambiguous and not manly enough for a male god.⁴³³ Even the Archaeological Museum of Seville where the mosaic is currently displayed is unsure and describes the portrait as a 'Man/Woman of Greco-Roman mythology...possibly Bacchus or Ariadne'.⁴³⁴ However, is this confusion or ambiguity not the point of

⁴³² Mañas Romero 2010: 66.

⁴³³ Blanco Freijeiro 1978a: 28.

⁴³⁴ Inventory No. CE05394 'Hombre/Mujer de la mitología greco-romana...posiblemente Baco o Ariadna' (<http://www.museosdeandalucia.es/web/museoarqueologicodesevilla/acceso-a-fondos> [accessed 19/03/2019].)

this image? The general consensus now is that it is Bacchus, in his most ambiguous form.⁴³⁵ As Jameson says, when discussing Bacchus ‘one might also speak of his bisexuality, the coexistence of elements of both genders’.⁴³⁶ This is bisexuality in the sense that he brings together ‘both genders’ and this is how this image seems to read. He can be both male and female (as both Bacchus and Ariadne) without losing his power, or it seems, his appeal to this Roman or provincial audience. Whereas Hercules must return to his masculine form, Bacchus can be more elusive.

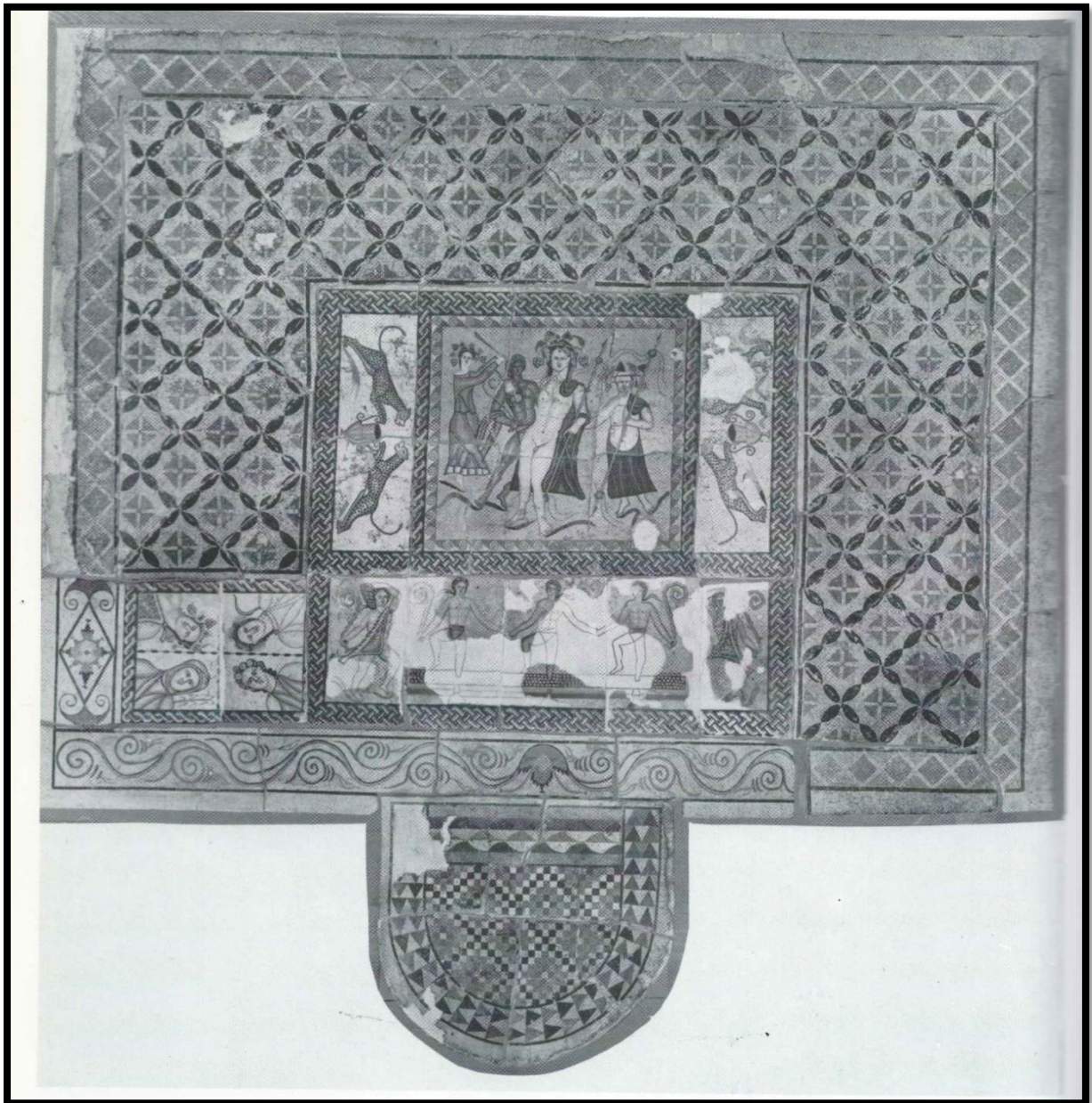


Figure 101: Drawing of the Bacchus mosaic, including all panels, Complutum (Fernández-Galiano 1984)

⁴³⁵ Eg. Mañas Romero 2010: 215; Vargas Vázquez 2014: 155.

⁴³⁶ Jameson 1993: 44.

A final mosaic for this section brings together both drunkenness and gender ambiguity (Figure 101 is a drawing of the whole mosaic). From the town of Complutum (modern Alcalá de Henares, just outside Madrid), this mosaic is later than the previously discussed mosaics but continues the themes and iconography of the earlier pieces. It is dated from the fourth or fifth century AD and forms part of the decoration of a house labelled by the excavators as the House of Bacchus. It is a central panel from a *triclinium* mosaic, depicting the drunken Bacchus being held up by his followers. The surrounding scenes depict grape treading, leopards drinking from kraters and the Seasons, confirming the Bacchic theme.

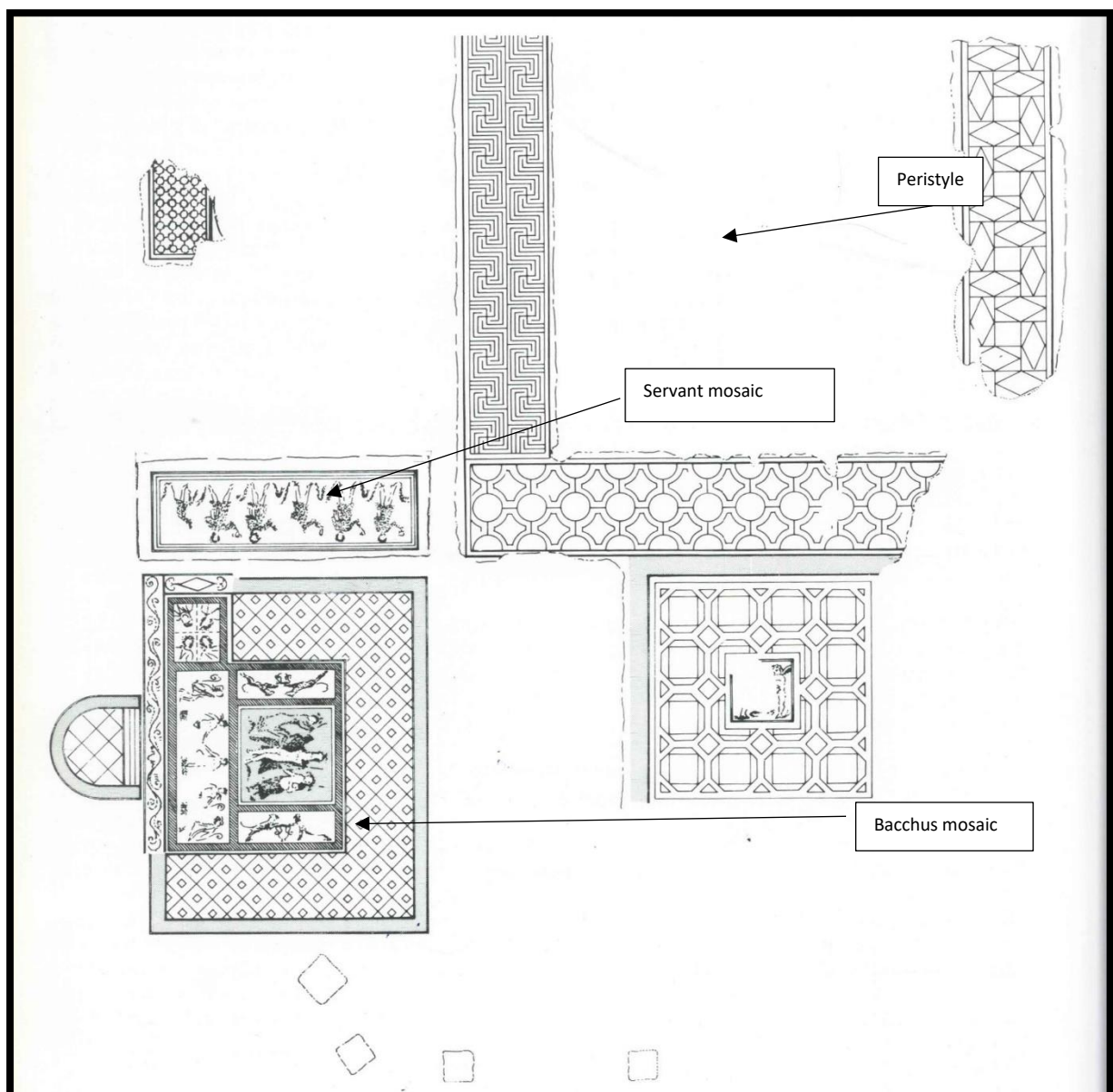


Figure 102: Plan of the House of Bacchus, Complutum (Fernández-Galiano 1984, annotated by the author)

Although the layout of the rest of the house is not clear, this area can be understood fairly easily (Figure 102). This *triclinium* is in a separate corridor off the peristyle, an archetypal dining room to demonstrate the patron's wealth and power. The ceramics found in this room at the level of the mosaic mostly consist of *terra sigillata Hispania*, locally produced fine ware that imitated the Italian Arretine ware that is ubiquitous across the Empire.⁴³⁷ There is no evidence of ceramics from beyond the Iberian Peninsula. This is nice tableware, but it is not extremely high quality. There were also examples of more coarse cooking wares.⁴³⁸ This gives a picture of a room used for eating and entertaining in this reasonably well-off townhouse. We can imagine a patron who is a local councillor or business man, but not necessarily connected with the upper elite of the imperial network. He would entertain local guests and his family. He has slaves – as we will see – but not necessarily the larger numbers expected at grand villas and palaces, such as Centcelles or La Olmeda, for example.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁷ Fernández-Galiano 1984: 82.

⁴³⁸ Fernández-Galiano 1984: 104.

⁴³⁹ Identifying exact numbers of slaves and proportions in households is very difficult. Joshel discusses the fear of being overwhelmed by the slaves in the household, and discusses the range of slave households, e.g. in Table 1 (2010: 183); Bradley presents legal evidence that regulates the number of slaves allowed to be freed in wills which could give some idea of the general proportions of slaves within the household (1994: 11). He also quotes Ammianus Marcellianus who criticises certain fourth century AD grandees for their ostentation in having retinues of 50 slaves and considers Apuleius with four to six slave dependents (1994: 15, 63). Thus a smaller number would be suitable for a smaller household.



Figure 103: Detail of Bacchus mosaic, House of Bacchus, Complutum (Archaeological Museum, Alcala de Henares) (Fernández-Galiano 1984)

The central panel depicts Bacchus as the main figure (Figure 103). He is semi-nude and crowned with vine leaves. He is being supported by a younger, darker skinned boy wearing a leopard skin (possibly Ampelos), Silenus to his left and a maenad or follower at the back of the image.⁴⁴⁰ There are a number of different bodies here for the viewer to explore. The main one is of course that of the god himself. He is front and centre and larger than life, staring directly out at the viewer. He has that sinuous curve again, with his hip outlined against Ampelos's darker, smaller body that emphasises the different shapes and suggests a very feminine set of curves. This goes with his long locks that tumble over his shoulders. But he is also muscled and has (very small) male genitals. His body is clearly a hybrid one, with both male and female characteristics forming this image of a powerful god, like the bust. This is also stressed by his comparative size to the other figures. He is leaning on Ampelos but dwarfs him, indicating his power, importance, and masculinity. The contrast between the two, between their skin tones, size, and pose both presents the pair together as a couple. Their oppositions invite us to see them as two halves. If we compare it with the Ariadne pair from the House of the Planets (Figure 85, page 164), Ampelos, the young lover, is clearly the female partner

⁴⁴⁰ Ampelos was Bacchus's lover. Ovid *Fasti* 3.410 – 415.

here. However, a comparison with the body of Silenus, with his paunch and his beard, leaves us with an impression of Bacchus as the athletic young hero. A final level of difference comes with the maenad, as she is covered up in a long robe and although the outline of her legs is highlighted, she is much more discreet than the male figures here, presenting a line of difference between the clothed female and the semi-naked male.

Another difference comes with the image that defines the entrance to this space in the corridor outside the room.



Figure 104: Detail of Cupbearer mosaic showing two out of the six figures, Complutum (National Museum of Archaeology, Madrid) (photo by the author)

Here we have a rectangular mosaic depicting a line of slaves, bringing cups to the guests in the *triclinium* (Figure 104).⁴⁴¹ These cups or goblets are of much higher status than the artefacts that have been found in the room. This is not a representation of reality. In this context, this is as fantastical as the Bacchic scene if more attainable, and distinctly sets the tone of this suite as one of wish-fulfilment.

A contrast can be made between the body of Bacchus on the mosaic and the slaves outside the room. They are dressed, in short tunics, and their pose is one of servitude: they carry a cup in one hand, and a towel in the other. They are there for the convenience and pleasure of those dining in the *triclinium*. Their bodies are not heroic, admirable, nor masculine, but objects to be used. This is emphasised in the repetition of the bodies. Through this repetition, matching poses, and the insignificance of their personal presence, they become a decorative element rather than individual characters. Bacchus, Ampelos, Silenus, and even the maenad, have more agency in their bodies than

⁴⁴¹ See also Dunbabin 2003b.

these slaves. It may help prepare the viewer for his response to the room. Firstly, the waiting servants with their elaborate drinking vessels are indicative of pleasures ahead for those who are allowed to enter the room as guests or participants. Secondly, it provides a contrast: in this mosaic, Bacchus is what a free man could be and what a slave could not.

On the whole, these decorative motifs of Bacchus and his retinue do seem to move away from the stricter guidelines of gender performance that we have seen in the previous chapters, suggesting that there were opportunities for debating and testing these guidelines in reality as well as in myth. Women can be beautiful and sexual without automatically being in danger, men can play with the less obvious forms of masculinity, including their more bestial, or indeed their feminine sides, as long as neither gender takes this behaviour to excess, as with Agave. They are able to do so because this world comes under the aegis of Bacchus, a god who can incorporate both genders, who can be both vulnerable and sensuous, without losing his masculine power and who can put aside that masculinity for a while because in this contextual space which the mosaics depict, all things are possible. This is a space in which to test out the implications (and pleasures) of behaviours that are not correct. It is nevertheless important to remember that there are still ways to establish distinctions between those who can enter this Bacchic context and enjoy these transgressive behaviours and those who cannot, as is made clear in the Complutum mosaics.

These mosaics focus on the fertility and fruitfulness of the world of Bacchus. The connection to nature is always stressed, not as something to be tamed as depicted in the mosaics of the hunters in the second chapter, but as something to explore and enjoy. There is an idea of making the physical and mythical space one of welcome and positivity. If we look at where the mosaics discussed in this chapter are placed in the house we can see that they are rooms for entertaining, part of the suite of reception rooms where the owners and visitors would interact (see Figure 84, page 164 and Figure 105, page 192). The Mosaico con Bustos Baquicos has no recorded location but the size indicates an important room. Mañas Romero has suggested that it was in a room next to the triclinium.⁴⁴² If it follows the patterns of the previous mosaics, we may suspect that it lay just off the main courtyards. The majority of the rooms which housed these mosaics are not directly accessible from these open spaces, often instead through corridors or anterooms, but these are not secret cultic rooms intended only for religious worship. They are precious, elaborately decorated, intimate spaces that are just as much intended to display wealth and status as the larger rooms but to a more select group. This again ties in with their imagery, emphasising the opportunity in these spaces to be conventionally unconventional with one's social equals.

⁴⁴² Mañas Romero 2010.

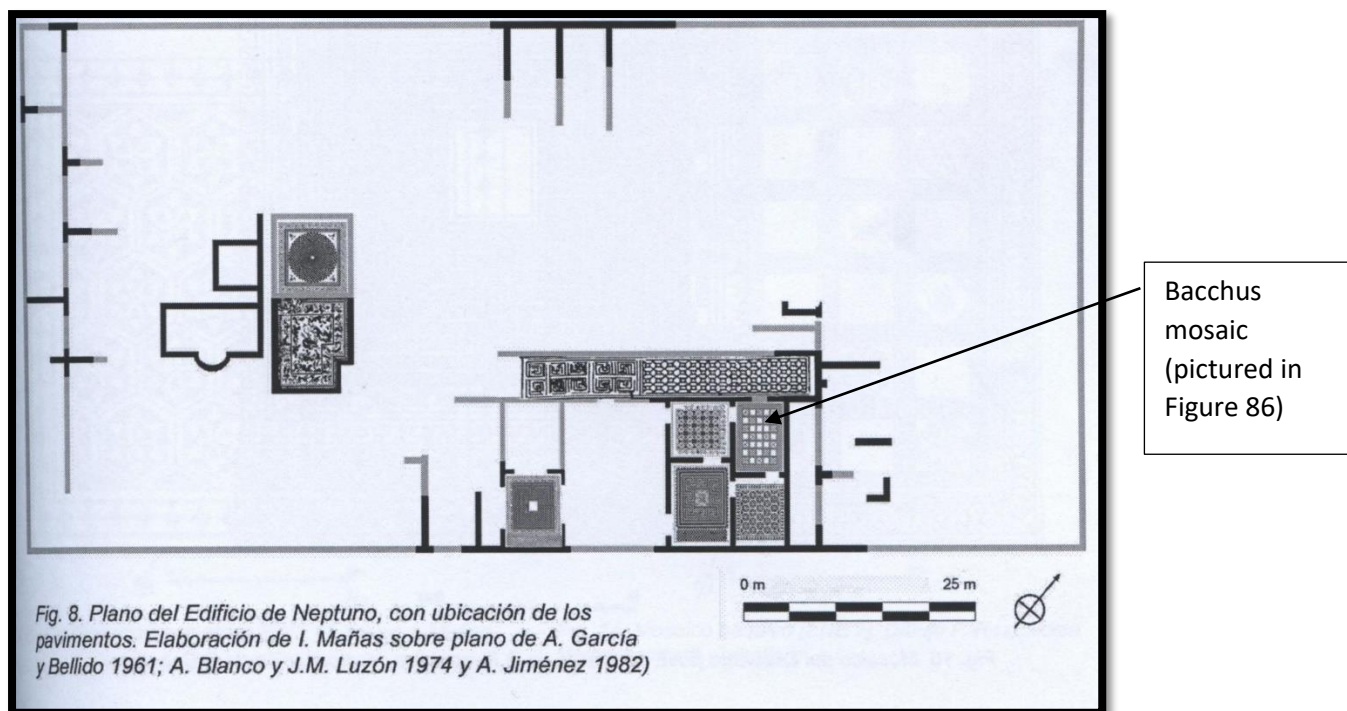


Figure 105: Plan of the Building of Neptune, Italica (Mañas Romero 2010, annotated by the author)

The viewers of these Bacchic images are fundamentally still acting within a Graeco-Roman visual language that would be recognisable across the provinces. The performances of gender that are enacted through these decorative motifs reinforce and recreate the gender roles that were defined in the previous chapters and represent a recognisable spectrum of gender, if one that has been expanded from the previous chapters. They achieve this by demonstrating the ways in which the viewer can safely transgress from accepted boundaries, if in an appropriate physical and mythical context. The men and women in these mosaics do not “perform properly” according to the earlier chapters and sometimes they suffer the consequences, especially if their behaviour is taken to excess. However, if the occasion is right, these transgressors can enjoy their transgressions.

4.3 THE DISCOVERY OF ARIADNE

In the mosaics of Roman Spain Bacchus is depicted in two primary narratives, in contrast to the wider range identified elsewhere.⁴⁴³ The first is the discovery of Ariadne when she is sleeping on Naxos. The second is his triumph after the defeat of the Indians. Unlike the North African mosaics, there are only two examples of Bacchus riding a leopard, particularly as a child. On the whole, this is not a composition or topic that appears to have interested the Iberian audiences.⁴⁴⁴ Dunbabin

⁴⁴³ See Appendix 1 for the database of mosaics. Dunbabin 1971; 1978.

⁴⁴⁴ Guardia 1989: 61.

frames this scene as relating to ceremonies of initiation. Whether this means that Iberian viewers were less involved in the religious aspect of these images is impossible to tell. For the purposes of this research it is interesting to note is that a child is less easily identified to a specific gender, especially in the ways that have been identified in the previous discussions. However, it does not necessarily mean that gender was a more prominent aspect of Bacchic images for Iberian homeowners.

The scene of the discovery of Ariadne is very common in Roman art, on wall paintings, and on sarcophagi across the provinces. Richardson states that there is 'scarcely a house in the ancient city [of Pompeii] without its Ariadne' but this composition only appears twice in the Spanish mosaic repertoire.⁴⁴⁵ The painting from the House of the Coloured Capitals in Pompeii (Figure 106) is a typical example of the iconographic format of the picture: Ariadne lies in the foreground, often right at the front of the picture. She is in the lowest register of the scene, and the other figures tower above her, including Bacchus. He normally stands surrounded by his followers who are dancing and drinking in their traditional exuberant revelry. Ariadne may be accompanied by a figure representing sleep, as she is in Figure 106 (the seated figure upon whom she rests her head).

⁴⁴⁵ Richardson 2000: 10.



Figure 106: Painting from the House of the Coloured Capitals, Pompeii
(<http://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2004%2031%20p8.htm> [accessed 30.08.16])

This is supposed to be a scene of discovery but there is something unsettling and threatening about this composition. Again, we have the female body exposed to the viewer, being uncovered by the *eros* in this image, inviting the viewer (and the god) to take what he wants. He is physically above her, in a position of power. Even without an obviously visible attribution of divinity, this composition makes him infinitely more powerful than her. Bacchus is accompanied by the *thiasos*, his band of revellers who bring with them a milieu of sexual pleasure and drunkenness, but also madness and a loss of control. The gender performances found in the mythical narrative chapter are apparent in this image and stress to the viewer the disparity in status and power between female and male.

This composition is repeated in mosaics across the Empire, such as examples from Volubilius, Thessalonika, Crete and Izmir.⁴⁴⁶ However, the two Spanish examples utilise a different composition. The first, from Cordoba (Figure 107), depicts Bacchus and Ariadne without the other participants and

⁴⁴⁶ Dunbabin 1978: 277; Dunbabin 1999: 214-5 (figure 226); Sweetman 2013; Jobst & Vettors 1977.

the strong power dynamic identified in the Pompeiian wall painting. The characters and the narrative are presented to the viewer in a different format.



Figure 107: Detail of Discovery of Ariadne mosaic, Archaeological Museum, Cordoba, (http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/imgdomus/MAECO_IMAGENES/fondos_pre/MAECOFCE023824_SEQ_001_P.JPG [accessed 20.06.18])

The mosaic is a figurative panel at the centre of a geometric pattern (4.60m x 3.60m), probably dating from the third century AD.⁴⁴⁷ The landscape around them indicates that this narrative occurs in the countryside, as is traditional. There are four smaller figured squares around it, depicting two *erotes* and a satyr (the fourth one is lost) which would constitute a hint of the *thiasos*. The *erotes* remind the viewers that this is a love scene as with those in the wall painting above but they are all separated by the borders from the couple themselves. Bacchus is on his own without his retinue. There is no real evidence on the context of the mosaic (the only notes available are that it was found during sewage works in the Calle Duque de Hornachuelos in Cordoba).⁴⁴⁸ It depicts the couple sitting on either side of a rock. Ariadne is not sleeping but is comfortably conversing with Bacchus. He is

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http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/imgdomus/MAECO_IMAGENES/fondos_pre/MAECOFCE023824_SEQ_001_P.JPG [accessed 20.06.18]. No. CE023824 in the collection of the Archaeological Museum of Cordoba.

⁴⁴⁸ Vicent 1965.

slightly above her but not standing. They appear to be almost equals. Both are semi-nude and there is an erotic pleasure in their bodies, but neither is threatening the other: there are no indications in this image that this meeting will end in rape and violence as is implied, or given potential, in the more standard composition.

The second mosaic from Iberia depicting the sleeping Ariadne is much later, probably late fourth, or fifth century AD (Figure 108). It was excavated from the town of Merida, and the mosaic is signed by the craftsman, Anniponius (*ex officina Anniponi*). There are similarities in the style to the Bacchus mosaic from Complutum.

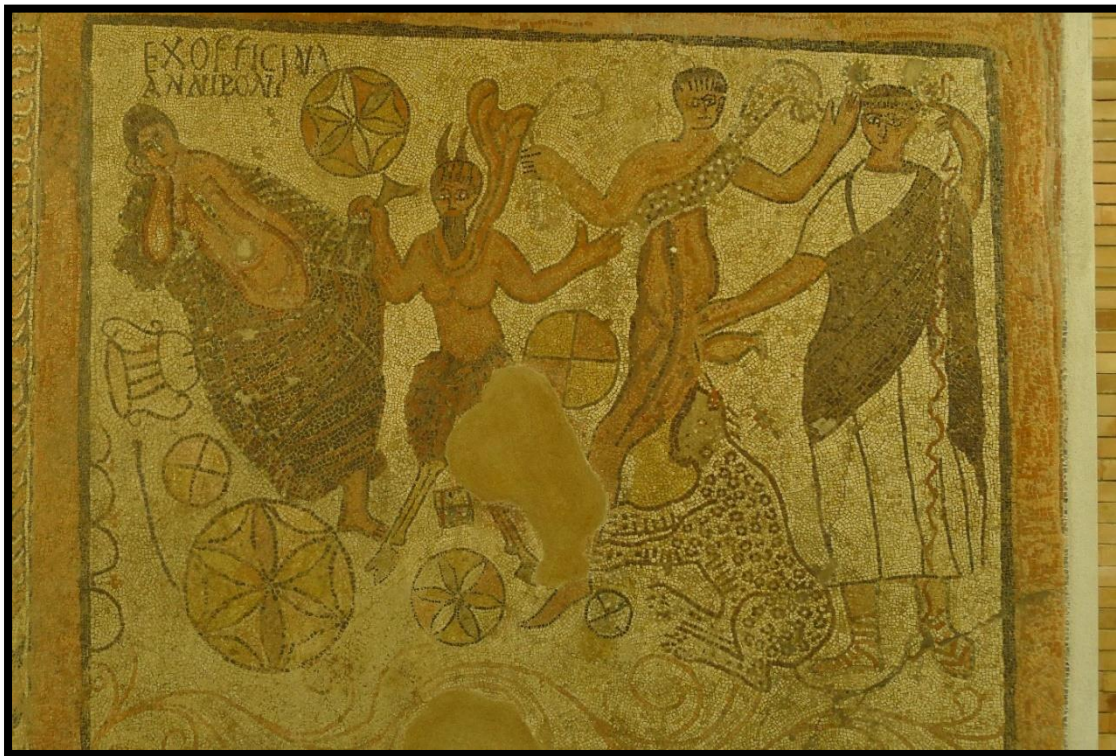


Figure 108: Mosaic of Bacchus and Ariadne, Merida (National Museum of Roman Art, Merida) (Photo by the author)

The mosaic depicts Ariadne sleeping, as expected, being discovered by Pan who points her out to Bacchus on the far right of the image. Dunbabin describes it as showing ‘the disintegration of classical forms, with...circles and disks scattered at random’.⁴⁴⁹ There is the *horror vacui* or fear of blank space that is indicative of Late Antique art, but the narrative is still recognisable. Despite the abstract background, the key elements of the narrative are there, and presumably for the contemporary viewers of this mosaic this image represents an engagement with earlier classical narratives, but in a style that makes sense to them. Though in part due to the changed style, it is clear that there is not really the sense of threat that comes from the traditional composition.

⁴⁴⁹ Dunbabin 1999: 158.

Bacchus, Pan, and the other figure have open, expansive gestures that feel welcoming and unthreatening. Bacchus's open arms feel similar to this. His upraised left arm against his head is more indicative of emotion than action.⁴⁵⁰ The Thessalonika mosaic, despite also being described by Dunbabin as showing 'ambiguities in the treatment of the third dimension', from the fourth century AD, does repeat the traditional composition and the impression that Ariadne is vulnerable to violence (Figure 109) though it is closer to a classical style.⁴⁵¹



Figure 109: Detail from Dionysus and Ariadne mosaic, Thessalonika
(<https://twitter.com/alphamelville/status/753894322660048896> [accessed 19/06/18])

The loss of perspective in the Merida image is a stylistic change but it does put Ariadne on the same level as her viewers. The reduction in the *thiasos* also contributes to the reduced sense of violence. However, the most important change is in Bacchus's costume. It is a respectable Roman costume, not the nude costume of the divine hero but that of the elite man. The bands of purple suggest a senatorial and imperial connection. The associations and implications of the scene are quite different because of this. This is an image of the creation of a respectable family rather than casual divine rape for erotic pleasure. It returns the viewers to the structure of the previous chapters. The power of the male figure in this mosaic is civic, imperial, and political. There is less of a threat, but the underlying power structures are there.

⁴⁵⁰ As in the Europa and the Hercules mosaics in chapter 3.

⁴⁵¹ Dunbabin 1999: 215 (figure 226).

Both Iberian mosaics that depict the discovery of Ariadne by Bacchus differ from each other in their composition in order to tell a familiar story in different ways, using different iconography. In examples from the other provinces, such as the Pompeian painting, and the Thessalonkia example discussed, and others from Volubilius, Crete, Izmir, and Ptolemais, all show Ariadne lying down and Bacchus standing up.⁴⁵² The Cordoba mosaic is clearly different. The lack of disparity in the relative positions of the two figures (and the exclusion of any other characters) changes the dynamic between them. The clearest match to the composition of the figures in the Cordoba mosaic is a second century black and white mosaic from Ostia.⁴⁵³ It consists of a large carpet of floral designs with the centre kept clear for a vignette of Bacchus and Ariadne watching a wrestling match with Pan and Eros. The composition of Bacchus and Ariadne mirrors the Cordoba mosaic; they are seated on a rock, leaning against each other, relaxed and in partnership. This is not a composition of violence or threat. What is interesting, then, is how this more equal pairing adopted for a genre scene in Ostia is adapted to the narrative of Ariadne's discovery, which more often gives a clear upper hand to Bacchus. The Iberian patrons or craftsmen have presumably used this composition because it suited their conception of this mythic pairing and the narrative of their meeting.

With only two examples this is a very small sample and possibly it would appear that the mosaicists and the Iberian patrons did not choose to tell this story very much at all but when they did, their emphasis appears to have been on a less threatening portrayal. An interesting point to note, that may or may not have influenced the depictions of these scenes, is that no Bacchic sarcophagi have been found in Spain.⁴⁵⁴ The motif of the sleeping Ariadne was a popular choice for sarcophagi elsewhere in the Empire, due to the conceptual connections between sleep and death, and the connotations that Ariadne is being awoken to a better life. This implies that there is not really a desire to depict this narrative. Iberian viewers seemingly preferred reminders of the good life, or as will be discussed in the following section, images of triumph. In particular, for the patron or artist of the Cordoba mosaic (Figure 107), this composition seems to emphasise the harmony and partnership between the mythical couple. This idea of harmony between genders is also echoed in the image of Ariadne holding up the drunk Bacchus in Figure 85 (page 164).⁴⁵⁵ Within this provincial context, it appears that this was an opportunity to show parity between the genders rather than the unequal power structures that have otherwise been identified.

⁴⁵² Sweetman compares the iconography of the Cretan and Thessalonkian and Antichoan mosaics, but mainly notes the difference in the background scenery (2013: 48).

⁴⁵³ Becatti 1961: 153 – 8.

⁴⁵⁴ Arce 1986: 167.

⁴⁵⁵ There could be a connection here with the image of Semele or Ariadne in the Villa of Mysteries in Pompeii, where Bacchus rests his head on her lap as she sits on a throne.

4.4 THE BACCHIC TRIUMPH: THE ICONOGRAPHY OF VICTORY

Partnership may also be a feature of the second, larger collection of mythical narrative scenes of this theme that appear on the mosaics: the triumph of the god. In the Roman world, a triumph was a procession that was initially celebrated in the city of Rome when a general had achieved a victory over a foreign enemy. It was normally decided by number of deaths in the conflict.⁴⁵⁶ Under the emperors, triumphs were restricted to the imperial family only, becoming an imperial right rather than a republican honour, making them a symbol of imperial power. There are a number of visual resonances that can be associated with the idea of the triumph, and in particular, of the triumph of Bacchus.

The triumph of Bacchus is a popular motif across the Empire. It has a complex iconographical history drawing on Hellenistic, Roman and new traditions as with other Bacchic iconography. Monteagudo summarises it as the 'Hellenistic figure of the colonizing hero, conqueror of the brute and disorderly forces of evil, surrounded by an aura of prestige conferred upon the civilizing hero, [which] was very successfully resurrected in the Roman period'.⁴⁵⁷ This brings together some of the themes that have been discussed in this chapter. Various Roman authors claimed that Bacchus was the inventor of the triumph because he was the first person to initiate a formal procession to celebrate victory, which he celebrated after beating the Indians in battle.⁴⁵⁸ Pliny, for example, cites this story, as does Curtius Rufus, who describes Alexander 'imitating the triumphal procession of Father Liber'. Ovid also refers to it in his *Lovers*.⁴⁵⁹ An exaggerated example of the Hellenistic Bacchic triumph is the festival procession in Alexandria that was initiated by Ptolemy II Philadelphos in 280/279, in honour of his parents. It included a Bacchic section, which 'was the richest, as befitted the regime's divine ancestor and revered patron of their success'.⁴⁶⁰ There were men dressed up as satyrs, wine being dispensed to the crowd, an image of the god himself and various attendants and a statue of Alexander and Ptolemy, emphasising the connections between the two men and the god. Alexander's personal and familial section of the procession came after Bacchus's.⁴⁶¹ This was an elaborate display of wealth, power, and divine favour, as well as good fortune, all of which are bound up in the images of the Bacchic triumph. The stories of Alexander and Bacchus and triumphal

⁴⁵⁶ Beard 2007.

⁴⁵⁷ Monteagudo 1999: 40.

⁴⁵⁸ Hedreen 2004: 48.

⁴⁵⁹ Beard 2007: 215-6; Curtius Rufus *History of Alexander* 3.12.18 (Liber being a Roman equivalent for Bacchus); Ovid *Amores*, 1.2. 47 – 8.

⁴⁶⁰ Stewart 2014: 207.

⁴⁶¹ Stewart 2014: 207-8. See also Appendix B in the same volume.

processions are formed together in the Roman imagination, along with the previously stated associations with the Roman past.

This Hellenistic background is then supplemented by the reality of the historical Roman triumph. Some ancient writers attributed the first Roman triumph to Romulus himself.⁴⁶² He is the first name recorded on the *Fasti Triumphales*, which is an inscribed list of triumphs.⁴⁶³ The fact that these ephemeral events are inscribed in a public monument like this indicates their importance and significance within Roman society.⁴⁶⁴ These victory processions were an important part of the cultural landscape of the Roman world, over and above the divine and Hellenistic traditions. They allowed the conquering general to display his victory to the people: Beard stresses that it was a very visual spectacle, with paintings of the important battles appearing in the procession and the physical reality of the precious objects and captives that were paraded through the streets.⁴⁶⁵ Fundamentally, ‘the triumph...re-presented and re-enacted the victory’ for the Roman people. It bought the action to them and helped them claim it as a victory for the whole community.⁴⁶⁶ It is therefore understandable that these events became part of a visual repertoire of victory and success. They were a clearly decipherable means of conveying such ideas in a visual format, especially in order to translate these events from the city of Rome out to the imperial provinces. They could be shortened down to simply the triumphal chariot, upon which the victorious general was carried on through the parade. This image was frequently used on coinage which would have circulated widely in the provinces.⁴⁶⁷ Another example of this provincial translation is the panels on the Arch of Septimius Severus in Leptis Magna. The emperor is depicted with his two sons in a chariot decorated with Victory crowning Liber Pater and Hercules.⁴⁶⁸ Even with only minimal trappings of the procession, it is easy to read that this is a celebration of a triumph. In art and images therefore, the triumph becomes the celebration of a great man in a chariot: these are the elements that the viewer needs to understand these messages of success. In regard to the divine triumph, a final important visual aspect is that the chariot is drawn by exotic or even mythical animals, such as tigers or centaurs, rather than horses.

⁴⁶² E.g. Dionysus of Halicarnassus *Roman Antiquities* 2.34.

⁴⁶³ Beard 2007: 73-4.

⁴⁶⁴ Though of course this inscription was created at the end of the Republican period, and the names arranged in order to mark the end of this process, before the Imperial family were the only ones eligible for a triumph, it is part of the conception of the Romans’ own history.

⁴⁶⁵ Beard 2007: 13-4.

⁴⁶⁶ Beard 2007: 32.

⁴⁶⁷ Rowan 2012.

⁴⁶⁸ <http://www.livius.org/articles/place/lepcis-magna/photos/lepcis-magna-arch-of-septimius-severus/> [accessed 19/06/18].

By incorporating these images into the domestic sphere, the two conceptions of the divine and the human triumph, the householder is clearly trying to bring some of that glory and good fortune into his own life, and to associate himself with the victorious triumph. The focus on Bacchus is part of a long Roman and Hellenistic tradition of associating the triumph with this god and therefore the householder can draw on these associations in the creation of this domestic stage set.⁴⁶⁹ In terms of questions of gender, triumphs were initially only celebrated by men. Women may take part in them. Infamously, Messalina rode behind her husband Claudius in his triumph of 44 AD after his conquest of Britain, and more respectably, female children were often depicted with their triumphant fathers to demonstrate the viability of the family line. They can also be the object of the triumph: for example, Aurelian celebrated a triumph over Zenobia of Palmyra in 274 AD.⁴⁷⁰ But they cannot be the subject: a general cannot be a woman, and therefore she cannot have a triumph. The only exception would be Venus who is also a popular *triumphator* in domestic art. Like Bacchus, certain conditions make her suitable: she is a goddess not a woman, and her triumph is in the feminine field of love. Ordinarily however, the triumph should be an emblem of success so the adoption of this theme in the ambiguous world of Bacchus, where one can potentially play with gender boundaries and social rules, could conflict with this. Bacchus's complex and contradictory character is at play again.

There are some very interesting examples of the Bacchic Triumph in the collection of Iberian mosaics. From the same site as the Wolf and the Twins mosaic (Figure 89, page 168) is a second Bacchic themed image: satyrs and maenads surrounding Bacchus in triumph on his chariot (Figure 110).⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁹ Other gods were associated with the triumph, such as Venus, whose marine triumph was a popular domestic subject. However, as sources like Curtius Rufus and Ovid show, Bacchus is prominent in the mythography of the triumph. Curtius Rufus *History of Alexander* 3.12.18; Ovid *Amores*, 1.2. 47 – 8.

⁴⁷⁰ Beard 2007: 239 & 321.

⁴⁷¹ Item CE013354 in the Cordoba Archaeological Museum catalogue.

<http://www.museosdeandalucia.es/web/museoarqueologicocordoba/acceso-a-fondos>



Figure 110: Bacchus mosaic, Alcolea, Archaeological Museum of Cordoba
(http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/imgdomus/MAECO_IMAGENES/fondos_pre/MAECOFCE013354_P.JPG [accessed 21/06/18])

This mosaic presents a general sense that this is an image of good fortune, as expected. The victory of the figure in the rearing chariot is associated with and brings a kind of sympathetic magic to the household in which it is placed. The satyrs and maenads add an erotic pleasure for the viewer and a sense of escapism and freedom, possibly a chance to play out some animalistic desires. The chariot is drawn by centaurs, stressing that this a divine or at least mythical triumph. In this image, it seems that the viewer could identify as a victor with Bacchus, in order to embody the positive qualities he represents. The elite man may be entertaining in the domestic space and wants to encourage the comparison with the successful leader depicted below him. Possibly it is easier for the town councillor who has never covered himself with military glory to claim these associations of success because they are framed in this mythical rather than 'realistic' realm? A direct image of an imperial triumph could be too jarring, but an indirect metaphorical, mythological scene would blur the boundaries better. Overall, this is a fairly standard presentation of the Bacchic Triumph scene.

Another standard composition, that draws on some of the ambiguities that have been discussed above, is an example from Zaragoza, a town in the south-east of the Peninsula. The Roman name of the town was Caesaraugusta and it was an early veteran settlement. This mosaic dates from the second century AD, from a site in the centre of the town (Figure 111).



Figure 111: Triumph of Bacchus, Zaragoza (National Museum of Archaeology, Madrid) (photo by the author)

Bacchus stands in his chariot being pulled by two tigresses, flanked by a satyr and a winged Victory. Pan or another satyr and two maenads walk alongside the tigresses in the procession. The interest here is in the figure of Bacchus (Figure 112). Again, he is portrayed in a very feminine style. His hair is long and flowing and his costume is very modest and covers him fully.



*Figure 112: Detail of Bacchus from Triumph of Bacchus mosaic, Zaragoza (National Museum of Archaeology, Madrid)
(photo by the author)*

This is a characteristic that Dunbabin notes in her survey of North African triumph mosaics: ‘the long-sleeved feminine robe, high-girdled and reaching to the ankles, which has become a standard costume at this time for the almost androgynous god’.⁴⁷² Barring one earlier example, all the North African mosaics surveyed in this article depict this costume, whereas it is much less common in our collection of Iberian Bacchic scenes. As we have discussed above, Iberian viewers recognise the gender ambiguity of Bacchus but seemingly choose to indicate this ambiguity in a different way. The aspects to be drawn from these mosaics is that the most common form of indicating Bacchus’s ambiguity (a feminine costume) is present in Iberia but is not prevalent.

4.5 THE TRIUMPH OF BACCHUS: THE MANLY MAN TRIUMPHANT?

There are approximately twelve triumph mosaics in Iberia including the two above, and five are either lost or too damaged to be examined in this study.⁴⁷³ Of the remaining seven, three are depicted with fairly standard iconography, like the Alcolea and the Zaragoza examples. The focus is

⁴⁷² Dunbabin 1971: 53.

⁴⁷³ As per the numbers I have collected in my database for this research. Arce describes 10 triumphal mosaics in 1986 and Hershkowitz records 11 in 2017.

on the god and his triumph. However, I will focus on the three others as I will argue that they present a slightly different format. As with the other scenes discussed in this chapter, they present a potentially interesting idea of gender which this section will explore. The fourth is on the same floor as the Noheda mosaic discussed in previous chapters. It is a single panel with a large procession. Unfortunately, the central section of the panel is damaged and therefore appears poorly in photographs. Valero Tévar states that it shows Bacchus in the centre of a chariot and the figure of winged Victory on the left, and Ariadne on the right.⁴⁷⁴ The two are equally important in his celebration. However, with the difficulty in decoding and reproducing this mosaic clearly, I will focus on the other three examples.

The first is from the town of Ecija, which was the ancient Roman town of Colonia Augusta Firma Astigi, near Seville (Figure 113). The mosaic is currently in the Seville Archaeological Museum and is one of the highlights of the collection. It is 7.20m x 4.52m in size and is believed to come from the *triclinium* of a town house, probably from the Severan era (late second to third century AD). Collantes argues that it is from a *triclinium* as there are sections on the mosaic (not visible in Figure 113 or preserved at the museum) which indicate where the couches would go. They were made

⁴⁷⁴ Valero Tévar 2013, 2015.

from coarser tesserae and were less colourful than the central panel according to the excavation reports.⁴⁷⁵



Figure 113: *Triumph of Bacchus, Ecija* (Seville Archaeological Museum) (photo by the author)

It is a simple and striking image. Bacchus stands in the chariot at the far left of the scene. He is naked, with a reasonably well-defined body but still with a hint of the feminine curve discussed above. He is crowned with a wreath of ivy leaves and rests his left hand on the figure in front of him. The viewer's eyes are drawn to him, as his nude body contrasts with the clothed figure next to him. He holds something in his other hand which is now mostly lost. The clothed figure is identified as Ariadne rather than Victory, another common companion, because of her lack of mythological attributes such as wings. She is fully dressed in a cloak over her robe and is crowned in slightly smaller ivy leaves. She holds the reins of the chariot and a spear or *thyrsus* type stick. The difference in clothing highlights the gender difference between the two figures as we can see Bacchus's masculine, heroic body but not Ariadne's, which is suitable for a modest woman and a good wife.⁴⁷⁶ Apart from that, they are both celebrating the triumph, they are both part of the victorious nature of this image. The third figure, to the right, is half-dressed, with his chest bare but a short cloak of animal skin over his shoulder. He beckons the chariot forward and carries a crook in his left hand. He presumably represents a satyr type figure. The chariot itself is drawn by two tigers.

⁴⁷⁵ Blázquez 1982: 13-14 drawing on a personal report from Collantes de Terán.

⁴⁷⁶ Bacchus can be dressed, as seen in previous mosaics, but here the signifiers of difference that have been chosen are the masculine nude body and the clothed female body. Hallett 2005.

This image conveys the majesty of the god and his companion. The tigers emphasise his mastery and connection with nature. The idea of the chariot riding in triumph emphasises his victory and power. The owner of this villa could entertain his guests in this dining room and encourage the idea that there was a connection between these positive attributes celebrated in this image and himself. The iconography and position of Bacchus and Ariadne is an interesting one. They are god and human, characters from myth, and husband and wife: all these permutations are apparent. There is a strong sense of partnership in this image, which I think would be stressed and played upon by the owner and his wife. A female viewer can see herself as the beloved of the god, but in a much more equal, less violent way than with the rape scenes. She sees, as with the Briseis mosaic for example, that it is correct for her to be modestly dressed and support her husband (Blázquez describes her in this image as a 'buena esposa romana', a good Roman wife), but also that she deserves to join in his triumph because she is a part of his victory and success as an elite man.⁴⁷⁷ The connotations of good fortune and prosperity in this image involve both Bacchus and Ariadne.

The second triumph mosaic is from a villa called Fuente Alamo, near Cordoba (Figure 114). It is an interesting mosaic, divided into two sections to depict two different scenes. It has been dated to the fourth century AD and covered a rectangular area of the floor in an apsidal room, possibly the *oecus* of the villa (the mosaic covers 5.10 x 4.75m).⁴⁷⁸ The apse is decorated with a mosaic of a large shell. The villa is relatively large and consists of a *pars urbana* covered with rich mosaics and a *pars rustica* where the agricultural business occurred (Figure 114). The site was originally a *balenem* and the main body of the villa was probably constructed on top of the bath site in the third century AD. There was further reworking in the fourth and fifth centuries, including the *oecus* mosaic, and evidence of continued occupation after that until about the sixth or seventh century AD.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁷ Blázquez 1982: 14.

⁴⁷⁸ Monteagudo 1999: 36.

⁴⁷⁹ Palomo 2013.

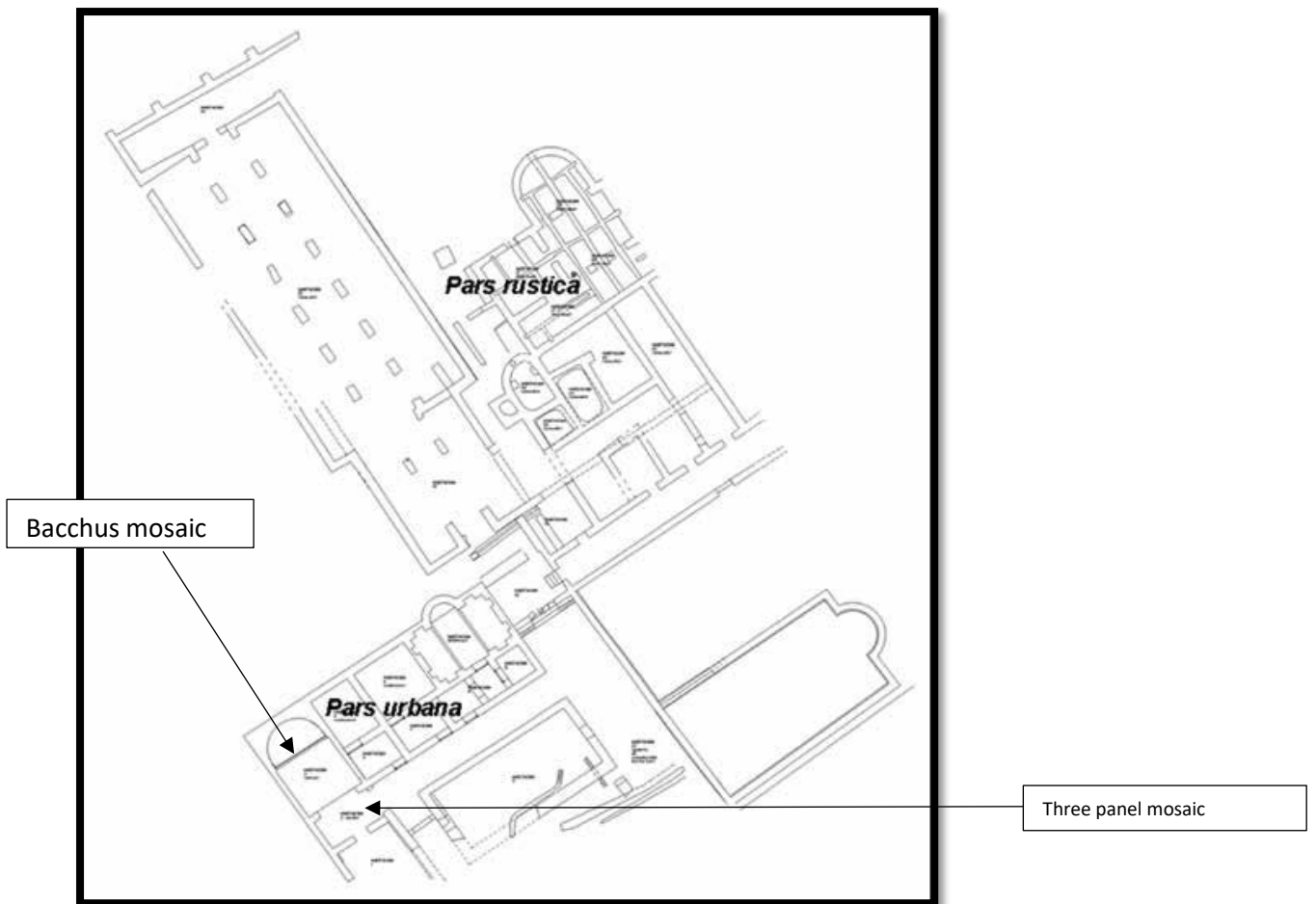


Figure 114: Plan of Fuente Alamo villa, Cordoba (Palomo 2013, annotated by the author)

The room is situated at the end of a long corridor, which runs across the width of the building, ending in the antechamber before the *oecus*. At this point is a second figurative mosaic, depicting three panels in a rectangle: a nymph attending to Pegasus, the three Graces, and a satyr and a maenad. These images help to prepare the viewer for the mosaic in the next room because they signal that they are entering an area that is different from the rest of the villa. During this phase these were the only figurative mosaics in the villa, indicating the importance of these areas within the house and possibly that this is a space of entertainment, with the satyr and the maenad bringing an air of conviviality, and of refined education, which is needed in order to understand the Three Graces and the story of Pegasus.⁴⁸⁰ The Graces may remind the viewer that this is a special room, which requires special behaviours. The visitor would then walk up three steps into the room itself.

⁴⁸⁰ Palomo 2013.



Figure 115: Fuente Alamo Bacchus mosaic – looking from the threshold into the room towards the apse (<http://antropicos.blogspot.co.uk/2013/09/la-villa-romana-de-fuente-alamo.html> [accessed 10/09/16])

The mosaic is orientated towards the viewer as he steps into the room and the images are displayed for him to draw what judgements he may (Figure 115). It is unusual that this room is not on the main axis of the house; it is set in the far corner rather than on the traditional line of sight through the important reception rooms. López Palomo argues that despite this, the arrangement still gives a sense of moving through domestic spaces to the most important one because of the long corridor.⁴⁸¹ It may not have functioned as a traditional *oecus* but it was clearly a space of some importance (indicated by the mosaics and architecture) and does seem designed to be a place where the owner could receive visitors and display himself as a man of status and power. The steps and the apse lend the end of the room a focus that suggests a place for a powerful patron in which to sit or stand and to take control and manage the room.

The upper panel depicts the triumph, and the lower panel depicts the battle that bought about the triumph, Bacchus's fight against the Indians (Figure 116 depicts the whole mosaic as if the viewer is hovering above it). This is therefore an explicit depiction of that Hellenistic heritage and the idea that Bacchus created the triumph following his significant victory over barbarism.

⁴⁸¹ Palomo 2013: 334-5.



Figure 116: Fuente Alamo Bacchus mosaic, showing the two panels (Palomo 2013)

First, we will discuss the battle scene in the lower panel (Figure 117). Here, the god is accompanied by satyrs and maenads, and the Indians are clearly picked out by their dark skin.



Figure 117: Detail from Fuente Alamo Bacchus mosaic - Bacchus fighting the Indians (http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-aZ7hg63QbNM/Uj_3wxmnWqI/AAAAAAAAACfM/qBJ84uA51Zs/s1600/P9210132.JPG [accessed 10/09/16])

This is an interesting conception of difference. The maenads, satyrs and the god are iconographically similar, whereas the Indians are the 'other' here. Bacchus is the nude upper body on the left of Figure 117, beating an Indian with his *thyrsus*. The maenad, the figure with damage across the main part of her body, is just another soldier in this fight: her gender neither excludes her nor differentiates her from her male companions. She towers over a fallen Indian, inflicting just as much damage and violence as the satyr and the god to her right.

The male viewer may see this as evidence of the monstrosity of this scene. If women are allowed to do the things that maenads do – to drink, to dance, to be naked, to go out into the wild places – they will partake in such hideous acts. They will become violent, unrestrained, and essentially try and do what men do, which is the scariest scenario of all. However, I would argue that this image allows for another possible reading. The distinction here is between the Bacchic group and the Indians: they are the odd ones, the "other", the ones who are being beaten and submissive. They have lost the power battle here. This division of 'them' and 'us' seems to take precedence over gender lines.⁴⁸²

This is emphasised in the upper panel that depicts the triumph itself (Figure 118).



Figure 118: Detail from Fuente Alamo Bacchus mosaic, showing Bacchus and Ariadne (http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-TDNabc153G4/Uj8Sm7R2USI/AAAAAAAAACeE/_tPjkFgZ2d8/s1600/11+baco+2.JPG accessed 10/09/16)

⁴⁸² This scene is also unusual because it is very rare to see a mosaic of the actual battle. Only two others are known from Italy and France. Both include maenads taking an active role in the fighting. Monteagudo 1999: 37–8.

Here we see the standard triumphal procession (Figure 116 for the full panel, Figures 117 and 118 for details). There are three figures of a satyr, a maenad and Silenus on the donkey, who lead the procession, followed by Pan, a second maenad (mostly lost) and Bacchus reclining in splendour on his chariot. Finally, a female figure follows the chariot and this figure has been interpreted as Ariadne.⁴⁸³

We have less of a sense of equality here than we did in the Ecijian triumph. Bacchus is semi-nude, reclining, crowned with vines, and is a distinctly divine figure. This is particularly emphasised by his seated pose whilst everyone else walks. Ariadne is dressed in a short tunic and veil and has an elaborate hairstyle. Monteagudo suggests that she is outside the chariot 'with the intention of emphasizing the god's triumph'.⁴⁸⁴ There has clearly been a decision here to show the god in a different form. Maybe it contrasts more with the active hero in the upper panel? Has he done his work and now he can celebrate? It is still clearly important that Ariadne is there. The way the composition is arranged means that she is separated from the other characters by Bacchus and his chariot. Again, they form a pair, which suggests that she still has a more important special status with the god as his consort.

The group at the front is interesting as well. López Palomo and San Nicolas have suggested that Silenus, the maenad and the satyr are in fact portraits of the family – husband, wife, and son - who owned the villa and commissioned the mosaic (Figure 119).⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸³ Monteagudo 1999: 38-9.

⁴⁸⁴ Monteagudo 1999: 39.

⁴⁸⁵ Palomo 2013: 304; San Nicolás 1994. It is unclear as to why he has made this identification but is an interesting hypothesis.

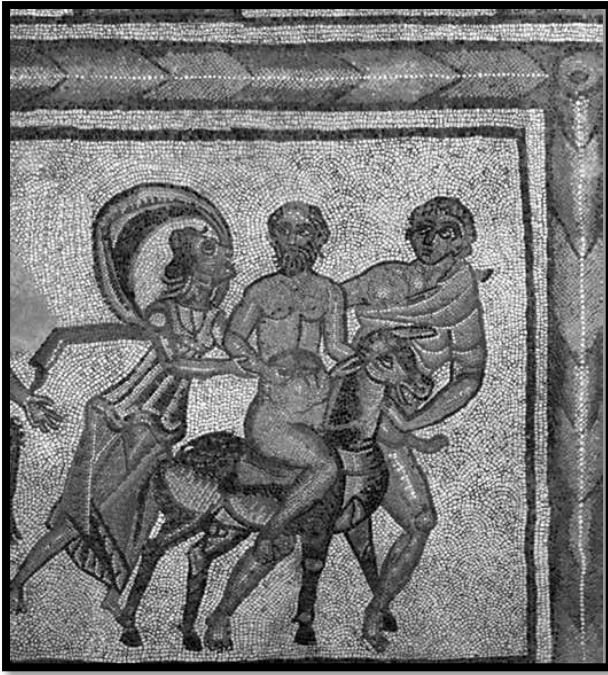


Figure 119: Detail of the Fuente Alamo Bacchus mosaic showing the Silenus, maenad and satyr group. (Palomo 2013)

This reading is highly uncertain and seemingly based on the grouping of the three together. As with the Dulcitus mosaic in Chapter 2, it does not seem essential to recognise the “portraits” in order for viewers to understand the image. If we can see the family here, it provides another refraction of the theme of partnership and collaboration that appears in these mosaics. It encourages the viewer to cross the boundary between reality and the mosaic and identify themselves with these mythological characters. It means that the viewers are fully aligned with Bacchus against the dark-skinned exotic Indians in the other panel. Gender is not the most important divider in terms of power and identity.

The final triumph mosaic to be discussed has the same divided format as the Fuente Alamo one. Again, we have two scenes of Bacchic narrative and, again, the depiction of gender behaviours is less than straightforward. The mosaic is from the late fourth century villa of Baños de Valdearados, north of Madrid, near the modern town of Burgos. Only some of the villa has been excavated which may correspond to its south-east corner, but without further excavations it is hard to tell (Figure 120).⁴⁸⁶ Because of the partial excavation, the layout of the villa is difficult to discern as well. From later geophysics and excavation, the peristyle is possibly to the north-west of the Bacchus room.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁶ Collins 1998: 77.

⁴⁸⁷ Rodríguez 2014: 270.

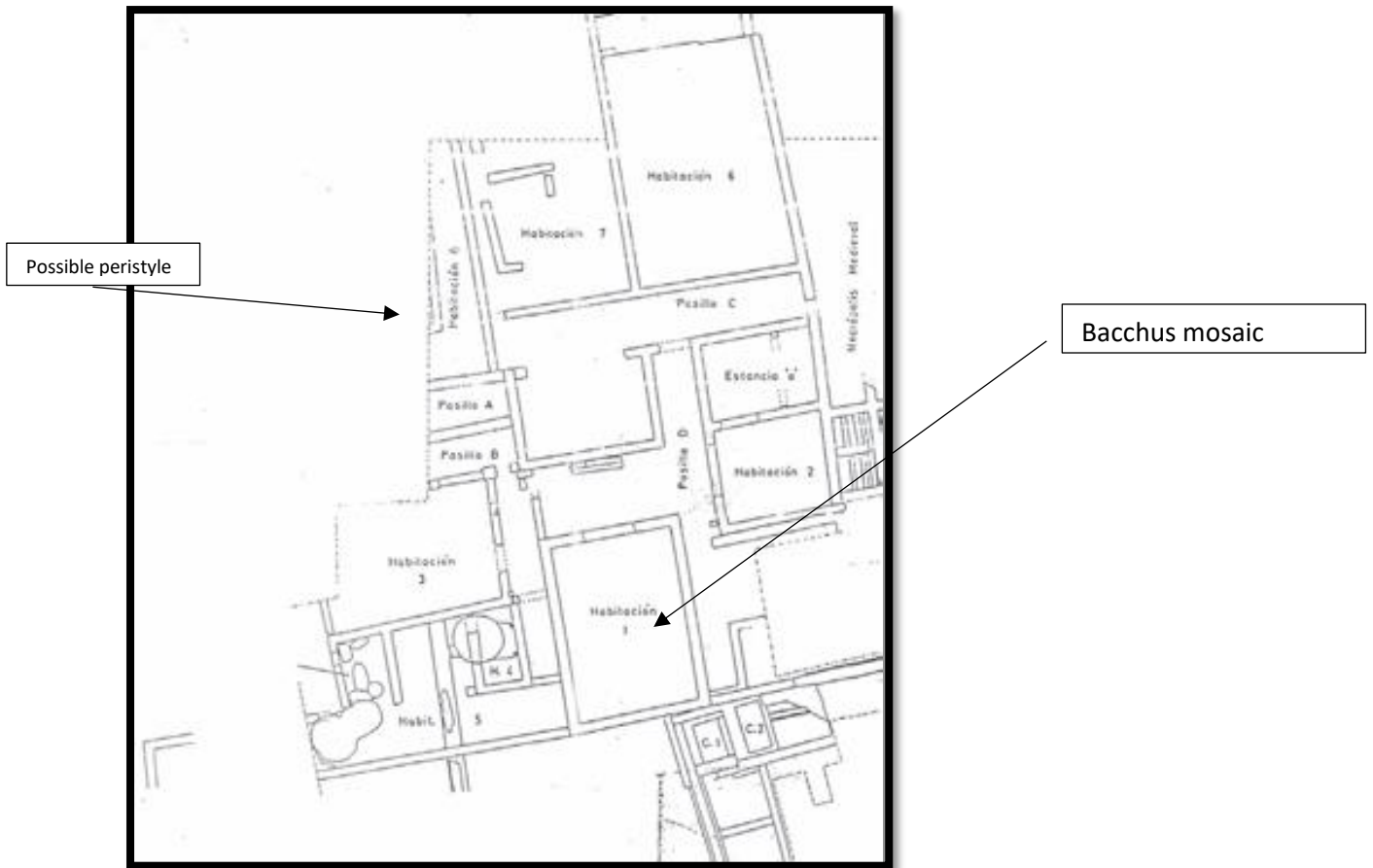


Figure 120: Plan of the villa at Baños de Valdearados, showing the excavated area. (Rodríguez 2014: 268, annotated by the author)

The mosaic was found in one the largest rooms, and measures 9.90m by 6.65m. Again, the entrance is marked by three steps, and the walls are decorated with stucco work. The suggestion is that this is the *oecus*.⁴⁸⁸ Regardless of its designation, this is clearly an important room. The steps, the decorated walls, and the fact that this is the only fully figurative mosaic in the villa, all point to a setting for entertainment and display.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁸ Monteagudo 1999: 40.

⁴⁸⁹ Two other rooms had geometric mosaics, one with a head of goddess that is now lost - Rodríguez 2014: 276-8.



Figure 121: Baños de Valdeareados Bacchus mosaic (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/rabiespierre/1746540071> [accessed 02.02.2018])

The central panel is surrounded by elaborate geometric patterns and six smaller panels, two of which can be seen in Figure 121 on the top left and right of the picture. These depict mini hunting vignettes of dogs chasing various prey and they also have the names of the winds in four of them. In the corner of the mosaic are four squares with male busts in them. They have no attributes so it is only supposition to label them personifications of the winds from the names in the hunting panels.⁴⁹⁰

The upper panel depicts a number of figures in a row. It has been interpreted as a procession but there is little indication of any directional movement, though there is a sense of excited activity.⁴⁹¹ It is more generally a gathering of Bacchic figures. The central figure is Bacchus, semi-nude and crowned with an *aureole*, signalling his divine status. He is also larger than the other figures. He holds the wrist of Ariadne to his right. She is fully dressed in an elaborate tunic and hairstyle and holds a *thyrsus*. To his left is a much smaller, dark-skinned figure upon whom he is leaning. This

⁴⁹⁰ Monteagudo 1999.

⁴⁹¹ Monteagudo 1999.

probably represents Ampelos.⁴⁹² This central trio form the focus for the viewer, and possibly demonstrate the range of sexual options available for the masculine viewer. His height and the signs of his divinity (his *aureole*, his semi-nudity) mark Bacchus out as the most important figure in this group and therefore the one with whom the elite male should identify himself. The way Bacchus is physically holding both Ariadne and Ampelos indicates his control over them. The other figures, the satyrs, maenads, Pan and Silenus, emphasise the revelry here. Although, because we know the stories we assign quasi-romantic roles to the three figures, this could easily be a family grouping. I will return to this idea after discussion of the lower panel.

The lower panel depicts three figures, in a triumph scene: Bacchus, Ariadne and Pan (Figure 122). Pan stands to the left of the image, behind the triumphal chariot. He wears furs and plays his (pan) pipes. Bacchus is in the centre, on the chariot. Ariadne stands next to him, dressed in a tunic.



Figure 122: Detail of Baños de Valdearados Bacchus mosaic, lower panel. (<http://www.elmosaicodebaco.com/about-us> [accessed 21/06/17])

Bacchus is semi-nude again and has a headdress with two bunches of grapes hanging on either side of his face. He holds a krater in his right hand. Finally, Ariadne stands next to him, dressed in a tunic

⁴⁹² Ovid *Fasti* 3.410 – 415. See discussion regarding the House of Bacchus mosaic.

and another tall and elaborate hairstyle. She too holds a krater. Again, as with the Ecija mosaic, there is a sense of partnership. In Figure 122 it can clearly be seen that Bacchus and Ariadne look at each other with an interesting use of the gaze, which acts to exclude the viewer in many ways.⁴⁹³ This is a private moment almost, after or amidst the public revelry typified above.

Below this lower panel are two busts. They are not labelled and do not have any attributes. I think that the most reasonable attribution here is that these portraits are of the owners of the villa or have some important connection to them. These portraits are separate from the panel but associated with them, have no recognizably divine characteristics, and are clearly marked out with honour.⁴⁹⁴ Monteagudo also suggests that the whole panel is almost a theatrical scene; the top of the panel depicts a pediment and could suggest a theatre setting. He describes it as 'a scenographic representation of the myth of Dionysus, in which the leading actors are the house owners themselves'.⁴⁹⁵ The inclusion of the two busts is a very explicit indication for the viewer to draw a parallel between the mythic scenes and the inclusion of the owners of the villa who would have entertained guests in this elaborate room. The physical insertion into the image of the owners of the mosaic stresses the ways in which viewers are supposed to see this image. When they are recognised, it makes explicit the connection between the image and the people who are performing the roles and rituals of their identity in the room. The viewer may have identified with particular characters in the mosaics or may have viewed them at one remove and used them to explore the connections to other concepts. Either must depend on context and the suitability of the image. Reading a message of partnership in these images, such as that which was identified on the Ecijan mosaic, is appropriate in this context and the right parallel for the viewer to draw and identify with if he wishes. Just as the family are connected here, so Bacchus and Ariadne are a family as well. Together these form the identity of the family at the heart of this villa. Both Bacchus and Ariadne have a role to play in the images, as do the husband and wife in the activities that occur in the villa.

4.6 ARIADNE AND BACCHUS IN IBERIA

The comparison with other North African mosaics highlights these key features. Apart from the Zaragoza mosaic, Bacchus does not appear in the very feminine costume in which North African mosaicists dress him. Also, in the African provinces, Bacchus is much more likely to be accompanied

⁴⁹³ Monteagudo 1999: 45 suggests that this scene illustrates the procession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. I see no reason why this should be the case – for the very well-educated viewer it may call that reference into mind but is not necessary for the viewer to have read Athenaeus's description to identify or relate to this image.

⁴⁹⁴ Monteagudo 1999: 44.

⁴⁹⁵ Monteagudo 1999: 46

in his chariot by a figure of Victory, rather than Ariadne. Examples include the triumphs from Saint-Leu, Sabratha, and Sousse again.⁴⁹⁶ The Sousse mosaic has a very similar composition to the Zaragoza mosaic (the Zaragoza mosaic is pictured in Figure 111, page 203, the Sousse mosaic in Figure 123).



Figure 123: Bacchus Triumph mosaic, Sousse ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triumph_of_Bacchus_-_Sousse_\(edit\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triumph_of_Bacchus_-_Sousse_(edit).jpg) [accessed 09.05.18])

It is dated to the early third century AD.⁴⁹⁷ Bacchus comes in from his chariot on the left, being drawn by four tigresses this time, and various attendants dance around. He is dressed in his feminine robe and accompanied by a semi-nude winged female figure. This figure is identified as the personification of Victory, which is entirely suitable for the triumph (and often appears in representations of imperial triumphs). She cannot be Ariadne as she has wings and is therefore not a mortal.

Unlike Ariadne, the figure of Victory is not a female counterpoint to Bacchus in the mosaics or indeed interchangeable, both possibilities suggested by Dunbabin in North African mosaics.⁴⁹⁸ Firstly, this is because Bacchus himself provides the female counterpoint with his feminine dress and his

⁴⁹⁶ Dunbabin 1971, plates XVI b, XIV a, and XII.

⁴⁹⁷ Dunbabin 1978: 269, catalogue entry 12 (d).

⁴⁹⁸ Dunbabin 1971: 58.

own inherent bisexual ambiguity is very important here. Secondly, Victory's femininity is not one with which the viewer is encouraged to identify. Personifications are not characters but anthropomorphised forms of concepts. Victory is not there as a beautiful woman for the viewer to take erotic pleasure in, or to imagine a narrative in which she is raped or married off to a man.⁴⁹⁹ She is there representing the idea of triumph – a shorthand within a shorthand - and her lack of character is precisely the aspect that allows her to do that. There is no emotional connection with Bacchus or the viewer that Ariadne can have. Dunbabin states that in the African triumph mosaics 'there was clearly a feeling that Dionysus ought to be accompanied on the Triumph by both Ariadne and Victory, but some confusion in the model as to which was which'.⁵⁰⁰ I am not sure that I agree with this: by including the wings, there is a clear distinction between the two, and I would argue, a deliberate choice being made in order to emphasise a different message.

4.7 PARTNERSHIP?

The theme of Bacchus and his retinue is seen as a theme in which it is possible to explore different gender relations than those of simply dominant and subordinate, powerful and powerless, that have been seen in the mythic narratives of chapter 3. The evidence for this, to summarise, is that there is less violence in these scenes: the powerless characters are not constantly under threat, as is seen in the images of the maenad with her back to us, and Ariadne awake (Figure 90, page 171, and Figure 107, page 195, respectively) There is more room to play with ideas about gender, in the figures of the satyr and the centaur, and Bacchus's ambiguity. Finally, the masculine world of the triumph seemingly needs to be balanced by a female figure who is not there simply for the pleasure of the powerful male gaze.⁵⁰¹ For the Iberian mosaics, the message is that it is important that Ariadne is involved in the triumph as Bacchus's partner and wife. Overall, in these Iberian Bacchic mosaics, it is clear that there is less of a division between powerful and powerless and less aggressive divisions between the genders. This could possibly be tied to the epigraphic evidence that was discussed in the introduction. The visibility of women in this evidence and therefore in the public life of the civic community, and the importance placed upon the maternal family, could be represented in the iconography with greater visibility of female characters and less aggressive portrayals of the relationships between the genders. Melchor Gil and Revell both stress that the matrilineal line is given importance in these inscriptions: Revell gives the example of Acilia Plecusa from Singilia Barba

⁴⁹⁹ Though of course Victory can be highly seductive (Kousser 2006) but lacks the narrative of beauty.

⁵⁰⁰ Dunbabin 1971: 58.

⁵⁰¹ We can tell this because she is not depicted in the poses and costumes that have signalled this role in the third chapter, and the way her relationships with the other figures are depicted.

(a town in southern Spain).⁵⁰² When statues were dedicated to Acilia's grandson and granddaughter, both were identified through their relationship to her, rather than to a male relative. Her lineage was of more significance or prestige, and this status could clearly be passed down the female line.

The mosaics depicting Ariadne and Bacchus together round out this picture of family groups that consider the maternal family as important as the paternal. Prestige, power and position depend upon that history of success, and the interconnections that women can make are an integral part of this network and can be celebrated. In these images of Ariadne, the partnership between the two figures – the two 'families' coming together (mortal and divine, man and woman) – is celebrated and recognised as important. Her presence in the triumph is entirely appropriate here. The elite man who entertains clients and guests in these rooms is encouraging that link between the success of the triumph, and his own success, as supported by his family. Of course, this is on a smaller scale to the previous two chapters.

4.8 CONCLUSION

Overall, the mosaics in this chapter have shown that some deliberate choices have been made in the presentation of the Bacchic iconography. The comparison with the North African examples has raised the suggestion that Ariadne is more likely to be included in the triumph images in Iberia, and that on the whole, female figures in the Bacchic mosaics are potentially less likely to be treated with violence or presented for the male gaze. The lack of space for comparative work, in North Africa and in other provinces, makes this uncertain. The epigraphic evidence suggests this possibly has a connection with the idea that the female family role has value within the elite Iberian society, and this may have contributed to these choices, and be reflected in them. The Bacchic iconography is an appropriate vehicle through which to incorporate these ideas of partnership and collaboration due to Bacchus's gender ambiguity. The Bacchic mosaics are very conventionally unconventional. They play with Bacchus's ambiguity and 'bisexuality' in fairly standardised ways and present more relaxed examples of gender behaviours in a way that is not out of place in the concept of the good life and rustic play that is associated with this imagery across the Empire. The inclusion of Ariadne and the lack of threat towards the female participants appears to be an exaggerated local variation on this theme, that combined with the other evidence does perhaps shed light on particular Iberian, provincial attitudes.

⁵⁰² Melchor Gil 2008: 447; Revell 2016.

5 CONCLUSION

In this thesis a selection of mosaics depicting various mythical narratives and themes have been explored with the intention of illuminating aspects of gender behaviour and identity within the domestic contexts of the Iberian provinces during the first to the fifth centuries AD. The mosaics have been examined in regard to their iconographic readings and their context within the space of the social house.⁵⁰³ This research has demonstrated that these mosaics can inform our understanding of the ways in which concepts such as masculinity, femininity, ambiguity, and partnership between the genders were present within images and narratives, and how they contributed to the formation of identities for the people who lived and viewed these mosaics. It has demonstrated that there is an exciting and new conception of gender within the Iberian provinces, as supported by the funerary and epigraphic evidence, in that male and female partnerships were celebrated to a greater visible extent than in other Western provinces.

The first question posed in the introduction addressed how these mosaics can be used to explore ideas of gender roles and identities as conceived of by the people who built, commissioned, lived with, and generally interacted with them. The mosaics discussed in this thesis show a clear conception of the ways in which men and women were expected to perform in different ways that were appropriate for their gender. This is evident from the repeated use of particular iconographic forms. The second chapter explored the presentation of masculinity and the ways in which these images celebrate and elevate particular behaviours that are associated with a specific male identity. The iconography seems to show a preference in Iberian society for certain presentations of masculinity, but these preferences are firmly couched in Roman sensibilities. The men in Chapter Two are active, courageous, and wealthy. Specifically, the hunting mosaics set up a heroic archetype of masculinity. However, gender is not the only identity at play here. It is clear that status, in particular status within the Roman Empire and its power structures, intersects with gender and forms an essential aspect of the elite masculine hero. By exploring the location of these mosaics, often in reception rooms, and in villas with bath houses and estates, this research suggests that the owners of these mosaics are using them as part of a narrative to bolster their masculine and their elite identity.

For the female viewers of these mosaics, iconography again emphasises an archetype to which they might aspire. The passivity of the women depicted on these mosaics throughout chapters two and

⁵⁰³ Wallace-Hadrill 1988.

three formed a consistent message. The physical contrast between the bodies of men and women on these mosaics suggested a clear conception of differing roles and behaviours that were appropriate for each gender. This contrast also indicated that gender was not purely a matter of biology. The depictions of Ganymede, and the array of masculine bodies on the Circus mosaic from Barcelona, demonstrated that gender depended upon behaviour and power. Boys and less powerful men were not as masculine as the elite patron. Thus, they enacted behaviours and roles that are suitable for the female gender: sexual availability, passivity, subservience.

Chapter Four adds a complexity to this picture of active men and subservient women (and boys). As well as depicting contextual space in which the viewers can test the boundaries between genders and subvert appropriate behaviours, these mosaics stressed the importance of partnership between different identities. The Bacchic Triumph mosaics in particular seemed to celebrate the ways in which these different roles made up the family unit. Aspects of masculinity and femininity are appropriate in creating a successful household, and both roles can be celebrated. Fundamentally, a tension is present between the research from the second and third chapters and the findings of the fourth chapter. The people who lived with these mosaics both promoted strict gender divisions, encouraging a hierarchy between male and female, and celebrating partnership between husband and wife.

The second question in the introduction considered the context and physical environment of the mosaics. Gender is a performative category and thus the ways in which the roles played out in the domestic spaces was important. The context of the mosaics is a key aspect of understanding how the iconography might be understood by the viewers. These two features interact when considering how these mosaics were experienced. The appearance of the masculine heroic archetype in the reception room allows us to postulate an experience for the viewer that integrates the narrative presented by the images, and the physical activities that would occur in the room and elsewhere. For example, the elite owner of the Villa of Maternus (whether that is Maternus himself or not) depends upon this interaction between image and environment to sustain his identity.

In light of the tension between the two readings of gender in these provinces, context might help resolve some of the conflict. The type of masculinity that the elite male owner performs may be dictated by the physical context, but more importantly the temporal one. The audience may be essential to understanding these presentations. There would be times when a powerful male iconography is emphasised over an idea of partnership and vice versa. It reflects an idea of appropriateness that was drawn out in Chapter Four. The mosaics are mirrors on the floors that

reflect and refract the gender behaviours that are playing out on the surface: sometimes they are a copy or a guide, sometimes they are an incentive to conform or to deny the embodied actions.

Finally, the mosaics examined in this thesis allow us to draw some conclusions about gender within the Iberian provinces. These images and contexts are the products of Iberia and were seen by primarily Iberian viewers. The evidence suggests much that is consistent with our idea of gender taken from Roman texts, as discussed in the introduction. The active male and the passive female are apparent and seemingly in favour for the majority of the time. There is a predilection for depicting the active male as the heroic hunter using a composition that is recognisable across the Empire but seems to have appealed in a particular way to the Iberian audience as connected to this idea of masculinity. That iconographic representation communicated an ideal of masculinity to the Iberian viewer. Equally, femininity is often presented as passive, and of a lower status than masculinity. However, this is not consistent throughout.

Gender is also being tested in conventional ways in these mosaics. The boundaries and structures of society are established through the myths and legends of the Graeco-Roman canon, in forms that would be entirely recognisable to viewers from across the Empire. However, a difference can be discerned in the inclusion of Ariadne in the Bacchic Triumph mosaics. Even with the small sample, basic comparative work with North Africa suggests that this is an important, and hitherto unidentified characteristic of the Iberian provinces, and with the epigraphic evidence, allows us to hypothesise to a certain extent about a greater emphasis on partnership amongst the genders. The contradiction between these two conceptual approaches to gender roles demonstrates the complexity of the imperial process. The peoples of Iberia seem to strive at different points to be Roman and to be Iberian, on a sliding scale rather than a binary.

Overall, I think this thesis presents evidence that in comparison to other western provinces, women in Iberia are recorded in different, more visible ways, celebrating their roles and ascribing value to their presence within the family. Women in Iberian provinces may have played an unusually active role in the political, social and economic life of Iberia. By using multiple sources of evidence – epigraphy, textual, material – a much more nuanced and subtle approach can be taken, a local response to ideas about gender and identity that has formed within this specific context. The depiction of gender in these mosaics is Iberian because we cannot understand them without understanding their context within the Iberian provinces.

Further Research

To build upon this work, more comparative work needs to be done. This analysis could be applied to mosaic collections in other provinces, and more widely, an exploration of gender within the provincial world would be of great value. It would definitely highlight how “odd” or not the Iberian evidence is. The epigraphic evidence that identifies this seemingly anomalous gender behaviour in Iberia, whilst very useful, needs a wider context and integration with other sources, such as mosaics. Equally, other intersections of identity could be explored: it is obvious from the discussions in this work that gender cannot be considered without status, but age and ethnicity would also prove interesting factors to incorporate.

A key area would be to expand the use of the wider decorative schema in the spaces discussed. In the examples where I have been able to find published information about the sculpture or other artefacts in the rooms with the mosaics it has enriched the picture that has been drawn about the behaviours that were occurring. The statue of one of the *Dioscuri* in villa at Noheda provides an excellent refraction of the celebration of masculinity that appears on the mosaic. That villa in particular provides a potential example to really illuminate the choices made within a particular domestic space: the interaction between the multiple figured mosaics, the artefacts found in the room, and the architectural space itself.

Another approach would be to assess the material on a regional basis. Due to the limited time and space a PhD project presents the decision was taken for this research to take an overview of the Iberian provinces as a whole. However, work could be done looking into the regional differences and trends. A brief look at the maps that have been produced for this work shows no obvious patterns, but this could require more detailed analysis.

This thesis is a clear example of the potential of this material that is currently underused in this form of social analysis and contributes to the ways in which scholars can examine and understand identity in the past. In the Anglophone world especially, the Iberian provinces can be neglected, but they form a fundamental part of our understanding of the Roman Empire. This thesis has demonstrated the value of applying social approaches to material culture and broadened our understanding of gender.

6 APPENDIX 1: TABLE OF MOSAICS

This table lists the mosaics discussed in this thesis, with any known contextual information and a summary of the themes and subject matter that are depicted. It is intended to supplement the main thesis by summarising the information that is known about each mosaic, and to show the full range of mosaics that were studied in the process of this PhD. It will also guide the reader to the key publications in which each mosaic is documented. The maps depicted in the thesis were created using the information in this table.

It is not a complete catalogue of figurative mosaics in the Iberian provinces and any errors or gaps are the author's own work.

Title	Location	Size	Context	Description	Image in Text	References	Themes
Meleager	Avila	0.3m border	Villa as part of the El Vergel II site in the Duero Basin. Original agrarian site in the 1st century AD, villa built between the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. Possible located in the triclinium. No information on other decorative elements	Central figure of Meleager who is semi naked and holds his spear across his body towards boar. Other male figure behind him. Female figure (nude) in upper right-hand corner - could be Atalanta or Artemis. Hunting dogs attacking boar. Horse below Meleager, incorrect perspective. Inscription 'STORIA MELEAGRI' to left of Meleager.	Figure 29, page 70.	Cabrero Piquero 2011.	Hunting Masculinity Heroes
Circus	Barcelona	Approx. 9m x 3.6m	Excavated below the Royal Palace, 1860. No information on context except that room was richly decorated with wall paintings, no information on subject, though may be related to fresco of horseman (fig. 15, p. 54). Suggested date second century AD but uncertain. Now in Archaeological Museum in Barcelona.	Very fragmented, current composition is a modern reconstruction with considerable modern input. Depicts a race around a circus spina. Time is compressed so there is a crash occurring and the end of race with the victory at the same time. Includes inscriptions which may be name of horses?	Figures 36 - 40, pages 82 - 8.	Humphreys 1986.	Circus
Mosaico A. Baquico	Burgos	9.90m x 6.65m, emblema 5m x 2.50m	Excavations in 1973 - 4, discovered an L-shaped villa at Banos de Valderados; this mosaic found in room A (see fig. 120, p. 215) possibly the oecus. Room decorated with stucco and stepped apse. 2 other geometric mosaics in villa.	Large, rectangular mosaic containing four squares at each corner with the busts of the winds, named in them; two rectangles down either of the long sides with lions and leopards, antelopes and deer. 2 emblema in the middle, upper panel - Dionysus (drunk) and Ariadne, maenads and satyrs, possibly Pan and Silenus; on the lower panel - Dionysus,	Figures 121 - 2, pages 216 - 7.	Monteagudo et al 1998; Monteagudo 1999.	Bacchic Triumph Hunting

				Ariadne and Pan in a chariot pulled by panthers.			
Judgement of Paris	Casariche	3.65m x 3.2m	Villa del Alcaparrel, excavated 1985. Possibly from the atrium. No other information about decorative elements. Early 5th Century AD.	3 figures of the goddesses - Minerva, Juno, Venus - presenting to Paris who sits on a rock, being advised by Eros.	Figure 54, page 116.	Blázquez, López, Neira, & San Nicolás 1993.	Gods and Mortals
Mosaico de Aquiles y Penthesilea	Complutem	10.15 x 7.21m	Complutem, in a town house, room described as 'la habitacion principal' by Fernández Galiano & Bermejo Tirado. 4th century AD. Pottery found in the room, no information found on other decorative elements. Discovered/restored 1970s.	Central panel depicts Achilles, naked but with helmet and weapons, holding Penthesilea by the hair where she has been dragged off the horse. V bad condition. No of medallions inserted into surrounding frieze including Medusa and Bacchic and potentially a portrait of the master of the villa in toga.	Figure 30, page 71.	Fernández Galiano 1984; Bermejo Tirado 2007.	Heroes Trojan War Masculinity
Bacchus	Complutem	?	Complutum, town house known as the House of Bacchus (fig. 102, p.188). Triclinium mosaic, from separate corridor off the peristyle. Ceramics found with it - terra sigillata Hispania. 4th or 5th century AD.	Mosaic is designed with a U-shaped geometric section for couches and a central panel showing Bacchus leaning on Ampelos with Silenus and satyr; two panther panels flanking it and one depicting dancing men below it. There is also panel by the door depicting the 4 seasons. In the corridor outside is a rectangular panel showing servants carrying wine.	Figures 101 - 104, pages 186 - 190.	Fernández Galiano 1984.	Bacchic themes Representations
Mosaicos de la Villa de Fernan Nunez: El Rapto de Europa	Cordoba	1.05m x 1.55m	Remains from area near an estate of the Dukes of Fernan Nunez, south of Cordoba; excavated 1906 from a hill site, uncovered a room containing the mosaic	Rectangular panel showing Europa riding the bull in the centre, 2 women onlooking in amazement to the left, and to the right Eros with a thrysus.	Figure 76, page 144.	Blázquez 1981.	Metamorphoses Abduction Power

			<p>fragments (8.23m x 7.46m) - the overall scheme of room is very hard to distinguish but another panel does depict the Seasons. Very little information on other elements and decorative programme.</p> <p>4th or 5th century AD</p>				
<p>Mosaico de la Loba y los Gemelos</p>	Cordoba	3.65m x 3.65m	<p>Discovered at villa at Alcolea in 1958, a site 11km NE of Cordoba - on the banks of the river Guadalquivir.</p> <p>Very little context known as villa is only partially excavated. Other mosaics at site depict further Bacchic themes, and Theseus and the Minotaur.</p> <p>2nd century AD.</p>	<p>Occupied left half of room - other half had plain floor - possibly a dormitorio?</p> <p>Square pavement with central medallion; semicircles abutting central circle on each side; quarter circle at each corner.</p> <p>Central medallion: (1.20m diameter) - scene of the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus - she's striped a bit like a tiger and the background is a woodland scene.</p> <p>Semicircles: faun crowned with wreath, sitting on the ground, naked with a horse's tail?, deerskin, holding a flute, lamb grazing nearby; maenad lying with her back to us, drinking from a libation vessel, leopard next to her; satyr lying on rocks, holding a crater in one hand, goat behind him on more rocks; last is mostly lost, but likely to be another maenad.</p> <p>4 corners - vases.</p> <p>Spaces in between the panels have Medusa heads.</p>	Figure 89, page 169.	Fernández Castro 1982; Blázquez 1981.	<p>Bacchic themes</p> <p>Romulus and Remus - foundation myth</p> <p>Medusa</p>

Mosaicos de Alcolea: Thysos Baquico	Cordoba	2.60m x 2.60m	<p>Discovered at villa at Alcolea in 1958, a site 11km NE of Cordoba - on the banks of the river Guadalquivir. Very little context known as villa is only partially excavated. Other mosaics at site depict further Bacchic themes, and Theseus and the Minotaur.</p> <p>2nd century AD - 160 - 170 AD?</p>	<p>V similar composition to the Mosaico de Bacchos at la Calle de Cruz Conde - octagonal central medallion with rectangles radiating off it, 4 circles at the corners, and semicircles in between. Octagon - Bacchus riding a chariot pulled by 2 centaurs, carrying appropriate accompaniments. Rectangles - similar to one above, alternating male and female with Bacchic themes - satyr wearing a leaf wreath, maenad; satyr carrying hunter's stick; maenad crowned with ivy; satyr with double flute; dancing maenad; satyr with pipe; maenad. Circles - busts of the 4 winds - 2 with beards, all winged. Other spaces - vine leaves.</p>	Figure 110, page 203.	<p>Item CE013354 in the Cordoba Archaeological Museum catalogue. http://www.museosdeandalucia.es/web/museoarqueologico/cordoba/acceso-a-fondos</p>	Bacchic Triumph Bacchic themes Representations
Bacchic Triumph	Cordoba	5.10m x 4.75m	<p>Villa site at Fuente Alamo (fig. 114, p. 209), large agricultural site as part of villa as well. Only part of building with figurative mosaics - Pegasus, Bacchic themes, three Graces. Steps into apsed room, opus sectile decoration on walls. No other decorative elements known.</p> <p>4th century AD</p>	<p>Two panels: upper depicts triumph of Bacchus in a procession: Bacchus in chariot with Ariadne, satyr, group of Silenus on donkey, satyr and maenad. Lower panel depicts battle scene of Bacchus plus satyrs and maenads against the Indians. Some damage.</p>	Figures 114 - 119, pages 209 - 214.	<p>Monteagudo 1999; Palomo 2013; San Nicolás 1994.</p>	Bacchic Triumph Bacchic themes

Bacchus and Ariadne	Cordoba	4.6m x 3.6m	Found during excavations at Calle Duque de Hornachuelos, Córdoba (Andalucía, España), no context known. 3rd century AD.	5 figured panels in meander pattern. 4 of satyrs? Central panel of Bacchus and Ariadne reclining together.	Figure 107, page 196.	Vicent 1965. http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/cultura/imgdomus/MAECO_I/MAGENES/fondos_pre/MAECO/FCE023824_SEQ_001_P.JPG [accessed 20.06.18]. No. CE023824 in the collection of the Archaeological Museum of Cordoba	Bacchic themes
Mosaico con el Triunfo de Dionysos	Ecija	7.50m x 4.52m	Discovered in Ecija before 1952; potentially rich roman townhouse - triclinium mosaic due to lost sections? No other context or decorative elements known. Severan period, late 2nd to 3rd century AD.	Main panel consists of Bacchus and Ariadne riding in chariot pulled by 2 tigers; B & A are crowned. Some loss to lower part of Bacchus. To the right of the chariot is a satyr playing a tambourine, cloak billowing behind him. Unusual to have Ariadne in a Bacchus triumph? Collantes says that other panels show it is triclinium mosaic but unable to trace these.	Figure 113, page 207.	Blázquez 1982b.	Bacchic Triumph Bacchic themes

Metamorphoses	Ecija	Room = 5m x 8m	Archaeological site called the Plaza des Armas. Excavated 2012 - ongoing, no contextual information. Possible triclinium as geometric sections may indicate couch locations. 3rd century AD.	Approx. 14 scenes, damage to right-hand side of the floor. Seasons, Bacchus. Zeus and Danae, Europa, Leda, Antiope, Ganymede. Geometric section - for couch?	Figures 72 - 4, pages 140 - 2.	Reports from Sergio García-Dils, the lead archaeologist for the site, http://ecijahistoria.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/los-amores-de-zeus-nuevo-tesoro.html (accessed 18/05/17) and http://www.nationalgeographic.com.es/historia/actualidad/descubren-un-esplendido-mosaico-romano-en-ecija_9519/1 (accessed 18/05/17).	Metamorphoses Bacchic themes Representations
Emblema of Sacrifice of Iphigeneia	Emporiae	0.55m x 0.60m	Museo Monografico de las Excavaciones, Ampurias; exact findspot unknown, no contextual information. 1st century BC - 1st century AD.	Reproduction of Greek painting? Depicts sacrifice of Iphigeneia, including Odysseus, Calchus & Agamemnon. Arranged round altar of rocks, against backdrop of hangings 'indented to evoke a stage setting'. Top right - Artemis with deer to be substituted.	Figure 53, page 113.	Dunbabin 1999.	Gods and Mortals Trojan War

Bellerophon/Circus	Girona	17.4m x 3.32m	Villa of Can Pau Birol (Torre del Bell-Lloc). Villa not excavated fully - peristyle corridor? No contextual information or further decorative elements known. Late 3rd century?	Very long mosaic. Geometric section with panel of Bellerophon and Chimera. End section with circus scene, and details of Rhea and Mars story as part of decoration. Circus Maximus style statues. Magistrate in charge. Connection with Rome.	Figures 23 - 6, pages 64 - 7, figure 35, page 80.	Guàrdia i Pons 1999.	Hunting Heroes Masculinity
Los Amores de Zeus	Italica	6.85m x 6.88m	Unknown house discovered next to the amphitheatre in the area of Los Palacios. Excavated 1914, currently laid in the museum/house of Condesa de Lebrija in Seville. No contextual information or other decorative elements known but possible connection with Bacchic mosaics? Middle of 2nd century AD.	Originally rectangular - restoration apparent. Central figure of Pan? Apollo? Polyphemo?, Seasons at each corner in circular medallions; four further circular medallions - Leda and the swan, Io, Ganymede, Danae; four square panels of Europa & Zeus as bull, Arcas and Callisto as bear, Zeus as Satyr & Antiope, river god - possible Nile? Surrounded by polychrome flowers, border of guilloche design. Suggestion theme is Ovid's Metamorphoses?	Figures 61 - 70, pages 131 - 8.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Metamorphoses Abduction
Mosaico di Ganimedes	Italica	3m x 3m Central circle approx . 1.07m in diameter	Discovered in 1907 in the area of Los Palacios; moved to la Casa de la Condesa de Lebrija in 1912; restored then also - Ganymede's legs, dog's hind legs - inscription may also be modern. No contextual information or other decorative elements known but possible connection with Lovers of	Square with border, and central medallion surrounded by semi-circular sections. Central medallion - Ganymede being taken by the eagle. Semi-circles - 2 tigers; 1 panther; 1 with inscription 'Salve' possibly modern. Flowers in 4 corners.	Figure 78, page 148.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Abduction Power

			Zeus mosaic. 150 AD?				
El Mosaico de Hylas	Italica	1.12m x 1.12m (central panel)	From the house called the Casa de Mosaico de Hylas in Italica (fig. 80, p. 149). The surround remains in situ, central panel in Museo Arqueologico de Sevilla but it is possibly not correct surround. Excavated 1927 - 28. House has 10 mosaics in total, 5 of which are figurative - others included busts of personifications, Seasons, Oceanus, and a potential lost scene of Ganymede's abduction. No information on other decorative elements. 2nd century AD?	Depicts abduction of Hylas - Hylas being pulled to the left by 3 nymphs, with Hercules to the right with his hand raised - trees in the background. Connection to story popularised by Apollonius Rhodios (Argonautia). Surround is rectangular area of guilloched swastika meander, chevron border. Composition inspired by Hellenistic original? Similar to one in St Colombe (Gaul).	Figures 80 - 1, pages 149 - 150.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Abduction Power Gods and Mortals
Mosaico con Bustos Baquicos	Italica	5.30m x 5.12m	From an unknown house site in Italica. Excavated 1914, currently laid in the museum/house of Condesa de Lebrija in Seville. Restored 1945. 2nd century AD - early 3rd century AD (Severan era).	Central medallion - Bacchus or poss. Ariadne - long hair, wreath of flowers. Double border - dentures then octagon. Four squares of the Seasons; eight medallions - four lions, two tigers, poss. Silenus, crowned with vine leaves, & Hercules - difficult to identify because this area has been heavily restored - crown is definite restoration work. Guilloche borders (same as Lovers of Zeus mosaic), decorated lozenges, outer wave patterned border, swastika pattern.	Figure 100, page 186.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes Representations

Mosaico baquico de la Casa del Planetario	Italica	4.5m x 3.9m	From the Casa del Planetario in Italica. Town house. Excavated 1972. 7 mosaics, 4 figurative. Less accessible room (fig. 84, p. 164). No information on other decorative elements. 2nd Century AD.	Rectangle - 2 parts: large square divided into 9 panels, smaller rectangle below. Enclosed by pattern of intersecting lines and small floral motifs in border. 9 figurative panels - 4 centaurs, 2 anthers, 2 satyrs, centre panel of 'drunk' Bacchus and Ariadne.	Figures 83 - 5, pages 163 - 5.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes
Edificio de Neptuno 7	Italica	6.4m x 4.5m	From the Casa del Mosaico de Neptuno in Italica, very large building. Excavated 1929 - 30. Not complete plan (fig. 105, p. 193). 8 mosaics, 3 figurative - marine, Theseus and the Minotaur (lost), Bacchic. No information on other decorative elements. 2nd century AD.	Large section in upper middle part destroyed. Rectangle divided into 35 squares surrounded by cable borders. Squares contain some floral motifs, and others with Bacchan figures e.g. dancing satyrs, flute playing satyrs, Agave holding the head of Pentheus, centaurs, Silenius on a donkey, a lion, a tiger, and dancing maenads.	Figures 86 - 7, pages 166 - 7, figure 105, page 193.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes
Hylas and the Nymphs	Leon	4m x 4m originally, now 1.60m x 1.50m	Excavated at Quintana del Marco - rural site, remains of possible Roman town (area called Los Villares). No contextual information or further decorative elements. Presented to Museo de Leon in 1925. 4th century AD.	Remaining section consists of 3 figures - 2 nymphs, one on either side of a mostly lost Hylas. He's trying to pull away, they are grabbing him. Highly coloured. Extensive restoration.	Figure 79, page 151.	Blázquez 1993.	Abduction Power Gods and Mortals

Fragmento de Mosaico con Bellerofonte	Malaga	1.44m x 1.52m	Found in the area of the Gardens of Puerta Oscura in Malaga in 1915. Blázquez states that it is from the second phase of the villa building but no further information on context or other decorative elements. 2nd century AD.	Highly damaged fragment. Bellerophon mounted on Pegasus - and Chimera - with general hunting going around - another male figure and dogs. Part of the same mosaic as the fragmento con caceria.	Figure 27, page 67.	Blázquez 1981.	Hunting Heroes Masculinity
Fragmento con Caceria	Malaga	1.20m x 1.55m	Found in the area of the Gardens of Puerta Oscura in Malaga in 1915. Blázquez states that it is from the second phase of the villa building but no further information on context or other decorative elements. 2nd century AD.	Very damaged fragment. Jungle/forest scene with palms - African? Hare - hunted by dog; lion pouncing; 2 gazelles on far side. Part of mosaic of Bellerophon?	Figure 28, page 68.	Blázquez 1981.	Hunting Africa
El Rapto de Europa	Merida	4.45m x 2.90m Central piece - 0.92m x 0.92m	Discovered in 1958 on a site between the street Legio X and Via Ensanche, single room. No other context recorded. 2nd century AD.	Mosaic has 2 parts - rectangular piece at the bottom with T block pattern of black and white; square piece above - border of black triangles; 2 black line borders, the central geometric pattern of stars and triangles. Central piece depicting Europa being taken by the bull over the sea - surrounded by cloak (golden?). Polychrome - blues and greens.	Figure 75, page 143.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Abduction Metamorphoses Gods and Mortals

Mosaic of Dionysus and Ariadne	Merida	2.17m x 1.80m	Found near the railway station in 1910. Fragments in the citadel and figured panel in the National Museum of Roman Art, Merida. No information on context or other decorative elements. Late 4th - 5th century AD.	Figured panel showing sleeping Ariadne being discovered by Dionysus, being revealed by Pan. Bacchus spills jug, licked up by panther. Figures are on abstract background - random decorative motifs of discs etc are scattered around them. Similar composition to a painting described by Philostratus in the book Images - also similar to some Pompeian paintings and various sarcophaguses. Signed by Anniponus. Restored in antiquity at some point.	Figure 108, page 197.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Bacchic themes
Seven Sages	Merida	?	Excavated from Calle Holguín, domestic space but close to public buildings. Some other mosaics but only fragments remain - not enough to tell subject. Some 'fragmentos de decoración arquitectónica'. No plans available. 4th century AD.	Rectangular panel surrounded by double border, upper section depicting with 7 sages, labelled in Greek; lower shows Achilles, male figure, male figure, Briseis.	Figures 51 - 2, pages 110 - 1.	Blázquez 1993; Bermejo Tirado 1999.	Gods and Mortals Trojan War
Mosaico de la Habitación Octogonal o de Dulcitus	Navarra	7.35m across the axis Central medallion 1.60m in	Villa of Ramalete - north of Tudela, in a bend of the river Ebro (fig. 8, page 44). Excavated portion of villa - bathhouse rooms excavated along a corridor, octagonal room opposite side of the corridor from the main rooms with small antechamber? at entrance. No information on	Octagonal mosaic, various vegetal and floral patterns surround a central medallion depicting male figure on horseback - his hand is raised having just thrown his spear at the deer at the horse's feet. Surrounded by pastoral landscape of bushes, a tree, a rock. Inscription by head of the rider: DULCITIUS - his name?	Figures 7 - 9, pages 43 - 5.	Blázquez & Mezquíriz de Catalán 1985.	Hunting Masculinity

		diameter	decorative elements. 4th century AD.				
El Hinojal - Mosaico con cazador de pantera	Nr Merida	Incomplete mosaic - 4.65m x 2.42m	El Hinojal is a villa approx. 18km north-west of Merida - by the Via Emerita-Olisispo - remains are of Constantinian period, but remains of earlier villa below. Discovered 1974. Taken to Citadel. 2 bath complexes. Boar hunt and nereid (possible marine scene) in same villa. No other decorative elements known. 4th century AD.	Mosaic divided into two sections - remains of one end of a corridor or threshold mosaic? Central bit that gets broken off = pattern of interlaced cable - creating circles and crossed squares. Left square shows man on horseback about to spear a panther; wooded scene.	Figures 10 - 1, pages 49 - 50.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Hunting Masculinity
El Hinojal - Mosaico con cazador de jabali	Nr Merida	10.80 m x 8.50m (whole area) Central panel: 3.26m x 3.14m	El Hinojal is a villa approx. 18km north-west of Merida - by the Via Emerita-Olisispo - remains are of Constantinian period, but remains of earlier villa below. Discovered 1974. Taken to Citadel. 2 bath complexes. Panther hunt and nereid (possible marine scene) in same villa. No other decorative elements known. 4th century AD.	Rectangle and U-shaped area filled with patterns - rhombas with motifs in; in U-shaped area is square panel with figures. Square panel - border of vines with busts of the 4 Seasons - named, female; centre is hunting scene of boar - again wooded scene, man thrusting spear into boar (no horse).	Figure 16, page 55.	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Hunting Masculinity
Hunting Scene	Pedrosa de la Vega, near Palentia	5m x 2m	Villa of La Olmeda. 15 mosaics, 2 figurative - both in same room (oecus?) (fig. 33, p. 76). Some fragmentary pieces of sculpture and bronze found -	Large figured panel surrounded by 'ornamental carpet'. Hunters attacking various animals including leopards, tigers, bears, boar and lions.	Figures 33 - 4, pages 76 - 7.	Fernandez Castro 1982; www.villaromanalaolmeda.com ; Dunbabin 1999.	Hunting

	(north Tarraco nensis)		not clear what subject is. 4th Century AD.				
Achilles on Skyros	Pedrosa de la Vega, near Palentia (north Tarraco nensis)	Central panel: 3.75m x 4.70m	Villa of La Olmeda. 15 mosaics, 2 figurative - both in same room (oecus?) (fig. 33, p. 76). Some fragmentary pieces of sculpture and bronze found - not clear what subject is. 4th Century AD.	Second large panel - border of pairs of confronted ducks whose tails turn into dolphins, medallions with portraits. Busts of Seasons in corners. Central panel - Achilles in Skyros: trumpet is being blown whilst Achilles is seizing the weapons, while the daughters of Lykomedes try to restrain him; setting of the women's quarters - lots of wool work, spindles etc.	Figure 99, page 185.	Dunbabin 1999; Bermejo Tirado 2009.	Heroes Bacchic themes Trojan War
Suplicio de Dirce	Ecija.	6.40m x 2.60m	Discovered in Ecija. No information on context at all. 4th century AD.	Large figurative mosaic - lots of white space, no patterned border. Depicts the torture/death of Dirce - mother? stepmother of Antiope (story in Euripides and others). Dirce is semi naked, tied (?) to bull, both stretched horizontally across the mosaic; there is a tree on one side and a man on the other - semi naked, carrying a curved stick, second man beyond the tree, raising his stick to beat her/the bull - two men representing the twin sons of Antiope - Anthion and Zethos. 2 birds above main image.	Figure 77, page 147.	Blázquez 1982b.	Power Metamorphoses Masculinity Gods and Mortals

Mosaico de Centcelles	Tarragona	?	Cupola decoration from the Mausoleum at Centcelles, nr Tarraco; clearly a villa site but reused many times (fig. 18, p. 59). Debate over burial remains - who was this tomb for? On the walls and roof of the cupola - some loss but v large mosaic so main themes can still be seen. 4th century AD.	Centre has biblical scenes e.g. Daniel and the lions Frieze running around lower edge - hunting, multiple hunts - deer mainly, dogs and men on horseback but also other men - looking after dogs, setting up nets etc. Christian context	Figures 18 - 22, pages 59 -62.	Blázquez 1993; Dunbabin 2003a; Collins 1998; Schlunk & Hauschild 1962.	Hunting Christianity
Perseus and Andromeda	Tarragona	?	No information on context. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	Panel from larger mosaic of life of Perseus? Medusa head associated with it. Panel depicts Perseus and Andromeda, dead head of the monster at his feet.	Figure 56, page 120.	Blázquez et al 1986.	Heroes Medusa Masculinity
Mosaic with the Labours of Hercules	Valencia	5.5m x 4.5m	Discovered in 1917 at Casa de Porcar in Liria (currently at the Nat Museum in Madrid). Probably town house. No context or information about other decorative elements available. 3rd century AD.	Divided into two sections, top is geometric design, lower is 12 squares with the labours of Hercules, surrounding a central square showing Hercules and Omphale wearing each other's clothes - Hercules carries wool, and Omphale his club. Order of labours is not canonical.	Figures 96 - 8, pages 182 - 3.	National Museum of Archaeology, Madrid	Heroes Bacchic themes Masculinity

La Villa de Materno	Villa at Carranque (Toledo)	Various 1st - 10m x 7m. 2nd - c.2m square panel 3rd - ? 4th - 5.4m x 4.6m	Villa of Maternus, almost whole villa has mosaics, but only 3 are figurative (fig. 49, p. 108). No information about other decorative elements. 4th century AD.	1st - possible death of Adonis - nude hunter fighting boar, watched by Mars and Venus, plus more everyday hunting aspects - hounds with names inscribed - large central panel from reception room. 2nd - Achilles and Briseis - large central panel from reception room. 3rd - Head of Ocean with fish and sea creatures - from basin in peristyle. 4th - El mosaico de "las metamorfosis" de Carranque: central medallion of female allegorical figure - Felicitas?, surrounded by semi circles depicting metamorphic scenes - Diana and Actaeon, Hylas and the Nymphs, Pyramus and Thisbe, Neptune? and Amymone. Evidence of 2 mosaic workshops - 1 & 3, 2 & 4.	Figures 49 - 50, pages 108 - 9, figures 59 - 60, pages 124 - 125.	Dunbabin 1999; Fernández-Galiano 1995.	Hunting Metamorphoses Abduction Trojan War Gods and Mortals Marine
Noheda	Villa de Noheda	Circus panel: 10.8m x 3.05m 6 of similar size	Extensive villa. 3 apsed room in villa, entered through antechamber, entrance with 2 columns and steps. One of the largest triclinium in the Empire (Valero Tevar 2013: 313). Dioscuri statue in room. No plans available. 4th century AD.	From west: A: contest between Oenomaus and Pelops, including success at the end; B: theatrical scenes performing pantomime and mime, ludi scaenici, boxing; C: Judgement of Paris, abduction of Helen, journey to Troy; D: Bacchic triumph w/ Ariadne and Nike; E: groups like B relating to ludi; F: marine motifs.	Figures 41 - 2, pages 89 - 90.	Valero Tevar 2013.	Circus Bacchic themes Theatre/Games

Mosaico con el Triunfo de Baco	Zaragoza	3.60 x 2.95m	Found in 1908 in casa 4 de la Calle Alfonso 1, with a group of nymphs (statues). Has been heavily restored. No information on plan or other context. 2nd century AD.	Surrounded by Seasons busts? Triumph of Bacchus in a carriage pulled by 2 tigers, 6 people involved in total. At the front of the procession is a mostly lost maenad (probably), then man in leopard skin with various Bacchic accoutrements, then in between the tigers is a woman in a yellow tunic, crowned and with a mantle of red; before this figure is maenad crowned in ivy, turning towards the chariot. In the chariot is Bacchus, looking very regal, being crowned by a Victory, and flanked by Ampelos.	Figures 111 - 2, pages 204 - 5.	Blázquez et al 1989b.	Bacchic Triumph Representations
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Mosaics Not Used in Thesis

Title	Location	Size	Context	Description	Image in Text	References	Themes
Mosaico con Medusa	Albacete	5.00m x 4.46m	Discovered in la Villa de Romana del Camino Viejo de las Sepulturas (Balazote). Part of bath house? Room connects to passage via apodyterium.	Square mosaic, outer border of open shapes, thin border of arrows, central meander pattern, central emblem of Medusa head - mostly lost Only hair with snakes and wings remains.	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989a.	Medusa
Mosaico con Oceano	Albacete	5.98m x 6.61m	Discovered in la Villa de Romana del Camino Viejo de las Sepulturas (Balazote). Part of bath house? Also accessed through	Large square with series of borders, circular piece in centre - at corners are the 4 winds, only 1 preserved, and in central hexagon is bust identified as Oceanus. Oceanus is bearded man; wind is also male but un-bearded.	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989a.	Marine Representations

			apodyterium, but with small antechamber before it.				
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Mosaico del Calendario	Albacete	7m x 7m	One of 2 mosaics discovered at the villa romano of Hellin, on what would have been a Roman route, and is now the Madrid to Cartagena road. Small, but v rich mosaics, in residential part - agricultural part contains lots of ceramics etc. Next to the triclinium mosaic.	Square, with main part taken up by arrangement of circles - scenes in circles and in octagonal spaces between: 11 octagons remain, 5 circles Octagons: 4 Seasons in centre, 12 months at edge, named, Bacchic themes; Winter: lady holding 4 leaves, accompanied by mostly naked Satyr, she is swathed in cloak; Summer is mostly lost but can discern same pairing,; Spring - maenad dancing naked crowned with flowers, satyr dancing and singing?; Autumn - maenad with bared breast pours wine into naked satyr's cup; Months -April, semi naked lady riding man/bull - meant to be Taurus? she is crowned like Venus; May - the god Mercury with his cloak and caduceus, on the back of a naked winged man, carrying baby twins - possibly Gemini, possibly Apollo and Hercules?!?!; June - only top of wreathed head remains; August - woman - Diana? - riding centaur - image for Virgo?; September - bearded man - Vulcan - rides young winged man carrying scales for Libra; Oct - young naked man throws/drops basket of grapes, with 2 claws on his head - Scorpio - with man sitting on his shoulder - possibly Mars because connected to festival in October - he is unarmed except for a trumpet which matches the festival; November - partially destroyed, lady riding a centaur holding a bow and arrow (Sagittarius) - lady normally connected with	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989a.	Representations Gods Pastoral
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				<p>Nov is Diana but she is already in August, so poss. Isis?; December also mostly lost, again lady with sheep centaur (Capricorn), lady poss. Hestia.</p> <p>Circles: scenes of rural and mythological life, e.g. goatherd looking after 2 goats (twice), naked man holding flute in pastoral scene, a bull, Eros fighting Pan as a bird - others lost</p> <p>Proper mix of divinities, zodiac signs, festivals, months, seasons, etc etc etc</p> <p>First half of 3rd century.</p>			
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Mosaico con Estrella y Menade	Albacete	2m x 2m	Discovered in 1977 at the villa of La Casa de los Guardas in Tarazona de la Mancha - only small section (4 rooms) excavated.	Star formed of cable borders within circle within square; central image mostly lost - probably dancing maenad.	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989a.	Bacchic themes
Mosaico de Annus	Aranjuez	108 x 107m	Unknown.	Bust of young man with wreath and cornucopia - attributes of Annus?	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989b.	Representations
Atalanta y Meleagro	Burgos	11.45m x 7.80m	Excavations in 1975 at the villa Cardeñajimeno - another large estate site. Figures almost completely lost. 4th century AD.	Central square with 3 figures, surrounded by hunting frieze and geometric patterns: figures identified as Atalanta, Meleagar and a servant or companion, after the hunt. V bad condition.	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989b.	Hunting Heroes Masculinity
Mosaic de Venus y Adonis	Cadiz	approx. 2.60m x 2.10m	Found approx. 4 km from Arcos de la Frontera - Roman villa near the banks of the Guadalete river. Discovered end of 19th century - now lost. 4th century AD.	Depicts group of 3 figures - male with cloak, holding large spear/stick, female also naked with cloak/material draped round her, holding hands with small child; possibly horses behind them - legs remaining. Poss. Adonis, Aphrodite and Eros.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Gods
Mosaico con Tritones	Cadiz	?	3 pieces of Neptune mosaic, now mostly destroyed From Paterna? 2nd century AD.	a) Triton con remos: large triton carrying oar and playing bucina - long serpentine tail, 2 horse forelegs, human chest/head, crowned with twigs?; b) Triton con delfin: similar to above, but is holding a dolphin as well; c) fish. All black and white.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Marine

Mosaico de Polifemo y Galatea	Cordoba	4.10m x 5.10m	Discovered in la Plaza de La Corredera in 1959 - the plaza is near the ruins of the Temple in Cordoba, and they excavated a large Roman mansion at the site, which had a number of mosaics. No plan. 3rd century AD.	Large square panel - 2 figures in a landscaped background. Left figure - Galatea, seated on a sea monster - a cetos? which bares its teeth at Polyphemos opposite. She is doing her hair and wearing lots of jewellery. Right figure - Polyphemos, seated on a boulder, wearing a leopard skin, declaring his love for her - symmetrical composition - mirrors Galatea; pan pipes behind him. Unusual depiction of cyclops with two eyes.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Relationships Gods and Mortals
Actor Tragico	Cordoba	1.57m x 1.42m	Discovered in la Plaza de La Corredera in 1959 - the plaza is near the ruins of the Temple in Cordoba, and they excavated a large Roman mansion at the site, which had a number of mosaics. 2nd or 3rd century AD.	Probably just the central part of a larger mosaic: single figure of tragic actor - wearing mask, and standing in front of a stage or rostrum structure; holding stick like a blind man - possibly portraying Oedipus?	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Theatre
Medusa	Cordoba	2.60m x 2.55m	Discovered in la Plaza de La Corredera in 1959 - the plaza is near the ruins of the Temple in Cordoba, and they excavated a large Roman mansion at the site, which had a number of mosaics. Room measured - 3.42m x 3.00m.	Square mosaic with borders of wave, patterns of rhombuses and Solomon knots; central medallion with head of Medusa.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Medusa

Mascara de Oceano	Cordoba	1.55m x 1.63m - total Central panel - 0.90m x 0.97m	Discovered in la Plaza de La Corredera in 1959 - the plaza is near the ruins of the Temple in Cordoba, and they excavated a large Roman mansion at the site, which had a number of mosaics. Room off the peristyle. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	Only central panel preserved depicting bearded head of Oceanus - crowned with 2 crab claws, surrounded by dolphins and 2 prawn type creatures.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Marine
Eros y Psique	Cordoba	4.40m x 3.47m	Found in la Plaza de La Corredera in 1958, at a depth of 3.70m. 3rd - 4th century AD.	Some portion missing but majority remains. Squared mosaic containing large central medallion and 4 smaller medallions at each corner. Central medallion - Eros and Psyche embracing; Eros is almost fully naked, with a cloak floating behind, winged; Psyche has equally inadequate wisps of cloth around her; bordered by cable. Corners - busts of the Seasons: top left - Winter; top right - Autumn, crowned with vines and grapes; bottom part is mostly missing.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Eros Representations
Mosaico de Dionysus	Cordoba	3.54m x 3.54m	Discovered in 1957 - 1958, on the ancient street del Cano (modern name Calle Hermanos Gonzalez Murga) Area where several other mosaics have	Missing approximately a quarter of the mosaic, including the central figurative medallion. Only shoulders of bust remain - with thyrsus that has led to the identification as Bacchus. In the centre of a labyrinth pattern, bordered by cable and dentro border; this circle is in a square with Solomon knots at the corners, and an overall border of cable.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Bacchic themes

			been found. 2nd century AD.				
Medallones con las Estaciones	Cordoba	0.42m diameter	Remains of a pavement discovered in the area of el Banco de Espana in Cordoba. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	3 busts - all bordered with cable: bearded man crowned with vine leaves - Autumn; head of a young man with curly hair; young woman with elaborate hairstyle.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations
Mosaicos de la Calle de Cruz Conde: Mosaico de Bacchos	Cordoba	4.85m x 5.10m	Significant problems with excavation records of this area - some drawings but problems with context and accuracy. Excavated approx. 1946. 2nd century AD.	Bottom left missing. Central octagonal medallion - 0.77m in diameter - with rectangles coming off each side; 4 corners have small circular medallions; and semi circles on each remaining side - all boarded by cables. Central medallion: head of Bacchus, crowned with vine leaves - beautiful, like a painting. Rectangles: alternate with male and female figures on Bacchic theme e.g. dancing maenad, satyrs, flute playing etc. Corners: Seasons - loss of Spring; Summer wears crown of yellow rays and carries a sickle; Autumn is crowned with vine leaves, carrying a shepherd's crook; Winter is a veiled woman - all trad. taken as female but Summer/Autumn are quite masculine. Semicircles - all animals.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Bacchic themes Representations
Mosaicos de la Calle de Cruz Conde: Mosaico del canal	Cordoba	?	Sig problems with excavation records of this area - some drawings but problems with context and accuracy.	Fragments preserved from border around peristyle, strips with niches. Depicts fish and sea creatures - possibly. Eros riding a dolphin.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Marine Eros

			Excavated approx. 1946. These fragments from border around peristyle? 2nd century AD.				
Mosaico de la Calle de Cruz Conde: Mosaico de Pegaso	Cordoba	0.83m x 0.86m - remaining piece of mosaic Central panel: 0.57m squared Original pavement - 8m x 9.80m?	Sig problems with excavation records of this area - some drawings but problems with context and accuracy. Excavated approx. 1946. 2nd century AD.	Only surviving piece is central square with a little bit of geometric pattern, and panel of Pegasus - large winged horse in centre.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Mythical creatures Medusa
Mosaico de la Avda. Del Generalissimo: Eros y Psique	Cordoba	3.72m x 4.41m Central panel: 0.69m x 0.68m	Discovered at site of la Caja de Ahorros. Some modern restoration. 3rd or 4th century AD.	Large geometric pattern of circles, cable border, small central panel (again with cable border) with figurative design: scene of Eros y Psyche embracing.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Eros

Mosaico con las Cuatro Estaciones	Cordoba	3.72m x 2.90m	Discovered at la Bodega de la Compania. No information on other decorative elements. 4th century AD.	Patterns surrounding panel of 4 rectangles with figures in each one - decorated with motifs that relate to each season. Most of the top 2 are missing - Spring and Winter, but still some features visible. Spring - young man, holding a flower, and surrounded by other flowers in each corner, Dalmatian outfit? Striped. Winter - between two olive trees? Summer - holds a sickle and a sheath of a cereal?, head is missing but potentially crown of rays, 2 olive trees behind - also Dalmatian dress? - with 2 braids hanging down. Autumn - holds a sickle and a large bunch of grapes, surrounded by vines. All boys.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations
Mosaico con Aurigo Vencedor	Cordoba	4.60m x 3.46m	Discovered in the hospital of the old Convent of Mercy in 1927. No other context known. 3rd century Ad.	Central panel of a charioteer racing on a quadriga - damaged most of figure of charioteer but hand is raised in victory - possibly representation of Helios?	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Chariots Planets/Sun
Teseo y el Minotauro	Cordoba	0.73m x 0.73m	Found at the estate next to the villa site of Alcolea in 1958 - 1959. Only centre remains. Site is 11km NE of Cordoba - on the banks of the river Guadalquivir. Very little context known as villa is only partially excavated.	Scene of Theseus fighting the Minotaur - raising a club to kill him? Made of large tesserae.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Heroes Mythical Creatures

			Other mosaics at site depict Bacchic themes. 2nd century AD - 160 - 170 AD?				
Mosaicos de la Villa de Fernan Nunez: Otono	Cordoba	0.74m x 0.74m	Remains from area near an estate of the Dukes of Fernan Nunez, south of Cordoba; excavated 1906 from a hill site, uncovered a room containing the mosaic fragments (8.23m x 7.46m) - the overall scheme of room is very hard to distinguish, includes rape of Europa. Very little information on other elements and decorative programme. 4th or 5th century AD	Found in corner of room (Winter also found in diagonally opposite corner but now lost). Young man, crowned with vine leaves.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations
Mosaicos de la Villa de Fernan Nunez: mosaico con dos figuras	Cordoba	?	Remains from area near an estate of the Dukes of Fernan Nunez, south of Cordoba; excavated 1906 from a hill site, uncovered a room containing the mosaic fragments (8.23m x	2 seated women - looking to the left. Both labelled with Greek names? words? - METOIIQP and MQN.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Individual Inscription

			7.46m) - the overall scheme of room is very hard to distinguish, includes rape of Europa and Seasons. Very little information on other elements and decorative programme. 4th or 5th century AD				
Mosaico de la Villa de Fernan Nunez: mosaico con mujer sentada	Cordoba	0.88m x 0.54m	Remains from area near an estate of the Dukes of Fernan Nunez, south of Cordoba; excavated 1906 from a hill site, uncovered a room containing the mosaic fragments (8.23m x 7.46m) - the overall scheme of room is very hard to distinguish, includes rape of Europa and Seasons. Very little information on other elements and decorative programme. 4th or 5th century AD	Seated, semi-nude female figure.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Individual

Mosaico de la Villa de Fernan Nunez: mosaico con la representacion de una ciudad	Cordoba	0.93m x 0.55m	Remains from area near an estate of the Dukes of Fernan Nunez, south of Cordoba; excavated 1906 from a hill site, uncovered a room containing the mosaic fragments (8.23m x 7.46m) - the overall scheme of room is very hard to distinguish, includes rape of Europa and Seasons. Very little information on other elements and decorative programme. 4th or 5th century AD	Bearded man sitting above a river in contemplation. Connections to representations of Antioch and the Orontes? Representation of a city?	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations
Mosaico de la Villa de Fernan Nunez: mosaico con Erote	Cordoba	0.91m x 0.51m	Remains from area near an estate of the Dukes of Fernan Nunez, south of Cordoba; excavated 1906 from a hill site, uncovered a room containing the mosaic fragments (8.23m x 7.46m) - the overall scheme of room is very hard to distinguish, includes	Flying Eros carrying bow and arrow.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Eros

			rape of Europa and Seasons. Very little information on other elements and decorative programme. 4th or 5th century AD				
Cabeza de Minerva	Cordoba	0.30m x 0.27m	No context known. 4th century AD.	Small square of black and white mosaic with a head of Minerva on facing right.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Gods
Sirena	Cordoba	0.23m x 0.26m	No context known. 4th century AD.	Body of a bird, head of a lady - black and white.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Mythical creatures
Fragmentos de Mosacicos de Monte-Mayor	Cordoba	?	From somewhere near Ulia, all now lost, no drawings.	2 pieces of mosaic: 1 with the head and shoulders of a young woman with the inscription EUTERPE, 1 with 2 young women's heads.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Muses
Mosaico de las Estaciones de la Casa de Hylas	Italica	7.10m x 10.25m	From the house called the Casa de Mosaico de Hylas in Italica (fig. 80, p. 149). The surround remains in situ, central panel in Museo Arqueologico de Sevilla but it is possibly not correct surround. Excavated 1927 - 28. House has 10 mosaics in total, 5 of which are figurative - others included Hylas and Hercules, Oceanus, and a potential lost	Triclinium mosaic? U shaped area of large black and white patterned space, interlocking hexagons and rhombas. T shaped area of 2 smaller squares and a large central square panel with 4 busts of the seasons plus a central bust. V badly damaged - loss of Winter? And others in v poor state. Questionable genders on Spring and Autumn. Central bust - Flora, Bacchus, Tellus, Annus-Aion?	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations

			scene of Ganymede's abduction. No information on other decorative elements. 2nd century AD?				
Mosaico de Galatea	Italica	12.2m x 9.2m	Labelled the Segunda Casa/Casa Palacio area but very little known about the context. Excavated 1874 - lost and only known from drawing.	Triclinium mosaic? Peristyle? Name from central figure - said to resemble Raphael's painting of Galatea (ideal beauty). Rectangular - central panel surrounded on 3 sides with large patterned space. 2 small patterned squares at the top, with central panel of 18 circular medallions linked by a guilloche pattern and 3 central scenes; 4 medallions destroyed. Central scenes from top: naked man and woman - Venus & Adonis?; lone female figure - Galatea? Venus?; Eros and Pan as a large bird - contrast between brute force and intelligence. Medallions alternate 8 birds, 6 figures - possibly Seasons, Luna/Diana, satyr and maenad. Top rectangular panel of forest scene with animals?	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Gods Representations Bacchic themes
Mosaico de Tellus	Italica	?	From the Casa de los Pajaros in Italica. Full plan in Mañas Romero 2010: fig. 15, p. 152. Small second atrium at the back of the house? Excavated 1929 - 30.	Square mosaic with circular central panel surrounded by octagonal frame and 8 rectangles containing images of birds and floral patterns; rest of mosaic filled by lozenges and squares with similar motifs. Cable border. Central bust of Tellus.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations

Mosaico del Planetario	Italica	4.8m x 6.7m	From the Casa del Planetario in Italica, excavated 1972. 7 mosaics, 4 figurative, including Bacchic subjects. Plan shown fig. 84, p. 164. No information on other decorative elements. 2nd Century AD.	Central circular panel in a square with two long rectangles at either end. Square and rectangles filled with vegetal pattern. Circular panel contains 6 hexagons around 1 central hexagon - all with busts representing the planets: Venus (centre), Luna, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Saturn & Sol - also the days of the week.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations
Mosaico de Medusa	Italica	?	From the Casa del Planetario in Italica, excavated 1972. 7 mosaics, 4 figurative, including Bacchic subjects. Plan shown fig. 84, p. 164. No information on other decorative elements. 2nd Century AD.	Rectangle, 3 separate sections: 2 small rectangles at either end, central square around a circular panel. Circle divided into 6 rectangles round a central hexagon; 12 further rectangles around the edge of the circle, 6 diamonds connecting the two sections. Bordered by guilloche pattern with floral patterns. Central hexagon - head of Medusa - poor condition.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Medusa
Mosaico de Medusa	Italica	4.7m x 4.7m	Found in the Los Palacios area - very little information about context. Found 1907. 2nd century AD.	Square with highly complex/intricate patterns including interlocking meander, with some angles picked out in guilloche patterns. Second inner square with complicated arrangement of shapes, 4 crosses of guilloche pattern, 8 octagons of floral patterns, lozenges. Central square panel with 3 borders, alternate plain and guilloche. Medusa head at centre - with wings and snakes.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Medusa

Bustos de un Mosaico de Planetas	Italica	?	Found in the Los Palacios area - very little information about context. Only 4 busts remaining of larger mosaic.	Hexagonal busts - 2 partially conserved, 2 mostly lost. Depict divinities connected with days of the week - Luna, Saturn, Sol, Venus? White background with frame - likely surrounded by second frame of cable pattern (only survives on Sol bust).	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations
Dos Medallones Baquicos	Italica	0.7m diameter	Unknown, currently in the Casa de la Condesa de Lebrija, Seville. Probably from the Los Palacios area. 2nd century AD.	Two panels, context/discovery unknown, not well conserved. Round panel - 2 figures from the back, satyr with wand and maenad. 2nd panel, v damaged - Bacchus and panther.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes
Tres Busto de Estaciones	Italica	Central section = 0.86m diameter	Unknown, acquired in 1960 for Don Santiago de Campe. 3rd century AD.	Series of 5, only 3 remaining. Similar to Seasons mosaic in the Casa de Hylas. 1st panel - male bust, octagonal panel with circular frame; bust crowned with laurel or olive wreath, sword belt across chest; possibly Apollo? 2nd panel - female bust, same dimensions and style; crown of leaves, personification of Ver? 3rd panel - female bust, veiled and crowned with twigs, personification of Winter. Originally set of Seasons with Apollo as Sol?	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations

Mosaico de Ibarra	Italica	5.25m x 4.15m Central rectangle = 3.98m x 2.65m, border of 0.48m	Unknown, excavated by Quintero in 1901? Left part of town? Restored and currently in the house of don Eduardo Ibarra, Mateos Gago 59. 2nd century AD - 3rd century AD.	Restored - when? Beginning of 20th century? 8 octagonal panels depicting figures connected with Bacchic mythology Panels: Bacchus holding wand, accompanied by ?tiger; acolyte in same pose; centaur with hands above head; centaur playing flutes; Pan with wand and goat; 3 fauns making wine; Silenus riding an ass; 2 maenads dressing. Guilloche border and decorated lozenges.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes
Mosaico de Perissoterus	Italica	approx. 0.64m x 0.54m	Discovered in 1896, very fragmentary. No context known.	Only fragment remains showing figure and inscription: PERISSOTERUS DICIT QV AL EXS AN DER Perissoterus DI, QV on fragment with figure. Possible reconstruction - 'Perissoterus qu(i) dicit(ur) Alexander' - v unusual name, from the Greek for extraordinary?! Figure possible Saturn, Pluto or abduction of Prosperina - bearded male maybe holding reins to cart.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Abduction Gods and Mortals
Fragmento con Figuras	Italica	0.66m x 0.55m	Discovered 1911 in 'el Pajar de Artillo'. No other contextual information known.	Highly coloured but very fragmentary, and in poor condition - loss of left part of scene. 3 figures - possible female, wearing cloak; man holding cup; figure with double flute; arm of 4th figure. Possible Bacchic scene or Venus?	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes

Mosaico del Nacimiento de Venus	Italica	10.5m x 6.5m	Excavated 1973 by Nogue & Canto, from town house in Italica. No plan available, or any other contextual information. 3rd century AD.	Birth of Venus but scene is so damaged that hardly any remains. Composition is mainly reconstructed in drawings.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Gods
Mosaico Sepulcral de Antonia Vetia	Italica	?	Discovered 1903, cemetery north of the modern village of Santiponce, inside a tomb. 4th century AD.	Seated female figure (loss of head), flanked by candelabras and a written panel: ANTONIA VETIA VIX ANN...MVII Bottom half - floral patterns, vegetation, bird, animal. Potentially Christian?	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Christianity Individual
Mosaico de las Musas	Italica	5.40m x 3.40m	Discovered 1839 - lost and now only known from drawing. From excavations south of the Forum, near the area of Los Palacios but no other context known.	Rectangular, large patterned border, 4 inner frames around central panel which depicts 9 Muses, with some damage. Figures: 1st - red cloak, Kleio?; 2nd - Euterpe, carrying flute; 3rd - missing face, carries comic mask, Thaleia?; 4th/5th - only feet left, possibly Melpomene & Terpsichore?; 6th - carrying lyre, Polyhymnia?; 7th - rhetorical pose, Erato; 8th - Ourania; 9th - lower half remains, Kalliope? All names tentative (Blanco Freijeiro 1978a)	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Muses

Mosaico de Circo	Italica	approx. 13m x 9m	Discovered 1789; drawn 1800; drawn again by Laborde, with some differences between the two sets so reconstruction is hypothetical. No other context known.	Rectangular, central panel surrounded by approx. 36 medallions, surrounded by birds and floral patterns. Medallions contain creatures, plants, busts of Muses with names and attributes, Seasons (as young boys). Central panel - circus scene, mostly destroyed - starting gates and some horses, fighters and spectators. End of panel, names Mascel and Marcianus inscribed - Marcianus poss connected to charioteer from Merida.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Circus Muses Seasons
Neptune and the Pygmies	Italica	8.70m x 7.30m	From the Casa del Mosaico de Neptuno in Italica, very large building. Excavated 1929 - 30. Not complete plan (fig. 105, p. 193). 8 mosaics, 3 figurative - marine, Theseus and the Minotaur (lost), Bacchic. No information on other decorative elements. 2nd century AD.	Frieze of pygmies in Nilotic setting, surrounding marine scene with Neptune at centre riding seahorses. All black and white except the god who is picked out in flesh tones and green.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Marine
Fuente de los Tritones	Italica	Various sizes, original mosaic approx. 3.8m across?	Fragments of mosaic - discovered off la Calle de Pescadores, in 1891-2. No other context known.	Approx. 11 fragments, depicting sea creatures, monsters, tritons.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Marine

Fragmentos con Busto Baquico	Italica	2m x 2m (in modern setting)	No data relating to excavation. Currently in the Casa de la Condesa de Lebrija, Seville.	Square piece with most missing - figure almost completely lost. Possibly Bacchus - lacking obvious identifying features.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes
Mosaicos de una Casa de las Eras del Monasterio: Triunfo de Baco	Italica	1.65m x 1.03m	Discovered by Quintero in 1902, in the Monastery house - in an atrium?, no other contextual information known. Currently in the Casa de la Condesa de Lebrija, Seville. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	Small rectangular panel - with some damage. 3 figures - one possibly Bacchus in chariot being pulled by tigers, satyr leading them.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes
El Mosaico Grande	Italica	8m across	Discovered 1838 - lost, now only know from drawing. No other contextual information known. Size in drawing suggests corridor and room. 3rd century AD?	Drawing shows bad preservation overall. Room panel: 4 seasons at either corner in medallions; various depictions of dogs and birds and a dolphin; 2 oval medallions - one showing a rider with 4 horse, the other with 2 horses, both holding laurel wreaths - wearing Phrygian caps? Corridor panel: 3 labelled figures in central section - Venus, Tullia and ...Pro? (?Apro).	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations Chariot
Tetis	Jaen	5m x 2.45m - when found 4.70m x 1.80m - now	Found 1959, behind the Church of the King Christ, excavated in 1961 - some destruction had occurred. No other contextual information known. 4th century AD.	Semi-circular mosaic with a bust of Thetis bottom centre between two cetos sea monsters, holding an oar?, surrounded by dolphins, other fish and a shell.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Marine

Erotes	Jaen	2.26m x 1.80m	Found 1959, behind the Church of the King Christ, excavated in 1961 - some destruction had occurred. No other contextual information known.	Just a few fragments remaining of a large mosaic, with sections divided by cable borders. Only remaining image shows Eros in a boat.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Eros Marine
Mosaico con Medusa	Jaen	4.60m x 2.90m	From the Villa Romana de Brunel, room west of peristyle, 8 mosaics excavated including Medusa and female figure. Plan in Blázquez 1981. No other information known.	Central square contains bust of Medusa - modern restoration? Surrounded by complex interwoven borders and patterns.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Medusa
Mosaico con Medallones	Jaen		From the Villa Romana de Brunel, room west of peristyle, 8 mosaics excavated including Medusa and female figure. Plan in Blázquez 1981. No other information known.	Very badly damaged but shows pattern of medallions across pavement, with busts in the centres. One female figure partly remaining - no obvious features to identify her.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations

Aquiles en Scyros, y La Disputa de Marsias y Apolo	Jaen	8m x 3.10m approx.	Discovered in 1969 when it was reported as appearing on the side of the road from Valdemorales to Caparral in an olive grove, 15km from the town; was rescued but the top half was destroyed. No other information on site. 5th century AD - from style.	Mosaic of 3 scenes - 1 is lost almost completely (top left); bottom left - victory of Apollo after beating Marsyas in a musical competition - Marsyas is suspended from the pine tree - Diana to Apollo's right?; bottom right hand side - only have lower half, so much is missing; lots of legs in tunics but also large inscription: PYRRA FILIUS TETIDIS CIRCE DEIDAMIA MOEDIA ISTE ENIM OMNES VIRGENES QUE SUNT MU LIERES FILIAE SUNT SOLIS NAM LYSIDES FILIUS PRIAMI. Quite a mixed-up inscription/scene but fundamentally Achilles on Scyros, hiding amongst the women. Style is 'muy ruda', 'primitivismo' y 'barbaro'	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Gods and Mortals Trojan War Inscriptions
La Loba y Los Gemelos	Jaen		From Villacarrillo, excavated in 1884 - now lost, only a drawing remains and no contextual information. 2nd century AD.	Almost identical to Mosaic de la Loba y los Gemelos from Cordoba - same layout with central medallion of wolf suckling twins, surrounded by semicircles and quarter circles at corners. Semi circles - lion, tiger, leopard, wood. Corners - winds. In-between spaces - Seasons (only Spring and Winter remain).	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations Romulus and Remus - foundation myth
Mosaico de Venatio	Lerida	7.50m across	Villa of El Reguer in Puigvert de Agramunt - from plan looks mosaic is in jumbled series of layers so very difficult to get contextual information.	Very fragmented, square room?, kraters at corners, central medallion? One of remaining pieces shows semi-nude man interpreted as participating in act of venutio - how?! No other indications?	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989a.	Unknown

Mosaico de Asunto Baquico	Madrid		Discovered in Carabanchel, in 1860. Notes suggest in triclinium but no other information available. 5th century AD.	4 seasons (female busts); centre part mostly destroyed - part of tiger or leopard, with a collar - lost part indicates a god or a genius.	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Representations Bacchic themes?
Medusa	Malaga	2.98m x 2.98m	From a villa on the outskirts of Marbella, excavated in 1960; from room of peristyle (peristyle decorated with culinary mosaic strip). 1st - 2nd century AD.	Central medallion with semicircles completing square - lots of white space, floral/vine design with kraters in corners. Central medallion contains head of Medusa. Black and white.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Medusa
Nacimiento de Venus	Malaga	7.60m x 4.50m Central rectangle - 7.20m x 4.50m	Discovered during the construction of house in Cartama in 1956 - no other excavation done to establish rest of building. 2nd century AD.	Long rectangle with central square, rectangle above and 2 smaller squares below - all patterned. Central square - 8 small squares form octagon in centre: Venus lies in shell - naked, with a nimbus behind her head; below the shell are 2 dolphins facing each other. 'El enblema esta concebido casi como un motivo heraldico'. Squares that make up octagon contain birds.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Gods Marine

Trabajos de Hercules	Malaga	6.45m x 3.20m Squares - 0.85m x 0.92m Small rectangle - 2.70m x 0.97m	Found by a road worker in Cartama in 1858. No information on context - no consensus on arrangement of the pieces as it is. See Blázquez 1981. 3rd century AD?	Small rectangle - drunken Hercules, being supported by Silenus and holding his hand out to a lady. Squares: Nemean lion, asleep under a branch; Lerna Hydra - body of snake, with smaller snakes coming off head; Kerynian hind - pictured at moment of death; Erymanthian boar - depicts moment boar is shown to Eurystheus in his jar; belt of Hippolyte - damaged, shows only shield, helmet and part of head of an animal; cattle of Geryon - shows Geryon with 3 heads; Cerberus - emerges being pulled on chain; garden of the Hesperides - shows snake wrapped around tree; lost square of victorious Hercules for centre?; lost - Cretan bull, Stymphalian birds, horses of Diomedes, & the Augeian stables; square of river God - naked man sitting on rocks head in hand, thinking - Alpheus? connected with cleaning of Augeian stables.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Heroes Bacchic themes
Victoria de pie	Malaga	1.86m x 0.83m	Unknown villa excavated 1905 - 1940, on the River Torrox. Large site, mosaics only in one room, but no other contextual information. Plan in Blázquez 1981.	Part of mosaic mostly destroyed. Figure of Victory.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations
Victoria	Malaga	1.84m x 0.88m	Unknown villa excavated 1905 - 1940, on the River	Part of mosaic mostly destroyed. Figure of Victory.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Representations

			Torrox. Large site, mosaics only in one room, but no other contextual information. Plan in Blázquez 1981.				
Mosaico baquico	Malaga		Cabra? No other contextual information known. Mosaic seems to be lost.	Bacchus mosaic, central square shows Bacchus riding on a chariot pulled by tigers.	N/A	Blázquez 1981.	Bacchic Triumph
Cosmological mosaic	Merida	4.04m x 5.07m	La Casa del Mitreo - discovered 1902 -1913 - on southern slopes of Carro de San Albin, near the Plaza de Toros. Associated with a number of inscriptions and statues relating to Mithras (poss statues of Chronis, Venus?, Aion?) - possible sanctuary. Atrium house - not yet fully excavated - possible subterranean rooms? Some wall paintings extant - including in room where mosaic was found - bands of red, white panels - poss	V large scene of allegorical figures related to the cosmos - identified in Latin. Top: the Heavens, the Pole, Time, Epoch, Chaos; then Winds, Clouds, rising Sun and setting Moon; then Nature, Mountain, Snow; damaged centre - Eternal Time plus Seasons, poss Zodiac now missing; water theme - Ocean, Nile, Euphrates, Plenty, Shipping, boats; bottom - Pharos, Portus. Use of glass tesserae - for blue green sky and sea. Controversial in interpretation - uncertain. Some suggest Mithraic connections; or copy of Hellenistic painting - original from Alexandria because of names - Greek translated (not always correctly) into Latin; or glorification of Rome. Room itself rather strange - poss v dark, and mosaic set to face back with small panel to stand and view on - how easy to actually see?	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Representations

			mosaic is not original flooring though? 3rd century AD?				
Thiasos Marino - fragments A, B, C, D, G.	Merida	A: 0.82m x 0.63m B: 0.92m x 0.64m C: 0.82m x 0.48m D: 0.67m x 0.50m G: 0.90m x 1.15m	Fragments of 2 mosaics discovered in 1907 in no.4 de la Calle de Pizarro. Hypothesis by Melida (who described the discovery) - overall theme of triumph of Neptune. No other contextual information.	Various fragments - a: Nereid on a sea horse, with fish and part of another sea creature; b: Triton holding oar and shell, various fish, possible dolphin with long eel like tail; c: repeat of fragment B in mirror image; d: repeat of fragment A in mirror image; g: some of central square which potentially depicts the triumph of Neptune but only arm remains, corner of figure of Victory? Holds the vines that scroll round the border - which make circular shapes, in each of which are panthers.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Marine

<p>Mosaic de Seleucus et Anthus</p>	<p>Merida</p>	<p>11.20m x 6.30m Central rectangle - 4.25m x 4.15m</p>	<p>Discovered by accident in 1834 in the Calle del Portillo, in a rectangular room which has been preserved in the modern Citadel. After the discovery - when it was drawn - there has been significant damage to some of the figures, so drawing is relied on to reconstruct it - though there are discrepancies in the drawings/inaccuracies - e.g. we have lost the title which was supposedly engraved 'Seleucus et Anthus'. No other contextual information. 2nd century AD.</p>	<p>Mostly black and white, but with central polychrome piece - rectangle, series of patterned borders, with rectangular section at the bottom; also semi-circle with vase. Central piece has border of figures, central square filled with 4 semi-circles, 1 central medallion, 4 corner quarter circles, and 4 figures in the space between. Central medallion - significant damage but still has seated male figure, wearing laurel crown and a himation - middle aged man. In the drawing - there is a goat to one side of him, and he is holding a staff and a theatrical mask - maybe a bucolic poet? Theocritus? Accompanied by a muse, con citara y plectro? Other semicircles show other muses with similar attributes incl. Urania, Clio, Melpomene & Talia. The four corner circles show the 4 Seasons - 3 female and one male (Autumn). The in between figures are victories, crowned and winged. The border refers to Egypt? Depictions of boats, crocodiles, pygmies, cranes, palms, an obelisk, and maybe a seated Isis? Lower side is largely lost but drawing depicts scene possibly with Apollo and Pegasus? - Winged horse in centre, seated male figure to right (bare chest, laurel wreath, staff - Bellerophon?), chimera and woodland scene. Flanked by two poets - possibly Aratos and Bion or Moschus.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.</p>	<p>Poetry Muses Representations Victory</p>
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Casa del Anfiteatro - Mosaico de Venus	Merida	Venus y Cupido - 2.80m x 2.80m Scene of grape treading - 2.40m x 2.80m	Casa del Anfiteatro - one of three rooms off atrium/peristyle. Plan in Blanco Freijeiro 1978b. No other information about decorative elements. Room measures 9.15m x 5.86m. 3rd century AD.	Divided into two squares, both covered with pattern of vines, with various motifs within them e.g. Lion heads, separated by double cable border. First square - centre has small scene of Venus and Cupid: Venus is semi-nude, with lots of jewellery and a diadem - holding a sceptre/long spur in one hand, and the apple from the Judgement of Paris in the other? Cupid is offering her a perfume bottle. Lower square - scenes of grape picking/treading - making wine: ladders, birds, vases full of grapes all entwined in vine pattern, 3 solitary figures picking and treading; centre contains 3 figures together treading grapes.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Gods Trojan War
Calle Masona - 43B	Merida	15m x 5.50m	Small set of rooms or separate house by the Casa del Anfiteatro. Plan in Blanco Freijeiro 1978b. Mosaic discovered in 1977 in building work. 2nd century AD.	Composition is square-circle-square - with apses at either end. Central piece with circular medallion - mostly lost; four winds at the corners represented by bearded men; possible female bacchantes in centre, panther? 1 Square - contains quadriga and charioteer (mostly lost) holding whip in one hand, palm in the other; inscription of PAULUS NICA. 2nd Square - similar victorious quadriga, better preserved; inscription of MARCIANUS NICHA - possible connection with Mosaico del Circo at Italica; horses are also named in this one - INLUMINATOR, and GETUS across another.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Bacchic themes Chariots Representations
Huerta de Otero - 57	Merida		Peristyle house excavated in 1976, east side of the citadel	Composition unknown due to lack of excavation but possible square mosaic, meander patterns, panels of birds and fish;	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Medusa

			- only partially excavated, lacking full room plan. No other contextual information.	theatrical masks; and central octagonal medallion with head of Medusa.			
Mosaico con el Nacimiento de Venus	Murcia		Discovered 1876. No other contextual information. 4th century AD.	Square, central medallion, semi circles round edge, corner quarter circles. Central medallion - Venus lying on shell, holding spear/cloak; tritons holding shell up; above 2 erotes holding banner. 4 corners - Seasons.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Gods Representations
Mosaico de Orfeo	Murcia		Villa near La Alberca? - excavated in the last century. Now lost? Found with other pavements nearby including one depicting a deer?	Image of Orpheus with wild animals, with writing above his head - Virtus.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Heroes Masculinity
Mosaico con Pavo Real	Murcia		No contextual information known. Fragmentary and now lost.	Female head - poss Season? Long hair, necklace.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Representations

<p>Mosaico de las Musas de Arroniz</p>	<p>Navarra</p>	<p>4.90m across axis, central medallion 1.66m in diameter</p>	<p>Discovered by a farmer in 1882, 4.5 km south of Arroniz; official excavations started in 1883 and removed to museum - various. First studied properly in 1914, some discussion over restoration of pieces. No other contextual information. 4th century AD?</p>	<p>Octagonal mosaic divided into 9 sections around a central circle piece. Each section appears to depict a female figure and a male figure against a white background with landscape and building in the distance behind; 4 sections plus the central are mostly lost, 5 can still be discerned.</p> <p>1st: scene of 2 figures before a villa - female figure is Caliope? standing full frontal - male only head remains - Homer? 2nd: female figure plays lyre balanced on small column, young man stands next to her in toga pointing at lyre and holding a scroll; 3rd: female figure is standing gesturing with right hand - loss of left side; behind her is mask? bust? on small pedestal; male figure is seated watching the female, again young and well dressed. 4th: female figure - Thalia? carrying mask in front of her face, wearing robe of v vivid blue; seated male figure - Menander? similar to 2 and 3. 5th: male seated on right - young, wearing Phrygian cap - Hyagnis? inventor of the aulos, holding a single flute; female figure standing - Euterpe turning away holding other single flute; 6th: Clio, standing, holding out a stylus (reed) to the male figure - young, face mostly lost; building. 7th: mostly lost - small building. 8th: only part of figure remains to left - young man, trees and villa. 9th: Bottom half lost; female figure -</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Blázquez & Mezquíriz de Catalán 1985.</p>	<p>Muses</p>
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				Urania? - holding a radius; facing young man - Areto? Centre - almost all lost except for back end of horse.			
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EL Hinojal - Mosaico con una nereida	Nr Merida	Room = 3.70m x 3.25m	El Hinojal is a villa approx. 18km north-west of Merida - by the Via Emerita- Olisipo - remains are of Constantinian period, but remains of earlier villa below. Discovered 1974. Taken to Citadel. 2 bath complexes. Boar hunt, panther hunt, and nereid (possible marine scene) in same villa. No other decorative elements known. 4th century AD.	Series of borders around squared patterned centre; small panel to the top with figure of nereid - lying half naked with fabric swathed around. Restored in antiquity - cross added.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978b.	Marine
Mosaic of Medusa and the Seasons	Palencia		No context known. 2nd century AD.	Square mosaic with central head of Medusa, and four medallions of the Seasons: four female busts, Winter veiled, Spring - no attributes? Updo, flowers in hair? Autumn with a vine leaf in hair and by side. Summer with sheaf of wheat in hair and something next to her?	N/A	Blázquez et al 1989b.	Medusa Representations
Mosaico de Diana Cazadora	Real Academia de la Historia		Only known in drawing from the Real Academia de la Historia - originally from site of Cabriana in Alava, from the area known as the Comunion. No other	Square mosaic with apse piece above - all elaborately patterned. Centre of square, defined by 2 interlocking squares with cable borders, depicts Diana as goddess of the hunt. Drawing shows significant damage across body but potentially shows Diana with a deer behind her, holding her bow.	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Hunting Gods

			contextual information known.				
Mosaico con las Cuatro Estaciones	Real Academia de la Historia		Only known in drawing from the Real Academia de la Historia - originally from site of Cabriana in Alava, from the area known as the Comunion. No other contextual information known. 4th century AD.	Rectangular mosaic - slightly odd proportions - esp. lower piece cutting across. Within rectangle - 4 squares, 2 small rectangles. Squares: 4 seasons - female busts orientated towards corners so diagonally opposite each other; trad. attributes - vine leaves, wheat, shoots?, flowers - 1 veiled - Winter? - others all with similar draped tunics. Small rectangles - 2 griffins standing on branches?	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Representations Mythical creatures
Mosaico de la Toilette de Pegaso y Las Ninfas	Real Academia de la Historia		Only known in drawing from the Real Academia de la Historia - originally from site of S. Julien de Valmuza. No other contextual information known. 4th century AD.	Square mosaic with apse piece above - apse piece striped? Central panel contains scene of Pegasus and 3 nymphs: 1 riding him, crowning him with a laurel wreath, 1 in front holding a dish out to him, and last behind plaiting his tail?	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Mythical creatures
Mosaico de guerreros	Rievles		Very little information about context, Blázquez et al suggest a bath house but no information further.	Mosaic with central panel of 4 male armed figures on - gladiators?	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Masculinity
Mosaico con Carrera de Carros and Mosaico con Cuadriga	Seville	1.50m x 1.50m 1.55m x 1.35m	Discovered in Paradas - Cortijo de Paterna. Fragments. No other contextual	Patterned border, one fragment with figure of leaping chariot and charioteer raising whip, figure to right of charioteer - not clear. Second fragment shows	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Chariots Masculinity

			information. 4th century AD.	charioteer in quadriga, jumping. Heavily restored.			
Fragmento de Mosaico con Leon	Seville	0.61m x 0.61m	Discovered at Dos Hermanas? No other information known. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	Fragment of mosaic showing lion standing.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Animals Bacchic themes?
Medallón con Imagen del Otono	Seville	0.77m diámetro	Discovered at Dos Hermanas? No other information known. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	Bust of lady, flowing hair, tunic half off shoulder. Tree/branch in corner.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Representations
Medallón con Busto Femenino - La Primavera	Seville	0.77m diámetro	Discovered at Dos Hermanas? No other information known. 2nd - 3rd century AD.	Female bust, elaborate hair style, flowers.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Representations
Mosaico Geométrico con la Cabeza de la Medusa	Seville	2.05m in length, 1.88m in diámetro	Discovered in Carmona. No other contextual information. 2nd century AD.	Detailed, elaborately patterned mosaic with small central medallion of Medusa's head, in a square with the 4 seasons at each corner. Winter? - veiled all over, with pot?; Autumn? With trident? And spiky hair; Spring? Neat updo, tree behind her? jewellery, low cut tunic/dress, 2 leaves on shoulders?; Summer? - well-dressed lady, cloak around shoulders, necklace, horn.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Medusa Representations
Cabeza de Invierno	Seville	1m x 0.99m	Discovered in Carmona. No other contextual information. 2nd century AD.	Bearded male bust, crown on leaves, wrapped up in mantle; holds stick with bodies of two birds on the top; most probably Winter.	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Representations
Mosaico con Cabeza Femenina	Seville	0.87m x 0.77m	Discovered in Carmona. No other contextual	Bust of lady, hair on either side of neck, head covering; tree behind her - poss Flora or Spring?	N/A	Blázquez 1982b.	Representations

			information. 2nd century AD.				
Mosaico con el Busto de Abundancia	Soria	Radius of hemi circle - 2.75m	Discovered in v large villa (Los Quintanares), excavated from 1817 onwards. Room is cruciform, with three apses, on the northern side of the villa. No other decorative information known. 4th century AD.	Central hexagon with border of guilloche, female bust carrying cornucopia in one hand and a dish? in the other; crowned with a walled crown; well dressed, jewellery; image of Abundance. Surrounded by decorated pavement of hexagons and Maltese crosses.	N/A	Blázquez & Ortego y Frías 1983.	Representations
Mosaico con Emblema	Soria	6.35m x 5.75m	From the Villa Romana de Santervas del Burgo, excavated 1954. Room X on plan in Blázquez & Ortego y Frías 1983. Room is circular with 4 apses? at each corner, southern side of villa. 4th century AD.	Octagon within star of cabled borders, within circle. Female bust with cornucopia, poss. Ceres? Holds stick with circle on, crowned and with cloak over shoulders.	N/A	Blázquez & Ortego y Frías 1983.	Representations
Mosaico con Bellefonte y La Quimera	Soria	12m x 8m	Published in 1887 by Rabal in 'Soria: Sus Monumentos y Artos' but no details, only known from drawing now.	Mosaic is rectangle divided by triangles into 3 halves, bottom half with images of fish, birds, kraters and vine leaves, central pattern mirrored but top rectangle has image of chimera chasing Bellerophon on Pegasus, Bellerophon has thrown his spear into the chimera. Inscribed with: BELEROFONS IN EQVO PEGASO OCCIDIT CIMERA.	N/A	Blázquez & Ortego y Frías 1983.	Hunting Heroes Masculinity

Mosaico con Escenas Portuarias	Toledo	2.10m across main axis	Discovered in the Vega Baja of Toledo - the lower river valley of the old city. No other contextual information. 3rd - 4th century AD.	Octagonal mosaic with 4 borders, central scene of various port activities: fishing, boats, sea creatures, buildings - quays/wharfs? Surrounds open space in centre.	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Marine
Mosaico Geometrico con Busto	Toledo		Discovered at the Villa Saucedo, in Talavera de la Reina, Toledo. No other contextual information. 4th century AD.	Rectangular geometric mosaic, bust in centre? Not sure how medallion fits to geometric part. Suggested bust of owner of farm: named ISEAIUS; male bust, craters in corners; holding a cornucopia and an apple; bearded, cloaked.	N/A	Blázquez 1982a.	Representations
Bust of Dionysus/Mosaic con Busto de Baco	Italica	2.70m x 2.96m	Unknown house discovered next to the amphitheatre in the area of Los Palacios. Excavated 1914, currently laid in the museum/house of Condesa de Lebrija in Seville. No contextual information or other decorative elements known but suggested connection with Lovers of Zeus mosaic and second Bacchic mosaic. 1st - 2nd century AD.	Large geometric mosaic with small bust of Dionysus in the centre - 3 sections, outer border, inner rectangular patterned panel, small rectangle containing the bust in the centre. Pattern of stars or lozenges around is black, white, red, ochre but bust is fully polychromatic. Bacchus is crowned with vine leaves and has a thrysus (wand/staff of giant fennel) tipped with a spear head.	N/A	Blanco Freijeiro 1978a; Mañas Romero 2010.	Bacchic themes

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7.3 WEBSITES (PRESENTED AS IN THE ORDER OF THE TEXT)

Palacio de Lebrija Visitor Site: <http://www.palaciodelebrija.com/Historia.html>

Image of the Small Hunt Mosaic from Piazza Armerina, Sicily:

<https://www.typicalsicily.it/en/enna/Elenco/area-archeologica-a-piazza-armerina-villa-romana-del-casale/?lang=en>

Plan of Centcelles: <http://www.turismo-prerromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centcelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0>

Images of the Centcelles mosaics: <http://www.turismo-prerromanico.com/es/visigodo/monumento/mausoleode-centcelles-20130130223328/#ad-image-0>

Details of the Sevso Treasure: <http://www.archaeology.co.uk/blog/lisa-westcott/sevso-treasure.htm>

Image of the Achilles and Penthesilia mosaic:

http://www.museoarqueologicoregional.org/cs/Satellite?c=MUSE_Pieza_FA&cid=1142577656221&language=es&pageid=1162525802577&pagename=Museos%2FComunes%2FPresentacion%2FMUSE_galeriaImagenes

Image of the Adonis mosaic: <http://www.parquearqueologico.org/es/el-parque/yacimiento/la-casa-de-maternus>

Plan of La Olmeda: <https://meetingpoint.wikispaces.com/2-+The+romanization+of+the+Iberian+Peninsula>

Image of the Hunt Scene from La Olmeda: <http://www.villaromanalaolmeda.com/>

Official Visitor's Guide to the Villa de la Olmeda:

http://www.villaromanalaolmeda.com/export/sites/villaromana/otrosContenidos/actividad/2012/documentos_2012/Folleto_VRO_2012_inglxs.pdf

Lex Urso, *CIL* II2 5 1022 <https://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/edh/inschrift/HD031535>

Image of the Antioch Paris mosaic: <http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/mosaic-judgment-paris>

Image of Mars & Rhea from the Circus mosaic at Bell-Lloc:

http://www.pedresdegirona.com/separata_biol_1.htm

Image of Ecija mosaic and details of excavation:

http://www.nationalgeographic.com.es/historia/actualidad/descubren-un-esplendido-mosaico-romano-en-ecija_9519/1

Images of Leda & Danae from the Ecija mosaic and details of excavation:

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