

**THE IMAGE OF ORPHEUS
IN ROMAN MOSAIC**

An exploration of the figure of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman culture with special reference to its expression in the medium of mosaic in late antiquity.

Two Volumes

Volume One

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ABSTRACT.

An exploration of the place in Graeco-Roman culture of the image of Orpheus, real and conceptual, with emphasis on the depiction in Roman mosaic, a phenomenon of late antiquity. Part One explores the figure of Orpheus in art, literature and religion to provide a wider context for the mosaic image, a new approach. A review of all artefacts depicting Orpheus, from the sixth century BC to the fifth AD focusses on the development of the animal-charming scene, the only one in mosaic, to reveal visual and symbolic themes. Poetic treatments of the episode provide literary background, as do texts witnessing to the pervasive presence of Orpheus in the antique imagination. The place accorded him in Christian art and thought reflects his importance in Greek religion. The relationship between Orpheus, gods and heroes, which governs his iconography, is set out.

The in-depth investigation of Part Two, the pictorial and iconographic structure of the 89 mosaics, proceeds from this context. Parameters for the genre 'Orpheus in mosaic' are established. Problems of representation, the illusionist or decorative solutions, are examined. Style and repertoires, explored in detail, display affinities which reveal routes of dissemination of eastern imagery and craftsmen. The iconography of Orpheus himself aids such identification, costume type telling whether the figure belongs in a religious or secular context. The animals, significant in the culture, with an imagery which extends the relevance of the Orpheus motif, are newly accorded a discussion of their own. Pendent imagery, previously ignored, is here seen as an important adjunct to the message of the depiction. Its consistent patterns point to the life and death symbolism of Orpheus. Information from inscriptions and locations further elucidates the function and interpretation of these mosaics. In conclusion Orpheus in mosaic, a popular, almost mundane image, is found to be one with profound cultural import.

Appendix I is a critique of cataloguing; appendix II is the extended catalogue of Orpheus mosaics accompanying this work. Extensively illustrated, the line drawings are integral to the argument.

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INTRODUCTION

A glimpse of Orpheus began the search. The Great Pavement of the Roman villa at Woodchester was unearthed for the first time in ten years in 1973. The huge mosaic was an impressive spectacle with its subtle colours, the magical parade of animals and birds circling a tantalizingly empty centre. From the midst of the swirling acanthus scroll round the central scene emerged the sinister head of Oceanus. At the margins of this circular island, naiads, floating in the blue of their weed-strewn pools, trickled water from overturned vases. All around the figured area, spread intricate, geometrically patterned panels carpeting the room to its edges. Only low walls and a column base remained from which to reconstruct, in the imagination, its architecture, the feel of inhabiting its space, and its light. What was the purpose of the room? What was the meaning of the imagery on the mosaic? It was as entrancing visually as Orpheus' legendary song was to its listeners of myth. Could the mosaic have had such an effect on the Roman observer? The question lingered in the mind from that moment until research began almost ten years later.

The publication to hand in 1973 was the booklet by D.J.Smith which led to J.M.C.Toynbee's 'Art in Britain Under the Romans'. Smith answered some questions and prompted more. Woodchester, he said, was 'in size and degree of elaboration ... unmatched by any Roman mosaic north of the Alps' and 'the largest and most elaborate Orpheus mosaic so far discovered anywhere' [1]. He summarised the significance and popularity of the theme of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman art, accepting Henri Stern's conclusion that 'The poetry inherent in the subject led to the adoption of the image for the

decoration of places of relaxation and rest' [2]. This interpretation was unsatisfactory, since the image seemed far from restful. The figuration, by turns disturbing and startling, was vigorously drawn and surrounded by dazzling surface patterns. Surely so impressive a mosaic would have decorated a room with an important function and, surely so important a room would have merited a pavement full of meaning?

Two books introduced new possibilities: W.K.C.Guthrie's Orpheus and Greek Religion and R.Eisler's Orpheus the Fisher. A figure quite different from the charming mythical singer emerged from this reading, the founder of religions and teacher of mysteries. It seemed impossible for the antique observer not to have noted some symbolic significance in the scene before him at Woodchester, as well as its decorative qualities. With the opportunity to research the subject in depth, an objective approach was required. The character of the enquiry was to be art-historical. This discipline would impose the questions and give form to the answers. The major emphasis would be on iconography, the structure of the image, and its relationship to the broader frame of Roman art and to Graeco-Roman society. A search for pictural traditions, for visual and symbolic structures would be involved. Since the medium brings mosaic into the category of decorative, rather than fine art, the concepts of decorative imagery in Roman art would need to be explored.

Henri Stern's formative work [3] in which he described the mosaic of Blanzky-les-Fismes, introduced a design typology and presented a catalogue, afforded the next impetus for the research. Noting that the Orpheus mosaics of Britain were of a different design to others from the empire, and that Britain provided more examples than anywhere else, he considered them deserving of a special investigation (p.68). Both Toynbee and Smith were later to treat British mosaics separately, but Smith, at the end of his definitive descriptive work invited further iconographic study [4]. The starting point would have to be the design of Orpheus mosaics and an exploration of the popularity of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman art. The

assumption of Stern and Smith, that British Orpheus mosaics differ from others, begs the question as to what extent, and how far they are the same. Was the mosaic image, that of the lyric poet charming animals, related to or reflective of the Orpheus of religion, who seemed equally pervasive of Graeco-Roman society?

More speculative questions raised at the outset were: what would have been the significance of this image in the mind of the antique observer? Would it be possible to divine anything of the function of the Woodchester room, the people who used it or the character of the society in which they lived from the imagery of its mosaic? Did the imagery display any esoteric symbolism? Could the room have been the venue for meetings of an Orphic sect? As the research progressed, some questions proved of value, others not. For example, the Orphic sects posited by certain scholars were dismissed in the arguments of others, so that the notion of a venue was to be reconsidered. The character of Orpheus' popularity became the most difficult idea to approach.

Romano-British Orpheus mosaics were compared with other Orpheus mosaics of the Empire and with Orpheus in other media, the background against which difference of imagery and style could be discerned. The search for an understanding of the Romano-British mosaics would entail laying wider and wider nets of reference to place them in a context. It soon proved that their 'unique' concentric circle design was paralleled elsewhere, though not often. Far from being radically different, as Stern's comment had led one to believe, in many respects they exhibited stylistic affinities with mosaics from the rest of the Empire and were located within existing iconographic traditions. Nor did they, nor any Orpheus mosaics, fall quite so neatly into the groupings proposed by Stern and others to categorise them. Stylistically the group of Romano-British mosaics, like the rest, were marked more by their differences than their similarities.

Along with the typological systems, Stern's in particular taken as standard for some thirty years, catalogues, which present Orpheus mosaics as a group, colour the modern

perception of their iconography, promoting the idea of 'likeness'. The problem will be aired in Appendix I. To find a fresh perception (one which side-stepped the existing conception determined by such presentation) it was necessary to re-evaluate these mosaic groupings. Consideration of each mosaic individually as an expressive variation on a traditional theme, dependent on the influences of local and current styles, then opened the way to a new view of the subject in its genre context. Despite the formulaic presentation of subject matter in Orpheus mosaics, the closer the inspection, the more individual each comes to appear. Orpheus mosaics could be, and were, composed of an enormous number of infinitely variable elements, further mixed by the movement of mosaicists around the Empire, resulting in a blend of personal specialities with regional modifications. That each mosaic differs from the others in so many respects speaks of the inventiveness of the makers. Interest lies in the extent to which each, executed with degrees of artistic capability, avoids repetition whilst remaining within the bounds of artistic conventions. A commonplace of Graeco-Roman art is the flooding of the ancient world with copies of celebrated prototypes made for collectors. Another is that the illustration of the essential scene of a myth would occur time and again in many media. In historical, that is, political, biographical and propagandist representations, the archetype was essential to support the clothing of transient prestige, the visual formulae of affairs of state. The image of Orpheus in mosaic shares in this reliance on understood patterns.

Orpheus mosaics comprise a set of images similar without being the same, dissimilar but not different. Artisans were evidently working from models, though not adhering to a rigidly regulated scheme. Thought was directed towards understanding the pictorial and conceptual rules which governed and limited the depictions, seeking a definition of the genre 'Orpheus and the animals in mosaic'. Such a definition calls for an investigation of visual sources, mechanisms involved in the diffusion of imagery, the adaptation of real and conceptual model to circumstance.

Visual and symbolic imagery was shaped by many factors to which the research was bound to stretch, extending it beyond the scope originally envisaged. Not only would all other Orpheus mosaics as well as the British group have to be studied, but Orpheus in other media. The range of topics forming a background to the visual expression included animal scenes in art and literature, pagan and Judaeo-Christian philosophy and iconography, Alexandrian poetry. No one influence could be considered without reference to several other balancing or affecting factors, each contextual frame relating to the next. One of the most important is the portrayal of Orpheus' animal audience, an integral part of the conceptual image and not merely a decorative adjunct in mosaic. Animals were of considerable significance in the Graeco-Roman world, both real and symbolic. The fauna, as it appears in mosaic and other media, has been accorded a study of its own for the first time. Comparisons have been drawn with other animal scenes in art, and thought given to the important place of animal spectacle in antiquity, to which all such scenes relate. The meaning of the image of Orpheus in mosaic is dependent on its being the animal-charming scene, it is the only scene, from the only episode, depicted in the medium. This scene is the exclusive concern of Hellenistic and Roman art, a series of images in part inspired by poetry where pleasure was taken in relating the details of a romantic tragedy in its sylvan surrounds. The image of the lyrist in the midst of animals encapsulated the whole myth. That single scene also exemplified the moral and salvatory character of the figure of Orpheus, pervasive of Graeco-Roman society in both pagan and later, Christian circles.

It will only be possible here to give some intimation of the many meanings accruing to the figure in the Graeco-Roman world, associated with it in the contemporary mind. Literary evidence for the value accorded the figure of Orpheus by the Greek and Roman observer is second hand, writers commonly reporting popular notions or expectations of the image filtered through their own bias. As a popular religious figure he was denigrated by Plato and Christian writers alike. Cicero says that Orpheus often came into his

mind, while Fronto commends Orpheus to the young Marcus Aurelius as an example of concord. Claudian in 400 AD was still able to call upon Orpheus as a simile for the *pax romana*. Orpheus was involved in late antique magic, even as he was hailed as a prefiguration of Christ. Commenting on the legend and its popular appeal, classical writers would often begin 'Men say that...' None of those 'Men' ever wrote a testimony to the significance of the figure in the visual arts as far as is known. Such an exercise would involve concepts unknown to the antique mind. The descriptions of the Philostrati serve more as evidence for popular expectations of appearance and the rhetorical exercise *ekphrasis* than as records of personal response.

The sheer volume of texts and artefacts relative to Orpheus in antiquity testifies to his popularity and significance. Part I of the thesis explores the manifestations of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman culture from his earliest appearance in classical Greece to his latest in the later Roman Empire. The visual material, all artefacts with a depiction of Orpheus, has been reviewed by various scholars whose work informs the argument of Chapter Two. To their catalogues, which begin with the earliest depiction of the 7th century BC, were added Christian items and artefacts from as late as the sixth century AD, early Byzantine. No other such work stretches so far, setting the development of the imagery within an enlightening continuum. More than a review, in a new approach this chapter reveals the iconographic themes which developed. This is the work of the present writer.

The mass of texts has been approached here in a novel manner. In Chapter Three only those recording the particular scene of the animal-charming are compared and contrasted, noting the changing description and perception of the theme revealed by the texts themselves. The capability of the figure to appeal at many levels in the Graeco-Roman world, to symbolise several concepts at once (which now appear at variance with one another), lends it an importance which supercedes the banality of its imagery. Orpheus was of consequence in both pagan and Christian philosophies, the Christian concern to an extent reflecting the eminent position held

by the figure in Greek religion. Orpheus could appear as the paradigm of the lyric poet, the singer, the romantic lover, a man with access to the hearts of the gods, a culture hero and civilizing force, the founder of mysteries offering salvation. Or, the charlatan magus weaving spells and providing potions of doubtful efficacy. For others still he was a power to evoke against the evil eye, protective of health and fecundity. Chapter Four analyses the multiple perceptions of the image. The texts are examined under several headings which describe the various characteristics which make up the richly mutable composite known as Orpheus.

Part II investigates the pictorial structure of Orpheus mosaics, stylistic developments, figurative and decorative repertories and conventions. Examination of the actual mosaics was the starting point for studying artistry, but where that proved impractical the principal sources were catalogues, photographs, drawings and articles.

The identification of regional repertories, eastern and western, revealed stylistic and iconographic analogies in mosaics along routes of diffusion. Comparison of Orpheus mosaics with others from the same source was more productive than basing critique on the superficial affinities of broad compositional types. Figures and scenes accompanying Orpheus, either within the same field or in adjacent areas, were drawn into the investigation, proving a valuable interpretative tool. Reading across from image to image was a process familiar in antiquity. Associated imagery gave clues to the particular message of each depiction where the central image was the stereotypical figure capable of embodying any one of several philosophies. The distinction between pagan and Christian Orpheus in art is clarified by this mode of study.

Uniquely, these and other iconographic features are included as data in the long and elaborate catalogue, Appendix II, which lists 89 Orpheus mosaics. The total is brought to 103 entries by the inclusion of all other mosaics previously thought to be Orpheus or erroneously listed. Each has extensive bibliography and comment. This work cannot be an exhaustive examination of every

mosaic. Light will be thrown on pictorial structure, design and composition of the picture of Orpheus in mosaic, the establishment of the rules as far as possible. A means of grasping the iconographic patterns will be offered which can be further applied elsewhere.

So much has been written about Orpheus mosaics, much of it since this research began in 1982, it might be assumed virtually everything had been said. What more need be added? Despite the availability of a large body of information, many questions remained unanswered, importantly many were unasked, principally about mosaics as works of Graeco-Roman art. Floor mosaics come into the category of decorative art. However finely executed, to whatever extent they replicate or are derived from works of high art, context ensured they functioned unlike fine art work. The imagery must be explored with such factors in mind. An inquiry into the context and location of the mosaic and the place of the figure of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman society, pictured on it, is pertinent to the interpretation of these functional objects. As far as subjecting the pictures of Orpheus in mosaic to an art-historical enquiry, the same proposals can extend to cover mosaics, whatever their level of artistry, as relate to decorative art from later periods. We are as far removed from the Roman period eye as can be, but at the same time no further, conceptually, than we are from the Renaissance eye. Our culture is not theirs, but we can be aware that the modern view should be put aside to appreciate the antique manner of perception.

The study in depth of the mosaic image forming the main body of this work is not one that has been attempted before. The abundant material is explored in considerable detail, given an art historical approach which searches for meaning in the minutiae of pictorial structure and iconography. Concerns have been the definition of the genre 'Orpheus and the animals', the relationship of text to image, the extent to which the mosaic image reflects the producing society. The figure of Orpheus in relation to art, literature, philosophy and history has been discussed before, but here each will be seen as a factor in the construction of the

several images of Orpheus of which the particular focus of this work, the picture in mosaic, is one expression.

The aim of the introductory chapters of Part I is to discern the concept of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman thought and to trace the visual tradition. Part II examines the image of Orpheus in mosaic relative to those contexts, how it was composed, how it appears to us. The work is based on two premises: first, that imagery in Roman mosaic would have been as receptive to a reading by contemporary observers, that is to say, would have held a 'meaning', as would the art of any era. Meaning is not to be confused with 'meaningful' in the modern sense of the term. The meaning of the image might be mundane, rather than esoteric, but the depiction would not be empty of content. Second, our narrow concept of 'decoration' no longer allows us to comprehend the richness and ambiguity of symbolic language inherent in the imagery of the decorative schemes of ancient art. Whether the imagery was related to Orphic doctrines, common superstition, the expression of aristocratic polytheism or the arts and luxurious relaxation, it would have had some value for its observers, and that value is the object of the search.

The Orpheus mosaics are a phenomenon of Late Antiquity. The few examples which date before AD 200 exhibit a classicising court style. Most Orpheus mosaics, in form and content can be seen to respond to the changed atmosphere of the Later Roman Empire, in all its manifestations. They may be interpreted as emblems of the integrity of a culture whose foundations were shifting, nostalgically evocative of Golden Age harmony.

NOTES.

1. D.J.Smith, The Great Pavement and Roman Villa at Woodchester Gloucestershire (1973), 1, 7.
2. Smith (1973), 7, quoting Stern, Gallia XIII (1955).
3. H.Stern, 'La Mosaique d'Orphée de Blanzky-les-Fismes', Gallia XIII (1955), 41-77.
4. D.J.Smith 'Orpheus Mosaics in Britain', Mosaique. Recueil d'hommages a Henri Stern (1983), 315.

PART I

ORPHEUS IN GRAECO-ROMAN CULTURE

Chapter One

THE STORY OF ORPHEUS.

'C'est le privilège des légendes d'être sans âge.'
Jean Cocteau.

Orpheus, a figure of great antiquity, is the complex archetype of the lyric poet who descends and returns from the Underworld, who dies and is reborn, carrying a value and potency as a symbol different for each individual, group, society and culture which encounters it. Yet Orpheus embodies the eternal truth of the process of creativity as the well-spring of culture.

Orpheus entered the historical record in the seventh century BC. The origins of the figure are mysterious but it is generally accepted that they lie outside the mainstream of Greek religion, with ancient shamanism [1]. What is known for certain is that Orpheus does not appear in the Homeric epics, but that tradition in antiquity placed him as living in time before the Trojan wars and being the ancestor of Homer and Hesiod. This figure remains a symbolic resource to the present day. The myth found a principal expression in literature and music, the arts of which he was the master and patron. As the hero of epic poems, the Argonautic voyager, or of poetry in romantic or pathetic vein, as the focus for philosophical speculation on literature, religion and culture, as a moral exemplar, as the supposed author of numerous ancient texts and religious poems - Orpheus the mythological figure has been the inspiration for a vast body of work created over twenty-seven centuries. Much of the antique output is lost, leaving only remnants, scattered references and indications of lost works. Most of the art works depicting Orpheus were the creation of the Graeco-Roman world.

This is not the place to recount fully the

subsequent history of Orpheus [2]. In brief, the figure lost the authority it had as an emblem of Greek religion. The story of Orpheus and Eurydice, as related by Virgil and Ovid, was used by the Roman philosopher Boethius, fifth-sixth century, as a principal example in his *Consolation of Philosophy*. The work was of such popularity and standing in the Middle Ages that it provided the principal source for the story and a means of keeping it alive. By the fourteenth century Orpheus emerged as a troubadour with magical powers in, for example, the illustrated French *Ovid moralisé*, when the chivalric aspects of the love story of Orpheus and Eurydice emerged. In the Neoplatonic circles of the Renaissance Orpheus appeared once again as the culture hero and theologian with access to secrets hidden from men, which it was hoped newly composed Orphic 'music of the spheres' would reveal. He exemplified Music and later, the cultural heritage of Antiquity, the imposition of order and civilisation. As a general symbol for the arts he was popular with painters and sculptors as a decorative and optimistic subject providing the chance to depict both animals and the favourite theme of music. Many poets were influenced by Renaissance humanist currents, especially Spenser in England. J.Warden in *Orpheus: Metamorphoses of a Myth*, 1982, examines the myth in literature up to Milton. Venetian artists saw the melancholy aspects of the story, an almost modern interpretation emphasising the tragedy of the dilemma of creativity, man's weakness and mortality. The Florentine poet and humanist Poliziano wrote a tragic drama with music on the theme of Orpheus, *La Favola di Orfeo*, 1480, a precursor of early opera. Versions written for a Medici wedding had happy endings. In the opera of the Venetian Monteverdi, *L'Orfeo*, 1607, the first tragic ending, based on Poliziano, had to be exchanged for one more optimistic. Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, 1762 was the only work to retain its popularity into the 19th and 20th centuries until recent revivals of Monteverdi. It too had an enforced happy ending. Mozart's *The Magic Flute* 1791, can be seen as a sophisticated reworking of the myth. There were many more musical offerings, perhaps the ancient 'Orphic hymns' come into this category? Offenbach's comic opera *Orpheus in the Underworld*,

1858, reminds us that the tragic subject has always been parodied. In the 19th century the Symbolist movement in the fine arts and poetry was fascinated by the poignant hero, in particular the subject of the severed head, painted by Moreau, Puvis de Chavannes, Redon and others. The Orphic theme, death and renewal, was of profound importance to poets, Mallarme, Apollinaire in his *Bestiary* and, most memorably, Rilke in his *Sonnets to Orpheus* in the early 20th century. A number of artists in France, 1912-13, dedicated to 'pure painting', the expression of inward feelings, the Underworld, by abstract rather than representational means, were dubbed Orphists by Apollinaire. The theme of Orpheus re-entered the creative imagination in the mid-twentieth century. Jean Anouilh's play focusses on purity and integrity, represented by the eponymous *Eurydice*, 1942. Stravinsky wrote a ballet score *Orpheus* in 1948, a foil to his *Apollo*. The films of Jean Cocteau, the autobiographical *Orphee*, 1950 inspired by Rilke, and *Testament d'Orphee*, an epitaph, 1960, explore the mystical qualities of a myth which deeply influenced Cocteau most of his life, in a manner analogous to the total experience of the ancient world through the modern medium of film. Tennessee Williams' play *Orpheus Descending*, 1955 was made into a film. *Black Orpheus* by Marcel Camus 1958 is a film where Greek myth is excitingly transposed to Brazilian folklore. Sir Michael Tippett set lines from Rilke's *Sonnets* in his cantata *The Mask of Time*, 1983. *The Mask of Orpheus* by Sir Harrison Birtwhistle, 1986, is the most recent musical working of the myth. Musical ensembles naturally take the name of Orpheus. The French philosopher Maurice Blanchot reflected on *The Gaze of Orpheus* as the point of creativity in art. The backward glance, the impatience of the artist for the riches of the unconscious and inevitable loss, has become the fascination for the modern visual artist.

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The legend which engendered this stream of creativity is one of the oldest, most beautiful and intriguing of Greek myths and, familiar as it is, still delights in repetition. It is recounted here, to set the

scene, in a version which is an amalgam of ancient accounts [3].

ORPHEUS

Orpheus was the son of Oeagrus, a river god, and Calliope, the Muse of lyric poetry. Thracian in origin, he lived for some time in Pieria, near Olympus and died in Thrace. He was a singer, musician and poet, divinely inspired. Apollo had presented him with the lyre and the Muses taught him to play. So entrancing was his music that the most barbaric of men became enthralled, wild beasts would follow him, the trees would bow down to him and even uproot themselves to listen as he wandered through the forests. He could make rocks and mountains move and stay the course of rushing rivers with his wondrous song of the creation of the gods and the world.

Because of his power over supernatural forces he was called to join Jason and the heroes on the voyage of the Argo, giving the time to the oarsmen with his playing. His music caused fish to leap from the water or to follow the boat like sheep, while birds stopped in mid flight and hovered overhead. He did not fight in the adventures, being a weakling, but sang to calm the quarrels of men and to overcome the malevolence of divine powers. He stilled the waves in a great storm, parted the Clashing Rocks, and when the Sirens sang to lure the sailors, his melody was so exquisite that the Argonauts were restrained. During the expedition he instituted sacred rites, initiating his companions into the Mysteries.

On his return he married Eurydice, but she died when a snake bit her ankle as she fled from the advances of Aristaeus. Orpheus was so grief stricken that he determined to descend to the Underworld, even at the cost of his own life, and bring her out. By means of his music he was able to persuade the ferryman Charon to take him across the Styx, tame the fierce dog Cerberus, and evade every hazard on his approach to the gods, while the dreadful tortures of the damned were suspended as he passed through the valleys of Avernus. At the sound of his plaintive lament

the savage heart of the god Hades relented and Eurydice was restored to Orpheus on the one condition, set by Persephone, that he must not look back until they had both ascended into the light. Orpheus went ahead and Eurydice limped slowly behind him along the dark, steep track. But on the very brink of success, suddenly doubting, impatient, Orpheus turned to look at his beloved wife. In that fatal glance Eurydice died a second time. She held out her hands to him and he reached to touch them, but she was already smoke. He tried to descend again, but in vain, he could not defeat Death twice. He had failed and was mortified over his loss.

He mourned a long while for Eurydice. He sang, more beautifully than ever before, of his lost love. As he wandered over many lands legends sprang up about his deeds and the circumstances of his death. He shunned women from that time, though many desired him. Some said he turned away from the world to live an ascetic life, instituting mysteries founded on his experiences in the Underworld which excluded women, others that he spurned women only because he wished to remain faithful to the memory of Eurydice, others still that he assuaged his longing by turning to young men.

Orpheus was murdered by women, but whether it was by the scorned women of Thrace in the manic possession of their Bacchic rites or by Dionysus' maenads, sent by the jealous god to avenge Orpheus' worship of Apollo, no one can tell. In a crazed and savage attack, the women rushed at the gentle singer, hurling spears and rocks. At first he was able to divert their weapons, which dropped harmlessly, but as their screeching and howling increased combining with the clangour of the Bacchic music, Orpheus' lyrical song lost its effect. The women rushed in and, seizing him with their bare hands, tore the youth apart, limb from limb, in a bloody scene of carnage.

Then all Nature mourned for Orpheus. Birds and wild creatures, rocks and woods, that had once been held spellbound by his music, wept. The trees shed their leaves and rivers swelled with their own tears and all the spirits of Nature mourned too. The Muses collected the scattered limbs and buried them at

Liebethra where the nightingales now sing most sweetly. Orpheus' severed head had been thrown into the river Hebrus, but miraculously, floating on his lyre, it still sang, calling out 'Eurydice, ah! Eurydice' as the current bore it down to the sea. It was said by some that the head and the lyre arrived at the island of Lesbos, where the head was honoured with funerary rites, which is why the inhabitants excelled in lyric poetry. Others thought the head rested in a cave sacred to Dionysus where it prophesied day and night. The lyre was borne up to heaven to become a constellation. Orpheus' ghost went beneath the earth to the Elysian Fields where he was joyously reunited with Eurydice forever .

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1. Shamanism: E.R.Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational, (1951), 140-7. M.Eliade, Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy (1964) 387ff. M.L.West, The Orphic Poems, 4-7, 146-7.
- 2 . Ancient texts collected in O.Kern, Orphicorum fragmentum (1922). J.B.Friedman, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (1970). W.A.Strauss, Descent and Return: The Orphic Theme in Modern Literature (1971) J.Warden (ed.) Orpheus: Metamorphoses of a Myth (1982). J.Culik, Orpheus Through the Ages (1985).
3. The story has many variants. Amongst ancient texts are: The Greek Anthology, ed. and tr. W.R.Paton, Loeb Lib. (1919). Virgil, Georgics, IV, 453-527; Ovid, Metamorphoses X, 1-107, XI, 1-66. All references in: O.Gruppe in Roscher's Lexicon III (1898), cols.1058-1207; P.Monceaux in Daremberg-Saglio, DA. (1873-1919) 'Orpheus'; K.Zeigler in Pauly-Wissowa, RE. XVIII, I (1939), col.1200-1316; W.K.C.Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion (1935); I.M.Linforth, The Arts of Orpheus (1941); P.Grimal, Dictionary of Classical Mythology (1951), Eng. tr. (1986) 331-333; Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, (1955) I, 28.

Chapter Two

THEMES IN THE VISUAL DEPICTION OF ORPHEUS

This review of the several scenes of Orpheus' myth as depicted in the media of Graeco-Roman art will act as a framework for the detailed examination of the mosaics themselves, pursued in Part II. It reveals themes in the evolution of iconography, defining a context for mosaic within the overall development of the depiction from the sixth century BC to the sixth century AD. Most of the artefacts depicting Orpheus have been collated and discussed in works which I have used as sources for most of the material [1]. None includes all the Greek, Roman, Christian and early Byzantine depictions within the same argument. So doing reveals thematic development and patterns of imagery in a way precluded by the imposition of artificial, modern categories.

The mythical career of Orpheus is episodic. Scenes represented in art are, in order of appearance in the myth: the Argonaut adventure; Orpheus singing to Thracian men and to satyrs; in the Underworld; Orpheus rescuing Eurydice; singing to the animals; the death of Orpheus; the oracular head.

In the history of art these episodes found favour in another order. Chronologically, starting with the art of classical Greece, these were: Orpheus as the Argonaut, singer to Greek men and heroes; Orpheus murdered by Thracian women; the oracular head; Orpheus singing to Thracians and exotic creatures; in the underworld; rescuing Eurydice; singing to animals. This last was the preferred image in the later Roman Empire [2].

These divisions are not exclusive, but the pattern is distinct. All media, from gems to mosaics are represented

in a survey totalling over 300 items. Some material is found in great numbers: Attic and Apulian vases and mosaics; whilst others are rare: wall painting, metal relief. Still others have perished: panel and textile painting. The picture is distorted by accidents of survival. Analysis of the data is necessarily complex. Placing all items in chronological order results in a confusing mass of information. Clarity is difficult to maintain when reviewing the output of the Roman Imperial period, when depictions of the scene of Orpheus singing to animals proliferated. Such an abundance of material offers many organisational problems for pursuing a logical argument.

The presentation of material is unavoidably complex. Panyagua treats the material in chronological order, grouping media. Schöeller employs a presentation which follows the path of Orpheus' career, dividing the material by medium. These scholars were obliged to make such divisions, or found they could, because only one, or at most two episodes would be in vogue at any one time. Similarly, choice of medium was limited at each period, a picture based on accidents of survival. When the material was collated and displayed [2a], patterns of representation were revealed relative to each discipline and to each period sometimes paralleling events in the social and historic background.

The function of the objects on which Orpheus appeared had some bearing on the choice of episode and the manner in which it was depicted. For example, Orpheus pleading for his wife in the Underworld is painted on Apulian funerary vases, to be placed in the earth, while he leads her out on Hellenistic funerary stele, erected above ground. These conventions were observed when on the Ostian fresco Orpheus pleading for Eurydice decorated the inside of a Roman tomb while on relief he brought her to the light [3]. Such conventions might represent the passing of forms and craft practices through apprenticeship to become the expression traditional to each medium. Thus, for example, the profile view of Orpheus singing to the animals is associated primarily with relief, so that mosaics depicting him that way can be said to derive from such a visual source, departing as they do from conventions of mosaic [4].

The marked preference for a particular episode at one time is consistent with a legend which was not fully formed in the version we know from Virgil and Ovid, at the date of its earliest depictions, but was growing, accreting episodes and characters, reflecting in its changing emphases a changing culture. Rarely were more than two episodes seen at the same time. In the Roman imperial period the favoured scene was the animal charming.

In this review the emphasis is placed on iconographic themes and relationships which highlight the development of the animal charming scene. Certain objects bearing the theme seem not to fit the revealed patterns at the dates assigned to them and these have been reevaluated in the light of this comparative iconographic study. The sequence proves workable, but of course might be deemed by some, arguable.

We first see Orpheus as a musician for the Greek heroes. The earliest portrayal shows him with his lyre on the Argo with another musician, only Orpheus is named. His name is inscribed to distinguish this singer from the several others in Greek myth with whom he might be confused, being presented simply as a lyrist. A black-figure vase depicts a musician stepping up on stage to sing, in a manner akin to contemporary depictions of Hercules. The form of inscription, *XAIRE ORPHEUS*, 'Hail, Orpheus!', is such as to lead P.-L.Rinuy to believe that this figure is not Orpheus himself, but an acknowledgment of Orpheus as patron of musical arts [5]. On the oldest Italiote vase to show him, Orpheus appears semi-nude, in laurel wreath, with the inscription *ORPHEUS*, even though a Thracian horseman is his audience [6]. Much later his attributes would be so familiar that the name would become unnecessary. A Constantinian mosaic from Ulpiana (Poljanice) inscribes his name in Greek, not so much to identify him, nor as an affectation, for it was a Greek-speaking region, but to increase the numinous power of the image.

His first audience to appear in the visual arts was human and Greek, but not for some while was he to be depicted in the act of singing. The well known Boetian cup (fig 1.) shows a musician enthroned on a regal seat which is perhaps an

attribute of status. He is accompanied by birds and a hare or hind wearing a leash [7], but his identity is not certain. He may be Apollo, long associated with attracting animals by his music (Eurip. Alcestis, c.438 BC, older legend), often depicted with birds and a hind. The iconography of the best known scene of the myth was not the invention of classical Greece, but seems to have grown from the infusion of cultures which fuelled Hellenistic art.

The much cited passage from Alcestis (570ff.), in which Apollo influences animal behaviour by his music is quoted in full:

Under your roof Apollo chose to live
 The prophet, the musician;
 And as a member of your household
 Was content to graze your sheep,
 Piping a tune of shepherd's love
 Over the steep winding pastures.
 Spotted lynxes loved his music and came
 To feed beside his flock
 And a tawny herd of lions
 Came from the glen of Othrys;
 And around your lyre, Apollo,
 Dappled fawns stepping out
 Slender-footed from the high shady fir-trees,
 Danced for joy to your enchanting notes.
 Thus through divine protection
 Admetus' hearth and lands surpass in wealth
 all others....' [8]

The artefact called to mind is a fifth century BC bronze mirror showing a seated lyrist of disputed identity, accompanied by birds, a hind and a lynx (fig.2), perhaps dated c.420-390BC [9].

According to Eisler the basket of scrolls next to the singer identifies him positively as Orpheus in his persona of prophet, poet, maker of sacred texts, as described in Plato. (Rep.364E-365A). The image seems to reflect the passage from Alcestis. Like the Boetian cup, the figure sits on a chair rather than the rock which is particular to Orpheus (Gruppe figs. 5, 6, 7; Paus. X, 30, 6, describes Orpheus in a 5thC. Greek painting). There is no inscription, so no clear intention to depict Orpheus. Both hind and raven on the mirror are attributes of Apollo. The collar and bell worn by the hind indicates it is not wild, as it would have to be for

Orpheus, but the tame animal of the god (cf. the leashed animal of the Boetian cup). The scrolls, the birds, the laurel wreath behind the singer's head and the laurel ornamenting the edge of the mirror, may allude to the god's oracular powers. The attributes suggest that the figure is Apollo and although it remains ambiguous, pictorially comparable with later images supposedly of Orpheus (Stern 1980, figs. 6, 9) I am inclined to see Apollo here as belonging to the date assigned to the mirror. The parallel iconography of Orpheus and Apollo, expressive of their close association, continues in the Roman Imperial era when a comparison of context and attributes is adequate for identification.

Meanwhile, in literature, Orpheus is described as spellbinding more than simply humans with his music. Simonides of Chios, c.500, described fish and birds following Orpheus singing on board the ship Argo. On the expedition Orpheus overpowered supernatural forces with his song, but only one work of art of the period remains which depicts these exploits, a black-figure vase showing a lyrist between two sirens on a ship, identified as Orpheus on the Argo (FA, XII, 1956, 3861). The terracotta group identified as Orpheus and Sirens is dated late 4th.C. BC, (ill.1). The iconography is unlike any other extant depiction dating before or after, though south Italian provenance and time parallel the Apulian Underworld vases. A useful suggestion is to see in this an imitation of Orpheus where a mortal figure invokes the powers of the divine singer in the Underworld, to ensure his own safe passage beyond the fatal song of the Sirens. They often appeared during the fourth century in funerary contexts as mourners or muses of the Underworld [9a]. Cf. Ch.IV.2, Chthonian Orpheus and (ill.18).

On the series of Attic red-figure vases, c.480-430 BC and on South Italian vases from c.430-350 BC, the myth of Orpheus suddenly leapt into artistic prominence when his violent death at the hands of Thracian women was depicted. The sudden, short vogue for this episode is exclusive to these vases, never seen in any other medium. In view of an image notable for its pacific character this portrayal of savagery seems surprising, but for a thousand

years, carnage and bloodshed were never far from the paradisaical scene. Iconographic change can be seen to correspond with the type and provenance of the vases, chronologically: Attic from Greece, Attic from Magna Graecia, Etruscan and then Apulian. Artists from each area added to the content of the depiction, possibly in response to variants in the oral and literary tradition, but perhaps iconographic changes influenced the story itself. The entire development of the Orphean depiction is contained in the evolving iconography of the vases, save the animal-charming scene. However, that is prefigured in the expressive content of imagery conveying the same message about the effects of Orpheus' song. Themes which developed in the vases provided the source material for Greek, Roman and Byzantine artists.

Aeschylus' lost play *Bassarides*, which treated the death of Orpheus [10], could not be the inspiration for the vase series, for its date is almost certainly too late (466-459?BC) and more likely both are expressions of the same cultural stimulus. Guthrie, (49, 54-5) argues that Orpheus is not shown taking the part of a victim in a Bacchic orgy. The women brandish their domestic implements as weapons. Later vases show Orpheus being stoned or speared (ill.2), no picture shows him torn to death by the *Bassarides*. Guthrie relates the vase scene to the popular story that the Thracian women, acting on their own account (not at the instigation of Dionysus) were angered by the indifference or active hostility which Orpheus showed towards them and by his success at enticing their men away from them. The version of the story, later used by Virgil and Ovid relates to Orpheus as an activator of cultural change more than a protagonist in cult. In the literary version of the myth Orpheus is dismembered, as befits one who refuses to follow Dionysus, emphasising his allegiance to Apollo. Possibly he represented a vein of societal purity and steadfastness in the face of the demands of the disturbing Dionysian ethos.

Other artefacts of the 5th.C. BC relate to the theme of Orpheus' death. A head on a coin of Lesbos, c.479 [11] is supposedly Orpheus prophesying, as the myth tells us, when after

death the severed head floated to that island. Later coins similarly commemorate the traditional locations of the myth. He wears the Phrygian cap, which would become a distinguishing feature, and its earliest appearance if Orpheus is firmly identified here. On vases the oracular head appears just after the 'death of Orpheus' series on Attic vases from Greece, c.420 [12]. Apollo appears perhaps to oversee the process, perhaps to intercede (ill.3). On two bronze mirrors (ill.4) a ritual oracular scene corresponds with the Etruscan myth of Tages [13], but one mirror is inscribed to distinguish Orpheus from the Etruscan hero. A Hellenistic gem (Guthrie 39, fig.8) shows an oracle of Orpheus resembling these images. If the older mirror (n.9) in fact depicts Apollo the prophet, they may all belong to the one tradition, since all are concerned with oracle and prophecy.

The painting by Polygnotus at Delphi [14], (c.460-55BC), depicted Orpheus in the Underworld amongst a group of doomed mythical singers. It was described by Pausanias (X, 30, 6) who reported the pose of Orpheus who is not playing but, sitting by a (prophetic, sacred) willow, holds the lyre in his left hand while touching the tree with the other. One of a group of small bronzes known mainly in later copies [15] shows a singer semi-nude, holding the lyre down by his side, a picture of dejection, which may represent this same theme. The statue of Orpheus, with Dionysus and Zeus, placed near to that of 'Struggle' (Pausanias V, 26, 3) dated to the same period c.460, may also have derived from the focus on the circumstances preceding or following Orpheus' death. So far he is not seen singing. Few large scale statues of Orpheus have survived, others are known only from text references. Of the mysterious xoana of cypress wood, again noted by Pausanias, one in Liebethran Olympus, the other in a temple of Demeter, little is known. They may have had religious connotations relating to a very old stratum of belief [16]. No mention is made of animals accompanying the singer, indeed, none of the depictions so far is of the animal-charming scene, attention being focussed on Orpheus' violent death or consequent events. The image of animal charming had yet to develop in the visual arts.

From about 450BC a notable iconographic change occurs with vases showing Orpheus singing and playing to an audience which begins to assume its well known character. Having sung to the civilized Greeks he is now shown in the act of singing to barbaric Thracians (ill.5). Increasing emphasis is placed on the wildness of his audience, only the Thracian women fail to become entranced. The Thracian audience appears for the first time c.480-470BC. Two bearded men and a boy wearing Phrygian caps and enveloping mantles were intended, says Panyagua, to represent country folk or mountain shepherds [17]. This introduces the 'wild' or 'of the mountain' character of Orpheus' audience, the pattern from which the later image is to evolve: uncouth, barbarous creatures from the wild places entranced by civilizing art.

Several more elements are introduced into the scene on vases from Southern Italy. Orpheus is seen playing not only to Thracians in their long, rich mantles, but to satyrs, members of Dionysus' cortege who also represent the forces of nature, personified in the older vase by shepherds [18]. Dionysus, a maenad and a satyr appear on the reverse of an Attic vase c440BC, showing the death of Orpheus, a natural juxtaposition in view of the account of the Thracian women's furiously aroused state of mind. They hover at the edge of the scene ready to attack [19]. The Bacchic ambience increases from this time, mainly on Etruscan vases and those from Magna Graecia, with satyrs appearing in the audience. They are not associated with Orpheus' death, but represent the increasingly important theme of his attraction of otherwise uncontrollable forces [20] and the natural passions of man, the principal aspect of his power which determines the iconography through into late antiquity (ill.6). Bacchic figures are a frequent component of the latest representations, including funerary art, the Jerusalem mosaic and Coptic textiles. The statue noted by Pausanias is placed with Dionysus and Zeus. In Euripides' *Bacchae* (560ff.= test 49), where Dionysus is the chief protagonist, the peaceable scene of Orpheus, who once roved in the forests of Olympus, entrancing the wild creatures, is placed briefly as an antithesis to the tragic course of

the main action.

There is some overlap with the scene of Orpheus' death, combined at first on the vases with his singing to Thracian warriors, who sometimes look on as Orpheus is killed, helpless in the face of the women's fury. In one instance a warrior rushes to his defence. Etruscan vases of this type come from tombs [21]. Gradually the musical powers assume importance, the death scene is dropped and Orpheus is shown amid entranced, pacified warriors. The most telling example is on the Berlin Vase [22] from Gela, Sicily (fig.4, ill.7). Orpheus sits half-draped, laurel-wreathed, head thrown back, singing exultantly to the sound of the lyre surrounded by Thracian warriors whose differing attitudes express degrees of enchantment and attachment. The warrior on the right, the fiercest, with beard and moustache, turns his head towards the singer, but his body and feet turn away, ready to flee as he draws his Thracian cloak tight around him, protectively. Others, close-shaven, younger?, with relaxed stance, their cloaks thrown back, listen entranced to the song. The attitude of the bearded warrior is repeated later in the standard iconography of the fierce animals which are often shown in just such a pose, resistant, but drawn (Paphos, Sparta, Saragossa). Orpheus usually appeared as a young Greek, but exceptionally, was first seen dressed as a Thracian as early as the mid-5thC BC. on an Attic *skyphos* from Piraeus [23] when Thracian warriors were appearing on South Italian vases. The first literary mention of his Thracian connections appears in the roughly contemporary Alcestis (Eurip.Alc. 967), but otherwise on the vases he remains for a little while a Greek amidst his audience of barbarians.

The depiction on an Apulian *krater* from Naples c350BC [24], summarises the developments in the iconography thus far. The Phrygian Orpheus has made his appearance. On one side Orpheus appears dressed in short, richly decorated Asian costume and Phrygian cap, playing to Thracians and Muses. A young hind sits at his feet, listening to the music which drew it from the woods. It is an attribute of Apollo, taken from his imagery. On the reverse are Dionysus, Ariadne and a satyr, emphasising the links between Orpheus

and the Dionysian cult. All reference to the death scene has gone and the pacific ambience of the singer among his enthralled and civilized audience is contrasted with the abandoned, uncontrolled world of Dionysus.

The series of Apulian Underworld Vases was created at the opening of the Hellenistic period in art [25]. Their radical iconographic changes record the shifting emphases of the myth. Recalling Polygnotus' painting, Orpheus is seen in the Infernal regions, but here among underworld deities and tortured souls, wearing Thracian sacerdotal robes, he stands playing as a supplicant to Hades himself for Eurydice, who appears for certain only once [26] (fig.17). The implication of the imagery in these funerary vases is the successful release of the soul from that realm to be transported to the astral plane.

A number of Hellenistic reliefs have an ambiguous imagery, showing a lyrist playing to young satyrs or to a Thracian and satyrs. A figure in the presence of a poet and what is called an 'initiate' is dubious. It is proposed that this last may have belonged to an Orphic edifice or sepulchre, but the hypothesis is flimsy [27]. The reliefs in which Orpheus appears in a landscape setting, difficult to place as regards to iconography, are tentatively dated. A fresco of Orpheus with Hercules and the Muses from Pompeii is the earliest extant mural painting, with Orpheus in Phrygian cap and the long *stola* of Apollo Citharoedus [28]. Orpheus when seen as the teacher of Hercules was a symbol of culture. The Muses present here recall scenes in the type of Hellenistic poetry from which this painting may derive.

The episode of Orpheus and Eurydice seems to have been a late addition to the legend [29]. The relief showing a group of Orpheus, Eurydice and Hermes, which could be a funerary *stèle*, is known in five copies (ill.8), the original putatively dated c.420-410 BC [30]. It might be contemporary with Alcestis which contains an allusion to Orpheus' rescue of his wife (lls. 357-362). Orpheus wears short Phrygian dress, Thracian foxskin cap and high boots. Names inscribed above the figures may be later additions on

the copies. Orpheus' wife was at first anonymous, later it became customary to name her, perhaps corresponding with a vogue for the episode c.330BC, when the Underworld venture is shown on Apulian vases. Heurgon interprets the scene as illustrating the moment when Eurydice is taken back from Orpheus by Hermes, but surely for some employing the image in a funerary context, the successful outcome of the story would have best represented the salvatory theme they sought? As with the Underworld vases translation to celestial realms, salvation and victory despite death, is implied. The meaning and function of the *stele* remains ambiguous, but the work belongs to that vein in art which emphasised death, Eurydice's or Orpheus' own, his presence in the Underworld with other doomed heroes, failure and loss.

The literary version of the myth which shares this ethos, coming down through Alexandrian poems and the Augustan poets who drew from them, Virgil and Ovid, speaks of Orpheus' failure and loss, the prime material of dramatic tragedy, offering many opportunities for the expression of the pathos beloved by Alexandrian poets [31]. There had always been two possible outcomes to Orpheus' rescue of his wife. Plato talks of the failure of a weak Orpheus (*Symp.*179D), but in the less rarified circles, which he denigrates, the positive Orpheus, the happy ending, was preferred. Funerary art later required the salvatory, positive theme, Orpheus rescuing his wife from the clutches of Hades. It was not an esoteric vision, but a common device, no doubt witness to the popular perception of the myth in this period. The poems of Virgil and Ovid were themselves celebrated so it would seem both versions were known concurrently.

The theme of Orpheus rescuing Eurydice from Hades is continued in a number of frescos and reliefs clustering around the end of the Republican period and opening of the Imperial era, mid-1st.C.BC to mid-1st.C.AD, from tombs or with a funerary connection. An alto-relief from Rome, c.1st.C BC, shows Orpheus holding Eurydice's hand as he leads her from Hades. The same salvatory motif has eschatological connotations in the Pythagorean basilica of the *Porta Maggiore*, Rome. The scene of Orpheus in Hades

asking for Eurydice's release is pictured on a fresco from Ostia [32]. Orpheus leading Eurydice was the subject first employed to express the salvatory theme. Orpheus playing to the animals with its visual promise of a paradise is sometimes juxtaposed to it on certain late monuments, sometimes stands alone [33] (ill.9). Orpheus assuming a Greek 'Victory' pose expresses the certainty of salvation after death on Christian sarcophagi from Rome [34].^(fig.6) In all cases he wears Thracian or Phrygian robes, is never semi-draped in the Greek style. For the private patron a funerary relief was an appropriate location for biography, a monument to status, where Orpheus acted as a figure expressive both of personal salvation and affinity with Greek culture, the hallmark of the cultivated man.

It is important to consider the extent to which the visual depiction is illustrative or independent of surviving texts concerning Orpheus. Christian writers had much to say, but what effect they had on the artisans and patrons of the catacombs, sarcophagi and mosaics, if any, cannot be judged. The Christian Orpheus employed in a funerary context will be discussed later. Chapters dealing with the texts will reveal a gap between the literary and philosophical Orpheus and traditional artistic practice. My guess is that by the Roman period strong and persistent visual traditions, expressing popular notions of the figure, had an independent existence. These would provide more powerful models for the depiction of Orpheus in various contexts than could be imposed by the tracts of the apologists.

To move now to statuary of a later period, a life size votive statue from Memphis, in the Hemicycle of the Poets in the Serapaeion c.300 BC, which shows a standing, Greek musician accompanied only by two raptors, presents what may be Orpheus as a revered artist among his peers. Perhaps it relates in concept to the Delphic *metope* and the location of a statue in the sanctuary of the Muses on Mount Helicon. The Memphis statue is closer to older forms than the developing iconography of Orpheus among the animals [35]. The sculptural group on Mount Helicon is described by Pausanias and Callistratus [36]. The group of Orpheus and the animals, made of

stone and bronze, was juxtaposed with the figure of *Telete*: 'Mystery'. From the description it seems to compare with narrative sculptural groups in so-called Hellenistic Rococo style of the second century BC. The statue of Nile in the Vatican (Braccio Nuovo, a Roman copy of a Hellenistic original) illustrates well the pleasure in sentimental detail. The river god is almost submerged by putti and animals and we may imagine the figure of Orpheus likewise in the midst of an array of elaborately detailed animals. The Helicon group was in stone and bronze, perhaps it was embellished with colour too. Artists of the period took pleasure in exotic features: Orpheus was dressed in long robe and Phrygian cap in Callistratus' description [37]. Hellenistic artists of the second-first centuries BC delighted in all manner of natural forms, in bucolic and idyllic motifs and in animal groups perhaps made for landscape settings. The Orpheus group may be placed in this milieu and dated to the 2nd.C.BC.

On an engraved sardonyx, 163-123BC, Orpheus and the animals are seen probably for the first time (ill.10, fig.3). The gem shows a nude, Greek, musician elegantly drawn, in 'pathetique' pose with an animal audience. The number and variety of animals distinguishes it from Apollo, although the repertory certainly borrows from like images of the god (Stern 1980, p.160 and fig.6). An Italic cornelian dated 135-80 BC, showing a long-robed musician with a crow and stag is unlikely to be other than Orpheus (*ibid.*, fig.4). (Following Stern's dating, but this is arguable.)

If the dates are correct and accidents of survival have not distorted the picture, there appears to have been a fascinating hiatus in the visual record between c.300BC-c.163BC, with a dearth of extant images of any of the episodes. Concentration on Orpheus had not diminished, but took literary form. This is the period of Alexandrian poetry, of odes and explanations and elaborations of the legend, of the epic poem by Apollonios Rhodios, the Argonautica. Towards the end of the period the new iconographic motif, Orpheus and the animals, bursts out as if to illustrate this literary blooming with Orpheus as a tragic-pathetic hero in Hellenistic poetry with its focus on nature. The origin of the motif

must be around 200BC. The entry of the animal audience into the repertory may be coincident with an expansion of the animal industry, trade and spectacle, in the Hellenistic kingdoms, allowing greater availability of exotic beasts (cf. Jennison, 1937, Intro.). Such visibility would advance their depiction in art. The character of the Hellenistic literary image of Orpheus was extended and elaborated, highly descriptive of the natural world where the singer was seen as the human mediator between the forces of Nature and man.

The depiction of the audience for Orpheus' magical music changes during this period. It had included the Muses and underworld deities of the classical myth but also satyrs, Thracian warriors, Hercules [38], all of which are half man half beast. The satyrs obviously are half goat; Thracian horsemen, barbaric by nature, were almost equivalent to centaurs, inseparable from their mounts; Hercules was bestial man, potentially able to mount to the spiritual plane. The audience came to consist only of the wildest animals. In late antiquity came fabulous creatures which exemplified the same powerful inhuman forces first represented by these listeners of the vases.

The earliest extant sculpture confidently identified as Orpheus is the peperino figure now in the Capitoline museum, Rome, probably of 1st.C. BC date [39]. A nude, frontal figure sits on a rock among the fragments of an animal audience, a feline at his feet, an owl on his knee, traces of the feet of another bird on its back, the ensemble contiguously carved. As it was found in a cemetery region Guthrie suggests that it was a sepulchral monument, Stern likewise considers it such. Guthrie suggests the statue was dedicated by a guild of flute players (13), unlikely in view of the antique idea that the lyre was antithetical to wind instruments. The scene of Orpheus with Eurydice seems to have been the favoured episode for funerary purposes at that time. There was further speculation that the peperino figure and the fountain in Rome described by Martial were one and the same, though it was probably not so. Martial describes a monument he knew, a public fountain to be seen near Suburra in 1st.C.AD Imperial Rome. He tells how Orpheus

'sprinkled with water droplets commands a trickling theatre of entranced savage beasts..' [40]. The passage reminds us of the important relationship of Orpheus to water and watery contexts. The idea of the '*theatrum*', a word already found in Ovid (*Met.* XI, 22) for the audience of animals, which Martial himself uses elsewhere (*De Spect.*21) to make just such an allusion, seems to have something to do here with the shape of the fountain, with the placing of animals, the circle of spectators. It was given physical expression by having the animals contiguously carved all around the singer in a framing device on the third century AD marble fountain ornaments from the east which resemble *akroteria* [41]. Picard (*REL*, 1947, 84) associates '*theatrum*' with the *frons scaenae* of elaborate *nymphaea* such as Byblos, in which the *akroterion* was set, a theatre of water (cf. Trevi, Rome). He assumes Martial's fountain to have been of this type. The contiguous carving of both the late antique marbles and the peperino group demonstrates the longevity of the design. The iconographic relationship between these sculptural groups suggests that the presentation of an Apolline Orpheus was a convention in the watery context, while funerary Orpheus appears as the Phrygian shepherd or Thracian magus.

An important development in Orphean iconography appears on gold rings of 1st.C.BC. where Orpheus in Thracian robes, with animals, is turned to three-quarter view [42]. Ultimately in late antiquity a frontal pose is assumed. Stern points out the eirenic function of the image and the importance of its appearance coincident with the Civil Wars. If the successful rescue of Eurydice from the Underworld, current first century BC to first AD, also served as a metaphor for the rescue of the Roman people from the horrors of the Civil Wars into the light of the Augustan age, it would perhaps explain some of its popularity as an image, expressing aspirations similar to those of the animal scene on Republican gold rings. The subject continued to be depicted on gems into the 4thC AD, its iconography gradually evolving. In the Imperial era the conventions of the animal scene were distinct, no longer reliant on association with Apollo.

The story of Orpheus fell out of favour as the subject of tragic and pastoral poetry from the mid first century AD though the figure of Orpheus retained his popularity. Varro described (36BC) a comedy presentation in a park; 120 years later Martial described a more grisly one in the arena, informing us of the widespread popularity of the figure and nature of its perception among all levels of society (cf. Chapter 4.10). Orpheus appears as the hero of two epic poems (Val. Flac. c.AD80 and anonymous *Argonautica* 4th.C.AD, Guthrie 27). He was much discussed by historians, commentators and religious apologists. Depictions of Orpheus among the animals appear with increasing frequency. The focus for the early Imperial examples appears to have been Rome, connected perhaps with aristocratic circles. Orpheus was a favourite image of court art, the figure signifying the qualities of a cultivated society and the classical age (cf. Horace *Ars Poetica* 391). Mural paintings adorned the royal palaces. One of Orpheus and a stag came from the *Domus Aurea*, and Orpheus playing to Cerberus from the *Villa Adriana*, c.130 AD, a return to classic Underworld imagery [43]. Pompeian mural paintings reflect the popular imagery of Orpheus which by 69-79 AD had assumed the familiar configuration [44]. Both examples are on walls fronting gardens, a location common to some late mosaics, the well known depiction from the 'Maison d'Orphee' opens an illusionistic vista of its own onto an idyllic park. These paintings express the perception of landscape and gardens as having mystical value, the lost paradise (Grimal, *Jardins Romains*, 353ff.).

Terra sigillata trays from the *Domus Aurea* (1st.C. AD) showing Orpheus in familiar manner, may derive directly from silverware. Fourth century examples, in the form of moulds, from Germany, also appear to have taken their developed compositions from metal originals [45] (ill.11, fig.5). The intricate techniques and fine detail practiced by gold and silversmiths usually expressed an elaborated, scholarly iconography, which is the case here. The variety of creatures and features of the setting to be seen on plates from Germany are not equalled elsewhere. One collates all the figures

otherwise scattered across late third to fourth century artefacts. The leaping fox and griffin of British mosaics appear with the sphinx and centaur of eastern depictions.

An intriguing work which has proved difficult to date is a marble relief showing an Apolline Orpheus on a rock, surrounded by animals. One side was restored in the 18th century. A number of coins and gems apparently derived from the same model help to fill the gaps caused by the inventions of the restorer. The relief itself, says Stern, is Hadrianic, perhaps of patrician ambience, but two gems which copy the scene he dates 70-50BC. The original therefore, he states, must have been a lost Hellenistic monument, a celebrated work created c.150-75BC, probably in Rome, giving rise to many copies. Antonine coins are the only items with a fixed date. (Antoninus Pius, Lucius Verus, Marcus Aurelius, original model c.142-3AD) [46]. However the copies, assigned dates over a 300 year period, show remarkable consistency and may perhaps all be of the same date. As Stern himself remarked, there is no trace of this iconography in painting or mosaics (1973, 336) which one would expect if the work was an influential public monument. Coins and mosaics where Orpheus displays the notable feature of an outstretched playing arm, may be responding to the influence of just such a monument from Philipopolis, according to Stern (1955, 58-9). Another statue known only from its inscribed base was found north of the city [47].

Coins depicting Orpheus were minted in areas associated with his myth or with aspects of Orphean iconography. Five Antonine coins duplicating the marble relief were issued in Alexandria, alluding to the associations of Orpheus with the city, to his sojourn in Egypt, to the influential poetry on the subject of Orpheus which issued from it and, not least, to the tradition of animal parades in Ptolemaic Egypt (Jennison 1937, ch.1). The philosophical and moral character of the image was appropriately expressive of typical Antonine sentiments [48]. Fronto recommended Orpheus as an exemplar of Concordia to the young Marcus Aurelius (M.Cornelius Fronto, Loeb ed. 71-3, letter c.140-43 AD) In these circumstances commemoration of a monument may have been the least

urgent reason for placing the image on a coin. The mid second century AD must be the point of origin for all the copies, including the Louvre marble itself, of the original work of art which itself must have been of this time. The famous scene, which had its origins in the Hellenistic cultures, found special favour with the Imperial court of the late second century. The Egyptian connection and the extent to which the scene of Orpheus charming the animals was expressive of the ideal of a Roman culture rooted in Greek origins, may already have made it attractive in Hadrianic circles. On the marble plaque and the coin copies, we see the Greek Orpheus, in Hadrianic classicising style. It is fair to see the nude, Greek figure as evocative of classical culture. So he appears in the first century peperino sculpture, the third century marble reliefs and a number of mosaics. Severan coins were issued from Thrace, legendary home of Orpheus. On a coin of Caracalla issued from Philippopolis c.211, Orpheus is depicted with an outstretched arm (see above and cf. Ch.9). Either the eirenic or civilising qualities of the image join Severan propaganda. On coins of Julia Domna an allusion to cult and religion may be added. Coins of Gordian III issued in Thrace, showing Orpheus with Eurydice and Hermes, may have been intended to carry a message of salvation dependent on the emperor [49].

Orpheus dressed in long Thracian or short Phrygian robe may represent a religious aspect of his persona. The Phrygian figure appears in the Christian catacombs of Rome. Orpheus on his first appearance in the Catacomb of Callixtus, c.220AD, plays to sheep. In Peter and Marcellinus I, c.300, biblical scenes surrounding Orpheus all contain figures who are leaders of flocks, either animal or human: Noah, Moses, Christ himself. In the second image from that catacomb, dated 325AD, Orpheus wears richly ornamented oriental robes and has the outstretched arm seen on certain mosaics: Palermo I, Miletus, Cos I, Paphos, Poljanice, Djemila, Avenches I and the coin of Caracalla. Meanwhile, in the Catacombs of Domitilla on the Via Appia, Orpheus has the appearance familiar from mosaic and other images (ill.12a,b). He is surrounded by the crowd of wild animals common in Orphean iconography including

a lizard, mouse and camel. Amongst them sits a ram (ferocious) and a ewe, a mixture of wild and timid beasts calmed by the music (Domitilla I c.330, ceiling; Domitilla II c.360). Only the juxtaposition of biblical images marks the Christian loci. A metal casket covering from Intercisa, Hungary, combines the standard image of Orpheus with biblical images in the same way. The *Chi-Rho* confirms the Christian imagery [50].

A description of a contemporary secular painting is that of Philostratus the Younger, c.300AD, in imitation of the *Imagines* of his grandfather the Elder Philostratus, c.240AD, reflecting tastes and attitudes to art in late antiquity. Whether he described a real painting or was involved in an oratorical exercise is not certain. Lehmann-Hartleben has demonstrated that paintings described by the Elder Philostratus may have existed by reconstructing their setting in a gallery. Orpheus was not included [51]. The elaborated word-picture given by the younger Philostratus (in full, Ch.9), though broadly descriptive of the well known scene, includes details of dress, landscape setting and fauna not usually represented in the visual art which remains, mosaics for the most part. Many of these features correspond with the supposed Campanian painting in a generalised way, but none exactly matches. Often quoted in relation to the mosaics, Philostratus' description is more likely evidence for the iconography of the secular painted image of the time, which has not survived. In many respects it is the literary conception of the visual image, its conventions literary, rather than visual.

Of panel paintings hanging in *pinacoteca* or other public venues and in private houses, which might have passed through the art markets, nothing remains. Only a few references remain to hint at more public and ephemeral painting in the popular tradition, such as appeared in amphitheatres and *fora*, to aggrandise triumphs, on *vexillae*, or inn signs, where Orpheus might have been one of the subjects [52]. While a more elaborated and *recherché* imagery is associated with such patrician images as remain (fresco, relief, silverware, gems, ivories) and more detail would be demanded of painting (Philostratus), the stereotypical model, cut to the

essentials of diagnosis, would prevail outside this ambience. Orpheus, like other well known subjects, could be represented with minimum imagery, but maximum effect, as can be seen in the Mosaic of Horses at Carthage where many mythological personages and scenes including Orpheus are represented in a 'shorthand' form which must have been readable to its audience [53]. Attention paid to the natural world and the increasing availability and visibility of animals could have played a part in forming the populist depiction. Mosaics tend to the stereotypical representation, with a few refined versions.

The Hadrianic relief, coins and gems evidence the growing interest in the image of Orpheus from the second century. The famous animal-charming scene, its origins in Hellenistic cultures, found favour and gradually assumed predominance in the Empire. It is the only scene on mosaics, which provide most examples, though they are rarely of the highest artistic quality. The mosaic sequence began in the mid-second century. 89 mosaics are now known to me from all provinces of the Roman Empire. The earliest is Italian black-and-white, of Antonine date. Orpheus soon became a subject for polychrome tessellation in the provinces, employing the pictorial conventions of that medium. Most mosaics can be dated after 200AD, with a cluster around the end of the third and opening of the fourth centuries. Many of the iconographic features of even the earliest depictions of Orpheus are echoed in the mosaic sequence, such as the pose of the fearful Thracian on the Berlin vase compared with the pose of felines in fourth century mosaics from the Greek East (Paphos, Sparta) and the combination of Orpheus with images of struggle. The sequence ends with the Jerusalem Orpheus of the sixth century AD. Being such a durable medium, this is the only series of images of Orpheus extant in any numbers, other than vases.

Orpheus singing to the animals remained the principal scene in all media. Orpheus rescuing Eurydice, exclusively employed for sepulchral decoration up to the mid 1st century, was superceded by the animal-charming on objects destined for funerary use in catacombs and elsewhere. A number of ceramic bowls and bronze

patera handles have been recovered from tombs in Cologne and Trier [54], while some mosaics were associated with cavern tombs (Edessa, Cherchel, Constantine). With the increasing interest in personal religion and salvatory themes, the animal scene was combined with the rescue, for example on the mausoleum of El Amrouni and the group of funerary *steles* from Noricum and Pannonia of the 4th.C.AD. A purely pictorial influence of Mithraic iconography, both in the manner of animal depiction and Orpheus' costume, pervades mosaics from the Northern provinces. It is also seen on Severan gems [55] and is evident in a group of strigillated sarcophagi from Rome, Ostia and Sardinia where the animal audience is much reduced and has a symbolic charge. An Orpheus in the victorious pose of Mithras Tauroctonos (fig.6), places one raised foot close to the back of a sheep or a lion. Some sarcophagi, apparently originating from the same workshop, were employed for Christian interment. Examples from Rome and Ostia have accompanying scenes which designate them Christian (ills.13,14). An example from Sardinia includes the Apollonian griffin as the animal attribute, perhaps to allude to Orpheus as the new Christ/Apollo [56].

Later than these and drawing upon an eastern repertory, are the group of marble fountain ornaments, provisionally dated c.275-350 (see n.42), which may be a group clustering together somewhere early in that period, so close in kind are they. They are descendents in a sculptural tradition of which the Hellenistic statue from the Capitoline Museum, Rome, is an early example. An evolved Apolline Orpheus wears a mantle over his knees, sandals and Phrygian bonnet. A number of animals are carved all around him and beneath his feet (figs.7a,7b). The origin of the marbles was probably Asia Minor. The school of Aphrodisias has been proposed [57], but perhaps the sculptors of Ephesus, the point of manufacture for a large number of Attic sarcophagi, were also involved. Mosaics from this area show Orpheus in long Greek or Thracian robes. Apollo wore the Phrygian bonnet on sarcophagi, but his griffin attribute and related figures, Muses and Marsyas, distinguished him (ill.20). Squarciopino suggests that these marbles were candelabra, while Picard connects them with

nymphaea, where the example from Byblos was found. Given the established connection of Orpheus with watery contexts, borne out by the iconography of many mosaics (Ch.11) Picard's theory seems more convincing. The image does not seem so suitable for a candelabrum. Squarciopino places them in a religious context, one now in Istanbul having been re-dedicated with a scratched cross.

In late antiquity depictions of Orpheus appear in such rich materials as ivories, gems, rich metal relief and textiles, suggesting it had been taken up by the aristocracy and into the fine court style again, though perhaps just an accident of survival. There is little evidence in the visual record for the eminent place he held in the ordinary world, witnessed in texts, just one or two small terracotta figurines from earlier times [58]. Surviving images were commissioned by people wealthy enough to pay for durable art works. Mosaics, numerous in the first quarter of the fourth century are found in large rich villas, more often than not at this period decorating public rooms giving access to a garden, evoking a classical, 'Golden Age' ambience. Figures and scenes accompanying Orpheus in late antiquity suggest a renewed interest in classical sources. Satyrs, maenads, centaurs, members of the Bacchic train appear, recalling the earliest Attic vases. Uniquely Orpheus is accompanied by a maenad on a mosaic from Antalya. Two ivory *pyxides* show Pan, satyrs and centaurs beside Orpheus, with hunting scenes on the reverse (figs.8a-9c) [59]. One was destined for central France, now in the Bargello, Florence and the other for the monastery at Bobbio, North Italy, but they are considered to be of eastern workmanship. On a casket from Hungary, Orpheus is juxtaposed with Seasons and Bacchic scenes and, on a ceremonial bucket from Caesaria, with conscious classicism, Orpheus is shown three times, with Thracians, with Eurydice and with animals [60].

Coptic *orbiculi* of the 4th-6th.C. AD (ill.15) show members of the Bacchic cortege, exotic beasts and fantastic creatures such as the sphinx incorporated into the traditional repertory, a feature of the 4thC. German ceramic [61]. As far as I am aware, Orpheus has not been found as a subject of the large woven

textiles of which a number depicting Bacchic scenes have been recovered, but only on the small medallions. These were sewn on to garments, perhaps intended to have an apotropaic effect during life, or during the afterlife, for they have been preserved in Egyptian and Syrian tombs. I am inclined to believe in their use during the lifetime of the wearer on the analogy of textiles with apotropaic images worn by Christians (Grabar, 1969, 99), although the possibility remains that these were seen simply as mythological subjects providing an interesting decorative motif. On one an Apolline Orpheus, in *tiara*, is surrounded by animals including exotic subjects, such as appear in eastern church and synagogue mosaics, like the giraffe and centaur. Stryzowski notes, referring to the Jerusalem mosaic, that the centaur was typical of late, eastern artefacts, Syrian and especially Antiochene [62]. The animal imagery of the marble fountain ornaments similarly includes the exotics. Late antique art may have derived from or shared much imagery disseminated through the textile trade [63]. In a similarly fragile medium which survives are rolls and *codices*. Miniatures in the famous *codex Vergilianus Vaticanus*, c.400AD, [64] illustrate the *Georgics*: Eurydice's death by snakebite, the fatal look back, and from the *Aeneid*: Orpheus solitary in the Elysian fields. At this date these texts had assumed the prestige of holy books, in pagan aristocratic society the equivalent of a 'bible'. The emperor Julian proscribed their teaching by Christians, whom he considered had abused Greek culture and blasphemed the gods by calling on these texts to sustain their arguments (P.Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, 1971, 93).

Fourth century gems (ill.16, 17, fig.10) have been recovered from centres along the routes of communication between Eastern and Western empires (Scutari, Belgrade, Aquilea) [65]. They share such features as the snake-in-tree with late mosaics from eastern provinces, with the *pyxides* and with the London Bacchus from the temple of Mithras [66]. The Belgrade gem shows a sheep and a centaur, symbolically a representation of opposing forces. The centaur is the wild uncontrollable force of nature, the sheep is the human soul, the flock, in a harmony effected by the presence of

Orpheus. Such oppositions might be capable of a Christian or a pagan interpretation, ambiguous like many late depictions (Jerusalem mosaic). The strangest item is the amulet (fig.11), now lost, showing a crucified figure beneath seven stars and a crescent moon. The inscription reads: *ORPHEOS BAKKIKOS*. A conflation of Orphic, Bacchic and Christian iconography, the meaning is ambiguous [67]. Items worn close to the person such as finger rings had obvious protective qualities as well as proclaiming personal beliefs. Many items come from funerary contexts, distorting the picture, as much secular evidence has been lost: painting, textiles, frescos, bronzes, tapestries, but it seems that Orpheus was always deemed suitable both for funerary and secular purposes. Contemporary values influenced the choice of episode expressing eschatological aspirations, in Late Antiquity the animal scene. The myth of Orpheus pointed not only to salvation and a blessed afterlife, but to a fruitful and a felicitous life on earth. Many artefacts were located where the image could bestow its fortuitous properties: on rings interred with the defunct, on food dishes, wine jars with their reference to Bacchus, on terracotta statuettes and plaques, on thresholds (Brading). This suggests that simple, pleasurable decoration, was only one of several reasons for choosing the subject of Orpheus.

Over the long period from the sixth century BC to the sixth AD different episodes of the myth came to the fore as the focus of attention, the animal charming scene developing last to become the one which crystallised all aspects of the myth illustrated in other scenes. The figure had, by late antiquity assumed a mystic significance. During this time the imagery of Orpheus changed, but yet some features remained constant while others recurred in changed guise to form the traditions underlying the imagery of Orpheus with the animals. The negative character of earlier depictions, concentrating on death and loss, was replaced by a positive imagery which emphasised the salvatory message of the myth, the fortuitous and fruitful properties of Orpheus. The evolving iconography of the vases accounts for most developments in the perception of Orpheus' character, shifts of emphasis reflecting his changing place within

Graeco-Roman society. The mosaic series is next in importance as visual evidence for the developing concept of Orpheus, taking the story on until the pagan figure was subsumed by Christianity. The iconography of no single medium can be examined in isolation, so many cross currents affected the development of imagery, and so much information is lost, it is only possible to understand the individual story from the stand point of the wider perspective. The mosaic image reflects the development of the whole.

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NOTES

1. O.Gruppe in Roscher's Lexicon III, (1898) cols.1058-1207. 'Orphée' in DAFL XII (1934-36), cols. 2735-2755. E.R.Panyagua, 'La Figura de Orfeo en el arte griego y romano' Helmantica XVIII (1967) 173-239, figs. 1-17; *idem*, 'Catalogo de representaciones de Orfeo', Helmantica XXIII (1972) 87-135, figs.1-16, 393-416; *ibid* XXIV (1973) 433-498, figs.17-44. F.M.Schöeller Darstellungen des Orpheus in der Antike, Diss. Freiburg (1969). H.Stern, 'La Mosaïque d'Orphée de Blanzky-les-Fismes' Gallia XIII (1955) 41-77; *idem*, 'Orphée dans l'art paléo-chrétien', Cahiers archéologiques XXIII (1974) 1-16, figs. 1-19; *idem* 'Les débuts e l'iconographie d'Orphée charmant les animaux', Mélanges de Numismatique de l'archéologie et d'histoire offerts a Jean Lafaurie (1980) 157-164, pls.XII-XIV. P.Prigent 'Orphée dans l'iconographie chrétienne', Rev. d'hist. et de phil. relig. 64 (1984) 205-221, figs.1-4.
2. Chronology of episodes: I.M.Linforth The Arts of Orpheus (1941) 16ff. On the character of episodes: P.-L.Rinuy, 'L'imagerie d'Orphée dans l'antiquité', Rev. d'Arch.mod. et d'arch.gen. 4, (1986) 297 and n.2.
- 2a. A working model: index cards laid out on the floor in media groups.
3. Apulian *krater*, Armento, c.330 BC. See n.27. Stele with Orpheus, Eurydice and Hermes. See n.30. Fresco from tomb, Ostia, c.100 BC: O. with *pedum* leads E. towards Ianitor and Cerberus, Pluto watches. Gruppe 1176-7, fig.1. Reinach RPGR 200, 2. Schöeller 48, 83, pl.XIV, 3. Panyagua (1973) no.191. Alto-relief, 40BC-40AD: O. and E. hand in hand as they exit together. Gruppe 1198, fig.15. Reinach RSGR II, 512, 2. Schöeller 48, pl.XIV, 2. Panyagua (1972) no.92.

4. J.Balty, 'La mosaïque d'Orphée de Chahba-Philippopolis', Mosaïque. Recueil d'hommages a Henri Stern. (1982) 33-7, pls.XXI-XXIV, 34. Cf. Orpheus mosaic Sparta.
5. *Metope* of the Treasury of the Syconians, Delphi, c.560 BC: A bearded Orpheus on the Argo, inscribed ORPHAS. Another lyrist stands next to him, Philammon? W.K.C.Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion (1935) 21, fig. 2. Schöeller 7, 12, pl.I,1. Panyagua (1967) 184-5; idem, (1972), 2. Black-fig. *oenoeche*, Villa Giulia, Rome, c.520-510 BC, ABV 432: Singer steps up on the *bema*. Reinach RVP 451, 2. Guthrie 21, fig.1; Schöeller pp.14, 77, pl.1, 3. Panyagua (1967) 186-7; idem (1972) no.3, fig.1. Rinuy (1986), 299 and fig.6 - disallows this image as Orpheus.
6. Campaniform Apulian *krater*, red-figure, 430-420BC, Egnazia, Latium: Inscribed ORPHEUS. Oldest Italian vase with O. Gruppe 1180, 1-7. Schöeller 53, pl.XVI, 1. Panyagua (1967) 189; idem (1972) no.65.
7. Boetian cup: 600 BC. O.Kern Gnomon 11 (1935) 476-7, more refs. Panyagua (1967) 186-7, fig. 2; idem (1972) no.4. Schöeller 25f., pl.VI, 1. Stern (1980) 158 fig.1.
8. Euripides, Alcestis, tr. P.Vellacott, Penguin (1953) 1974 ed.
9. Bronze mirror: c.420-390BC. R.Eisler, Orphisch-dionysische Mysteriengedanken in der christlichen Antike, 1925, fig.34, p.97, n.2. Guthrie fig.9, p.66; Panyagua (1967) 187-8; idem (1972) no.94, 420-10BC. Schöeller 24, pl.V, 4. Stern (1980) 158-9, fig.2. Another: Panyagua (1972) no.96. The spotted lynx of the poem appears on both.
- 9a. Handbook of the Collections (J.Paul Getty Museum), 1986, 33.
10. Aeschylus, Bassarides. Ps.Eratosthenes, Catasterismoi, 24, Lyra = Kern test.113. I.M. Linfoth 'Two Notes on the Legend of Orpheus' T.A.P.A. LXII (1931) 5-17, II.
11. Coin of Lesbos: After 479 BC. Panyagua (1972) no.93.
12. Hydria: oracular head of O., Apollo stands holding lyre and laurel branch, 2 women listen. 475's BC. Guthrie, 36, pl.5. Schöeller 69, pl. XXIV, 3. Panyagua (1972) no.75. Attic cup: oracular head of O., seated youth transcribes, Apollo holding laurel branch holds out hand, palm down. c.420's. Gruppe 1177, fig.3. Reinach RVP I, 493, 2. Eisler, 6, n.5, fig.4. Guthrie, 36 and fig.7. Schöeller 69, pl.XXIV, 4. Panyagua (1967) 199, n.133; idem (1972) no.76. F.Graf, 'Orpheus: A Poet Among Men', in Interpretations of Greek Mythology, J.Bremmer ed. (1987) 80-106. Graf, p.94, does not believe Apollo intercedes as Guthrie does, p.35, but as healer god supervises writing of healing verses uttered by head.
13. Oracular head of O. at feet of youth transcribing answers, 2 men, 3 women listen. End fifth BC. Schöeller 69, pl. XXIV, 5, (Louvre). Almost identical example from tomb, Chiusi (Sienna),

- inscribed *VRPHE*. Guthrie 36, fig.6. Panyagua (1967) 199; idem (1972) no.95, fig.16. See notes 9, 10, above.
14. Painting in Nekyia of the Lesche of the Cnidians, Delos, 460-455 BC, described by Pausanias, X, 30, 6, c.180AD. Panyagua (1967) 191ff., and fig.5, reconstruction by K.Robert, which does not show Orpheus quite as described by Pausanias.
 15. Small bronze statuette, lyre held by side. Pany. (1973) no.146, fig.18. 3rd.BC. Others: Apolline O. *kitharoed*, lyre lost. Schöeller 16ff., pl.IV, 1-3. Panyagua (1972) no.89 and 145 (identical), fig.17. Three heads perhaps from statues of the same model, basalt or marble. Panyagua (1972) no.86, (Schöeller 15f., pl.II, 1-4) 87, 88. Schöeller 15ff. pl.III, 1-2. Hellenistic copies, original c.460BC.
 16. *Xoana*: Pierian Liebethra, Olympus. Plutarch, *Alex.* 14. Ps.Callisthenes, (Aesopus) 1, 42 6.7 = Kern test.144. Temple of Eleusinian Ceres, Taygetos, Pausanias III, 20, 5 = Kern test. 145. Guthrie 24, n.8.
 17. Attic *pelike* c.480-470 BC: bearded O. in Phr. cap plays, youth and two men in Thracian clothes, mountain shepherds, listen. Panyagua (1972) no.6. cf. *id.*(1967) 185, n.68 on bearded O.
 18. Column krater, Naples: O. in richly ornamented mantle. Thracian in *alopexis* and satyr with *thyrsus*. More Thracians on other side. c.450BC. Pany. (1972) no.57; cf. Gruppe 1182, fig.6, robe.
 19. Attic campaniform krater. c.440BC. Panyagua (1972) no.42. O. subsidiary subject on side B. Thracians and a satyr listen, armed woman about to attack: Panyagua (1972) no.54, Nola, c.430 = Gruppe 1180-1, fig.5; Reinach *RVP* I, 403, 4-5; Guthrie 64, i; Schöeller 52, pl.XV, 2,3. Panyagua (1972) no.56, fig.11; idem, (1967) 197, n.121. Schöeller's pls.XVII-XXIII amply illustrate the extensive genre of the death of O. Cf. Guthrie 64-5, n.8; Panyagua (1972) nos.8-51.
 20. Etruscan and Magna Graecia: column krater, O., Thracian and horse, a satyr. Panyagua (1972) no.62. Italiote campaniform krater, Tarentum c.390: O. and female centaur. Panyagua (1972) no.71. Italiote volute krater, O., satyr, female figure and hind (from iconog. of Apollo, Panyagua (1967) 188). *Idem* (1972) no.72b. South Etruscan oenochoe, Vulci, O. in Bacchic ambience: Gruppe 1182-3, fig.6 (Orpheus only). Reinach *RVP* I, 271, 4. Panyagua (1967) 194; idem (1972) no.74. *Brit.Mus.* F.100. See also [18] above, Panyagua no.57, and [19] no.54.
 21. Thracian women in background + singing to warriors: campaniform krater, c.440BC. O. and a Thracian who turns to remonstrate? with a woman who raises a sickle Panyagua (1967) fig.6; idem (1972) no.52. Attic calyx krater, Paestum, 460-430BC. In registers, upper: O. sings to Thracian warriors, lower: Thracian women, one, maenad? wearing spotted skin, rush to the attack, chased off by a warrior. Guthrie 65, iv, fig.5, drawing, inverting registers. Schöeller 52, pl.XV, 4. Panyagua (1972) no.53, fig.10. From an Etruscan tomb near Arezzo. Hydria,

- c.460. One warrior looks on helpless, the other protects himself under tree as O. killed by 5 women. Inscription ORPHEUS. Gruppe 1185 G. Schöeller 56, pl.XX 3, 4. Panyagua (1972) no.27. Mounted Thracian warrior rushes to his aid as two Thracian women, one in nebris, batter him with rocks: Attic Stamnos from Chiusi. Gruppe 1165, 1184 D, 1188, figs 11-12. Reinach RVP I, 3327, 1. Guthrie 64-5, iii, fig.4. Panyagua (1972) no.44. Etruscan vases with Thracians and death of O.: add Gruppe 1184 A, fig.8. Guthrie 64, ii. Panyagua (1972) no.29. From Vulci.
22. From Gela, Sicily. c.460-450. Attic column krater. Berlin, Museum of Antiquities no.3172. Gruppe 1179, 1, fig.4. Guthrie pl.6. Schöeller 51f, pl.XV, 1. Panyagua (1967) 191-2; idem (1972) no.61. Orpheus has ivy wreath, rather than usual laurel.
23. Death of O. Wears Thracian, richly embroidered, long-sleeved tunic for the first time on vases. Bare-headed. Panyagua (1972) no.43, fig.7. Schöeller 60, pl.XXII, 4, cf.pl.XXII 1, 2, 3.
24. Hind cf. n.21. Gruppe 1180, 51-64. Reinach RVP I, 176, 1. Panyagua (1967) 188, 191, 195; idem (1972) no.69. Stern (1980) 159, pl.XII, fig.5.
25. Apulian Underworld vases. Produced S. Italy c.340 BC to early 3rdC. Employed for funerary purposes. O. appears in Hades amongst many figures to plead for E., the scene influenced by Orphico-Pythagorean cults (Panyagua 205 and n.168). Gruppe 1188. Schöeller 43-5, pls.XI, 3,4, XII, 1-4. Panyagua(1967) 204-6, fig.9; idem, (1972) nos.77-85b.
26. O. rescues E. Apulian volute crater, from Armento, c.330. Gruppe 1188, 105 D, fig.13. Reinach RVP I, 455, 1. Heurgon MEFRA 49 (1932) 22-3, fig.3. Schöeller 44, pl.XII, 1, 2. Panyagua (1972) no.81.
27. Hellenistic reliefs. Lyrist playing to young satyrs attracted from woods, divinities watch. Environs Rome? Panyagua (1967) 194-5, fig.4; idem (1972) no.151. In Phrygian cap O. plays to Thracian and satyr, Rome. Panyagua (1967) 195; idem, (1972) no.152, fig.21. From Sparta, end 3rd.BC. or 1st AD?: lyrist in landscape with animals, presence of poet and initiate or warrior on pedestal. Panyagua (1967) 190-1, fig.3; idem (1972) no.153. O. enticing satyrs: *Liber Monstrorum* I, 6, Lucan. Astr. = Kern test.67. '*..fauni silvicolae*'.
28. Wall painting, O. with Hercules and Muses. Guthrie, fig.3. Panyagua (1967) 195-6; idem, (1972) no.185, fig.27.
29. J.Heurgon, 'Orphée et Eurydice avant Virgil', MEFRA, xlix, (1932) 6-60.
30. Relief showing E. between O. and Hermes. Greek original c.430-400, known in 5 Roman copies. Heurgon 34ff., fig.4, argues it shows Hermes taking E. back to Hades after O.'s fatal look back. Likewise C.M.Bowra, CIQ. 46 (1952) 113-126. Schöeller

- pl.XIII, 1-4, XIV, 1. Panyagua (1967) 201-4; idem, (1972) no.91, A-E. P.-L.Rinuy, RAMAGE 4, (1986), 299 and fig.3.
31. Pathos in Alexandrian poets: T.B.L.Webster, Hellenistic Poetry and Art, (1964) Ch.VII, 'Alexandrian Art and Alexandrian Poetry'. B.Hughes Fowler, The Hellenistic Aesthetic, (1989), Ch.VII, 'Pathos'.
 32. Alto-relief, Rome. O. brings E. into the light. Hands as in dextrarum iunctio. See n.2. Frag. of Tarentine relief, E. with Cerberus. Panyagua (1967) 217; idem (1973) no.162. Bas-relief. Mantua. O. in Hades pleads for E. who stands veiled. Gruppe 1198 17-51, fig.15. Eisler 15, n.2, pl. II, fig.9. Panyagua (1967) 216-7, fig. 11; idem (1973) no.163 also no.164. Stucco, O. leads E. out of Hades. Underground basilica Rome. 41-54 AD. J.Carcopino, La Basilique pythagoricienne de la Porte Majeure (1943) esp. 331-3 + pl. Panyagua (1967) 216-7; idem, (1973) no.161, fig.23. Mural paintings from tombs Ostia and Rome, see above n.3 and underworld scenes: Panyagua (1973) nos.184, 190 C, 191-3. Schöeller pl.XI, 3. All 1st BC-1st AD.
 33. Pannonian sepulchral steles: Intercisa, O. rescues E. Reinach RRGR, II, 122. Panyagua (1967) 231; idem, (1973) no.168. Tomb of decurion, Pettau: above, O. and animals; below, O. in Hades pleads for E. Reinach RRGR II, 130, 2. Schöeller 25, pl. VII, 1. Panyagua (1967) 231; idem (1973) no.169. Tomb, Noricum: O. and animals above, lower missing. Reinach RRGR II, 132, 1. Schöeller 28, pl.VIII, 1. Panyagua (1967) 231; idem (1973) no.170. Also no.171, from Pettau; no.172, Lorch, fig.18, O. and animals; no.173. Tunisian mausoleum of El-Amrouni, 3rd-4th.C. AD. O. and animals, birds; O. and E. in Hades; Hercules and Alcestis in Hades. Gruppe 1198, 51-66, 1200, 22-41. P.Berger Rev.Arch. XXVI (1895), II, 71-81. Schöeller pl.XI, 1. Panyagua (1967) 231, fig.20; idem (1973) no.166.
 34. See n.56. Cf. pose of Mithras Tauroctonos, ill.23.
 35. Life size statue, Memphis. O. standing + 2 large birds. c.300 BC. Panyagua (1967) 209-10; idem (1973) no.147, fig.19.
 36. Pausanias IX, 30, 4. Callistratus stat.7. Kern test.142. Sanctuary of the Muses, Mount Helicon. The same group?
 37. Hellenistic 'Rococo' style. J.J.Pollit, Art in the Hellenistic Age (1986) Ch.6. The elaborate statue with its accompanying figures in stone and bronze, compares with the type of work, including animals and fancy subjects, designated Rococo, 2nd-1st C.BC, though elaborations may belong more with Callistratus' descriptive style.
 38. Mural painting, Pompeii. See n.30.
 39. Peperino statue. Rome. Outside Porta Tiburtina. Guthrie 42, pl.7 showing guild monument found in same place. D.Mustilli, Il Museo Mussolini (1938), 10-11, no.20, pl.XIII, 44-6. Panyagua (1967) 213; idem (1973) no.148. Schöeller pl.V, 2. Stern CRAI (1970) 77-8, fig.2; idem, (1980) 161-2, 2nd-1st BC.

40. Martial Epigrams X, 20, 6ff. = Kern test 146. quoted Ch.Picard 'Lacus Orphei', Revue des Etudes Latines 25 (1947) 80-85.
41. Fountain ornaments from Byblos, Sabratha, Aegina, Istanbul, Aquileia. Marble. O. semi-nude in Phrygian cap, surrounded by many animals carved contiguously. M.Squarciapino, 'Un gruppo di Orfeo tra le fiere del Museo di Sabratha', Bull. del Mus. dell'Imp. Rome LXIX (1941) 61-79. Ch.Picard 'Sur l'Orphée de la fontaine monumentale de Byblos', Orient.Christ.Period. XIII, 1-2, (1947) 266-81, fig.2. Discussed, Picard, REL (1947). Schöeller 26-7, pl.VI, 2, 3, 4. Panyagua (1967) 214-6; idem, (1973) nos.179-183, figs.25, 26. Sister Murray, 'Rebirth and Afterlife' BAR S100, (1981) figs.11-13. Byblos found in a nymphaeum, Istanbul later inscribed with a cross. Four more fragmentary examples. AD 275-350, prob. near 300.
42. Republican according: Stern (1980) 162. pl.XIV, fig.16.
43. O. + stag. Rome. 1st.AD. Reinach RPGR 122, 11. Orpheus + Cerberus, c.130AD. Reinach RPGR 203, 9. Panyagua (1967) 216; idem (1973) nos.188, 189.
44. Pompeian murals. O. and animals, with gardens, dancing satyrs. Casa d'Orfeo: Gruppe 1177, 22-30, fig.2. Guthrie pl.1. P.Grimal, Les Jardins Romains (1943) 365 pl.III, 1. Panyagua (1967) 211-12; idem, (1973) no.186, fig.28. Stern (1980) 163, pl.XIV, fig.21. From another house, O. next Venus on shell, hunting scene: Panyagua (1973) no.187.
45. *Terra sigillata*: J.M.C.Toynbee, 'Fragments of Italian Red-Gloss Ware from the 'Domus Aurea' Rome', Latomus 16 (1957) 18-22, pls.II-V. Panyagua (1973) nos.132, 133. France, Hadrianic: Panyagua (1972) no. 134. Antonine from the Rhineland: Panyagua (1972) nos.135-139. 4th.C. elaborated plates from Trier and Cologne: Panyagua (1967) 234-6; idem, (1972) nos.140, 141: R.Forrer Strasbourg-Argentorate (1927) I, 48-51, II, 736-8, fig.535. Panyagua (1972) no.142. V.H.Elbern, Das erste Jahrtausend, Kultur u. Kunst (1962) pl.92.
46. H.Stern 'Un Relief d'Orphée au Musée du Louvre', BSNAF 1973, 330-341, pl.XXX-XXXII, includes assoc. coins; 1980, 161, pl.XIII, figs.9-12.
47. Guthrie (1935) 42, n.16; Stern (1955) 59 + n.30; Murray (1981) 45 + n.65.
48. Orpheus in Egypt. Herod. 2, 81. Diod.Sic. 4. 25. ..'he went to live in Egypt ... and became foremost of the Greeks in theology, cult ceremonies, poetry and music (trans. Guthrie 61). Euseb. Praep.Evang. i, 6, p.18A = test 98; ibid x, 4, p.469B = test 99a. O. brought many matters of religious import to Greece modelled on Egyptian practice. J.B.Friedman, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (1970), Ch.II 'Moses' Pupil'. On the 'Testament' of Orpheus, Diathekai.
49. Coin of Caracalla early IIIrd.C.: Philippopolis, Thrace. Outstretched arm, no animals. Stern (1955) 58 and n.28, fig.16.

- Panyagua (1967) 218-9; *idem*, (1972) no.125. Gordianus Pius 238-244AD: O. + E + Hermes. Guthrie 21, fig.2c. Panyagua (1967) 217; *idem*, (1972) no.128, also 129. Julia Domna early IIIrd.C: Trajanopolis, Thrace. O. and animals. Panyagua (1972) no.127.
50. DACL XII, 2738-2740, figs 9236-9. Stern CA XXIII (1974) 1-16, figs.1-6, with earlier bibliog. Sister Murray BAR S100 (1981) 38-40, figs 7,9. Friedman (1970) 38-49, figs.1, 3-5. Prigent, Rev.hist.phil.rel. 64 (1984) 202-221.
51. Philostratus the Elder, Imagines. Philostratus the Younger. Imagines. Loeb Library ed. Amphion: Philost. Eld. I, 10. Orpheus: Philost. Jun. 6. J.J. Pollit, The Art of Rome (1966) 1983 ed., 219, n.46, 224 on ekphrasis. K.Lehmann-Hartleben 'The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus', The Art Bulletin XXIII, 23, (1941) 16-44.
52. P.H.von Blankenhagen, 'Narration in Hellenistic and Roman Art', AJA 61, (1957) 78-83, esp. 82. Shop sign Via Abbondantia, Pompeii: Venus. Metal casket decoration, Intercisa: Hungarian National Museum, Inv. no. 64.1903.19-24, 67.126.1.
53. J.W.Salamonson, La Mosaïque aux Chevaux de l'Antiquarium de Carthage, (1965).
54. Bronze appliques and patera handles, from tombs, Cologne: Panyagua (1972) nos.114-117.
55. Stern (1980) 161. Fig.14, Sardonyx, c.225AD. Nude O., frontal pose, nine animals around, anticlockwise: snake, dog jumping up, lion, fox, cockerel, bird, hare, eagle and scorpion. Fig. 15. Cornelian, Severan, c.225AD. Nude O. flying birds, dog jumping up at his feet.
56. Sarcophagi c.275-300AD: Stern CA XXIII (1974) 1-16, figs.7-11, with earlier bibliog. Sister Murray BAR S100 (1981) 40-1, figs 3-6. Prigent, Rev. hist. phil.rel. 64 (1984) 202-221. Sardinia: G.Pesce, Sarcofagi romani di Sardegna, 1957, 102, 103, no.57, figs.113, 114; Toynbee ARLA, 290. Panyagua (1973) nos.176 (= Stern fig.11), 177, 178 - not Christian.
57. Squarciapino, re Sabratha, Bull. del Mus. dell'Imp. 1941, 66-8.
58. Figurines: Athens, O + animals, c.250AD. Panyagua (1967) 219, *idem* (1973) nos.154a, b, fig.22. Sousse, standing O. holds pedum and plectrum, ie. underworld fig., prob. from lararium. Pany. (1967) 217-8; *idem* (1973) no.149. fig.20.
59. Pyxides: Bargello, Florence: M.L.Brehier, Ivoires chrétiens de la région de Brioude (1939), p.10. Bobbio: DACL XII, 2751, no.15, fig.9247. Eisler, 14. Guthrie 264, pl.15. W.F.Volbach Early Christian Art, (1961) pl.84; *idem* Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike (1976) 70, no.91, pl.50, no.92, pl.51 (Bargello). Murray BAR S100 (1981), 148, n.8, fig.8. Gough, The Origins of Christian Art, (1973) 107-8, suggests Syrian provenance. Ovadia (1981) 164. IVth-Vth.C.

60. Bronze relief on wooden casket, Hungary c.400AD: Orpheus with Bacchic figures and male Seasons: Budapest, Hungarian National Museum, inv. 31.1885.34. G.Hanfmann, The Season Sarcophagus in Dumbarton Oaks II, no.362. Bronze bucket, Caesaria, 4th-5th.C.: O. + E. + Hermes; O. pleads for E. in Hades; O. sings, Thracian listens. Panyagua (1972) no.113.
61. Coptic textiles: 1: J.Strzygowski (below n.63) fig.17 with refs. 2: H.Dalton Cat. of Byzantine Art and Architecture (1911) 579, fig.363. c.400-450AD. With sphinx. 3: H.Pierce, R.Tyler L'Art Byzantine II, (1932-4) 120-2, pl.159a, with giraffe. 4: A.V.Bank, M.A.Bissanova, Cat.: The Art of Byzantium in Collections of the USSR, I (1977) no.341, ill. p.173; 5: *ibid* no.342 + pl. Sister Murray BAR S100 (1981), 148, n.8 - another in Ontario? 1, 5: O. sits on lion-footed throne with footstool.
62. J.Strzygowski, 'Das neugefundene Orpheus-mosaik in Jerusalem', Zeitschr. des deutsch. Palaestina-Verein XXIV (1901) 139-165, on centaur and orbiculi, 147-9, fig.17. Murray BAR S100 (1981) 148-9, n.8. Nos.1,2,3,5 (above n.62) have centaur and Pan.
63. Comparisons between textiles and mosaics. D.E.Johnston, Mosaic, 14 (1987) p.12 and pls.2 and 4 cf. Mercury in the border of the Venus mosaic at Rudston derived from tapestry. Strzygowski, above, p.152, fig.21, compares design of long vertical sides of Pettau stele, n.34, with length of Coptic decorative weaving, fig.22. Cf. footstool of 1,5, above n.62, with mosaic El Pesquero. Cf. design of *orbiculi* with Brading Orpheus.
64. Codex: Vergilianus Vaticanus. cod. F) Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat.Lat. 3225. c.420AD. Death of E., Virgil Georg. IV, 475-8, illust. 8; O. in Avernus, 471-503, ill.9; O. playing kithara in Elysium, Aeneid VI, 635-59, illust.36. J.de Wit Die Miniaturen des Vergilianus Vaticanus (1959). Panyagua (1973) no.256 A-C. M.Henig 'Late Antique Book Illustration and the Gallic Prefecture' in De Rebus Bellicis, BAR S63 (1979), 17-28.
65. Scutari: DACL XII, 2753-4, no.24, fig.9250. Stern CA XXIII (1974) 16. Belgrade: Stern (1980) 163, fig.17; Aquilea: 3 gems, *ibid*, 162, fig. 19 a,b,c. Berlin: 3 gems perhaps same provenance, *ibid*, 162, 18a,b,c.
66. London Bacchus, J.M.C.Toynbee, The Roman Art Treasures from the Temple of Mithras (1986), 39-42, no.15, pl.XII. Balkan manufacture c.250AD. Marble fountain ornaments n.43, 275-300AD. Mosaics, Chabha, Antalya I, Ptolemais, Tobruk, Orpheus. Adam, Huarte, Syria: P.Canivet CA, 24 (1975) fig.3. Rings: Brit.Mus. Smith, Cat. of Gems in BM 1371-4, 158-9, 104; H.B.Walters, Cat. 3129. Stern (1980) 162; *ibid*, fig.17, Belgrade. DACL XII, no. 23, Scutari. Pyxides: n.60. Reciprocal influence along routes of communication.
67. Orpheos Bakkikos, seal-cylinder: DACL XII, 2753, no.22, fig. 9249. Eisler, 338-9, fig.121. Friedman, (1970) 59, fig.8. See Ch.5. 4: syncretic imagery. Might this be an 18th.C. fake? Pers. communication M.Henig.



Fig. 1:
Boetian Cup.
6th-5th C. BC



Fig. 3:
Engraved sardonyx.
c.160 BC



Fig. 2:
Bronze mirror.
420-390 BC



Fig. 4: The Berlin Vase
Attic column krater.
c.440 BC



Fig. 5: Clay mould from silver(?) original.
4th. C. AD.

After Elbern, fig.92, impression.



Fig. 6: Victorious Orpheus, central motif of strigillated sarcophagus. 3rd. C. AD



Fig. 7a: Marble fountain ornament, Athens.
c.275 AD.



Fig. 7b: Marble fountain ornament, Sabratha.
c.275 AD.



Fig. 8a: Ivory pyxis, Bobbio. Front.
5th-6th C. AD.



Fig. 8b: Ivory pyxis, Bobbio. Side.
5th-6th C. AD.



Fig. 8c: Ivory pyxis, Bobbio. Reverse.
5th-6th C. AD.



Fig. 9a: Ivory pyxis, Brioude. Front.
5th-6th C. AD.



Fig. 9b: Ivory pyxis, Brioude. Side.
5th-6th C. AD.



Fig. 9c: Ivory pyxis, Brioude. Reverse.
5th-6th C. AD.

Chapter Three

THE SCENE OF ORPHEUS AND THE ANIMALS IN GREEK AND ROMAN LITERATURE

Over the centuries illustration of the life and career of Orpheus was in the form of a single scene being depicted at any time, rather than a selection of episodes. It was as if at each period the imagination of society was exercised by one aspect of the legend that held a particular meaning for it. An examination of texts is a natural adjunct to a study of the visual record, revealing similar shifts in attitudes. Here the animal-charming scene, the only one depicted in mosaic, is isolated to pick up any correspondence with its portrayal in art. The study does not encompass all texts concerning Orpheus playing, his name was a byword for musical excellence and the calming of natural forces, so was called upon by many authors. In literature the power of the singer's entrancing music is one of the first things we are told. The scene enjoyed many elaborations, gaining in importance as it moved from a simple tale of the charming of animals to an allegory where the cosmogonic song could alter the hearts of men and effect cultural changes, of which the appearance of Thracian warriors as the audience on vases is a parallel. Gradually the literary presentation moved from the generalised to the particular. Descriptions remaining in poetry of the animal-charming scene are mostly concentrated in the late Hellenistic and Augustan eras. Emphasis was upon the communion of the poet with Nature, of which the animals were but one form. The Latin poets were heirs to Alexandrian literary traditions. These are the literary sources for the picture of Orpheus the spell-binder of animals in the art of the later Roman Empire.

In the fifth century BC in Agamemnon the croaking of the Chorus was compared to the rapturous voice of Orpheus

which 'drew all things by its sweetness' (Aesch. *Ag.* 1629ff.). It must have been a commonly known tale. The earliest literary allusion to Orpheus' powers over the animal kingdom is a verse of the lyric poet Simonides of Chios, about 500 BC. A member of the crew of the Argo with Jason and the Heroes searching for the Golden Fleece, his music works as a charm on the fish which follow the sound of his lyre like sheep. The effect is accidental, his musical powers are reserved for other purposes, but the love of fishes for music is a fact known to fishermen. When Orpheus sang aboard ship, overhead '...hovered birds innumerable, and the fishes leapt clean from the blue water because of his music...' [1]. The beautiful image, some way from the ultimate picture, contains the first intimation of the power of the song to put nature at peace with itself. Normally the birds would eat the fish, but here they mingle in the air [2].

Few works of art survive depicting him in a marine setting. For the most part his characteristic qualities are terrestrial, though his image was frequently associated in art with aquatic imagery, marine scenes playing an important part in the iconography of mosaics. In mosaic Orpheus is juxtaposed with Jason, Medea and the Golden Fleece (Trinquetaille). Although Ovid in the first century BC, chose to drop the adventure, stories of the Argonauts remained popular. Doubtless the vernacular tradition played its part. The expedition appears as a literary subject in a first century AD version, where Orpheus sings the story of Phrixus and Helle to the sailors before they embark (Val.Fl. I, 276-293) and in the fourth, in the anonymous *Orphic Argonautica*. The *Argonautika* of Apollonios Rhodios, written in mid-third century BC Alexandria, brought together most of the material then available to the ancients concerning the legend of Orpheus in epic form. The musician's attraction of the fish is likened to the benign power of the shepherd over his flock, an image persisting in the popular imagination. Early pictures of Orpheus paralleled Apollo, so this early poetic vision of Orpheus echoes the god as shepherd of Admetus:

'..and the fishes came darting through the deep sea, great mixed with small and followed gambolling along the watery paths. And as when in the track of the shepherd their master,

countless sheep follow...so the fishes followed...' (Ap.Rh. Arg. I, 569ff.)

Trees followed Orpheus (I, 28) and fish, but animals were the preserve of the wild Mistress of Beasts, Rhea, Phrygian Artemis, becoming docile once she was propitiated (I, 1138-1152). Nor yet was Orpheus pictured with animals. Three examples from the Greek Anthology [3] use imagery another way, in the 'pathetic' form perfected by Alexandrian poets of the third century BC. The concentration, like Attic vases, is on the tragic death of the singer. Here the shepherding association is retained for the beasts are included in the charmed congregation. From Damagetos the epitaph written for...

'Orpheus.. whom the trees disobeyed not and the lifeless rock followed and the herds of forest beasts...who charmed with his lyre even the heavy sense of the implacable Lord of Hell and his unyielding wrath.' [4]

The following beautiful poem was used by Guthrie as the opening dedication to his Orpheus and Greek Religion:

'No more, Orpheus shalt thou lead the charmed oaks and rocks and the shepherdless herds of wild beasts. No more shalt thou will to sleep the howling winds and the hail, and the drifting snow, and the roaring sea. For dead thou art; and the daughters of Mnemosyne bewail thee much, and before all thy mother Calliope. Why sigh we for our dead sons, when not even the gods have power to protect their children from death?' [5]

Echoing the sentiments of the last piece, an anonymous epitaph tells how the Muses and the same Thracian women who killed Orpheus, mourned for his death:

'The very Muses of Pieria...burst into tears mourning for the singer, and the rocks moaned, and the trees that erst he charmed with his lovely lyre' [6].

Poems such as these and, doubtless, others now lost, form the basis for a tradition which conceived the singing Orpheus as allegorising the mystical communion with nature enjoyed by the Poet and his audience through the medium of poetry itself.

By Virgil's time, late first century BC, the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, the descent to the Underworld and the piteous tragedy of her second loss had become the focus of attention for poets. The episode had appeared on Apulian vases some two

centuries earlier. Virgil, in a complex poetic device [7] inserts the story into the fourth book of *The Georgics*, 'the great poem of united Italy' (Wilkinson, 21), an interpolation in an ostensibly didactic poem on the subject of farming, but the farmer is seen to stand for Man in general and Orpheus is shown as a type of the creative man who nevertheless fails in his endeavour [8]. The opposition of Aristaeus and Orpheus presents the complex relations between 'man's power over nature and nature's power over man' [9]. True to Alexandrian poetic tradition the story is subjective and full of pathos, differentiated from the style of the containing poetic episode. The animal-charming is not the principal scene of this narrative, in which Virgil's own 'sympathy with all nature, animate and inanimate' is revealed (Wilkinson, 29), but is used metaphorically to bring out the emotive qualities at that point, to heighten the tragic tone and move the story onwards. We see Orpheus after his second, devastating loss of Eurydice, weeping alone at the foot of a great mountain, in the cold, starry night; he...

'...sang his tale of woe, entrancing tigers
 And drawing oak-trees; as the nightingale
 Mourning beneath the shade of a poplar-tree
 Laments lost young ones.....She
 Weeps all night long and.....
 Fills all the air with grief..' (lls.510-514)

More species are named here than in earlier works. Jupiter's tree, the oak, the most immovable, belongs to the ancient Orphean tradition, the poplar has its own multiple symbolism pertaining to Hercules and the Underworld [10]. Details of landscape and surroundings enter the account. Animals are represented by the one considered the fiercest, the tiger, and birds by the nightingale, a bird of sadness and lament associated with Orpheus' own death [11]. The empathetic feeling for the natural world pervading all of Virgil's poem is true of much late Hellenistic and Augustan art where silverware, fresco, reliefs and mosaics are covered with a display of beautifully observed and exquisitely executed natural detail of animals, plants and landscape [12].

So suddenly and completely are the various episodes drawn together into a complete and continuous poetic

narrative, in a form which was to become definitive, as if from nowhere, that O. Gruppe posited a 'lost poem' of late Alexandrian date as a model for this work [13]. The various episodes of the fable which Virgil brought together may well have been known already as a continuous narrative in the vernacular traditions of storytellers. One aspect of placing the Orpheus story within the structure of the *Georgics* may be used to elucidate the symbolic meaning of the image outside of this context. We are told that the episode came to pass as a result of a transgression on the part of Aristaeus, whose amorous exploits were the cause of Eurydice's death (lls. 453-461), therefore indirectly of Orpheus' death. Aristaeus' bees suffered plague and blight as a divine punishment. He was bound to make reparation and sacrifice to the souls of Orpheus and Eurydice. It seems as if the presence of Orpheus happy, singing in the forest groves among pacified beasts, would promote health and wealth, while plague followed his death, all sweetness gone from the land. Perhaps a reflection of a popularly perceived property of the figure and his music, giving a reason for the invocation of the magical Orpheus in the Roman period, to protect the land and crops.

The poetic image of Orpheus appears in the Odes of Horace, Virgil's contemporary:

'....upon cool Haemus' or Pindus' summit
 (whence a forest mazedly followed
 Orpheus singing,
 who by his mother's art held back
 the flowing of streams and rushing winds;
 whose eloquent songs and lyre drew away
 the spell-bound oaks)....'
 (*Odes* I, 12, 5f. [14])

Horace points to the mother of Orpheus, Calliope, Muse of eloquence and epic poetry, as the source for his rich and powerful gifts rather than the classical Apollo. Similarly it was she rather than the god who appeared in Antipater's poem. This Orpheus is the epitome of poetry, invoked as such by poets and musicians from this time forward, and we are made to see that eternal pair, the Poet and his Muse.

Ovid brings a different tone to his rendition

of the story in the *Metamorphoses*, one dependent for its impact upon his audience's acquaintance with the Virgilian poem written some thirty-five years earlier [15]. Ovid's long poem, intertwined threads of narrative, profoundly influenced the subsequent vision of the myths he recounted, it was so popular. His depiction of Orpheus is the one which seems to lie behind the pictorial concepts of the mosaics, rather than the profound tragedy of Virgil. Ovid presents the myth inserted into his seamless text at two points separated by the interpolation of other stories (*Met.* X. 1-85, XI, 1ff., c.1-8AD). Most of the previously recorded episodes are related, save the Argo's voyage. The story begins at the point of Orpheus' marriage to Eurydice. After the fruitless venture to Avernus to regain the life of his beloved wife, Orpheus is described playing the lyre on the top of a sun-drenched hill. As the divinely born poet strikes up a melody all manner of trees and shrubs move in around to shade him, constructing the type of idyllic pastoral envisioned in the traditions of Hellenistic poetry, a scene evoking pleasure, health and fecundity [16]. With botanical exactitude, Ovid enumerates the precise varieties which are brought to the hill top, oak, beech, lime, the hardwood trees, laurel, evergreens, shrubs and so on, down to herbaceous plants and creepers, a veritable plantsman's catalogue (*Met.* X, 100). This desire for extended detail is evident in Roman visual art of the period. A taste for idealised nature reflected in poetry, as expressed for example in the elegies of Propertius and equally in the visual arts, was an element of Roman sensibility [16a]. The grove fills with wild creatures and birds spellbound by the music. Here the Alexandrian poets and the pathetic fallacy are echoed, for the trees are not commanded to move by magical incantations, but are 'moved' by pity for his sad loss, which he has expressed in the sheer musicality of the sound, by the metaphorical magic of music, to care enough to shade him. Later Nature joins in the sorrow and mourning [17]. Ovid interposes several stories, the subjects of Orpheus' songs, before relating the manner of his death at the hands of the Thracian women (*Met.* XI. 1). They in their frenzy turn first upon his audience:

'the first victims were the countless birds ... the snakes and the throng of wild animals, the audience which had brought Orpheus such renown.'

The ensuing carnage is likened to a bloodthirsty morning in the arena '*matutina* ... *harena*' (*Met.* XI, 26). Orpheus is the human victim among the animal dead. The animal audience is generalised, mere arena-fodder, in marked contrast to the careful description of vegetation. The delight taken at once in nature as in the vicarious pleasure of the most brutal bloodletting, is the same as that exhibited on African mosaics. After he died:

'the grief-stricken birds, the host of wild creatures, the flinty rocks and the woods that had so often followed his songs, all wept for Orpheus. The trees shed their leaves and, with bared heads, mourned his loss' [18].

This lovely, sad image is not the one depicted by Roman artists who preferred the earlier scene with the gathering of birds and beasts in the magical glade, the trees leaning in to shade Orpheus bending to listen to the song, which Martial, (*De Spect.* 21) and later Philostratus Jun. (*Imag.* 6, 10-15) repeat; the rock on which he sits is a notable iconographic feature recorded in Polygnotus' painting (Paus. X, 30, 6) and seen on vases (Gruppe, figs. 5, 6, 7). Ovid may have produced a literary working of current visual imagery. Virgil saw Orpheus singing lone and still, beneath a crag by the river in the cold night-time, far in feeling from Ovid's verdant grove, who, perhaps, was elaborating on performances in the theatre or arena, with their painted scenery. Hellenistic gems were not so detailed, but a Pompeian mural painting of Orpheus is close to his description, a multitude of naturalistic garden paintings showing the popularity of such themes at the time. Works such as these may have been in Ovid's mind as starting points for his poetic treatment [19].

The singer is surrounded by an audience in number markedly increased over any previous depiction. Ovid inventoried the plant world, his poetry steeped in the Hellenistic love of nature, but visual artists were beginning to represent a newly varied fauna. Animals were flooding into the markets of Rome to satisfy the appetite for spectacle. Picture makers no longer restricted themselves to representative species: a fierce feline, a

timid doe, but depicted a whole menagerie. Ovid pictures Orpheus closely surrounded by his audience, an idea important in relation to mosaic design. We see on mosaics that moment of perfect stillness and tranquillity, with all nature held in thrall by the song, just before the Thracian women burst in upon the scene to wreak havoc and death. Scenes shown in association with Orpheus similarly show us the contrast between joyous life and violent death integral to Ovid's narration. (Cf. Ch. 11, Pendent scenes).

Seneca's Hercules tragedies were written c.50AD. His treatment of the Orpheus story is similar in feeling and probably influenced by those of Horace, Virgil and Ovid. Seneca combines the animal-charming with the Underworld adventure, events which characterised the singer. 'The art...at whose sound the beasts had stopped to listen, soothes the Underworld with unaccustomed strains' [20]. Orpheus had powers over all forces which ruled human lives on earth as well as in the Underworld. Already the divine singer with human frailties, with whom poets could identify, was yielding to the Mage with endless powers. From Hercules Oetaeus comes the following passage, perhaps the latest poetic treatment of the scene; essentially the same as the previous excerpt, the imagery is considerably embroidered:

'True sang the bard beneath the heights of Thracian Rhodope, fitting the words to his Pierian lyre, Orpheus, Calliope's blessed son, that naught for endless life is made. At his sweet strains the rushing torrent's roar was stilled, and, forgetful of their eager flight, the waters ceased their flow; and because the rivers stayed to hear, the far Bistonians thought their Hebrus had failed ... The woods came with their birds to him, perched among the trees they came, or, if in the high air soaring, some wandering bird caught the sound of the charming song, his drooping wings sank earthward. Athos broke off his crags, bringing the Centaurs as he came and next to Rhodope he stood, his snows melted by the music; the Dryad, leaving her oaken haunts, sped to the singer's side. To hear your song, with their very lairs the wild beasts came and close to the fearless herds the Marmaric lion crouched; does felt no fear of wolves and the serpent fled her gloomy den, her venom at last forgot.' (Seneca, Herc. oet. 1036ff. trans F.J.Millar).

Seneca goes on to describe events in the Underworld in the same elaborated manner. The picture of lions near

fearless herds harks back to one of the oldest and most abiding Golden Age traditions. However, such a pastoral scene is not pictured on the mosaics. With Orpheus are not obedient herds, but single animals, usually the male of the species, a choice determined by characteristic behaviours which make them elusive to the hunter, ferocious to capture. Literary and pictorial conventions are not the same, the creative blooming of written and visual depictions of Orpheus were not, for the most part, coincident.

The text of Philostratus the Younger (c.300 AD) differs somewhat in that it is not a poetic treatment of the myth, but apparently the description of a picture in a gallery. Precise details of flora and fauna are given:

'..a lion and a boar nearby Orpheus are listening to him, and also a deer and a hare who do not leap away from the lion's onrush, and all the wild creatures to whom the lion is a terror in the chase now herd with him, both they and he unconcerned. And pray do not fail to note carefully the birds also, not merely the sweet singers whose music is wont to fill the groves, but also note, please, the "chattering daw", the "cawing crow", and the eagle of Zeus. The eagle, poised aloft on both his wings, gazes intently at Orpheus and pays no heed to the hare nearby, while the animals, keeping their jaws closed - both wolves yonder and the lambs are mingled together - are wholly under the spell of the enchanter, as though dazed.' (Philost. Jun. *Imagines* 6, tr. A.Fairbanks, Loeb 1917)

All the traditional elements of the scene are there, including animal foes at peace, with the important difference that, rather than using the poetic formulae, he seems to be delineating something of the disposition and appearance of the animals as they were actually portrayed in art (cf.Ch.10, where the figure of Orpheus as described by Philostratus is more ambiguously related to the extant visual depiction). Only at the end of the passage do we see the wolves and lambs of literary convention who rarely appear in art, never together.

A late poetic treatment, from c.AD400, that of Claudian, gives us an elaborate word picture filled with natural details, of the wind dropping, the weather calming, rivers slowing and mountains moving to hear the singer, as the train of pines, oaks, poplars and laurels streams towards him. The animals, including the

traditional wolf and lamb, are pictured as pairs of traditional antagonists peacefully frolicking together:

'The hare submitted fearlessly to the caresses of the Molossian hound. Does sported in amity with the striped tiger, and Massylian stags had no fear of the lion's mane' [21].

It reiterates the form first used in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid and variously treated by, for example Seneca, but the animals, as in Philostratus' work, relate closely to the visual depiction, the author obviously influenced by the commonly depicted scene. Genre pairings belonging to the hunt, common in animal scenes in art, appeared in the depiction of Orpheus from the late third century [22]. Here they are at peace, in art they continued their fight.

The unfinished *Argonautica* by Valerius Flaccus, was written later in the first century. It follows Apollonius, but leaves the picture of Orpheus thin, he appears as a musician and religious leader. When he sings on board 'the seals delight in the Odrysian chant' (V, 439) an unusual combination of the animal tradition with a marine context [23]. The anonymous *Orphic Argonautika*, its extant version of the fourth century, in which Orpheus speaks in the first person, belongs to the adventure story genre. Though far distant in time from Hellenistic poetry which delighted in the poignant and sentimental story of Orpheus, it nevertheless had its roots in the same identification of the poet with the Golden age virtues of Hellenic culture. Orpheus relates how his honeyed song charmed beasts, birds and reptiles as he sang to Apollo in Thrace (OA. 72-4). The reptiles, so frequently depicted with Orpheus in art after the mid third century, have entered the literary picture. Most attention is paid to his religious and magical powers, reflecting his current appeal.

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A development in the imagery can be traced in the texts. Orpheus the animal charmer who allegorises man's relationship with Nature is first glimpsed at a distance, flitting through mountain groves, a stream of animals and trees in his train, as befits the wandering

musician of early popular myth. Later the image becomes stilled, we find him seated in a grove surrounded by a congregation of wild beasts. As far as one can tell the Hellenistic poets of the third and second centuries BC elaborated what had been a secondary feature of the singer's power, to attract living things by his music, introducing many details, a landscape, wind-blown trees, rocks, rushing rivers, creating an atmospheric setting. The delight of these poets to depict nature, their landscape peopled with mythical and elemental beings, found eloquent expression in the tragic story of Orpheus, so full of pathos. The poet at the centre of the forces of Nature accorded with their love of such dramatic scenarios and a newfound empathy with the natural world. In the late second century BC Orpheus among the animals appeared certainly in art for the first time [24]. The Latin poets, heir to the Hellenistic discovery of nature, introduced an almost scientific specificity to the romantic account, anachronistically naming the fiercest beasts as tigers, not imported from India till it stood at the edge of their Empire: 'you have the power to draw tigers and the woods in your train and stay the rushing brooks.' (Horace, *Odes* III,11,12). Once the lynx, still native to Greece, had filled that place [25]. The trees of folklore ((Ap.Rh.I, 28) changed to poplars, laurels and garden plants.

The potential of Orpheus' humanity began to be exploited towards the end of the third century BC. Orpheus' wife, once anonymous, simply a peg on which to hang the myth of retrieving dead souls, acquired the name Eurydice. The story of her loss was the most eloquent vehicle of his human qualities. Virgil expressed the profound tragedy of Orpheus' human frailty through his depiction of Nature, whose elements are seen as metaphors for the feelings evoked by the moving story. The ability to calm the participants of a quarrel, first exercised by Orpheus as an Argonaut, was perceived in its wider sense as the capability of music to transmute the atavistic passions of man, the ferocity of beasts and the powers of natural forces. The amelioration of such instincts in savage and warlike men, taking them to a higher plane of conduct, was thought to have led directly to the formation of civilization. On mid-fifth century BC

Attic vases Orpheus was shown singing to barbarians, characterised as the Thracians of his native land, to soothe their savage breasts, about the same time as the Thracian connection first enters the literary record [26]. This image of Orpheus the peace-maker and culture hero, was integral to the figure's import in Graeco-Roman society, one which persisted to late antiquity. Only later the animals of the poetic account entered the visual record, supplanting savage Thracians and perceived as metaphors for the savage or uneducated instincts of such men and of humankind in general. The animal-charming scene symbolised the proper action of the superior man to effect harmony in society.

As will be seen in texts reviewed in the following chapter, writers gradually shifted in their beliefs, at first accepting the historical truth of the legend, later moving to a position more and more removed from and increasingly sceptical about the magical properties of the music. As the humanity of the figure came to the fore, his artistry, spell-binding in its own way, with which poets were bound to identify, was emphasised. Wizardry was then held to be an unnecessary concomitant to this highest achievement of the human intellect and emotions. The ancient and continually popular legends crediting Orpheus with supra-natural powers required an explanation in a later climate of increasing scientific exploration of natural phenomena, to which end various theories were advanced to account for the fable. It was considered that Orpheus' superlative art gave rise to the subsequent animal charming story: he was such a skillful artist that men came to believe that his music had the power to draw animals and birds to him. Without denying the one time existence of Orpheus, it was said that the taming and civilizing of beast-like early men had been allegorized into the story of animal taming. The historical validity of the fable of animal charming no longer applied, but such were its poetic, philosophic and symbolic qualities that it continued to flourish. The power of the divinely inspired, human Orpheus over Nature, the gods and the hearts of men was crystallised in the one telling scene. Orpheus was seen as a culture hero, creator of

civilization, founder of religious ritual, the epitome of the romantic, suffering artist, humanly frail.

Virgil's treatment marks the highpoint of poetic interpretation of the myth. After the age of the 'Silver' poets, Orpheus' powers were extolled in works which repeated the poetic formulae of earlier times, evoking the ambience of a Golden Age. The proliferation of visual images appears to have had some influence on writers, whose literary scene owed much to their example. In late antiquity Orpheus in writing lost much of his human quality, to be followed by a turn back to the figure associated with ritual, purification and prophylaxis, who always lived in the popular imagination and the vernacular tradition. In the late antique epic poem, Orpheus controls the elements and is involved in spirit-invoking rituals, employing magical formulae from the sorcerer's repertoire (OA. 941-1015).

Once, Apollo had soothed startled animals, quelled the ferocity of carnivores and commanded the unbidable deer to dance. He lent his talent for divine music to Orpheus. The essence of Orphean power was its influence over the wildest heart, in literature portrayed as a contrast of natural with entranced behaviour, as if cruel or intractable beasts had become sheep. Orpheus drew animals, plants, objects, men, out of their natural element, controlling and subduing natural instincts. Fish were drawn from water, birds caused to halt in their flight, beasts were drawn from their mountain lairs, trees uprooted, rocks and even whole mountains were moved. The English pun allows the dual sense of physical movement and the emotional movement of the senses and the soul brought about by music. The apparition of the musician god had given protection and fertility to the lands of the saintly Admetus. The image of Orpheus came to be similarly invoked, to the same end. A multitude of texts, to be examined in the following chapter, testify to the popularity of the myth in the Graeco-Roman world.

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NOTES.

1. Simonides fr.40 = Kern test 47. Victory Songs 51 in Lyra Graeca ed. and trans. J.M.Edmonds, Loeb Lib. (1952)
2. E.Schwarz, Aspects of Orpheus in Classical Literature and Mythology. Diss. Cambs. Mass. (1984), 71.
3. The Greek Anthology, Ed. and trans. W.R.Paton, Loeb Lib. (1919)
4. Damagetos, Anth.Pal. VII, 9 = Kern test.126. Tr. Greek Anth..
5. Antipater of Sidon, Anth.Pal.VII, 7,8 (test.127). Tr. Greek Anth..
6. Anonymous. Anth.Pal. VII 10 = Kern test. 128. Tr. Greek Anth..
7. Georgics, Tr., notes and preface L.P.Wilkinson, Penguin (1982).
8. Wilkinson p.11. Argues meaning of story and its placing, 40-2.
9. C.Segal, 'Orpheus and the Fourth Georgic: Vergil on Nature and Civilization', Am.Journ. of Philol. 87, 1966, 307-25. cf. M.Detienne 'The Myth of Honeyed Orpheus' in R.L. Gordon ed. Myth, Religion and Society (1981) 95-109, a structuralist approach. Note assoc. of O. with invention of agriculture in Them., Orat. 30 349b. Mid-4thC. AD.
10. Ap.Rh. I, 28, the oaks of Zone moved to O's music. Poplar, a tree of life, of waters, a crown of poplar worn by Hercules on his descent to Hades, J.C.Cooper, Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols. (1978).
11. Pausanias, X, 30, 4, records the legend that nightingales at Orpheus' own grave sang sweetest of all. In fact, only the male bird sings.
12. Silver: Boscoreale cups (Louvre); fresco: garden scene, Villa Livia (Roman Nat. Mus.); relief: Ara Pacis Rome, Farnesina House, stucco. Rom.Nat.Mus., birds in nest, marble relief, Vatican, Lateran Mus. cf. Zliten, mosaic of volutes; 'asaroton' mosaic floor (Hellenistic orig.), Lateran. All 1st.BC.
13. C.M.Bowra, 'Orpheus and Eurydice', Classical Quarterly 46, (1952) 113-126, reconstructs the story used by Virgil and Ovid. J.Heurgon, 'Orphée et Eurydice avant Virgile' MEFRA XLIX, 1932, discusses the two variants of the ending, a happy outcome known from earliest times pp.27-34. Contra: F.Graf, 'Orpheus: A Poet among Men' in J.Bremmer, ed. Interpretations of Greek Mythology (1987) 80-105. Gruppe: Roscher Lex. 3. 1159.
14. Horace, Odes I, 12, 5f. Trans. W.G.Shepherd. Penguin (1983)
15. C.Segal, 'Ovid's Orpheus and Augustan Ideology' Trans.Am. Phil. Assoc., 103, (1972), 473-494; W.S.Anderson 'The Orpheus of Virgil and Ovid' in J.Warden ed, Orpheus: The Metamorphosis of a Myth (1982) 25-50: Ovid's narration depended on audience acquaintance with Virgil.

16. Ovid. Metamorphoses. Trans. M.M.Innes, Penguin (1955). The idyllic grove: cf. T.B.L.Webster, Hellenistic Art (1966), 64-67, pastoral landscape, the Symposion tent of Ptolemy II at Alexandria.
- 16a. D.Joly, 'A propos de mosaïque: quelques réflexions de poètes', Mosaïque...hommages H.Stern (1982) 231-37.
17. Term 'Pathetic fallacy' invented by John Ruskin, 19th C, to describe the correspondence supposed to exist between the feelings of men and the actions of Nature, exemplified in art of that period. Perfectly fits the mood of Hellenistic art when it is concerned to depict Nature. Apparently an invention of Hellenistic times. Bowra (loc.cit.117) points out the world of difference between 'nature ... stirred to ecstatic movement by a god' and this 'spontaneous demonstration of grief by mountains, trees, rivers ... animals'.
18. cf.Alexandrian epitaphs supra; Virgil.
19. Stern (1980), Hellenistic gems, 159-161, figs.4-8, fresco, fig.21. See Ch.2. Grimal, Jardins romains figs. passim.
20. Seneca, Herc.furiosus 572 = test 55. Tr. F.J.Miller, Loeb, (1917).
21. Claudian, The Abduction of Proserpina, Book II, 17-21. Trans. M.Platnauer, Loeb, (1972).
22. Mosaics: Cagliari; Horkstow, hare and hounds; Newton St.Loe, lion and doe; Orbe; Thina, Sakiel, mongoose and cobra; Withington. Lion savaging deer on marble sculpture groups from Athens and Sabratha, Pany. (1973) nos.180, 181, figs. 25, 26.
23. Valerius Flaccus, Argonautica Trans. J.H.Mosley, Loeb (1934).
24. Sardonyx, c.163-123BC, Stern (1980) fig.6, nude singer, 'pathétique' pose, cf.Orpheus of Perugia mosaic. Later gem, 135-80BC, showing a musician in long robes is undoubtedly Orpheus, ibid fig.4.
25. Eurip.Alc 570ff. Bronze mirror, Stern (1980) fig.2.
26. Eurip.Alc. 967. c.438BC.

Chapter Four

ORPHEUS IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN IMAGINATION

The figure of Orpheus remains vital in Western culture. It continues to exert upon us a power comparable to the fabled musicality in the mythical world. Orpheus is an archetype upon which a society's expressions of 'culture' can be projected, mirroring its image of itself as a civilized state, according to its needs at any epoch. He is seen now as a personification of creativity, his deeds embody the creative process [1]. This chapter introduces the several conceptions of the figure of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman culture from the sixth century BC to the sixth century AD, literary, philosophic and religious. The perception of the composite figure of Orpheus drawn from textual sources I call the 'image', the significance of the figure in imagination. Over so long a period perceptions developed. Certain characteristics of the complex figure called Orpheus originated at source in the earliest moments of its existence, others accreted as the myth evolved, some were modified. The first record in classical Greek literature presumably postdated extensive vulgate traditions. As is true of any powerful archetype, the image of Orpheus does not appear to have had a fixed or limited meaning, but generated a number of coexistent concepts, emblematic of the variety of ideas held by different groups within society. The potency of this multidimensional image allowed for all perceptions to be equally valued and valid. Everyone who saw a picture of Orpheus would have some notion already in mind, while the character and context of the object might add colour to the meaning.

It is worth reiterating the interpretation of the image made by Henri Stern (1955, 64-5), taken as a guide to the

meaning of Orpheus by many subsequent writers, especially on mosaics. As he saw it the image of Orpheus with the animals in Graeco-Roman art always kept its first significance, springing from the Greek myths: the concretising of the power of Apollonian music, the music of the spheres, on beings without reason, animals and barbarians, even inanimate objects. Certain Greek and Roman authors had seen in him a symbol of the light of Graeco-Roman civilization, prefiguring the Christian interpretation of the myth. The musician, the representative 'par excellence' of the superior qualities of the art, created an ideal, peaceful world around himself. This is a valid observation, but the statement was written some time ago. In subsequent papers Stern acknowledged different functions for the visual image of Orpheus according to its presentation and context [2]. The multivalent figure was capable of meaning almost all things to all men, so that at the apogee of the Roman Empire Orpheus was called upon to embody ideas from the sublime to the banal. The testimony of antique commentators on beliefs about Orpheus prove the image not to have been a fixed entity. In antiquity not only was Orpheus the figure of classical myth, but he represented all the store of poetry and literature written about the legendary personality, which reinterpreted and added to its substance, as well as everything ascribed to his authorship. The principal concepts may be summed up under a series of headings:

1. Singer, Musician - a. The Song; b. Lyre Music.
 2. The Chthonian figure.
 3. Telestai, Prophet.
 4. Magus.
 5. Poet, Culture hero.
 6. Guardian of Nature.
 7. The Protector.
 8. The Weakling.
 9. Orpheus and Philosophy.
 10. The Popular Image.
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1. THE SINGER AND MUSICIAN.

The foremost designation of Orpheus is as musician and poet. Every story reflects his unique musical gifts, every power ascribed to him depends on this capability. The earliest visual and literary depictions display and extol his prowess in the art. In one of the earliest references he is 'the father of melodious song' (Pindar, Pyth.IV. 177, c.460BC). 'The most famous and foremost musician and poet' (Diod.Sic. 4.25). He sang to the Argonauts to entertain them, to give the beat for their oars with his Thracian *kithara* (Eur.Hyps. = test.78, 79, Linforth 5-7). Not only is the beauty of the song important, but also its effects. As well as the famed ability to countermand natural phenomena, avert a storm, calm the sea (Philost. Eld. II, 15) and call up the winds (Val.Fl. 4, 422), he could outplay the Sirens (Ap.Rh. 4, 891-921; OA 1270-91) and quell the rage of the human protagonists of an argument (Ap.Rh. I, 492-515). The Thracian women came upon him when he was singing. He tried to defend himself physically with his lyre, as depicted on Attic vases, and by playing to make his music deflect their weapons, as Ovid relates (Met. X, 10). His musicianship drew all nature animate and inanimate, changing its character so that uncontrollable powers were calmed and rendered harmless in a manner unattainable by the common man. The image of Orpheus singing became invested with the same power to avert the harmful barbs thrown at humans by jealous divinities. Just as in myth, his music affected natural phenomena, so might the icon work in the real world [3].

Artists of the vases at first focussed on Orpheus' murder, then his singing. The scene might have alluded to salvatory powers inherent in the song which had gained him entry alive to the Underworld, overpowered the infernal forces and softened the hearts of the gods to allow him to return safely. The audience, Thracians, savage opponents of Greek civilization, satyrs, wild forest dwellers of Dionysus' cortege, all came under the sway of the music. Orpheus in the act of singing represented Apollonian reason overpowering dark, Dionysian irrationality.

a. The Song.

The substance of this wonderful song, according to Apollonius Rhodios, c.250 BC, was a cosmogony, 'the gods and their relationships and the origin of all things'.

'He sang how the earth the heaven and the sea, once mingled together in one form, after deadly strife were separated from each other; and how the stars and the moon and the paths of the sun ever keep their fixed place in the sky; and how the mountains rose and how the resounding rivers with their nymphs came into being and all creeping things' (I, 494).

This song had the power of ordering, of forming the rational from the chaotic, the incidental effect of which was the pacification of Nature and men. It was frequently sung in association with the reconciliation of a quarrel (Schwarz, 1984, 72ff). For Orpheus to sing of the creation of the universe, the conception and birth of the gods, was in itself a magical act. The song was an embodiment of culture. Orpheus the singer was a '*theologos*', his singing was a religious event with numinous power. The severed head sang oracles which were written down and proved to be healing charms (Eur.Alc. 965ff.), an echo of the Greek belief in the real healing powers of music. Ovid gives him a different song in which several of the metamorphic tales are recounted, concerning the mythical adventures of the gods, where all is flux and change.

b. Lyre music

The lyre or *kithara* had profound cultural significance, a cosmic symbol equivalent to the song. The sound of the ancient seven-stringed lyre, queen of instruments, was thought of as the terrestrial echo of the harmony of the heavenly spheres [4]. The beautiful coincidence of musical intervals and harmonics, the musical scale, with a mathematical progression which could be rendered precisely on the rigidly tuned strings of the lyre, made music the most highly valued art form of the Greeks (Plato Tim. 35b-36b; Rep. VII 530c-531c). It was thought to reflect the patterns of order of the world, which philosophers greatly desired to exist and eagerly sought [5]. Lyre music represented the antithesis of the mystical

number system of Pythagoras to Dionysiac frenzy. The tradition of a musical scale formed by the planetary spheres, the 'music of the spheres', was ancient. That it equated with the strings of the lyre and that the soul might ascend to heaven through the scale was an invention of Pythagorean circles of the Hellenistic period. The harmonious music of this cosmic instrument could influence the natural order to bring all into harmony [6]. The Greeks were aware of the calming, healing effect of music as a medicine, effective in the real world (the biblical story of David and Saul is an example). The use of lyre music to help the ascending soul is apparently alluded to by Cicero in the Somnium Scipionis, where Africanus, after explaining the music of the spheres says:

'learned men, by imitating this harmony on stringed instruments and in song have gained for themselves a return to this region [heaven]..' [7]

Macrobius, in his Commentary on the Somnium Scipionis said:

'..every soul in this world is allured by musical sounds...for the soul carries with it into the body a memory of the music which it knew in the sky and is so captivated by its charm that there is no breast so cruel or savage as not to be gripped by the spell of such an appeal. This I believe was the origin of the stories of Orpheus and Amphion...' [8].

Lyra is the name for a lost poem ascribed to Orpheus, possibly of neo-Pythagorean origin. A scholium on Virgil reads:

'But some say that Orpheus' lyre had seven strings corresponding to the seven circles of heaven. Varro says there was an Orphic book about summoning the soul, called The Lyre. It is said that souls need the *kithara* in order to ascend.'

It has been suggested that the context implies that the book concerned the conjuring of souls of the dead by lyre music which was so applied to save Eurydice [9]. The lyre, effective in raising Orpheus from the world of the dead to the world of the living, could take the dead soul to the heavens. It became a Christian symbol.

Orpheus personified the morally sound musician. Part of his claim to respectability in the eyes of Christians rested upon acceptability of pagan lyre music. Clement of Alexandria said the instrument for the Christian was the lyre

(*Paedagogus* III, xi) and that he should avoid the flute and pipe, instruments of idolators, appealing to animals and the irrational part of man (*ibid* II. iv). A pagan voice belongs to Aristides Quintilianus, a musical theorist of the fourth century AD, who explained that:

'instruments made of tuned strings are somewhat similar to the ethereal, dry and simple part of the cosmos and to the soul itself.'

The lyre was an enemy of the lower realms of earth and water, where humidity would cause the strings to lose their tension, just as material concerns would weigh the soul and impede its journey to the One [10]. Strings supposedly had power over the rational part of the soul, while wind instruments, the martial trumpet or lascivious flute, were characterised by their power over the irascible, concupiscent passions which held the soul to earth (Friedman, 88). Many antique sources testify to the celestial qualities of lyre music and its primacy as the desired music in the afterlife (Cumont, 1942, 294ff.).

The sensibility of animals to music, especially the higher frequencies of wind instruments was well known. Whistling summoned fish or dogs [11]. Both the shepherd piping to his flock and trained animals responding to the pipe are depicted on late, eastern mosaics. When, in Varro's anecdote, the mock-Orpheus, carrying a lyre, called the wild herds of deer, he used a horn. In terms of everyday experience, Orpheus' ability to lure animals with lyre music put his powers onto a higher plane than those of animal trainers. Only divine art could change their nature so that their response was no longer on the bestial level, something beyond the skills of ordinary mortals, though some would aspire to such heights. Moreover something semi-magical attached to his musical dialogue with the beasts. Another reason for their attraction to the ethereal sounds might be that animals were actually transmigrated souls.

The lyre connects Orpheus with Apollo. The belief that it was more civilised than wind instruments was crystallised in the contest between Apollo and the flute-playing Marsyas. Pan, too was defeated by the god. Only the lyrist can both

sing and play at the same time, expressing Greek respect for articulate speech and the beauty of the human face (Onians, 66). The distinction between lyre and flute is that characteristic opposition of Apollonian stringed instruments and Dionysian wind and percussion. On mosaics the heavy concert *kithara* is just as frequently depicted as the lyre. Music held an important place in Roman society, the virtuoso qualities of the musician were highly appreciated.

2. THE CHTHONIAN FIGURE.

Apollo, with whom Orpheus was associated by the lyric art, was a solar divinity, but Dionysus, whose mysteries and initiation rites he reformed, was a god whose manifestations were chthonic and terrestrial, god of Mysteries, immanent in Nature. The Underworld was the conquered realm of Orpheus: he was enabled to enter and return by virtue of his art, not by warrior skills, like those heroes who made the journey. He alone was able to soften the hearts of the Hadean gods. He could aid the defunct in the Underworld (ill.18), both by their uttering the formulae he had revealed to them and by his presence in that realm [12]. He is shown in art residing in the Elysian fields, among other doomed musicians, is seen by Aeneas among other dead souls. Orpheus was believed to have been able to raise the dead by singing and playing the lyre, given narrative form in the myth of the descent with a successful outcome [13], the picture of Eurydice led back to life being placed on tombstones. It was believed he could raise others if his rituals were observed. Although there is no certain etymology for the name Orpheus, one suggestion is 'the dark one' [14]. His journeying to the Otherworld and back again through ritual music and chant reveals the shamanistic origin of the figure.

3. PROPHET AND TELESTAE

Orpheus had the gift for prophecy, receiving inspiration from Apollo (Plato, Phaedrus 265B). The myth tells how his dismembered head survived his cruel death and gave oracles. In this capacity he is represented in art before he is shown in the act of singing. Vases where Apollo gestures towards the oracular head of Orpheus on Lesbos are variously interpreted as Apollo overseeing and approving Orpheus' oracle (Graf 94), forbidding the oracle, arguing 'rivalry which is evidence of very closely related functions' (Guthrie 42) or signifies incompatibility between two oracular techniques, Pythian and shamanic [15]. The gifts of poet and seer were near allies in the classical world, the Latin word *vates* covers both. Ovid says '*vatis Apollinei*', Martial '*supra vatem*' (Met. XI, 8; de Spec.21).

Orpheus, founder of Mysteries played a leading role in Graeco-Roman culture (test. 90-105; Eliade, 182ff.). The cults of both Dionysus and Apollo involved initiations and 'ecstasy'. By virtue of the *katabasis* (descent) Orpheus was imbued with a knowledge of the afterworld and survival beyond death which he could pass on to other men in the form of salvatory mysteries. The statue on Mount Helicon of Orpheus with Telete, Mystery, illustrates the close association of the animal-charming singer with ritual. He was said to have instituted cult rites and formulated the rules of the art of Greek mysteries, *teletae*, mysteries and *orgia*, which recur in a great many texts, establishing regular practices and principles. These for the most part are connected with Dionysus, but there is considerable variety in the kinds of Dionysiac rites with which he is associated (Linforth 264-7). The specific forms of their rituals, certain initiations and ritual formulae which were ascribed to Orpheus, were known to the ancients as 'Orphic' or 'the Orphica' [16].

Orpheus was both poet and organiser of religious institutions. This dual identity was explicitly asserted by Clement of Alexandria when he called Orpheus 'at once hierophant and poet' and elsewhere the 'poet of the rite'. Quoting two lines from an Orphic poem in which the myth of the Eleusinia was told, he

attributed it to Orpheus the mystagogus [17]. The Eleusinian Mysteries were supposedly inaugurated by Orpheus. The figure retained a close association with such ritual at all levels of society into late antiquity. In fifth century North Africa he was connected with funerary rites. The city of the ungodly, said Augustine, generally put Orpheus in charge of the sacred (to the saint they were sacreligious), rites of the pagan underworld, performed in his name [18]. By the late fourth century AD a highly syncretic pagan religious system had developed, of which Orpheus was the principal poet and main authority on the rites (Macrob. *Saturnalia* I, 18, 12-22). By the same time, the figure had been adopted into Christian iconography and thought. Such was his primacy as the prophet of Greek religion that he was proclaimed by the pagan philosophers of late antiquity as its founder and the potent representative of a spirituality to rival Christianity (Cf. Linforth, 306). The association of Orpheus with the performance of cult ritual was pervasive.

4. THE MAGUS.

A system of belief existing alongside organised religion, or somewhat intertwined, was magic and superstition [19]. The gods were implacable, their concerns too rarified to include the ordinary ills and misfortunes of everyday life, but magic could have an immediate and perceptible effect in the experiential world. Earliest references to Orpheus' magic skills are found in the Greek dramas. In Euripides' *Cyclops* (646) one of the lazy and frightened Satyrs, unwilling to help Odysseus in the task of driving the burning stake into the eye of the giant, exclaims:

'But I know a spell of Orpheus, a fine one, which will make the brand step up of its own accord to burn this one-eyed son of Earth.'

Compare the effect of Orpheus' song in Ovid's description of his death, where the music is at first capable of diverting the flung spears of the murderous women. In *Alcestis* the chorus lament that

they have found no remedy for the blows of fate; nothing avails:

'no charm on Thracian tablets which tuneful Orpheus carved out'
(which Orpheus wrote with his sung words) (Eur.Alc. 965ff.)

The extensive use of protective charms and amulets of all kinds is well known up to and beyond the Roman Imperial period. Orpheus' words or his image seem to have been considered particularly efficacious.

Plato denigrated the effect on society of a cult in which a type of vulgar wandering soothsayer or priest, private practitioners, performed rites in Orpheus' name, open to all, which procured remission of sins and happiness after death. Books by Orpheus were in some way authoritative in these rites (Rep. 364b-365a). There were also what Theophrastus called *Orpheotelestes*, Orphic initiators. Here the line between a peripatetic 'religious' and a peddler of commonplace magic becomes thin. Perhaps only the attitude of the writer distinguishes between them. One of the characteristic features of popular religions is the throng of ecstasies, diviners and healers who invoke the name and prestige of the divinity or prophet of a reputed religion, as Eliade remarks (1982, p.186). That such practices should appear as parodies, to be dismissed as worthless, misses the point of their impetus. Far from the higher spirituality of revelatory initiations, the cures, purifications and comforts offered by these magicians were, nevertheless, the other side of the same coin. Medieval purveyors of 'indulgences', satirised by Chaucer in the character of the Pardoner, against whom Luther later railed, served the same needs, surely as profound in their way, as the more refined spiritual experiences nominated and permitted by established Christianity. Not everyone using their services was a hypocrite.

Specific forms of ritual said to have been instituted by Orpheus which might belong in this category were lustral sprinklings, purifications for unholy deeds, cures for diseases and apotropaic rites for averting divine wrath [20]. Pausanias (c.AD 150-70), is sceptical about the popular legend of Orpheus rescuing Eurydice, and his power over wild beasts. This he dismisses in favour of another notion of magical powers, presumably

of equal currency in popular thought, which he ties to the assumed historicity of the figure (Paus. IX, 30, 4). It was this second concept which gave the figure its power in the greater society where esoteric notions of culture and poetry might not sustain. In the late antique *Argonautica*, Orpheus, the narrator, participates in the gathering of the Golden Fleece, an action which he does not join in the Hellenistic epic. With Medea's aid he concocts a magical spell involving herbs, chemicals and the sacrifice of puppies and images. He invokes the various gods of magic to appear and open the way to the sanctuary where the terrible dragon guards the Fleece. He plays and sings a special song bringing Sleep to calm the dragon, allowing Medea to gather the Fleece (941-1006). Later, Medea is advised by Circe, the sorceress, that Orpheus knows the purificatory rites which will ameliorate the guilt of her crimes (1230-34).

Apollonius of Tyana in the first century AD said:

'...you think that the philosophers who are followers of Pythagoras should be called *magi* and the followers of Orpheus, too, I dare say.' [21].

Marinus in his life of Proclus (test. 239, Linforth, 257) says that Proclus made constant use of rites of purification, sometimes Orphic rites, sometimes Chaldaean. Evidently these writers associated rituals of some kind, called Orphic, with eastern magical practices employed for the same purpose.

Clement of Alexandria derides Orpheus, Amphion and Arion saying that under the guise of music these men had done much to degrade life, practising a kind of methodical sorcery disastrous in its results. He appears to be thinking of the Dionysiac mysteries, rituals he denigrated as mere magic because of his hatred of paganism, but links Orpheus with the other singers supposed to have magic powers and may also have had the commonplace magical practices associated with Orpheus in mind (*Protr.* i, 3). On this mundane level, Cyril against Julian on Orpheus: 'they say that he was the most superstitious of men' (I, 25 = O.F.245) by back reference,

perhaps because his name was involved in various superstitions of the day, the fourth century AD.

A curious version of the myth of moving trees comes from the the third century BC (attributed to Palaephatus, Linforth, 208). The author knew the Bacchic ceremony of the *dendrophoria*, in which processions of worshippers carried boughs. He relates an occasion when Orpheus had been called as a *mantis* to bring back to their distraught husbands the wives who had gone to the hills as Bacchae. He made the trees move and the women, thinking they were seeing the moving branches of the *dendrophorai* rites, followed them back. Thus the fable arose that Orpheus could lead trees from the mountains. The effect of Orpheus' music on animals was like a magic spell. There was something magical and even divine in the capture of animals by music, in the submission of their wild bestial nature to the force which summoned and possessed it [22]. The image recalls the fascination exerted by the sorceress Circe whose victims were metamorphosed into animals. The invocation or luring of dead souls by the lyre might have been thought of as a magical act.

In the much cited passage in the *Historia Augusta*, Alexander Severus 29, 2, it is stated that he had placed in his *lararium* beside images of Abraham, Christ and Apollonius of Tyana, that of Orpheus [23]. Macmullen does not consider that they were syncretically combined, but that all were equated. Rather than cancelling each other out, each would be credited his own powers. There is some doubt as to the authenticity of this particular report, nevertheless the passage testifies to the equating of Orpheus with at least one other mage, Apollonius, and with other prophets. According to Firmicus Maternus, Christian apologist of the fourth century, Abraham, Orpheus and Critodermus discovered astrology (Friedman, 23). Terracotta images which might have served for a domestic *lararium*, have been found in Greece and Tunisia, though the latter, the Underworld Orpheus with *pedum*, is probably a funerary object [24].

The mosaics have been interpreted as exerting a magical effect by J.Thirion who sees them as serving a prophylactic

function (MEFRA 1955, 'Orphee magicien..') which he extends to the realm of magic, though it was not quite the same. Stern notes the marked change of emphasis in the dress and pose of the figure:

'...the Apollonian musician has become the magician who bewitches all Nature ... dressed in the richly embroidered robe and Phrygian cap of the magician-priest' (1980, 158, 163).

Literary references testify as to how long magical powers were equated with Orpheus, even when he was presented in Apolline guise. Guthrie notes a fascinating reference to magic in an early fourth century Christian writer which parallels Plato's denunciation of the *orpheotelestai*. Tempting even Christians, the trade in spells and charms had continued unabated, old women would:

'for twenty obols or a glass of wine ... disgorge a spell of Orpheus at you.' [25]

5. POET AND CULTURE HERO.

Poets were propagators of cultural values. Orpheus was the most famous of legendary poets. Genealogists made him the ancestor of Homer and Hesiod, so his utterances as a poet were semi-divine, invested with a power of having formed their treasured civilisation. Poetry encompassed art, oratory, cosmogonies, religious ritual. His statue was placed in the Serapieion at Memphis (3rd BC) with statues of poets and thinkers including Homer, around a figure perhaps of Dionysus. Another similar group existed in Alexandria (Onians, 159). The Helicon group too, was placed near statues of famous poets and distinguished musicians in the sanctuary of the Muses (Paus. IX, 30, 3). He was customarily numbered among legendary Thracian poets, servant of the Muses, son of the Muse of Lyric poetry, Calliope.

A body of poetry related to and emanated from sources connected with the development of the Mysteries. An important type of ritual poem was naturally ascribed to the name of the greatest poet of the rite, Orpheus, therefore such work was known as

Orphic (Linforth, 294-5). Literature deemed Orphic, or to be by Orpheus, was a vast production. In antiquity men of insight, sceptics, found it impossible to believe that all the Orphic poems were written by the Orpheus of legend. It was not confined to cult circles and was freely accessible, commanding respect and located with the classics of Homer. Extant fragments of Orphic poetry, written in the Imperial period, are hieratic in origin and subject matter, notable for their pedestrian quality. Pausanias mentions, however, that the hymns of Orpheus he heard sung in the mysteries were beautiful and second only to the hymns of Homer (IX, 30, 5-6). Orpheus the poet as founder of mysteries was the benefactor of humanity. The Greeks were fond of enumerating the culture heroes from whom, they liked to believe, they had obtained the elements of civilization. Plato includes Orpheus in a list of six culture heroes, without specifying his contribution. Perhaps he intended the *teletae* (Linforth, 35). He evidently distinguished this revered personage and his rites from the wandering priests uttering spells in his name.

Perceptions of the myth current c.250BC are revealed by Callisthenes noting a cypress-wood image of Orpheus found at Leibethra in the foothills of mount Olympus, perhaps the same as that described by Pausanias (Callis. 17 1. 42, 6. 7 = test. 144):

'...by his playing and singing (Orpheus) won over the Greeks, changed the hearts of barbarians and tamed wild beasts...'

An important concept has entered the description, the taming of wild beasts is relegated to a place behind the song's civilizing effect on the hearts of men. What the civilized Greeks were won to must have been the rites and *teletae* of Dionysus, called Orphic. Orpheus is perceived as refining the culture of the Greeks and bringing the barbarians to a degree of civilization. The concept must have been common currency for some time, already pictured on vases of the fourth-third centuries BC., especially the Berlin vase (Ch.2, n.22). but does not appear in the literary record until later.

In one epigram [26] Orpheus is credited not only with the invention of poetry, a vocal art, but with writing,

that is, literature, permanence. He is the teacher of Hercules, Man who conquered nature by brute force. Made learned by Orpheus he becomes cultured. In the Odes of Horace (Carm.I, 12, 8; III, 11, 8) Orpheus is the quintessential lyric poet set against an Alexandrian landscape. In the Ars Poetica, however, Orpheus is a 'culture hero'. Horace, like earlier writers telling of Orpheus' powers to change savages to humans, projects the idea of the model cultivated man. In the Odes such a man is equated with the artist, Art itself seen as a prerequisite of humanity. Orpheus was a culture hero because lyre music was the reflection of cosmic order and the spoken or sung word accompanying it was an enactment of the construction of classical civilization. In the Ars Poetica 391-407, the myth of Orpheus is employed to build a convincing argument for presenting Poetry as the most estimable of arts, rather than being merely a rich man's pastime, true poetry being social in origin.

Horace goes as far as to say that the legend of Orpheus charming the animals was an allegory signifying the education of men by music. He rationalises the myth, associating Orpheus founder of rites with another legendary poet, Amphion, founder of cities, who by his music made stones move and so built the walls of Greek Thebes. Together the two poets account for major forces in the establishment of civilization, religion and cities, which they effected by means of their poetry. Thus poetry could be seen to have had a profound role in the establishment of civilization and the maintainance of its values:

'Men lived in the woods when a sacred person, an interpreter of the god, Orpheus, turned them away from murder and an infamous nourishment (cannibalism) and that is why it is said that he tamed tigers and ferocious lions. (391f. trans. Brink; cf. test.144, Callisth.)

Primitive man is credited with the cruel brutality of carnivores [27]. The animals roam in the darkness of woods just as men remain in the brutish darkness of ignorance until the enlightenment of poetry reaches them. Orpheus expunged animal nature from the hearts of primitive men. As he drew away animals, so he took men from the forests, making them cultured, teaching them the arts of agriculture

and inclining their natures towards peace and gentleness. The changed emphasis enters the visual record when vases no longer show the bloodshed of Orpheus' death, but depict calmed warriors. They desist not only from battle, but presumably also from the horrid customs indulged by barbarians according to the Greeks. Horace took the elements of an ancient tradition, combined them anew for his apologetic purposes, relegating the animal charming scene to the realms of fable, disassociating it from the actions of Orpheus the founder of rites, in the social sphere.

Agriculture was another basic feature of civilisation, which Orpheus was given the credit for inventing in an interpretation of the legend by Themistius in the fourth century AD.:

'..similarly even the rites and ceremonies of Orpheus bear some relationship to the business of the farmer. The legend which tells how all things were affected by his enchantment really means how he tamed all nature and wild animals by means of the cultivated crops which farming produces and that he tamed and eradicated the animal nature in the soul. Animals were believed to have been charmed by his song because for all sacrifice and divine worship he used the good things that are provided by the farmer. At all events his fame spread far and wide and farming was everywhere adopted' (Them. Orat. 30, 394b, trans. Linforth 255-6).

The passage reiterates the ancient antagonism between hunter and farmer. The the civilised farmer, who led the mild and peaceful life introduced by Orpheus the culture hero, is victorious, his offerings the most acceptable. Virgil's use of the story in the Georgics acknowledged the relationship of the mythic tamer of nature and the farmer who must do the same.

The image of Orpheus represented a desirable quality of the civilised man on one gem from the time of Mithridates of Pontus, 163-123BC (fig.3). The 'pathetique' image was characteristic of the period. This king, before mounting the throne, had passed long years living with nature and would have desired to present himself under the traits of Orpheus as a benefactor of humanity (Stern 1980, 160, citing M.L.Vollenweider). Orpheus was employed in a similar manner on the Alexandrian coins of the Antonines. The message inherent in the image, interpreted by Fronto

for his pupil Marcus Aurelius, was the uniting first of his friends and followers and then the diverse peoples of the Empire. Orpheus knew how to tame the human passions of his numerous followers to create peace and unity. This was to be the task of the Antonine prince, which would be far more difficult to attain than simply charming fierce beasts with the lyre (Fronto, Correspondence, Loeb,

73). Later, on the Emperor's coins the image signified 'Concordia', the self-image of Roman rule in the Empire. The Antonine's choice of Greek mythologies and their classicising tendencies witness to the importance of the heritage of Greek culture, of which Orpheus was seen as a potent emblem. Severan coins from Thrace, legendary home of Orpheus, may also allude to the values of Greek culture. In a similar vein, at the end of the fourth century AD, Claudian could still call upon the classical image of Orpheus when he wished to extol the political skill and eloquence of the consul Manlius, whose effect on the peoples of the Empire was the same as the effect of Orpheus' song on the wild animals and barbarous Thracians of the remote past:

'What sedition, what madness of the crowd, could see thee and not sink down appeased? What country so barbarous, so foreign in its customs, as not to bow in reverence before thy meditation? Who that desires the honeyed charm of polished eloquence would not desert the lyre-accompanied song of tuneful Orpheus?' (Claudian xvii, 248-52. Tr. M. Platnauer, Loeb, 1972)

In art the evocative image harked back to the desirable qualities of authentic classical civilization with all the cultural values, especially of Greek religion, which it embodied. In late antiquity the common themes of classical imagery which pervaded art were hunting and the circus, real events which symbolised the play of fortune and success, the vigorous life of Emperor and city [28]. Orpheus, as we shall see (Ch.11), was frequently associated with such imagery, the central calming, fortuitous focus and repository of cultural values. The importance of Orpheus as a symbol of culture is brought to the fore in a text of c.395AD. The author pictures what would happen if Orpheus were to cease playing. In the third century BC the Greek epitaphs which told of the reaction to Orpheus' death presented a picturesque scene of Nature mourning, sad and pitious. Placed firmly in the past, it was contained within

an ethos of contemporary confidence. Orpheus, savagely murdered had stopped playing, but his legacy of art and culture lived on. By the end of the fourth century AD fears that the forces of barbarism were poised to overrun classical civilization and bring it to an end were insistent and well-founded. Claudian tells how Orpheus tiring, put down his instrument and for a long while ceased to play:

'Nature's savagery returned and the heifer in terror of the lion looked in vain for help from the now voiceless lyre'
[28a].

6. GUARDIAN OF NATURE.

By the 'Guardian of Nature', is not meant the Good Shepherd, which is a Christian idealised figure of the late Empire, incorporating ancient eastern imagery, but the relationship of Orpheus with Nature developed in the Hellenistic period. The scene of Orpheus and the animals encapsulated a fascination for the natural world which had been growing from the fourth century BC, a delight in portraying the minutiae of the natural world with as much realistic detail as possible. Besides the growing desire for knowledge of the natural world came the opportunity for empirical discoveries with the increasing flow of goods and animals through the markets of the ancient world. It came within man's capability to understand and harness some natural forces for his own benefit. In this respect Orpheus charming the animals represented a profound desire of the ancients, in the face of potentially harmful natural phenomena, for control. It was the same world, inhabited by the pagan gods and immortals, which could exhibit its inherent destructive capabilities as could provide all that was bountiful and life enhancing. Orpheus and the animals embodied the vital relationship of Man with the rest of creation, the evil bound up in harmony with the good. Whilst full humanity was to be achieved by overcoming animal instincts, it was acknowledged that the changed heart could return to its former condition if the spell of Orpheus' art ceased, if classical culture and all that was deemed civilized was withdrawn. The most profound

good came from the balanced structure of the forces of nature held in thrall by Art. The two went forward together. Christianity sought simply to ban what it saw as evil, sacrificing balance.

The form of the myth where Orpheus brought his wife safely back to the light echoed the cycle of Dionysus' death and rebirth, the cycles of plant growth and animal life engendered and embodied by the god. Orpheus' association with the seasons and agriculture continued into late antiquity. The Seasons appear with Orpheus on mosaics and other artefacts [29]. It was thought proper that farmers pray to Dionysus as well as Demeter and Kore (Arrian, *Cyneg.* XXXV, 2). The safeguarding of the production of flesh, wheat and vine was of profound importance: Orpheus could effect it. The link here is Orpheus in his role as instigator of the Eleusianian rites in which all three divinities were worshipped.

Orpheus as he appears in Roman art amid an array of wild life echoing arena spectacles, processions and the zoological collections of metropolis and estate, recalls the idyllic motif of the teeming paradise. He appears with wild beasts as the shepherd was pictured among his flocks. These images, similarly composed, were iconographically distinct, until, influenced by Christian art, sheep might appear in pagan pictures of Orpheus. The Christian Orpheus in Phrygian shepherd's dress, sometimes plays to sheep alone. These coincident concepts were in place early in the development of Orphean themes. The shoal of fish following the sound of Orpheus' music on the Argo (*Ap.Rh.* 569ff.) was likened to a shepherd with his flock, the marine picture compared with a pastoral scene. The idea must always have been evoked by the animal-charming scene that the wild animals were being made to behave like domestic herds. But Orpheus was not a shepherd guarding flocks from outside attack, rather, he drew the fierce powers towards him, making them act like sheep, containing their force. The literary vision of lambs lying with lions does not belong to the greater visual tradition of Orpheus. The Guardian is a terrestrial image, rooted in the earthly world of natural phenomena, structurally antithetical both to chthonian Dionysus and the astral and cosmological symbolism of

Apollo's lyre and song. Orpheus is the human mediator between the heavens and the Underworld, guarding the balance vital for civilization.

7. THE PROTECTOR:

Orpheus leads Eurydice from Hades at the successful outcome of the *katabasis*. The image was used in funerary art with the hope of a similar resurrection for the defunct. Orpheus appears without his customary lyre, but carrying a *pedum*, not only to signify his journey, but as the mark of the protector. This image was in vogue from the first century BC to the first AD in fresco and relief (cf. Ch.2, n.32). The Good Shepherd figure appears in the Christian catacombs from c.220AD. How easily the shepherd-like figure of Orpheus in funerary art must have elided with the Christian Good Shepherd, protector of flocks. The image of Orpheus and the animals in a funerary context, pagan or Christian, might be interpreted as Orpheus creating the paradisaical state, the enchanted place where the defunct hoped to arrive, ensuring a protected island of peace after death. He protected them against evil powers. Certain poetic formulae, supposedly written by Orpheus, were to be repeated by dead souls on entry to the Underworld. Thus they would be protected from the horrors of that realm and led to the Blessed Isles of the after-life. Such formulae were sometimes engraved on protective amulets, the Orphic Gold Leaves, placed in the grave, perhaps clutched in the deceased's hand. They date from the 6th.C.BC to the 2nd C AD, mostly from Southern Italy [30].

To superstitious people Orpheus acted as protector against the evils surrounding them, his image, like that of Medusa, drew fierce spirits, defusing their power and sweetening them. The Brading mosaic is situated to protect the vulnerable threshold. Coptic *orbiculi* worn on clothes performed the same function in protecting the person (cf. Grabar, 1969, 99 on Christian protective textile images). Stern, remarking that a large number of finger rings bore representations of Orpheus, supposed that the

ancients credited the image with an apotropaic power. This is, perhaps, an explanation for the popularity of the subject in the late Empire (1980, 164).

8. THE WEAKLING, THE FAILURE.

Orpheus shared the traditional, characteristic weakness of all lyre players (Plato Symp. 179D). He could not be a hero of the Argonaut adventure, but, Cheiron told Jason (test. 5), only with his help could they escape the Sirens, still he could not defend himself against the attacking women. His brutal murder on the early vases is a contrast of reason and fury; the song was the music of the spheres, the women represent the inhuman forces of the depths, personified as feminine. He constitutes an opposite to Hercules who also descended to Hades, returning with Alcestis, but who conquered that region by physical strength, where Orpheus had done so by means of art. Orpheus represents the power of art over brute strength, animal brutality vanquished by culture. Hercules ultimately achieves divinity, but Orpheus, the frail man, dies. His personality is never heroic, though he braves the infernal powers for love under the protection of art. King David is a parallel, the weak lyre player with an enchanting song, who conquered, but remained humanly fallible. A synagogue mosaic in Gaza (Stern, CRAI 1970) presents the saviour king of Israel in the guise of Orpheus, surely not wishing to evoke the frailty of either.

Plato knew the form of the myth where the descent had an unsuccessful outcome: because of his cowardice the gods only showed Orpheus a *phasma* of his wife (Symp. 179D). The tragic image of failure and loss was pleasing to Hellenistic poets and their heirs, notably Virgil, suiting a 'pathetique' literary style. Writing shows a concentration for the most part on loss while contemporary visual depictions depended for their understanding on the fact of the happy ending. The image of failure was not the pictorial tradition, but became the province of literature.

9. ORPHEUS AND PHILOSOPHY.

Through the lyre Orpheus was connected with the body of Neoplatonic thought concerning the harmonies of the universe and the soul's origin in the heavens, current in pagan philosophical circles into late antiquity. Macrobius tells us:

'Orphici understand Liber to be NOUS HILIKOS - indivisible and yet divided throughout the universe and their rites, in which they represent his dismemberment by the Titans, carry this meaning' (late fourth to early fifth century AD; Linforth 283-4).

It is not known what form such rites took, but they evidence the continued functioning of Greek religion. How far the gap extended between the esoteric philosophy reported by Macrobius and the near superstitious activities of the mass of followers of the rites prescribed by Orpheus, cannot be known, but it must be noted that such a difference existed. A contemporary testimony to the nature of this divergence of appreciation is given by Rufinus, a Christian apologist of the fourth century AD. Talking of the cosmogonic poetry:

'..attributed to many authors..two names stand out, Orpheus and Hesiod. Now the writings of these fall into two parts, divided according to the way they are interpreted, literally or allegorically. The parts that are taken literally have attracted the low minds of the vulgar, but those whose value lies in their allegory have ever called forth the admiring comments of philosophy and scholarship.' (Recognit. X, 30, OF. p.133, tr. Guthrie, 69).

According to Stern, the image of Orpheus on Antonine coins was used to promote a moral philosophy. Orpheus was a moral model conforming to expressions of the notion of *Pietas* under Antoninus Pius (1973, 337-8). In his opinion the moral sense of the image in the court was very near to that generalized philanthropy expressed in the numerous private representations of Orpheus of the time and a little later, the explanation for the current vogue of the subject (p.339), thinking of the gems which form the content of his discussion. The Perugia mosaic belongs to this period.

In the Roman Imperial era Orpheus seems to have passed as a philosopher by virtue of the perception of the doctrines ascribed to him. Writers of late antiquity speak of

followers of Orpheus as though of a school of philosophy. A Christian writer (Ps-Justinus) quotes a passage from the composition *Diathykai*, in which Orpheus is made to recant his paganism and hold to monotheism, where the readers or hearers of Orphic poems are called by a name, *akroatai*, commonly used of the followers or disciples of a philosopher [31]. As Guthrie says:

'It was the fashion among Neoplatonist philosophers, active from the third century AD onwards, to quote copiously from the poems of Orpheus and thus lend to their doctrines the dignity which derives from hoary antiquity' (Guthrie, 14).

The exposition of Orphic thought and writings in the Neoplatonic circles of Graeco-Roman society, especially in the late Roman Empire is beyond the scope of this work [32].

10. THE POPULAR IMAGE

'Famous Orpheus' - the earliest mention already designates Orpheus as a celebrated personage (*Ibycus*, 6thC. BC = test.2). His image, a construct of multiple characteristics, so pervaded Graeco-Roman society that now it virtually eludes the grasp. A perceptible difference exists between the Orpheus who appears in the texts of poets, philosophers and commentators, and the general appreciation of Orpheus by the public and artists. Clues to this alternative perception are second hand and allusive, gathered from texts and the character of the visual depiction. A passage from Apollonius Rhodios telling how Orpheus' music could make trees and rocks move:

'Men say that he, by the music of his songs, charmed the stubborn rocks upon the mountains and stayed the course of rivers. And the wild oak trees to this day, tokens of that magic strain, that grow at Zone on the Thracian shore stand in ordered ranks close together, the same which under the charm of his lyre he led down from Pieria.' (Ap.Rh. I, 26-31)

Its opening '...Men say that..' implies perhaps that this was not a belief to which the author subscribed, but a commonly held view. Legends of stones or trees that were once alive and danced, abound in the world's folklore and doubtless this, at root, is a report of one such from that area. A scepticism began to appear in the accounts of

the historians of last years of the Hellenistic era which was suspended in the poetical narrations (ie. Horace). Orpheus singing to the animals served as a rich source of artistic inspiration. It was as if two figures, both poets, had appeared, with Orpheus the artist distinguished from the Orpheus of ritual and religion.

Diodorus Siculus (late first century BC) in his History of the World recounted Orpheus' abilities thus:

'..in culture, music and poetry easily first of those whose memory has been preserved; he composed poetry of a merit which astonishes, distinguished by its exceptionally melodious quality. And his fame grew to such a degree that men believed that with his music he held a spell over both the wild beasts and the trees' (4.25, trans. Guthrie 61).

Diodorus brought together all the speculative theories advanced in the previous three centuries to explain the myth. The superlative quality of Orpheus' artistry lay at the centre of his importance, the erroneous belief in his power to charm animals arose from the fame that accrued to the great talent. Additionally, fame came from appreciation of the figure in the public imagination, which saw the power of sorcery rather than art.

The historian Strabo, Diodorus' contemporary, talks of Orpheus disapprovingly, without mention of the animal-charming scene. He calls him a magician, a wandering musician and soothsayer, a peddler of initiation rites. Strabo envisages a historical personage whose followers bear some relation to those similarly decried by Plato. Orpheus, Strabo says, had no magical powers, but his reputation made him big headed, he aimed for power and an unruly following and was murdered for his presumption (Strabo 7.330, fr.18 = test 40). Plato's denigration of the wandering priests and his decrying of the singer's weakling and cowardly character speak of the contempt in which his section of society held that form of religion (Rep. II, 364). Clearly Orpheus in some guise held an important place in the lives of his followers, pictured by non-believers virtually as a mob. The description might apply to the common people, but believers in the simpler forms of ritual, while not the intellectual elite, might belong to any stratum of society. The figure kept its place in popular imagination from the sixth

century AD to the sixth AD, of such power in late antiquity that Christian thinkers seemed obliged to absorb it. Orpheus could neither be ignored nor dismissed.

Thus far Orpheus has been treated with seriousness, but another view appears in the many parodies and performances in which he figured. The earliest record is the name of a Greek comedy by Antiphanis (test. 254). The appearance of satyrs in Orpheus' audience on several vases of the fifth century BC from Magna Graecia might reflect an influence from the stage (Schoeller 53, Graf 103 n.20). Orphic rites are not the subject of this thesis, but mention can be made of the parody in Aristophanes' The Clouds, which reveals that even if such esoteric activities were not commonly appreciated, some of their constituents were common knowledge [33].

A passage in Varro, De Re Rustica (III.13), c.36 BC. is instructive. In the anecdote a parody performance is combined with discussion of the management of an estate park. One of a number of speakers reports that wild boars and deer would gather to be fed at the sound of a horn on one estate where they had been so trained, another remarks in reply that he had seen it carried out...

'...more in the Thracian fashion at Quintus Hortensius's place near Laurentum when I was there. For there was a forest which covered ... more than fifty *iugera* ... it was enclosed within a wall and he called it ... a game-preserve. In it was a high spot where was spread the table at which we were dining, to which he bade Orpheus to be called. When he appeared with his long robe and kithara, and was bidden to sing, he blew a horn; whereupon there poured around us such a crowd of stags, boars and other animals that it seemed to me no less attractive a sight than when the hunts of the *aediles* take place in the Circus Maximus without the African beasts' (trans. W.H.Hooper, Loeb, 1934).

Several ideas help to identify the popular image of the time. This entertainment was linked in the Roman viewer's mind with circus spectacles; the animals perform at the command of 'Orpheus', crowding around him. There are no mystical connotations here, quite the opposite, it is a jest at the expense of the tragic hero, the divinely inspired singer of poetry, whose abilities are gently parodied. Although carrying a *kithara*, the gamekeeper had in fact to call the animals with the blast of a horn, for real animals respond to wind

instruments, not strings. This also alludes to the legendary 'softness' of Orpheus, the horn being a martial instrument [34].

Another example of a mocking impersonation comes at the height of the Empire, nearly a century later, transferred from sylvan surroundings to the arena in Rome, where Martial was witness to the event. A poor criminal dressed as Orpheus was torn to pieces by a she-bear sent up from the cages below [35]. An elaborate setting of trees, birds and beasts was made for the execution, just like the legendary surroundings of Rhodope and the grove of the Hesperides where the famous scene occurred, said Martial. Mountains and forests moved, as in the myth, but, comically, the stage-hands, not the wondrous music of Orpheus, caused them to shift. Artificial settings made for the *venatio* brought to life, for an audience which would comprise all sections of society, as well as 'Caesar', the idyllic landscapes of wall paintings and stage backdrops. It was a commonplace that Orpheus should be coupled with such animal-filled landscapes. Martial likens the arena scene to pictures of Orpheus with which the audience would be familiar.

In contrast to the paradisaical state brought about by the mythical Orpheus, the cruelty of the parody event, witnessed and condoned by the general public, speaks of a dismissal of the higher cultural values associated with the figure. The weakness of the artist was ridiculed and punished, the esoteric figure of poetry and ritual denigrated. Orpheus was known as the tamer of wild beasts: had the poor criminal been able to produce the magical sounds, he might have saved his life. We can imagine the laughter that this grisly sight engendered as the well known scene of enchantment was contrasted with the vulgar events enacted in the arena below.

Martial conjures up Ovid's famous narration, using words that would be familiar to his readers [36]. Ovid had already likened the carnage at Orpheus' death to a day at the *venationes* in the arena (*Met.* XI, 26). In a reversal of the fable this Orpheus was to become a victim of the beasts, with the un-enthralled she-bear a reminder that the legendary Orpheus met his own

death at the hands of the fierce, blood-thirsty Thracian women, similarly evading his spell. It is evident that from the first century BC at least, the gentle image of Orpheus and the animals was bound up in the imagination with the spectacle and cruelty of the arena and continued to be so until the fourth century, an association seen in mosaic iconography.

Orpheus was once thought to have existed before Homer in the furthest reaches of a Greek world still peopled with supernatural beings, but later historians questioning that supposition, placed him in the real world and advanced euhemeristic explanations for subsequent mythologising. The writers are the elite, intellectuals, historians, poets, theologians. Their repudiation of the popular legends of Orpheus and the potency of his eponymous rites, throws into relief the beliefs of the masses. Considered by Christians to express certain of their religious doctrines, equally honoured by pagan philosophical writers, Orpheus was simultaneously a presiding figure in more mundane systems of belief. Many people believed in the Orpheus whose image and ritual utterances could avert the evils of nature and the jealous gods, cure illness, sustain good health and bring fortune and prosperity in the present world. His rituals and poetry could obtain for the defunct sustenance in the afterlife, an avoidance of the terrible punishments of that realm and hope of salvation. His image was a powerful apotropaic symbol and as such played a part in the extensive superstitious faith endemic in the ancient world.

This exploration of the many manifestations of Orpheus in Graeco-Roman culture has revealed that his was one of the most pervasive images. Cicero mused upon the problem:

'Aristotle says that the poet Orpheus never existed..' He goes on to ask how could he form a mental picture of someone who never existed: 'But Orpheus, (that is, the image of Orpheus, as you would say) is often in my mind. Again, why do you and I have in our minds different images of the same person?' [37]

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NOTES.

1. J.Warden, ed. Orpheus: The metamorphosis of a Myth. (1982) W.A.Strauss, Descent and Return: The Orphic Theme in Modern Literature (1971), Intro., 1-19. Cf. Ch. 1.
2. H.Stern, 'Orphée dans l'art paleo-chrétien'. CA. XXIII, 1974, 1-16. *Idem*, 'Les débuts de l'iconographie d'Orphée charmant les animaux'. Mélanges...Jean Lafaurie, (MEFRA) (1980), 157-164, pl.XII-XIV.
3. Orpheus on Brading mosaic; finger rings; Coptic orbiculi; cf. Medusa in mosaic: image with prophylactic function. Cf.J.Thirion MEFRA 1955.
4. F.Cumont, Recherches sur le symbolisme funeraire des romains, (1942), 17-18.
5. J.Onians, Art and Thought in the Hellenistic Age. (1979), 67-8.
6. The Pythagorean writer Panaceas: M.L.West, The Orphic Poems (1983) 31, n.94; 29-33.
7. Cicero, De Rep. 6, 18. Loeb ed. 1959, trans. C.W.Keyes. 1st.AD.
8. Macrobius Som. Scip. IV, 7-8. Commentary on the dream of Scipio. 4th century AD. Trans. W.H.Stahl, (1952) 195.
9. First published: J.J.Savage TAPA, 56, (1925). Interpreted: A.D.Nock, Classical Review 41, (1927), 170. Eng. tr. and commentary: West p.30.
10. Aristides. De Musica 11, 18, cited J.B.Friedman, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (1970), 81, n.79.
11. J.Aymard, Essai sur les chasses romaines (1951) 335-7; especially sensitive: elephants, dolphins, horses, 336 n.3.
12. Invocations: the Orphic Gold Leaves see n.30. Vase: West pl.3, p.25, O. + defunct at boundary of Hades.
13. Ch.3, no.13. Add: Guthrie 31; the suggestion made in Eur.Alc 357, confirmed by Hermesianax = test.61.
14. Etymology, perhaps: 'the dark one' from the Greek root ORPH in Greek ORPHNOS = 'obscure'. S.Reinach, Cultes, Mythes, Religions II, 122. ORPHOS: an underworld deity in Thracian mythology.
15. M.Eliade, A History of Religious Ideas, 2, 183, n.11.
16. Diod.Sic. 3.65. O. reformed rites of Dionysus. Setting up of images, incantations, hymns and chants, Eusebius: Linforth 243. Mystes of Dionysus, Guthrie p.41; *idem*, 253.
17. Clement of Alex., Protr. vii, 74, 3; *ibid*, ii, 21.
18. Augustine: City of god XVII, 14.
19. A.A.Barb 'The Survival of Magic Arts' in A.Momigliano, ed. Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century, (1963) 100-25.

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20. Texts collated Linforth 264: Paus. IX, 30, 4; Marinus, Life of Proclus = test 239.
21. Apollonius, Ep. 16, ed. C.L.Kayser, Philostratus, Linforth, 280.
22. R.Eisler. Orpheus the Fisher (1921), 16-18.
23. R.Macmullen, Paganism in the Roman Empire (1981) 92-4. In lararium of Alexander Severus: Christ, Abraham, Orpheus and Apollonius of Tyana. 'Not syncretism, but discrete beings were on display'.
24. Panyagua (1973), no.149, Bardo, O. + pedum; 154a, b. O. + animals.
25. Athanasius cod.Reg. 1993 = test.154: Guthrie, 19-20, n.7.
26. Preserved by Ps-Alcidamas, Ulixes 24, ed. Blass, Antipho = test 123: Linforth 15.
27. Trans. C.O.Brink, Horace on Poetry, (1971) Commentary pp.384-89. Some commentators saw in the form of words '*caedibus et victu foedo deterruit*', the implication of cannibalism. Assesses arguments of scholars on this suggestion: p.387.
28. P.R.L.Brown, 'Art and Society in Late Antiquity' in K.Weitzmann ed. Age of Spirituality (1980) 23-4. Even under Christianity the forms in which society mirrored its norms and aspirations remained classical.
- 28a. Claudian, The Abduction of Proserpina Book II, 1-8. Trans. M. Platnauer, Loeb, 1972)
29. Seasons and O.: see Ch.2, n.60; Ch.11, Pendants.
30. Orphic gold leaves, texts engraved on slips of gold: G.Murray in J.Harrison Prolegomena, 659-73, gives text in full; discussion: G.Zuntz Persephone (1971) 277-393. West 22f., 25f.
31. Akroatai: Linforth 280-1: test.168. Also '*discipuli Orphici*'.
32. The subject has been extensively discussed elsewhere, see bibliography: A.Boulanger (1925); W.K.C.Guthrie (1935); I.M.Linforth (1941); L.Moulinier (1955); J.B.Friedman (1971); Sister Murray (1981); M.Eliade (1982) with full bibliography; M.L.West (1983).
33. Aristophanes Nub. 223ff. In full with commentary, Harrison, op.cit. 511-16.
34. Musician of Knole relief, Pany. (1973) no.156, has been called Orpheus, but carries a horn. Is either a huntsman or an Orpheus parody of a similar kind. Genre scenes of entertainers and herdsmen using flutes on inhabited scrolls of east. mosaics, 6th C: C.Dauphin Art History I, no.4 (1978), figs.9, 12.
35. De Spectaculis 21, 21B. Epigrams I, Loeb ed. 1961 trans. W.C.A.Ker. K.M.Coleman 'Fatal Charades' JRS LXXX (1990) 44-73.
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36. F. della Corte, Gli Spettacoli di Marziale (1986) 57: Martial's scene is that set by Ovid, echoing his very words, which connote the arena.
37. De natura deorum, Cicero in person of Colta addressing Velleius, i, 38. 108 = test 13. Trans H.C.P.McGregor, Penguin (1984).

Chapter Five

ORPHEUS AND THE GODS .

Orpheus was closely bound in art and thought to the gods in whose cults he mediated. Much conflated imagery occurs, so it is convenient here to examine the association between Orpheus, the gods and other numinous figures. Iconography and the symbolic structure of the relationships are principle concerns. The term 'Orphic' relates to the doctrines, rituals and literature so-called by the ancients. In distinction, anything pertaining to the depiction of Orpheus in art is termed 'Orphean'. Apollo and Dionysus were the deities closest to Orpheus. The triangular relationship of the two gods and their human counterpart, convoluted and profound, is expressive of the deeper currents of Greek religion. Orpheus appears to be the earthly mirror of both these antithetical gods; all his activities and the substance of his mythic persona depended on his mediating between their polarities, rationale and madness, making humane their counterposed demands. Orpheus, through the symbolic value he acquired in the pagan milieu, was perceived as a figure close in meaning to Christian and Jewish salvatory philosophies. The form of the divine singer was adopted as a model for representing David and Christ. Mithraism and syncretic currents, sharing in the process of reciprocal influence in the late Roman empire, helped modify iconography and ideas. The Christian perception of Orpheus in antiquity is examined not least because the prevailing Christian ethic of western culture has coloured concepts of the figure to the present day. In late antiquity Orpheus came to represent, not only Greek polytheism, but the heritage of Hellenic culture, the ideal of a civilized society.

In Guthrie's opinion Orpheus in relationship

to Apollo presents the classical, Greek figure, perhaps the oldest stratum of his development. His close association with the Hellenic cult of Apollo perhaps led in his early days to conflict with the pre-eminently Thracian worship of Dionysus, an essentially different type of religion. This contact with Dionysian cults is possibly reflected in the vases showing a Greek Orpheus amid Thracian warriors (Guthrie 45ff.). Current thinking places the absolute origins of Orpheus with Thracian shamanism (Ch.1, n.1). The important relationship of Orpheus and Dionysus is manifest in art and throughout the texts. Orpheus continued in his role as hierophant to the Bacchic cults to the end of paganism. The events of Orpheus' legend are inextricably linked with both gods so that Guthrie's designation 'priest of Dionysus' is not enough to explain his role in that regard nor his continuing association with Apollo where these two had appeared to be enemies. Orpheus manifested characteristics both of Apollo and Dionysus. The association of pacific Orpheus with the rites of an orgiastic cult with a violent and disturbing god whom his career reflects, yet contradicts, presents a central paradox. But his place between these forces will be seen to be precisely the strongest point, the reconciling of two antithetical modes of existence, two sensibilities, characterised as polarised gods, who, despite their antagonism nevertheless were not always separated in the minds of worshippers, as the texts witness (examples: Guthrie 43). Orpheus becomes the channel of Apollonian rationale and Dionysian intoxication fused in the service of man. Through art, song, poetry, lyre music, music of the spheres, Orpheus was the culture hero, 'child' of Apollo, mirroring his creation of a divine order. But the effect of the music located him with Dionysus, god of fertility, lord of the beasts, the wilds, the growth and rebirth of plants [1] whose excesses he regulated. In that sense he would be the enemy of Dionysus whose frenzied followers murdered him in one version of the myth. Apollo's enlightened Reason was effected by Orpheus as the animal tamer, transmuting their bestial natures, and in the invention and formulation of the rites of Dionysus. By regulating the orgiastic cult he brought it into the civilized world

where the barbarism and frenzy of the myth could be re-enacted safely within the metaphors of ritual.

1. APOLLO.

Some said Apollo was the father of Orpheus, or if not, he was responsible for endowing Orpheus with the great talent which made him famous, the more common view in the classical age. He is '*sent by Apollo*' [2]. In the familiar passage from Euripides the capabilities attributed to the god and the beneficent results of his presence are just those things which later attach to the figure of Orpheus (Eur. Alc. 579. Ch.Two) The apparition of the god and his music protected the land and endowed it with fertility. The image of Orpheus came to be invoked in a similar fashion. Orpheus was the terrestrial equivalent of Apollo, a divine or divinely inspired singer, child of a Muse, bringer of bountiful peace, patron figure of the arts. A prophet of Apollo, with oracular powers, he was a figure of the astral plane, first known as a worshipper of Helios-Apollo (Aesch. *Bassarides*) before being acknowledged as founder of the rites of Dionysus. In early representations Orpheus is dressed as a Greek, though living in Thrace. He looks like the god he worships [3].

Helios-Apollo assumed importance in late antiquity as the god associated with Orphic thought, the monotheistic conflation of all powers (Macr.Sat. I, 18). Visual confusion surrounds the earliest depictions of Orpheus. An Apolline figure appears on Hellenistic gems, nude and muscular, surrounded by animals (fig.3), but we must hesitate about naming the image Orpheus without an inscription. Apollo was first associated with taming animals by music, an image offering the same protective function as Orpheus at a later period. He appears with his swan, raven and hind (ill.19). On the gems illustrated by Stern (1980, figs. 1, 2, 5, 6, 8) the butterfly, Psyche, the Soul, may be the clue to their being depictions of the salvatory Orpheus. When on a 4th.C. BC vase, Orpheus wearing Phrygian dress plays, the hind of Apollo listens (Stern 1980 fig. 3). In late antiquity Orpheus and Apollo can be

similarly attired, either semi-draped with Phrygian cap, or in Pythian stola, but the god is accompanied by his griffin, the Muses and Marsyas flayed (ill.20). A griffin accompanies Orpheus on the Porto Torres sarcophagus, but the ram underfoot the victory stance confirms Orpheus [4] (fig.6). Visual overlap of the figures occurs here, but pictorial conventions clarify the reading. While formulating the rites of Dionysus, Orpheus retained his Apolline characteristics. Like Apollo, Orpheus was credited with healing powers. His continuing close association with Apollo is evidenced in a metrical inscription from the base of a statue, probably Orpheus and the animals, seen in Thrace, dated second-third century AD, which makes Orpheus 'companion of Apollo' [5].

2. DIONYSUS/BACCHUS.

Orpheus descended to the Underworld; he suffered a violent death, he was alive again afterwards, his severed head gave oracles. Dionysus brought his mother Semele up from Hades, like, Diodorus observed (4.25.4) Orpheus' descent in quest of Eurydice. Through the *sparagmos* human Orpheus undergoes the same experience as his god, who, dismembered by the Titans, was revived [6]. All the depictions show Orpheus bludgeoned, cut or hacked to death by furious women, not, Guthrie notes (p.33), torn, an analogous, not identical death. Orpheus was a catalytic force in the cult of Dionysus, initiating men into his mysteries, even wild and bestial satyrs came under the sway of the music, only the women remained unmoved by his song. Dionysus, in some versions, was the instigator of the death of Orpheus. Various reasons are advanced for this, perhaps a punishment for worshipping Apollo, although the overwhelming number of texts retail his institution of Dionysus' rites. The episode warns how the enchantment can be broken allowing the dark forces to break through: he cannot weave his spell over the women. The cult of Dionysus was exclusively feminine at the outset (though not in the Roman Imperial period), the episode perhaps allegorises the fear of female power, considered irrational, inherent in its mysteries. A male-female opposition is

apparent in the myths of the two figures, each of whom, however, is notably androgynous in keeping with their shamanistic origins. 'Orpheus reflects Dionysus, yet at almost every point seems to contradict him' (Harrison, Prolegomena 455). Orpheus, the priest-teacher of Bacchic rites imposed Apolline rationale on the ecstatic cult.

The important antithetical structure of the bond reveals itself in the visual image, in the animal audience and the imagery accompanying the figure of Orpheus. The underlying antitheses are: chaos and calm, ecstasy and asceticism, Nature and culture, feminine and masculine, dark and light. Orpheus' every attribute is dependent upon his opposing relationship to the nature and deeds of Dionysus, a wild god of wine who released uncontrollable forces and stirred up the blackness of the depths, who brought frenzy and mania, unbalancing the natural order. At the centre of this whirling chaos Orpheus created calm, bringing all into a harmony which accorded with that of the heavens themselves. The form of his music imitated the vibrations of the unifying patterns of order of the universe.

Dionysus enthused his followers to commit deeds they would otherwise find abominable. He was the secret fire of the intoxicating wine which brought pleasure and prosperity and could transform its drinkers to madness as well as mirth. Orpheus taught men to abstain from murders, to respect human life. Some Orphic doctrines prescribed asceticism, abjuring all that was central to the myth of Dionysus. Followers were to forego meat and, in particular, wine because it aroused extremes of emotion disallowed as dangerous. The regulation of ecstatic cults by Orpheus brought them to cultural acceptability. Orpheus mediated the uncontrolled, impassioned energy of the god, filtering it to the benefit of humanity.

Paradoxically, dangerous Dionysus was himself a bringer of benefactions, a power extended to Orpheus, who, through the medium of the rites was connected with the cycles of death, rebirth and growth representing the turning of the world. At Delphi Dionysus was second in importance to Apollo where both were regarded

as seasonal gods. Ceremonies took place in early spring for Apollo and November for Dionysus [7]. Dionysus was associated in rites at Eleusis, said to have been founded by Orpheus [8], with Demeter, the wheat. He was considered an agricultural deity prayed to along with Demeter for crops. He was a Nature god, the spirit of growth, vegetation; the undying god of the evergreen ivy and the springing god of the rapidly growing vine, god of the re-awakening of nature. He was a god of many forms, sometimes a bear, a panther, a snake, sometimes a tree, fire, water [9]. Lord of beasts and animal fertility, his was a beneficent presence. Orpheus was the epitome of the cultivated man whose legend was perceived as allegorising the development of early man to the civilized state. In mythic terms his actions brought nature, Dionysus under Man's control so that all plants and animals engendered and controlled by the god were made available for the furtherance of human culture. Orpheus invented civilized institutions which included rites, poetry, eloquent rhetoric, agriculture. On mosaic we see Orpheus the virtuoso musician at the centre of a display of animals, birds and vegetation which he commands to stay or move.

Both the god and Orpheus had androgynous characteristics. Dionysus was considered to be both male and female and is depicted in art languorous and somewhat effeminate, but clearly male. His effect on men and women was to arouse the characteristics of the opposite sex in them. Being enthused with the power of Dionysus/Bacchus made his women followers take on manly strengths to become warrior-like, savage killers. When Bacchus, wine, drove men mad they behaved in a hysterical fashion like the women and lost their rationality; when wine was tempered Bacchus bestowed the gifts of inspiration, eloquence, poetry and rhetoric, the hallmark of the cultivated man (Horace *Carm*, I, 18). Orpheus was a weak lyre player lacking in manly courage. Rather than die for love he schemed his way alive into Hades, for which he was doomed to die at the hands of women (Plato *Sympos*. 179d). He was said to have originated the practice of homosexuality. The poet and his followers were customarily characterised as effeminate, but his strength lay in the

fact that as an artist he could control his intractible feminine nature, metaphorically led wild by the god. He was able to act in the world to harness the potential madness. He had no need to be overtly virile, warlike, for despite his weakness he was creative and conquered all the forces of the world through his art. He exerted his masculinity by being a calm, rational antithesis to Dionysus, who roused the irrationality characterised as feminine. Only the real women, brandishing their domestic implements on vases, refused the spell-binding song. Most animals on mosaics are male.

Dionysus was a god of the dark side of the human spirit, a cruel god who sent a terrible vengeance, a dangerous presence. He was not a god of the Underworld, but was associated with death and immortality. Amongst the many epithets to his name, the description of a dark god of the night commonly occurs. He was called the 'night wanderer', *nuktipolos* (Ovid *Met.* IV.15); 'he who wanders in the night' (Eur. *Cretans* fr.472); *Dionysos Nuktelios* (Plut. *De E.* 9, 389A). The duality of the god's nature was acknowledged. Plutarch speaks of Dionysus as the 'friendly god who lavishes blessings' even though he was for the most part 'the bestial and wild one' (Otto, 110-11). Horace calls the god '*candide bassareu*', the shining dark one, the clear-speaking foxy one (*Carm.*, I, 18). *Bassareus*, the fox, or fox-skin Dionysus, was an epithet still used by the Greeks for the god in the late fourth century (*Macr.Sat.* I, 18, 9). The night-wandering, Thracian fox appears close to Orpheus on mosaics from the Greek east and is his special attribute on the fourth century Romano-British mosaics. Orpheus was an opposing force, his whole nature Apolline, a man of rationale and reason, culture, everything characterised as 'light'. Orpheus singing embodied the power of Apollonian reason over dark Dionysiac irrationality. Paradoxically, Orpheus's chthonic association, the *katabasis*, was almost the most important aspect of the myth. His own name, like the Dionysian epithets, possibly meant 'the obscure', 'the dark one' (Ch.4, n.14).

Dionysus drove his women followers wild, drew them away from their natural place in the home to wander in the hills

committing acts of bestial savagery. Orpheus' contrasting act was to draw the wild beasts out of their natural place, the forest, and to tame them. He sweetened the souls of the barbaric Thracian warriors, turning them away from quarrelling and war, making them amenable to the higher spiritual values of Greek civilization. He took them from their natural place, the battle front, which angered the women who killed him. In his myth Dionysus in animal form was pursued by the Titans, caught and dismembered. In this way he was a divine analogue for the animals of the hunt and amphitheatre, of which he was a patron anyway. He was a god 'powerful in wild places where wild things live' [10]. Orpheus too, was powerful in such places, the pacific nature of the charmed circle he created was a contrast. The iconographic relationship in mosaic between amphitheatre scenes and Orpheus charming the animals, all belonging to the 'animal scene' genre of Roman art, is self-evident. Orpheus appeared in the midst of a cruel savagery which Dionysus/Bacchus might have instigated. The god who controlled the ferocious animals, took their form. They were the embodiments of his wild passions. He also lived in the vegetation which Orpheus made move. The paradise suggested by the harmonious resolution of this chaotic savagery effected by Orpheus' music is also that which Bacchic initiates could hope to find in paradise, the Isles of the Blessed: music, feasting, harmony.

3. HERCULES.

Hercules was a member of the crew of the Argo with Orpheus. The semi-divine hero was once his pupil. Orpheus instructed him in the cultural skills of writing, poetry, the mysteries. Hercules, the master of beasts, exemplifies the brute force manner of vanquishing animals to which pacific Orpheus is the antithesis. He also displays the intelligence and cunning which supercedes brutality, which he uses with his great strength to accomplish the Labours, metaphors for the obstacles which fate places before the human spirit on its journey through life. He is animal-like, his ferocious passions reined in by the educative powers of Orpheus, and thus an exemplar

for one kind of the perfected man. He presents a contrasting version of the mastery of animals and is an ultimate provider of plenty, a parallel to Orpheus. Hercules belongs with an ancient model of the 'Master of Beasts' deriving ultimately from near eastern myth, the hero Gilgamesh, depicted flanked by vanquished lions, an image which provided a model for the Judaeo-Christian motif of Daniel. Orphean iconography developed separately, deriving from such Greek figures as are seen on the Boetian cup and bronze mirror [11]. Finally Hercules wins the battle with Death itself, sharing with Orpheus the capacity to descend to the Underworld and retrieve dead souls. When he rescues Alcestis from the Underworld, Hercules has battled with and defeated Necessity, *ananke*, against which not even Orpheus had a magical verse nor Asclepius a medicinal remedy (Eur.Alc. 960-5). The combination of these two powerful Underworld figures must have increased the apotropaic properties of any floor they graced. The hero Hercules attained divinity and was associated with Bacchus in a cult brought from the East, protective of the Severan dynasty (Bruhl, 244). As drunken Hercules he appears usually with Bacchus, not Orpheus (as on an associated floor at Chahba), representing the divine intoxication of initiation, where Orpheus stands for the intellectual route towards the mysteries. Hercules and Orpheus together can be seen as a type of genre pairing representing the virtues of the active and contemplative life.

4. MITHRAS.

The eastern god Mithras is another vanquisher of animals, the great bull-slayer. His iconography of victory exerts a discernible pictorial influence on Orpheus in artefacts and monuments from the Northern provinces and Italy where a theme of victory over death is implied. There is no apparent conceptual relationship at a cult level, though West finds Orphic-Mithraic syncretism in art of another kind, its abstract themes not exhibited in the artefacts discussed here [12]. This mixed iconography relates to areas of prominent Mithraic worship evidenced in the archaeological record. A Severan

gem (Stern 1980, fig. 14) shows a fox leaping up at Orpheus like the dog in the Mithraic bull-slaying scene, which licks blood flowing from the wound made by Mithras (ill.23). This fox appears on a dish from Cologne. In a few mosaics from Britain, one or two elsewhere, it looks like the Mithraic dog, leaping up at Orpheus: it is clearly a fox, not a dog. All around Orpheus on the gem the animals are Mithraic in type, including the cockerel and scorpion. The clothing worn by Orpheus in many northern images is the Persian dress of Mithras. On sarcophagi from Rome and Ostia the pose of Orpheus is the same as Mithras Tauroctonus, victorious over the celestial bull. Orpheus stands with an animal beneath his raised right foot. Usually it is a sheep, once a lion, more appropriate to the victory stance (ill.13, 14).

5. SYNCRETIC IMAGERY.

Strigillated sarcophagi with Orpheus exhibit an iconography associated with Apollo and Mithras, but in two cases the inscriptions are Christian. This combined imagery might be significant for religious belief, but may denote a mixing of imagery purely pictorial in origin. Orpheus in victory stance, victorious over death, might be Christian or pagan. The context denotes intention: Christian inscription, iconography of end scenes, the defunct or, on the Vatican sarcophagus, the fisherman (ill.21). The Christian Fisher of Men, was an Orphic symbol too. The Old Man of the Sea, who appears on the Afterworld scene of the Farnesina stucco reliefs (ill.22), is common on North African marine mosaics (cf. La Chebba). The Porto Torres sarcophagus (fig.6) shows Orpheus with Apollo's griffin and laurel, a ram underfoot, perhaps suggesting that Orpheus-Christos was the new Apollo, lord of music and the sun [13]. Features which would mark it unmistakably as a pagan object, if the Christian sarcophagi were unknown are: the defunct as a classical philosopher, the *kithara*, the oracular raven perching on top, resting on a *cippus* in typically Apollonian attitude [14]. Perhaps it was simply the influence of several conventional pattern types outside of which the

sculptor could not create, resulting in syncretic imagery.

Possibly with the purpose of increasing the apotropaic potency of the charm, syncretic forms are exhibited frequently on gems and amulets. A Severan gem is discussed above. Deliberate syncretism might be suspected, for the same creatures were elsewhere depicted to ward off the evil eye [15]. The Gnostic gem of the third century, inscribed *ORPHEOS BAKKIKOS*, appears to conflate Orpheus, Bacchus and Christ with lunar and astral symbolism (fig.11). A crucified figure is depicted beneath seven stars and a crescent moon [16]. Eisler has argued for a purely pagan origin for the figure (338ff). He cites an old tradition, now lost, that Orpheus was crucified [17], but there is no need to go that far. The crucified Christ could have been understood as a symbol of the suffering soul, in life or after; the seven stars may indicate the astral plane to which Orpheus could take the dead soul, ascending through the strings of his lyre by way of the Bacchic rites. The syncretism expressed on gems would allow the image of Christ to bestow its numinous power without the gem itself being a Christian artefact. That the inscription is not Christian argues for its expressing purely pagan aspirations. Macrobius is a useful witness to the syncretism of late antiquity, especially *Saturnalia* I, 18, 12-22, where verses of Orpheus are quoted regarding the many epithets of Sol/Helios, the sun. Zeus, Hades, Dionysus, Phanes and Iao were all manifestations of the same power. The deity was conceived as encompassing both solar and chthonic forces, where Orpheus might mediate between and interpret the oppositions. Orpheus is not the priest, nor the object of worship, but, as Clement of Alexandria called him 'the poet of the rite', a religious authority.

6. CHRISTIAN ORPHEUS.

The Fathers of the Church showed special respect to Orpheus, early on perceived as a parallel to Christ [18], absorbing the figure into Christian orthodoxy, but this did not diminish its potency in Greek polytheism. Orpheus remained pagan to the pagans. In the fifth



Fig. 11:
Magic amulet. Lost.
c.3rd-4th C. AD.

Ill. 23: Mithras Tauroctonos. Marble.

2nd C. AD.



century, Augustine, who himself had repeated the teaching of the early church that Orpheus, like the Sybils, had prophesied the ministry of Christ (*Contra Faustum* 1. XVII, ch. xv.) relates that Orpheus was in charge of pagan Underworld rites in North Africa (*Civ. Dei*, XVII, 14). Clement of Alexandria, at the end of the second or start of the third century is a principle witness to the Christian view of Orpheus and also imparts some of the only information on the pagan rites, but his description of Greek religion is biased, intended to show the foulness and absurdity of an enemy faith. Christians denigrated elements of magic they associated with Orpheus, which contrasted with their ideas of him as a shepherd leading souls to heaven. Forms of popular religion in Orpheus' name could have seemed to be magic, while the luring of animals almost bears a reading of a folkloric casting of spells. Clement (*Protr.* I), accused Orpheus of introducing deeds of violence into ritual, probably reflecting the outsider's idea of the dismemberment of Dionysus as if actually carried out in the rites. Under the guise of music the legendary singers Amphion, Arion and Orpheus had deceived mankind and had done much to degrade human life, he said, they were charlatans who practiced a methodical sorcery disastrous in its results. They led humanity with song and lyre music to the adoration of pagan idols; with images and paintings they built up a stupid structure of social custom. Christ, on the contrary, the true instrument of God, had revealed the Truth in his service in a human body. His own body was like a musical instrument, his was the New Song: 'but far different is my singer'. Unlike those musicians honoured by the Greeks who enchant and ensnare their listeners, the Word frees those who listen to his music. It is not wild beasts he tames, but human beings who resemble them (*Protr.* I, 3-6).

Just as it was recounted that those famous singers moved trees and stones, so God the Word transforms senseless people:

'and the Logos of god, having scorned the lyre and the kithara, instruments without soul, rules by the Holy Spirit our world and particularly its microcosm, Man, body and soul...'

The new song does more than tame the savage and revive the

insensible, it gives order to the universe [19].

In funerary art, the Orpheus who wore shepherd's costume and carried a pedom as he led his wife to the light, would blend seamlessly into the figure who appeared among the flocks of sheep supplied by Christian iconography. Guthrie finds it is easy to imagine how, in the characteristic picture of Orpheus, the Christians could see their Good Shepherd as well as the ancient Golden Age vision and Old Testament prophecy of the lion and the lamb lying down together (Guthrie, 264-5). Later Christian writers were to make the natural comparison between the descent of Orpheus and the action of Christ rescuing souls from the power of death. Orpheus leading the soul of Eurydice from danger had been employed for many centuries in a funerary context and was perhaps used thus even after the adoption of Christianity as the official state religion. Orpheus in Christian art makes most of his appearances underground, in the catacombs. However, for Clement Orpheus is only the singer, he makes no use of the descent, but is concerned only to vilify the character of the classical musicians. Christian iconography seems to have incorporated generally held ideas of the figure's symbolism.

A changed appreciation of Orpheus comes with the acceptance of his recantation, which allowed pagans to continue to follow Orpheus who, having turned his back on polytheism, would now lead them towards Christianity, the only true faith, with his legendary skills (Guthrie, 256). He had learnt the Unity of God from Moses, it was said, on a voyage he had made to Egypt. The evidence for this was the Hellenistic text known as the *Diathekai* [20], 'The Testament of Orpheus' to his son Musaeus, perhaps written by an Alexandrian Jew for the purpose of establishing Jahveh as the source of all Greek philosophy. It was brought to the notice of the church by Ps.-Justinus in the 2nd century AD.:

'.....may you at least believe him who first instructed you in the lore of many gods, but who later thought it good to make a profitable and necessary palinode. You may believe Orpheus I say...' (*Cohortio ad Gentiles*, c. xiv.)

Christians were convinced that he of all figures of Greek religion had recanted. Even Clement had to admit that this destructive figure

had redeemed himself.

'The Thracian who was at once hierophant and poet, Orpheus the son of Oeagros, after his disclosure of the mystic rites and his theology of idols, told the truth in a recantation which he published later.' (Protr. 7, 74, 3 = fr.246)

For the most part, except for certain funerary depictions, Orpheus-Christus remained a literary concept.

As an allegorical figure Orpheus the poet and seer was important in Christian thought, but the texts, with one or two exceptions, run a separate course to art and one cannot be taken as source material for the other. Perhaps too much weight has been accorded the texts: a natural importance attaches to them as written evidence; we do not know how far their substance was known to the population at large, to patrons and artisans. The esteem attached to Orpheus' cosmological song could make it seem equable with the Divine Word, the Logos, of the Christians, despite Clement distinctly opposing Orpheus and Christ; Eusebius, c.355AD, whose disapproval was implicit, played on the difference between the false enchantment believed by the Greeks to have emanated from an inanimate object, the lyre, and that coming from the instrument of the soul, the Word of God, Orpheus less the negative image of Christ than his antetype, who by his music sweetened the spirit of the barbarians and led them to civilisation [21]. Eusebius was contemporaneous with the Domitilla frescos, in which Orpheus' audience is composed of the conventional throng of wild beasts. Stern is not sure that this current of thinking had much influence on the catacomb images (1974, 9), but Eusebius may have been calling upon a generally accepted concept of the myth, suitable both to the Christian and pagan audience. What may have had most effect on the artisans and patrons of the catacombs was the fact that Orpheus in the ancient world was a generally held symbol for immortality, the founder of mystery religions promising the immortal destiny of the soul. The celestial Paradise which was the destination of the soul after death was conjured by Orpheus' music. When, in the catacombs his animal audience was replaced by sheep, he could appear as the Good Shepherd, Christ himself [22].

Patrons continued to find the traditional

image of Orpheus suitably expressive of their aspirations, modified to fit the accumulating conventions of Christian art. But perhaps ideas changed: some African mosaics were damaged, the eyes or face hacked out [23] the work of Christian iconoclasts in the fourth century purges of Constantius or perhaps later, Muslims? Christians may have seen in the lyre the peace and harmony wrought by the music of Orpheus, or perhaps the popular association of the soul with the lyre, at any rate it was used as a seal by the Christians: Clement, (*Paedagog.* 3.2.1. = test.152): '*let our seals be a dove or a fish or a ship running with a fair wind or a lyre... or an anchor*'. Philo of Alexandria speaks of the Spirit of God as '*musically tuning the soul as it were a lyre*' (cited Guthrie 273, n.16). The Christian picture of Orpheus reveals the pagan perception, by creating a negative definition.

7. DAVID-ORPHEUS.

David was not a god; like Orpheus he was the human founder-hero of a culture. Unlike Orpheus he was a historical personality, although the generally held notion in the classical world was that Orpheus had once lived. Many traits of Orpheus accrued to David and came to be equated with him symbolically. His imagery was to some extent modelled on that of Orpheus. David was the regulator of the Law, the good shepherd, the divine singer, whom animals came to hear; one who could tame fierce powers and calm the frenzied heart. Even the power of moving inanimate objects was ascribed to him [24]. The Psalms are emblematic of Judaic culture in the same way that the cosmogonic song of Orpheus was of Hellenic culture. Both David and Orpheus assumed semi-divine status. The late antique Orpheus of Ptolemais, hieratically posed in Imperial robes, is nimbed like the Gaza David, the Phrygian cap an emblem of kingship like David's diadem. Clement, contrasting David with Orpheus, said he came somewhere between him and Christ. Like Orpheus David was a *kitharoed*, he was, however, far from revering demons who, on the contrary, he chased with his truthful music. He had only to play to Saul to heal him of possession

by evil spirits, which compared with Orpheus' actions on the bestial souls of animals and barbarians (Protr. i, 3). The earliest evidence of close contacts is found in the Dead Sea scrolls, psalm CLI [25] where allusion is apparently made to the myth of Orpheus. Stern notes the important point that the evocation of David-Orpheus coincided with Orpheus' appearance in Graeco-Roman art. The psalm is dated first century BC, like the peperino statue in Rome.

The Gaza mosaic shows David in the guise of Orpheus. The name David is written to distinguish him from Orpheus with whom he would immediately be compared, for he is accompanied by fierce animals. The viewer, reminded that David was like Orpheus, would see nimbed, in purple robes and imperial diadem, the famed biblical king in the frontal pose of late Roman Imperial iconography. Animals in the surviving fragments derive from animal genres in late mosaic. Later manuscript illustrations of David depict him as a shepherd with personifications and symbols of classical culture [26]. He too was the weakling singer who conquered brutality and overcame fearsome odds. At Gaza, David is presented in the image of Orpheus, the culture-hero, benefactor of Graeco-Roman civilization, who imparts his prestigious qualities to the great hero of Judaic culture, both a historic personality and symbol of messianic royalty.

The Orpheus-David painted on the wall of the synagogue of Dura-Europus, is a curious image, amply discussed [27]. Without wishing to enter the argument, mention must be made of it. The wall underwent many re-paintings, therefore the exact sequence in which the elements were placed and their relationship to each other is disputed. In the drawing used by Dupont-Sommer (pl.I, fig 3), a monkey sits next to the singer, at top-right. Next, a lion advances from the right, there are birds in a tree. This resembles the classical image of Orpheus. Stern uses a drawing (1970, 75, fig.10) showing an eagle, the imperial emblem, apparently perched on the back of Orpheus' chair. The lion was, perhaps, the Lion of Judah (Stern 74-5, figs.8, 10). This image apparently of Orpheus and the animals may be a composite which, as such never existed. However, the monkey, if contemporary with the singer, would denote Orpheus rather

than another personage. The monkey is commonly seen with him, often sitting on the lyre (Cf.Ch.Ten). The image is positioned above the Ark of the Torah, lending it a powerful value, whatever its meaning: Orpheus himself creating the paradisiac state of the psalms; David-Orpheus, incarnation of the royalty of Israel singing a psalm of praise and echoing the divine song of Orpheus; or King David, a purely Judaic figure.

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NOTES

1. A.Bruhl, Liber Pater (1953) 3.
2. Pindar Pyth. 4. 177, 467BC. Son of Apollo = test 22; Gruppe, 1156; Guthrie ch.3 and notes; Linforth, 22; prob. older trad. than Oeagros = test.23, who is more often named as his father. A. was always a powerful tutelary influence. Mother, Calliope, Muse of epic poetry.
3. W.K.C.Guthrie, The Greeks and their Gods, (1950), 315-6. Kern test. 45. Linforth TAPA 62, (1931), 11ff.
4. Stern, CA, XXIII, (1974), fig.9.
5. Guthrie, 42 and n.16. Roman Imperial date, 2nd.-3rd.AD, seen in Thrace, now lost. Murray BAR S100, (1981) 45 and n.65. Guthrie, 42-8 on relations of O. with Apollo and Dionysus (1935).
6. Linforth analyses all the texts: Ch. V, 307-364.
7. W.F.Otto, Dionysus, Myth and Cult (1956), 1981 ed., 103.
8. Theodoretus (383-456 AD) = test 103. Kern test.102-4. Linforth 189-197 on texts associating O. with Eleusinian Mysteries.
9. Otto 110; Nonnus Dionysiaca, 36, 291ff; 40, 38ff.
10. A.H.Rose, Nonnus, Loeb, Intro. p.xii-xiii.
11. Stern (1980) figs.1, 2. Burkert, Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual (1979) Ch.IV, 'Heracles and the Master of Animals'.
12. West, 253-5. A 2nd.C relief, probably from Rome, identified as the Protogonos of the Orphic Rhapsodies, relates to the esoteric texts and to Mithraic lion-headed deities, pl.6.
13. Stucco: Cubicle B, Farnesina House, Rome. c.20BC. Museo Nazionale, inv.1072. S.Aurigemma, Guide, pl.LXXIV. 'A Handbook

- of Roman Art' M.Henig (ed.) fig.83. Porto Torres sarcophagus: Murray, fig.6, Stern (1974) fig.9; Toynbee ARLA, 290.
14. Reinach, RSGR I, 246ff.
 15. Mosaic of evil eye with owl, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome, Toynbee ARLA 402, n.27, fig 139.
 16. See ch.2, n.66; cf. gem showing Orpheus with one star: J.E.Price, F.G.Price, Remains of Roman Buildings at Morton, IOW. (1881) fig.p.10. Eisler, Mysteriengedanken, 338-9, fig.121. Friedman, (1970) fig.12, funerary relief, child with 7 stars, p.7, discusses.
 17. An analogous tradition preserved in Diod.Sic. 3.65, that Lycurgos was crucified by Dionysus, and stories that D. himself and other Dionysiac figures were 'bound to the tree'. Marsyas also bound to a tree as are figures in other mythologies. An archetype of translation through suffering out of the earthly realm to a higher plane.
 18. Christian writer Celsus, see Murray, (1981) 46.
 19. E.Irwin, 'Orpheus and the new sing of Christ', in: J.Warden, ed. Orpheus: Metamorphosis of a Myth, (1982), 54; Stern (1974), 9; Linforth, 248. Another interpretation of the passage of the Protrepticus: Murray on the Christian Orpheus. She believes, p.47, Clem. was arguing for the substitution of Orpheus, who lacked true power, by the Logos.
 20. Diathekai Friedman (1970) 13-37.
 21. Eus. Laud. Const. Ch. XIV, tr. Friedman, 57.
 22. DACL, vol.12 col 2738; A.Boulangier, Orphée et l'Orphisme, (1925), Ch.8, 'Orphée dans l'art Chrétien', 149-163.
 23. P.Gaukler, Mon.Piot iii, 1896, 219-20. Dunbabin, 152, n.81.
 24. Stern CRAI (1970), 76ff.
 25. A.Dupont-Sommer, 'Le Mythe d'Orphée et ses Prolongements dans le Judaïsme, le Christianisme et l'Islam'. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (1975) 6-10; Stern (1970), p70. Prigent, Rev.H.Ph.Rel. (1984)
 26. Stern (1970) figs.13-15. Vatican. Cod., Barb. gr. 320 Fol 2r: K. Weitzmann, Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art (1951), 68, fig.85 and cf. figs. 82-4; idem, DOP 14, (1960) fig.42: Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Cod. gr. 139, fol. 1v.
 27. Discussed by Stern (1974), 70-77. Sister Murray, 'The Christian Orpheus' CA.26, (1977) 19-27, disputes his argument. Both include extensive bibliography on Dura and extent of contribution to the question.

PART II

THE MOSAICS

Chapter Six

THE DESIGN AND COMPOSITION OF ORPHEUS MOSAICS

The exploration of the place of the figure in Graeco-Roman culture, in literature, religion and popular thought, has established a background for the meaning of the image, while the study of Orpheus in art has given a context for its expression in mosaic. We move now to mosaics in particular with an examination of their pictorial structure. The first subject is design and composition, a history of design classifications. The classificatory systems proposed by G.Guidi, H.Stern and D.J.Smith have been taken generally as a basis for description and provide a focus for the scrutiny of design and composition which follows. Close study of the corpus of Orpheus mosaics reveals themes within them, in the light of which the material will be presented. The two major headings, Design and Composition, are concepts which require definition and separation. The well known typological systems instituted by Guidi in 1935, and Stern in 1955, employing respectively composition and design, fail to distinguish these two factors, giving rise to confusing categorisations [1]. Nor do these scholars justify their choice. It appeared necessary not to attempt to supersede them, nor to propose any new system, but to enlarge upon their work, to observe the manner in which Orpheus mosaics were pictorially constructed and the relationship to context. The definitions proposed are for the purposes of exploring the material to hand and need not apply elsewhere.

DESIGN: The shape of the pavement, the geometric framework of the mosaic field, the framing and shape of the depiction, the arrangement of dispersed elements.

COMPOSITION: How the figurative elements are arranged within the framework in relation to each other and to the picture plane. Orientation of subject elements. Pictorial conventions.

The material is conveniently gathered under the general headings of the 'types' and 'groups' previously proposed, but, as will become clear, it is more productive to consider the internal pictorial structure of the mosaics. The material falls into two main design types: panel pictures, in which Orpheus and his animals appear within the same frame, and compartmental mosaics where the elements of the picture are dispersed in their own panels within the framework of an all-over geometric setting.

In 1935 G.Guidi made the first attempt systematically to sort into visual categories many of the Orpheus mosaics then known. He chose types of composition as his mode of categorisation, distinguishing four main kinds. Matters were complicated by the compartmental mosaics whose design had to be separately analysed, making his group IV. This group is further divided to accommodate black-and-white and polychrome mosaics. The system is unwieldy and the many permutations of design, composition and style preclude the possibility of describing any example concisely.

Although Guidi's system is not now favoured, it is useful to consider since it approaches the material from the point of view of composition, which Stern's system leaves alone. Guidi's divisions are as follows:

Group I: mosaics which present a composed scene: 'una scena composta'.

Group II: mosaics showing Orpheus surrounded by isolated animals which converge towards the centre.

Group III: mosaics which represent Orpheus surrounded by isolated, dispersed animals, but which do not converge towards the centre.

These are all panel scenes. In his first group Guidi puts Lepcis I, Blanzj, Trinquetaille and Cherchel, in his second, Perugia, Cos I, Oudna, Thina and the two from Palermo. In his third he places Cagliari and Martim Gil (called Arnal in error), we might now add

Hanover. These last two are the work of inept draughtsmen, unrelated to the sophisticated Cagliari, which does not fit the description.

Group IV: Orpheus in the centre alone or surrounded by a few animals. The other animals are not only isolated and dispersed, but also separated and enclosed by a geometric framework or stylised plants.

Group IV is divided into:

A: black-and-white - only one, Santa Marinella.

B: polychrome.

The second section is itself subdivided into a further seven groups amongst which are all the many compartmental designs, broken down according to the various types of vault decoration with which they appear to correspond. Next are miscellaneous curvilinear designs and the final sub-subdivision g) contains those mosaics which cannot be placed in any other group, for which his single example is Aix, which does not, in fact, represent Orpheus.

Group IV, B, e: 'mosaici che rappresentano un cerchio iscritto in un quadrato e l'unione di motivi desunti dalla geometria, dalla fauna, dalla flora'.

Horkstow alone belongs to this group.

On examination it turns out that the mosaics chosen for each group do not compare with each other on more than a superficial level. The black-and-white Perugia Orpheus of the second century has little in common with fourth century Cos I, neither in design nor style. They originate in different mosaic disciplines each with its own determining conventions.

In 1955 H. Stern presented his design scheme, fitting mosaics into his new typological system where he distinguished three main 'types', some of which are subdivided. According to Stern his types Ia, Ib, II, and III, are regionally determined. Type Ia comes from the Rhone valley, France, where Orpheus is represented separated from the animals in a central compartment, with the animals in other similar compartments surrounding the central one; Ib comes from the three Gauls and the Germanies where Orpheus is shown in a central panel of a larger size, alone or with a few animals. Other animals or independent subjects are placed in surrounding compartments. Type II comes from the Mediterranean area, North Africa, Italy, Spain, Greece, where the

scene is represented in one unified panel scene, the ancient *emblema*. Type III comprises the circular, concentric fields, according to Stern, with the exception of Volubilis exclusively found in Britain, recognising nine Romano-British mosaics.

Stern has ignored the composition of the central panel, the principal theme of Guidi's groups I-III, in favour of design framework. The system serves as an excellent descriptive tool, enabling the identification of mosaics according to design simply by the notations, Ia, III and so on. However, in order to distinguish the type Ia mosaics St.Romain-en-Gal and Merida II, a more precise description is necessary, for the well made, geometrically precise compartmental scheme of the first bears little relationship to the baroque division of the second. The large number of mosaics brought to light since 1955 (Merida II, Spain: 1986), has disturbed Stern's regional relationships. Circular mosaics are not exclusive to Britain, nor are all the British examples of the same basic type. Compartmental designs are not confined to the Gallic and Germanic provinces, occurring also in Africa, in Mediterranean regions, in the Greek East. The picture is more complex yet.

An attempt to simplify the categorisation and to produce a workable system was made by A.Ovadia in 1980 when he suggested a classification based on 'compositional form' [2]. He cut the material into halves and each of his two groups was then subdivided. Ovadia's groups are:

Group I: Orpheus is shown together with the animals, enclosed within the same area. This area can have four forms: a) a vertical rectangle, b) a horizontal rectangle, c) a square, d) the form of a round medallion.

Group II: Orpheus is represented set apart from the animals, which are placed within various geometric forms: rhomboids, ovals, squares, octagons, triangles, circles, radial sections of the circle, and octagons with curved sides.

Group I encompasses Guidi's groups I, II, III and Stern's Type II, while Group II encompasses Guidi's group IVa-IVg, Stern's Types Ia, Ib and III. Ovadia is taking into account the recently discovered examples which disturb Stern's strictly regional definitions. The first group is the panel picture and the second comprises the

compartmental mosaics. This system promises much, it is simple and essentially correct so far as it goes, the descriptive possibilities appear within the grasp, but in fact the observer is distanced from a detailed understanding of artistry in the mosaics. For example, Perugia and Blanzky are coupled as Ovadia's group Ib, while Edessa, Rottweil and Tarsus occupy his group Ic. Mosaics where Orpheus in the central panel is joined by some animals while others are placed in the outer compartments, such as Mytilene, Cos II, Miletus, are not described, but Volubilis and Mytilene are thrown together in his group II. The pictorial distance between Blanzky and Perugia is as great as the gulf of time which separates them. Edessa, Ia, and Rottweil, Ic, stem from artistic traditions worlds apart. Ultimately, if the only description one can give is to say whether a mosaic is compartmental or unified, then only the most basic information is passed. If it then becomes necessary to describe each mosaic in fine detail to distinguish it from the others, one has thus stepped outside a system and back to extended reportage.

In 1982 D.Smith [3] described, illustrated and completely referenced eleven British Orpheus mosaics, refining and expanding Stern's type III, placing the British mosaics into three sub-types:

- Type IIIa: designs of two concentric circles.
- Type IIIb: designs of three concentric circles.
- Type IIIc: radially divided concentric circles.

Of the British mosaics, Brading falls outside these classes being a circular form of Stern's Type II, and Whatley's rectangular shape makes it a rectangular form of Type IIIa, Smith concludes. He feels that Littlecote is in fact a radially divided form of Type IIIa, more accurately described as Type IIIa/c. Already designs are eluding definitive classification.

No more will be attempted here. Stern's system is adequate to describe basic design distinctions, with some exceptions, given the reconsideration of the regional factor. Smith's refinements serve for type III mosaics. It is the intention here to move beyond the bounds set by cataloguing and design typology, which is another method of managing the material with a view to bringing a

number of disparate pictures under quasi-scientific control. As Guidi pointed out, incidentally to his intention, there are many arrangements of the elements within the panel or *emblema* type, groups I-III, Stern's Type II, which require the particular attention of a compositional analysis which will be the study here. The disposition of figuration in the through-designed schemes of compartmental mosaics and concentric schemes, which follow artistic developments associated with the decorative schemes of architecture and the applied arts, textiles, metalwork and so forth, is pursued in the following chapter.

* * * * *

The unified panel scenes are Stern's Types IIa and IIb and Guidi's group I. In proportion, the type II panels belong to the mosaics of the Greek east, 12 of the 16 examples, but since most Orpheus mosaics come from the western provinces, 51 and Africa, 21, the number of type two panels is greater, 18 from the west and 9 from Africa. On the other hand, only 3 type I mosaics are found in the east, while 26 come from the west with 11 type III mosaics, 9 from Britain (see Table after Catalogue). The larger numbers may to some extent reflect the rate of discovery in the west, with greater land re-use, especially in urban centres. With 39 panel scenes against 40 compartmental mosaics, and some unclassifiable compositions, it is not safe to say that the unified picture prevailed as a device for representing Orpheus. It accounts for almost two thirds of the Orpheus mosaics found in the Greek East and North Africa, about one third of mosaics from the western provinces, chiefly from Mediterranean regions. Panel scenes reflect directly, or at one remove, the conventions of spatial organisation in Hellenistic painting: its perspectival systems, superimposition of spatial planes, and the unified pictorial space which operated in painting and wall mosaic intended to be seen on the vertical plane from one viewpoint. The panel depiction was the favoured format for eastern mosaic into the 5th and 6th centuries. Elsewhere, when the panel scene was employed for floor mosaic, compo-

sitional changes followed on the shift to the horizontal plane and the multiple viewpoints offered by pavements as part of an architectural composite. Regard must be taken of the artistic traditions which these types are perpetuating and of which they are modifications.

The horizontal rectangle panel is an old pictorial device for the presentation of idyllic and pastoral landscape, of which the paradisiac scene of Orpheus is one sub-genre. It lends a narrative and episodic character to the depiction [4]. In practice the vertical rectangle was as often used in mural schemes to fit the space. The square panel, favoured by mosaicists of North Syria, suits insertion into the extended decorative surrounds, a carpet of pattern. The vertical rectangle, might be equated with the presentation of an emblematic, rather than narrative image, but such a design also takes account of its location, the floor, orienting the scene towards a room entrance and a line of sight. The vertical panel is extended to take on, in some cases, the apsidal shape of its architectural setting, as at Sakiyet, Thina and Piazza Armerina. The central scene of many of the Type I mosaics stands in a middle position, because the little scene itself with rocks, trees and sometimes animals, is closely related to the sacral-idyllic landscapes of Campanian mural decoration. These landscapes are evoked most clearly in late panel scenes, Thina and Sakiyet, where the familiar sacred pillar is included [5]. The picturesque style had its origins in a naturalistic art called 'Alexandrian', paralleled in bucolic Alexandrian poetry which delighted in the tragic-pastoral story of Orpheus [6].

Orpheus mosaics from Guidi's Group II and Stern's Type IIB in which the animals overlap, closest to the Hellenistic ideal, are Severan Tarsus and early fourth century Chahba, both in a square frame. Chahba is artistically outstanding in regard to plasticity of form and shading. The animals are seen to stand on a ground plane which recedes in accord with linear perspective. Almost all the animals are ranged one behind the other. An attempt is made to suggest that the group on the right stands beyond the central figure, where they are seen smaller than others in

the distance, but the fox and griffin on rocks above are larger. Birds are placed awkwardly in a tree at the top. Leopard and tiger on the left are set on the orthogonal, diagonal to the picture plane, respectively towards and away from Orpheus. The griffin takes its place in the upper region, crouching on a rock ledge. At Tarsus all the animals are recumbent at Orpheus' feet with an eagle on a rock next to his shoulder, an equivalent place to the griffin at Chahba, so the natural hierarchy is effected by its convincing placement within the landscape. Here the overlap is accomplished by so placing each beast that it is cut at shoulder level either by another in front or by a rock, effectively a composition of *protomae*. Even in such accomplished works as these, the relative sizing of the animals to each other and to the central figure is disregarded in manner typical of Orpheus mosaics. Nothing compares in the execution of a convincing perspective with even the simple depiction of the Pompeii fresco of Orpheus [7], with its unresolved middle distance.

Mosaics with fairly successful perspectival depth include Lepcis I, Blanzky and Trinquetaille. The groups of animals on either side of Orpheus at Lepcis I are set in superposed planes. The light background tesserae still serve both for the illusory horizontal ground plane on which they stand and the neutral ground parallel to the picture plane, in which they are set. Thus the birds at the top occupy their symbolic place in the upper register, while they are simultaneously seen walking naturally in the distance, on the same ground level as Orpheus, the horizon understood as outside the frame. At Blanzky and Trinquetaille the animals in overlapping planes are concertinaed into a shallow space. The pictorial recession is more the mechanical copying of a convention than the realisation of an empirical truth. The group of Orpheus, animals, birds and tree at Trinquetaille resembles a cut-out, an integral mass presented parallel to the picture plane, in decorative rather than realistic manner.

Pale reflections of Hellenistic composition can be seen in the Constantinian mosaics of Carnuntum and Poljanice. They are of crude style with only a few animals and rudimentary

landscape setting. The *emblema* of Poljanice, though, is entirely made of glass paste, showing the value placed on the scene. Other examples are Antalya I and Ptolemais, possibly Tobruk. Antalya I, difficult to discern in the photograph, locates animals and other figures within a perspectival landscape setting in a semi-illusionistic manner, though the overlapping of forms is not a device used. The animals of Ptolemais sit in troupes at either side of the singer's feet, reminiscent of those converging on Orpheus at Lepcis I, indeed both may be partaking of the same compositional tradition of Hellenistic illusionism. The city of Lepcis Magna is the location for the Hercules carvings thought to be of Aphrodisian workmanship. From nearby Sabratha came the marble sculpture of Orpheus which Squarciapino thought betrayed the same pictorial influence [8]. The Lepcis Orpheus is dressed in folkloric Thracian dress, rather than the generic robes common to the African depiction, his arm is not outstretched, but away from the lyre, the snake curls up from the rock like Paphos and Sparta. This mosaic too is under the influence of artists from the Greek East. It is sited within an ancient area of Greek influence.

Guidi's Groups II and III, Stern's Type IIa, on the whole exhibit the drift from Hellenistic conventions. A decorative IIa, and an illusionistic IIb, panel composition can be distinguished. Mosaics such as Oudna and Palermo I exhibit the more stylised and hieratic art of Roman naive or popular styles, also the older spatial solutions of Greek relief: figures are seen in profile, without depth, parallel to the picture plane, isolated against the neutral ground [9]. This is clearest in the black-and-white pavement of Perugia. Its horizontal rectangle evokes landscape painting, which is denied by white ground silhouette, which took the place of the Hellenistic *emblema* tradition of illusionistic setting [10]. The inherently abstract nature of black-and-white, primarily a decorative medium, with emphasis on pattern and surface plane, required different conventions. The composition can be most closely paralleled in Attic vase painting. This is the earliest Orpheus mosaic, of Antonine date, c.150, its construction corresponding with

the contemporary popularity of the figure of Orpheus in aristocratic circles (Chs. 3, 4,5). A diverse bestiary ranged in tiers fills the ground on either side and beneath the figure of Orpheus who is positioned top centre.

It has been suggested that, in polychrome, the isolation of figures on a white ground (IIa) may reflect the black-and-white silhouette tradition [11]. Vestiges of Hellenistic pictorialism remain. Landscape elements such as the sheltering tree and rock seat are regularly seen, convincingly shown at Thina, Sakieta and Piazza Armerina. Beyond this central setting no landscape is represented save that each animal has a little landscape footing of its own (Oudna, Palermo I, La Chebba, Rougga, El Djem). (ills.24, 25).

The origins of these footings, particular to the African depiction, have been explained elsewhere as being derived either from sculptural plinths or from copy-book models. Neither is mutually exclusive and both may indeed have been the case. The use of the device in wall-painting must also have played a part. A model must itself have an origin somewhere. B.Pace conjectured that miniature groupings of Orpheus and the animals, like the model Nativity scenes of southern Italy, were the source [12], but one would not need to search so far. The practice of placing the several elements of a sculptural group in a landscape setting is well known, the Mount Helicon Orpheus (Paus. IX, 30, 4) may be one instance. There would be nothing surprising in sculptural tableaux in sylvan settings in the parks and gardens of Rome, the Mediterranean area and Asia Minor in the second to fourth centuries AD. The most commonly agreed source is the copy-book picture, but the question of footings in mosaic is not answered by ascribing their origin to a hypothetical resource. The question is as pertinently asked of copy-books: why would it have been offered there as a model for emulation? Certainly the practice of setting an individual portrayal, animal or human, on a landscape base against a plain ground continues to this day, examples can be seen in any illustrative or decorative context. The impetus to distinguish the subject in three dimensions from the flat

surface plane is perhaps an unconscious one, reliant on the physiology of human perception, without need of graphic example. Whatever their origin, the interest lies in the effect of the bases and the manner in which they function in mosaic.

We see animals isolated from each other. No recession is indicated by linear or aerial perspective, but the implication is that animals placed towards the top of the picture are standing beyond the foreground. In a literal reading animals at the same height as the central figure would be seen as hanging in the air, but they are not to be understood so, that is not the intention (fig.12). They are on ground level further back. Here we see the influence of popular and primitive picture making, where the superposition of planes is forsaken for a simplistic treatment of space: 'up' reads 'back', 'down' reads 'forward', on a line of sight beginning at the bottom of the picture. After all, the image lies on a floor, flat on the ground, it is horizontal, not vertical at all. At Perugia, with Orpheus placed top centre, large quadrupeds, snakes and walking birds are correctly below, or in front of him. The problem of figures hanging in the air is avoided here because with black-and-white, simple figure and ground, no pretence of receding landscape is offered.

The bases function in the polychrome depiction where they render an envelope of illusory three-dimensional space around each animal, that would otherwise be integral with the surface, and would cut back into the picture plane. Lavin's remark 'a neutral ground cut through by an illusionistic hole' (Lavin 185-6) may be applied here. The bases allow the observer to imagine that the animals stand rather than lie flat in the floor plane. The footings accommodate the dichotomies arising between the illusory space projected by the polychrome depiction of the animals and the decorative space of the neutral field on the actual plane of the floor surface. They reflect the struggle between decorative picture making and the need to depict the empirical world, the naturalistic heritage of Greek art.

More intuitively than systematically applied,



Fig. 12: Spatial diagram. Illusionism and the frontal plane.

as a convention it was often little understood. The hedgehog at Rougga hovers about five illusory inches above its base so that its delicate paws can be depicted against the cream ground. Each ground line represented by the bases indicates the place on the understood horizontal and receding plane where the animal stands. In black-and-white the decorative value of the surface, the integration of figure and ground, would be disturbed by such footings. The use of ground lines in the black-and-white Rome Orpheus is one of several indications of its fourth century date. One development of the figure-base provides the heavy shaded line which represents the uneven earth by showing the animal's shadow upon it. This appears in the mosaics of Adana, Sparta, Piazza Armerina. Sometimes it is successfully integrated into the scene so that, although the white ground predominates, the illusion of landscape is realised, as at Paphos. Elsewhere the line is elongated, representing, uncomfortably, the receding ground plane where perspective space has been denied. This is evident at Rome, where animals are disposed in tiers, each row with its own ground line. Such a use of multiple ground lines to indicate an obliquely receding plane is also seen in the Great Hunt at Piazza Armerina.

The positioning and orientation of figurative elements in relation to each other and to the top and bottom of the panel, and the relative sizing of the animals and Orpheus, depended on resolving the opposing demands of narrative and symbolic space. The story to be illustrated was simple: Orpheus among entranced animals and trees while birds hover overhead. More than once in literature the listeners are described as 'the theatre of Orpheus', meaning his audience who surround him as in an amphitheatre. 'Surrounding' was the idea to be illustrated. The animals around the singer allegorise the charmed, harmonious circle of Golden Age peace in the world, the essential evocative quality of the image in the Antonine court. The problem was to render the spatial composition visually coherent. A natural viewpoint, as if looking at Orpheus from behind a group of animals, gathered in a circle around him, would have to be rendered as a row of heads, a blocked view. Panel scenes

derived from Hellenistic illusionism might render this natural view as the two 'herds' approaching Orpheus from each side, each figure superposed on the one behind. Placing smaller creatures at the front of what in reality would be a raked ground plane, all beasts would be visible (Lepcis, Blanzky, Chahba). The observer on the same ground plane, is in the same space as the events depicted.

A viewer looking down, as if from the tiers of amphitheatre seats, or in the theatre above the stage or *orchestra*, would see a tableau where the listeners gathered round the singer would appear as a circle or semi-circle in plan. The adoption of the second option, the overhead view, is that of a picture practice closer to naive or plebeian art, unable to compromise the wholeness of the figure. Overhead and multiple viewpoints were paramount, where everything occurring simultaneously was shown [13]. The crowding and uncertain locations resulting from superposition (Lepcis, Chahba) were eliminated. Perhaps the most famous painted example is the Pompeian amphitheatre fight, where events within the arena can be seen at the same time as those taking place outside, beyond and to the sides. The circle of cavalymen parading in the *decursio* carved on the base of the column of Antoninus Pius in the Vatican, is seen in the same way, the ellipse of a real viewpoint flattened into the circle of narrative space (ills. 26, 27). Similarly the animals of Orpheus' audience are disposed around the picture field, in parallel and oblique perspective. The natural order of the physical world is understood, but exchanged for the logic of artistic representation (cf. Brilliant, 257-9). A further reason for the choice was perhaps an obvious one, that mosaicists took their cues directly from those very arena displays, so popular in the late Empire, in which Orpheus must have figured frequently, reproducing the well known view of the observer in the stands.

Another problem was to have the animals face Orpheus, yet not have those in the centre, the difficult lower zone beneath Orpheus on the picture plane, turn their backs on the observer. In the two herds solution all the animals are in profile. Where figures were isolated, virtual cardboard cut-outs to be

disposed across the surface at will, foreground perspective was more of a difficulty, those 'in front' (ie. below), sometimes apparently heading towards the sides of the picture, paying no attention to the singer. Artisans do not appear to have been flexible enough to allow for a model to be transposed to the foreshortened view although these are known in amphitheatre and related scenes, especially in North African mosaics. Exceptionally, at Saragossa, the bear is depicted from behind using such a genre model. At Oudna the monkey and raven at the base of the picture, 'in front', look up at Orpheus above them on the picture plane, where in realistic perspective from the position indicated they would look more straight ahead. A favourite model from later eastern mosaics is the animal facing one way and looking back. At Sparta the running leopard to the left of Orpheus faces towards him, but she looks back, out of the picture. The nearly identical beast from Paphos is correctly placed beneath and to the right, giving the illusion of starting to run, but being attracted by the music to look back at Orpheus.

Sometimes space-filling overrode all other demands, the animals being placed randomly, their direction sometimes according with the integrity of the scene and sometimes at odds with it. So on the Hanover Orpheus from North Syria several animals apparently move away from Orpheus to the left, but others, facing the same way, are in their correct positions because they are right of centre. No sense of spatial coherence is evident here, for the guiding models need only to have been reversed. Evidently less skilled mosaicists were unable to achieve this.

Another factor modifying the placing of scenic elements is their correspondance in the symbolic field of the picture to the natural order of the physical world. Usually Orpheus is shown at the centre, just above middle, with the beasts ranged to the sides and below in a 'U' shape, rendering the ancient theatrum. The natural context could be rendered by the position of each creature towards the top or bottom of the panel or in relation to any landscape setting. The volatiles, birds, griffins, arboreal monkeys and snakes, naturally took their place in the airy, upper zone of the

picture or in and around a tree. The correct location for the large, heavy quadrupeds was at the bottom, in front. Small creatures stood close to Orpheus, snakes might be in a tree, in the upper region or sliding from the rocks by his feet. They could be at the base of the picture on the observer's 'ground' or at the centre, a location close to the singer's ground plane, for example the earthly lizards and tortoises. The scuttling mouse could be at the singer's feet. Another natural looking location is at Chahba where it balances on the *kithara*. Elsewhere it is placed at head height. Problems with the management of space combined with inexact definitions resulted in curious placements. The giant ostrich is found at the top, as at Palermo I, but stands uneasily in the same space as song-birds. With a central Orpheus, and animals disposed around pictorial space, the idea of Orpheus surrounded by beasts was satisfied, even if the natural perspective was thwarted. Thus at Thina several animals including a boar, a hare and a mongoose appear at picture top, above the tree under which Orpheus sits, an equivalent composition to the Pompeian amphitheatre and the Vatican *decursio*. At Piazza Armerina the same space above Orpheus has a display of colourful birds in a delightfully realised tree.

As well as illustrating the story, the centrality of Orpheus confers upon him an importance beyond that of the main protagonist of a narrative. He becomes a symbolic figure, surrounded by animals, as Christ will later be placed amid angels. At Antalya I, he is unusually displaced to one side of the panel, balanced by a maenad on the other, while at Woodchester, a concentric design, he is displaced from the centre by an unknown feature. Size is another factor, the animals on a smaller scale than Orpheus. The Lepcis Orpheus rises above the two tiers of animals, to touch the top border. Although increased size accords with a reading of the figure as an emblem, it also reflects a standard practice of Roman art, to portray the figures in a scene on a larger scale than the setting. The Sparta mosaic furnishes a good example of this practice, the singer covering the entire height of the panel with animals on a far smaller scale [14]. When the figure of Orpheus increases out of all

proportion, the animals become cyphers, ideas about Nature, no longer animals of the real world. The Jerusalem mosaic, the latest of the Orpheus mosaics, displays an oversized, frontal figure inhabiting the panel in the iconic fashion consonant with its Byzantine date. In relation to their position in foreground or background and to each other the animals themselves appear on an individual and arbitrary scale, relative size is ignored, since no linear perspective scheme is followed. Any correct depiction must be considered coincidental.

The observation has often been made that this lack of scale is direct evidence for models drawn from a copy-book, on the basis, it is said, that on its pages each animal would have appeared the same size [15]. There is no reason to suppose this always to have been the case, if the arbitrary sizing on the animal-filled pages of medieval bestiaries can be used as examples. Mosaicists would know in reality that the lion was larger than the dove. Perhaps a case of simple ineptitude, lack of real models. Nowhere illustrates better unnatural rendering of scale than the North Syrian pavement in Hanover, where the pheasant is as large as the lion and the leopard looks like a kitten at Orpheus's feet [16]. A pictorial logic was also at work. Decorative values governed the interrelationship of forms in pictorial space, elements to be balanced against each other, animating the surface. Real size would be discarded in the anti-illusionistic filling of space. All the animals were of equal importance, so unless notably small, like the mouse, were depicted in symbolic space, as of equal size.

The same animal forms occur over and over, not necessarily due to the employment of copy models. The slavish reproduction of forms learned in apprenticeship would have the same result in a milieu which discouraged inventiveness, as would have been the case in the later third century, when artisans were disallowed from changing their metier and sons were constrained to follow fathers [17]. Mosaicists were unable to invent new designs appropriate to the compositional problems which arose from their improvisatory spatial scheming. This method itself indicates that no plan in cartoon form (ie. full size) was produced before execution,

nor even perhaps a sketch where space is so mismanaged (Palermo I). Many Orpheus mosaics seem caught between compositional devices appropriate to the flat, decorative pictorial field of the floor and those deriving from Greek perspectival systems, insofar as these were applied, and the illusion of realism appropriate to painting. The result is a pastiche where the spatial organisation hovers uncomfortably between orthogonal and vertical planes [18]. In effect movement of predesigned elements was limited to up, down or sideways in the field, each animal seen in profile facing right or left in a schematization of the classical model. The favoured profile view of the animals was symptomatic of the decorative character of late Roman art as the frontal depiction of the human figure was also a distinctive late Roman development. In that simplified manner the essential and diagnostic features of the figure can best be presented. One can compare early Renaissance portraits in profile.

Three mosaics employing organisation around a centre may be discussed here: Cagliari, Martim Gil and Volubilis. The first two comprise Guidi's third group, in his definition 'elements dispersed'. The comparison is not fair, for they are of widely differing artistic quality, two types of composition. Only the Portuguese mosaic is the dispersed kind and cannot form a group on its own. The mosaicist had lost touch with the conventions of Hellenistic pictorial integration. The traditions and pervading artistic conventions which governed the design and composition of all the Orpheus mosaics were so strong that Martim Gil alone of known examples breaks free in its ineptitude. The artistry of Cagliari, judging from extant fragments, is excellent. In the depiction of Orpheus, this unique mosaic combines common conventions in an innovative way, he is a classical Apolline type in a new pose. Around him are not the usual Orphean fauna, nor are the usual poses assumed, but instead we see genre animal motifs such as the browsing hind, the chase, the seated boar. Locating these animal scenes at the edges facing outwards echoes North African traditions, where the central figure is oriented towards an entrance, while surrounding scenes relate to the edges, each to be seen from a different direction [19].

Cagliari may be considered as a type of compartmental design in effect, one in which the visible borders were omitted. Where Cagliari is sophisticated Martim Gil is clumsy, of the most debased provincial workmanship with sketchy figures, lacking any sense of perspective or spatial organisation. The idea of Orpheus surrounded by animals is conveyed by their being scattered around a central figure, but beyond that it has little merit or sense of tradition. Whilst other Orpheus mosaics, such as Merida, Winterton, Panik, might exhibit some degree of provincially inept draughtsmanship, these at least have the encompassing geometric framework holding the composition together.

The categorisation of the circular Volubilis as a type III mosaic, (Stern, 1955, 74, no.31). misses the subtlety of its spatial organisation. We see a radially divided circle, Orpheus at the centre, beasts and birds in the radial divisions, but the designer of this mosaic was staying close to the description of Ovid where he tells how the trees came to shade the singer (Met. X, 86-105); Philostratus (Imag. 6, 2) describes interlaced branches. Orpheus sits on the hill top. A multitude of different birds perch in the branches all around him [20]. Under the shade of the trees all the animals came to listen, depicted on the mosaic in broad sunshine. The mosaicist has shown us the scene from above while flattening it out. We are looking down through a hole at the centre of the grove and can see Orpheus below, as if through the fanlight of a vault. The birds which are above Orpheus in the trees come next in the flattened visual field. The bases of these trees appear at the outer edge of the mosaic and between them and Orpheus come the animals. The radial divisions and arcuate zones formed by the trees make an organic version of vault decoration. This mosaic can be considered a panel picture of the most imaginative kind, but will also be seen to be important as a comparative design when discussing compartmental mosaics.

If we judge the composition of type IIa panel scenes as if they ought to conform to the rules of literal representation many configurations will appear anomalous. For instance, the circumstance discussed above where the ground plane is

not indicated so that some animals appear to hang in the air, or the general disregard of natural scale. The literal depiction of space, which we have become accustomed to accept as truthful, was beside the point of these works where symbolic truth and the illustration of an imaginative concept were the objectives. The modern observer is familiar with two forms of spatial organisation from which the sophisticated Roman artist had to choose: along and across the picture plane, or an illusionistic, perspectival depiction of depth. We are accustomed to reading both modes, the first would be deemed childlike or primitive, the second, sophisticated and Western. We might expect them to appear separately. Roman art, like modern art, sometimes used both simultaneously, especially in mosaic [21].

The polychrome panel picture of the western and African Orpheus mosaics derived its figurative language from mixed sources, fused into a set of conventions which effected a spatial organisation closer to the symbolic space of popular and provincial art than to the illusionism of Hellenistic art, a continuing tradition in the Greek east. The key to the mathematical working of the perspectival system was to be the discovery of Renaissance artists, while those of antiquity approached the problem more with intuition than system [20]. Somewhere even in the most random seeming mosaic is an underlying order, or the evidence of the battle between antithetical modes of depiction. These are not the solutions of sophisticated artists, but craftsmen working with spatial conventions they little understood.

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NOTES

1. G.Guidi, Orfeo, Liber Pater e oceano in mosaici della Tripolitania' Mosaici della Tripolitania, Africa Italiana VI, (1935) 110-155. H.Stern, 'La mosaïque d'Orphee de Blanzly-les-Fismes', Gallia XIII (1955) 41-77.
2. A.Ovadia and S.Mucznik, 'Orpheus Mosaics in Roman and Early

- Byzantine Periods', Assaph I, (1980).
3. D.J.Smith, 'Orpheus Mosaics in Britain', Mosaique: Receuil d'hommages a Henri Stern, (1982), 315-328, pls. CCIII-CCXI.
 4. P.H. von Blankenhagen 'Narration in Hellenistic and Roman Art', AJA 61, (1957), 78-83. The Odyssey frieze, Vatican, continuous landscape.
 5. Cf. sacral-idyllic landscape from Boscotrecase, Naples, Museo Nazionale: E.Winsor-Leach The Rhetoric of Space, (1988), figs.18, 19.
 Later, manuscripts with lyre-playing David also show a pillar: Stern CA (1974) fig.15; Weitzman, DOP, 1960, fig. 42: beribboned pillar, Torah placed on top.
 6. Bucolic scenes in poetry: T.B.L.Webster, Hellenistic Poetry and Art (1964) 162-8. B.Hughes Fowler (1989) The Hellenistic Aesthetic 23-31.
 7. H.Stern, Mélanges...J.Lafaurie (1980) fig.21.
 8. M.Squarciapino, Boll.Commis.Commun. LXIX 1941, 61-79, esp.66-7.
 9. G.Picard, Roman Painting (1970) 66-7, flattening a characteristic of popular art. Bird's-eye view: I.Lavin, 'Antioch Hunting Mosaics and their Sources', Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 17, (1963), 223ff.
 10. J.R.Clarke, Roman Black-and-White Figural Mosaics 1979, 104, cf.97-9.
 11. Lavin, 181-285, esp. 257.
 12. B.Pace, 'Riproduzione in mosaico di gruppi plastici di Orfeo affine al presepio', Mon.Ant. XXX, (1925) 189-200.
 13. 'Plebeian': term employed for popular Roman art forms in distinction to aristocratic styles: R.Brilliant, Roman Art (1974) 217; overhead and multiple viewpoints, Blankenhagen, 81. Picard, 66-7.
 14. Seen on Trajans column, for example.
 15. D.Michaelides: Acts, Int.Arch.Symp. "Cyprus Between the Orient and the Occident" (1986), 473-89, esp.483.
 16. U.Liepmann, (1974) 9-36, esp.14, thinks copy-book the reason.
 17. Professional immobility: H.P.L'Orange, Art Forms and Civic Life (1965), 4-6.
 18. J.White, Perspective in Ancient Drawing and Painting (1956), 62ff.
 19. Cf., Dunbabin (1978): Neptune and Seasons, La Chebba: pl.XXXVII, 98; Dionysiac scenes, Djemila, pl.LXX; amphitheatre scene, Smirat, pl.XXII, 53; Worcester hunt, Antioch, pl.LXXIX, 205.
 20. Does this diversity of avifauna originate in physiological

illustration: such as the manuscript illustrations to the ornithological treatise by Dionysius of Philadelphia. Vienna Dioscurides, Vienna Nationalbibliothek, cod. med.gr.1, fol. 483v., K.Weitzmann, Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination, 1977, pl.20. Its grid form is most reminiscent of late antique mosaics from Antioch. Relevant to the St-Romain-en-Gal Orpheus.

- 21. Cf. White, 43ff. on Vitruvian perspective and Pompeian practice and G.M.Richter, Perspective in Greek and Roman Art (1970), 58: Vitruv. I, 2, 2; VII, praef.II; p.60, perspectival laws observed, but were they consistently applied?

The illustration of the Orpheus mosaic from St-Romain-en-Gal is a fine example of the use of a grid in late antique art. The grid form is most reminiscent of late antique mosaics from Antioch. Relevant to the St-Romain-en-Gal Orpheus.

13. The use of a grid in the design of the Orpheus mosaic is a fine example of the use of a grid in late antique art.

The illustration of the Orpheus mosaic from St-Romain-en-Gal is a fine example of the use of a grid in late antique art.

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The illustration of the Orpheus mosaic from St-Romain-en-Gal is a fine example of the use of a grid in late antique art.

Chapter Seven

THE DESIGN OF COMPARTMENTAL MOSAICS

The fragmenting of a narrative scene into a number of constituent figures isolated within the compartments of a geometrically divided field, departs from the illusionistic spatial precepts of Hellenistic art. This creates different problems of perception. For this reason compartmental mosaics are treated separately. In Stern's conception of categorisation, the geometric mosaics fall into three types: Ia and Ib which are closely related, and type III, the concentric circle design.

In Type Ia Orpheus is represented separated from the animals in a central compartment, with the animals in other similar compartments surrounding the central one.

Figuration becomes one component of a design, as important, visually, as the rich surface patterning of the geometric framework and decorative motifs, to which the presentation of the mythical scene is subordinate. The following examples of type Ia extend Stern's list:

Santa Marinella, Saint-Romain-en-Gal, Saint-Paul-lès-Romans,
?Lyon, Saint Colombe, Trento, El Djem, Tangier, La Chebba,
Sousse I, Sousse II, Rougga, Vienne, Merida II, Merida III.

According to Stern this design emanated from the Rhone Valley, but as well as the six examples from North Africa, there are two from Italy and two from Spain, none of which owe anything to Gallic designs. Vienne's draughtsmanship appears eastern in style.

In Type Ib Orpheus is shown in a central panel of a larger size, alone or with a few animals. Other animals or independent subjects are placed in surrounding compartments.

The unified scene of Type II is presented in reduced form in a central panel with more creatures in supporting compartments of smaller size and variously shaped. Pendent scenes are introduced into the same field in other compartments. Sometimes the presentation of the animals is such as to blend their meaning with that of a pendent subject, so that they perform two functions. Geometric schemes are of the simplest. All the figurative elements can be read as one symbolic narrative. Stern's list and geographic area are extended:

Forêt de Brotonne, Rottweil, Yverdon, Salona, Stolac, Panik, Mytilene, Miletus, Cos II.

Vienne's figure style belongs with mosaics in this group, but its geometric setting accords with local conventions. Trento, with its accompanying marine panels might also be included here. Italica is said to fit this group.

In a comparison of the two groups, a distinct regional pattern emerges, with type Ia centred on the western Mediterranean basin and routes of communication along the Rhone. The second group, Ib, is spread along the roads, rivers and maritime routes of the eastern trading arc which stretched between Asia Minor and the German and Gallic provinces, by way of the Aegean and Adriatic coast to Aquilea and the Alpine passes. The Danube provided a major river route [1]. The Byzantine Empire later commanded these routes, founding Venice as a refuge for its ships. The city made its fortune during the Crusades and the Renaissance by controlling some of these lines of communication and trade. The spread of iconography, design and composition of mosaics along these routes is marked, similarities are noted between mosaics from the provinces of Belgica and the Alps with North Syrian prototypes [2]. Quite how repertories were disseminated, movement of craftsmen, model books or otherwise, is not clear, but the visual relationship of the mosaics is evident. This repertorial grouping will be argued in the ensuing chapters.

In Type Ia mosaics St Paul-lès-Romans and Tangier the field around Orpheus is divided into a simple grid of squares around a central larger square; St.Romain-en-Gal had a great spread of octagonal compartments. El Djem and Saint Colombe both

depict Orpheus unusually as a bust in a central medallion. Within Saint Colombe's square frame is a circle with six hexagonal compartments each occupied by animals, around central Orpheus. The Seasons occupy the spandrels. Four square panels in the decorated surround hold birds. El Djem is a vertical rectangle, its intricate pattern based on a division into octagons framing circular medallions. Orpheus occupies a central octagon, its internal circle bordered with Greek-key and wave-crest pattern, with tangent squares. Trento has a circle-in-a-square frame for hexagonal compartments. At the centre Orpheus appears with rocks, a snake unrolls from a tree. The animals, in compartments, run clockwise round the field. Dolphins and fish with anchors and tridents occupy the spandrels, panels with fish extend the field at the corners. Santa Marinella had nine tangent circles within a square, Rougga nine plus six semi-circles. The design of Mytilene consists of a central octagon, eight square panels tangent to its sides touch the square frame, corner lozenges, isosceles and equilateral triangles, all figured.

The compartmental Orpheus depiction fits as naturally into the North African decorative repertory as into that of the north western provinces. In many African mosaics animals are isolated within compartments, either with a central figure or as part of an all-over design. Diana amid animals of the hunt is an analogous subject [3]. Many subjects are presented in compartmental designs, combinations of fruit, flowers, animals and birds. The pattern of wreaths with masks, vases and *xenia* motifs on an unpublished mosaic from Pupput (Hamamet, Tunisia) compares directly with Rougga (same locality). Richly decorated surfaces achieved with swirling arabesques of ornamental plant forms beloved of African mosaic are employed for Rougga, Sousse I, Sousse II and La Chebba. An equal delight was taken in rectilinear geometrics, used at El Djem and Tangier, some of which can be paralleled in Gaul and Germany. An overriding fondness for such geometric settings is evident in the Gallic and Germanic provinces. Figuration shared in importance with the decorative scheme.

North African geometrics balanced the

elements differently, often giving fluid shapes and floral borders to the compartments, perhaps the influence upon the Iberian examples. While the overall patterning of the geometric Orpheus mosaics of the Northern provinces can be sumptuously dazzling, as in the borders to the Woodchester pavement, nothing so inventively florid as the African designs appears outside their sphere of influence. Orpheus does not occupy the central panel of La Chebba's rectangle, but is placed to the right in a curvilinear tetragon, mirrored by a dolphin-riding *genius* on the left, amid an array of motifs displaying the riches of sea and land. The central rectangle holds a fishing scene and sea craft. The figuration is held in an ornate scheme of curvilinear tetrasons and ovals. Within a circular frame Sousse I and II are divided by an interlaced laurel and guilloche border providing six deltoidal and six fan-shaped compartments and a central curvilinear hexagon. Two mosaics from Merida have a complex design leaving a curvilinear octagon for Orpheus, the animals occupying lozenge-wise squares, birds in the circles and ovals of an interlaced guilloche framework. The richly varied repertoire of decorative motifs and geometric designs in Roman polychrome ensured that hardly any Orpheus mosaics need be the same.

Black-and-white mosaic has a particular decorative effect which polychrome cannot so simply supply, surfaces animated by the vivid, flickering movement set up by the alternation of light and dark. Figuration varies and highlights the decorative effect or, if predominant, the visual scheme subordinates narrative to decorative qualities [4]. Even in the naively executed monochromes with some polychrome, Merida I and Trento, the simple colour scheme and sharp outlines lend vigour to the visual impact. Santa Marinella is the sole black-and-white geometric. The animals sit in their circles in haphazard order, landscape elements jumbled in with two or even three beasts to a medallion, without orientation. Rougga, like Santa Marinella is constructed on a scheme of nine circles. It has tangent wreaths of floral style foliage, vine leaves where they touch, with six half wreaths at the two side edges. Santa Marinella had simple guilloche borders. Among its animals were a giraffe, which

appears on a mosaic of similar design to Rougga, in the Bardo [5].

The comparisons to be made between type Ib mosaics are in the iconography of the central panels and subsidiary subjects, rather than the geometric frame. Comparable mosaics belonging to type Ib are, for example, Rottweil and Miletus, where a bird and fox accompany Orpheus at the centre, with arena scenes in adjacent panels. Panik has an octagonal centre formed by intersecting squares one of which touches the square frame, cutting an outer border to create compartments in the angles of that frame. Stolac likewise has an octagonal central panel within a lozengewise square, six elongated hexagons and four square panels in the space between the two. Yvonand had a central circular panel, tangent semi-circles with squares at the corners. This scheme is repeated at Cos II in a less ornate manner based on a reduced design of tangent circles, seen in British mosaics [6]. The square corner panels of the design recur at Salona, but an extra sub-division of its central circle makes a concentric zone, radially divided, containing birds. The design has inspired comment on its similarity to the British mosaics [7]. Littlecote is as much like a circular version of type Ib, than a type III, concentric circles.

The subdivisions of Stern's type III were applied by Smith to the Romano-British mosaics alone. Volubilis, Salona, Ptolemais and Merida I were excluded from his account and, although difficult to categorise, they offer interesting comparisons. Type IIIa, designs of two concentric circles: Withington, Newton St.Loe, Pit Meads(?), and type IIIb, three concentric circles: Barton Farm, Woodchester, have a main field divided into circular zones. The outer geometric framework is based on rectangles and squares. The zones are attenuated, curvilinear versions of rectangular fields, functioning as such at Barton and Woodchester. Each zone is dedicated to one order of subject matter. Mosaics of Type IIIc, radially divided concentric circles, Littlecote, Horkstow, Winterton, are circular versions of types Ia and Ib, in that the simplest division of such geometric schemes results in radial segments, where a rectangle would provide squares and so forth. In all other respects

they are similar, having Orpheus in a central panel with animals and independent scenes in separate, surrounding compartments. The Orpheus mosaics of Britain may be reconsidered under the following headings:

- A: schemes which are circular versions of existing types;
- B: zonal schemes which employ concentric circles.

Zonal schemes employing concentric circles are the innovatory design of the mosaicists working in Britain. They are listed following Smith's typology:

- Type IIIb: Barton Farm; Woodchester.
- Type IIIa: Pit Meads; Withington; Newton St. Loe.

Of these IIIb are earlier than IIIa, Pit Meads providing the link between the two, the decoration of its remaining corner spandrel resembling the foliage of the Corinthian school whose workmanship is seen in type IIIb Orpheus mosaics and other local examples. Circular versions of existing types are Winterton (Ia), Littlecote (Ib) and Brading (IIa). Horkstow has radial sections dividing concentric zones, but cannot be considered an innovatory design since it exactly mirrors a scheme used for the decoration of the vault of a dome [8]. North African Volubilis, though its scene is divided by vegetation rather than geometric pattern, uses a similarly architecturally influenced scheme.

The discovery at Merida, Spain in 1983 of a concentrically circular mosaic, black-and-white with polychrome, throws any neat categorisations askew. The mosaic has an inner, circular tableau of Orpheus with tree, rock and animals and an outer zone with mixed small and large beasts and birds, plus in the spandrels four winged male genii issuing from acanthus (cf. Titans in spandrels of Mythological circle, Horkstow) It could be categorised as a type IIIa mosaic (two circles), but the scene in the central panel is landscape-based, comparable with Salona, a type Ib panel with a fruit tree and fauna related to the Mediterranean mosaics. Its Phrygian Orpheus distances it from the wreathed Apolline Orpheus of the Dalmatian mosaic, but neither does it bear any comparison with British mosaics.

Subtle resemblances between the mosaics of Britain and those of the Iberian peninsula and Volubilis do exist,

but any attempt to reconstruct a route of reciprocal influence for mosaic styles between Mauretania and Southern Britain by way of Spain and Portugal meets with confusions, for no simple train of development can be traced. It is an interesting coincidence, but perhaps no more, that examples of circular mosaic occur along another putative trade route, the ancient route of the Phoenician traders. Only the fact that the circular field is so infrequent gives any hint that influence may have been extended. In hunting mosaics from Conimbriga [9] an attempt is made to adapt material to the circular field, not altogether successfully, the figuration is not oriented to the edges. Only in Romano-British mosaics, in Merida and Volubilis, is the composition organised relative to the edges, or set of edges presented by the geometric setting. Romano-British Orpheus mosaics display the best use of the decorative possibilities of the circular field. Trento appears to offer an analogous depiction only because its animals run around Orpheus, like Withington and Newton St.Loe, but they are locked in their hexagonal compartments, so it must belong with standard geometrics.

The stylised trees of Withington are arranged to form arched compartments, bases at the outer edge and branches forming a vegetal garland round the wave-crest border of the centre. Within their compartments animals run anti-clockwise. There is a distant relationship to Volubilis, where the naturalism of the draughtsmanship prompts the observer to read pictorial space as an imaginative adaptation of an illusionistic picture. At Withington, however, stylisation and a geometric border to the central panel, in contrast to leafy, bird-filled branches on the African mosaic, flatten the space, precluding any perception but that of a decorative field. The arrangement at Volubilis appears naturalistic, birds in the branches, beasts in the grove. In some concentric mosaics birds encircle the centre, beasts are in the next register outwards. 'Zoning' is the organisational system particular, but not exclusive to the British mosaics, it appears in another form at Saragossa, a long rectangle divided horizontally into three registers, birds with Orpheus, large quadrupeds in tiers below. Zoning relies on conceptual

hierarchies within the scene, the relative values and natural place in the real world of the figures, which would be transposed into spatial relationships across the picture plane.

At Volubilis the larger quadrupeds are at the outer edges, for which read 'foreground'. 'Above' them come smaller animals, close to Orpheus, then birds in the trees. The gradation of sizes is also the best way to manage the decorative space of the scheme. At Barton Farm birds come in the inner zone with quadrupeds in the outer. Trees alternating with the animals form compartments, but essentially that concentric field is one unified picture. The trees belong to the scene of the entranced creatures in the grove. Such an arrangement is common to decorative borders, where it gives a visual rhythm. Compare, for example, the border to a circular *piscina* from Sousse [10], its animals and vegetation reminiscent of Barton Farm and Woodchester.

Hierarchies at Merida I are not so distinct. Small creatures inhabit the central panel with Orpheus. A mixture of animals, fierce and meek, quadrupeds and birds are seen in the outer zone. Salona is a hybrid, zoned within a type Ib geometric structure. Birds occupy the radially divided concentric circle around Orpheus's panel. Again we may imagine them hovering overhead. In squares tangent to it and in the corner spandrels, come four running beasts. The outer half-circles hold pendent marine scenes and sea-beasts. Salona is an interesting mixture of a common type in which the circles are part of a geometric framework and a concentrically zoned scheme. With its extra radially divided zone, Salona may correspond with the description of the lost mosaic of Yverdon where circles were reported [11]. At Rottweil outer, rectangular zones hold circus and chase scenes.

Numerous geometric schemes revolve around a circular central panel, exceedingly popular in Britain where mosaicists developed many concentric and radially divided schemes, a practice which included Orpheus mosaics. Mosaics where Orpheus in a central circle, has a setting which presents the legendary mise-en-scène of a grove in Rhodope are: Merida I, Volubilis, Cos II, Salona,

Yvonand, Brading, Rougga, Ptolemais; Vienne and Mytilene have an octagonal frame, Trento's is hexagonal; Forêt de Brotonne and Newton St.Loe with rocky seat perhaps belong, although Barton Farm with its one pale frond is probably outside this group. The spatial concepts of the vertically oriented rectangular panel are employed, as if the circular panel were a painting, an illusionistic hole in the flat plane. The actual horizontal plane and multiple viewpoints of a floor are recognised in the orientation of other elements and pendent scenes towards the outer edges in the compartments of type Ia and Ib pavements. Brading, probably a circular Type IIb, can also be seen as a Type Ib, its outer compartments contracted to spandrels. Ptolemais with its integrally woven tangent medallions and spandrels wherein scenic elements form a setting for genre birds, may be considered in the same way, as either IIb or Ib. The setting in late panels is reduced to nil: Littlecote, Withington, Horkstow, Winterton, Trier(?). Woodchester's Orpheus, moved down from the centre, has no background of his own, but the fox and peacock on either side intimate a ground line, faintly echoing advancing herds, like Lepcis I. In type Ib mosaics animals tend to face the same way, following a train of movement around the field, like the animals on a funfair ride, just as stiffly. They proceed clockwise at Trento. Type Ia mosaics are not so consistent a group as Ib and III, a number of arrangements and types of geometric frame being used. Several are so fragmentary as to preclude any compositional study.

An originally well preserved example was Saint-Romain-en-Gal, where 44 birds and beasts once paraded around the square panel holding Orpheus [12]. Creatures are disposed according to the spatial logic of panel painting, however those above Orpheus' head are upside down when the pavement is seen from a single viewpoint as it would be if illustrating an article or a hung on the wall of a museum. Approached in real space from the 'back' of Orpheus, another room entrance, they would appear correct, giving the desired sense that the animals are around the singer. The mosaicist adapted the illusory space of the panel picture to the spatial dynamics of the room in which the mosaic was set, involving the

participation of the spectator in the moving view.

St-Romain is an anecdotal display picture, Orpheus himself, in classic profile, ignores the spectator. In later mosaics, when the image charged with his symbolism and the force of the gathered animals, Orpheus, whether in central panel or part of a composed picture, faces towards the room entrance, (where that can be ascertained) on the central axis, to address the newly entered spectator. There are notable exceptions, La Chebba: centre occupied by the important marine scene, the dolphin rider to the left balancing Orpheus; Tarsus: Orpheus is one end of a line of three panels, Ganymede the other, a Bacchic motif in the centre; Constantine: Orpheus appears in a panel to the right of a central oval held by cupids, an Otherworld scene to the left, in a mosaic for a funerary cave; Antalya I: Orpheus at the left is balanced by a Maenad on the right; Djemila: Orpheus occupies a corner of the border diagonally opposite Ulysses, between mythological scenes; Littlecote: the figure faces towards the far apse on the important sight line through the body of the two chambers.

A circular, radiate design such as this emphasises the centre of the field in a manner lending it a symbolic force. Design centrality, the central axis on both on horizontal and vertical planes, assumed a new importance in architectural development of the late third century. Such structures represented microcosms of the universe, reinforced both by the pictorial and iconographic content of their decoration. Events enacted within such a space would assume a concomitant importance, their protagonists a cosmic power [13]. Mosaics with symmetrical circular designs can be envisaged as echoing the decoration of a dome, seen at Littlecote with its scallop-shell apses. Horkstow, almost exactly matching a vault fresco, includes the textile awnings hanging below the central skylight (ill.28). The vision of Orpheus would be 'heavenly', he would be above, whereas at Volubilis the spectator looks down on him. In mosaic such centralised designs display a new concept of space departing from the illusionism of mural decoration. The pictorial organisation would not imitate reality, but obey conceptual demands.

moving viewpoint of the

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where the viewer is

The pictorial idea illustrated by mosaicists of the Orpheus scene was a central figure surrounded by a group of others, the simple narrative scene with birds, animals and perhaps trees gathered around the singer. This would be best presented in the realistic rendering of space in the manner of Hellenistic illusionistic styles. Vying with this narrative urge was the symbolic content of the scene, the numinous figure creating an island of peace within a hostile environment. This was effected by hierarchical arrangements of the figural elements, also by involving the design of the frame to lend an abstract force to underly the symbolism. Another factor governing the design and composition of mosaics was their decorative function, the necessity to provide patterns for the eye, to present figures to the moving view, both in panel pictures and geometric schemes. Geometric mosaics might also reflect the architectural setting, allowing elements dispersed within the picture to be both around Orpheus and around the room. This arrangement acknowledges both the central protagonist of the narrative and the moving view of the observer. In panel pictures, problems posed and solutions provided by perspectival systems came into play. The *theatrum* of the gathered audience formed a circle, a shape perfectly and profoundly expressive of the harmonious peace engendered by the divine music, and itself a powerful archetype. On a symbolic level the depiction could be perceived as representing every power with which Orpheus was credited, powers to avert evil, ensure safety, intercede with the gods, or provide a music-filled haven of peace.

The form of mosaic design which provided the best visual analogy was symmetrical with a central focus. The 'birds-eye' viewpoint of Roman popular art could more successfully represent the symbolic space of the myth than could Greek perspective. The design best expressing all these levels of meaning is the concentric circle mosaic. A simple idea simply expressed. The animals pictured moving around Orpheus also move, in imagination, around the room. The design takes into account the horizontal plane of the mosaic, the

moving viewpoint of the observer, and room dynamics, which govern where he moves. The design expresses both the narrative and its symbolic content. The simple solution provides the structure which houses the strong impulse for narrative form and the desire for decoration and pattern [14]. Perhaps the best of these mosaics are Woodchester and Barton Farm, where the animals pad around the singer, subdued and entranced.

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NOTES.

1. Cf. M.P.Charlesworth, Trade Route and Commerce of the Roman Empire, (1924); R.Chevalier, Roman Roads, (1976).
2. See ch.10, 11. Orpheus mosaics from Avenches and Blanzly display iconographic features also seen on North Syrian hunting and Orpheus scenes. V. von Gonzenbach, Die Romischen mosaiken der Schweiz, (1961), 54, no.5.6, pl.37, Inv.1402. Stern (1955).
3. Diana amid animals: Thuburbo Maius: Yacoub, Musée du Bardo, p.120, Inv.2816, fig.129, G.Fradier, Mosaïques (1986) p100, colour. Dunbabin 274, no.5. El Djem: Sollertiana Domus, Dunbabin 259, 21a, i, pl.20. Sousse: L.Foucher, Inventaire des Mosaïques, Sousse, (1960), 57.187, pl.XLIic. Animals diverge from centre. .
4. J.R.Clark, Black-and-White Figural Mosaics (1979).
5. Musée du Bardo, floral style circles: room of Virgil and Muses.
6. D.S.Neal, Roman Mosaics in Britain (1981), 26, fig.6 A.
7. CMGR I, (1965), 294.
8. Ceiling of 'The Painted House', Ostia, R.Brilliant, Roman Art (1974), fig.III.32, AD 150-200; R.Bianchi Bandinelli, Rome, The Centre of Power (1971) fig.335.
9. M.Bairrao Oleiro, 'Mosaïques romaines de Portugal', CMGR I, (1965) 257-63, fig.7. C.MacMillan Mosaïques romaines de Portugal (1986), 63.
10. Inv.Sousse, 57.049, pl.Xc, XIa-c.
11. Yverdon: Gonzenbach. Mos.Schweiz, 237, no.143.2.
12. The mosaic shown in reduced restoration. Stern reconstructed the original design from the restorer's notes, 'Mosaïques de la

- region de Vienne', Gallia XXIX (1974), The mosaic destroyed by fire, 1968.
13. H.P.L'Orange, Art Forms and Civic Life in the Late Roman Empire (1965), axial dominance: 70-85. Cf. figs. 24, 25 and p.79, cosmic ambience. K.Lehmann 'The Dome of Heaven' The Art Bulletin XXVII, 1, (1945) 1-27. Cf. organisation of Diocletian's Palace, Split, L'Orange, 71-76; Brilliant, (1974) figs. 1.37a, 1.37b.
14. E.H.Gombrich The Sense of Order (1979) Introduction and 171.

Chapter Eight

REPERTORIES AND STYLE.

Further aspects of the pictorial character of the Orpheus depiction in mosaic are style, artistry and figural repertories. The interaction of patron and craftsman in matters of taste and subject matter would have had a bearing on the final presentation of the image. How far antique perceptions can be understood and the extent to which the contemporary eye re-interprets the ancient pictorial language, must be considered. Stylistic conventions governed both choice and expression of figuration. The evolution and spread of imagery in antiquity may have been effected through workshop practice, the use of model-books or the example of depictions in other media. Clues to the manner of dissemination come to light when Orpheus mosaics are compared with each other and with the iconography of analogous depictions.

The hypothesis of the employment of pattern- or copy-books as source or aid to the pictorial resources of the mosaicists, is one which recurs with regularity [1]. Only a few scholars question the notion [2]. The apparent similarity of model types or genre depictions of Orpheus or the animals prompts the hypothesis. One popular subject is the bird scratching its head with one leg. Frequent and widely dispersed in Graeco-Roman art, it continued to be depicted for centuries afterwards. A dove-like bird appears with the musician on the fourth century BC bronze mirror (Guthrie fig.9, p.66; Stern, 1980, fig.2). On Orpheus pavements at Woodchester and Withington it is a pheasant, at Ptolemais a wader (ill.29). It turns up again on the famous medieval sketchbook, c.1400, in the Pepys library, Cambridge, as a crane (ill.30). Plausibly this motif always had a model-book location, comparable with manuscript illustrations to the ornithological treatise

by Dionysius of Philadelphia. Its grid form is most reminiscent of late antique mosaics from Antioch, but also of St-Romain-en-Gal, where the idiosyncratic feature of the birds' hind wing, which appears in no other Orpheus mosaic, may derive from a set of drawings or the conventions of ceiling decoration which favoured grids in imitation of coffering. Weitzmann draws attention to the possibility of the design of manuscript pages being influenced by mosaic practice, not the other way round [3]. Doubtless many amply illustrated scientific treatises circulated.

Balanced against any requirement for a 'copy book' is the craftsman's capacity to carry a visual idea mentally and transmit it through his hands. Any artist can carry elements of repertory ready to put into two-dimensional plastic form. Some themes would be learned in the process of apprenticeship. In mosaic patterns and subjects might be gathered from various sources through a working life and noted down. These notebooks would be the personal property of the individual mosaicist. The medieval pattern albums of Villard de Honnecourt offer a parallel, filled with motifs sketched some of them on the spot we are told, though the sketches are already in Villard's own idiom. Books of drawings by the fifteenth century Venetian Jacopo Bellini were a jealously guarded commodity, only passed on to the family with certain provisos [4]. Jacopo's drawings were fully elaborated schemes, inventions of his own, considered treasures. An antique sketchbook perhaps contained animals, decorative borders, some figures and motifs in common usage, others noted for interest, famous works, specialities of other masters. The mosaics offer no evidence to suggest the passing from one workshop to another of a complete Orpheus scheme, on the contrary, Orpheus mosaics always have the appearance of a construct, of being on-the-spot inventions, lacking pictorial coherence, their elements derived from many sources.

The relationship of Orphean models to other genres emerges most obviously in later examples where imagery from the hunt and pastoral scenes is used almost unchanged. This suggests artisans more familiar with those repertories employing well rehearsed patterns to construct the famous image. It was as if the picture had to be re-invented for each mosaic, not that the mosaic image derived

from one or more Hellenistic painted originals.

It is evident from the study of figure forms that more than one repertory, i.e., a set of patterns organically linked by repetitive pictorial formulae, was used in each mosaic (Cf. Sparta, Chahba, Paphos; Palermo I). If in book form, either more than one book was called upon by mosaicist and assistants, or some of the models were executed from memory. In the case of one or two distinct figures appearing in the midst of a conventional group, the introductions might be from memory, sketch or invention. The employment of models from the pictorial vocabulary of Orpheus in other media and other genres, readily available, provides the simplest explanation for the process of composition, one which agrees with the visual evidence. The notion of copy-books introduces a process more problematic than it need be. Copying is discernible in the work of less able craftsmen [5], where the theme was unusual. It was unnecessary for the well known subject, especially for the able craftsman, unless perhaps a new pictorial feature had been seen elsewhere which he wished to imitate. All internal visual evidence suggests the deployment of ready-made elements, but the frequently stated theory of the copy-book as single source raises many questions, disregards many factors. It might be more useful anyway to refer to such sources, which no doubt played some part in the transmission of ideas, as model books, since a body of sketches, visual ideas, available for elaboration by the individual mosaicist, would be a closer description of the creative process suggested by the pictorial structure. The basis for the model-book hypothesis is the 'likeness' of figures between one mosaic and another. Examined closely, they reveal their differences. Further, similarity in the naturalistic African schools is not of the same order as it is in the stylised models from the repertories of the Greek east. It would be instructive to find sets of models used in Orpheus mosaics which would reveal a distinct source, but would this consist of a book, a school of mosaicists or a practice passed down in a family?

Little can be adduced of the lives of the artisans who constructed the mosaics, something of their work practices (Dunbabin 24-30). The few indications suggest to Dunbabin a designer,

pictor or *ordinator*, who may have designed the work, perhaps laying outlines or drawing *sinopia*. Others, whose work was described by '*tessellare*' or '*pavimentare*', would fill in and perhaps lay the geometric surround. Her hypothesis does not convey all the subtleties of appearance, nor the number of different hands evident in certain Orpheus mosaics. One would expect that the mundane task of laying in background would be given to the lowest in the workshop hierarchy, the apprentices, the less able, but the execution of principal figures ought to be the work of a master. No outlines are evident on any figures in Orpheus mosaics, all seem achieved as an organic whole. The combining of stock figures into a composed picture might have been the job of the *pictor*, says Dunbabin (p.29) although the improvisatory spatial organisation common to type II Orpheus mosaics does not say much for their ability. No example exhibits a wholly successful, balanced internal structure, but such a lack is true generally of Roman art and, indeed art before the fifteenth century when Brunelleschi gave the mathematical laws of perspective. The whole well known ensemble was subject to conventional rules of arrangement for which a specialist would be superfluous. Even where individual figures are of quality workmanship Orpheus mosaics have a tendency to appear as the work of lesser artists because their elements appear to have been thrown together.

Mosaics from the Greek east preserve the skill of Hellenistic painters in presenting an illusion of depth. Compositionally well achieved type IIb mosaics are the same as those where the level of artistry displayed in figure work is high (Chahba, Tarsus) suggesting a master responsible both for the composition and execution of a figured panel. A *pictor* may have designed the overall scheme of the pavement in which the panel was one element or may be the name for the figure master. Differences in workmanship between figures and setting and between panel and ornamental surround have been observed in many mosaics (Dunbabin, 30) The talent for producing subtle figure work is not the same as would be best for skilled geometrics with their complex nets. It is likely that on the finest mosaics there may have been several specialists at work: a designer, who may perhaps also have

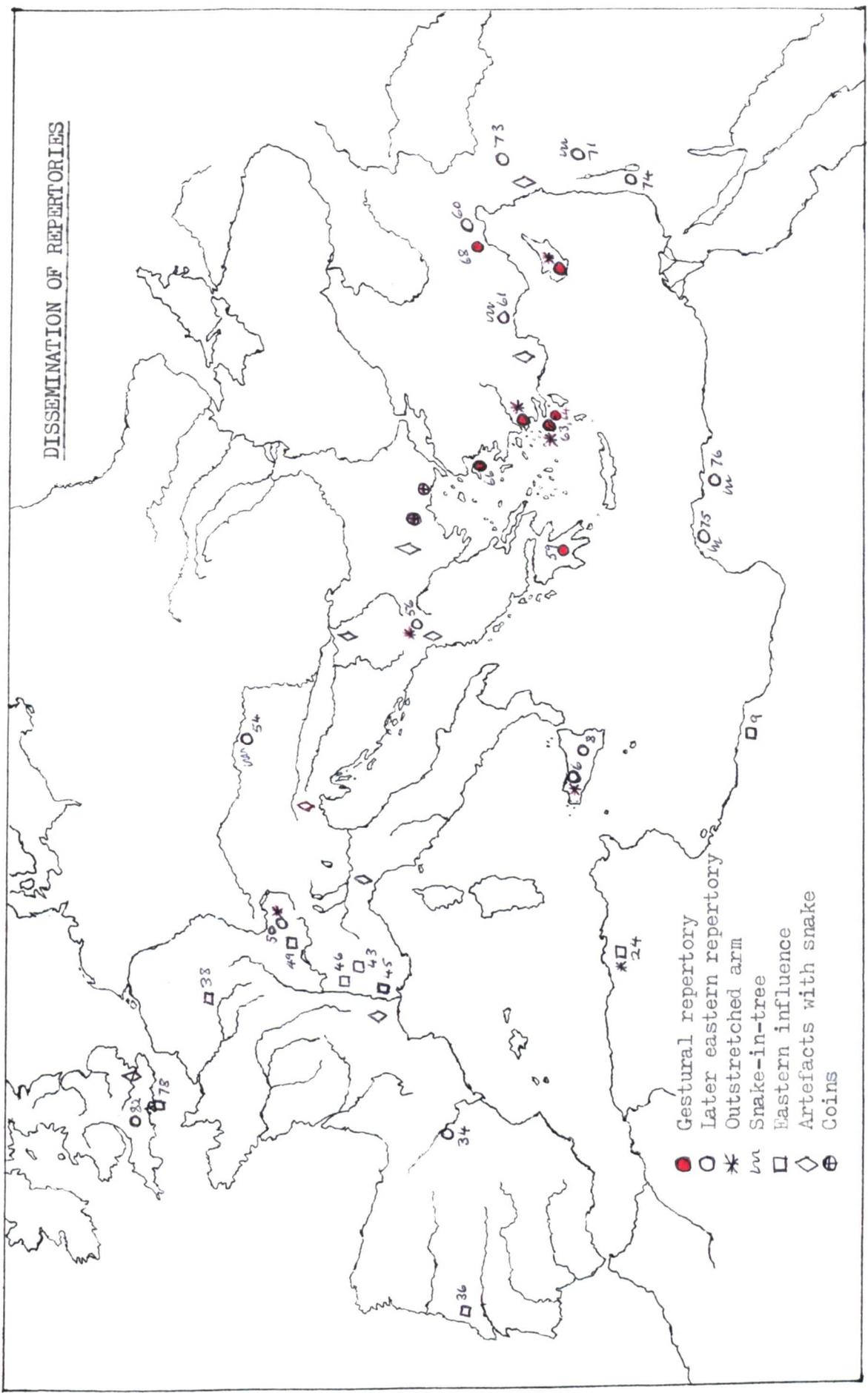
been either the figure master or the geometrics master or who may have contracted both of these; master of decorative foliar borders; the masters' assistants; background workers. Then others who prepared the floor, mixed the mortar, cut the tesserae, ground the finished pavement and gave it a shine, perhaps the tasks of apprentices. Not to mention those who colour grouped and sorted the tesserae, some of whom may have been children and nimble fingered girls. Any element of figuration repeatedly employed in numbers of mosaics might, at the height of the Empire, have had its own specialist artisan. Such was the practice in art until at least the early twentieth century, and which continues in the decorative arts. There is a perceptible difference in the hands, and skills, responsible for the several elements of a number of Orpheus mosaics. At Jerusalem the richly ornamented peopled scroll is more fluent than the principal figures. Either two mosaicists at work or a specialist in borders extending his practice to figuration. At Woodchester two hands have been discerned in the acanthus border, one less able than the other [6] master and apprentice perhaps. The *naiads* are drawn by two hands, perhaps the same two, one with access to classical forms (ill.31, 32), the other exhibiting provincial stylisation. The elegant geometric borders are of a different order again, the work of yet another, most proficient master. Whilst a number of specialists may have worked on the best mosaics, the cruder, simpler examples, Martim Gil, Brading, Poljanice, Carnuntum, amongst others, were probably entirely the work of one artisan and his mate. These were provincial, later, when diminishing skill is evident everywhere. Woodchester is notable for the number of specialists the patron was able to commission for a provincial mosaic. The geometrics master may have come from Trier [7], the designer, who was perhaps also the figure master, with his British apprentice, if not African, betrays African training, evident in the laurel border and the style and species of animals. On all accounts this was a prestigious undertaking with an according degree of innovation and elaboration.

Craftsmen are known to have travelled widely. Itinerant crews of mosaicists, perhaps family groups, practised their skills over a wide area. One from Alexandria worked in many cities

before being honoured in Perinthus, Thrace, where his son enjoyed the same status. Mosaicists of eastern provenance signed their names at Ostia, Rome, Nimes, Seville, Merida, Avenches and North Africa [8]. Evidence of the movement of eastern mosaicists can be detected in mosaics exhibiting features of their repertories along the east-west routes from Byzantium through Dalmatia, and along the Danubian frontier across the Alps into modern Italy, Germany, Switzerland and France [9]. The diffusion of African style has been addressed quite adequately by Dunbabin (1969, Ch.XII). A travelling group offers one explanation for the phenomenon of far flung and isolated occurrences of an otherwise local repertory. Thus for example, features employed in Orpheus mosaics from the Greek East are paralleled in the mosaics from Avenches, at one end of a great route of communication. Images from the same Orphean repertory recur on other items (rings, statuary, relief) recovered all along the major routes (cf.Ch.10, 'the snake'). Map. fig.13

Another pattern source might be genre figures in other media, especially portable items, employed for widely separated mosaics. The seated boar from Paphos appears in the Orpheus mosaics from Cagliari and possibly El Pesquero, Spain. Its characteristic pose is that of the cornered beast seen on depictions of the successful chase, for example hunting mosaics and sarcophagi with the Calydonian hunt. It appears with Adam on a 4th century ivory (ARLA fig.138). It may derive ultimately from the Hellenistic bronze boar, a copy of which is in Florence, known as '*Il Porcellino*'. Though unusual in Orpheus mosaics it appears elsewhere and recourse to a model-book need not apply [10].

Vehicles for the dissemination of imagery might have been western craftsmen returning from eastern travels, holding the new repertory in a graphic form, which subsequently circulated; or eastern workmen bringing out their skills, following the available commissions or in the train of merchants from Syria and the Greek east (known to have set up shop all along the routes as far north as Britain. Charlesworth, 238). Costume details, eastern contemporary fashions on western mosaics, suggest the conventions of the mosaicist's home being employed. The likelihood of a body of working designs and patterns ('model-book'), migrating without its owner cannot be assessed, but



Palermo I provides the one instance where it can be seen that eastern prototypes are dressed in the style of African conventions. Perhaps the designer had travelled, or was not a native of Sicily. The mosaicist was responsible for translating the eastern figural repertory into African forms. At Djemila an eastern Orpheus is set amid a thoroughly African triumph of Venus. Prosperous fourth century Britain attracted artisans from the Continent, some from further afield, seen (*infra*) in eastern influence on mosaics of Brading and Newton St. Loe. Many problems remain concerning the use or even existence of pattern books.

The patron's role in model-book usage must also be assessed. One modern assumption, that he would only be able to choose by looking through a book of possible subjects, must be questioned. There are several objections to the idea that imagery in the Graeco-Roman world was as much an unknown quantity as it is to the modern, lay, interior decorator. We must choose paper from a pattern book, because we cannot know all the possible variants. The advent of multiple reproduction has extended the range of images and their availability. It has been proposed that the patron would be vague about his overall scheme of imagery until shown some suggestions, just as we might need to look at sample decorative schemes. The same factors would apply again. We may never be able to encompass the full range of available decorative material from which we might choose, nor keep up with the desirable 'look' of the moment, but the repertoire of mythological and narrative scenes so far discovered from the Empire is not so great that we ourselves cannot become familiar with it. The subtle complexities of Pompeian mural decoration do not apply to the mosaic schemes of the late Empire. Patrons affluent enough to commission work would, doubtless, have known the extent of the most culturally pervasive and popular themes constituting the majority of depictions. These paintings, sculptures and mosaics were to be seen in the public rooms of the wealthy, in porticoes, galleries and temples [11]. The well educated patron would have access to more *recherché* and literary themes, while the intelligentsia might require something more esoteric about which the mosaicist could be informed, if need be, through illustrated books or by inventing the programme. No doubt patrons contributed to the scheme of

iconography, so that it would convey their desired message, with personal references, favourite themes. They might themselves have sketches of animals or style they wished incorporated in the finished mosaic. The realisation of the idea would depend on the skill and experience of the artist, his repertorial range, the counter-demands of the patron. On the other hand, the endless permutations of ornamentation and colour schemes in decorative borders might require consultation of the sort envisaged by the modern commentator, though available materials seem partly to have governed that choice.

The proposal that a figured scene, Orpheus and the animals with its accompanying subjects, might have been the random choice of the patron or even, perhaps, the mosaicist, is to be refuted. The scenario reflects the barrenness of the modern response to symbolic imagery. We do not, in fact, choose our interior decorations in a random manner, a good deal of attention is spent selecting a scheme reflecting individual and cultural aspirations, a mixture of fashion and personal taste. Clearly, since Roman patrons did not inhabit the same world, direct parallels cannot be drawn for the impetus behind their non-random choice; nor can we subsume their decorative values under our own.

It is a human desire to withdraw from the totally random and place some order on the environment. That it was so in the potential chaos of a world at the mercy of nature and unpropitiated divinities seems obvious. The predilection for extended planes of geometrically patterned surfaces suggests this was the case, the delight in the surface animation afforded by pattern being that it does so by means of regularly recurring forms, offering the opportunity to show chaos ordered [12]. This ordering of chaos was exactly the effect of Orpheus' song. An examination of the contexts for the Orpheus mosaics (Ch.11), shows the manner in which the adjacent images qualify his meaning in regular and predictable ways, bearing on his importance as a beneficial image. Fathoming the meaning of Orpheus (Ch.4), reveals his power and significance. The figure which represented the pacification of nature, the bringing of cultural order and the sense of Greek heritage, possessing eirenic and fortuitous qualities which could

be bestowed on the building which housed it and thus its inhabitants, was not selected from a book on a whim, but was chosen in response to deeper societal demands. Mosaics within the Roman dwelling had the value of being part of the fabric, rather than added surface decoration.

Given the desire to decorate a floor, the compendium of images which comprised the Graeco-Roman repertory was called upon by the patron and his mosaicist. It was made up of several orders of imagery. One was the popular image (of which Orpheus is a prime example): depictions of the exploits of the gods and heroes known to the entire population either in the vernacular, in oral literature or the popular classics. Genre scenes of the amphitheatre, the chase, inhabited scrolls, *xenia* motifs and so forth, could be adapted to local taste and personal biography. The standard iconography of Roman state religion, with local provincial variants, on statues, relief, implements and furnishings would be equally pervasive. Such popular images might be seen anywhere, in domestic surroundings, public places, illustrated in paintings. Stage settings of idyllic landscapes would have been familiar in cities, the type of scene painted to record the *silva* of Gordian I (235-38AD), when the circus was turned into a forest. On a huge frieze some 1320 animals were painted [13]. In the same category come paintings of wild animals on the walls of peristyle courtyards of private houses and the many garden landscapes from Pompeii [14], where animals, birds and appropriate gods and heroes, such as Orpheus, would naturally fit. These decorated the houses of the wealthy. The evidence for the use of visual narrative in public triumphs and court cases [15] suggests that acceptance and understanding of such material was widespread. In the realm of popular imagery there may have been images of the bill-board type, springing from use as stage sets, carrying a depiction of Orpheus, *vexillae*, inn or shop signs, like the Venus from the *Via Abbondantia*, Pompeii. Literature bears witness to elaborate scenarios of mythical scenes, including Orpheus, being familiar to the masses [16].

In contrast the abstruse image illustrated a moral point, a philosophy, esoteric learning: for example the '*Therapēnides*' from Apamea, stylistically derived from painting (Musée Royal, Brussels); the 'Cosmological' mosaic from Merida and a similar

scene from Chahba [17]. Other schemes which offer esoteric readings might be composed of standard representations newly juxtaposed, for example the divinities of the pavement from the house of Orpheus, Palermo [18]. Ornamentation and style would be the province of designer and mosaicist [19]. The picture is clouded for us by the departure from traditional patterns in the illustration of themes outside the classical cannon, and more obscure depictions of the personal philosophies of the patron. The work of provincial artisans often represented the schemes of late syncretism [20] or the work of inept artisans with scant knowledge of the rules of classical depiction. We may be sure that patrons knew what they were asking of their mosaicists, especially given the lowly place of the artisan and his craft in antique society. The fabricator of floor mosaic was at the lower end of the scale. He was contracted to carry out commissions.

Sometimes it seems the stereotyped image of Orpheus might have been interpreted in an esoteric light. The inventive imagery of Littlecote and the unique conjunction at Palermo of Orpheus with the mystic pavement suggests that where another reading was required, the pictorial message was clarified by the context of the overall programme.

Few people would have had difficulty recognising an Orpheus, even outside the urban centres. Imagery on mosaics and other artefacts demonstrated that the underlying model remained constant across the Roman Empire. The very nature of the image of Orpheus may rule out the model prototype, for it was so well known in geographical areas that were not isolated from classic cultural currents. How the concept was clothed depended on the artisan's ability, where he learned his craft, current and provincial fashion. Neither individuality, nor innovation in the image, appears to have formed part of the working practice of later Roman artists. Mosaicists would adapt the traditional forms and formulae: the patron would be sure he would obtain something encompassing the picture he had imagined [21]. This does not rule out the patron's direction of the content and organisation of his mosaic. Having chosen a popular subject the patron would have in mind an image echoing the generally available depictions with which he was

familiar. Anything so commonplace as Orpheus would hardly need to be a detailed commission. But who chose whether Orpheus appeared semi-draped or in Thracian garb, the patron or the mosaicist? Or did convention finally determine the appearance? The type of garment worn by the singer is not found randomly, but in specific contexts and regions. The same conventions are observed on the numerous small articles such as rings, terracotta figurines and plates, which sustained the image (cf. Ch.9). Convention and local fashion were important factors, but imported repertories played a part.

* * * * *

To move on to a close examination of figure style: questions asked of the material were whether a traditional Orphean repertory prevailed that was the same in all regions dating from the late second century to the fifth, or if there were several or none at all, but a random scattering of types and styles. An important artistic development is to be noted in mosaics of the Greek East which progressed from Hellenistic naturalism to the symbolic stylisations of late antiquity and beyond. The same distinctive repertorial features appearing in mosaics from the Greek East were picked up in provinces connected by east-west communication routes, as far afield as Britain. In the following exploration of repertorial forms, the fauna, although responding to the same influences, are treated first, separately from the figure of Orpheus who is the subject of the following chapter. The first task has been to isolate the models from their mosaic context, comparing them directly each with the other. Species were isolated and grouped utilizing drawings prepared from photographs. Where possible first hand material has been used, otherwise published pictures, to construct a pictorial catalogue. (See Ch.10, figs.21-31)

It became apparent in this process that there were two types of depiction. One was naturalistic, deriving from direct observation, faithfully rendered portrayals, lovingly detailed, all subtly different. Their vivid reality betrays first hand knowledge of the animals. At least until the first years of the Imperial era artists

were drawing from life [22]. The naturalistic tradition was served by the continuing presence in Italian and North African cities, of beasts imported in huge numbers by the animal trade for display. Later mosaicists may have relied on stereotypes, but the ethos of Hellenistic naturalism ensured fidelity to the physical truth.

Works from central Italian and African mosaic best exemplify Alexandrian naturalism, which delighted in the expansive display of animal portrayals. Orpheus represented one among many types of animal scenes which included savage fights, the hunt and capture of animals, their display, the *venatio* in the amphitheatre, even viciously cruel executions. Such dramatic scenarios gave abundant opportunity for mosaicists to exhibit their artistry depicting beasts in numerous active attitudes. The picture of Orpheus allowed animals to be shown in a peaceful situation, in quiet poses. The variety of naturalistic poses depicted in other animal scenes reveals that the mosaicists were quite conversant with their animal models. They are seen in combat or flight, at bay or savaging another beast, from the front, the side and the back (ills.33, 34). They may have been worked from memory or observation, passed by example from master to apprentice or from model-books, but the expressive response to the natural world was maintained. Creatures were depicted in a manner embodying their typical features, stance, colouring and locomotion. Recognisably real, these depictions still conformed to the limiting conventions of the Hellenistic tradition. Under these conditions portrayals necessarily shared many common points. Therefore similarities are no indication of an exclusively model-book source. The distinctions were made by the hands of the individual executants.

Animals familiar from their appearance in the arena were accurately portrayed and characterised. Others were subject to distortion, especially the elephant, tiger and leopard. The leopard is common in amphitheatre depictions, but the degree of stylisation suggests that as time went on it was rarely seen in reality. The changing colour of its coat affords a fascinating study. Beneath the rosette spots the ground colour is dark buff, which varies in mosaic from a yellow ochre to khaki, to bright green [23] (ill.35, 36). At Sparta the leopard is malachite green, at Ptolemais it is blue.

Eventually it is coloured mauve [24]. The leopard-head and spotted-skin motifs at Littlecote are dark purple-grey. A late antique reference to the leopard describes '*virides pardii*' [25]. In contrast, the mythical griffin comes in for fewer changes. Provincial artists, far from Greek traditions, may have had to rely on models, perhaps painted in scrolls or books, perhaps from other media. This gave the occasion for such models to gather distortions as they were copied. Everywhere, even on ineptly executed mosaics, certain beasts were accurately represented. The wild boar, common to Europe, Africa and Asia Minor, is usually specially well pictured. The lion, the bear and bull must have been quite as well known over the wider area. Some were the familiar beasts of the region, hunted, others perhaps formed part of the travelling menageries of gladiatorial groups and entertainers, who kept performing animals. Birds are represented in great variety on mosaics of North African inspiration, particularly 'plumage birds' as Pliny calls them, exotic peacocks, guinea fowl, parrots, and the bee-eater, brilliant blue roller and vivid hoopoe of the locality.

Representations inspired by the naturalistic traditions are found primarily in the repertories of the Mediterranean and North Africa and mosaics of the western provinces under that influence. These for the most part date to the second and third centuries. By the later fourth century deterioration of skill led to increasing stylisation, even the disintegration of forms, but underlying models, however ineptly executed, were based on realistic patterns. Animals of the fourth century Byzacene Orpheus mosaics were as realistic as any (Thina, Sakiyet). Particularly well realised portrayals are found in the mosaics of Perugia, La Chebba, El Djem, Sousse I, St Romain, Oudna, Sakiyet, Thina and Piazza Armerina. Vigorously realised depictions from Woodchester and Barton Farm though flattened and linear, belong in the same tradition.

A second mode of depiction is to be found in the Orpheus mosaics of the Eastern Mediterranean, where naturalism was replaced early by stylisation. The division between the naturalistic and stylised Orpheus depictions corresponds with the two Hellenistic sources of artistic inspiration, Alexandrian or North African and the Greek

East, centred on Pergamum, Ephesus and Antioch, the later division of the Western and Eastern Empires. One repertory, in which the animals are given dramatic, formalised movements and Orpheus himself twists or flings wide his arm, is particular to a geographically close group of mosaics in the Greek East. In comparison with the naturalism of African depictions and the iconic, hieratic, depictions of the later fourth century, it appears decorative and artificial. Paradoxically, in regions thoroughly permeated with the forms of classical art, artificiality had its greatest effect in the Orpheus genre, but we may assume that here this involved a development in artistic style rather than a provincial distortion. The favoured mythological scenes of eastern mosaic continued to employ the sophisticated compositional devices of Hellenistic art, the emblema panel, the spatial logic of continuous recession and the single viewpoint, and the convincing plasticity of the human form. These Orpheus mosaics exhibit the move towards the formal symbolism of medieval art. Although pictorial traditions could be said to be in the process of decay, there was no loss of artistic vitality. Indeed, the tendency to involve all elements of the scene into a decorative surface gives these mosaics a vigour of expression in many respects greater than representations where anatomical felicity is high, depictions according with the dispersed and eclectic pictorial schemata of the mainstream of Roman art where part was more important than whole.

The distinctive qualities of the eastern repertories were revealed in a comparison of animal forms one with another, rather than comparing whole mosaics. While some assumed natural attitudes, others of the same species would be presented in an artificial manner. The most noticeable features were exaggerated gestures, dramatisations of normal movements and uncharacteristic behaviours. The gestures resemble those made by trained animals, like lions and tigers in the circus responding to the whip, or horses counting with a hoof. Standing out distinctly from a standard Orphean fauna employed Empire-wide were new species and groupings of animals. Iconographic features can be divided into two categories. These are termed here the Gestural Repertory and the Later Eastern Repertory. The former consists, as its name suggests, of clearly recognisable

dramatised movements. The latter proves more generalised, of diverse motifs, consisting of some new poses, genre types such as the snake-in-tree and the introduction of new kinds of beast and local fauna into the repertoire, such as horse and mouse.

I. GESTURAL REPERTORY

- *A. Head turned back.
- *B. Paw raised.
- *C. Both front legs raised
- *D. Feline, paw raised.
- *E. Hoof raised
- *F. Tail curled
- Orpheus:
- *Xa. Arm outstretched
- *Xb. Twisting pose

II. LATER EASTERN REPERTORY.

- G. Sitting-up feline.
- H. Running beast.
- I. Seated bull.
- J. Sitting fox.
- K. Recumbent fox.
- L. Horse.
- M. Snake-in-Tree.
- N. Snake and rock.
- O. Small creatures.
- P. Monkey.
- Q. Recumbent boar

The artificial mannerisms of the Gestural repertory displayed by the fauna and Orpheus, were confined to a set of mosaics geographically close. These combine with an overall flamboyant presentation on certain mosaics to offer a distinctive style in Orpheus mosaics. This has been designated 'Mannerism' or 'Antique Roman Mannerism' here, since the pictorial dramatisations favoured by the mosaicists resemble the formal devices of 16th century Italian Mannerism, while the air of artificiality and otherworldliness is common to both depictions [26]. (fig.14a-c)

The Mannerist style is seen in a cluster of mosaics in the Greek East. They date from the early third to the early fourth century: Sparta, Mytilene, Miletus, Cos I, Cos II, all from the Aegean coast of Asia Minor; Tarsus in the south east, and Paphos, Cyprus. Some Orpheus mosaics in the immediate locality share the same distinctive features and are clearly related iconographically: Antalya, Adana. Further afield are: Chahba, Hanover (North Syrian), Jerusalem, Palermo I, Piazza Armerina, Saragossa, Avenches II, Carnuntum, Poljanice, near Ulpiana and from Britain, Newton St. Loe. Mosaics in the western provinces displaying more general aspects of eastern influence are Lepcis I, Djemila, Martim Gil, Avenches I, Blanzly, Vienne,

St.Paul-lès-Romans, Trinquetaille and Brading. Palermo I and Piazza Armerina exhibit many African features, particularly in the fauna. Palermo I shares the most repertorial features with the Eastern group. While direct African influence is evident in so many of the mosaics of Piazza Armerina, the Orpheus depiction contains many traces of the repertories employed in these mosaics of the Greek East. Both Palermo I and Avenches II have the outstretched playing arm seen on other mosaics (*infra*) of the group. The Avenches mosaics are linked with the Eastern group not only by virtue of the gesture, but by such characteristic touches as corners filled with small, leafy bushes or tufts of vegetation at Avenches II, comparable with Hanover. This North Syrian style can also be detected in the Blanzly Orpheus in vegetation and animals as well as the figure and dress of Orpheus (before restoration, Stern 1955, figs.5, 6. Ch.9) The animals of Avenches I and Vienne also appear more closely related to Syrian than African beasts. Another mosaic from Switzerland parallels eastern examples (Michaelides, 489) indicating the presence of travelling mosaicists. Routes to and from the East to the Western Empire carried the ubiquitous Greek and Asian professionals and traders, following whom, no doubt, came the mosaicists (Charlesworth, 238).

While the iconographic features listed above are specific to eastern mosaics, models occurring regularly in the naturalistic depictions of African Orpheus mosaics continued to be employed, for example the recumbent male lion and the boar in speedy flight, natural attitudes for these beasts. Running felines and beasts rearing at the hunter, a commonplace of oriental hunting mosaics, were borrowed into the Orphean repertory of eastern mosaics and those under eastern influence. The African Orpheus, until the fourth century, always kept a separate vocabulary of forms. (Relationship of Orpheus and hunting scenes: Ch.11.) The boar is seated at Paphos, adopting a pose drawn from the hunt (*supra*). It is paralleled at Cagliari, where the animals are not Orpheus's audience but genre hunt scenes. Uniquely, the boar of Cos II is recumbent and raises a hoof, an unnatural pose. The recumbent fox (K) with its head turned (*A) is unique in Orpheus mosaics, but mirrors a common formula for the shepherd's dog. El Djem is

unique among African mosaics in depicting the wild ass recumbent (cf. St Colombe). The horses (L) of Hanover and Cos II are also depicted in this unusual position. Cos II has all its beasts recumbent, while most are so on Cos I. The recumbent creatures of Tarsus in superposed planes appear as *protomae*. In eastern mosaics the horse, or wild horse, rather than the ass is the equid attracted by the singing, apparently throwing back its head to join in at Chahba. The wild horse was a celebrated member of Asian fauna (as was the onager, more appropriate to hunting scenes), but one wonders if it was not chosen for the Orphean audience because it offered a more dramatic picture, with its long neck, waving tail and flowing mane, than the stiffer figure of the ass. The recognisable look of Mannerist mosaics is one of pictorial dramatisation.

A variant on running is to show raised, splayed front paws (*C), half way between the rearing posture of the hunt and a submissive raising of the fore legs. At Paphos, Sparta, Martim Gil and Newton St Loe the animals virtually rear up on their hind legs. The horse of Mytilene performs a rearing act. The animals of Newton St. Loe are almost heraldic in their degree of stylisation, but clearly derived from the basic models (see drawing). Sitting felines (G) act thus at Miletus, Cos I, Mytilene and Antalya, almost the same as the sit-up-and-beg pose of a circus act. The mongoose of Chahba (lower right corner) [27], which raises both forepaws, is seen in a posture at once conforming with the circus act mannerisms of the Gestural repertoire and quite characteristic of the beast in nature. This differs from its conventional depiction in Nilotic landscape. The raising of one front paw (*B) to signify submission and attention to the singer is a gesture usually made by a standing feline. It is one of the most prominent features. At Saragossa, Mytilene and Palermo I where we also see a fox and a hare raising a paw, they are seated. The Paphos bear raising its paw is a singular occurrence. The stork and partridge of Mytilene signal too. The raised hoof (*E) is the equivalent gesture made by ungulates. The distinction is visual, because the leg bends in a different way. A group of mosaics give the gesture to the seated bull, but it is also made by ibex and gazelle at Hanover, oryx of Chahba, oryx and stag of Piazza Armerina and Palermo's stag.

Another prominent feature is the backward-turned head (*A) which has an ancient origin. The Thracian warrior of the (4thC.BC) Berlin vase walks away, but looks back, drawn by the power of the music ((fig.4) Ch.2). The move, showing that even the fiercest heart can be turned, was a characteristic of Dionysus' feline steed or accompanying leopard which only the god could tame. It shows resentment and submission. In this group of mosaics from late antiquity, the power, not only to tame, but to command, is transferred to Orpheus. We are reminded again of display, of a circus act, Orpheus the ringmaster. A gesture of felines in one convention, in another the turned head marks the fear of fleeing prey. Thus it appears natural made by the stag, oryx and pangolin from Piazza Armerina, an ibex and gazelle from Hanover and an oryx from Chahba, though the meaning is changed, with Orpheus they sit fearless. The movement is uncharacteristic of a bull (Miletus) and a bear. Paphos has the highest incidence of gestural features. Perhaps the direction of the patron, commemorated in the inscription, is seen here. Set in different colours for each line it is another instance of pictorial *showiness*.

A third diagnostic feature of the gestural repertory is the reflexed tail seen so frequently (*F). In felines it is quite characteristic of the living beast to hold its tail thus, at certain times, principally when it stops moving. At Sparta it looks a device to ensure creatures keep within the limited space. It is equally effective in balancing and centring forms, articulating the surface to give the picture a decorative quality. These linear arabesques are typical not only of this repertory, but of the eastern depiction in general with its leaning towards decoration. The motif of running beasts with reflexed tail and raised paw may have been lifted from the popular decorative device of hunts in peopled scrolls. The curve-tailed beast is seen on textiles recovered from Egypt and in mosaic borders such as those around the Rural Scenes panel from the 'House of Ikarios' Oudna [28]. The tail occurs in pavements pendent to Orpheus, laid by the same workshop: Paphos, Nemean lion; Miletus, hunting feline of the *venatio*; Sparta, Europa's bull. A compartmental mosaic from Manisa shows several beasts around a central eagle, all with turned head or reflexed tail.

Otherwise the features belong to a decorative context [29].

No mosaic showed the Gestural and Later Eastern repertories entire, but new models mixed with conventional figures. The gesture which links Paphos, Cos I and Miletus, as well as Palermo I, is that made by Orpheus, the outstretched playing arm (see Ch.9). These mosaics, where the animals are the most closely related formally, look dissimilar in regard to draughtsmanship and composition. The animals of Cos II, distinctive in that all are recumbent, relate visually to those of Cos I, but are placed in a geometric scheme, while Cos I is a unified panel. The mosaics of Sparta and Paphos appear unlike at first sight, but the leopards are almost identical, even to the same bifurcated shadow. At Sparta it is squeezed between Orpheus and the left edge, looking back out of the picture. At Paphos the same model is placed below Orpheus and so looks at him. The same sinuous linearity displayed in the fine mosaic of Paphos holds together the decorative surface of the provincial Sparta depiction. Both exhibit 'Mannerist' features, but use different compositional schemes and Orpheus figures. Sparta shares the model for its Orpheus with Chahba, which has nothing in common with Paphos. Both Chahba and Sparta may derive from the same famous relief or painting [30]. Apart from Orpheus' outstretched arm, a gesture Palermo I shares with mosaics from the Greek east, its animals display only one gesture, the raised paw (*B); the bull is recumbent. The overall effect would be something like Paphos, animals isolated in the field, but fauna, draughtsmanship and costume are African. These four mosaics provide tantalising clues to the use of models. They have been assigned dates between 220, Paphos, and 325, Chahba. Sparta is c.300, Palermo I after 300 (Boeselager, 1986) An intricate net of reciprocal influence binds these depictions which if unravelled might determine an absolute dating as well as revealing the process of visual realisation.

Many variants in design and composition appear on mosaics employing these figural repertories. A consistent group of features exhibited in a manner suggestive of derivation from a central stylistic origin is displayed in these eastern mosaics. The new Mannerist mode of representation imparted drama to a peaceful situation.

It was the opposite of that which sought to make animals recognisable by showing them at their most typical in any situation. Movements are artificial and affected. Mosaics later in the fourth century return to the standard Orphean repertory, presenting it in a hieratic, abstract form. The Gestural and Late Eastern repertories and the 'Mannerist' style, blooming in a limited area in the Greek East in the mid third century appear later in individual mosaics in other regions (list above). The adaptation of a fashion to a mosaicist's own designs can be seen at Palermo I, an example of a predominantly African fauna in the style of eastern repertories. Possible scenarios are: an African trained mosaicist equipped with a book of models from the Greek East, presenting the fauna of his training in these new poses; an African trained artisan who had travelled east and made sketches of the Eastern repertory, presenting the old fauna in newly fashionable forms; an eastern designer in Sicily, designing the mosaic which was laid by an artisan of African training; the influence of the patron coming back from the east with a record of something he had seen. The Palermo craftsman's handling of space is decidedly inept, it is hard to envisage him copying from a complete working drawing. The roles of designer and craftsman are impossible to distinguish without documentary evidence, but here and in the closely related pair Barton Farm and Woodchester differences might yield clues to working process.

The Mannerist repertory was new to Orpheus mosaics, but its constituents were not new to the vocabulary of late antique art. Each was borrowed from other genres and media, combined to express a new message. The stylised depiction cannot be compared with a local output of animal scenes in those eastern Mediterranean regions where it originated. There the favoured representation in the early to mid third century was the mythological scene. Beast shows were as popular in the eastern provinces as elsewhere, but the idealised oriental hunt [31] and the animal Paradise come from a period after the Orpheus mosaics. The mosaicists of the Orpheus scene, therefore, could not draw directly from a parallel visual tradition in the manner of their African counterparts. The style of animal presentation seems to owe much to the decorative formal devices of animals vividly portrayed

in the 4th. century BC Greek pebble mosaics from Pella and Olynthus (the same style is seen in the animal hunt from Alexandria), and in the 2nd century tessellated mosaics from Delos [31a]. The third century mosaicists of the Greek East required other direct iconographic sources from which to construct a picture of Orpheus, perhaps drawing heavily on patterns already employed in the decorative and applied arts.

Some compartmental mosaics show running beasts: Forêt de Brotonne, Vienne, Salona, Stolac, Panik. Newton St Loe, Withington (concentric), Horkstow, Winterton. They also occur on panel scenes of fourth century date: Sparta, Palermo II, Martim Gil, and from Africa, Sakiyet and Thina. The animals of Vienne, where one might expect African influence, are closely related stylistically to those of Syrian hunting mosaics [32]. Running animals around the rims of fourth century silverware bowls are commonplace and may have some relevance to the occurrence of the circular design in the British Orpheus [33]. The tendency to incorporate into the Orphean repertory motifs from other genres is seen in these late mosaics, such as hunting scenes from decorative borders in mosaic and other media especially relief, textiles and silverware; the influence of pastoral imagery is noted in the sheep at Thina and Rome and a sheepdog pose given to the Paphos fox. Hunt imagery appears first and pervasively in the eastern examples. The inclusion of running beasts in the two African mosaics exhibits the breakdown in craft traditions, losing the distinctions between genre repertories, which were so strong there earlier on, where running animals were appropriate to Diana, for example, but not Orpheus. (ill.38) Animals leaping across schematic trees are seen at Horkstow, Winterton, Stolac and Salona. Trento is similar.

Another introduction of nature was the use of bushes and branches scattered across the picture plane in *asaroton* fashion, characteristic of North Syrian mosaics: Hanover, Rome, Jerusalem, and the bird compartments of Ptolemais. The corner-filling bush typical of Syrian work is seen at Hanover and Paphos, Panik, Avenches I, Blanzky and Whatley (cf. Antioch, Worcester Hunt, Lavin, fig.2; Apamea, *ibid.* fig.139). At Woodchester and Barton Farm, scattered branches appear behind the birds. Pale coloured tendrils with

the quadrupeds represent creeping plants, perhaps ivy and vine, others on a dark ground are water plants. Woodchester's great acanthus scroll is perhaps the most vivid evocation of the plant world. Thus the variety of vegetation detailed in Ovid's description (Met. X, 86-105) is brought to life. Space-filling with plants brought the later images nearer to medieval tapestries or manuscripts. They remain artistically successful however far they stray from Hellenistic pictorial illusionism.

An Orpheus mosaic in the Antalya museum links the marble fountain ornaments of Sabratha, Istanbul, Athens, Byblos and the ivory *pyxides* of Bobbio and Florence, believed to be of Syrian origin [34] tying them all to the one area. Notable features are a monkey perched up high with its legs drawn up (P), a griffin, a snake-in-a-tree (M). All save the maenad are found on the *pyxides* where the monkey sits on the lyre. The fountain sculptures agree, but instead of the maenad, include the sphinx, perhaps perceived as an analogous murderous force. The Antalya mosaic displays those elements of the Later Eastern repertory particular to mosaics whose range in the east is denoted by a geographical arc from Antalya through Syria round to Cyrenaica. Genre motifs such as the snake-in-tree (M), the mouse (O), relate the Orpheus mosaics of Antalya, Hanover, Chahba, Jerusalem, Ptolemais and Tobruk repertorially, though they differ stylistically. Some also share the repertories discussed above. Overlapping nets enclose the two groups of mosaics, for mouse and monkey shoulder level to Orpheus appear at Piazza Armerina. The eastern iconography travelled north and west, the snake-in-tree of Syrian mosaics, the fountain ornaments, the *pyxides* and a small sculptural group, the London Bacchus [35], is seen on the Orpheus mosaic of Carnuntum on the Danube. Gems recovered from routes through Danubian and Dalmatian provinces carry the same image. The iconography of the ivories is paralleled in Coptic textiles and the Jerusalem mosaic where the Centaur and Pan (who also appear on the London Bacchus statuette) are depicted.

Other developments in Orpheus mosaics include the fashion for Nilotic scenes. At Merida pigmy battles (popular in the region) are pendent to Orpheus. Sakiyet, Thina and Jerusalem employ the Nilotic group of mongoose and cobra, perhaps in the sense in which it

appears on sarcophagi, indicating life and death forces, which would accord with the changed meaning of later Orpheus mosaics. The crocodile and cobra of Hanover are not in combat (cf. Balty, 1976, 230). Nilotic groupings occur on the black-and-white mosaics of Rome, and Perugia with its crocodile, rhinoceros, cobra and ibis. In mosaics in the environs of Rome, Nilotic scenes were common before AD 200. The probably fourth century mosaic of Rome continues the tradition. It has an ibis and a hippopotamus among Nilotic vegetation. Nilotic features are exotic, the allusion perhaps being to Egypt and Alexandria, famed for its extravagant animal displays under the Ptolemies, one of the Hellenistic centres of a certain type of naturalistic art, and poetry in which Orpheus figured [36]. The influence of Mithraic iconography is seen in mosaics north of the Alps, principally in Britain, in Orpheus' dress (*infra*). The fox moves nearer to him, imitating the dog's pose in the Mithraic Tauroctony. The fox may have assumed the symbolic importance of the Mithraic dog, or was given the pose because it was an Orphean animal of equal significance. The imagery occurs in Christian sarcophagi, Roman catacomb frescos, ceramics from Cologne (cf.Ch.2).

A multiplicity of lost artefacts in other media might have acted as the agents passing the imagery from one discipline to another. Amongst these must be textiles, tapestries, woven and sewn, and carpets, with which mosaics have a formal relationship. All that now remains are the Coptic woven and embroidered tapestries and the small *orbiculi*, on several of which Orpheus appears (Ch.2, n.60). In many cases the closest parallels for later mosaics are to be found in other media, sharing spatial organisation and iconography. The contiguously carved animals of the marble fountain ornaments and the ivory *pyxides* are echoed in the composition of mosaics from Sparta and Palermo II, animals are disposed in tiers. Visual sources for later Orpheus mosaics appear to have been motifs culled from the decorative arts and portable items, almost as much as from mosaic craft traditions or painting. Stale workshop practices consolidated in provincial centres would further the decay of classical forms. It is appropriate to consider the matter of draughtsmanship at this point. The forms of classical art were imitated in local native styles. In Britain a tendency to subsume all forms to a

rhythmic linear striation gave strong inner patterning, though the structure of individual forms diminished. Nevertheless, design is a strength of these mosaics. Either through continual copying, or passing the figure 'from hand to hand' in the workshop without knowing or understanding the originating model, images lost their organic coherence. Many times the modern observer is at a loss to interpret strange figures, perhaps only taking into account immediate visual effects, what it looks like now, disregarding distorted drawing. Points to note are exaggeration of diagnostic or typical forms changing them out of recognition; or, normalising features strange to their eyes. The hump on the back of the European bear can become overlarge or be smoothed out altogether, while the unlikely elephant undergoes distinct metamorphoses. The trunk is stretched or the ears shrink. Woodchester's ungainly *naiads* are based on classical forms. Orpheus and the goddesses at Littlecote appear to dance or stand, though in fact they were intended to obey particular conventions of the seated figure and can be shown to do so. Bad draughtsmanship, which includes ill judged spatial organisation, has to be accorded its place in the formation of the image. The intended depiction, distanced, for many reasons, from an ancient model, should be read through the distortions. If not the image, resulting from the inept drawing of a conventional model, may be interpreted as turning oddly towards the esoteric and abstruse.

Mosaic repertories can be viewed from a wide angle or given a detailed scrutiny. The first produces a picture of mosaics conforming to a pattern. A repertory for Orpheus with the animals developed in the Hellenistic period. It was a genre with its own rules to which the mosaics conformed. If not so, the picture would have become unrecognisable. Stereotypical poses evolved for each animal based on characteristic behaviour, the embodiment of the typical. Distinct styles evolved regionally, representing local taste. With so many permutations of style, repertory and composition each mosaic now appears distinct. The eastern Mannerist depiction draws upon stereotypes from other genres, radically changing their meaning and subtly altering that of Orpheus himself. Orpheus mosaics of the Western Empire belonged to an extensive industry of animal depictions, reflecting pictorial

conventions of Hellenistic naturalism. Mosaicists of the Eastern empire, where the illusionistic unified scene tended to contain compositions of humans and gods at the time of the Orpheus mosaics, could not draw upon a local tradition of animal art, so animal forms become stylised. Even mosaics closely related by figural repertories can look vastly different where different design repertories were employed.

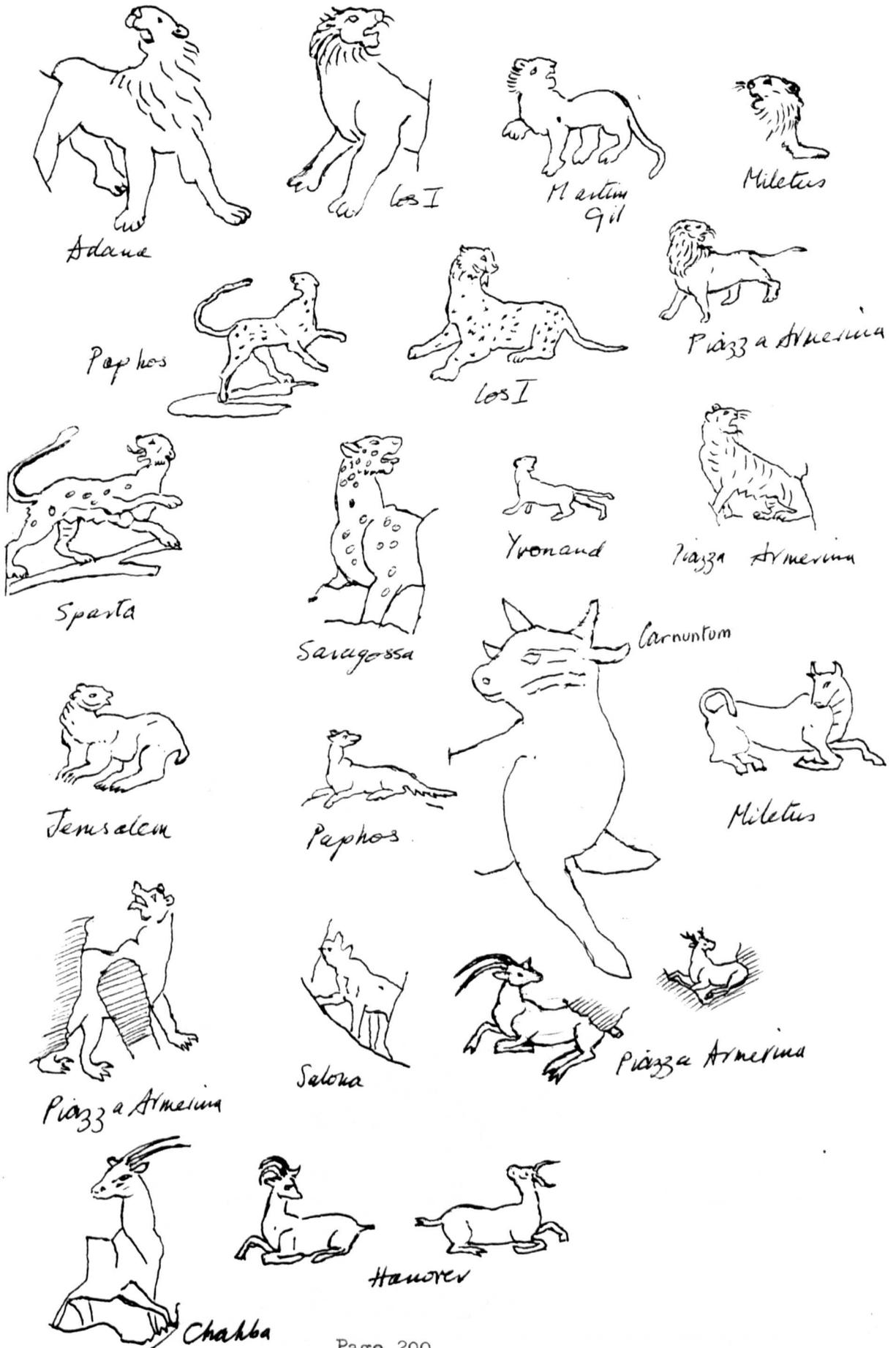
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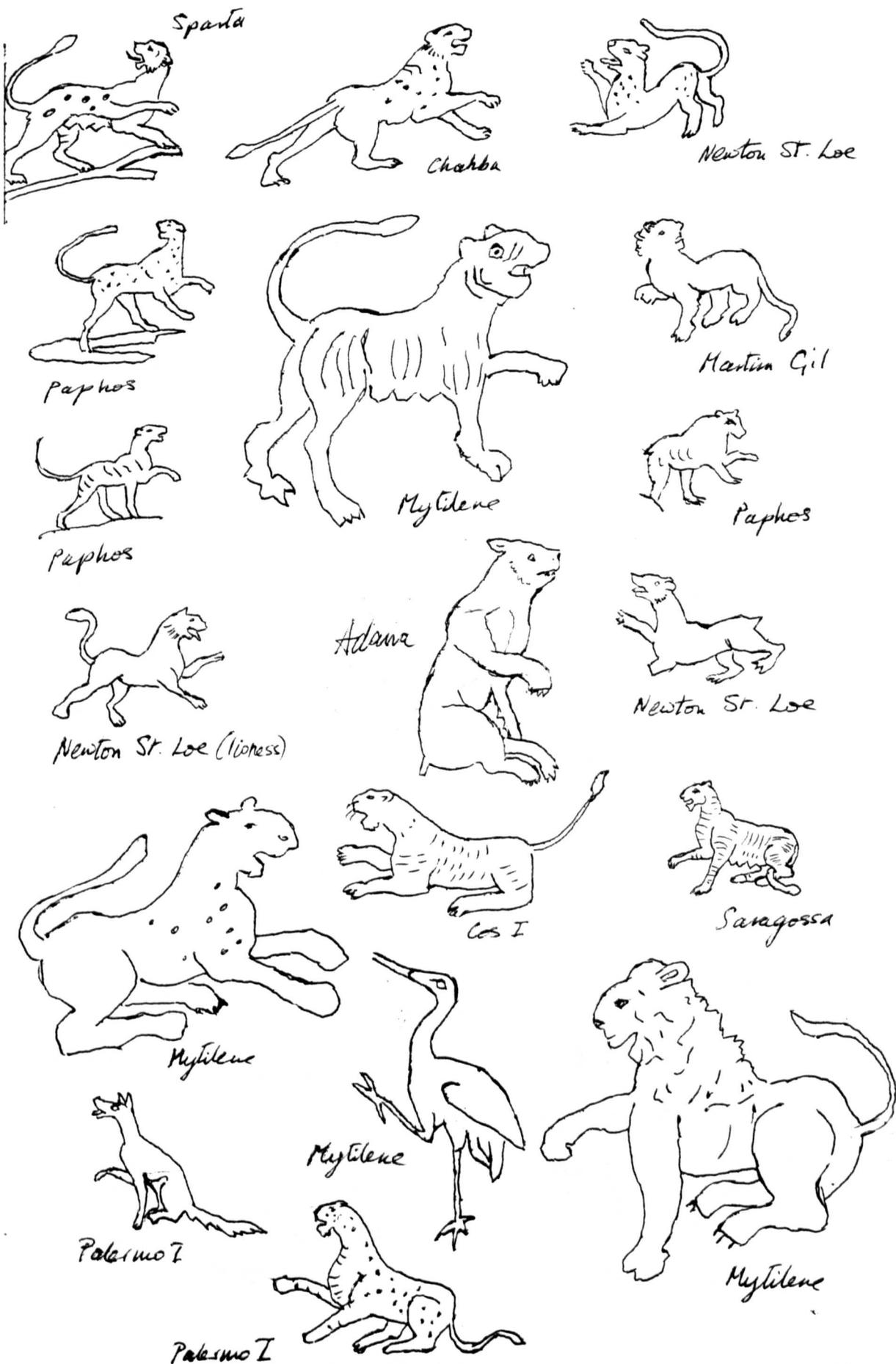
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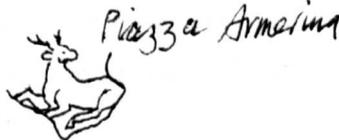
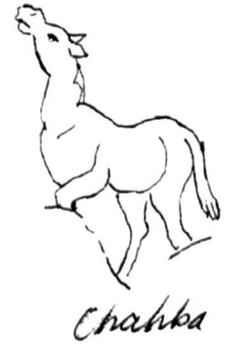
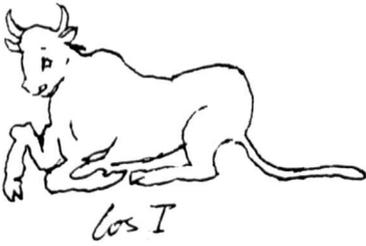
1. D.Levi, Antioch Mosaic Pavements (1947), 362ff.; V.von Gonzenbach (1950) 283; J.Thirion MEFRA (1955), 167; J.M.C.Toynbee, Latomus VI, (1951), 46-8, *idem*, (1964), 10-11; R.M.Harrison, JRS 52, (1962), 13-18; L.Budde, Antike mosaiken in Kilikien, (1969), 83, D.Michaelides (1986) 483; etc.
2. R.J.A.Wilson, JRS 71, (1981), 173-7; P.Bruneau, 'Les mosaïcistes antiques, avaient-ils des cahiers des modèles?' Rev.Arch, (1984), 241-272.
3. Pepys Library, Magdalene College Cambridge, Ms. P.L. 1916; Vienna Dioscurides, Vienna Nationalbibliothek, cod. med.gr.1, fol. 483v., K.Weitzmann, Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination, 1977, pl.20; *idem*, Illustrations in Roll and Codex, 2nd ed.(1970).
4. Villard: E.Gombrich, Art and Illusion, [1959], 1977 pbk.ed., p.68, fig.52, p.130-1, figs. 105-6. Bellini: C.Joost-Gaugier, Jacopo Bellini, Selected Drawings, (1980) v-vi.
5. Eg.Brading, Astronomer: Toynbee (1962), pl.233, left arm misunderstood.
6. B.Woodward, talking about the Wotton reconstruction. Cf. Mosaic 4, (1981), 10-15.
7. Cf.K.Parlasca (1959), 50, pl.50; D.J.Smith (1965), 113-14, fig.18; *idem*, 'The Mosaic Pavements' in The Roman Villa in Britain, A.L.F.Rivet ed. (1969) 116, pl.3.32. Both discuss a panel in the geometrically patterned border, considering the mosaicist worked first in Britain, then Trier on grounds that elaboration in the Trier version shows it was laid second. But simplification at Woodchester might be evidence of movement away from a centre of inspiration. NB. distinction made in this work between masters responsible for figures and for patterns.

8. Toynebee, Latomus IX, 1950, 296-7.
9. M.P.Charlesworth, Trade Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire, (1924), Ch.10, 173-8.
10. Carthage, Dermech, Dunbabin pl.XII, 23; Oudna, Maison des Laberii, *ibid* pl.XXXIX, 101, Lavin fig.75. Many hunt scenes show the cornered boar on its back legs. 'Il porcellino', Ufizzi, Florence: F.Haskell Taste and the Antique (1981) 161-3, fig.83. G.Richter Animals in Greek Sculpture (1930). Cf. Michaelides (1986) 483.
11. Cf. L.Casson, Travel in the Ancient World, (1974), Ch.17, esp. 264-271. Pliny NH XXXVI, 28-29, 34-36. More: J.J.Pollitt The Arts of Rome (1966) 88-91; and so on.
12. E.Gombrich The Sense of Order, (1979), 1-12, pattern, ancient origins as ordering chaos.
13. Pliny on galleries XXXV, 33, 51-2. HA III, 6-8. J.J.Pollit, The Art of Rome, (1966), 202. G.Rodenwaldt, 'The Transition to Late Roman Art', Cambs. Anc. Hist. XII, ch. xvi, p.560.
14. P.Grimal, Les jardins romains, (1943). Pompeii: 'House of the Ceii'.
15. Cicero, Pro Sestio 93: P.H. von Blankenhagen AJA, 61, (1957) 81-2.
16. Martial, de Spect.21; Parody by Petronius, Satyricon, 29 and 83.
17. Return of Ulysses and the Therapēnides from Apamea, Balty, 1977, 76, no.33; Cosmological mosaic from Merida: J.M. Blasquez Martinez, AEArq. 59, (1986), 89-100 and fig.4, Chahba (also Balty 1977).
18. D.Levi Berytus 7 (1942); R.Camerata-Scovazzo, Kokalos 21, (1975) 231-73.
19. Cf. Renaissance programme devised by patron given over to interpretation of artist eg.: created by Paride de Ceresara for Isabella d'Este to present to Perugino, cited J.Hall, A History of Ideas and Images in Italian Art (1983) 267 and n.53. Isabella also commissioned Giovanni Bellini who refused to produce her programme.
20. Eg Trier, Kornmarkt mosaic: W.Dorigo, Late Roman Painting (1970) 235-241, figs.189-194, pl.19. Brading: Smith, BAR 41, (i), (1977) pl.6.IV.
21. P.H. von Blankenhagen, 'The Odyssey Frieze', MDAI (R) (1963) 100-146: novelty and independence not what mattered in Roman art, but adaptation to give new meaning.
22. Pliny tells of Pasitiles, a sculptor, on the quayside attempting to draw a lion in its cage, savaged by an escaped leopard. NH VIII, 25, (66).

23. Khaki leopard: Utica, Brit.Mus., Hinks 1933, no.45, fig.137. Green: Dionysus mosaic, Cologne, 3rdC. O.Doppelfeld, The Dionysiac Mosaic at Cologne Cathedral (1964), figs 11, 17. Painted glass prob. from Egypt, from burial, Denmark, 3rdC., A Handbook of Roman Art, ed. M.Henig (1983), 215, and colour pl.19. Pliny on ban on their import, NH VIII, 24, (64). Well observed beasts those easily available from N. Africa. Ch.10: animals.
24. Synagogue, Ma'on, Nirim, Israel, Grabar (1969), fig. 152. This leopard now a plaque in a wall in North London.
25. De consulatu Stilichonis III, 345, cited Smith 1976, 133, n.2, Toynbee ARLA 86, n.123.
26. See Jesnick, 'The Mannerist Depiction in Orpheus Mosaics', Acts of the 6th International Colloquium on Ancient Mosaics, 1990, forthcoming.
27. Not recumbent beast so called by Balty = the fox. Mosaïque (1982), 34; *idem*, 'Le cobra et la mangouste dans les mosaïques tardives du proche-orient', Jarb.der Osterr.Byzant. 25, (1976) 223-33, esp.229 and pl.10.
28. Also as 'House of the Laberii'. Bull. AIEMA 12, (1988-9), 301, pl.2 (after Gaukler). Repeated models in hunting borders and animals in outer compartmental design.
29. Manisa: animal mos. AE.de Arq. 59, (1986) 240, figs 14, 15.
30. O.Wattel, I.Jesnick, 'Mosaics from the House of Mourabas, Sparta', JBAA, CXLIV (1991) 92-106, pls. IX-XI.
31. Such as Apamea: J.Balty, La grande mosaïque de chasse du triclinos, (1969), 18-19. I.Lavin 'Antioch Hunting Mosaics', DOP (1963) fig.139.
32. M.Matthews, 'Some Zoological Observations on Ancient Mosaics', Bull. AIEMA 12, (1988-9), 334-49, photos 1-6, 12-16.
33. Balty (1969), 34, pl.XLV 1-4.
34. M.Gough, The Origins of Christian Art, (1973) 107-8. 'its colouristic treatment strongly suggests a Syrian provenance.' Or S. and E. Asia Minor. Taken to Italy.
35. Danubian acc. J.M.C.Toynbee, The Roman Art Treasures from the Temple of Mithras (1986) 39-42, no.15, pl.XII. See Ch.2, n.66.
36. In fact the type of Hellenistic naturalism known as Alexandrian art may not have originated there, as B.R.Brown, has demonstrated. Ptolemaic Painting and Mosaics and the Alexandrian Style, (1957).
37. Cf. M.Henig, 'Graeco-Roman Art and Romano-British Imagination', JBAA, 135 (1985), 1-22, esp. 15-18. I agree with his championing of Romano-British style for its strength and vivacity.







Chapter Nine

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE FIGURE OF ORPHEUS IN MOSAIC.

The iconography of the principal figure of the mosaic image, Orpheus himself, was not a factor in Stern's typological study and catalogue of mosaics (1955). Later, he proceeded to examine Orpheus in Paleo-Christian art (1974), then his earliest appearances in Graeco-Roman art, including an iconographic study of certain features (1980). Stern's work informs the subsequent discussion which nevertheless departs from some of his conclusions. The comparative study of costume, objects displayed and period gesture is an established method of art-historical enquiry, yielding valuable information on stylistic relationships, relative chronology and the evolution of Orpheus' depiction in mosaic. The revelation of such relationships within the corpus of Orpheus mosaics disturbs the neat geographic distinctions of Stern's 'Types' to reveal the movement of artisans within the Empire, who clothed the archetypal figure in the garments of their own home.

The subjects of this chapter are the various poses or stance of Orpheus, figure style, conventions regulating the clothing of a stereotypical figure, the landscape setting and the musical instrument [1]. Many details cannot be fully ascertained as so many of the mosaics are destroyed, badly damaged or available only in the interpreted versions of engravings, but enough remains to indicate general trends.

Three types of Orpheus can be recognised: a) Apolline or Greek, b) Thracian and c) Phrygian or Oriental. In contrast Stern saw only Greek and Phrygian, distinctions followed by other writers, but hardly representing the diversity and interest of

dress, as will become apparent. Details of costume type were often mixed in the mosaic picture, the confusion of one culture attempting to represent the historical dress of another. Roman mosaicists of the second century presented Orpheus nude in the likeness of Apollo, the Hellenistic model [2]. Soon he took on the guise of the Greek *kitharoed*, the Thracian priest or the Phrygian/Oriental mage. The semi-draped Greek Orpheus reappeared later in a revival of the classical model. The final destination was a figure typical of hieratic god/king imagery of the late antique court, heavily robed, eyes staring. (figs.15a-g)

The Hellenistic Apolline Orpheus (Stern, 1980, pls. XII-XIII), can act as one point of comparison. A muscular nude sits in profile facing picture right, his left leg is folded back and slightly raised to bear the lyre. The right leg extends forwards. He gazes picture right over the lyre held in his left hand. His right arm crosses his body to touch the strings. Sometimes he retains a mantle across the knees. This is the archetypal image of the divine lyrist, capable of serving to represent all such musicians; therefore it could be ambiguous. A second point of comparison is the description of a painting, one of many in a gallery in Naples admired by Philostratus Junior writing a little before 300 AD, when Orpheus was enjoying a popular appeal, and many of the mosaics were laid. The passage has been cited [3] to demonstrate the derivation of the mosaic image from this painting, or one like, itself possibly preserving a Hellenistic archetype. The deduction is problematic. The mosaics differ in important respects from a painting which may not even have existed. The books of the *Imagines* may have been rhetorical exercises, either literary elaborations departing from the pictorial model, rather than factual reportage, or works totally constructed in imagination. They describe types of painting closely related to literary works, almost illustrative of them [4].

The *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodios (third C. BC.), in which Orpheus was a character in the story of Jason, retained its popularity; symptomatic of the vogue for Orpheus in the third and fourth centuries AD was the anonymous epic poem the *Orphic*

Argonautica of which Orpheus was the first person hero [5]. The inclusion of Orpheus among the pictures in the Naples gallery may reflect the likelihood of such a popular literary figure being pictured there rather than the fact. Given this popular appeal, few paintings remain of the vast number that must surely have existed. Pictorial evidence remains in the form of catacomb paintings and abundant mosaics, but their import would differ from ephemeral secular work.

The late antique literary image relies on example and convention. The description of Amphion charming the stones of Thebes by Philostratus the Elder, c.240 AD (Book I, 10), is the model for the Orpheus described by the Younger who evokes the imagery of Ovid. Between the two can be discerned the type of lyrist whom the viewer would have expected to see in a late third century painting, and the type of exposition it would have prompted:

And the painter ventures a still more striking thing; for having torn trees up by the roots he is bringing them yonder to be an audience for Orpheus and is stationing them about him. Accordingly, pine and cypress and alder and the poplar and all the other trees stand about Orpheus with their branches joined like hands, and thus, without requiring the craft of man, they enclose for him a theatre, that therein the the birds may sit on their branches and he may make music in the shade (cf. Ovid, Met. X, 86-105). Orpheus sits there, the down of a first beard spreading over his cheeks, a tiarabright with gold standing erect upon his head, his eye tender, yet alert and divinely inspired as his mind ever reaches out to divine themes. Perhaps even now he is singing a song; indeed his eyebrow seems to indicate the sense of what he sings, his garment changes colour with his various motions, his left foot resting on the ground supports the lyre which rests upon his thigh, his right foot marks the time by beating the ground with its sandal, and, of the hands, the right one firmly grasping the plectrum gives close heed to the notes, the elbow extended and the wrist bent inward, while the left with straight fingers strikes the strings.' (Philostratus Jun. Imagines 6. Trans. A.Fairbanks, Loeb, 1931)

We can follow the development of the representation up to and beyond this point, noting differences between the mosaic and the literary depiction. The picture described is supposed to have influenced mosaics so diverse as Sakiety, Chahba and Hanover, none of which match it, demonstrating the very effect for which Philostratus aimed. The

viewer responds to literary art and elaborates his own picture round the verbal framework.

POSTURE.

For the present study let body position be the first consideration. Orpheus of Perugia is the earliest work where, Gonzenbach noted (1950, 278), the head is held in an attitude of Alexander-like pathos, gazing upwards (ill.39, cf. Stern 1980, fig.6). The singing Orpheus of vases threw his head back, as did the late Hellenistic peperino statue in the Capitoline museum [6]. The trunk twists to the left and is frontal. In this respect the figure differs from the classic Greek pattern. The pure profile is only seen in the nude Orpheus of St.Romain (2nd.C.), at Trento the intention is denied by the inept drawing of a leaning figure. The clothed Orpheus of Chahba and Sparta are late versions deliberately evocative of Greek classicism, displaying the articulated forms of the Mannerist repertory. The head is turned to the left, gazing forward. These mosaics appear to derive from a single source, either a famous painting, more likely a relief. The *stèle* from Intercisa [7] (ill.40) provides a comparison even for the arrangement of animals at Sparta [8]. The figures from Merida I and Barton Farm, of the same family, also have the frontal twist of the trunk. The profile Orpheus of Panik reflects the rigidity of its provincial style rather than any deliberate pictorial archaism.

Stern noted an important change in the image with the assumption for the first time of three-quarter view on Republican gems, a step on the path to late antique frontality (1980, 162). The changed orientation marks an input of Roman aesthetic into Greek patterns. This is the manner in which Orpheus is depicted on most mosaics, in three-quarter view, facing picture right or somewhat frontal, turning his head left to gaze seemingly to his audience, really direct at the spectator. Less often the figure faces picture left: Blanzky, Cos I, Hanover, Martim Gil, Paphos, Tarsus, Adana, Mytilene, Saragossa, Piazza Armerina, Newton St.Loe, Withington, Oudna, Thina, Santa Marinella, Trinquetaille, a posture taken in the

majority of mosaics with Mannerist features. The lyre is always on the right, so that the figure shown reaching to play is in a state of torsion. At Tarsus, Adana, Cos I and Blanzky the lyre or kithara is even further right on the rock next to Orpheus. This may accurately depict the placing on a stand of the heavy concert instrument. Pictorially speaking the exaggerated twist in Orpheus' body, resembling movements in sixteenth century Italian Mannerism, corresponds with the antique Roman Mannerist style of the animals detailed in the previous chapter. The rightward gaze occurs half as often. The Greek Orpheus of Rougga evokes the classical figure [9], but the twist of the body, legs wide and frontality of the trunk, marks its date later in the third century. At Oudna, Orpheus is vigorously twisting to reach the lyre on its rock, a comparable posture which can be called semi-frontal.

The rightward position is natural and aesthetically pleasing, but the opened, twisted pose allows the centre body to be seen frontally, a symbolic scheme characteristic of naive or plebeian art forms. (cf. eg. Egyptian, archaic Greek, Etruscan frontality) This open pose has the effect of drawing the right shoulder and arm away from the lyre, the fingers only enabled to touch the strings by some dislocation of anatomy, if at all, evident even on the Hellenistic inspired Perugia mosaic, not the concentrated, realistic play of Philostratus' Orpheus. The problem was elegantly and uniquely solved at Cagliari, where a Greek Orpheus, painted with a high degree of realism, holds the lyre on a rock to his left, casually resting his playing hand on his right knee (ill.41). Another non-playing figure occurs at Lepcis I. Orpheus is oriented right, but, opening the pose to view, holds the lyre slightly away from his body on one side and just raises his bent right arm, gazing left as if pausing from playing to sing. Again the figure and animals are depicted with a plastic realism. This 'pausing' posture, occurs on some North African examples eg. Lepcis, La Chebba (ill.42).

On a small group of mosaics Orpheus flings his right arm up and outwards as if making a bravura musical gesture

of playing the lyre. These are: Paphos, Miletus, Cos I, Palermo I, Poljanice, Avenches II and Djemila. The gesture appears in late catacomb paintings from Rome, one strikingly similar to the Djemila Orpheus in pose, also in recognisably oriental dress (fig.18). The image is first seen on Severan coins from Thrace (AD 198-217) [10]. Its origin has been discussed, possibly a monument commemorated on the coins (Stern, 1955, 59; Liepmann 1974, 16 and n.38). Dissemination of the image would be facilitated by its use on coins, but may also have been effected by means of paintings on public view and widely circulating artefacts in perishable media. It may have entered travelling artists' note books. The figure of Orpheus was adopted into the Mannerist repertory of the Greek east as another manifestation of the local contemporary taste for pictorial dramatisation. The first depiction on mosaic is the Paphos Orpheus, of a Severan date close to the coin issue. On mosaics the outstretched arm appears as an exultant gesture reflecting showy, virtuoso musical performance, and such as would accompany rhetorical declamation. Observers would be familiar with such movements in both contexts. It is also an imperious gesture, one encompassing Nature within Orpheus' realm of civilizing command, reflected in the circus act movements made by the animals in the same mosaics. The ring-master's whip could be substituted for the plectrum. The gesture has associations with Imperial iconography, a ceremonial gesture of benevolent greeting and power used for the *virtus-adventus* on contemporary Severan coins. The seated Orpheus recalls a Hellenistic image of the idealised Alexander, Apelles' painting in the House of the Vettii, Pompeii [11]. The ideal, harmonious state personified in these images provides the link with the eirenic Orpheus evoked in a Severan monument and celebrated on their coins. Orpheus was already familiar as a metaphor of Concordia on the Alexandrian coins of the Antonines, as Fronto had interpreted the image to the young Marcus Aurelius (Fronto, 140-43AD, Loeb, 71-3). Stern brought to notice the eirenic qualities of the image on Republican gems contemporary with the Civil Wars (1980, 162).

The ultimate metamorphosis is frontality.

Many later depictions are transitional versions of the three-quarter view where the figure is shifted almost to the front (semi-frontal). Mosaics of Sakiyet, Paphos, Rome, Cagliari are examples. In the completed move, knees face front at the same height, shoulders are straight. Frontal, hieratic figures are seen at El Pesquero, Arnal, Littlecote, Djemila, Ptolemais and Jerusalem, which are also the latest in date. The Jerusalem Orpheus not only sits straight to the front, but stares out ahead with the huge eyes of an icon. Stern (1980, 163) noted the symbolism of the frontal pose, elevating the figure out of reality and imparting a religious character to the image. In combination with the sacerdotal robes this denoted a new conception of the figure. *'Le musicien apollinien est devenu le magicien qui ensorcelle toute la nature.'*

In mosaic convention Orpheus is always seated to play his instrument. On the earliest representation, the Delphic *metope*, he stands (Panyagua, 1972, no.2). The pose adopted for Orpheus on sarcophagi from Rome (3rd C. AD), is almost the same as that of the victorious Mithras of the Tauroctony, itself perhaps influenced by the bull-slaying Victory of Greek origin. It indicates Orpheus's victory over death, otherwise represented by the Underworld scene. The lyre is placed on a pillar, as sometimes for Apollo (Reinach *RSGR* I, 248-51). Orpheus stands, one foot raised and resting on a rock by the back of an animal, retaining the seated conformation of his limbs. Thus he appears in some British pavements under the influence of Mithraic iconography (Barton Farm, Woodchester, Withington). Only in the Underworld scene with Eurydice does Orpheus stand, asking for her release or leading her to the light. On the Apulian Underworld vases Orpheus dances as he plays [12] (fig.16). In mosaic either he sits, or else the figure is not Orpheus.

The Apollo-like figure on the mosaic from Aix, to whom three birds and a fox listen, is usually identified as Orpheus (*RPGR*, 203, 6), but bears no resemblance to the Orpheus of mosaic tradition. This mobile figure is derived from Hellenistic painting (ill.43). The fox may be borrowed from third century Orpheus

depictions of the Greek east (Miletus, Mytilene and eastern style Rottweil, Palermo, Trinquetaille), giving a date and provenance for the picture. The excavator of the Aix musician [13], considered a scene of the Thracian singer in Elysium, where, in *Pythian stola*, he would be standing to play, but nothing sustains that definition here. Rouard's first suggestion of Apollo *Kitharoedos* would be more suitable for this figure which bears a resemblance to the Vatican Apollo (RSGR, I, 255). But the problem is not solved, to depict animals with the god was not the current artistic convention. He further suggests a female, perhaps the Muse Erato, a more convincing argument, since birds are sometimes depicted with the muses (eg. Inv.Sousse 57.042): Rouard's engraving clarifies what Reinach's line drawing omits, the figure has feminine characteristics. The *chiton* is the transparent, floating stuff of womens' garments, worn off the shoulder, the wreath is of flowers, not laurel. The green cloak and white robe are not consistent with Orphean colour conventions (*infra*).

Another problematic figure is Orpheus at Littlecote: not Apollo, who would have a griffin, Marsyas and/or Muses with him at this period (cf. Toynbee, *Britannia*, XII, 1982); here the lone fox designates Orpheus (ill.44). The position of the feet (as restored) seem to indicate a standing figure, but late, frontal figures do not show the left leg raised to support the lyre (cf. El Pesquero, Jerusalem). The internal contours of the curve of the torso in dark tunic clearly indicate a seated posture. The drapery of the cloak, rather than fall straight downward, as it would were he standing, makes an oval, billowing out to the left. It is then is pulled round the body below waist level on both sides. The outward movement of the cloak on the right follows the bend of the knees. Its folds over the lap can be traced, with the lyre resting on the singer's left knee. The cloak parts below to reveal the tunic, as it would on a seated figure (Cf. Adana). There were familiar pictorial formulae for depicting the fall of drapery which the artisan followed, albeit clumsily. This figure exhibits the problems

of depicting the folds of clothing without understanding the relationship between anatomy and drapery.

THE GREEK ORPHEUS.

For so specific a figure as Orpheus, the costumes in which he is attired comprise a variety of individual garments, presenting three types. Not every garment is clearly identifiable and cannot be certainly named. Texts reveal terms for certain items of Orpheus' clothing which can be used. Paradoxically, the study should begin with the nude figure. Orpheus already wore Thracian dress on vases of the mid-fourth century BC, but in the earliest mosaics he appears as a Greek, a figure of the classical world, representative of Greek culture and civilized refinement. Perugia has the only completely nude Orpheus. At Saint-Romain a cloak hangs behind upon which he sits, at Rougga a cloak fastened on one shoulder descends to be drawn around his middle leaving him bare-legged, Trento likewise. Elsewhere the mantle is dropped, tastefully draped around the middle and over knees and shins: Volubilis, Cagliari and Oudna. The much restored Orpheus of Rome reveals his knees, at Santa Marinella he is similarly draped. The Elder Philostratus names the cloak of Amphion as a *chlamys*, but Orpheus wears the *himation* in the description of the younger writer (*Imag.* 6, 22) perhaps to indicate this type of semi-nude Orpheus which underlines his Hellenism. The *himation* indicated the philosopher and was later adopted by the Christians [14]. Apart from Perugia, St.Romain, perhaps Trento, of the second century, the other four Greek figures may be dated late third to fourth, manifesting a revival of the classical form corresponding in time with the marble fountain ornaments from the Greek East, where Orpheus is similarly attired (ill.46, 47. These mosaics have been dated earlier on the basis that the nude figure preceded the clothed Orpheus in the mosaic sequence (following Stern 1955) and that polychrome superceded black and white: neither is a fact.

The Perugia Orpheus is bareheaded, his hair blown up and back like a crown, recalling the iconography of Alexander [15]. In all respects this mosaic is quite different from

other Orpheus mosaics, earlier than those of the main sequence, c.AD 150, reflecting Antonine classicising tastes. The later Orpheus in Apolline guise can be crowned with a wreath. Those of Rome, Santa Marinella, Volubilis and Rougga are flattened and resemble the laurel diadems worn by the Tetrarchic group of the Vatican (L'Orange, 1965, figs 19, 20). At Saint-Romain, Trento, Oudna and Cagliari, Orpheus wears a Phrygian bonnet, like the Phrygian-Apolline Orpheus of the eastern marble fountain ornaments (cf.fig.7a,b). It is significant that the pavements at Perugia and Oudna decorated *frigidaria*, Volubilis fronts a *peristyle* with large *piscina*. Orpheus in the Pompeian fresco decorating a fountained courtyard was also semi-draped with Phrygian cap. This suggests that a nude Orpheus accorded with a secular watery context [16]. A heavily-robed Orpheus at Salona wears a wreath, paralleled at Trier, where only wreathed head and cloak remain. As far as can be told from the engravings of Yvonand (RPGR 201, 7; 202, 3) this Orpheus too was robed and wreathed, and it, too decorated a bath building. In all three mosaics Orpheus occupies a central circular frame, a repertorial relationship of this classically evocative Orpheus, again associated with water.

Stern (1955, 68) describes Greek costume, which he calls the *chiton* of the *kitharoed*, bracketing it with the nude Orpheus as the Greek figure. In mosaic Orpheus is usually portrayed in long robes. Varro remarks that the parody Orpheus wore the *stola* [17] a reference to the Pythian *stola* of the Apolline musician, similar to the *chiton*, rather than the familiar dress of the Roman matron. The nude or semi-draped figure, wreathed or capped, and the robed figure wreathed, are deliberately evocative of classicism and can be termed Greek. The *stola* is depicted at Paphos and Miletus, amongst others from the Greek East, where the costume would be in keeping, not an appeal to the classical past. Bare feet also evoke the Greek figure. The Greek picture of Philostratus' *himation*-clad Orpheus is completed by sandals, suggesting a semi-draped figure such as is seen on the eastern marble sculptures, but not on mosaic. He might have described what he thought an ancient painting should look like, or an actual painting. Conventions in

mural and easel painting may well have differed from those of mosaic, retaining the tradition of Greek dress. Pausanias' remark that Orpheus looked Greek in the ancient painting of an Underworld scene by Polygnotus, has been taken to imply that a robed figure was customary by c.160AD [18], but images of the nude figure existed contemporaneously (Louvre relief, mosaics). The Greek Orpheus continued to be seen, as Philostratus c.300 and Pausanias himself witnesses, and to be made, in the shape of the marble fountain ornaments. All examples come from a secular context. The remark may reflect the concept held by Pausanias, that Thracian Orpheus was the priestly figure associated with the Underworld, and that he seemed incorrectly dressed in the ancient painting.

Rather than Philostratus' painting being an ancient prototype, might he, in fact, have derived his visualisation from the currently popular figure of the monuments, his description following the period fashion? The premise that there had to exist behind the mosaic depiction a real originating painting is obstructive. Iconography developed organically, responsive to contemporary taste, vagaries of fashion, provincial style, the reciprocal influence of other media, which clothed the concept of the lyrist given literary form by the Philostrati. In that sense Amphion, Orpheus and the Phrygian-capped Apollo all manifest the same underlying conceptual pattern. Whilst a convention of mosaic practice was to copy famous paintings, they were not an exclusive source. The variety of guises in which Orpheus appears, whilst remaining recognisably the same figure, external details being matters of context, craft tradition, fashion, and local taste, suggests that the archetype lay in the imagination, the visual model existing outside of any one medium, another conceptualisation of the figure to be added to those detailed in Chapter 4.

THRACIAN ORPHEUS: Greek-style robes appear most often, in fact, but were they intended for a Greek figure, or was it that Thracian sacerdotal robes were understood to be represented by the traditional garments of the virtuoso musician? Virgil talks of Thracian robes, while Pausanias (10, 30, 6, between 150-170AD),

distinguishes Greek dress from the robes and hat of Thracian Orpheus. Evidently 'Thracian' was the understood term, the contemporary observer's interpretation. Since variants of the long robe neither Greek nor Thracian, but late Roman, are employed equally often, I have designated most Phrygian-capped, long-robed figures 'Thracian', those garments identifying Orpheus as the Thracian priestly figure with knowledge of the Underworld. If he were wearing the robe of his legendary birthplace, as the sacerdotal figure described in Vergil: '*nec non Threicius longa cum veste sacerdos*' (*Aeneid* vi, 645-47), it should be the long, heavy, colourfully embroidered Thracian robe seen on Apulian vases, belted high on the chest. It is seen at Lepcis I, similar to the robe worn by victorious Dionysus on African mosaics [19]. Often the long garment worn by Thracian Orpheus resembles the *Pythian stola* of Apollo *Kitharoedos*, long-sleeved, flowing, belted on the chest, who appears thus on mosaic at Paphos and an unpublished mosaic from Utica. In both cases Apollo wears a fillet, and is accompanied by a scene of Marsyas. At Miletus, Paphos and Trinquetaille, the *stola* of the musician is worn to present a figure representing the vocal accomplishments of Greek culture, poetry, rhetoric, philosophical discourse. The *tunica dalmatica* was a long overtunic, sometimes belted, with short sleeves under which the long, tight sleeves of a *tunica interior* can be seen: Edessa, Adana and Tarsus, beneath which trousers appear, confirming that these are contemporary eastern clothes. The long robes seen at Sakiet, Cos I, Saragossa and Jerusalem carry the rich decorations of Oriental dress. The Saragossa robe has horizontal hem stripes. Most interesting are the *orbiculi* ornamenting the shoulders, also seen at Lepcis, Cos I, Jerusalem, El Pesquero (also on the hem). *Orbiculi* ornament the costumes of the family and hunters on the Piazza Armerina mosaics, and many fourth century North African pavements where real persons are seen in secular settings. Rottweil's Orpheus has a decorative applique on his shoulder and the large, central woven stripe of the third-fourth century costume of the north-western Orpheus.

The practice of dressing Orpheus in contemporary garb grew in the later mosaics. He wears the heavily

striped oriental material from Asia Minor and Syria, similar to the integrally woven *clavi* of Coptic and Asian robes. Variants of the striped *dalmatic* had become customary apparel for most of the Roman Empire by the fourth century [20]. The garment worn by the Tarsus Orpheus is a contemporary fashion. His short-sleeved, yellow *dalmatic* bears two blue *clavi*. The tight sleeves of the undertunic are ornamented with cuff-stripes, an almost universal addition to Orpheus' garment (ill.48). A similarly striped, long sleeved, loose tunic is seen at Djemila. The multi-coloured short tunic worn by the Orpheus of Sparta exhibits a trend in Greek provincial mosaic to depict contemporary costume [21]. It is striped in as many colours as the mosaic uses. Cos I has an even more motley appearance, stripes of blue, ochre, greens, reds, with as many colours in the cloak. Even Barton Farm and Newton St.Loe have this multi-coloured striping, though within their limited colour range, the effect is more tonal. Two mosaics from the same location, La Chebba and Sakiyet (Sahelian coast of Tunisia) show the same heavily pleated, long robe. Sakiyet is fourth century, La Chebba, given a second century date on the basis of its geometric setting, could be the same [22].

The tunic is worn under a heavy cloak, fastened by a *fibula* on the right shoulder, which either falls down to one side or is pulled across the knees. This is the *chlamys*, a garment traditional in the iconography of Orpheus. At Miletus, Mytilene, Adana, Paphos and Vienne, a Greek style is adopted: the mantle is dropped to drape around the knees over the tunic. This, perhaps, is the form indicated by Philostratus', so mosaics mirroring the painting would be these of the Greek East. In western regions of the empire the *chlamys* is usually depicted red. The stones used in North African examples reproduce not the bright scarlet of military wear, but one of the duller red dyes under the generic heading of purple (L.Wilson, 6-11, pl.I). In the Greek East yellow was favoured for the cloak, with a blue-green tunic, or some permutation of the colours: Paphos, Adana, Sparta, Edessa, Mytilene, Tarsus, Miletus. The preference may simply reflect the local availability of certain coloured stones. At Vienne, where the animals show eastern stylistic

influence, tunic and cloak are both shades of green-blue, undertunic and trousers are yellow (ill.49).

Examples from the north-western provinces are limited in colour, in the brown and red range, with black, white and grey. A grey-green stone used in the cloak at Newton St.Loe, occurs in several south-western British mosaics. Expensive enamel and glass tesserae represented the multi-coloured sleeve bands and embroidery of the exotic costume. These areas were robbed out at Sakiet in modern times. The approximation of Thracian robes, which had assumed the look of late antique, rich court costume, became, in the latest mosaics, the voluminous *chlamys* and tunic representing the iconography of the figure in '*maiestas*', a symbol of authority, often Tyrian purple (dark crimson): Thina, Sakiet, Arnal, Martim Gil, Merida II, Piazza Armerina, Hanover, Littlecote, Horkstow, Ptolemais, Jerusalem (Rinaldi, 225 and fig.16). The fluidity of antique pictorial language is seen here, the Imperial iconography assumed by Orpheus also to be found in early Christian art. The Emperor was presented, rigid and iconic, at the centre of elaborate, stylised court ritual and was thus depicted. Orpheus in mosaic presented an analogous image [23]. (ill. 50, 51.)

THE PHRYGIAN ORPHEUS.

Less often Orpheus is dressed in a short tunic with cloak and bonnet. This figure is called here the Phrygian Orpheus, combining elements of Phrygian (cf. Hope pls.23, 32) and Persian costume. These short robes denote the Phrygian or oriental Mage, powerful in effecting phenomena in the experiential world, although the Orpheus dressed so appears sometimes in funerary art. Usually the garment, of seemingly heavy material with a single, central, embellished *clavus*, has long, striped sleeves. Pliny describes the invention of embroidery by the Phrygians, a type of embroidered robe being known as Phrygian (NH VIII, lxxiv, 196). At Palermo a loosely belted, light, voluminous Roman tunic, a contemporary garment from that region of the Mediterranean, is worn with Thracian boots and leggings. The costume style is a local version of the short, heavy shepherd's costume, of

Phrygian origin, like the cap, worn by Paris and Attis on Mount Ida and the Orpheus with eschatological associations. He often carries a *pedum*, as on the relief from the Porta Maggiore basilica (Rinaldi fig.9).

In many cases and from the earliest period, Phrygian costume is worn by the figure in a funerary context, Apulian vases (RVGP 176, 1, 2), relief, fresco, Christian catacombs and sarcophagi. This Oriental or Phrygian style is seen in Britain (ill.52), Carnuntum and Merida, it is a figure of western art, also appearing on German ceramics and Danubian bas-relief [24] (fig.5, ill.40). It is the dress of the Orpheus of the catacombs (fig.18). In that context, Chahba and Sparta from the Greek East are anomalous mosaics, Orpheus was generally shown in the long robe in that region, but being close geographically to the source of the costume type its appearance is natural. At Chahba this Phrygian costume is correctly shown, cinched on the chest as well as having a waist-belt, over which the material pouches. At Sparta the costume is belted only at the waist. The short Oriental tunic is worn with trousers. The Persian *anaxirides* were loose with an embroidered panel or ribbon down the front, giving a ruched effect, clearly seen at Chahba. A type of baggy, oriental *anaxirides* tucked into boots shows at Barton Farm, Woodchester, Withington and Newton St.Loe and on the Trier dish. The ribbon is clear at Vienne and Djemila, discernible at Brading (cf. ill.53). Leggings which covered the feet like tights were also called *anaxirides* in the east, while the same in the west were called generically *braccae*, though properly these garments did not reach below the ankle (Rinaldi p.253). At Sparta the tighter-fitting, functional *anaxirides* have the front ribbon of Persian trousers. Leggings: Trinquetaille, Sakiel and Tarsus.

The most notable and frequent parallels for the short oriental garb are costumes worn by Mithras and the *magi*. The Persian *magi* wear short robes with Phrygian cap and baggy trousers, Mithras wears the tighter *anaxirides* seen on the British Orpheus. Phrygian costume appeared earlier in catacomb frescos from Rome. It is surely no coincidence that Orpheus' dress here mirrors

that of the eastern hunter-Mage Mithras, whose underground shrines were particularly numerous in Rome and Ostia. Romano-British mosaics also carry the short cloak, which flies up like Mithras's cloak on the many statues and reliefs (Barton Farm, Woodchester, Withington). The influence of Mithraic iconography is not evident on the Orpheus of Chahba, Sparta, Palermo I, Carnuntum and Merida I. The fall of drapery and cloak length indicate the traditional long mantle pulled around the body. Nor is their posture the angular stance of the Victory, one leg pulled up. The British pavements of Brading and Newton St.Loe are also exempt from this influence, different from the early fourth century Orpheus mosaics assigned to the 'Corinian' school (Smith 1965). The costume worn by the Brading Orpheus is a short version of the short-sleeved garment with undertunic of the Greek east. Its 'apron' can best be seen in depictions of the *magi* [25].

HEADWEAR.

The traditional headwear that denotes Orpheus is known as the Phrygian cap, or bonnet, or *tiara*. It is often the principal distinguishing sign: a terracotta from Sousse, Tunisia, in the Bardo museum (vitr.12, no.1.8), a coin from Lesbos (Panyagua 1972, no.93) both show simply a bonneted head. The younger Philostratus describes an erect *tiara* (Imag. 6, 17-18), otherwise the prerogative of royalty in Persia and the near East kingdoms, not perhaps what was envisaged. The conventional non-Greek headwear appeared early. Orpheus is seen wearing it with Thracian robes on fourth century Greek vases. Sometimes the hat is erect and decorated, with hanging side ribbons, perhaps the *tiara* [26]. Sometimes it is closer to the Thracian *alopexis*, a fox-fur hat with a fox tail hanging down behind and the high peak and ear flaps, the conventional head-dress of the Thracians. It was heavy and voluminous, although it also appears in lighter versions [27]. (fig.19)

The familiar form of the mosaics, called the Phrygian bonnet, is less elaborate, conical with the typical rounded peak overturned, sometimes shown with ear flaps and strings to tie it

on: Miletus, Adana, Palermo I, Blanzky, Trento, Saragossa (Bradley pl.V, 8; Ch. 3, VI, 3). In the Greek East artisans would be familiar with the headwear of local traditional dress, descendants of the forms seen on vases, which also had a hanging flap behind, which they reproduced. Mosaics of Adana, Chahba and Sparta show it made of stitched and padded cloth, a fairly substantial item (ill.54, 55). Panyagua's fig. 12, perhaps fig.9, vases, illustrate what might be a version of the hat with multiple folds, ear flaps and tail. The folded appearance is evident in the bonnet of the Chahba Orpheus, some 700 years later. On mosaics the bonnet sometimes is striped, either horizontally: Adana, Miletus, or with a vertical band of fabric or embroidery: Chahba, Sparta, Blanzky and Jerusalem. At Djemila and St.Paul-lès-Romans the curious turban-shaped cap is a distortion of the heavy eastern form. The bonnet of the mosaics is not the fox-fur *alopexis*, however, it may have belonged to the same family of regional headgear, a version worn centuries later in both Asia and nearby Thrace, understood to denote Orpheus's ancient Thracian origins.

This *tiara* or Phrygian bonnet seems to have been associated in art with the extreme north-west region of the Asian provinces, the nearest point to Thrace. A bonneted head on a coin of Lesbos, c.450 BC is interpreted as Orpheus (cf. Ch.2 and n.11). For the Greeks and Romans the bonnet was once the sign of the barbarian, later associated with rural subjects. The simple form is worn in Roman art by Paris as a shepherd of Mount Ida [28], but it denotes all Trojans and Amazons. Ganymede, the young herdsman abducted from the same mountain wears the bonnet as does Attis (who wears the same shepherd garb as Orpheus), beloved of Cybele the Great Mother goddess of Ida (Hope, pls. 19-32, Phrygian costume). Later it was taken to signify people from further East, Persians and Chaldeans generally, then assuming a symbolic import as a sign of the priests of Phrygia and Mages of Cappadocia, it was adopted for both Mithras and the Magi. Apollo himself appears with the cap on third century sarcophagi [29]. When Eastern and mystery religions became absorbed into the mainstream of Graeco-Roman culture after 200AD, the pastoral

Orpheus assumed a new significance, indicated by this same cap, subsequently perceived to have a ceremonial function. At Blanzly and Vienne it was rendered in gold tesserae, which compares with Philostratus' description of a *tiara* bright with gold. At Barton Farm (ill.45) and Littlecote, the cap bears three white crosses which might portray this sparkle, denoting the supra-normal importance of the figure, comparable to the nimbus seen at Ptolemais. An example of a cap embroidered with stars is shown by Hope (pl.29), so the British mosaics may be portraying traditional eastern sewn decoration. The decorated cap harks back to that shown on Apulian vases, highly ornamented, distinct from the Thracian fur head-dress.

A great mass of curls falls from beneath the cap. The face bears a sweet, transported expression with the eyes rolled up to convey the ecstasy of the divine music. The round, staring eyes are further exaggerated in the course of the fourth century under the influence of Tetrarchic and Constantinian modes and their expressions of divinity, fixed in the transcendent gaze [30]. Orpheus becomes more an abstract symbol of eternal verities, uniquely nimbed like the gods in the 4th-5th century mosaic of Ptolemais; the Jerusalem figure is hieratic, static and iconic [31].

SHOES.

One expects to see sandals worn by the Greek Orpheus, but they appear on mosaics with heavily robed figures of late antique date, perhaps deliberately evocative of an archaic classicism: Merida (Phrygian tunic); Cos I, Saragossa (late Roman oriental robes); Jerusalem (*chlamys*, oriental robe). Exceptions are Paphos, in Greek dress, dated early third century, and Rougga (similar date), a wreathed, semi-nude figure, the only Apolline figure on mosaic not barefoot. Otherwise, the nude or semi-draped Orpheus, wreathed or in Phrygian cap, is barefoot. Two clothed, barefoot figures are at Miletus, where the classical *stola* is worn, and nearby Cos II which is damaged, but may have been similarly dressed. The Sparta Orpheus wears the cuffed Thracian boots, traditionally of soft fawn skin, in keeping with his legendary origins rather than correct for the Oriental costume they

accompany. These high boots of ancient origin are worn by Thracians on fourth century BC vases and appear at Barton Farm, Woodchester, Withington, Newton St.Loe, Brading, Palermo and El Pesquero. Round-toed heavy shoes, perhaps of felt with a central seam and of eastern origin, are worn with *anaxirides*. Clearly depicted at Chahba, they can also be seen at Panik, Ptolemais, Djemila, Saint Paul-lès-Romans, perhaps Poljanice. The rounded, thick shoe of Piazza Armerina, red, open at the front, tied at the ankle, is closest to the *calceus patricius*, of red leather, worn by noblemen, or the Byzantine slipper, with a strap (Bradley pl X, 8). Orpheus at Cherchel wore red shoes. Authority and status are being emphasised. The ankle boots of Blanzky are the work of the restorer. Originally he wore Persian shoes with a central seam, and *anaxirides* (Stern 1955, fig.6). Stern noted North African influence here, but all indications point to the repertory of the Greek East. Short boots, loose at the ankle, are worn by the Orpheus of Tarsus, possibly also at Carnuntum. Boots of brown felt or leather with a central seam, are worn at Mytilene. Charitonidis says they are laced (1970, 19), which may explain the zig-zag line seen at Saint-Paul. On a number of mosaics, an anonymous, apparently soft, foothugging, pointed-toed shoe with a medieval character is worn (Trinquetaille, Littlecote, Adana, Hanover).

THE ROCK SEAT.

Poetic sources sit Orpheus on a rock or crag in mountainous Rhodope. The rock outcrop is carefully delineated in fourth century BC red-figure vases which show him singing (Gruppe figs. 4-7) and all depictions thenceforward. Only once on a vase might there a figure seated on a chair who be Orpheus as the Thracian women attack him (Panyagua 1972, no.8, fig.3). Some scholars question this identification, preferring to see the death of Aegisthus. Orpheus with the Sirens in the fourth century BC terracotta statuary group (ill.1) is similarly enthroned, a configuration in many ways outside the standard iconography. For this reason the identities of the enthroned lyrists of the Boetian cup and the bronze mirror (Stern

1980, figs.1, 2) come into question [31a]. In most mosaics the essential rock and tree are pictured. Sometimes this extends to a naturalistic environment, recalling the sacral-idyllic landscapes of Campanian painting. The most aesthetically pleasing examples are Sakiyet and Thina (which include a sacred pillar behind the singer), La Chebba, Rougga, Piazza Armerina, Cagliari, Saragossa, Antalya I and Chahba. The rocky centre of Volubilis is surrounded by the abundant foliage of the tree tops, another scene of lush vegetation in the manner of Hellenistic foliar decoration. It is the only mosaic on which the interlaced canopy of sheltering trees, described by Philostratus, is really represented.

Sometimes the animals sit on the rock setting, perhaps birds on the crags and beasts on the ledges. Chahba, Tarsus and Saragossa show the same type of mountainous background, a pale echo of which can be discerned within Brading's circle. The crags of the naive depiction of Carnuntum are similarly stylised. Comparable reduced versions are seen at Miletus and Rottweil, plants grow from the cracks. At Miletus only the fox and crow join the singer on his rock. Tarsus shows a naturalistic rocky landscape with a token branch for plant life. In a further reduction the only indication of setting is a single boulder upon which Orpheus sits: Adana, Hanover, Avenches, Sparta, Paphos, Lepcis, Ptolemais, Forêt de Brotonne. The snake sometimes is to be seen sliding around the rock: Paphos, Sparta, Lepcis, Merida I. A curious placing of the tree is noted at Ptolemais and Tobruk where it grows in an arc from the surrounding frame of the picture, a snake curling around the stem; the same arrangement appears more natural at Trento.

The stylised representation of the boulder seat, an attempt to depict light falling on the hard, slabbed surface of rock, gives a form best described as chequered, box-like: Edessa, Merida I, Newton St. Loe, Martim Gil. The rock at Ptolemais is stylised into *peltae* shapes. At Forêt de Brotonne after restoration it now appears like a chair or a throne [32]. Orpheus at Blanzky is now seated on a chair which, like the table beside him on which the lyre rests, is covered with voluminous drapery. In the drawing of

mosaic as found, the familiar rocks are rendered in light and shade (Stern 1955, 42-6, figs.5, 6). At El Pesquero Orpheus, seated, is separated from the rocks by a line of light tesserae. As no seat can be seen he appears to be floating. His feet rest on a curious, stippled triangular addition, a marble foot stool, which lends him a regal appearance. Jerusalem, to which the mosaic bears many similarities [33], likewise shows Orpheus in seated position, but without a seat, in common with other mosaics showing no setting at all. The posture alone was intended to convey the familiar message. These others are Cherchel (like Jerusalem it has a scatter of plants across the field), Arnal and the British mosaics. These are the latest or most remotely located of the series.

THE INSTRUMENT

The lyre is the most diverse and difficult element of the imagery. As can be seen from the illustration (fig.20a, b), it is different in almost every mosaic. The depictions approximate two types, called here the lyre and the *kithara*. The Lyre, a rustic instrument of simple construction, was the instrument invented by Hermes which he presented first to the Muses and Apollo [34]. The sound box was a tortoise-shell, the incurving arms were first goat, later antelope horn (Herod. IV,192). These last are shown in mosaic by the use of 'barley-sugar' striations. Finally the arms became wooden, horn shaped. They were joined by a cross bar over which the gut strings were stretched from a bridge. Seven, the number of mystical import according with the seven spheres of heaven, is the number of strings accorded the legendary instrument, but in reality it may have had as few as the five or three often shown, or up to twelve in the case of the *kithara* [35]. The number portrayed in mosaic varies, perhaps according to the capability and understanding of the mosaicist. By the time of its representation in Orpheus mosaics it was an object of great antiquity, probably unknown in reality to the artisans who confused its details. Oxhide would be stretched over the concave side of the tortoiseshell to produce a sound-chest, allowing the plucked strings to resonate within the bowl of the carapace. In mosaics a

hole in the flat base of the shell is sometimes shown. In one vase-painting, the lyre is correctly played by a female musician, with the shell behind, stringing to the front [36]. If it were realistically portrayed on Orpheus mosaics, the tortoiseshell would not be seen when he was in his usual position. However, the shell was an important part of the story, so is often depicted on mosaic. A poetic name for the lyre was Greek *chelys* or Latin *testudo* = tortoise. The Elder Philostratus, describing the picture of Amphion, advises on how to represent the lyre. (*Imag.* I, 10.) He makes much of asking the spectator to see if the tortoiseshell is portrayed in lifelike fashion, then goes on to describe the stringing as if the instrument were facing the other way. What was he actually looking at, or, more likely, expecting to see? Mosaics where the lyre is turned so that the shell faces front to display the markings: Oudna, El Djem, Palermo, Vienne, Adana (with sound hole wrongly shown in the top shell). Edessa is just a circle. The lyre would be unplayable this way, like a lute held with the bowl outwards. Mosaics showing the shell and horn lyre more or less correctly are La Chebba, Cagliari, Tarsus, Sparta. In many damaged mosaics the antelope horns remain, indicating the popularity of this type for the portrayal of Orpheus.

The other instrument portrayed in mosaic is realistic, commonly used and no doubt familiar to the craftsmen, the *kithara*. Depictions divide into two types, the *kithara* of classical Greece and the instrument developed during the Empire when the lyre fell out of use. The classical instrument was large, wood with ivory, horn or even gold and silver fittings and decoration. Metal or horn plates could be fitted to the base to increase the tone, one can be seen on the *kithara* of Chahba. The arms, integral with the rectangular sound box, were parallel, curving from front to back, rather than inwards in lyre-shape. They could be hollow to add to the resonating cavity of the instrument. The strings connected between the box below, then up over a bridge to fix to pegs on a heavy, cylindrical cross bar (*Grove DMI*, 'Lyre'). Good depictions of this type are Chahba and Blanzly; perhaps Rougga, Trinquetaille, Cos I,

Poljanice. It usually had many strings, sixteen are shown at Chahba. Wavy lines beneath the box of Cos I may indicate loose ends of strings. The *kithara* does not carry, on the mosaics, the curving sharp-pointed finials above, reminiscent of the horn tips. The type perhaps appears at Djemila, though the instrument has curving finials and striped arms, in the convention for antelope horn. The classical *kithara* was a heavy instrument which, when the player stood, was held up by a shoulder strap, apparent on statues of Apollo, who was credited with inventing this *kithara*, which, like the lyre, evoked the antique.

The other type of *kithara* was that in common use, developed from one not so graceful and finely balanced as the classical Greek version. It had a flat body, integral with the arms, extending half way up the entire instrument and finished in the double-curved shape of a bow. The strong cross bar held the tuning pegs. It was of solid construction capable of the hard wear necessary for a travelling musician. It was held by an arm strap in use (Oxford Hist. Music I, 414, pl.12). The clearest examples are Aix (not Orpheus), Perugia, Miletus and Rottweil. They are all slightly different. Others probably of the same type are Paphos, Carnuntum, Salona, Trento, Forêt de Brotonne, perhaps Newton St.Loe and Littlecote. The *kithara* seen at Rottweil might portray a musical instrument more common in northern provinces, the developing European lyre [37]. The lyres of Newton St. Loe and Littlecote may be of this type or an intermediary between it and the Roman *kithara*. The *kithara* shown on the Jerusalem mosaic is unique. The tops of the arms appear ornately carved with ridges, spheres, even curved finials, like the antelope-horn tips. Behind the strings are glimpsed at the base two joined, curved projections apparently fixed to the arms in front, the only indication of a sound box or resonating plates on an otherwise simple rectangular eleven stringed instrument.

A number of mosaics present confused representations, hybrids, combining parts of real instruments with the antelope horn arms of the antique Orphean lyre: La Chebba, Sakiyet, Sousse I, Djemila, Volubilis, Mytilene, Hanover, Ptolemais,

Merida I, Saragossa, El Pesquero, Woodchester, Barton Farm. These hybrids perhaps imitate in size, shape and method of play, real instruments whose appearance was modified on the mosaic to render the antique lyre of legend. The straight-armed, tortoiseshell lyre of Oudna is almost the same as a modern African lyre (Grove DMI, p.580, b). Philostratus gives no description of the instrument Orpheus plays, called *Kithara*, doubtless familiar to his readers [38]. This heavy concert instrument often rests on a rock.

Stringed instruments could be played with the aid of a pecten or plectrum of ivory, held in the right hand. '*...iamque eadem digitis, iam pectine pulsat eburno..*' (Virgil, Aeneid VI, 645-7). One end was round and the other pointed, so the strings could be plucked or struck. The left hand behind could strum the strings as well as damping them. About thirty percent of the mosaic sample shows the *kithara* or, less often, the lyre, played without a plectrum. They are for the most part the simpler, more provincial and naive depictions, the latest mosaics of the fourth and fifth century which nevertheless incorporated a feature of ancient art. In the Campanian paintings described by the Philostrati, Amphion was playing the lyre with hands only, as befitted his antiquity, while Orpheus used a plectrum on the *kithara* in the manner of a contemporary musician.

The *kithara* was primarily a concert instrument [39], while the lyre was at first associated with amateur music making, suitable to accompany love songs. By the fourth century AD the lyre was considered the more manly instrument, more serious [40], its sonority close to the *kithara*, but of deeper, more resonant tone. The amateur lyrist was, then, associated with archaic heroism (Achilles, Hercules) while the performing kitharist was less manly. An ancient motif attached to Orpheus' role as a performer was his lack of manliness. The cult of the concert soloist, the brilliant virtuoso, was as entrenched in Graeco-Roman society as in our own. The well known artist would be feted and commemorated. Nero dressed up as Orpheus for his appearance as *kitharoedos* [41]. The legend of Orpheus describes a player so virtuosic, so moving, that he could

charm the natural world. He could be perceived as equivalent to the artistic 'star', for whom the *kithara* would be more appropriate than the lyre. At Mytilene in the 'House of Menander' Orpheus is associated with scenes from famous stage comedies. There he epitomises music, the concomitant to theatrical events. He plays a lyre, a feature of which is the blue smoke issuing from the top (the same pale blue stone used elsewhere on the mosaics). If correct (not an effect of colour reproduction), the aura may represent the issuing of the extraordinary, divine music itself.

One might argue that the portrayal of Orpheus in mosaic always relates to this celebration of the musician, that the picture signifies musical prowess and the imagined pleasure and peace of the sound, nothing more (Stern 1955; Gonzenbach 1950, 280). So it may in some cases, but the lyre, its music, and Orpheus' song had profound spiritual and religious qualities especially in the Neoplatonic currents of late antiquity [42]. In mosaic the lyre is depicted as often, if not a little more, than the *kithara*, as far as extant material tells. The nude, Greek Orpheus, the Apolline Orpheus in Pythian *stola*, the Thracian priest and the Phrygian Mage, all might equally well play the lyre as the *kithara* on mosaic. According to Panyagua, most of the huge number of representations of Orpheus in all media show him playing the *kithara* more often than the lyre (Helmantica 24, 1973, 456). It is notable that the depiction of almost every instrument on the Orpheus mosaics is different from every other one. Interestingly, on the most closely related mosaics such as Chahba and Sparta or Barton Farm and Woodchester, the instrument is different in each one of the pair. Patterns are elusive [43].

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The lyre is the most diverse element of Orphean iconography, but the exploration of other features reveals repertorial affinities. When like features of costume and setting are grouped together, the same names occur together over again, paralleling the western and eastern

animal repertoires of the previous chapter. Several western examples employ constituents of repertoires from the Greek East and Syria, suggesting the movement of artists following the source of commissions. They would use the great trading routes, thronged by Eastern merchants, running from Asia to beyond the Alps. Mosaics from as far west as Brading and Blanzky, from the Rhone Valley: Vienne and St-Paul-lès-Romans, Algerian Djemila, and a Roman catacomb painting all show Orpheus clearly dressed in contemporary eastern costume. The presence of eastern artisans was apparently widespread and the influence of their style pervasive after the mid-third century. While the model for the figure may be carried in documentary form and the conventional folding of drapery may have been the common trade knowledge of the artisan, costume exhibiting contemporary fashion details must betray his place of origin. The supremacy of the influence of North African workshops should be reviewed in this light. Ample iconographic evidence shows the influence of Eastern repertoires employed Empire-wide, even picked up in North African practice [44].

When the development of figure and setting over time is reviewed we note at the outset a nude Orpheus derived from a Hellenistic model of the Apollonian lyrist, soon to be replaced by the robed figure which was the usual apparition. Another Greek Orpheus, wearing a *chiton* or *stola* with sandals or bare feet, wreathed or bonneted, can be recognised, deliberately evocative, in late Roman society, of the classical heritage. Greek robes were appropriate to the virtuoso singer, a familiar figure, denoting the importance of musical performance. The long costume and Phrygian cap was recognised as Thracian by contemporary observers, evincing the poet of the Underworld, knowledgeable in afterlife mysteries. The Phrygian *magus* implies operative powers of a different order. Orpheus' garments, though representing those of the legendary singer of past times, were often in the form of contemporary and regional costume. A revival occurred of the classical figure: semi-draped rather than nude, sometimes crowned with laurel, Phrygian-capped at others. Another similar figure in mosaic was long-robed and wreathed. These

Greek figures were apparently associated with water, bath buildings and *nymphaea*, in all media. A sacerdotal reading would then be ruled out for such figures [45] which may be dated after AD 250.

Another development of this period can be seen in mosaics of the Greek East, where the depiction of Orpheus, like that of the animals, was marked by a distinct move from naturalism to a dramatisation of movement, the exaggerated twisting of an antique 'Mannerist' style. In contrast many of the most naturalistic settings are to be found in mosaics of the fourth century at the same time as the figure moves towards rigidity and other-worldliness. The later figure took on all the trappings of Imperial iconography, transcendent gaze, purple mantle, red shoes, a semi-divine figure of mystical import. The later mosaicists dressed Orpheus in Imperial robes in frontal, hieratic pose, an icon in the image of the Emperor. The David of the Gaza synagogue uses this imagery to depict the semi-divine singer-king of Israel [46].

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NOTES.

1. Cf. Gonzenbach, (1950), 278ff. Stern (1955), 56; Liepmann (1974), 15-16; Tosi, (1978), 72-8; Michaelides, (1984), 481-2; inter alia.
2. Cf. gem, 2ndC. BC, Stern (1980); Pompeian fresco: *ibid* fig.21; Capitoline peperino statue 1st BC, Guthrie pl.7; Perugia mosaic c.150AD; Hadrianic classicising plaque: Stern BSNA (1973).
3. Stern, (1955), 60, re Blanzky, subscribing to the view of Guidi, 119 re Lepcis; Thirion, 170-2, re Henchir Thina; Liepmann, 16-7, re Hanover; Balty (1982), 35, re Chahba; Michaelides (1986) 480 re Paphos, noting dissimilarity of his mosaic.
4. Imagines Loeb ed. Intro. xviii.
5. Trans. F.Vian, Paris (1987); Guthrie 27-8.
6. Berlin vase, Guthrie pl.6; statue, Guthrie pl.7.
7. Intercisa relief: Reinach, RRGR II, 121, 4. Budapest, Hungarian National Museum no. 22-1905-88; Panyagua, (1973) no.167.

8. See Jesnick in O.Wattel and I.Jesnick, 'The Mosaics of the House of Mourabas in Sparta', JBAAs (1991), 92-106, pl.IX-XI,
9. H.Slim in Carthage: A Mosaic of Ancient Tunisia, cat. (1987), late 2nd-early 3rdC.
10. Catacombs: Rome, Peter and Marcellinus, 4th AD; Priscilla, 4th. AD. Sister Murray, BAR S100 (1981), figs 7 and 9. See Michaelides, 480-1 and n.51, where he mistakenly includes Piazza Armerina in this group. In black and white photos, apparently the hand of an outstretched arm, colour photographs reveal this to be the head of a small mammal, possibly a mouse.
11. Severan coins: R.Brilliant, Gesture and Rank in Roman Art, (1963), 173-6; Apelles' painting of Alexander in House of Vettii, Pompeii: J.J.Pollitt, Art in the Hellenistic Age, (1986), fig.9.
12. The dancing hem of the robe indicates the movement of the musician. Schöeller pl.XI, 3, 4. Huergon MEFRA, xlix, (1932) fig.1.
13. M.Rouard, Les fouilles d'antiquités faites à Aix en 1843 et 1844, 8-15, Inv.55. Lithograph: Reinaud.
14. L.M.Wilson, The Clothing of the Ancient Romans, (1938), 80.
15. Boll. Comm. LXXIII (1949/50) 1953, 80, fig.8. cf. above, the Alexander-like turn of the head and aspiring gaze. See J.J.Pollitt, Art in the Hellenistic Age (1986), Ch.1, Royal Iconography.
16. M.Squarciapino, Bull.Comm.Arch. xix-xx, (1941), 70, suggests these marbles are lamps. The iconography fits this 'water' group. Cf. Picard on 'Lacus Orphei' REL, (1947) 80-5.
17. G.Roux, 'Stola', DA.; L.Wilson, 152ff. Varro, R.R., III, 13, 2-3.
18. Pausanias 10, 30, 6. Stern (1955) 57. Michaelides, (1986) 481.
19. Inv. Sousse 57.099. Dunbabin pl.LXXI, 182. G.Fradier, Mosaïques de Tunisie, (1986) 145, colour.
20. E.Abrahams, M.Evans Ancient Greek Dress (1964), 117. L.Wilson (1938); M.L.Rinaldi, 'l costume romano e i mosaici di Piazza Armerina', Revista dell'inst. naz. di arch. e arte, 13-14, (1964-5) 200-268, esp. 233ff.; Edict of Diocletian, XXIX, 9-34, T.Frank, V, 408-11.
21. S.E.Waywell, AJA 83 (1979) 321.
22. Gaukler, Inv. Tunisie I, suggested that the central marine scene was a later insert, Guidi considered it original. It compares stylistically with other fourth century African marine subjects. If the figure of Orpheus is of the same period, the early dating of the whole mosaic (Stern, Gallia XIII, 150-200AD), is put into question. The central subject seems designed to reflect the presence of the dolphin rider and Orpheus. See ch.11 Pendent Scenes.

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23. Grabar (1969) 42ff. Cf. Jerusalem Orpheus with Emperor image of Theodosius, fig.105.
24. Panyagua, (1972) nos.140-42; *idem*, (1973) nos.167, 169-73.
25. At Ravenna twice, once on the robe of Empress Theodosia, Grabar, (1969), fig 252; also fig.52, Dura Europos; Basilica of S.Apollinare Nuovo, G.Bovini, Ravenna Mosaics, (1957), pl.21.
26. *Tiara*: O.Navarre, DA, Vol V, 296-8; Smith, Dict.Ant.; C.Bradley, A History of World Costume (1955), Asiatic dress, pl.V,7. O. wears tiara: on death vases, Schöeller pl.XXII, 1, 3, Panyagua, fig.8, cat. no. 47, fig.9, cat.no.49; on Underworld vases, Schöeller pl.XI, 3, 4, pl.XII, 2, Panyagua fig.12, cat. no.67, *idem*, (1967) fig.9.
27. Phrygian bonnet: G.Seiterle, 'Die Urform der phrygischer Mütze', Antike Welt16, (1985) vol.3, 3-11. Alopexis: Gruppe, 1175, figs.4,5; RVGR 176, 1-3; Panyagua figs.8, 12. Schöeller XIII, 2, XVI, 1, 3.
28. A Greek vase shows him in Greek dress: The Judgement of Paris. c.480 BC, Staatliches Museum, Berlin. Gombrich, Art and Illusion (1959), fig.88, cf. fig.89, fresco 1st AD.
29. Apollo, on 3rdC sarcophagus, recognised by accompanying poets and flaying of Marsyas, Murray, BAR S100, fig.14.
30. H.P.L'Orange, (1965), 121-5 and figs 61-6. Cf espec. fig.64, colossal head of Constantine.
31. Nimbus cf. Apollo, Paphos, Cyprus; D.Michaelides, Cypriot Mosaics (1987), pl.XXIV, 30; cf.pls.XXII-III. Venus, Bignor, England, BAR 41 (i). (1977). pl.6.III.
- 31a. The status-lending seat may record an old tradition, superceded by the rock. While the Boetian cup could be an early picture of Orpheus, features on the mirror strongly suggest Apollo. Cf. Ch.2, nn.7, 9.
32. RPGR, 200, 5. M.Charlier, Mémoires de la Soc. des antiqu. de Normandie, XI, (1837/39): colour drawing of Forêt de Brotonne.
33. Both mosaics late, Pesquero fourth century, Jerusalem fifth-sixth; both frontal, the stylised figure not integrated with setting, both have elaborate peopled scroll surround.
34. Bion, IX, 8; Paus.V, 14,6; DA III, 2, 'Lyre', 1437-61, T. Reinach; Grove, Dictionary of Musical Instruments, (DMI) Lyre 2, J.McKinnon.
35. New Oxford History of Music, I, 1957, 381.
36. Grove, DMI 582, fig.5, 5thC BC red-fig. vase, lyrist facing left.
37. A medieval instrument, with a flat, rectangular body, the body, arms and cross bar made of a single piece of wood. The rotte, Grove DMI.: Rotte II.) R. has its five strings all converging
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- to one point on a bridge added to the body. Large black spots along edges may be holes. R. = Rottweil.
38. Good illustrations of varieties of instruments in T.Hope, Costumes of the Greeks and Romans, (1962) pls. 113, 192, 200; also DA.
 39. Aristotle (Polit. V [viii] 6,5.) proscribed the *kithara* for education of the young as it presented too many technical difficulties.
 40. Arist. Quint. De Musica II, [p.101, Meib], T. Reinach, 'Lyra', DA. III, 2, 1437-51.
 41. Reinach, DA III, 2; Grove Dict.Mus.; Ox. Hist. Mus., I, 416.
 42. J.Festugiere, TAPA 85 (1954), 55-78.
 43. Cf. Charitonidis, (1970), 19, n.5 - but his comparisons do not bear close scrutiny. The lyre of Saragossa is the nearest to Mytilene, both are hybrids. Orpheus always plays a stringed instrument, a simple iconographic point: a figure playing anything else would have been understood to be other than Orpheus. Objects showing diverse musicians have been claimed as O. cf. DACL, XII, 2752, 17, lamp; shepherd of Jenah, Harrison JRS (1962) 13, n.8; Knole relief, Panyagua (1973) no.156.
 44. Gothic raids along the Aegean coast in the 3rd C may have forced craftsmen to move to settled areas where building was possible.
 45. Contrast Eisler, Mysteriengedanken, 111-12, who sees a form of Orphic baptism represented here.
 46. Stern, CRAI (1970), 63-82; not Orpheus, but David in persona of Orpheus. The figure inscribed DAVID.



Adara



Aix



Arnod



Avanches II



Barton
Farm



Blauzy restored



Brading



Cagliari



Blauzy as found



Carthage



La Chebba



Cherchel



Casuntum



Chahba



Dyer St.



Cos I



Djemila



Edessa



Hanover



Jerusalem



Leptis I



Littlecote



Marston Gid



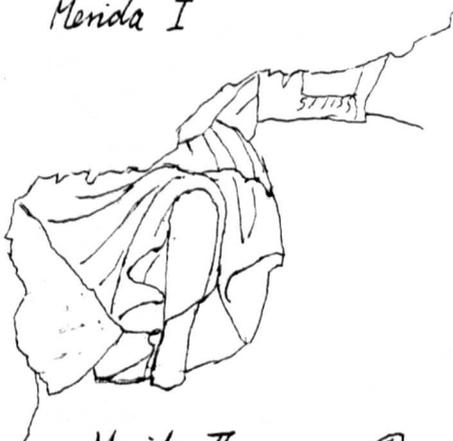
Menida I



lyon



Miletus



Menida II



Mytilene



Newton St Loe



Oudna



Palermo I



Panik



Paphos



Pemgia



El Pasquero



Piazza Armerina

↓ ○ P ↓ Φ Ε Ψ



Poljanice



Rome (restored)

Ptolemais (raked view)



Ptolemais (head)



Rottweil



*Forêt de Brotonne
(Rouen)*



Rouqqa



Saint-Colombe



Saint-Paul-les-Romans



St. Romain-en-Gal



Sabona



*Thysdrus
(El Djem)*



Sakiet



Saragossa



Sousse I

Sparta



Tarsus



Trier

Trento



Thina



Tringuetaille



Volubilis



Withington



Vienne



Woodchester



*Yvonand
(engraving RPGR 202, 3)*



*Yvonand
(engraving RPGR 201, 7)*

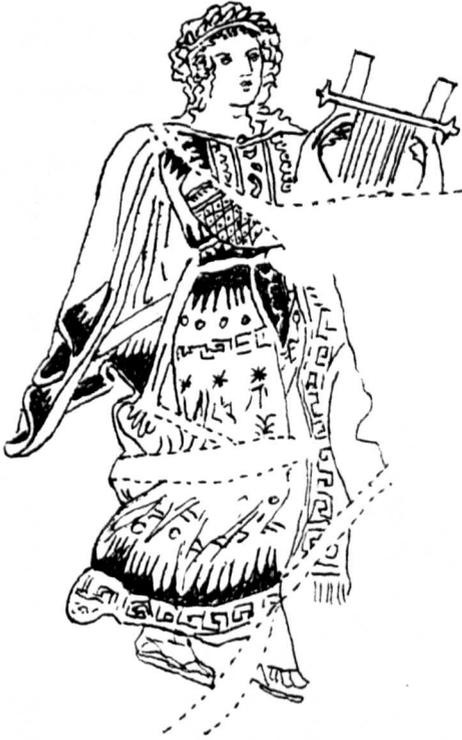


Fig. 16:

Orpheus plays in the
Underworld. Note the
dancing hem of his robe.

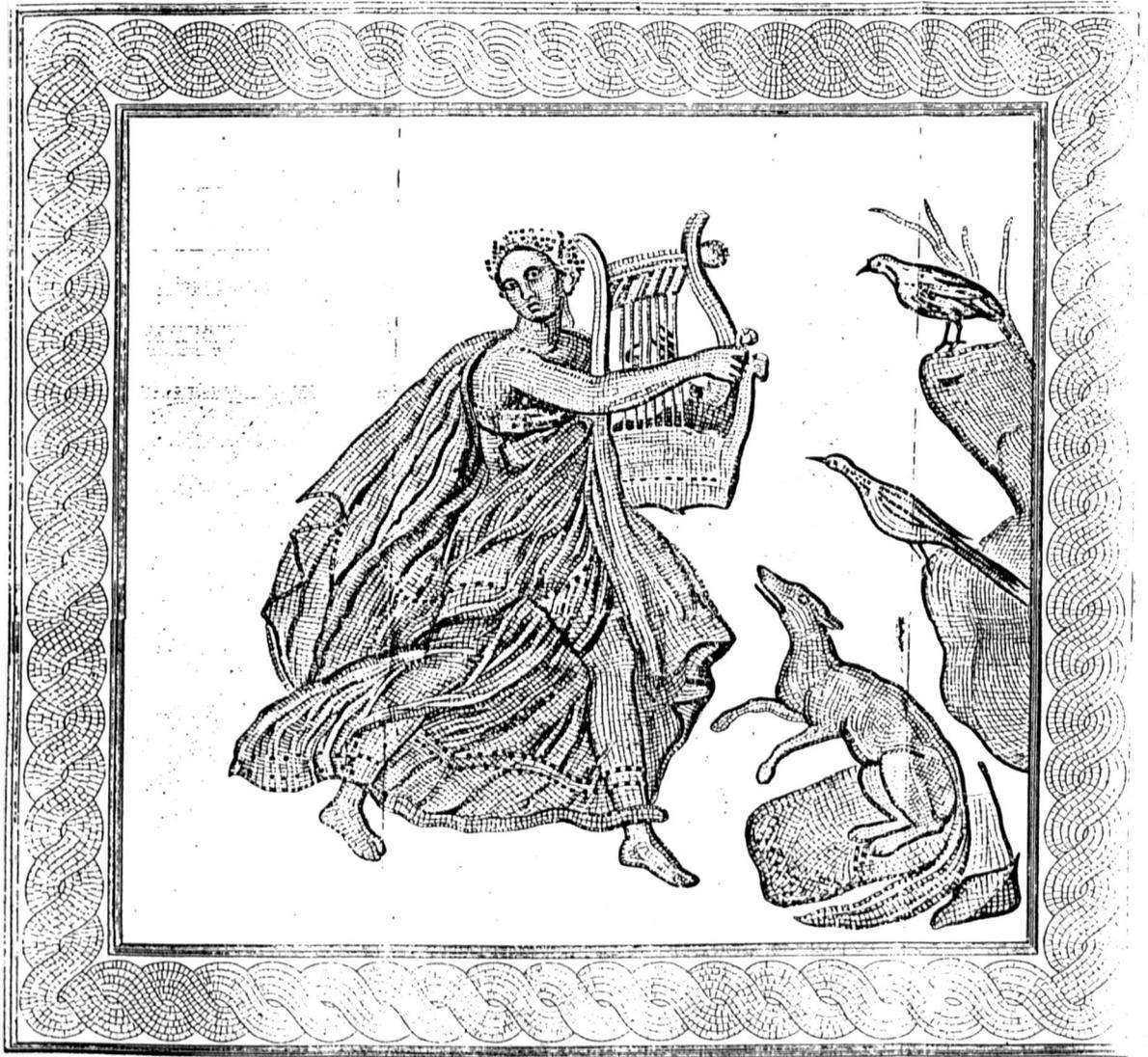
Apulian vase.
c.330 BC.



Fig. 17:

Orpheus with Eurydice in the
Underworld.

Apulian krater.
c.330 BC.



Mosaïque trouvée à Aix-en-Provence, le 29 Septembre l'an républicain 1803. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Paris.

Ill. 43: The Aix musician. Female lyrist. Erato?
Aix-en-Provence. Engraving of mosaic.



A. Orpheus



B. Orpheus



C. Amazon



D. Thracian Warriors



F. Amazon



G. Amazon



E. Thracian



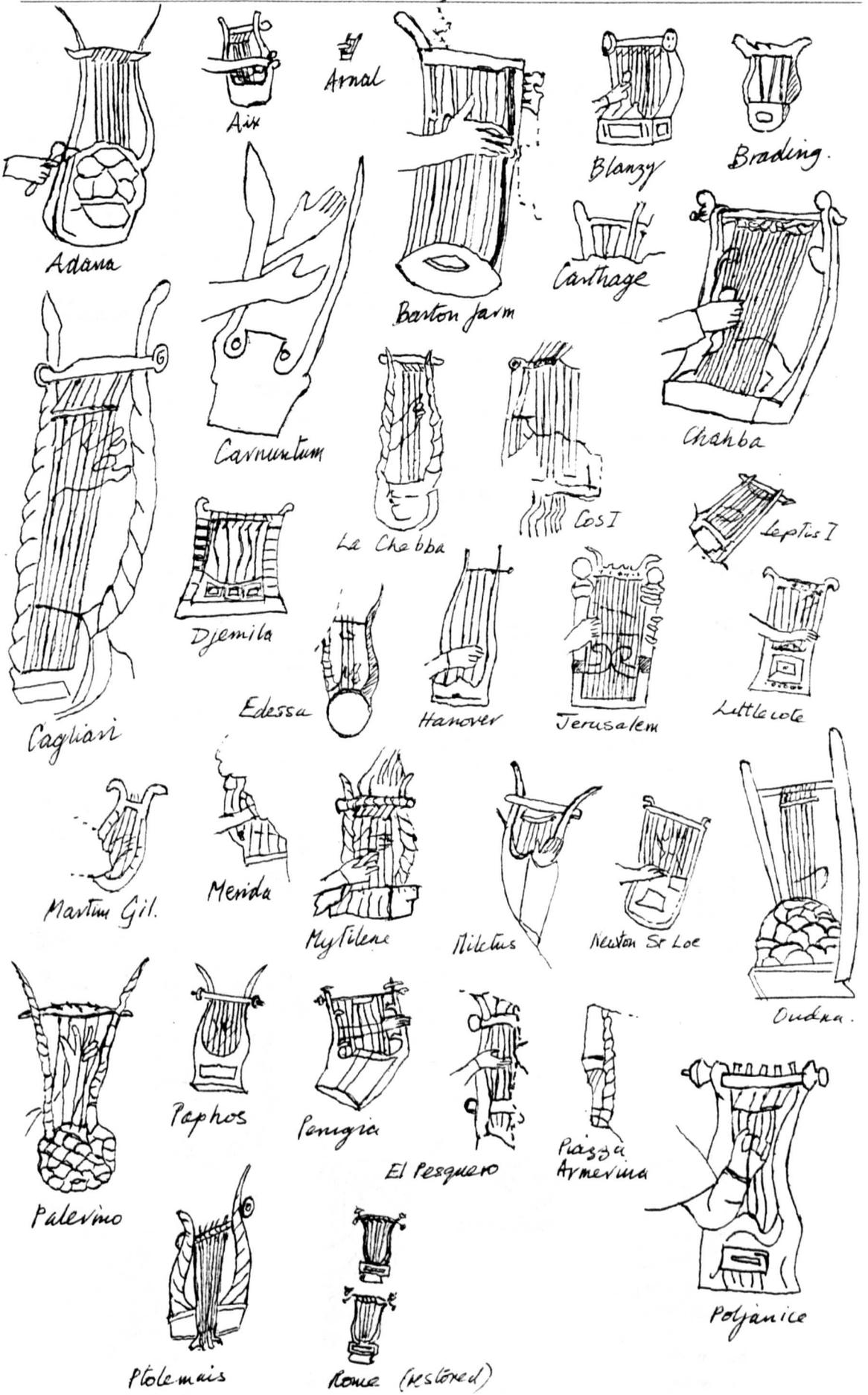
H. Mithras

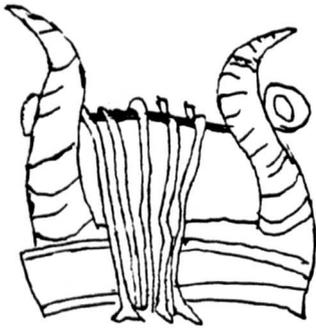


I. Magus



J. Orpheus





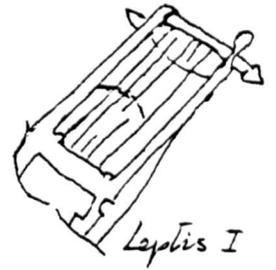
Ptolemais



Rottweil



Rougga



Lapolis I



St-Romain cu-Gul



St-Romain restored



Sakiet



Sabona



Saragossa



Santa Marta



Tarsus



Mysdms (El Djem)



Soussa I



Sparta



Trento



Thina



Trier



Tringua Taille



Vienne



Woodchester



Volubilis (restored)

Chapter Ten.

THE ANIMALS

The animals, so essential to the character of Orphean imagery, have not yet been accorded a study of their own. They offer an important approach to the meaning of the image. Their depiction would have been one of the prime attractions of the scene for artists and patrons in antiquity. The choice of animals in the mosaics is not random, but accords with the conventions of Orpheus mosaics. By the term 'animal' all creatures depicted are meant: mammals, birds, reptiles, fish, invertebrates and fabulous beasts. An antique definition was 'land beasts that go on foot' [1]. Literature records an ancient and persistent sentiment that wolves would lie down with lambs and flocks have no fear of ravening lions [2], but mosaics do not directly illustrate this theme. Poetic imagery evokes peace in a Golden Age, reflecting the idealised aspirations of the Roman people, proud of their civilized refinement, but continuing to picture themselves as a farmer nation, where fearless flocks, pacified lions and satiated wolves mingle in the idyllic peace of *romanitas*. These animals, their inner natures changed, respond in a novel manner to each other's presence, forgetting their own battles. The pictorial convention of Orpheus was not bucolic. By means of art he effected what was otherwise the prerogative of the gods, controlling the forces of Nature. His music affects wild and savage beasts only. On Orpheus mosaics animals are those elsewhere shown in an antagonistic relationship to man in man-made situations. Ferocity, cruelty, danger or timidity were the traits of these animals, which *bestiarius*, huntsman and gamekeeper found difficult to handle or elusive. The hare beside the lion does not sit smiling at him, but both, customarily hunted, have

been drawn into the arena of the picture, captured and stilled by the fascination of Orpheus' music. Should he stop they would once more be at enmity. It may have been the patrons' intention that mosaicists should portray the literary ideal, but the message of the depiction is not the same.

The scene of Orpheus surrounded by many animals and plants encapsulated an increasing fascination with nature, a love of natural forms, vegetative growth, animal-filled landscape, evident from the fourth century BC. Hellenistic artists, the Alexandrian poets, and artists of the first centuries of the Roman era, delighted in a portrayal of the natural world effected with minute realism. Interest in the details of natural history grew. Pliny in the Roman period presented his extensive study of all things animate and inanimate, in which he combined the scientific work of his illustrious Greek predecessors with apocryphal stories and everyday lore. There were also available many treatises on zoology, biology, medicine, husbandry and animal welfare. Besides the growing desire for knowledge of the natural world came the opportunity for empirical discoveries with the flow of goods and animals through the markets of the ancient world opened up by Rome's power. By the middle of the second century BC, many species were imported regularly to Italy and elsewhere in the Roman world for the arenas and parks of cities and estates. Perhaps associated with the availability of animal species a taste grew for displaying the abundance of teeming life in art and spectacle. The fabulous pageant of 278 BC held in Alexandria by Ptolemy II Philadelphus is one such, later at the feast of the Liberalia in Thysdrus (El Djem) Dionysus was likewise honoured with spectacular displays of beasts [3]. Hellenistic artists and poets had combined the tragedy of Orpheus with his mystical communion with Nature. Artists of the late Roman era were to ignore the tragic element of the story, picturing only the life enhancing image of fecund prosperity. The parade of animals around some later Roman floors was surely as much a Bacchic *thiasos*, a celebration of the life force, the here and now, as it was a scene of paradise to come.

Orpheus mosaics belong to the 'animal scene'

genre, one of the most popular in Roman art, depicting the arena, the chase, the circus, the capture and display of animals (ill.56-58). In North African mosaic Orphean iconography related directly to these portrayals of realistic events, both in regard to the choice of animals, which were those of the hunt and spectacle, and to their symbolism. The image was perceived as an antithesis to such real life situations: Orpheus could accomplish what in the real world took physical courage and skill, to lure and still the beasts. The struggles and savagery of the arena, the danger of hunts and races were allegories of the battle through life, the hope for victory, the play of chance and fortune. Orpheus brought peace and eternal stillness. At Piazza Armerina, where the visual scheme includes the Great Hunt, the Little Hunt, the Circus and scenes of mythic carnage, there is a large and important Orpheus.

The eastern depiction is different in kind, stylistically and symbolically, developing independently of eastern animal genres, the oriental hunts and teeming paradise themes of the later fourth century. In the eastern Orpheus depiction, animal models recall the decorative forms of the fourth century BC pebble mosaics, while mosaicists evidently drew on the contemporary pictorial conventions in other media, similarly stylised in form. The depiction was artificial in appearance. Its pictorial context was formed by the mythic subjects favoured in the region. Thus the picture of Orpheus related to classical myth as an expression of Hellenism, not the experiential world of a living tradition of animal representation. The picture is an expression of Orpheus' command over a Nature seen as somewhat alien, an array of abstract forces, rather than a celebration of Nature's variety. For the most part the animals are of lesser importance in this picture.

In Hellenistic and Augustan poetry, landscape elements personified human feelings. In mosaic everything inherent in the antique conception of natural forces, against which Man had so few defences, along with the potentially uncontrollable human passions, were presented metaphorically in the animal audience. This is the deeper, symbolic level on which the imagery works. Fourth

century AD depictions in all media include fabulous beasts, symbolising the battle of benign and malevolent forces: the cruel Sphinx, vengeful griffin, bestial Centaur and Pan, the generative force of Nature. Only Orpheus, the perfected type of Man, could avert the onslaught to bring harmony with his cosmogonic song, where furious discord ruled. He could harness such bestial powers and provide them for Man's use, accomplish a rapport, bringing the savage, the fugitive to a peaceful confrontation with civilisation. Thus, Orpheus is important in representing the division between raw nature and culture: through his mediation came civilization.

The animals are literally enchanted by the song, they are made to behave uncharacteristically. The antagonistic fascination is embodied both in animal types and the poses given them, drawing on artistic traditions stretching back to the earliest representations. The similarity between the Thracian warrior of the Berlin vase (fig.4) and the leopard of the Paphos Orpheus has been noted. They present the same fierce rejection and grudging acceptance. Both turn away, but are drawn back, both are the most fearsome, barbaric, of their kind. The stock pose was often given to the savage animals in mosaics of the Greek East where the metaphoric effect of Orpheus' song was the dominance of Hellenic cultural values. In African mosaic the image of the musician had quasi-magical properties, able to quell savagery. The pictured song belonged in the same area of operation in regard to the world of the imagination as the actual use of music and noise to lure and baffle animals in the real situations depicted on mosaics [4]. The Hellenistic motif of cobra and mongoose, characteristic of Nilotic landscapes [5], was used on sarcophagi to signify, like the lion and deer, the struggle of the soul with death. The mongoose will outwit the fatal sting of the cobra, a hope of salvation in the afterlife (ill.59).

The decorative effect of animal scenes remains paramount as a motif for choosing them, an opportunity for sumptuous display. As well as recording combats and munificent gifts, such pictures served also to remind the patron and his guests of the exciting, pleasurable sight of animals in the arena, parks and

processions. The larger mosaics, intended to display all the animals of the world '*omnia ex toto orbe terrarum*' [6], depict a great variety of birds and beasts. The largest number with Orpheus on a single mosaic must be the sixty odd, fifty-six of which are visible whole or in part, at Piazza Armerina [7]. Large pavements have the less commonly depicted creatures, exhibiting the power of the patron to gather every creature into one place to create a zoological park, a *paradeisos* (Thina, Perugia, St-Romain, Volubilis). Such images might have a propagandist intent, for as public munificence was commemorated in the picture of an arena display (Dunbabin, 228), so the gathering of wild animals by the figure representative of civilisation, Orpheus, would reflect on the virtue and power of the patron. Perugia has some thirty-seven animals remaining of a probable forty or more, Volubilis once had as many, plus the same of birds. St-Romain-en-Gal had twenty-four animals, twenty birds. At the other end of the scale are the four animals at Brading, Forêt de Brotonne and Rottweil. These animals serve as attributes of the figure, whose symbolism precedes display. Some species are rarely depicted anywhere: the squirrel of Merida, genet of Volubilis and zebra of Perugia. The pangolin (*Manis tricuspis*) of Piazza Armerina (ill.60), running rather than curling up within its protective scales, is unique [8]. The giraffe and frog of Santa Marinella make their only appearance with Orpheus. The frog, a good omen, occurs in Hellenistic art, the giraffe appears more frequently in late antique mosaic from the east [9]. Beasts rare in Orpheus mosaics: flamingo, crocodile, rhinoceros, scorpion, hedgehog, snail, are common in other genres of Graeco-Roman art. Some never found their way into the Orpheus mosaic repertory. No lynx, the native Greek cat, though it appears elsewhere and with the earliest depiction of an Apolline figure (Stern 1980, fig.2). The hyena might have been expected, but is not shown, nor are vultures and kites. Only once is a wolf clearly identified, another two are possible.

Character and behaviour, amply demonstrated in amphitheatre or hunt, were vital. Domesticated animals are not shown, no beasts of burden, no young of any kind. The exceptions are

camels, exotic eastern beasts where depicted [10], ordinary at home, associated with Bacchus. Sheep, representing timidity, reflect the influence of Christian iconography, but are not indicative of Christian dedication [11], the rams are by no means docile. Hunting dogs, from the arena, were of the most tenacious savagery, capable of felling elephants and lions. There are many testaments to their ferocity and strength (ARLA 102ff.). Animals running as if in a hunt appear in later mosaics. A short-tailed boar hound among Withington's animals runs in pursuit of the boar ahead of it in the circle (ill.70). The popularity of the griffin with Orpheus relates to this development, appearing in late antique hunts of symbolic import. (ill.67a)

The number of species identified, including fabulous beasts, is about ninety. Some animals defy identification, many birds are indistinguishable. The most commonly depicted animals, as familiar to us as to the ancients, are recognisable, portrayed in vividly realistic manner. The boar's bristly coat and speed are frequently well observed. In the hands of an inept draughtsman an already badly understood image would distort beyond recognition. With creatures occurring rarely in the repertory, perhaps not seen first hand by the mosaicists, conventional models did not develop to help. Volubilis is notable for combining realistic with enigmatic depictions (ill.62). Perhaps two artisans worked there originally. Sometimes the modern observer is less sure of animal physiology. Chahba, a mosaic of high artistry, has a small animal, lower right, difficult to identify. It sits up on hind legs, raising its paws, resembling the typical stance of the meerkat (*Suricata suricatta*, Sahara), but its relative the mongoose is probably the animal depicted. Usually shown in four-footed attacking pose, it will sit up to see around. Balty does not name it, but calls the fox a mongoose, seeing it as part of a mongoose and cobra grouping [12]. The fox, on a ledge below the griffin, is identifiable by its club-like tail (the mongoose's is pointed) long, sharp ears, body shape and recumbent posture. The snake is a benign tree climber, not a cobra.

The main division in the character of the

animal audience lay between fierce, the most amply represented, and timid. Animals belong to one or other category. Unexpected animals could be fearsome, an Ethiopian monkey, Pliny says, was known for its particularly wild and difficult behaviour (NH VIII, lxxx, 216) and the partridge for its fighting ability, likewise the cockerel. Cock-fighting, a frequent artistic motif, even had a moral quality [13]. Birds account for 30% of the creatures. At Piazza Armerina robin, crested hoopoe, thrush, goldfinch, bright blue roller, palm dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*), woodpecker and swallow inhabit the trees. Volubilis has a bee-eater, falcon, blue rock-thrush (*Monticola solitarius*), owl, kingfisher, flycatcher (*ficedula*), and more (ill.61, 63). Although these wonderful displays seem to parallel illustrated natural history handbooks, particularly St-Romain, they could just as well comprise a gazeteer of local birds. The compartmental format of St-Romain was common for painted decoration on ceilings, imitating coffering [14] which may be the real inspiration. African mosaicists, delighting in nature, presented as many colourful species as possible, derived from direct observation. Lepcis I and Sousse have fine bird portrayals. Outside the African sphere of influence, matters differed. Birds of the north-western provinces hardly appear unless conventional in Greek art or African practice eg. magpie and crow. These are joined by a number of colourful southern and eastern natives, such as the partridge, pheasant and cockerel. Guinea fowl and crane appear at Barton Farm (ill.64a, b). Far fewer birds appear on Orpheus mosaics of the eastern provinces, their artisans, unlike their African fellows, not concerned to manifest the riches of nature.

A count was made of creatures remaining on all extant mosaics published and all those of which descriptions exist, a 65% sample of the corpus of Orpheus mosaics. The results cannot be claimed as accurate: few of the mosaics are complete, some written descriptions could be misleading nor do they give a full account; some mosaics remain unpublished; not all portrayals are accurate, while my designations of ambiguous depictions might be questioned, but general trends can be ascertained. For a typological

analysis of the material, creatures were organised into zoological groups of kind rather than the modern scientific 'orders'. Another way of looking at the animals was to regard them as grouped according to their perceived characters, much as they might have been in antiquity, which would have had a bearing on their use in the mosaics [15]. Of each kind of animal, there are several varieties, one or more of which might represent the 'kind' in the audience.

Felines comprise lion, leopard, tiger, lioness, wild cat, genet. Panther is a poetic term for the leopard, not another cat. The genus 'big cats' is now denoted by *Panthera*. The modern dual naming of the leopard only reflects the antique lack of distinction. It is difficult now to know which of the spotted cats were being described. Pliny (NH VIII, xxiii, 62-4) describes the marks of '*pantheris*' as *oculi*, architectural wreaths with central holes, which exactly matches the rings of the leopard. Jennison discusses the ambiguous nomenclature of the spotted cats. *Leopardus* was thought to be the offspring of the lion and a spotted cat. Female and male cats, perhaps cheetahs, were called *varia* and *pardus* in Nero's reign. Later *panthera* and *leopardus* might denote female and male (ASPAR, 183-7; ARLA 82) of probably the leopard. *Leopardina* occurs in Diocletian's Edict in the entry on fur prices, no other spotted fur is named [16]. Since the leopard is clearly and exclusively represented on mosaic in arena and hunt, the trade in their skins depending in large part on these activities, the conclusion must be that the name and the depiction coincide. The leopard is the only large spotted cat with Orpheus. This virtually untamable creature was the steed of Dionysus.

Visually and zoologically cheetah and leopard are distinct. The leopard (*Panthera pardis*) is large, powerfully built, with long body and short legs, its ears drawn back flat. The ground colour is tawny, its spots are grouped in rosettes which break it up to seem greyish from a distance. This dark coloration was in late antiquity a diagnostic feature subject to exaggeration over the course of time: leopards are shown khaki, green, purple. A late antique writer refers to '*virides pardi*' [17]. The nocturnal leopard

hunts alone. The cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*), which hunts in packs during the day, is a lighter, hollow-backed cat with big shoulders. Its colour is pale buff, with small spots scattered singly, its legs are extremely long and thin, it has a slight wiry mane and carries its ears pricked up. It has a small head with canine features and a diagnostic black stripe from eye to mouth which I have never seen in mosaic [18]. North African depictions are clear. Sculptures show the flat head, lowered ears of the leopard. Two late versions are British, Woodchester: the leopard has a vigorous pattern of large black circles with yellow centres, and Barton Farm: rosettes transformed into scale pattern (ill.65, 66). The cheetah, being quite amenable to taming, walking on a leash, used for hunting by the eastern kings, is excluded by its character from the repertory. Elagabalus' cruel trick of inserting *pardi* into his guests' bedrooms (SHA Elagab. 25, 1) would be best accomplished with the cheetah. The cat at Adana is like, but has no eyestripe. Its hind legs are striped like the African wild cat (*Felis libyca*), perhaps just an inept rendering of an unknown beast in terms of familiar ones. At Cos I a small, squat cat on the left might be the European wild cat (*Felis silvestris*), or a lynx, though lacking the distinctive ears.

The count reveals, as expected, that felines alone make up over a quarter and individually lion and leopard are the most common beasts with the tiger (*Panthera tigris*) next. It came from India, providing a major item of the animal trade [19] or from Armenia and around the Black Sea shores (NH VII, xxv, 66). It was second to the leopard as a Bacchic animal, a nocturnal lone hunter. The name *tigris* is always feminine in Latin poetry and in Pliny. Conventionally the tigress is given large teats. She was ferocious in the defence of her cubs, which she is never without in the wild. Roman hunters would almost certainly meet the female, the male being even more shy than she. The leopard is sometimes shown as female with teats (Sparta, Adana). The lion was a common symbol of death in funerary art and a *memento mori* on mosaic [20]. Its shaggy mane made it quite unmistakable. Toynbee notes the exhibition at the games of Probus (AD 276-282) of maned (*iubati leones*) and maneless lions

(*leopardi*), which might be very young males, which are lightly spotted. The lioness is quite often depicted, more so in the later mosaics (4th.C). She is given teats in Africa (Sousse I, El Djem), not in later images (Barton Farm). Some apparent lionesses might be maneless adult males, a condition quite common in nature.

This is a case where both male and female of a species are shown. Others are stag and doe, ram and ewe, (with opposing characteristics), peacock and peahen. There are no other repeats in these visual inventories.

To underline the force inherent in the gathered array of beasts, most are the virile males of the species, the genitalia graphically delineated, especially: the hartebeest (*Alcelaphus buselaphus*: Oudna, Cherchel), griffin (Piazza Armerina), bull and ass (Thina), fallow stag (*Dama dama*: Lepcis I). The so-called cow at St-Romain (Stern, 1971) was no doubt a conventionally well endowed bull. A decorous 19th century illustrator probably preferred to see udders. There is neither precedent nor parallel for a cow. Animals would be assumed male unless the female had an especially savage reputation: tigress, lioness, sphinx. The bear, sacred to Artemis, was perhaps always female in view of the exclusively female myths and rites associated with it [21].

The next largest grouping after felines is reptiles, mostly snakes plus tortoises and lizards. Snakes comprise the venomous and the benign. A Palestinian viper (*Vipera palaestinae*) has been recognised at Jerusalem [22], the commonest venomous snake of the area. The mongoose (*Herpes ichneumon*) confronting it wears a leash, (Cf Balty 1976, fig.7) which might evoke the 'montreurs de serpents' [23] a staged battle with an air of protective magic. Alternately it might reflect its employment in the east as a semi-domesticated exterminator of vermin (Rosen). In Jewish and early Christian symbology the snake was the incarnation of all evil and may belong at Jerusalem with the Bacchic figures, Pan and the Centaur, vermin by extension. The traditional enemy of the mongoose, the cobra, is recognisable by its hood and striped belly, sitting coiled ready to strike. At Sakiet and Thina it continues its cosmic fight.

At Hanover it appears nose to nose with a lion, a running hound at its back, an inept placement. Balty (1976, 230, fig.12) opposes it unconvincingly to the crocodile, from whom it is separated by a flower and beneath which can be seen the striped, venomless colubrid snake usually shown wriggling along the ground. Where the cobra appears, so also does the benign snake.

In some later eastern mosaics a snake curls around a tree in the manner of the arboreal Aesculapian snake (*Elaphe longissima*). It is associated with Apollo and was an envoy of his son, the healing god. Its presence would lend a protective air in Graeco-Roman art where snake symbolism was positive. It was capable of regeneration, sloughing its skin, it had apotropaic and prophetic qualities. The snake also belongs to the mysteries of Dionysus, issuing from the *cista mystica*. The snake-in-tree motif is seen with Orpheus at Ptolemais, Tobruk, Chahba, Antalya, Carnuntum, the snake curls through a bush at Oudna. The snake-in-tree occurs frequently in later eastern depictions in mosaic and other media [24]. (See Map, fig.13). This motif, adopted in Christian art as The Serpent, was the same as the dragon of Thebes slain by Cadmus, an evil pagan connotation [25]. At Sparta a snake coils round a rock like Python around the Omphalos or as it appears with Apollo round an altar (RSGR 250-252). Often a snake issues from a crack in the rock seat (Paphos, Lepcis I, Merida I, Saragossa, Poljanice), or hides by one (Palermo I). The spiralling snake was always an ambiguous presence, evoking Orpheus' protective and prophetic character as well as symbolising a particular evil vanquished. A snake almost savaged the severed head of Orpheus, washed up on the shores of Lesbos, but Apollo interceded (Ovid, *Met.* XI, 58). A snake-bite took Eurydice to Hades, so this denizen of the earth might recall the Descent. Snakes were anciently connected with the Underworld, considered to be the benefic familiars of the dead. The striped snakes are often seen together with tortoise and lizard in a grouping of fortuitous animals (Sparta for example). The frog of Santa Marinella appears in such a grouping, recalling creatures of the apotropaic hand statuettes of Sabazios [26]. The slow, cold tortoise was almost a stone, a

considerable feat to charm.

The groups: canids, equids, deer, cattle, antelopes, bears and boars, reptiles are equally represented as well as a sizeable group of small beasts. After lion and leopard, the most frequently represented animals are tiger, boar, bull, stag, snake, bear, wild ass and fox. The monkey, elephant, antelope, hare, griffin and lioness come next. Monkey and hare stand out from the savage beasts of the hunt, but the speedy hare was a popular prey for the hunt, the only one that could not retaliate. At Merida and Pesquero rabbits, native to Spain might be depicted. So characteristic of the country was the rabbit, it graced Hadrianic provincial coins (ARLA 203, n.29). Some birds represent timid creatures, but not all. Pliny divided them into taloned and web-footed classes (NH, X, xiii, 29). The first is subdivided into carnivores and other clawed birds: song birds and large plumage birds, peacocks and farmyard cockerels (X, xxii, 43). The peacock is by far the most frequently represented on mosaic, followed by partridge, parrot and dove, crows and the eagle. The partridge, like pheasants and guinea fowl, was not only hunted for food, but was extremely shy; the bustard, also hunted, is noted for its timidity as is the porphyrio, the purple gallinule (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), a brilliantly coloured wader kept for its plumage. The ostrich must count as one of the dangerous amphitheatre beasts, notable for speed and strength. These are ground-birds, they walk about, like the web footed ducks and geese. The duck was hunted in winter, like the wild grey goose represented (Greylag, *Anser anser*), a bird difficult to tame. The goose of Pesquero and Barton is grey and black. The white domestic goose is ferociously antagonistic, its capabilities as a guard legendary [27]. It will see off snakes. The swan, sacred to Apollo, dedicated to Venus, an incarnation of Zeus, the preferred reincarnation of Orpheus (Plato, Rep. X, 620a), occurs at Perugia and Barton Farm. Of the long-legged birds the ibis, stork and heron are hunters of fish and reptiles, while cranes had a reputation for fighting Pigmies (NH, X, xxx, 58) and belong also to Nilotic scenes. The stork was specifically noted for killing snakes, but at Thina and Sakiel is coupled with the hare. A lone flamingo

appears at Thina. These are mostly fresh water waders or live in a marshy habitat. No sea birds are shown. The cockerel by virtue of its character, belongs with savage creatures not fowl.

The raptors form a group of savage birds complementing the beasts, chief amongst which is Jupiter's eagle, an avian counterpart to the lion. The majestic eagle is a carnivore capable of carrying off small quadrupeds. It did battle with stags and serpents (NH X, iv, 17). The eagle and snake fight, zoologically correct, is depicted at Perugia. This savage bird is not as common as one might expect, its presence lending an air of divine and temporal power to the scene. Of ravens and crows, it is unclear which is intended, so they are counted together. The raven was the oracular bird of Apollo, associated also with Mithras, but the light build of the mosaic black bird resembles the crow which was the better mimic. Hawks, used for hunting (Little Hunt, Piazza Armerina) and therefore already in human control, are seen only at Volubilis. Against the raptors is set the dove, attribute of Venus, chosen alone at Carnuntum for its pacific character opposite the eagle, as in a catacomb where dove and eagle appear on each side [28]. Numerous small, colourful birds appear, some for their plumage (bee-eater, kingfisher, hoopoe) or song birds joining with the divine song. The nightingales which sang their sweetest on Orpheus' tomb [29] would no doubt be depicted, but this small brown bird cannot be identified. In black-and-white, at Perugia, nightingale and blackbird may indeed be represented, but how to tell? The thrush, another songster, was caught for food. Birds can represent the seasons as in the genre scene of birds pulling chariots. The migratory swallow and the peacock which moults in autumn and regrows its feathers when new leaves appear [30] both represent Spring. At Miletus a peacock, parrot and porphyryon represent spring, summer and autumn (winter perhaps a goose? Cf. ARLA 280-2, 'Birds in Harness').

Of sheep and goats, which might constitute 'fearless flocks', few examples appear, save the billy-goat, notoriously wayward. The barbary sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*) with huge horns and an apron-like fringe of hairs, is the wild sheep of the

African *venatio* mosaics, one of the beasts set out for show on a floor from Carthage (ARLA 30, n.73, 163: called mouflon). (ill.57). At Volubilis one appears in suitably pugnacious posture. Another ovine is the ibex, with equally huge horns and beard [31]. Pliny notes its remarkable speed (NH, VIII 79, 214). A popular item in the arena in the third century, it is recorded as appearing in great numbers, and is common in later eastern depictions (ARLA, 147) with a corresponding appearance in Orpheus mosaics of the region (Cos II, Hanover, Mytilene). Of domestic sheep, two rams occur, at Rome and Thina as the fierce ovine. Timid ewes appear at Rome and Jerusalem and two mosaics from the Rhone valley. There alone the literary ideal is expressed, with sheep near savage beasts. Sheep occur either on the earliest mosaics, reflecting Hellenistic landscape poetry, or the latest, influenced by Christian imagery.

Equids, including horses and wild asses, deer and antelope would all have been recognised as dangerous, with many testaments to their behaviour in the amphitheatre. Stags are ferocious, the does represent timidity, although deer could be tamed. Two forms are depicted, fallow and red deer stags, distinct animals. Both are clearly shown at Lepcis I and perhaps El Pesquero. Often they are difficult to distinguish in art. The red deer (*Cervus elephas*) has typical branched antlers. The fallow stag (*Dama dama*) is smaller and distinctive with a light, spotted coat and flattened, spade-like antlers. It is not to be confused with the elk, a larger, dark beast which Pliny describes as 'bullock-like' (NH VIII, xv, 38, 39) on account of its hump and rounded muzzle, though its antlers are similar (cf. ARLA, 145). Fallow stags are seen at Thina and seated at Volubilis. Deer appeared in the arena and were also beasts of the hunt. Antelopes include some of the fiercest fighters of the *venatio* which could despatch the dogs. Oryxes were especially destructive of the hounds. Oryxes, addaxes and hartebeests were imported in numbers to Rome [32]. Gazelle belong to the same timid and fleet footed category as hares and does, but could be tamed.

Quite as rapid, but untamable, were the wild asses of Africa (*Equus asinus atlanticus*) [33] and of Asia (*Equus*

hemionus), including subspecies onager. Wild asses, exceptionally shy, were favourite hunting prey able to run for long distances at great speed. When finally cornered they defended themselves with some force. *Onagri* was a slang name used by the Roman army for small catapults with a powerful kick. The Asiatic ass would attack an enemy with its teeth and hooves, flailing with rage. Leg stripes on the African wild ass reveal its presence at Oudna and Piazza Armerina where only the lower legs remain. Third century mosaicists from the Greek east preferred to put the horse rather than the ass with Orpheus. Asia was a favoured source of horses in the Late Empire, those from near the Taurus considered the best (Oppian. *Cyn.*, I, 197). Imperial horse ranches existed in Phrygia; race horses came from Cappadocia [34]. Another source of horses was Spain. The more flamboyant anatomy of the horse, long-necked, flowing mane and tail, better suited the decorative character of the depiction than the stiffer build of the ass. The 'Mosaic of Horses', Carthage [35], includes the only African depiction of a horse with Orpheus, but is exceptional in showing no other animals with him. On this pavement he, like other secondary motifs, indicates the name, perhaps the character of the racehorse. Salomonson only considers Orpheus as a name (p.118), unlikely in view of his legendary weakness, but perhaps Enchanter? By back reference to the nature of the Orphean audience, further suggestions are: *Atmetus*, (Unconquered); *Ferox* (Hotspur); (Cf. *ARLA*, 178-82); *Thrax* (Thracian = barbarian, fierce); a name meaning 'uncatchable'.

Bulls have been counted among domestic animals, but the appellation is misleading, for they are the most dangerous of creatures. The placid bull which pulled a plough is not the beast of the mosaics. At Perugia three types are depicted, one the light, ferocious bull of the Spanish bull-ring, half wild; a heavier, hairy beast, perhaps the European bison (*Bison bonasus*) which is also seen at Piazza Armerina; a smaller, seated bull, perhaps the domestic stud animal whose ferocity is legendary. The same violence is true of the humped zebu which frequently appeared in the arena. Bulls were tied to bears in a nasty

amphitheatre turn. Bears were common wild animals all over the Roman Empire, a staple of amphitheatre displays large and small. Horrendous to meet in the arena or hunt, a ruthless killer when enraged, it was also in demand as a performing animal of some charm and ability. Sacred to Artemis, symbolic, after hibernation, of resurrection, the bear combines qualities of cruelty with almost human intelligence and form. These last characteristics associated it with the ancient shamanistic origins of the Orpheus figure [36]. Doubtless in mosaic its familiar performance in the hunt or arena was the motive for depiction. The bear trade was a major industry [37]. Equally available throughout the empire was the wild boar. As an object of mythical hunts and the cause of heroic deaths it was perhaps viewed as an agent of divine destiny. The boar hunt was a metaphor for imperial *virtus*, as displayed on a Hadrianic tondo in the Arch of Constantine (cf. Aymard 1962, 171).

An entire book is devoted to the elephant by H.H. Scullard, Toynbee reserves a chapter. The magnificent animal, consecrated as a solar beast had a symbolic role in the expression of triumphs temporal and celestial [38]. The Indian triumph of Dionysus on the Pashley Sarcophagus [39], shows an elephant whose thick hide is represented by an incised reticulation which is also shown on the mosaics of Piazza Armerina, Pesquero, Woodchester and Oudna II (fig. 21a, b). This is unlikely to be ceremonial netting. Pliny finds the wrinkled hide, '*cancellata cutis*', a notable feature of the beast. It was believed to be able to expand and contract for the purpose of killing flies! (NH, VIII, x, 30). A second century Greek medical treatise describes the hide fissured with transverse and oblique channels like a furrowed field (Scullard, 221) It was a convention of Roman relief to score the hide in this regular pattern [40]. Like every animal, elephants are assumed to be creatures of the wild drawn to the mountain where Orpheus sings, so would not bear the trappings of human domination. Sacrificial animals and especially those for the amphitheatre were beribboned, as were tame decoy animals [41]. Few exceptions are noted, collared hunting dogs, for example, the leash of the Jerusalem mongoose, the *bulla* worn by the

eagle. The collars and reins worn by the animals ridden by the divinities at Littlecote designate them attributes of the goddesses and not of Orpheus. Cf. Ch.11, 309, 321. See n.47 below.

The savage beasts are most amply represented. These are carnivores with the habit of tearing, slashing or biting their foe, venomous snakes and the fatally stinging scorpion. Dangerous animals make up the next largest group, including bulls, boars, elephants, stags. Nilotic hippopotamus and rhinoceros should go in the dangerous group, while the crocodile, 'a curse on four legs' Pliny calls it (NH, VIII, 37), might be included with the big cats. Alternately, crocodile, cobra and viper could be grouped as savage and venomous creatures, with scorpions. For us the crocodile should be with the genera reptiles, but it features differently in art. The suggested groups best fit antique definitions.

Small creatures have their own group, the hare most frequently represented of all. A squirrel appears at Merida I (*Sciurus vulgaris*). The creature seen with Orpheus at Yvonand (RPGR 202, 3) is not a squirrel, but a fox, elaborated by the engraver, sat in customary position attentive to the singer [42]. At Jerusalem a shrew (*Crocidura russula*), like the mongoose a sacred animal in Egypt, makes of the depiction a religious panorama (Rosen, 1984). The mouse appears in later, eastern mosaics, not scurrying round the floor, but high up on the picture plane, perched on the kithara at Chahba. Amongst the rarer animals of Piazza Armerina are a hedgehog and snail, sharing a characteristic withdrawal into defences with the tortoise and pangolin. The migratory swallow, envoy of Spring, the bee-eater, the hare and the scuttling mouse fall into the character category 'animals which never rest' with the inference that only Orpheus lures them.

The fabulous griffin entered the Orphean mosaic repertory after AD 250. Though not numerous in the total sample, it became popular from that time. At Chahba it occupies a rock ledge above and behind Orpheus, equivalently placed to the eagle of Tarsus. The griffin, combining lion body, ears and mane with eagle wings, head and beak, was likewise capable of ascent to the heavens.

The griffin of Romano-British mosaics has the wattle of a cockerel under its beak. The griffin appears on all the eastern marble sculptures with Orpheus, and on the ivory *pyxides*. It was long associated with hunting scenes. A pebble mosaic from Alexandria shows *erotes* killing a deer in a decorative border of lions, deer, leopards, and so forth, with griffins constituting a familiar apparition amid typical hunting scenes [43]. The creature appears in the Great Hunt of Piazza Armerina, lured by human bait and in a similar scene on a silver strainer from the London Mithraeum, which also depicts the mongoose-cobra combat [44] (ill.67a). A disproportionate number of griffins occur in Romano-British mosaics, 50% of the sample: Barton Farm, Woodchester, Whatley, Winterton and Horkstow. (ill.67b) The circular animal frieze of the first two recalls the Alexandrian border. The griffin was popularly believed to exist in eastern lands (Philostratus, *Vita Apoll.* 3, 48). In the Imperial period it symbolised Nemesis [45]. L.Foucher (1969, *Latomus* 103) sees it as a symbol of Diana-Nemesis, patron of the amphitheatre. The griffin already had an ancient role in the hunt and *venatio*, a metaphor for the vengeful force of Nature conjured by the massed presence of animals, and for human presumption in attempting domination. The griffin was associated with Fortune, death and apotheosis, guardian of the road to salvation and of treasure. The solar animal (lion-eagle) was consecrated to Apollo, appearing by his side everywhere; on sarcophagi its salvatory potential would apply [46]. At Littlecote the figure of Nemesis herself, with Zeus in swan form, brings the same symbolism to the scene of mythic pursuit as the griffin does to realistic hunting scenes. The added complexity is that she too was forced to metamorphose into fierce beasts to escape the pursuing god [47], like Dionysus. Cf. 313-14 below.

Other fabulous creatures are represented once each. The phoenix with Orpheus at Piazza Armerina also occurs in the south apse of the Great Hunt and was believed to exist in Arabia or India, either of which the imagery might represent. It is depicted with Orpheus on the dish from Trier (fig.5 Panyagua 1973, no.142) Pliny thought it might be fabulous (NH, X, ii,3). The solar bird was

a symbol of immortality. It lived for five hundred years, died in the fire of its nest where it was resurrected. Seven rays of fiery light emanate from its head. Such transcendent symbolism of renewal and eternity was usually provided by the peacock, which is not apparent on remaining fragments. This is an early depiction of the bird, in later art an imperial symbol of the perennality of the Roman empire and a Christian eternity symbol [48]. Dionysus' companions, Pan, half goat, and the Centaur, half horse, appear at Jerusalem symbolising the unbridled animal passions, lust, drunken brutality, ignorance, to be restrained (cf. the satyrs and erotic couple on vase, ill.6). In the older mythology their human halves allowed them the grace to master the Nature embodied in their animal halves, a duality which gave them benign aspects. A philosophical reading of the Orpheus image made all animals representative of natural passions which the civilised Man must bring into concord. Pan, who pervaded every thing, was the fertile force of Nature, denizen of woods and fields, guardian of flocks and herds and therefore the embodiment of that spirit of Nature drawn by the cosmogonic song: the greatest good, with, nonetheless, a propensity for chaos. His powers of generation exemplified in his lustful exploits, Goat-Pan embodied the chthonic powers of Dionysus. On the Jerusalem pavement his genitalia are depicted, like other powerful male animals with Orpheus. The centaur combined instinctual animal force with the superior human qualities of virtue and judgement: the centaur Chiron, teacher of Achilles, personified wisdom. The horse was a solar beast, representing intellect, nobility, dynamism. The centaur at Jerusalem carries a club, pointing up an analogy with Hercules: the human constituent is responsible for his brutal exploits. He shows his bemused submission to a higher spiritual force by putting a hand to his mouth, a gesture of approval, sitting and beating time with a hoof. This compares with the description in the fourth century Orphic Argonautica [49] of the centaur Chiron after defeat by Orpheus in a singing contest. Pan indicates his state and presents the apparition Orpheus with an outstretched open hand (cf. gesture of satyrs on *pyxis* from Bobbio [50], fig.8b). The pair appear regularly on Coptic textiles [51].

They entered the audience in late antiquity, but the precedent for their attendance was set on Attic vases when Satyrs and Thracians were drawn by Orpheus' song, personifications of raw animal energy and brutality. The place of the Thracian horsemen was taken in late antique art by the then favoured equivalent, the Centaur. Together they present the highest and lowest aspirations, the powers of heaven and earth, intellect and instinct, bound together in fruitful harmony by the music. The limiting Christian view would make them all evil.

These are all male creatures, while Orpheus is involved with fatal female powers in his legend. Two expressions of female force in mosaic are the sphinx and maenads. The sphinx which occurs on the eastern marbles [52], on the Trier dish, and on textiles appears once on a fourth century mosaic (Pesquero). She has a lioness body with teats, a woman's upper body and breasts, and eagle's wings. This beast is a version of the griffin which converts its savage, but potentially salvational force, into the malevolent power of the Greek sphinx. Man, in his search for the arcane wisdom of which she was the repository, could be dragged into the depths by her. A maenad peers from the edge of the scene at Antalya I. These woman followers of Dionysus, capable of irrational fury, are best discussed in the chapter on associated scenes. The Sirens, with girl's faces, but bird's legs and feet, outsung by Orpheus on the Argonautic voyage, are not represented in the terrestrial setting of the mosaic scene [53]. Eager for blood, they diverted men from their spiritual goal. Male bestial qualities were capable of reform, while the revelation of the bestial nature of women only increased the terror they inspired.

The sea-griffins of Salona, beasts common to decorative borders, might qualify as pendent marine motifs which so often accompanied Orpheus. Every creature on earth had its marine double, sea-griffins serving the same symbolic purpose as their terrestrial counterparts, intimating the dangers of the marine arena and salvation through death therein. Also at Salona are fish and dolphins, decorative motifs. Dolphins, especially in the appropriate context of mosaics from coastal towns, were fortuitous creatures. The

further role they had in funerary art of escorting souls across the sea to the Isles of the Blessed, may be interpreted in a domestic context as guardianship of life. On four mosaics fish occupied the field with Orpheus: Salona, Trento, Yverdon and Woodchester (Bradley: 'fish and a star round the centre'). The first account of Orpheus' power has fish following him like sheep. A fish-tail ('*un pez plateado*') can be made out at Santa Marta. The photograph is indistinct, but this may be a sea-beast.

The fox, the most prominent creature in the British repertory, is common in mosaics from the Greek East. Where Orpheus occupies a central panel the fox is among the few animals to accompany him: Miletus, Mytilene, Rottweil, Yvonand, Salona, Brading. It lies on the ledge below the griffin at Chahba, apart from the other animals. A fox and crow are the accompanying animals at Cagliari. Its importance in Britain is denoted by a location close to Orpheus, set apart from other animals, the only one at Littlecote and one of two at Brading, where its sitting posture and the rocky setting recall eastern mosaics. It is always a fox companion, not a dog. In late mosaics dogs are the hunting breeds of the *venatio* genre which invades the charmed circle (ill.69. 70). Hunting dogs run at full speed (Hanover), have short tails (Withington, Rome) or collars (Mytilene, Miletus). The other canids, wolf and jackal are seen with the fox at Piazza Armerina, demonstrating their conventional distinctions, from each other and from hunting dogs (ill.68a). The fox is long, low, short-legged, with a club-like tail. In the eastern repertory it might sit (Miletus, Rottweil, Brading, Piazza Armerina, St-Paul-lès-Romans), recline (Mytilene, Chahba), run, or leap up like the Mithraic dog (British mosaics). Its smooth red coat and pale chest are realistically pictured at Piazza Armerina. The jackal, running here, often stands (Rougga). It has long thin legs, a thick, rough coat of variegated colour, indicated by black lines over an ochre ground. It also has a club-like tail (ill.68b). The heavier set wolf has a dark grey coat, its shaggy tail curls upward. Dark canines at Merida II and Ptolemais may be wolves. The animal hounded by the dog *Mustela* on the Oudna pavement is a long-legged jackal [54]. As

the prey of African hunts, its more common appearance with Orpheus there would be explained. Foxes belong to the eastern mosaics which did not rely on the hunting genre for their fauna [55]. The beast lower right at Avenches II apparently shown sideways in the engraving, was most likely originally a seated fox.

In Christian symbolism the fox was a cunning deceiver, the despoiler of vines. In the classical world his legendary fondness for grapes brought him, like the leopard, peacock and snake, all drawn by wine, into the orbit of Dionysus the wine god [56]. The fox is principally nocturnal, living in an underground earth, an animal representative of the chthonian god, an epithet for whom *Bassareus* = fox-fur, is attested both in Horace: '*candide Bassareu*' (*Carm.* I, 18, first C.) and Macrobius (*Sat.* I, 18, 9, fourth.C.) Even the purple foxglove - *baccare* - attests to the association with Bacchus. (Virgil *Ecl.* IV, 19; VII, 27). The distinctive Thracian fox-fur cap and boots of ancient times and the long fox-fur robes called *bassarai*, worn by the Thracian followers of Dionysus, were signified by the fox, which served as an emblem of the singer's Thracian origin. At Littlecote the animal charmer becomes the Thracian mage, the fox acting as the specific attribute of Orpheus, distinguishing the figure from Apollo [57]. The animal scene is of less importance than his ritual function as poet of the Bacchic rites. The dog which accompanies hunting personages, Diana, Meleager, Silvanus, designates them as such. Orpheus is not a hunter. Shepherds have a dog companion: Paris, Endymion. Some pastoral imagery could have permeated to Orpheus, at Paphos the fox assumes a sheep dog pose. Romano-British mosaics, influenced by the iconography of Mithras the eastern hunter, employ his dog as model for the fox.

Orpheus presides over Woodchester's sumptuous display, the fox and peacock emphasised by their location on each side of him like heraldic beasts, one a creature of earth, the other of the heavens. At Brading fox and peacock are again chosen as representing the essential symbolism of the singer, with the addition of the monkey and crow. The peacock which carried the stars on its tail ('*quae*

cauda sidera portat' Ovid *Met.* XV, 385) was a symbol of the heavens and immortality. Its flesh was said never to decompose [58], making it analogous to the eternal phoenix. Like the phoenix it came from the east, from India, signifying Spring and resurrection (NH, X, 44). It could carry souls up to heaven, was the bird of apotheosis for certain empresses, was depicted in funerary art and became absorbed into Christian symbolism. It was a powerful apotropaic image [59], its feathers alone and the 'wheel' of its spread tail providing protection from evil influences on African mosaics (Dunbabin, 166-9). The splendid sight of this bird made it a prime decorative subject, both for its jewelled colours and feather pattern, but its prominent placing in British mosaics suggests a symbolic reading. It does not display on Orpheus mosaics.

The monkey on African mosaics is probably the Vervet or Green monkey (*Cercopithecus aethiops*) of which there are several varieties [60]. Pliny speaks of the '*cynocephalus*', dog-head, from Ethiopia, remarking on its extreme ferocity (NH, VI, xxxv, 184; VII, ii, 31; VIII, lxxx, 216). Two ape species can be seen at Thina and Sakiety. One peers from behind the rocks, hand to head in a typical manner. The other, seated nearby, both hands raised, has a distinctive tail with a brushy end. If this is the Anubis Baboon (*Papio anubis*, Ethiopia) it would fit Pliny's description, dog-headed and fierce, though it might be the Hamadryas (*Papio hamadryas*, Egypt, Arabia), the sacred Egyptian baboon. The baboon was one of the animals sacred to the god Thoth, (the equivalent of Greek Hermes), a god of wisdom and the voice of reason. However, the baboon only appears on these late African mosaics, perhaps bringing a Nilotic ambience. The tailless Barbary Ape (*Macaca sylvanus*) is monkey on eastern mosaics. Reliefs, (ARLA, figs. 13, 14), illustrate typical postures assumed by the monkey. One on a shop counter sits, knees drawn up, one hand to its head (Thina, Sakiety, Palermo II, Antalya). Other postures are legs trailing as on a branch (Piazza Armerina) or seated, legs and arms straight (Palermo I, Brading). Rather than being located on the ground (Volubilis, Oudna) (ill.71, 72), in several mosaics the monkey is placed high up on the picture plane to

one side (Adana, Brading, Rome, Perugia, Palermo I, Palermo II, Antalya) in respect of its arboreal habitat. On ivories and marbles, the monkey sits on the lyre itself, knees drawn up, hand to head. The example unique to British mosaics at Brading is coupled with the fox. Both are of the eastern repertory, suggesting the provenance of the mosaicist.

The monkey had a natural place in a display of the world's creatures, but more than that, it was imitative, almost human. It performed tricks in the arena. D. Levi [61] describes the turns, jugglers, tumblers and trained monkeys, of a *venatio*, illustrated with a relief of monkeys and a bear cub seated on stools at a table, like a 'chimps tea party'. Brading's monkey, said to be wearing a 'red hat' [62] could be performing, but the hat is no more than the ear badly drawn. (Cf Oudna, ear 'above' cocked head.) Monkeys 'ape' the lowest, most bestial human qualities. Monkey is the trickster figure, highlighting weakness, yet ultimately benign. The parody ape of Sousse II playing a mandolin is illustrating its typical characteristic of imitation [63]. The instrument was usually played by Psyche, the soul. The lost central figure was surely Orpheus, whom he mirrors. The parody would underline Orpheus's capability to impose order. Monkey music will be far from divine, but Orpheus can bring order to the perceived chaos of a dangerously human imitation. The monkey, in many respects like half human Pan and Centaur, is the unregenerate soul, showing what might befall man if it were not for the civilising effects of the cosmogonic song, but, though imitative of Man, he has no humanity in his make-up and cannot achieve salvation. Parrots and ravens are also imitative, but while the parrot's utterances were the mundane repetitions of pets, those of the raven, Apollo's bird, were oracular, prophetic, its presence hinting at Orpheus' ultimate fate, a severed head uttering oracles [64]. The monkey, peacock, fox, raven/crow at Brading make a carefully chosen group symbolising the powers of dark and light, benign and malevolent forces. The mosaic is placed on the threshold, in form like a protective *orbiculum* (Cf. *Mosaic* 16, 1989, 9-13).

Species may be appropriately bracketed by character, for

example the imitative, Nilotic and nocturnal groups: one from each might be represented. Nilotic creatures are crocodile, mongoose, cobra, ibis, duck, hippo and rhinoceros. They appear together in three Italian Orpheus mosaics, Perugia: crocodile, rhino and ibis; Piazza Armerina: mongoose, hippo and rhino. The animals are not placed together. At Rome the hippo has its aquatic vegetation, lily pads, usual in the black-and-white Nilotic scenes so popular a subject of Italian mosaic. 'Exotic' creatures were those not encountered in public displays and hunts. They include the camel, shown infrequently, only seven examples, but all on mosaics from the Gallic provinces and Italy. They seem to have been considered exotic there, whereas in North Africa and Asia they were and remain draught animals and beasts of burden well known for a treacherous temperament. They were used as battle cavalry. They may be bracketed with Nilotic animals as examples of exotica. The zebra, giraffe and pangolin are curiosities, shown to demonstrate the power of the patron as much as Orpheus, to bring them from afar. Exotic birds were those brought from the east, originally novelties, then kept in Italy and perhaps further west eventually: guinea fowl, pheasants, porphyryons (purple gallinule), the peacock (which still excites our admiration and wonder), the fabulous phoenix, the parrot from Bacchus' Indian triumph. At Barton Farm guinea fowl and crane represent exotics. The placing of creatures common to Bacchic scenes on Orpheus mosaics does not suggest the influence of ritual iconography. They mingle with the others, all having their own symbolic life. Leopard and tiger may denote the Bacchic rites Orpheus reformed, but are more likely represented for their natural ferocity. A direct reference to the cult is implied in two instances: at Littlecote the animals ridden by the deities are the same as the metamorphoses of Dionysus fleeing the Titans - leopard, bull, goat and deer. Pan and the Centaur of Jerusalem, members of the Bacchic cortege, might denote a despised cult subdued, or more likely classical nature spirits civilized, like the satyrs of Attic vases.

Only the New Song of Christ, wrote Clement of Alexandria, rather than the pagan chant of Orpheus, had been able to tame Man,

the most intractable animal, comparing types of men with their animal counterparts: frivolous men were like birds, deceivers like reptiles, irascible men like lions, voluptuous men like swine, rapacious men like wolves. The silliest men are as thick as wood and stone, while the man steeped in ignorance (of Christianity) is more insensible even than stone (*Protrep.* I, 4, 1). Such comparison of human and animal souls was ancient. Plato believed evil souls entered the bodies of animals with a corresponding nature, gluttons, drunkards and violent men would be reincarnated as asses and similar beasts. The unjust, robbers and tyrants would find themselves in the bodies of wolves, hawks and kites (*Phaedo* 82, A-B). Orpheus expressed a desire to return as a swan, rather than be born through the body of a woman (*Rep.* X, 620 A). Pythagoreans believed in the absolute equivalence of animal and human souls: just men would be reincarnated as mild and tamed animals (Cumont, *Symb. Fun.* 404). Clement's tirade denigrates Nature, the animals and the animal nature of men, using a simile alluding to the familiar myth, with a view to diminishing the value of Orpheus' song. The kinds of animals omitted from the Orphean repertory, the domestic, the cowardly, the 'unjust', show that Orphean animals belonged to a pagan symbolic system of art emphasising positive characteristics. The 'irascible' lion, for example, was as often the noble envoy of valorous Death in pagan funerary art. So the action of Orpheus was not the deceiving magic gathering ignoble souls, as Clement would have it, but was expressive of a noble life and death struggle, ultimately victorious.

The massed strength conjured by Orpheus was as potentially dangerous in image as it would be in reality [65]. All the savage, rapacious beasts, all the malign forces such as the sphinx, the nocturnal owl, all the fear generated by the timid animals, the mischievous harm of the monkey, the darkness of chthonian fox, all the powers of divine vengeance, Nemesis, of the griffin, were brought together by the singer. Ranged against them are birds of good omen, the peacock, the crow, the swallow, the peaceful dove, the majestic eagle, the fortuitous presence of the snake and the lizard. Orpheus plays, sings, and the tremendous, almost electrical potency of the

audience is brought into harmony, transformed into a force for good, the evil spirits vanquished, weak overpowering strong. Scenes of carnage could be tolerated on living room floors in part for their apotropaic value. An 'Evil Eye' mosaic (ARLA fig.139, n.27) shows an owl on an eye pierced with a spear being mobbed by a group of animals plunging in at it: crows, snake, bull, stag, tiger, bear, oryx, scorpion. The malevolence of the eye is held in check by the animals of good omen. The combination of hunting and amphitheatre scenes had a particular prophylactic effect stemming from the moral sense of 'virtue' attaching to the vanquishing of a foe, the dangers of pursuit, combat and death [66]. African mosaics depict a zoological inventory of animals derived from amphitheatre or hunts. Animals which were immortalised on mosaic being gathered from many lands (Dermech), arrayed ready for despatch (Rades), in active combat with hunters or each other (Smirat, El Djem) or enumerated as victims (Sousse), would meet their death in great numbers in arena set-pieces or hunted down in the field [67]. To this savagery the African Orpheus was an antithetical image, depicting the gathering of beasts by peaceable, perhaps magical means. It functioned as a prophylaxis complementing the protective potency of carnage imagery, effective against the malignities of nature and jealous gods, against the forces of massed animal power conjured by these same savage images. It also provided protection for the men engaged in the carnage either combatively or by procuring the beasts. The fauna of such Orpheus mosaics reflects the wider animal genre, with a figural repertory employing the beasts of the arena and hunt in distinctly different attitudes. In the eastern depiction animals were chosen to be symbolic of themes relating the image to its literary background, making it effectually an emblem of Hellenism. There the fox would signify Orpheus' Thracian origin and his association with Dionysus; the snake his association with Apollo and healing; the tortoise, Hermes and the lyre. Monkey and the fabulous beasts denote the location of the image in the metaphorical, rather than the real world. The hunt enters the picture in the form of stylised figures of running beasts.

In both depictions Nature was allegorised. The audience was structured as a range of opposing, but equal forces to illustrate the harmonious balance brought by Orpheus. Animals were not anthropomorphised, but could embody human traits, even transmigrated souls. Simultaneously, almost every creature was consecrated to the gods, attribute and companion. Perhaps the god was not by the side of the beast, but each beast reflected some aspect of their divinity. Some creatures were half human, some imitated humanity, their ambiguous duality permeating the image. According to context the same animal could be a good or bad omen, the assumption with Orpheus being that good fortune prevailed. The depiction of numbers of animals provided a pleasurable display, but was not solely for that purpose. The picture could embody a message proclaiming the patron's allegiance to classical culture. Some elemental force was generated by the massing of bestial power which could also be diffused by it. Positive and negative forces were allegorised by the Orphean animals, celestial, solar and chthonian beasts, light and dark, male and female, malevolent and benign, representatives of vengeance, fate, destiny, life and death forces and ultimate safe passage through life, perhaps salvation after death. Orpheus harmonised chaotic oppositions providing a positively charged field which would protect the house of which it was an integral part, as well as decorating it admirably.

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LOCATION OF UNUSUAL CREATURES

ONAGER: Adana; Avenches II; Cos II; Perugia;
Salona; Stolac; Vienne; Withington,
Woodchester.

HORSE: Blanzky; Carthage; Chahba; Hanover;
Mytilene; Perugia; Piazza Armerina; Rome;
Volubilis, Yvonand; Santa Marinella.

ZEBRA: Perugia.

CROCODILE:	Blanzky; Hanover; Perugia.
RHINOCEROS:	Perugia; Piazza Armerina.
HIPPOPOTAMUS:	Piazza Armerina; Rome; Volubilis.
HOUND:	Bavai; Hanover; Horkstow; Miletus; Mytilene; Perugia; Rome; Winterton; Withington; Trento.
JACKAL:	Piazza Armerina; Rougga; ?Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Salona; Sakiety; Thina; ?Tobruk; ?Ptolemais.
WOLF:	Merida II; Piazza Armerina; ?Ptolemais; ?Tobruk; ?Saint-Romain-en-Gal;
SHEEP:	Jerusalem; Piazza Armerina, Rome; Saint-Romain-en-Gal.
RAM:	Thina; Rome.
GOAT:	Adana; Miletus; Perugia; Rome; Sakiety; Salamis; ?Tobruk.
IBEX:	Cos II; Hanover; Mytilene; Rome; Yvonand.
BARBARY SHEEP:	Volubilis.
ADDAX:	Lepcis Magna; Palermo I.
HARTEBEEST:	Arnal; Cherchel; Lepcis Magna; Oudna; Piazza Armerina; Ptolemais; Volubilis; Sta. Marinella.
GAZELLE:	Adana; Cagliari; Cherchel; Edessa; Hanover; Miletus; Yvonand.
DOE:	Cagliari (2); Carnuntum; Newton St. Loe; Perugia; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Volubilis; Withington; Yvonand.
ZEBU:	Hanover; Merida I; Mytilene; Perugia; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Sousse I; Volubilis; Sta. Marinella.
BISON:	Perugia; Piazza Armerina.
GIRAFFE:	Santa Marinella.
CAMEL:	Avenches I; Piazza Armerina; Rome; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Trinquetaille; [?Perugia].
HARE/STORK:	Mytilene; Palermo I; Rome; Rougga, Sakiety; Thina.
MOUSE:	Chahba; Hanover; Jerusalem; Piazza Armerina; Ptolemais.
MONGOOSE:	Chahba; Jerusalem; Piazza Armerina; Sakiety; Thina; Volubilis.
COBRA:	Hanover; Perugia; Sakiety; Thina; Santa Marinella; [?Rome; ?Rougga]
FROG:	Santa Marinella.
LIZARD:	Hanover; Mytilene; Palermo I; Piazza Armerina; Rome; Rougga; Sparta; Sakiety; Santa Marinella.
SNAKE-IN-TREE:	Antalya I; Carnuntum; Chahba; Ptolemais; Tobruk; Trento; Oudna.

TORTOISE:	Mytilene; Palermo I; Perugia; El Pesquero; Piazza Armerina; Rome; Rougga; Sparta; Sakiyet; Thina.
VIPER:	Jerusalem.
BABOON:	Sakiyet; Thina; Perugia.
HEDGEHOG:	Piazza Armerina; Rougga; Constantine
HYRAX:	?Thina; Volubilis.
PANGOLIN:	Piazza Armerina
SCORPION:	Merida I; Sakiyet.
SMALL CAT:	Cos I; Perugia; Piazza Armerina; Volubilis.
SNAIL:	Cos II; Piazza Armerina; Rome.
SQUIRREL:	Merida I.
BUSTARD:	Lepcis Magna; Merida I; Rome; Rougga; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Saragossa; Volubilis; Yvonand.
COCKEREL:	Lepcis Magna; Piazza Armerina; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Withington.
CRANE:	Barton Farm; Piazza Armerina; Saragossa.
FLAMINGO:	Thina.
GOOSE:	Barton Farm; Lepcis Magna; Miletus; Palermo II; El Pesquero; Piazza Armerina; Sparta.
GUINEA FOWL:	Barton Farm, Lepcis Magna; Sousse I.
HAWKS:	Volubilis.
HERON:	Ptolemais; ?Santa Marta.
HOOPOE:	Sakiyet; Piazza Armerina; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Saragossa; Volubilis; Merida II.
IBIS:	Adana; Avenches II; Cherchel; Hanover; Perugia.
KINGFISHER:	Volubilis, Saint-Paul-lès-Romans.
MAGPIE:	Edessa; Merida; Mytilene; Palermo I; Rottweil; Volubilis.
OSTRICH:	Chahba; Cherchel; Thina; Lepcis Magna; Palermo I; El Pesquero; Piazza Armerina; Sakiyet.
OWL:	Adana; Jerusalem; Lepcis Magna; Perugia; El Pesquero; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Volubilis.
PEAHEN:	Barton Farm; Saint-Romain-en-Gal.
PHEASANT:	Barton Farm; Hanover; Horkstow; Lepcis; Merida; Piazza Armerina; Saint-Romain-en-Gal; Vienne; Withington; Woodchester.
PORPHYRION:	La Chebba; Cos I; Merida III; Vienne.
ROLLER:	Hanover; Piazza Armerina; Volubilis.
SHELDUCK:	Mytilene; Piazza Armerina.
STORK:	Avenches II; Mytilene; Palermo I; Piazza Armerina; Ptolemais; Rome; Rottweil; Rougga; Sakiyet; ?Santa Marta; Thina.
SWALLOW:	Hanover; Thina; Piazza Armerina; Saragossa; ?Trinquetaille.
SWAN:	Barton Farm; Perugia.

BLUE ROCK THRUSH: Saint-Paul-lès-Romans; Volubilis.
 THRUSH: Piazza Armerina; Saint-Romain-en-Gal.
 ROBIN: Piazza Armerina.
 GOLDFINCH: Piazza Armerina.
 CHAFFINCH: Volubilis.
 FLYCATCHER: Volubilis.

FISH: Salona; Trento; Yverdon; Woodchester.
 DOLPHINS: Salona; Trento.
 MOLLUSC: Trento.

FABLED CREATURES:

CENTAUR: Jerusalem.
 PAN: Jerusalem.
 SPHINX: El Pesquero.
 MAENAD: Antalya I.
 ?SIREN: Bavai.
 PHOENIX: Piazza Armerina.
 SEAGRIFFIN: Salona.
 HIPPOGRIFFE: Bavai.

GRIFFIN: La Alberca; Antalya I; Bavai; Barton Farm;
 Chahba; Horkstow; Merida II; Piazza
 Armerina; Sakiet; Volubilis x 2; Whatley;
 Winterton; Woodchester.

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NOTES

1. Aristotle, Pliny and Aelian are sources of antique perceptions and definitions. Three modern books collating historic and scientific references to the ancient animal world are essential to this chapter. J.G.Jennison's Animals for Show and Pleasure in Ancient Rome (1937), ASPAR, from the point of view of an animal keeper. Invaluable for first hand zoological information and characteristic behaviour. An exhaustive review is provided by J.M.C.Toynbee, Animals in Roman Life and Art, (1973), ARLA. A synopsis of ancient ideas of birds is found in J.Pollard, Birds in Ancient Greek Art and Myth, (1977); Keller's Antike Tierworld not seen. These contributions, combined with information gleaned from modern scientific guides, underline present statements. J.Dorst, P.Dandelot, Field Guide to the Larger Mammals of Africa, (1970), 1988 edit.; Grzimeks Animal Life Encyclopaedia, 13 vols. (1975); Longman Illustrated Animal Encyclopedia, ed. P.Whitfield, compact edit. (1988); The Hamlyn Guide to Birds of Britain and Europe, ed. B.Bruun, (1970), repr. 1989; P.A.D. Hollom, R.F.Porter, S.Christensen, I.Willis, Birds of the Middle East and North Africa, (1988). Names, Latin and

- English, taken from these sources. Only matters pertaining to Orpheus need be added.
2. Isaiah 11, 6; Virgil, Eclogues 4.22. Claudian, The Abduction of Proserpina, II, 25. A.Grabar, (1969) 53-4.
 3. Ch.Picard BAC (1961-2), 23. Ptolemy's pageant: Athenaeus V 101B, 200F-202A, ARLA 39 and *passim*.
 4. J.Aymard, 'Quelques scènes du chasse', MEFRA (1957) 52.
 5. J.Aymard, 'La querelle du cobra et de la mangouste dans l'antiquité', MEFRA, 71, (1959) 227-62. J.Balty 'Le cobra et la mangouste dans les mosaïques tardives du Proche-Orient', JOBYZ (1976), 223-33. Thina, Sfax both have cobra mongoose group.
 6. Hist. Aug., Vita Pii, X, 9.
 7. Cf Z.Kadar, 'La fauna del mosaico di Orfeo in Piazza Armerina', Acts XI Int.Cong. Class.Arch. (1978/9), 282f. Sees only c.40 animals. Close examination and reconstruction of line drawing, Gentili (1959), fig.10, compared with colour photographs, reveals the presence of 56 animals, whole or fragmentary, with room for total to reach 60. Kadar's 'Über die Tiere um Orpheus auf einem Mosaik der Villa bei Casale (Piazza Armerina)' Festschrift für Klaus Wessel Munich (1988) 139-145, pl.pp.419-421, arrived too late for consideration. He counts 50 animals.
 8. Toynbee ARLA, 293, identified a squirrel at Yverdon, actually a fox, and an armadillo at Piazza Armerina, the South American cousin of the African pangolin.
 9. Frog: ARLA 216 and n.5. G.Moretti, Ara Pacis Augustae, (1948), pls.11, 13. Giraffe: C.Dauphin, 'Byzantine Pattern Books', Art History (1978) 1/4, 407-8, figs 2, 11, 13.
 10. Trinquetaille, Avenches I, St-Romain-en-Gal, Piazza Armerina, Rome, Perugia. In other media with Orpheus: dish from Trier, Panyagua (1973) no.142; marble sculpture groups, *ibid*, no.180, fig.25, no.181, fig.26.
 11. See Ch.11, Christian pendants.
 12. Balty, (1976), 229; *idem*, (1980) 34.
 13. J.Pollard, Birds in Greek Life and Myth, (1977), 107-8.
 14. Painted tomb, Silistra 4th.C. D.Strong, Roman Art (1976), fig.216.
 15. Pliny NH VIII; Aelian, De Natura Animalium. Line drawings in zoological books show the most typical postures, a useful comparison since it was antique pictorial practice to present animals at their most recognisable.
 16. Edict Diocletian VIII, 39, Tenney Frank, Economic Survey of Ancient Rome, V, 350.
 17. 'Virides': Claudian, De Consulatu Stilichonis, III, 345. Described as 'saffron-coloured' in 2nd.C., Julius Pollux, Onomasticon IV, 83. Green: Utica hunt, Brit.Mus. Hinks, Cat.45,

- fig.137, 2nd.C. olive green; Sparta Orpheus, early 4th.C. viridian; Winterton Orpheus, late 4th.C. outlined blue, shaded dark olive, D.Neal, Roman Mosaics, (1981) 111; purple: Littlecote. Cf. Ch.8, n.23, 24, 25.
18. Cf Titian's 'Bacchus and Ariadne', National Gallery, London, where leopard-shaped cheetahs draw the god's chariot. The cheetah was available in Renaissance menageries and model books, eg. Pisanello, the leopard hardly known.
 19. E.H.Warmington, The Commerce Between The Roman Empire and India, (1928).
 20. Verulamium, lion and stag-head: Building XXI, II, room 4. Neal, (1981) 102-3, fig.75.
 21. Myth of Callisto; the Athenian girls who danced as Bears to Artemis Brauronia J.Harrison, Themis, 450. M.Eliade, A History of Religious Ideas, I, (1979) 456; Martial, de spect. 21, a she-bear appears in the arena to savage the criminal 'Orpheus'.
 22. B.Rosen, IEJ 34, (1984), 182-3.
 23. Aymard, 71, (1959), 249-54.
 24. See Ch. 2, n.65. Orpheus: rings, ivory pyxes, marbles; other images: mosaic of Adam, Huarte; Bacchus group, London.
 25. Laconian black-figured cup, 6thC.BC, Pollard, (1977), fig.16; Frampton, mythological pavement, 4th.AD. BAR 41 (i) pl.6.XIIIb.
 26. ARLA 223-236; A.Merlin, L.Poinssot, Mon Piot XXXIV (1934) 129-76, for discussion of prophylactic properties of these animals. Hands of Sabazio: ARLA, 216-7, n.7, fig.114, from Avenches; an example in the BM., S.Perowne, Roman Mythology (1969), 1983, 102.
 27. Legend of geese guarding the Capitol of Rome, Livy V, 47, 3, 4; Pliny, NH, X, 26.
 28. Catacomb: Peter and Marcellinus, J.B.Friedman, (1970), 48, fig.5 (Cemetery of Two Laurels); Murray, BAR S100, fig.7.
 29. Leibethra: Paus. IX, 30, 3, nightingales nesting on O's grave. Lesbos: Myrsilus, FGrH 477 F 2, nightingales of Antissa, where O's head buried. F.Graf (1987) 92 and n.46.
 30. Aristotle, Historia Animalium VI 564 B, 1.
 31. Capra ibex, European native, but C.i. nubiana and C.i.walie, Africa, Asia accord with mosaic distribution, cf. ARLA, 147.
 32. Martial Ep. XII 95, Oppian Cyn. III, 445ff.; ARLA, 146.
 33. Atlas Mountains, now extinct. The shoulder cross distinguishes it from E.a.somalicus. M.Matthews, Bull.AIEMA12, (1989), 334-6.
 34. Tenney Frank, Economic Survey, IV, 617.
 35. J.W.Salomonsen, La mosaïque aux chevaux de l'antiquarium de Carthage (1965), 68, 118, fig.48, pl.XLIX:3; Dunbabin, fig.85.

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36. M.Eliade, Shamanism, Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy (1964); E.R.Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational, (1951) Ch.5, 135ff.
 37. Aymard, (1937) 56-7. Traders: *ursorum negotiatores*, scene of trapping on mosaic of Antiquarium of Rome a rare illustration of their methods.
 38. H.H.Scullard, The Elephant in the Greek and Roman World, (1974); R.Turcan, Les sarcophages romains a representations dionysiaques, (1966), 466.
 39. Catalogue of Greek and Roman Sculpture, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, (1964), no.161, pl.54.
 40. Sarcophagus dated 2nd century, but both mosaics, Woodchester, Pesquero, and incised reticulation in relief, eg. ivory diptych, apotheosis, ARLA pl.11, are 4th-5th C.
 41. Smirat, Dunbabin, fig.53, a leopard with lucky millet stalk girdle; El Djem, fig.68, all bulls girded and painted.
 42. Cf.von Gonzenbach, (1961), 235-6, no 143, pl.39; ARLA 293. The engraving process reverses the image copied; the lyre has been placed on the drawing so as to appear correct in printing, but lion behind Orpheus and fox sitting before him are customarily the other way about. Cf. Rottweil, Cagliari.
 43. B.R.Brown, Ptolemaic Paintings and Mosaics (1957), pl.41/1.
 44. Toynbee, (1986), figs.2 and 3.
 45. C.Settis-Frugoni, 'Il grifone e la tigre', CA, 24, (1975); 'Grifo', Enc. dell'Arte Antica iii, (1960).
 46. O. appears on a strigillated sarcophagus with a ram as his audience and a griffin behind him: Porto Torres, Sardinia, Murray, (1981), fig.6, the griffin suggesting Christ is new Apollo, lord of music and the sun. Toynbee, ARLA 290, argues meaning O. is new Apollo.
 47. Apollodorus, III, 10, 7; Pausanias I, 33, 7. The deer used as a decoy in hunting wore a ribbon to denote its tameness. J.Aymard, Les Chasses romaines (1951) 335, n.4.
 48. Pollard, 99-101; G.Amad, Recherches sur le mythe du Phénix dans la mosaïque antique, (1988).
 49. pls.440-2, ed.Budé, trans. F.Vian, (1987), 105, 179.
 50. Cf.Brilliant, Gesture and Rank (1963), passim. Rhetorical gesture.
 51. Sister Murray, BAR S100, (1981), 148-9, n.8, for refs and discussion.
 52. DACLXII, 2752, fig, 9246, Athens; ARLA fig.137, Sabratha.
 53. FA, XXXII-III, (1977-8), 3861, Attic black-fig. vase, c580BC. Arch.Anz. (1977), 582-610. A singer with lyre standing before two Sirens, on a boat, has been called O. The terracotta group in the J.Paul Getty Museum, West (1983) pl.4, shows a singer
-

- seated between Sirens. Orpheus is unlike any other depiction; the Sirens resemble those of imperial mosaics, not contemporary vase painting.
54. Fradier, 94-5; Dunbabin pl.XIX, 44; perhaps also in Rural Scenes panel, *ibid*, pl.XXXIX, 101.
 55. Its presence on the Sabratha marble suggests eastern provenance, as do sphinx, griffin, lizard, monkey on lyre. Squarciapino saw a local artisan trained in the Aphrodisian school, *Bull.Comm.Arch.* (1941)
 56. British foxes love blackberries.
 57. Literature on association of Dionysus and O. with the fox is extensive. S.Reinach *Cultes, Mythes et Religions*, II, 85-122, sees the fox as an ancient totemic animal which O. embodies. Reviews ancient refs. Also R.Eisler, *Mysteriengedanken* (1925) 110, n.2.
 58. Cumont, *Recherches sur le symbolism funeraire des Romains* (1942) 231.
 59. *DA* II, 987, *ibid* III, 674, n.12.
 60. Toynbee's 'Barbary ape' *ARLA*, p.56, is the tailless Macaque which now infests Gibraltar. It has no variant with a tail, as she states, unless she means the whole order of *Cercopithecidae*, Old World Monkeys.
 61. D.Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements* II, (1936), 273-77.
 62. J.E.Price and F.G.H.Price, *A Description of the Remains of Roman Buildings at Morton, near Brading, IOW*, (1881), 9. Toynbee, *Art in Britain Under the Romans* (1964) 255.
 63. Panyagua (1973) 490-1, no.245, critique of previous discussion. Cites another example of parody monkey, a *terra sigillata* dish from Cologne, cat. no.140, discussed *idem*, (1967) 234. A 5th.C. eastern mosaic from Kuseir Amra with animals in compartments amongst which is a musician monkey: *RPGR* 225, 1. Levi, (1947).
 64. Crows, ravens also kept as talking pets. *ARLA*, 274-5.
 65. Cf. R.L.Gordon, 'The Real and the Imaginary: Production and Religion in the Greco-Roman World', *Art History* 2, 1, March 1979, 5-34, on perception of reality in images.
 66. J.Aymard, 'Notes sur une mosaïque de Westerhofen', *Latomus*, lviii, (1962), 171.
 67. Dunbabin: pl.XII, 26-8; XXIV, 58; XXII, 53, XXIII, 56; XXV, 60.



Fig. 21a.

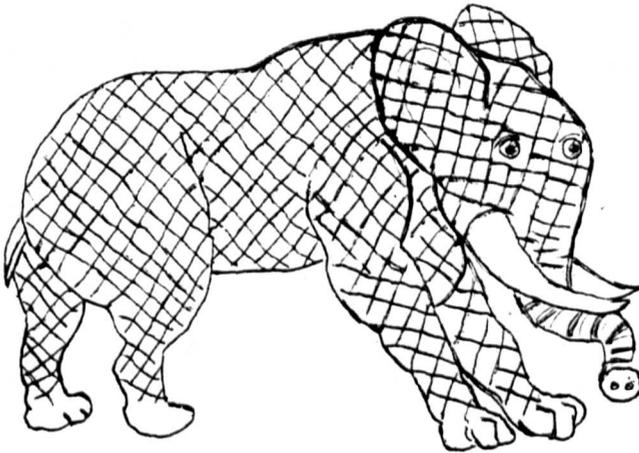


Fig. 21b.

21a: (top) Elephant, Woodchester, Lyson's engraving.
21b: (lower) Elephant, Piazza Armerina.
Both early 4th C. AD. Mosaics.



Adana



Burton Farn



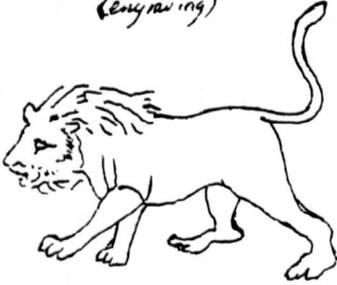
Chahba



Cherchel
(engraving)



Cagliari
(engraving)



Hanover



Cos I



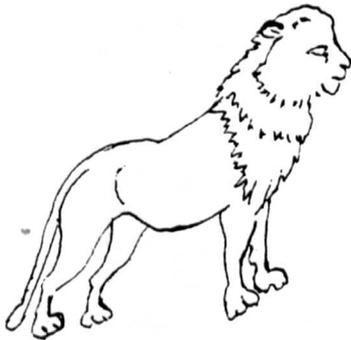
Edessa



Leptis I



Martim Gil



Merida III



Mileta



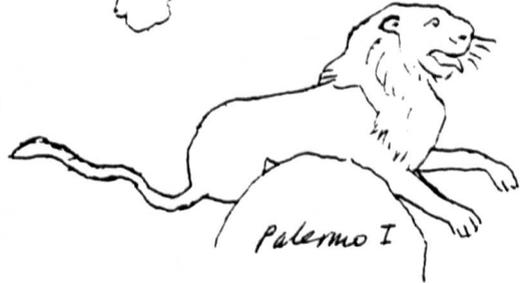
Mytilene



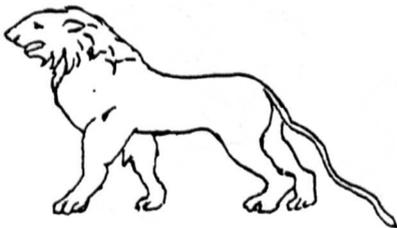
Newton St Loe



Oudna



Palermo I



Paphos



Pengia



El Pesquero



La Chebba



Foret de Brotonne



Piazza Armerina



Poljanica



Ptolemais



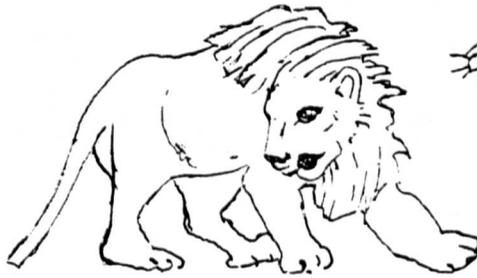
Rome



Rouga



St. Colombe



St. Romain-en-Gal

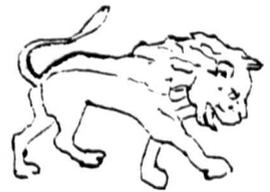


Sakiet

Sousse II



Saragossa



Spaña



Tingretaille



Thysdrus (El Djem)



Thina



Tarsus



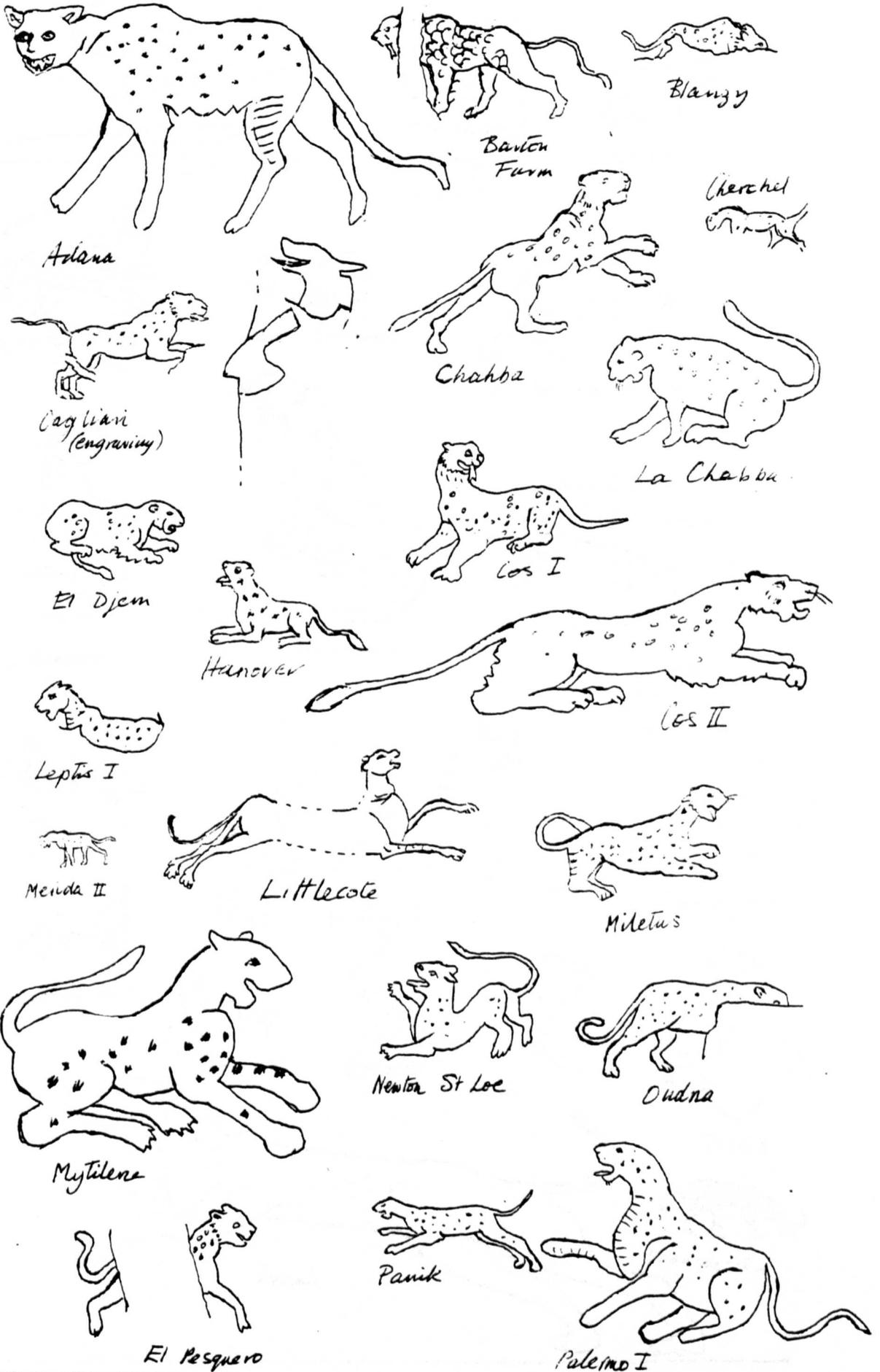
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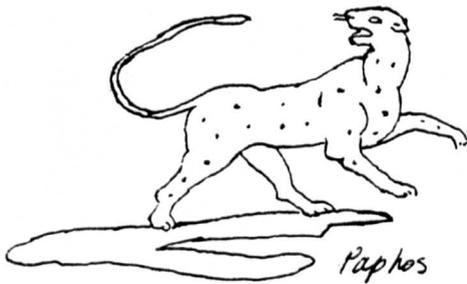


Woodchester



Yverdon





Paphos



Poljanice



Rougga



Sparta



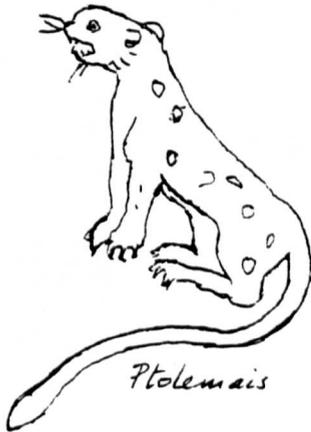
Saint Colombe



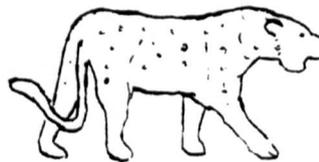
St Romain-en Gal



Saragossa



Ptolemais



Sousse I



Thina



Withington



Tringetaille



Winter ton



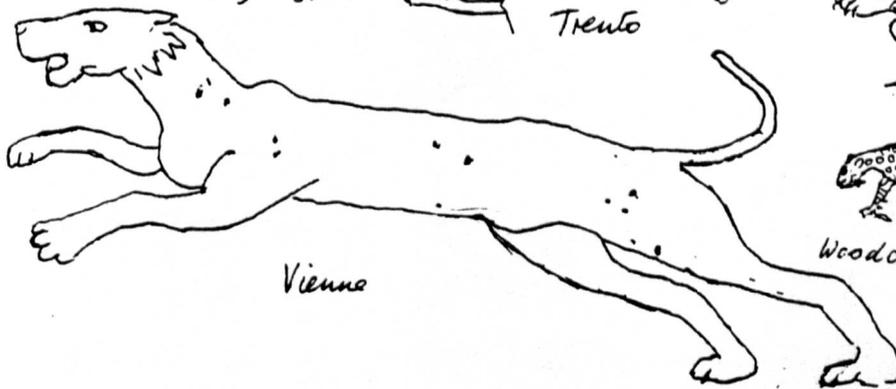
Yvanand (engoring)



Trento



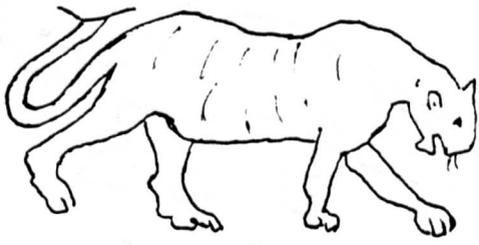
Tarsus



Vienna



Woodchester



La Chebba



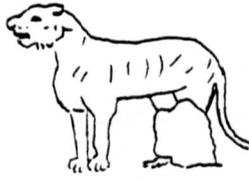
Cos I



Cos II



Chakba



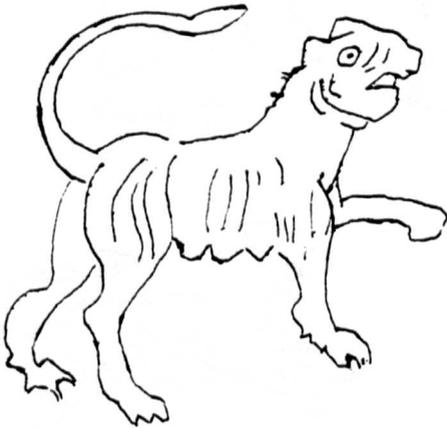
Leptis I



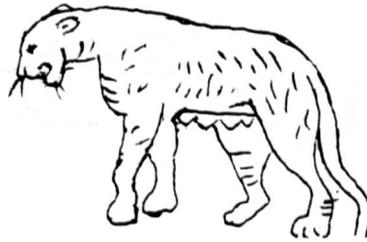
Markim Gil



Menda I



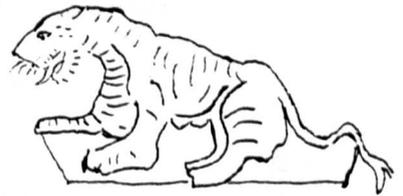
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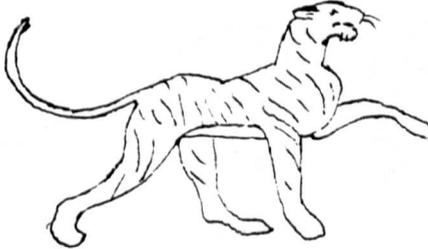
Oudna



Palermo II



Palermo I



Paphos



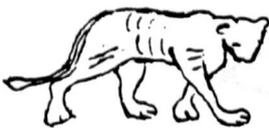
Piazza Armerina



Perugia



Rome



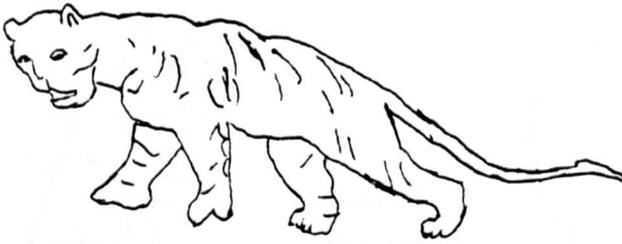
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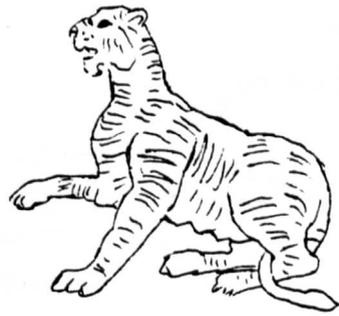
Saint-Colombe



St. Romain-en-Gal



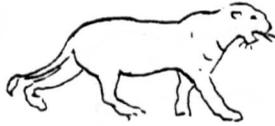
Sousse II



Saragossa



Sousse I



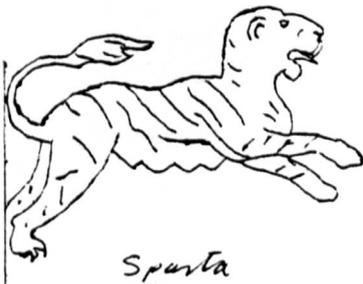
Thina



Sakiet (as found)



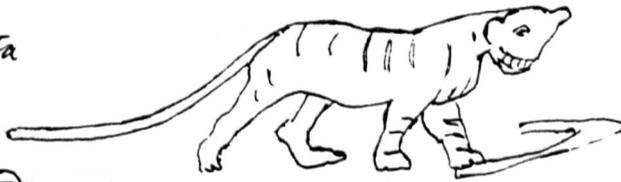
Sakiet (now)



Sparta



Stolac



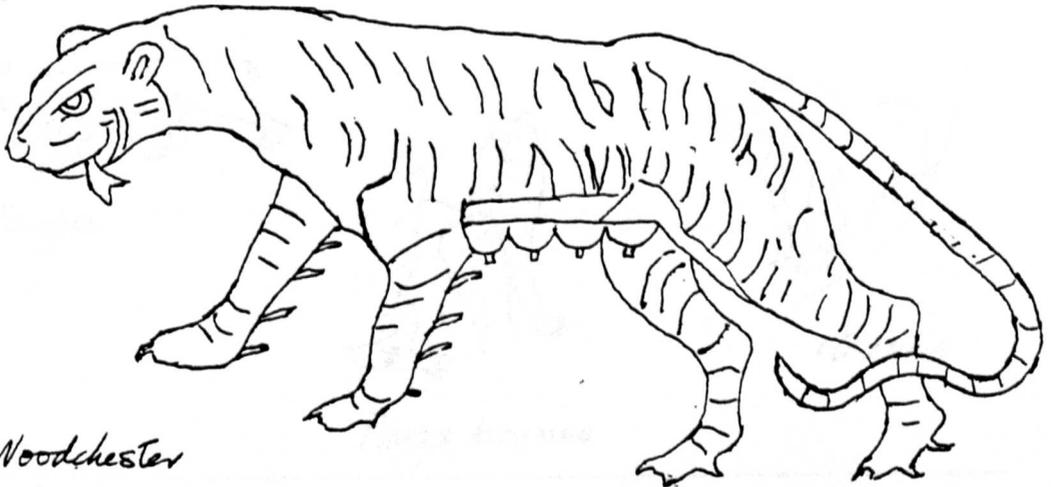
Volubilis



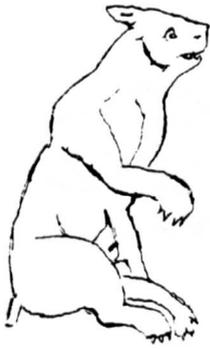
Winton



Tarsus



Woodchester



Adana

Arenches II
(Engraving)



Arenches I



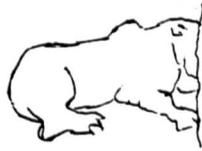
Blauzy



Blauzy (restored)



Los II



El Djem



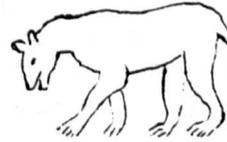
Horklow



Jerusalem



Leptis I



Miletus



Newton St. Loe.



Paphos



El Pasquero



Porugia



Piazza Armerina



Ptolemais



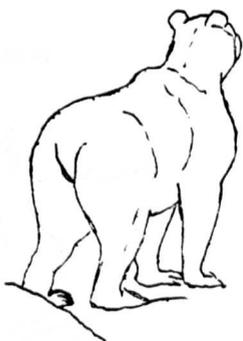
St. Columba



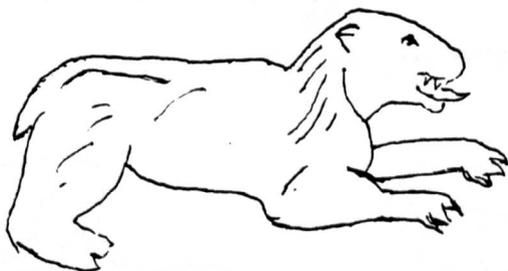
Rome
(restored)



Thina



Syracossa



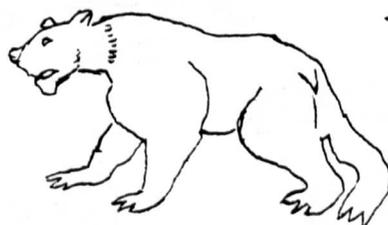
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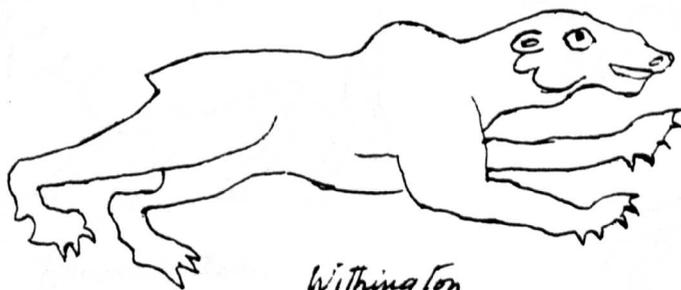
Tarsus



Piazza
Armerina



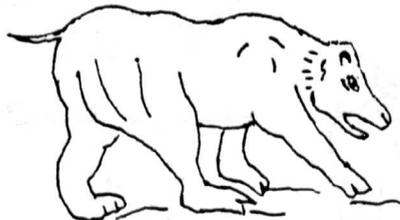
Sakiet



Withington



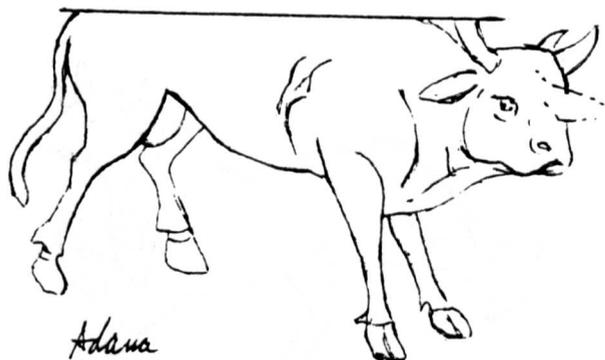
Woodchester



Volubilis



Yverdon
(engraving)



Adana



Laghan (engraving)



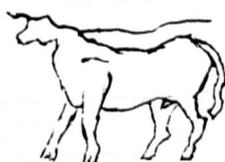
Chabba



Los I



Djemilah



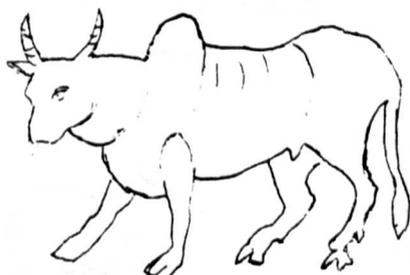
Hanover



Los II



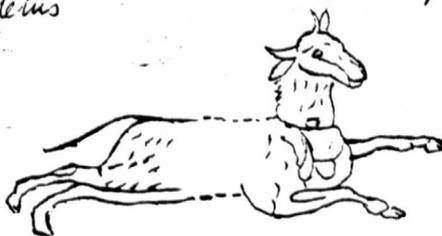
Lepts I



Hanover, Zebu



Miletus



Littlecote



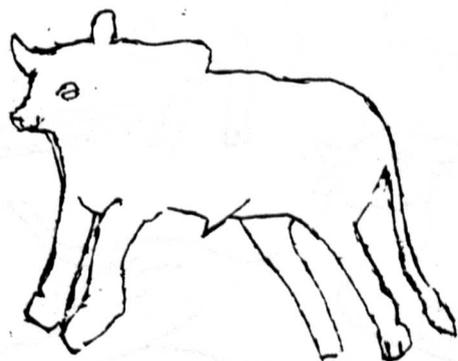
Menda I, zebu



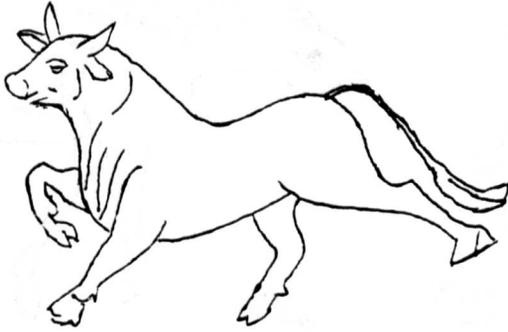
Panik



Oudna



Mytilene



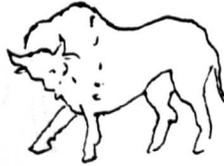
Newton St Loe



Palermo I



Paphos



St Romain-en-Gal
(wall colour)



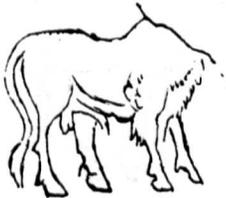
Palermo II



Pangia



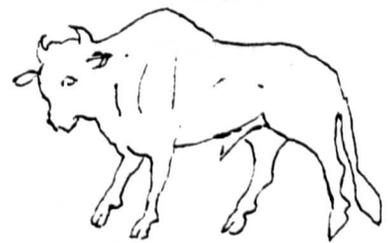
Pangia



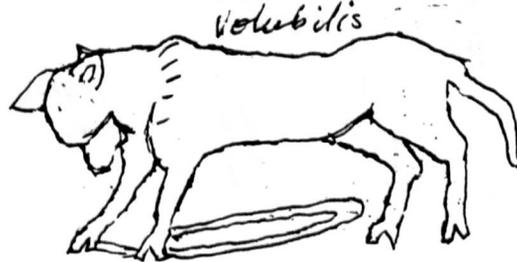
Piazza Armerina



Rougga



Sousse I.



Volubilis



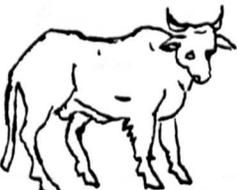
Tarsus



Trinquetaille



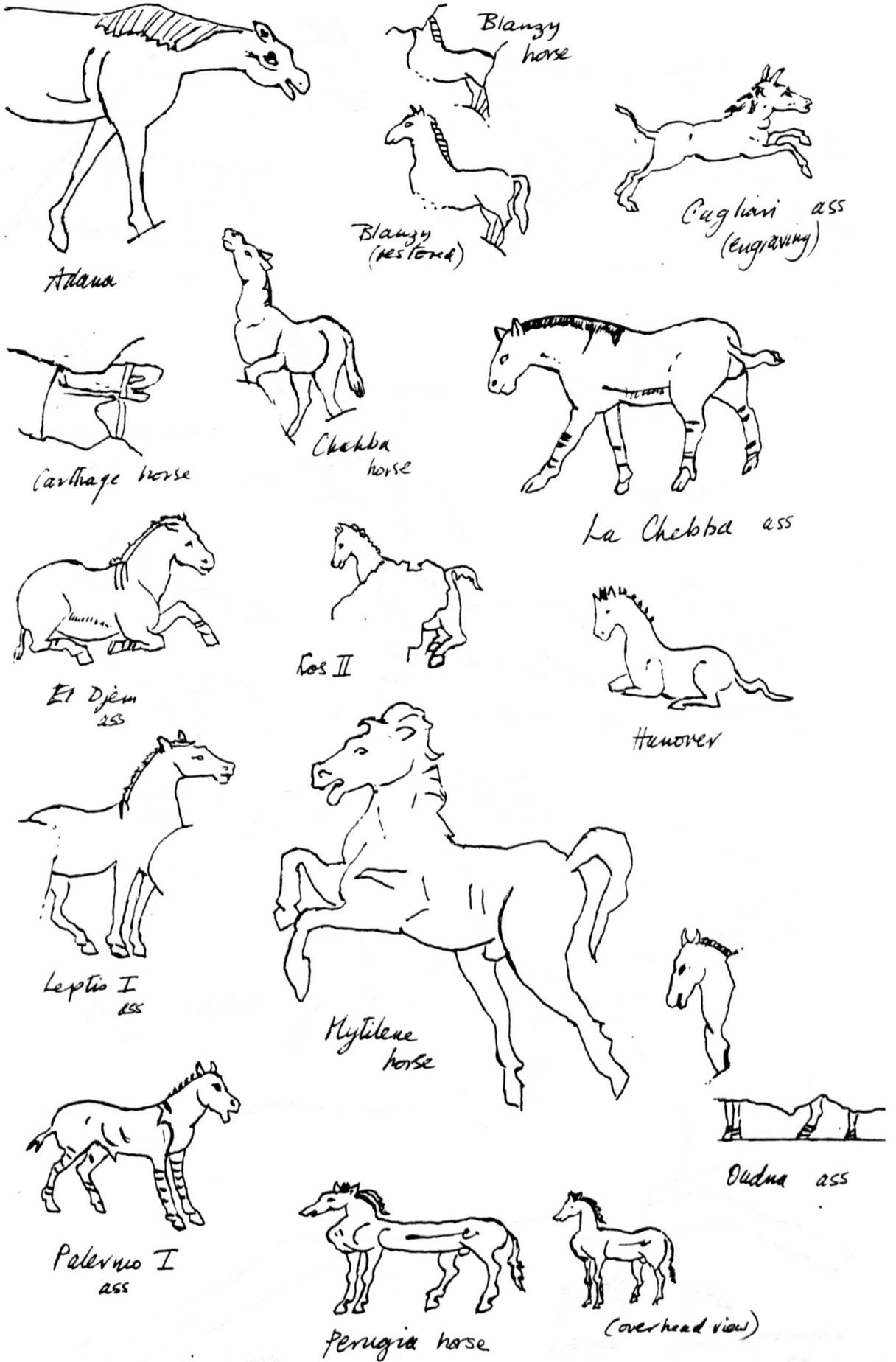
Thina

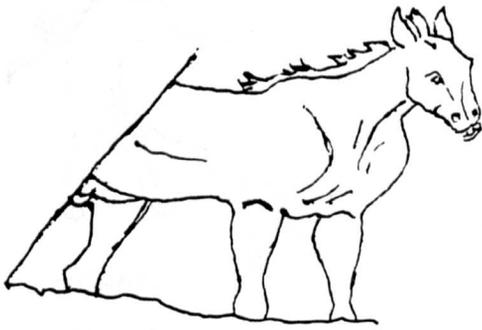


St Romain-en-Gal (wall colour)

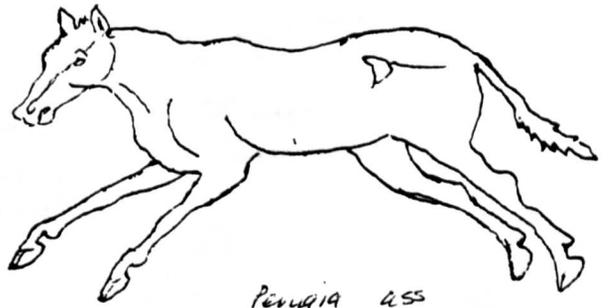


Withington





Perugia, mule



Perugia ass



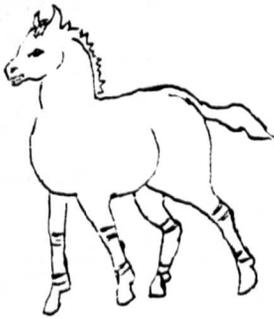
Piazza Armetina
ass



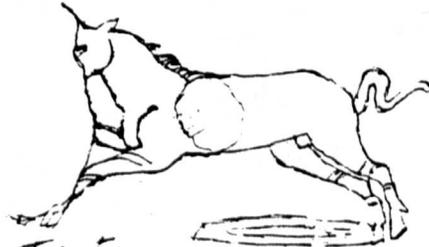
horse



Rome horse



Sousse II
ass



Trento



Rouya
ass



Sakiet.



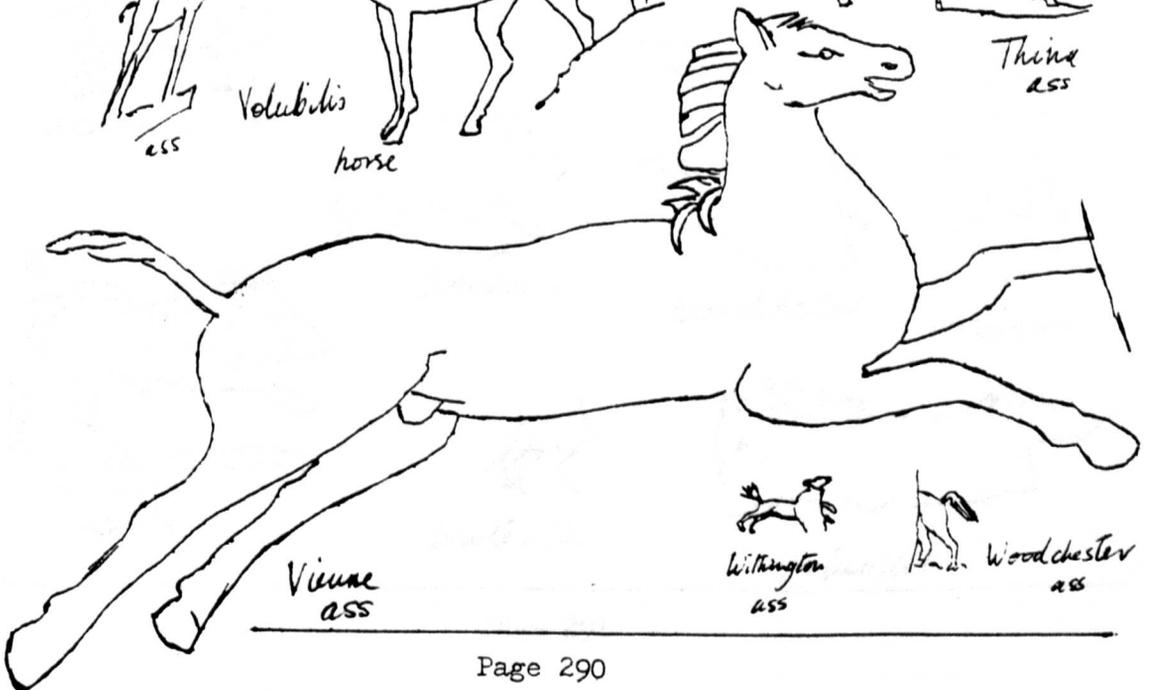
ass



Volubilis
horse



Thine
ass



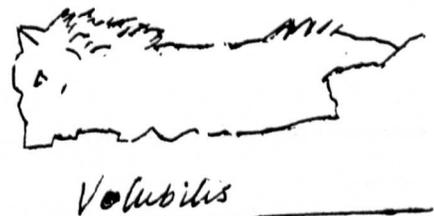
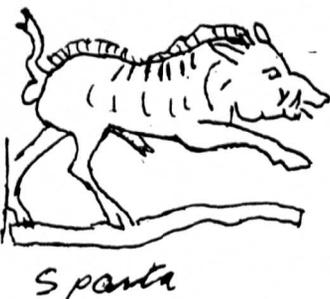
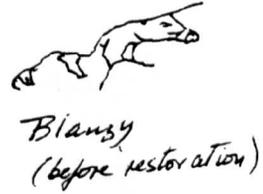
Vienne
ass



Wilmington
ass



Woodchester
ass

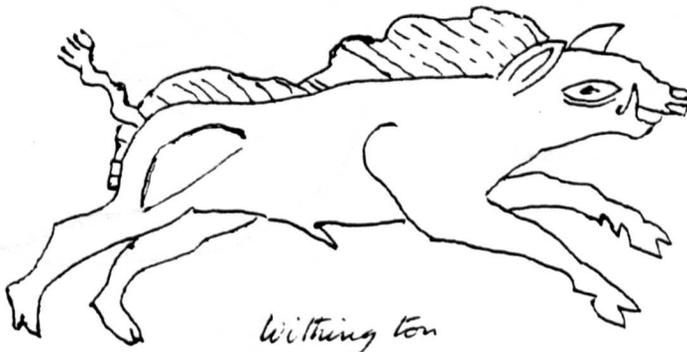




Sakiet



Thinn



Wittington



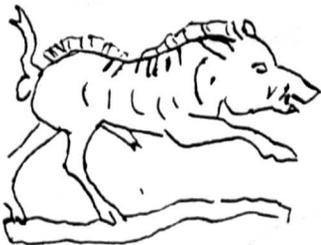
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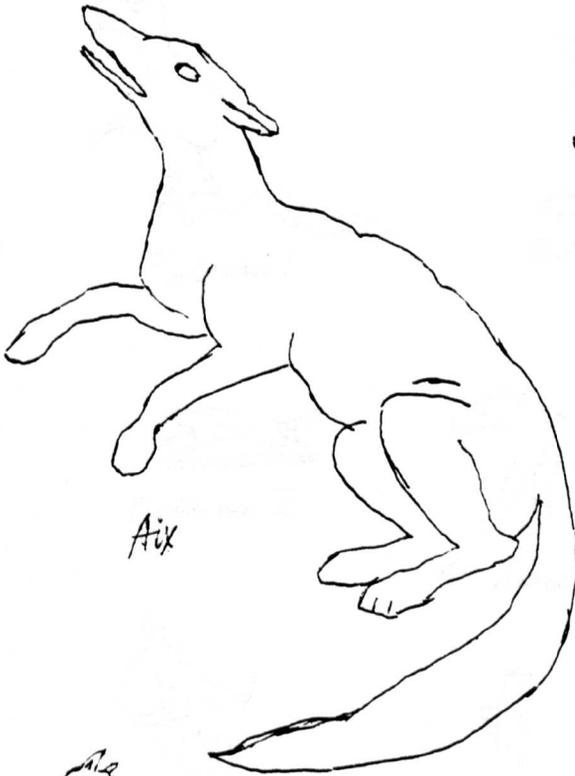
Kongga



St-Romain-en-Gal



Sparta



Aix



Boston Farm



Brading



Chahba



Caqhari
(eng, wing)



Littlecote



Newton
St. loc



Menda I



Miletus



Paphos



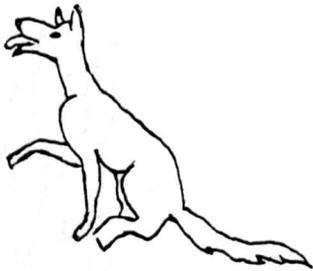
Phytikene



Martin Gil



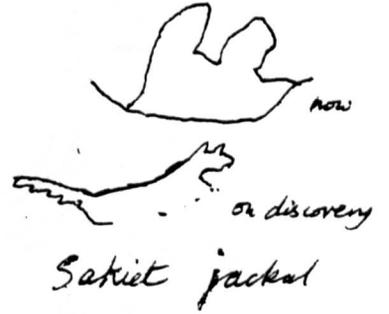
St Paul-
les-Romans



Palermo I



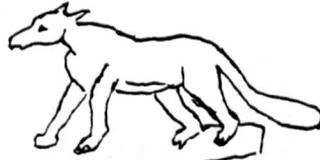
Reitweil



Sakiet jackal



Palermo II



St Romain-en-Gal



Thina jackal



Salona



Yvonand
(engraving)



Rougga jackal



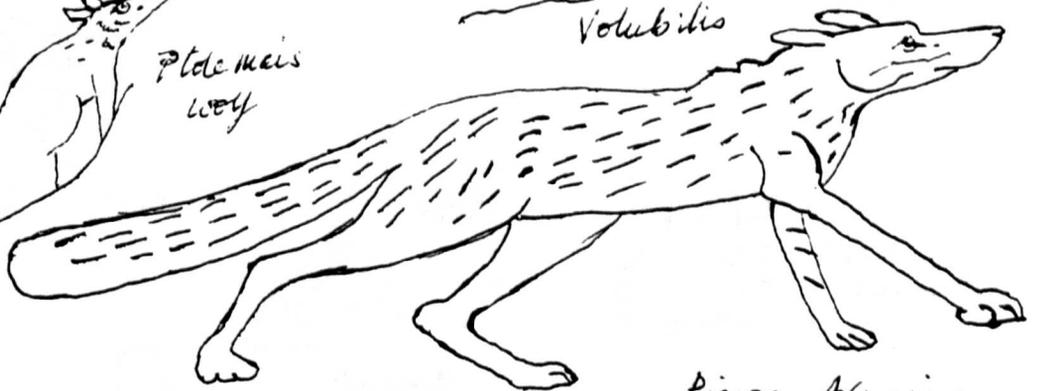
Woodchester



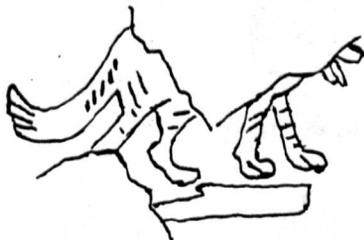
Volubilis



Ptdemeis
wolf



Piazza Armerina
jackal



Piazza Armerina
wolf



Menida II wolf?



Adana



Brading



Oudux



Palermo I

Palermo II



Perugia



Piazza Armerina



Salamis



Rome



Sousse II



Thina



Sakiet



Thina baboon



Antalya



Pixis, Bobbio



Beirut, fountain



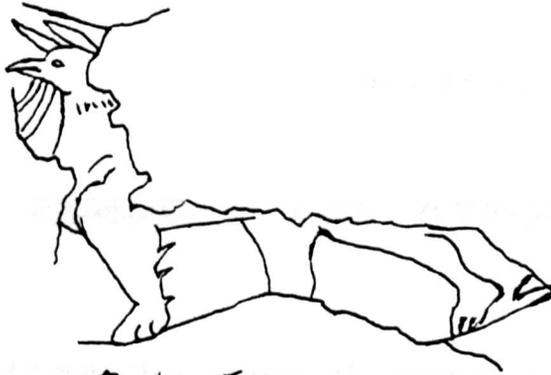
Sebasteia, fountain



Athens, fountain



Vokubilis



Barton Farm



Chakba



Merida II



Piazza Amerina



Sakiet



Woodchester



Volubilis



Whatley



El Pesquero, sphinx

Chapter Eleven.

PENDENT AND ASSOCIATED SCENES

The stereotypical image of Orpheus by itself might be representing any one of the several identities of this important personage. The study of figure style and the construction of the animal audience has demonstrated the location of each picture in western or eastern mode, the naturalistic or stylised depiction, each with attendant symbolic function. The study of this chapter, the imagery seen in association with the principal figure of the mosaic, adds a further refinement, which qualifies and elucidates the message of each depiction. The interpretation hinges on two basic premises: that groups of images were not random combinations of independent subjects, but might form part of larger related visual schemes, to be read across architectural divisions; and that besides the decorative function, imagery was accorded a symbolic value.

It has been argued that some juxtaposed mural paintings were intended not so much to form a continuous narrative, as to evoke the feeling of visual relationships, paralleling the use of echoing compositional devices in poetry. Such scenes allowed the observer to discover their inter-association and define the larger thematic patterns. Such studies focus on Hellenistic painting. The mosaic image excites another kind of aesthetic response [1]. Mosaics are part of the building's fabric, in way that painting is not, seen and experienced underfoot. They partake of the conventions of architecture, their compositions reflecting the structural and visual axes of the building, the patterns of movement directed by its form and the function of the room. The perception of thematic patterns in Orphean imagery, both pendent: within the principal field, and

associated: laid in other rooms of the same building, is not stimulated by pictorial means as it is in mural painting. Rather it is inherent in the contexts which the suites of mosaic images set up. Regular and coherent patterns of imagery are presented with Orpheus which would have excited in the contemporary observer, schooled in the symbolic language of antique figuration, a predictable response to their conventional message. Without straining probability, credible metaphoric narratives can be read in the recurrent combinations of images. It can be concluded that patrons intended a comprehensive visual scheme.

The discussion will pursue two issues: first, relative placing - imagery which is either part of the same picture or in a separate, but adjacent field. For these the terms 'pendent' and 'associated' have been coined. Second, the kind and character of that imagery - how it affects or is affected by the image of Orpheus, how each sets up a context for the other. The material comprises [i] genre images occurring together with Orpheus integrated with the design, in the border to the main panel, or the spandrels of a circular design, sometimes even in the same panel with Orpheus; [ii] separate scenes within the same overall scheme of one floor; [iii] mosaics located in the same building on floors in different, but adjoining rooms. In the first instance the material can be readily accepted as belonging to Orpheus' own symbolic field, the two, or more, sets of images are intended to be read together. These are designated Pendent Scenes, directly attached to the depiction of Orpheus, where the figures surely belong to the interpretation of the whole. For example, Hercules at Cos II, the border of gladiators at Cos I, the *naiads* of Woodchester, Pan at Jerusalem. An example of the second type would be a mosaic where Orpheus is not the central motif, such as Tarsus where a Bacchic subject is the central of three panels, the other being Ganymede. The third type of setting presents a related scheme extending over the floors of one complex, as Cos I, Chahba and Piazza Armerina. Sometimes the setting itself is involved, near the gardens and fountains. These are the Associated Scenes. The compendium of imagery used for dispersed schemes is different, but of

like content to pendent imagery.

Certain subjects are unambiguously coupled with Orpheus. The most common of these divide under three headings: Aquatic imagery, Agriculture and Strife. Aquatic may be subdivided into: a) Marine, a direct reference to the sea, its dangers and bounties, marine activities, beasts, personages and divinities connected with the sea, references to mythic voyages in literary form; b) Watery, fresh water themes, which include fountains, real and pictorial, personages connected with water and mosaics set adjacent to water. Agriculture is indicated by the Seasons, elaborate vegetal garlands, fruits and food, rural scenes, vintaging, personifications and divinities connected with growth and safe harvest. In opposition to these positive themes there are as many of struggle and danger under the heading Strife. Hunting appears as genre scenes, and in an adaptation the meaning is condensed so that the fauna of the audience is also that of the hunt. It is once allusively represented by the Dionysiac myth. The *venatio* introduces the systematised bloodletting of the arena, including gladiatorial combat. Dangerous pursuits include chariot races. Depictions of Strife and Combat tend to appear in adjacent rooms, setting up a contrast to the peaceful chamber with Orpheus.

Personages are shown whose characters and stories express Orphean themes. Hercules represents combat, also salvation, intellect overcoming brutality; Arion is an analogous lyrist in a marine setting; Hylas, belonging to the Watery context, presents an otherworldly strain, and he, along with Hercules, recalls the voyage of the Argonauts. In one sense, Pan (a generative force), and the centaur (half bestial), are both aspects of Nature or natural passions to be restrained. When the contrasting carnality of Pan and higher wisdom inherent in the human part of the centaur are seen together they express the song's effect of reconciliation. Personifications of agriculture appear, but mostly nameless denizens of the sea, nereids, tritons, sea-beasts. Cupids, who impart good luck, take the place of human protagonists as *venatores*, charioteers, fishermen or in funerary contexts. Deities appear occasionally, Venus with

Neptune and Oceanus presiding over marine scenes; with Demeter, Persephone, Nemesis/Leda as seasonal apparitions. Dionysus appears once, though his presence is frequently felt. Mythical figures are few, drawn from the Argonaut adventure, popular throughout the empire, Orpheus' marine association. Borders of masks in mosaics of the Greek East are proper both to the theatre, and to the Bacchic cult, which Orpheus as poet of the rites always evoked. Figures of the cortege, Pan, Silenus, satyrs, maenads, vintaging scenes, grapes, all allude to it. A last category of subject matter is abstract, otherworldly: the afterlife, heavens, luck, fortune, fecundity, health. Orpheus was a well known subject in funerary art, including tomb mosaics, offering salvation after death. Among motifs conferring luck are mongoose/cobra, peacocks/*krater*, birds/fruit. Seasons and chariots express time passing, growth, fulfillment and eternity.

Associated scenes on adjacent pavements exemplify the same themes in allusive manner. The aquatic theme is represented by Europa and the bull, Nilotic scenes, marine deities. Jason and the Golden Fleece illustrates the Argonautic voyage and the winning of bounty. The association of Orpheus with agriculture, harvesting in particular, is shown by personifications of providence and fortune bearing cornucopiae. Motifs are found closely associated with Orpheus on adjacent mosaics whose overall theme appears to be on a more esoteric plane. This linkage modifies the imagery of each, as for example at Horkstow, Palermo I and Piazza Armerina. In associated scenes arena savagery is presented in allegorical form. Combats, which include wrestlers, *palaestra* motifs, Nilotic pigmy and crane fights, scenes of mythical carnage, even an Amazon, are not depicted with Orpheus in the same field. The fight between Eros and Pan, a Bacchic motif, embodies the struggle between spiritual and carnal passions, the higher and lower worlds, somewhat akin to the pairing of Pan and the centaur. Hercules the master of beasts exemplifies this struggle within himself, for he is an animal-like brute force. In combat with supernatural animals he is almost the same as they are. He also displays an intelligence and cunning which supercedes brutality, taking him on to the spiritual plane. The abductions of

Europa, Ganymede and Hylas evince the uncertainty of life, with the solace of immortality and salvation. Zeus is present in animal form. Dionysus hovers behind much of the imagery.

* * * * *

Examining themes in detail, the most widespread is Aquatic which seems to have been a basic concomitant of the Orpheus motif, occurring on mosaics from all parts of the empire. Much of this imagery is concerned with the safe gathering of a fruitful marine harvest; not unnaturally it is seen on mosaics located near coasts, in particular those of North Africa (Sousse I, II, La Chebba, Thina, Lepcis I, Djemila, also Cos II). The subject belongs to its extensive marine repertory which includes the everyday experience of the peoples of the fertile Mediterranean coasts. Many mosaics picture fishing, using rod and line, tridents, nets from boats. One panel at Lepcis I shows the search for crustaceans on the rocks (ill.73). A common variant was to replace human with cupid fishermen [2]. At La Chebba the central tableau shows, not Orpheus, but the genre figure of the lone fisherman sitting on a rock, playing rod and line at a sea teeming with large fish, the Old Man of the Sea. Two men fish from a large boat, powered by two banks of oars for a voyage out to sea, seen on the horizon. The Fisherman was a potent emblem of humanity pitted against the elements, a genre figure who occurs in the afterworld scene of the Farnesina stuccoes (ill.22). Another version occurs with Orpheus on the Vatican strigillated sarcophagus [3] (ill.21). The Fisher of Men became a familiar Christian symbol. The name Orpheus may be derived from a word for fish, as Eisler asserts in Orpheus the Fisher. On the mosaic of La Chebba the fisherman is under the aegis of Orpheus, in a panel to the right, who had powers over the waters and the sea beasts, could avert a storm or call up the wind (Val.Flac. 4. 422), thus as well luring fish to him and safeguarding ships, he enabled a successful sea harvest. The sea voyage is protected by the dolphin-rider in the left-hand opposite panel, surrounded by fish. He is usually called Arion, but is more

likely Palaemon. This boy on a dolphin is bareheaded, with classical curls. Carrying a trident not a lyre and perhaps winged, he has none of Arion's attributes (ill.74). Arion is definitely seen at Thina without Orpheus (Inv.Tun. II, 18, Dunbabin, pl.IX, 17, 18) and at Piazza Armerina, dressed in long robes and Phrygian cap, fitting this native of Lesbos. The dolphin-rider of La Chebba compares with the many representations of winged cupids on dolphins [4] and may be the same figure who accompanies Orpheus at Djemila [below]. Although all the images are located within the same field in compartments, the placing of Orpheus to one side, almost as subordinate imagery, equal with the dolphin-rider, relates this to elaborated schemes sometimes extended over more than one pavement.

Djemila is an African mosaic of similar type. The mosaic occupies a large apsidal chamber, adjacent to the temple of Venus Genetrix. Its central scene, a marine triumph of the goddess, portrays her symbolic manifestation. Above her, a statue of Neptune in shallow water, is of the phenomenal world. The borders comprise apparently subsidiary scenes: fishing of all types portrayed in accurate detail, the unloading of goods in a port and a marine religious festival. In the corners, myths: Hero and Leander, Perseus and Andromeda, Ulysses and the Cyclops; finally Orpheus on an obligatory slip of land with two beasts. This minimum audience is enough to designate him, for his relationship to the marine ritual is emphasised, while the animal-charming is relegated (Cf. Littlecote: only the fox). In one respect the two sea divinities are the most important, Venus in particular, to whom the religious festival is dedicated, with power of life and death, dearth and harvest, over all the other activities. The presence of Orpheus informs us of the celebrants' aspirations for, as a mediator between potentially implacable gods and men, he acts to ensure the success and protection asked from the gods.

All the marine activities undertaken by the population are indicated, their dangers metaphorically represented by the mythical figures. Perseus and Andromeda represent salvation from vicious sea monsters, the sea 'devouring' men, but doubtless the

literal fear of such monsters; Hero: the personal danger of drowning and the fallibility of human guides (the lighthouse); the perils of the great sea voyage, marine trading and travel, are represented by Ulysses (who eventually arrives home safe). Adjacent to Orpheus are two figures, one a cupid driving two dolphins chariot-wise whom Blanchard-Lemée calls Palaemon [5], (fig.32). Charioteer cupids accompany the Sousse II parody where they drive teams of fish. In the myth the boy Palaemon was borne across the waves by a dolphin and saved from drowning, but the Romans honoured him as a sea god who watched over harbours, which seems to be the location for the secular activities at Djemila. If this and the figure at La Chebba are the same their presence would suit the protective intent of the imagery. A Nereid on a dolphin to the left of Orpheus carries a flying arc of drapery to show her movement across the waves. In this position she might be Ino-Leukothea, sea-goddess, promoter of marine fertility and mother of Palaemon [6].

They may not be these two, but important in themselves as local marine spirits of safe journey across, and bounty from, the sea, their names lost to us. Orpheus' purport here is twofold. Located diagonally opposite Ulysses in the scheme he represents the Argonautic voyage, the other great marine adventure. Jason could have been depicted, but Orpheus fulfills the same function as on the voyage, which associated him with marine settings: he was taken aboard to use his enchanting song to avert the natural dangers of the voyage, calm storms, call up slack winds and overpower supernatural enemies.

A comparable scheme is found in the baths of Thina, where the same mythological figures, fishing scenes and marine Venus, are subordinate to the central figure of Arion on his dolphin (Dunbabin, pl.IX, 17, 18). Blanchard-Lemée thought both mosaics recorded aquatic amphitheatre spectacles. Stern called the Djemila lyrist Arion [7], but while at Thina Arion rides his dolphin over the waves, here an area of *terra firma* has been intruded, somewhat awkwardly, into the seascape. His eastern garments (banded trousers, tunic with stripe, heavy *tíara*) belong to the late costume of Orpheus, but are alien to Arion. The imagery compares with the

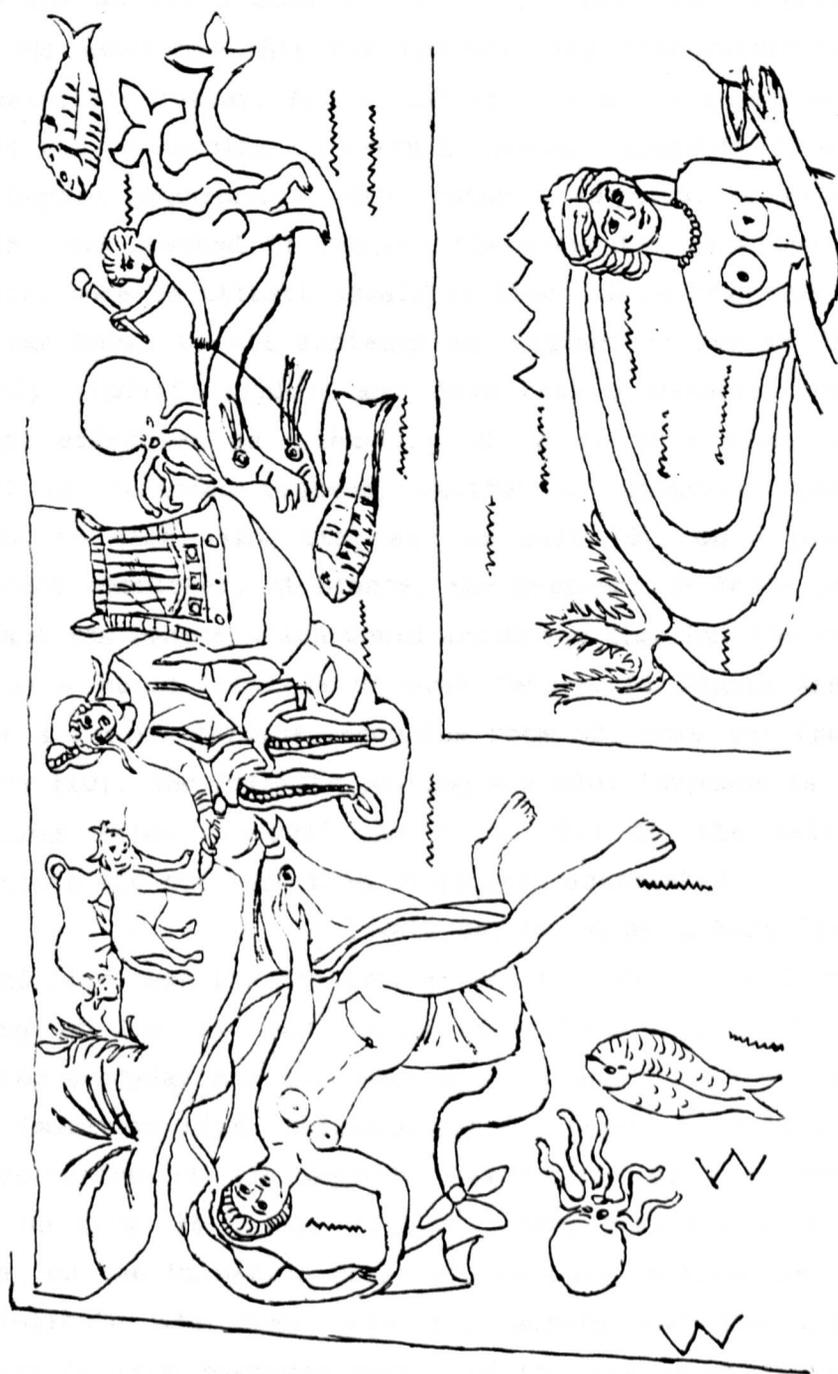


Fig. 32: Djemila. Mosaic. 'The Triumph of Venus'.
Detail: border, top left corner.

Late 4th C. AD

simpler scheme of Chebba, allowing an interpretation of Djemila's Orpheus as bestowing his protection on the activities as he does there and as Arion does at Thina. The presence of Orpheus suggests that the image has this safeguarding character rather than recording a theatrical display. Appropriately located in a marine context, his effect was, according to textual sources, protective, almost magical (cf. *Orphic Argonautica*, 4th century). Orpheus, or rites prescribed by him, was invoked to control the elements, calm the sea and draw animals, here to attract shoals of fish. More than one Mediterranean fish was known to the ancients as '*orphus*' (Pliny *NH* XXXII, 152 and IX, 57), indeed '*orphoi*' may have been a generic term. Music was thought effective as a hunting charm to lure fish [8]. The fox, symbol of Thracian Orpheus, epithet of Dionysus (*Bassareus*), was thought to fish using its tail as bait [9]. On a pavement with a different character, at Blanzky, the presence of Arion is inferred by fish and sea beasts which would accompany him, but the focus could as well be a cupid, Oceanus or even Tethys. At Piazza Armerina Arion, amidst a marine *thiasos*, occupies room 32, some way from Orpheus in room 39 [10]. The literary pairing was old: '*Orpheus in silvis, inter delphinas Arion*' (Virgil, *Ecl.*VIII, 56) is the well known tag; mosaicists did not show them so closely associated.

A lively depiction of a Koan fisherman, with rod and line, wearing his typical pointed hat is the local version of fishing at Cos II. With this exception, only African mosaicists depicted everyday marine events with Orpheus. Other marine scenes are of an imaginary kind. Dolphins and sea beasts on British mosaics are representative of the aquatic realm; the head of Neptune/Oceanus rears up from the waters (ill.75). Such marine motifs occurring at Salona, on the Dalmatian coast and on mosaics from the British Isles may indicate the same hope for safety and the expectation of deliverance from everyday perils of the sea as exhibited on African examples. These mosaics compare iconographically with, from Switzerland, Yverdon and Orbe (where marine motifs in the apse are dominated by a triton blowing a conch), and Trento, north Italy, where dolphins flank anchors and tridents, motifs similar to those on a Hellenistic

mosaic in the 'House of Dionysus' at Delos. Dolphins in quotidian surrounds would represent lucky and life-enhancing symbols. These sites are well inland, suggesting a symbolic intent. Dolphins offered a safe passage across the most dangerous sea: guiding the dead soul towards the Isles of the Blessed. However, as the sites are close to Lakes Neuchâtel, Geneva and Garda, the imagery may have been employed for the same reasons as in coastal regions, although, of course, the creatures would not appear in lake waters. Safety at sea and a rich marine harvest are invoked at Chahba where within a border of fishing cupids, a magnificent representation of Tethys with fish-strewn hair and starfish crown, her dragon of the depths, and her oar, occupies a room adjacent to Orpheus [11]. Perhaps the female bust amidst dolphins and sea-beasts at Whatley, whom we see with a cornucopia and wearing a strange crown with flowing tendrils, was, in fact, Tethys with oar and streaming hair, turned by the lithographer into a more ambiguous image (Smith, 1977, pl.6.XXX). Versions of marine themes in associated mosaics can bear spiritual interpretations. The Abduction of Europa at Sparta, a perilous sea voyage attended by the cupids who throng aquatic contexts near Orpheus, allegorises a spiritual transformation. (ill.76).

The watery element, distinguished from the marine, as it is in the mosaics, is seen in the evocation or actual presence of fresh, flowing water, springs or fountains. Several mosaics in the grander villas were either set around, or are in a suite of rooms opening onto a *piscina*. The mosaic at Blanzly around a large circular pool, was designed to take account of this major water feature, Orpheus one side, Arion [?] on the other. A small *piscina* at Piazza Armerina interrupts the composition of the huge panel picture. A central octagonal pool is envisaged for Woodchester, its design of concentric circles emphasising and leading to it, the repetition of water features in the iconography creating an 'island' effect. Volubilis occupies one of a suite of large rooms around a courtyard pool, associated scenes leading to the water. Proximity to water was traditional, the Pompeian frescos with Orpheus were on the walls of courtyards with pools. Several mosaics actually decorated the

frigidaria of bath complexes. Oudna was on the access to a semi-circular *piscina*, its fountain in the form of a dolphin-riding *amor*. Orpheus in these cases is the Greek figure, denoting Hellenic culture, refinement, harmonious music, and pleasurable activities.

The Littlecote complex, which includes a small bath suite, is separate from the domestic wings of the villa, next to a stream. In the imagery appear dolphins, shells and sea-panthers as well as a feature which can be interpreted as a pool: on the threshold between the rectangular ante-room and the tri-apsed principal chamber, is a long rectangle filled with zig-zag lines, an abstract rendering of water. The design is also seen at the baths of Thaburbo Maius and the entrance to a water garden at Piazza Armerina to simulate water [11a]. Here the pool is not only a necessary adjunct to the Orpheus image, but, placed on the potent threshold, acts as an allegory of the crossing from one plane to another. The Wells of Memory play an important part in the Orphic exegesis. Eisler long ago postulated the employment of the *piscina* at Oudna as a 'baptismal' pool for Orphic initiates (1925, 111), not an interpretation borne out by the iconography of its semi-nude Orpheus who belongs to the genre of classical rather than sacerdotal figures. The whole ensemble is part of the baths complex anyway. The baths complex at Littlecote may have served a sacred function. The depiction of fresh water has otherworldly connotations at Constantine (a funerary mosaic), where Orpheus is placed to one side of a central oval panel. In the other was a stag drinking from a stream, a motif common to Christian art. Another aspect of the theme is portrayed by Hylas, abducted by the nymphs of the spring to become immortal, pendent to Orpheus at Seleucia, in association at St. Colombe. Eight recumbent naiads in the spandrels at Woodchester each hold an overturned vase issuing water. The Cotswolds area abounds with springs which, in the Roman period, still inhabited by the Celtic spirits, were availed of shrines dedicated to water divinities. Archaeological evidence suggests the presence of a real pool at the centre. A natural spring still feeds a fountain in the garden adjacent to the site. The iconographic programme leads through

Oceanus, god of all flowing waters, to the earthly and astral symbolism of fox and peacock, on to the centre, where, according to an early witness, there were 'fish and a star about the centre' [12]. One reading of the figuration across the field from the naiads to the centre, reveals a narrative regarding the progress of the soul to immortality, through the astral symbolism of the lyre and the salvatory character of Orpheus.

Four mosaics which include fish have a circular or concentric circle design. Fish might perhaps serve simply as marine creatures complementing land animals and to denote Orpheus as a provider or protector of bounty. At Trento, with a Greek Orpheus, the fish, drawn from black and white decoration, appear with confronted dolphins centred on anchors and tridents, conveying a hope for safety on the metaphoric sea of life as well as the waters of the nearby great lake. At Woodchester the fish were in the spring or fountain at the centre. An esoteric significance might be inferred from the well known symbolism, both pagan and Christian, of fish as souls or initiates. Fish are prominently placed in the mosaic scheme of the great hall of the divinities at Palermo, to which the room housing Orpheus is linked (Levi, Berytus 7, 1942). Even so, fish used decoratively in the base of pools are likely to have been of equal influence at Woodchester [13].

Associated Nilotic scenes (Cos I, Merida) belong to the same fashion for the revival of Alexandrian landscape as the Nilotic beasts and vegetation included on the mosaics themselves, exotica with a historic flavour. At Merida pigmy and crane fights, traditional elements of this type of landscape, also satisfy the category of Strife. Bordering the central panel, stylised lotus at Jerusalem may belong here. The issuing of Antonine coins from Alexandria depicting Orpheus reflects the association of the myth with the city, famed as the location of many pageants with animals and of Hellenistic menageries. Many poems including Apollonius Rhodios' famous epic had their origin within its literary ambience. Nilotic scenes combine the watery element with an evocation of the classical heritage. An enigmatic panel at Brading (room 3,

Smith, BAR 41 (i) pl 6.IVb) may be interpreted as a Nilotic scene. The draughtsmanship is poor. Its temple with stairway and winged beasts is paralleled on an Apamean mosaic (Balty 1977, 30, p.70), where one element of an Alexandrian port scene is a *tempietto* with winged beasts flanking its stair. A fisherman indicates with a gesture the presence of the god. At Brading the strange cock-headed and -footed creature may be an attempt at an Egyptian god in Roman dress, ibis-headed Thoth, equivalent of Mercury - who is sometimes given the head of his cockerel attribute 13a. The mosaicist may have been copying Nilotic scenes from a picture book.

* * * * *

An imagery which corresponds with the marine harvest is that for the fruits of the field. The seasons are frequent pendants, in the conventional manner of the four female heads of Arnal, Thina, Forêt de Brotonne and St.Colombe, decked with fruit and flowers, to a more allusive form. The heads of Brading and Horkstow are schematic. They might be anything, but could hardly be anything else. Orpheus controlled the elements brought by the seasons. They signify also the turning of the year, time, renewal. Seasons decorate an adjacent room at St.Paul-lès-Romans; a separate panel below the Orpheus at Ptolemais holds a nimbed and winged female reminiscent of Antiochene Seasons (Louvre; Dorigo LRP, pls.19, 20) bears armfuls of fruit. On fifth century metal relief Orpheus accompanies the Seasons and their leader Dionysus (ill.77) [14]. Rottweil's chariot race provides an allusion to the year, with the seasonal connotations of the four colours of the circus factions. Birds, whose arrivals and departures are seasonal markers, are often shown pulling chariots. At Miletus corner panels each hold a seasonal bird pecking a different flower, satisfying the need for appropriate flora, avifauna and pendent imagery. The divinities of Littlecote bear a seasonal interpretation [15]. Demeter carrying a stalk of wheat (Cf. LIMC V, addenda) represents harvest, more than she does autumn (also the import of grape-laden Dionysus often depicted in this place). Persephone, her arm raised for help, as in the abduction scene (ill.78) signifies Winter;

Aphrodite is budding, flowering Spring. The next figure is ambiguous, but the suggestion of Nemesis/Leda with Zeus as a swan fits Summer. Their steeds might have had their own seasonal symbolism [16].

Fruit is the earthly harvest which Orpheus protects and provides along with the marine bounty, and is depicted on mosaics as both real and symbolic gifts. Scenes of rural life, harvested fruit and birds share the larger panel with marine depictions at Lepcis I. At La Chebba *xenia* motifs are used. A basket of figs occupies a circular panel above the dolphin-rider, another beneath Orpheus holds a bunch of grapes, below the marine panel are artichokes, above are gourds. Insofar as these items represent plenty and gifts, the mosaic belongs to the popular *xenia* genre. In fact they are portrayals of ripening and the gifts of the harvest rather than a dinner menu. In the lush vegetal border scrolls of Jerusalem and El Pesquero, mosaics similar in several respects, occur baskets of fruits. Cornucopiae and personifications of plenty are coupled with Orpheus on the later mosaics: *Abundantia*, *Fecunditas*, *Providentia*, *Felicitas* and *Fortuna* are possible appellations (Neal, 1981, 113). The increasing display of these motifs may be associated with Themistius' statement in the fourth century that it was Orpheus who brought agriculture to men (Or. XXX, 349b), long accepted as another of his gifts to culture.

At Jerusalem the bust of a female, diademed, wearing a *bullae* occupies the central medallion of the border below Orpheus, above the pendent scenes opposite the apse. The top of a cornucopia appears at her shoulder (Ovadia 1981, 158). Ideally she should follow the orientation of the other figures, like Oceanus at Woodchester, but, following the organisation of the border, she appears upside down. A female bust with turret crown at Panik is not Eurydice (del Chiaro 1972, 198), but *Abundantia/Providentia* with a basket. A diademed female bust is located similarly at Newton St. Loe, in a medallion between one chamber and another. The fruit-carrying nimbed female of Ptolemais is in the same relationship to the principal image, seen and interpreted ahead of the figure of Orpheus, providing a gloss on his meaning. At Winterton a female with

cornucopia is probably the same, but another bust in a corridor mosaic, so-called *Fortuna* (Neal, 1981, 112, 84) is more likely Bacchus with *thyrsus* (cf. Smith 1977, 153, no. 150). All the aspirations expressed by such personifications, abundance, luck and so forth, could emanate from the same figure, doubling would be unnecessary. Dionysus was so closely associated with Orpheus that his appearance would be natural in a context evoking fecundity. Vintaging scenes at Horkstow and Merida again link him with Orpheus, presenting prosperity and a hope of salvation in the afterlife. The same mingling of present and future life aspirations expressed in terms of husbandry is seen in the complex symbolism of the Jerusalem mosaic. Pan, generative force of nature, guardian of flocks and fields, appears in the same picture as Orpheus, though can be regarded as a pendent image. The sheep in the top left-hand corner may belong to him and would not then be a Christian soul. The panel below Orpheus holds two haloed female figures designated by inscriptions *GEORGIA* and *THEODOSIA*, personifications rather than actual women [17]. A beribboned sacred column separates them, like the pillar seen behind Orpheus at Thina and Sakiel, denoting a pagan sacred place. (ill.50). *GEORGIA*, holding a bird, signifies by her name 'fruit of the earth' or agriculture (Cf *Georgics* with the interpolated story of Orpheus; the word is used four times by Themistius). Holding a flower is *THEODOSIA*, 'gift of the god', who would be Dionysus, one of whose feast days was so named, a celebration of the gift of wine (Pliny, *NH*, II, 321), but again harping on the theme of the gifts of harvest. Allusion to the feasting, real or metaphoric, associated with Bacchic cults is made in rooms adjacent to the great Woodchester pavement. Bacchic figures alternate with cupids bearing baskets of fruit and leaves with inscriptions of salutation or exhortations to enjoyment or to worship of Bonus Eventus. This god, or *Abundantia*, but most likely Bacchus, filled the lost central medallion.

Integral to the myth were the trees which listened to and were moved by the song. The usual representation is a single tree behind Orpheus in the central panel. At Merida I, this little tree actually bears several small, round fruits. Green Nature

itself is represented by elaborate vegetal border decoration befitting the Orpheus who bestowed Nature's bounties, as he was perceived to do in the Roman period. Lush garlands and scrolls also symbolised Dionysus the god of living, dying and resurgent growth. Those of Pesquero and Jerusalem provide locations for other pendent motifs, peopled with wild animals and fruit. At Jerusalem four Oceanus-type heads emerging from leaves in the corners belong to the eastern genre of male Medusas and vegetation deities described by Glueck (335 ff., pl.35; cf. Beisan, El Hammam necropolis, Lavin, 1963, fig.51). The two young and two old heads of Jerusalem are perhaps also evocative of seasons and time. The clawed head of Oceanus from which issues the acanthus scroll of Woodchester is an image both terrestrial and marine. It compares with a bronze bust from Aquileia (Glueck 346, pl. 13), a young deity veiled in leaves, dolphins in his hair, crab-claw horns. Beneath a marine scene in the apse of Orbe presides another head of the deity with crustacean claws, engendering an encircling acanthus scroll. The energetic scrolling of the lush acanthus at Woodchester could as easily represent the powerful waves of the ocean as the surging force of natural growth, Bacchus or Pan immanent in the leaves. *'The force that through the green fuse drives the flower...'* (Dylan Thomas). Almost as vigorous is the acanthus border at Santa Marta. The associations with Apollo, poetry and the arts, are not forgotten, a garland of laurel edges each compartment at Rougga, surrounds Blanzly, Woodchester, Barton Farm, Sousse I and II, El Pesquero and Piazza Armerina, where a statue of Apollo graced the apse. A lotus border at Jerusalem brings to mind Alexandrian landscape and poetry.

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Images of Strife balance these positive aspects, yet substantiate Orpheus' powers. His animals, adapted from the iconography of the bloodiest arena displays and the hunt, in opposition are submissive, pacified and safe. Struggles and combats unalleviated by his song appear in pendent and especially associated scenes. A small panel on

one side of the Rome mosaic, which did not survive restoration, showed a centaur under attack by wild beasts, who hits a tiger with his club, reminiscent of the *opus vermiculitum* panel from Hadrian's villa (now in Berlin) [20]. At Rottweil hunting scenes occupy outer panels of the concentric rectangular scheme. A scene in the outer border of the Merida Orpheus shows deer chased by hounds into the hunters' encircling nets. At Withington and Jerusalem genre figures of hunters spearing felines are set in panels away from the depiction of Orpheus. In late antiquity this motif encapsulated the property of 'virtus' inherent in fully realised hunts of earlier periods. It came to symbolise the power of good over evil. At Cos I, in an adjoining room, the hunter is a cupid with lance, while at Miletus a full scale *venatio* is staged where winged *genii* perform as *venatores*. (ill.79).

Closer to Orpheus, the animals around the singer at Cagliari, at first sight comprising the audience, are actually genre figures of landscape and chase scenes. Elsewhere they occupy border panels, but are here in the same pictorial field. A browsing doe, fleeing ass, leopard pursuing a doe, lion confronting another beast and a cornered boar appear. Their orientation to the outer edge, rather than to Orpheus, compares with African mosaics with separate scenes in the margins of a central image [19]. Cagliari combines two genres, 'Orpheus with animals' and 'animal scenes and chase' drawn from the Hellenistic repertoire, omitting the conventional audience. The compartments of Orbe hold not the single beasts of earlier such mosaics, but genre hunt scenes, lion with stag head, a hound pursuing a deer, cockerel and snake (perhaps a confusion with snake and stork motif). The hounds and hares of a stylised chase in compartments near the centre at Horkstow can be confused with the audience. At Withington and Newton St.Loe the animals run around their circular frame in the same configuration as on borders with decorative hunts. Indeed, it might be categorised as such, for they are certainly not a pacified audience. An entire entourage of running animals is also seen at Trento, Salona, Stolac and, highly stylised, at Winterton. Panik has a border of such beasts. The animals galloping at full speed ridden by Littlecote's

deities are in no way the audience, but, as metamorphoses of Dionysus fleeing the Titans, they offer a scene of pursuit [20]. On a lighter note, panels of birds with the Orpheus of Cos II may simply be the natural adjunct to a picture of Nature enthralled by song, though they accompany the fisherman in the next room, but the bird-catcher of Cos I reiterates the basic hunting theme. Nilotic scenes of pygmies and cranes at Merida offer a version of hunt and capture with a humorous content, including the popular motif of the pigmy chased up a tree by hippo or crocodile. The legendary adversaries of these battles were elementals, taking the scenes, in this Orphean context, onto a more eternal plane.

An Amazon (Paphos) represents particularly tenacious and savage behaviour in the hunt, in battle and in the arena. Hercules at Paphos fights the Nemaean lion, a supernatural beast, one of his 'Labours'. This is his usual mosaic imagery, the same as was popular on sarcophagi. He occurs in association to the hunting/Orpheus scene at Cagliari. At St-Paul-lès-Romans a particularly fine representation of the Labours occupied an adjacent room. At Piazza Armerina all are represented as 'Associated' images, the carnage scenes are the results of oversized Hercules' mammoth Labours. The bloody animal scenes experienced in reality, to which pacific Orpheus acts as an antithesis, are allegorised here. Hercules provides a mythologising of the theme of strife and a version of the mastery of animals contrasting with Orpheus. He also is a provider of plenty. Orpheus is subordinate in the great scheme of Piazza Armerina, its centrepiece the 'Great Hunt' corridor, the capturing of beasts from the entire empire for presentation in the amphitheatre, with the 'Little Hunt' (room 23) recording more ordinary events. Scenes of the chase and mock hunts involving children with small animals might have had a similar fortuitous import to *erote* and pygmy huntsmen. Similar to Hercules, Diana, mistress of beasts and patron of the hunt, is depicted in Rougga's main salon, a scheme including Orpheus [21].

Amphitheatre scenes, like hunts, are common in funerary art, a metaphor for putting up a valiant fight, in a

world where staying alive was always a chancy struggle against death, ultimately for victory over death itself. They were not employed with Orpheus on funerary mosaics, but retain their life and death symbolism where they do appear. The cupid *venatores* of Miletus take the scene into the allegorical realm. Bordering the Orpheus of Cos I named gladiators are pictured in specified combats. The games master is present and each victor indicated, making this an unusual portrayal (Dunbabin 75). A pair of gladiators fight in a panel of room 3, Brading. In all these motifs, the theme is victory after dangerous struggle, a fight with a moral sense, *labor et periculum*. In the chariot race at Horkstow the four circus factions are shown in a continuous narrative proceeding around the *spina* with the usual combination of victory and defeat. The winning charioteer is reining in his horses, lower right, being led in by the mounted games master with whip, at full gallop. The other rider has dismounted and appears to be helping the losing chariot, upper left, which has suffered *naufragium*, 'shipwreck'. It has lost a wheel, the charioteer being tipped out of his overturning vehicle. The victorious charioteer can be discerned among the fragmentary remains at Rottweil and stands alone at Rudston in the mosaic which may accompany a lost Orpheus in the adjacent panel. These are genre circus scenes, clearly seen in the circus mosaic of Piazza Armerina, which presents much anecdotal detail (Wilson 1983, fig.8). Amphitheatre and circus sports are depicted in the main salon at Rougga, with the same themes allegorised, the fall of Phaeton being the most spectacular form of 'shipwreck', loss of fortune.

Only a few combats usual to other arenas occur with Orpheus. Merida's wrestlers would normally meet in the *palaestra*. A favourite theme of Hellenistic sculptors, a famous group often copied [22] was depicted here, another instance of classical reference in its naively executed mosaics. One of the closest rooms, 38, to the Piazza Armerina Orpheus has the famous girl athletes (though these are much later in date). Athletic combats, which ensured a victor without involving life and death forces, had a positive outcome, like the childrens' mock hunts. A symbolic combat

is the wrestling or boxing match between Pan and Eros pictured in room 35, also seen in the room next to Orpheus at Saragossa [23]. Perhaps it stretches the hypothesis to include these Sicilian mosaics in this survey of imagery attaching to Orpheus, as though they made a coherent iconographic programme given the several stages of building (Wilson 34-9) and the distance between rooms in this palace, but, in fact, virtually every picture fits the inventory of suitable imagery, comprising a coherent scheme into which Orpheus fits, whether he is the focus, or as here, subordinate to the major themes: animals, the sea, struggle, carnage.

Orpheus was once the teacher of the semi-divine Hercules who shared his capacity to descend to the underworld and retrieve dead souls. Thus he is depicted at Cos II in the same mosaic (ill.80). Hercules reclines at a banquet, his club and lion skin discarded. In the background the signs of mourning, a servant cutting branches. This is Admetus' house where Hercules has been welcomed as a guest. To the right the shrouded figure of Alcestis emerges from the tomb. Hercules has battled with and defeated Necessity, against which not even Orpheus had a magical verse nor Asclepius a medicinal remedy (Eur. *Alc.* 960-5), though it can be assumed that Orpheus' poetry was still considered effectual. The combination of these two powerful underworld figures must have increased the apotropaic properties of the image. The house is adjacent to the temple of Hercules, who traditionally was driven aground on the island of Cos after a storm [24]. The hero attained divinity and is present with other deities on the esoteric pavement of Palermo. An important theme at Piazza Armerina (Villa Herculia) is his glorification.

Several other personages appear in pendent positions (Jerusalem has been discussed). The boy dolphin-rider and sea-goddess of Djemila, personifying the safe marine passage for which Orpheus would be invoked, must also have had some local significance. Rites of the marine Venus depicted on the mosaic are, under Christian guise, still celebrated all round the Mediterranean. Life enhancing Naiads filling the spandrels at Woodchester give a

never-ending supply of fresh water which delineates the central 'island' of peace where Orpheus sings. Two mythic persons whose abduction was associated with water are in mosaics adjacent to Orpheus: Hylas snatched by the nymphs of the spring (St. Colombe, Seleucia) and Europa (Sparta) taken across the sea to Crete. The Sparta figure is the mirror image of Orpheus, executed by the same workshop. As Wattel has shown [25] her iconography derives from marine nereids. With her arc of flying drapery she resembles the nereid of Djemila. (ill.76).

The nymphs who took Hylas can be called negative aspects of what is generally a beneficent female presence, personifications of plenty, the teeming life of the sea, abundant water. The Amazon of Paphos represents a ferocious aspect of the female exemplified in the animal audience by the savagery of tigress, lioness, leopardess, the sphinx of El Pesquero, horrific for being half animal. She appears with Orpheus on the eastern marbles, a ceramic from Trier, a textile *orbiculum* [26]. She has been discussed with the animals. Like Pan she appears by Orpheus, and can also be counted as a pendent image. A figure belonging to the legend of Orpheus as an Argonaut, but rarely depicted with him, is Scylla, a fearsome creature with the body of a female growing from a girdle of savage dogs. She lurked in the straits of Messina opposite the whirlpool Charybdis, to grab passing ships, when the dogs devoured any sailors. She is seen on the funerary monument from El Amrouni, Tunisia, where Orpheus, depicted twice, with animals and Eurydice, accompanies Hercules and Alcestis [27].

A figure identified as Scylla has been recognised on a mosaic from Cirencester, Dyer Street, of which the only record is a drawing. It seems to combine figures from Barton Farm and Woodchester (ill. 81). No trace of the mosaic has come to light. A strange figure in the central panel derives from images of Scylla, but whether in antiquity or through the agency of the nineteenth century recorder is difficult to discern. As a malign female power with marine associations, demonstrating Orpheus' power to mollify evil forces, she would not be out of place as a pendent

here, but such a figure as the central focus cannot be paralleled. The drawing may be a garbled record combining elements of two locally famous pavements. The leopard's scale-pattern spots unique to Barton Farm, are repeated on the Dyer St. drawing. The off-centre placing of Orpheus copies Woodchester, accounted for there by a central pool. On the drawing one at least of the animals vertical within the centre circle would echo the fox of Barton Farm. The Scylla figure may be the rationalisation of an unclear and misunderstood sketch of the Oceanus head from Woodchester. This mosaic was never uncovered fully at any time, so revealed figures might have appeared unrelated to their actual position in the scheme. Beecham admits to having tidied up the sketch and may have done so by inserting an appropriate figure from the classical myth, perhaps more familiar to him from antiquarian engravings of Pompeian painting, suggested by the sketch of the Oceanus head. The surging acanthus scroll issuing from beneath his chin might be read as Scylla's dog girdle and coiling tails, while his crustacean claws might translate as her upraised weapons. But the mystery is not solved. A simpler transposition on the original drawing may have been to exchange Scylla in a subsidiary position with a central Orpheus. Made from memory, the sketch might include elements from the other mosaics, but yet record a lost example. I do not believe this and have excluded Dyer Street from the catalogue count. More tantalising, the sketch may visually record something of those obscure descriptions of '*fish and sea-monsters*' and '*fish and a star*' at the centre of Woodchester [28].

Maenads were the female followers of Dionysus said to have killed Orpheus. On vases they watch him civilizing Thracians and satyrs by his song, intimating the savagery to follow the peaceful music. A maenad appears at the far side of the Antalya mosaic. At Orbe another occupies the compartment next to Orpheus. They bring an aura of strife to the scene. A maenad with purely Bacchic character is she who appears with a satyr in the central scene of the Tarsus ensemble, others appear in medallions below. Another name for these women was *Bassarides*, the title of the lost play by Aeschylus (test. 113), a name derived from their Thracian

fox-fur clothes, also the garb of the god whose epithet was Bassareus. The prominent fox in the eastern and especially British mosaics may serve to remind the viewer not only of the singer's Thracian origin, but of the imminent savagery of the women's furious attack.

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Dionysus/Bacchus is the god to whom most imagery alludes. Once he appears, to make the association explicit: at Lyon he stands directly behind Orpheus, holding a *thyrsus*. At Merida, fruited vines harvested by putti issue from *kanthari* in side panels, vintaging occupies others. Silenus on his ass led by a bacchant, accompanied by a satyr, is prominently placed (fig.33). Ganymede at Tarsus is a unique association with Orpheus. The central Bacchic scene and the line of maenad and satyr heads beneath provide the connection: the youth Ganymede was snatched away to become immortal, like Hylas, both taken young by divinities smitten by their beauty. They offer a warning not to incur the envy of the gods. Bacchic rites in the form prescribed by Orpheus might have effected a prophylaxis against the *invidus*. At Chahba, in a room next to the Orpheus, is pictured the marriage of Ariadne and Dionysus. Accompanying the pair were a torch-bearing *erote* (*Pothos*, Desire), a drunken Hercules and the satyr Maron. Surrounding the *heiros gamos* and symbolising the happy immortality bestowed on Ariadne and promised to all initiates of the mysteries, is an elaborate vine rinceau peopled with vintaging *erotes* and animal and human hunting motifs. In the corners four heads, an aged and a young man and two women crowned one with ivy, the other with grapes, compare with Jerusalem.

The *heiros gamos* with Zeus, the heavenly creator and agent of the transcendent soul, is depicted at Palermo I. The god is seen as the abductor in animal form with his several 'amours'. Other deities ride winged animals in the heavens [29]. Present also are nereids, winds and seasons, *telamones* upholding a

central space probably for an altar, and fish, whose meaning must be symbolic since there is no evident marine context for them. Levi discusses the symbolic implications, the mystical associations of Orpheus with fishing, the fish as initiates in Orphic rite (51-3). The iconography of this pavement is sufficiently esoteric, with three 'wise men' (Levi, 40) pictured in a programme containing the *hieros gamos*, transcendence, the regeneration of life - perhaps related to the Orphic theogony centred around Zeus [30] - to question the interpretation of Orpheus, in a room of the same linked suite, as a simple decorative subject (cf. Ch.13). This well known mosaic in itself contains no esoteric imagery.

Two other mosaics display *telamones*, which fit so well as spandrel decoration for circular designs, Horkstow and Merida, where they are winged male figures issuing from acanthus, decorative filling figures. In the great hall of Horkstow, compared by Levi to Palermo for its complex iconography, snake-legged Titans uphold the central circle of the composition accompanying Orpheus, which has Bacchic vintaging and marine figures and scenes, nereids and tritons, bacchantes and satyrs (ill.82). While Titans are essential to the Orphic myth of Dionysus, representing the base nature of men to be discarded through initiation, they are also classical decorative motifs. Their presence here may reveal an urge to employ classical imagery, an appeal to Greek culture, rather than the expression of rite as may pertain at Palermo. Traditional figures and scenes at Horkstow, unlike Palermo, are combined in a standard manner, albeit design and composition are unusual. The same can be said of Brading, room 12 (Smith BAR 41 (i) pl.6.V), where four panels show respectively Lycurgus and Ambrosia (Bacchus), Attis and Sagaritis (Cybele), Demeter and Triptolemus (Eleusis), and an enigmatic fourth which *could* be Zeus as a satyr with Antiope ('Loves of Zeus'). These depict the most prominent Mysteries of the period. Four winds fill the alternate spaces. A marine panel is laid at one end; the famous 'astrologer' figure (cf. the 'wise men' of Palermo) sits on the threshold to the larger part of the chamber. The instruments accompanying him (sundial, astral globe, water clock)

allude to the theme of 'time', perhaps eternal values. Such an interpretation allies this combination of figures with the 'Orphic' pavement of Palermo, but at Brading the group of famous mythological scenes from literature, of which only Perseus and Andromeda is identified, may indicate that the ensemble was intended to evoke classical culture, learning and religion, rather than being the decoration of a sacred locus as such. Cf. M.Henig, Mosaic 13 (1986) 13-19.

Littlecote's four female divinities are Nemesis/Leda, Demeter, Persephone and Aphrodite. The beasts they ride are the animal forms which Dionysus assumed to escape the Titans. Perhaps Helios is signified by the sea-shell/awning rays emanating from leopard heads in the apses. He appears as a rayed head at Palermo. Oceanus is prominent at Woodchester. A similar deity, dolphins issuing from his mouth, in an adjoining marine panel at Withington, holds Neptune's trident (ill.75). Venus at Djemila is the central figure, Orpheus a subsidiary, of a marine festival [31]. Orpheus is associated with such religious themes though the Argonaut adventure, when he established rites and made purifications, one of his principal functions on the voyage. Orpheus as a funerary image occurs in a conventional representation at Cherchel and at Edessa, where cupids hold a *tabula ansata* as they apparently do at Constantine. There Orpheus is to one side of the central oval, on the other is a paradise scene with drinking stag; at Jerusalem the floor was in a building later dedicated Christian with a cross. Once thought to be a funerary chapel, no sarcophagi have been found (Ovadia, 1981, 160 and n.13). The imagery is overwhelmingly pagan. The hunters, sacred column, female personifications and phallic Pan belong to pagan Orpheus.

The Bacchic nature of much pendent and associated imagery is evident, members of the cortege, Silenus, Pan, centaurs, satyrs, maenads, vintaging scenes, the prominent fox, all point to the presence of the god. He is present at Chahba, may have been depicted in the villas of Woodchester and Winterton. Orpheus was known as the poet and reformer of his rites. Bacchus was patron of theatre, of the theatrical performance of mysteries and religious

ritual. Linforth concludes that the arts of Orpheus were evidenced in such theatrical forms [32]. At Chahba theatrical masks, Bacchic emblems of the *thiasos*, occur in the border to Orpheus. The style of mosaics from the Greek east is of a kind evoking dramatic exposition, bravura performance of rhetoric or music (Ch.9). The mosaic subjects in the room next to Orpheus in the house of the Menander, Mytilene, suiting this fashion, are theatrical. The decoration includes masks, Menander the playwright, the muse Thalia, scenes from famous stage comedies. There existed a long tradition of theatrical imagery in domestic mural decoration. Further reference to drama is made on a mosaic from another Aegean island, Cos II, where a scene from Euripides' *Alcestis* is depicted with Orpheus. Literary references are all marine; from the Argonautic venture, Jason and the Golden fleece with Medea and the dragon appear at Trinquetaille. Hercules and his companion of the voyage, Hylas, have their own symbolic connotations as well as representing members of the crew of the Argo. The third century BC epic poem by Apollonius Rhodios was influential, later accounts, by Valerius Flaccus in the first century and the anonymous *Orphic Argonautica* known in its fourth century version, reflect the continuing popularity and changing character of the adventure in the Empire. Familiar mythical characters with marine connotations occur at Djemila: Ulysses, Hero and Leander, Perseus and Andromeda. At Orbe, scenes of Ariadne and the departing Theseus, implying the imminent arrival of Dionysus, have the same weight as Orpheus in that scheme. A panel with marine motifs at Littlecote has been interpreted as a reference to the story of Dionysus and the pirates [33].

A destroyed mosaic known only at second hand is Bavai, where strange motifs are reported which require decipherment. The mosaic was located in an important room of a sumptuous dwelling. Surrounded by a mixture of fruits, flowers and birds, probably a lush vegetal scroll, are a hippogriffe [a], a siren [b], fighting bulls [c], a lion asleep, hounds, birds, a winged dragon [d], a Parthian discharging an arrow [e], butterflies [f] and, centre, a sort of Apollo playing a tetrachord [g]. This seems to be the usual assortment of motifs: sea-beasts [a] and nereids [b], a

griffin [d], perhaps a centaur [e] a lyrist playing a small four-stringed instrument [g]. The fighting bulls [c] might belong to an arena scene, the butterflies [f] more likely bivalve shells [34], possibly fluttering birds.

The provision of luck and general well-being underlies much of the imagery. The benign and fortuitous aspects of animals, of the depiction of savage hunts, and of amphitheatre displays themselves, has been delineated. The symbolic and prophylactic content of circus depictions is well known [35]. The cupid charioteers of fish-chariots at Sousse II betray the metaphorical import of this type of image. Replacing human participants, fortuitous cupids carry the image into the realm of allegory, their life-enhancing character expressing and forwarding aspirations of good fortune. They replace *venatores* at Miletus, Cos I, the fishermen at Sousse I, inhabit the sea at Djemila, accompany Europa at Sparta. Bacchic *erotes* vintaging at Merida and Horkstow bring their benign influence to bear, at Woodchester they exhort salutations and wish a good future [36]. Personifications of abundance and fortune have the same import. Certain motifs, such as the mongoose and cobra, the lucky group of reptiles, form part of the animal scene itself. At Jerusalem the eagle wears a *bulla* around its neck, likewise the female bust in the border. Friedman sees a Christian symbol here, a cross, as on Coptic Christian reliefs with eagles, but there is ample evidence to suggest this jewel-bearing raptor might be an ancient apotropaic symbol; pagan divinities wear such amulets [37]. The protective nature of the image is announced. Medusa at Orbe performs the same function. Confronted peacocks drinking wine from Dionysus' *krater* assured initiates of luck, the motif had a religious sense in the figural language of paganism (Merlin and Poinssot, 138): this lucky symbol occurs at Withington. The peacock and fox either side of Orpheus at Woodchester are presented in the same confronted formula. Birds pecking fruit or flowers (Miletus, Horkstow, Rudston) are further lucky emblems. Laurel, signifying poetry and prophecy, is also an emblem of peace, the cessation of battle, quietness, victory. Being evergreen it

stands for eternity, immortality. It was used in purificatory rituals and protected against plague so was associated generally with rites intended to ward off evil or misfortune [38]. Around Orpheus, the author of such rites, laurel might surround the image with a protective barrier, especially true of Woodchester where the end bindings of a real wreath are depicted. A decorative function is combined with the evocation of poetry, prophecy, victory, immortality.

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Pendent and Associated imagery is not anecdotal, it does not comprise further scenes from the particular episode, nor other episodes from the legend of Orpheus, but we see consistent thematic patterns illustrative of the song's mythic legend. The imagery further alludes to areas of real experience, to the effect of the ritual verses ascribed to him, and then to the hope that the icon itself would be effective. Orpheus is associated with aquatic themes through being a crew member of the Argo. His accomplishments, control of natural elements, purifications, the instituting of rites, enabling the gaining of treasure (the Golden Fleece), were powers belonging to the figure of myth, which the icon might then bestow. In the late antique Argonautica, narrated by Orpheus, he plays an important part in the summoning of deities to aid the gathering of the Golden Fleece, a bounty which also had healing powers. The many motifs of harvest, marine or agricultural, personifications of Providence or Abundance, the Seasons, safety at sea and in harbour (so as to accomplish the import and export of the precious goods), all point to a primary function of the image to promote well-being and prosperity, to guard against the envy of the gods. Thus, the presence of Orpheus amid the marine celebrations of Djemila is no surprise, but the figure who would extend his powers to invoke the goodwill of the deities is not the same as the musician of the Greek East, a sophisticated associate of theatre themes, the badge of classical culture. Nor is the eastern mage the same as the Greek figure set among images evocative of Hellenism.

The adjunction of scenes of strife contradicts, but at the same time substantiates Orpheus' character as bringer of harmony so that in the ensembles a balance is drawn between the hoped for and the given. The antitheses which characterise the relationships between Orpheus and the gods are marked by such contrasts in the mosaic imagery. The gods presiding behind the imagery are Apollo: reason, regulation and culture; Dionysus: god of the living world, immanent in animals and plants, and of ultimate salvation; Zeus: the heavenly creator. Cupids playing human parts bring good fortune, but also take the image on to a heightened plane, the overriding theme being victory, celebrated by the animal-vanquishing *venator*, the winning charioteer. The imagery is that employed in funerary contexts where victory over death is meant. Many of the rooms decorated thus were reception rooms, public and private, housing the bustling activities of thriving communities, some were for relaxation, the arts.

The ancients had a fondness for *memento mori*, sharpening the appreciation of life with the certainty of death. Rooms decorated with cruel images, reminders of death, might still be employed for pleasantries, although we perceive such pictures, out of context, with a sense of shock. The imagery also served to safeguard the lives of the men and women who thronged those rooms, their hopes for the prolongation of fruitful and healthy life, for the reach into eternity as immortal souls, manifest in the iconography. The familiar message of the transformation of human nature from a bestial to a civilised state is taken a stage further when the human soul is to be transported to a heavenly plane, the afterlife, the hope of immortality conferred on Bacchic initiates. Hercules and Alcestis embody the hope for a reversal of death.

All the complex allegory translates to one aspiration, Life, promoted and preserved by Orpheus. His image brought health, wealth, a safe journey through life, avoiding or reversing its perils. Set around the animal charming scene, which crystallises the central theme of the control of Nature and natural passions, the achievement of harmonious accord, are scenes of Strife,

Fortune, Bacchic figures, Aquatic and Agricultural motifs. Every figure or scene can be accommodated under these headings. Pendent and associated imagery tells what the image of Orpheus singing was supposed to achieve, that is, the aspirations of the patrons who commissioned the ensembles. What we see are not independent subjects, but imagery contrived to present an overall programme. Evidently Orpheus could signify several themes, the conventions of pendent and associate imagery offering a contextual language allowing a tolerably precise reading of the antique message.

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NOTES.

1. E.Winsor Leach, The Rhetoric of Space, (1989), 405. M.L.Thompson, 'The Monumental and Literary Evidence for Programmatic Painting in Antiquity', Marsyas 9, (1960-1) 36-77. J.R.Clarke, Roman Black and White Figural Mosaics (1979) 'kinaesthetic address', 20-3, 104.
2. Fishermen cupids with O. mosaic, Sousse I, Foucher, Inv. Sousse 57.124.
3. R.Eisler Orpheus the Fisher (1921). Sarcophagus: Stern (1974) fig.7; Leptis Magna, 'Villa del Nilo', I.Lavin, 'Antioch Hunting Mosaics', DOP 17, (1963), fig.24; Farnesina stucco, S.Aurigemma, Museo Nazionale Romano Inv. 1072, pl.LXXIV; Henig ed. (1983) ill.83. D.Levi, Berytus 7, (1942), 51.
4. Cf. N.Glueck Deities and Dolphins, (1966), pls. 16b, 17b, 19.
5. After the figure in Apuleius The Golden Ass (Metamorphoses), IV, 31.
6. Cf.Glueck, pl.23a, Aphrodite with arc of drapery, on dolphin, Tunis.
7. H.Stern, Le Calendrier de 345, (1953), 278, n.4.
8. Herodotus i.141; Pliny NH XXXII, vii, 17; Varro, De re rust. iii. 17.
9. Aelian, De nat.anim. vi, 24; Gruppe, col.1062; Kern O.F., test.4; R.Eisler, Orpheus the Fisher, (1925), 14, 26-7; Zeigler, RE, 203-7.
10. R.J.A.Wilson, Piazza Armerina (1983).

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11. J.Balty, Mosaïques Antiques de Syrie, (1977) no.28-9, 66-9.
 - 11a. B.Walters, Archaeology, (Nov/Dec 1982), 43.
 12. G.Clarke 'The Roman Villa at Woodchester' Britannia, XIII (1977); R.Bradley, British Museum, Add. MSS. 5238, folio 3.
 13. Lufton: PSANHS XCII (1946) pl.IV, *ibid* XCVII (1952) pls. VI-IX; an octagonal basin of the type that may have graced the centre of Woodchester: C.Balmelle, M.Gauthier, R.Monturet 'Mosaïques de Saint-Emilion', Gallia XXXVIII (1980) 63-66, figs.2-4. Mosaic with fish and water-weed fronds decorates basin around a central fountain.
 - 13a. The Orpheus panel employs an eastern repertory, an influence felt in the imagery of other rooms. The combination of gladiators, nilotic and hunt scenes with O. is paralleled at Cos I. Ithyphallic cock-headed Mercury, tintinabulum, BritMus: GR 1814. 7-4. 415. Cf. Statue of Anubis in Roman garb, Vatican.
 14. G.Hanfmann The Seasons Sarcophagus in Dumbarton Oaks. II, p.65 and n.134, no.362, fig. 14. c.400AD.
 15. B.Walters 'The Orpheus Mosaic from Littlecote Park England', CIMA III (1984) 433-442.
 16. Cf. calender mosaic, St-Romain-en-Gal, J.Lancha Mosaïques de Vienne, (1990) 98-109, no.50, *erotes ride animals*, 100-1.
 17. Levi, (1942), 53; Ovadia, (1981), 160.
 18. I.Kriseleit, Antike mosaiken (1985) no.8, 30-1.
 19. La Chebba, Neptune; Djemila, Dionysus, Lavin 1963 figs.53, 54.
 20. Walters, (1984) 437.
 21. Hunts: Rottweil, Piazza Armerina, Rougga (Diana), Merida I, Horkstow, Withington, Jerusalem. Cupid *venatio*: Miletus, Cos I.
 22. Example in Ostia museum. Cf. Gigthis, G.Fradier, Mosaïques de Tunisie (1986) 128, Dunbabin, 261.
 23. R.J.A.Wilson (1983), 28; M.Chamoso Lamas 'Hallazgos romanos en Zaragoza' AEsp de Arq. 17, (1944) 286-95; B.Neutsch, JdI, 70 (1955), 155-84: the figure of Venus seen by Chamoso is in fact the referee, present in other depictions: 'Casa di Baccho e Ariana', Ostia, B.Becatti, CMGR I, (1965) 24, fig.18. LIMC III, 2, pl.695.
 24. R.Graves, Greek Myths, 137, Hesione.
 25. O.Wattel, I.Jesnick 'The Mosaics from the House of Mourabas in Sparta..' JBAA (1991), 92-106, O.Wattel: Europa.
 26. Panyagua (1972) no.142, ceramic, Trier; marbles, *idem*, (1973), no.180, Sabratha, no.181, Athens.
 27. El-Amrouni mausoleum: Ph.Berger, Rev.Arch. ser.3, 26, I (1895) 71-83, figs.1-6. Panyagua (1973) no.166.
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28. Thomas Wright, The Celt, Roman and Saxon (1892) 230-1. cf. Mosaic 4 (April 1981) 11.
29. Levi, (1942); R.Camerato-Scovazzo, Kokalos 21, 1975, 231-72.
30. Derveni Papyrus, M.Eliade, A History of Religious Ideas, II (1982), 188, n.19.
31. M.Blanchard-Lemée, Maisons a Mosaïques du quartier central de Djemila, (1975), 61-84, pls.I-XIII, late 4th century. Details and discussion of festival: 78-84.
32. I.M.Linforth, The Arts of Orpheus (1941) 296: '...the poetry...the music, the mimetic representation, the symbolism, the whole action of the ritual...were looked upon as the "arts of Orpheus."'
33. B.Walters, B.Phillips, Archaeological Excavations in Littlecote Park, Wiltshire 1979 & 80, Second Interim Report, 11, pl.9, though this may simply be a version of the marine subject so often accompanying Orpheus, incorporating Bacchic *kantharos* and confronted cats.
34. Cf. Littlecote, marine panel; Jurancon, Inv. 409; Lullingstone, BAR 41 [i] (1977), pl.6.XXIV a.
35. A.Merlin and L.Poinssot, Mon.Piot, XXXIV, (1934), 149ff.
36. J.M.C.Toynbee (1964) 274. D.Smith, BAR 41, (i) (1977) 114, 25.
37. J.B.Friedman, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (1970) 51-2, 79. P.Donceel-Vouté, 'La Pierre d'aigle at l'aigle au bijou', Mosaïque: hommages H.Stern (1982) 115-121, pl.LXII-LXIV. Amulets, worn by Venus: El Djem, Fradier, 149. Victory, Triumph of Bacchus, Sousse, Fradier, 145; Venus on 5 mosaics, Dunbabin pls. LVIII -LIX.
38. Apotropaic qualities of laurel: J.Stannard, 'Herbal Magic and Herbal medicine in Pliny's Time' Helmantica 37, (1986), 100, n.17. Ancient sources: NH XV, 127, 133f.; Martial Ep. 10, 1; Juvenal 10, 65.
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Chapter Twelve.

INSCRIPTIONS AND LOCATION

Two matters saved for discussion until now are the location of Orpheus mosaics and any inscriptions they carry, both of which have a bearing on the modern interpretation of any meaning assigned by the antique observer, the matter of the next chapter. The small number of inscriptions throw some light on the intent and social background of the patrons. The location of mosaics within the building, relative to architectural features, other mosaics and to rooms of known function provides the physical context which helps define the character of the decoration.

Mosaics with inscriptions are: Oudna, Paphos, Cos I, Cos II, Antalya II, Poljanice, Edessa and Jerusalem; an adjacent mosaic from Woodchester is also included. The first two refer to the patrons. At Oudna, next to the names presumed to be of the mosaicists is: *MASURI. 'IN PRAEDIS LABERIORUM LABERIANI ET PAULINI' MASURI*. This denotes the establishment and family (Dunbabin, 25, n.47, 266). At Paphos a multi-coloured inscription in Greek is held to name the owner of the mosaic, *Gaius Pinnius Restitutus*, and to proclaim his patronage (Michaelides, 485-6). The mosaic from Edessa, Syria, paved a cave-tomb. Its inscription on a *tabula ansata* held by two cupids is in Syriac, names the defunct, *Aphtuha*, and yields a precise date, 227-8 AD. To this period belong the previous two mosaics. At the time when Orpheus provided a funerary subject Edessa had a sizeable Christian community, but no Christian formulae appear in the wording [1]. The central oval of Constantine, upheld by cupids, may have carried an inscription.

The Jerusalem Orpheus lay in a chapel given a

Christian dedication after the mosaic was laid. It was once considered funerary. Whether the inscriptions denote patrons or personifications is debatable. In Greek: *GEORGIA* and *THEODOSIA*, to indicate the two females, carrying respectively a bird and a flower, on either side of a sacred column tied with ribbon. These may not be proper names, but titles with a symbolic meaning (Ovadiah, 1981, 160), the word *Georgia* 'fruit of the earth', occurs four times in a fourth century description of Orpheus the tamer of the wild elements in Man's soul and inventor of the civilizing practice of agriculture (Themist. *Or.* XXX, 349b); *Theodosia* 'gift of the god', is the same as the name of a feast of Dionysus. Even at this late date their message, conveyed in the inscriptions, is the traditional one of Bacchic plenty. The message of the Orpheus panel alludes to the freeing of the soul, which will be transported to heaven on eagles' wings through the sounds of the lyre, by controlling the desires of Man's bestial nature (Pan, the Centaur) through the agency of Orpheus's teachings.

Allusions to the afterworld are made in two mosaics from the same region in the Greek East. Antalya II has *ELYSION* in Greek, with clear afterworld and salvatory connotations. Cos II has *PROTEAS* (Greek letters) over a figure cutting leafy branches in a scene from Euripides' *Alcestis* showing Hercules feasted by Admetus while he mourns his wife, for which purpose the branches are cut. To the right Alcestis is seen emerging from the tomb. The house was built directly against a temple of Hercules, incorporating part of the edifice [2]. The intended message must be salvatory, Hercules and Orpheus both being capable of returning souls to life, Orpheus offering further aid in the afterlife. Hercules and Alcestis accompany Orpheus on the funerary monument of El Amrouni, Tunisia. Proteas may have been the name of the owner or a devotee.

The inscription on the mosaic of Poljanice, near Ulpiania, reveals another function of the Orpheus image. It is inscribed *ORPHEUS* in Greek letters, with interpolated *hederae*. Orpheus in the mosaic is quite unmistakable and, close to an urban

centre was undoubtedly a well known subject. Only in the oldest depictions was there a need to identify Orpheus, when the iconography was indistinct and confusion might arise as to which lyrist was intended. Here the inscription reinforces the image, doubling the protective power, the lucky *hederæ* perhaps tripling it.

From La Alberca, Spain, the word *VIRTUS* is read by Blasquez where (-)IRTUS or (-)IRIUS appears on the mosaic. Orpheus wreathed, in long robes is the classical figure evocative of Greek culture. *Virtus* was a characteristic of the superior Roman, a quality taking several forms according to context; it could be 'excellence' and 'virtue', 'courage', 'valour', as are expressed in the Hadrianic hunting tondi re-used in Constantine's Arch, Rome, a transcendent performance of the hunt. Seneca defines the word once as 'perfect reason' [3], which would suit the protégé of Apollo, able to strike up the music of the spheres on the lyre, antithesis of uncontrolled Dionysus. Elsewhere Seneca talks of the disasters of life sent by Fortuna as providing an opportunity for *virtus*, the testing of the spirit in the face of adversity [4]. The image of Orpheus, often combined with that of Fortuna or Providentia, provided protection from the unfairness of the gods' barbs. This mosaic with a scholarly invocation to Orpheus may belong with others seeking his aid and protection in a less elevated fashion.

At Cos I the inscription belongs to the pendent image of gladiators, where the combatants are named: *TYDEUS* and *LEUCASPIS*, *PACTOLOS* and *NYPHEROS*, *PERSEUS* and *[ACHILL]EUS* (Mendel, 509; Dunbabin, 75). Each victor is indicated by the letters *NEI*. The arena is here the metaphor for life's battle. Death in the arena was fortuitous in the dream book of Artemidorus [5]. At Woodchester the small ante-room to the great pavement has, in one of its four figured panels, cupids bearing a basket of flowers and leaves with the inscription *BONUM EVENTUM*. Opposite, only the damaged inscription remains, reconstructed as *BENE COLLITE* [6], urging enjoyment of whatever function the great room was housing and bestowing a wish for good luck on the proceedings. The Bacchic quality of the imagery (*bacchantes* in other panels) increases the

fortuitous quality of the whole.

The inscriptions of Woodchester, Oudna and La Alberca are in Latin, Edessa in Syriac, all others in Greek, all official local languages. Something of the symbolism and the patrons' aspirations are conveyed in these short messages. The owners' names at Oudna, Paphos, Cos II, indicate that the mosaics were prestigious objects that would enhance or denote their reputations, perhaps Cos II was even a devotional image. It is evident from the inscriptions of La Alberca, Antalya, Poljanice and Cos I, that the image was more than a simple decoration evocative of music and poetry. On the model of *memento mori*, the function of these rooms for receptions of a secular, public kind, would be quite in order in the presence of such otherworldly imagery, while the overt wish for good luck and present enjoyment exhibited at Poljanice and Woodchester again manifest that aspiration for plenty and a fortunate life.

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Such locations as can be ascertained yield further information on the function of the image. The subject of Orpheus was frequently chosen for the principal *oecus* of the house. One would expect a major effort to be spent on the best rooms, the most elaborate mosaic, a subject which would bring most pleasure through personal reference, which would reflect the function and importance of the room and its users. Any mythological subject, the Muses, a philosophical motif, would reflect the character of the patrons' aspirations in one way or another. These mosaics are said to decorate *triclinia*, but except for Miletus, with its orthodox 'T'-shaped figured panel within a *semis* decorating the space for benches, many depictions cover the floor space or a large part of the central field, obviously meant to be admired in their entirety. Others pave rooms not immediately indicating the business of dining, the largest room, set on a central axis, the buildings themselves sometimes betraying a function apart from the everyday.

Many such reception rooms opened on to the

gardens where frequently a pool, sometimes incorporated in the mosaic, completed the relaxing ensemble. Pompeian frescos of Orpheus were on outside walls in courtyards facing pools [7]. In the 'Maison d'Orphée' at Volubilis the mosaic of Orpheus occupies a large *oecus* isolated from the rest of the house. Marine mosaics lead between Orpheus and a large *piscina* [8]. A *piscina* lay nearby the Cos II Orpheus [9]. At Ptolemais the Orpheus room opens off a corridor overlooking a peristyle court. A large circular pool occupied the centre at Blanzly, and the off-centre Orpheus of Woodchester ceded his place to a pool. This largest single mosaic north of the Alps, decorated a grandiose chamber on the central axis, in a symmetrically designed wing of a palatial establishment, directly facing on to its courtyard and gardens [10]. Its interior structure was a domed tetrapylon, with clerestory above, ambulatory round the four pillars. The hall, indeed the whole establishment must have dominated its surroundings. (The villa lasted long enough into the Saxon period to achieve the name 'ceaster': *Uiduceastir*, in 716-43.) This hall was surely dedicated to public receptions, appropriate to the importance, or wealth, of the owner. At Piazza Armerina the mosaic of Orpheus decorates the principal *exedra* off the peristyle, its boundaries part of the public colonnade. Containing a small square pool and a statue of Apollo *Musagetes* it could have served for small receptions [11].

Orpheus as suggested, was traditionally associated with water. Several Orpheus mosaics are known to have come from the *frigidarium* of a bath complex: Perugia, Oudna, Vienne, Orbe, Yvonand, Yverdon, Stolac, Salamis. Others may have done so, Orpheus from Sakiyet may have decorated the main reception room of the villa (Thirion, though, could not decide whether the irregularly shaped room was an *oecus* or *frigidarium*) [12]. In either case the image was placed to be visible on public occasions. Other public locations are Piazza Armerina, where the colonnade of the corridor and that of the Orpheus room are common; at Brading, where the mosaic decorates the front corridor on the central axis of the villa; at Mactar, the mosaic was in the portico of the *Schola Juvenum*. The Orpheus of Saragossa comes from an important public building with many columns,

thought to be a temple. At Seleucia Orpheus paved the floor of a barrel-vaulted room with a Doric facade and *exedra* in the east *stoa* of the Agora, indicating a public, perhaps official room, rather than one privately owned.

The character of certain buildings and the juxtaposed imagery on their mosaics, seem to indicate a function other than the simple evocation of the charms of music and poetry or claims to culture by the owners. At Sparta Orpheus occupies a small, low, dark room joined diagonally to a larger chamber housing a depiction of Europa. The rooms had separate entrances and were not intercommunicating. The images came from the same workshop. Their juxtaposition has been likened in its symbolism to a grander scheme at Palermo. There a huge pavement of esoteric character indicates, through the imagery of the 'Loves of Jupiter' with deities and personifications, the journey of the transcendent soul. It occupies one end of a linked suite of rooms, at the other end of which is the well known Orpheus, which may have served for gatherings of a religious character. The strange location of the Sparta Orpheus with its iconographic echo of Palermo I suggests that the room served as a family shrine, Orpheus evoked in his persona as the founder of rites [13]. The Palermo pavements in their turn have been compared with those of Horkstow (Levi, 1942, pp.39, 50-1), an enormous hall with three figured mosaics, Orpheus governing the overall meaning of the imagery. Adjacent mosaics show typical Orphean combinations of marine and Bacchic groups, as well as a circus race indicating victory in the race of life, or victory over death, with attendant trials and defeats. The use of vault imagery for both circular mosaics suggests the likening of the earthly to the heavenly order, thus investing the imagery with a sense of the cosmos made manifest. The conventionality of the imagery, classical nereids and bacchantes, was surely a proclamation of devotion to classical culture, reason and law through its traditional representatives. The imagery can be associated with the state as embodiment of *romanitas*. With its classicising imagery and great size Horkstow speaks of an official function. It must have seen public meetings, perhaps connected with provincial government,

even the Imperial bureaucracy.

At Littlecote the complex is separate from the domestic wings of the villa. It has been proposed that the tri-apsed building right on the bank of the river served as a summer *triclinium*. It has not been shown that Orpheus was customarily employed for *triclinia*, Miletus being the only clear example of *triclinium* design. A similar floor configuration has recently been brought to light in a public building in Caerwent, where the benches were for the town council [14]. The singular imagery of the Littlecote mosaic is unlike any other classical representation of Orpheus. Its evident dedication to the pagan pantheon, to Apollo-Helios and Dionysus through the intermediary Orpheus in Imperial guise, surely indicates a sacerdotal function for the edifice, perhaps to some extent a public location. The erection of the building can be firmly dated to 361-363 AD, the rule of the apostate Julian [15], when allegiance to the Emperor could be expressed by manifestly observing Greek religion. The mosaic may be making a display of devotion to the religion of the pagan establishment and especially the Emperor before it would represent some esoteric cult. Performance of ritual in the building may not have been far removed from the conventional pagan practice of the day: a form of the mysteries reflecting the highly syncretic religious systems of which Orpheus was the poet and authority (cf Macrobius, *Sat.* I, 18). Orpheus here functioned as an emblem of pagan religiosity through the person of the Emperor.

In three cases, Arnal, Jerusalem, Hanover, the buildings housing the mosaics received a Christian dedication. Whether, in the case of the first two, contemporary with or later than the construction of the mosaics is not certainly known. Hanover's Orpheus is said to have come from a monastery, the Rome Orpheus was found beneath that of San Anselmo. Saragossa's may have come from a temple. Cos II was adjacent to, perhaps incorporating, the temple of Hercules. The marine Venus of Djemila in which Orpheus figures, is located in the great hall of the 'Maison de l'Ane', backing the temple of Venus *Genetrix*, perhaps part of its complex, a

public rather than private location [16]. Three mosaics come from tombs: Edessa, which paved a cave tomb in ancient Urfa, Cherchel and Constantine from funerary caverns. British Orpheus mosaics come from villas or other country establishments. The Dyer Street Orpheus would have been unique as the only British example from a building within city boundaries, a reason which mitigates against its existence.

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NOTES

1. J.B.Segal, 'New Mosaics from Edessa', Archaeology XII, (1959), 151-7.
2. L.Morricone, 'Scavi e ricerche a Coe', Boll. d'arte 35, 1950.
3. Seneca the Younger, Letter 76.10, J-A.Shelton, As the Romans Did (1988), p.434 (source book).
4. An Essay about Providence, 2.1-4; 4.1,3,6,11-13, Shelton, pp.436-7.
5. Artemidorus Key of Dreams II. 54 and V. 49. See MonPiot (1934) 152. A happy presage to see oneself fighting beasts in the amphitheatre. I. 5, good if a bachelor dreams he fights a gladiator = marriage.
6. Toynbee, (1964), 274, D.J.Smith, BAR 41 (i) (1977), 114, no.25.
7. Panyagua (1973) nos.186, 187. Cf. P.Grimal Les jardins romains (1943) 365 and *passim*.
8. L.Chatelaine, PSAM i, (1935), 1-8; R.Thouvenot, *ibid* iv, (1941), 42-6.
9. G.Karo, AA, 51, (1936), 178.
10. G.Clark, 'The Roman Villa at Woodchester' Britannia XIII, (1982).
11. A.Carandini et al, Filosofiana (1982) II, 138-144, fig. 63; Dunbabin, 135 and n.25.
12. J.Thirion, MEFRA (1955); Dunbabin, 27.
13. O.Wattel, I.Jesnick, JBAA (1991), 92-106, pl.IX-XI.
14. Personal comm., R.Brewer, Dept. of Archaeology, Cardiff Museum.
15. B.Walters, Arch. Excav. in Littlecote Park Wiltshire 1979 & 80, 2nd Interim Report, 8.
16. D.Fernandez-Galiano, Actas A.Balil (1990) 205-7.

Chapter Thirteen.

THE DEFINITION AND INTERPRETATION
OF AN ORPHEUS MOSAIC

Orpheus was such an important and popular subject, it seems pertinent to ask now, having explored the construction of the pictorial image, to what category of Roman art does an Orpheus mosaic belong? What should it look like? Further, in relation to the cultural import of the figure: what did it represent, for what was it a metaphor?

Orpheus in Graeco-Roman culture was a figure often presenting contrasting aspects, hugely popular, capable of being all things to all men. To come to some present understanding it has been necessary to fathom the antique perception of this multi-faceted persona as it developed over many centuries, so as to place in context its visual expression in one medium, mosaic, during one period, the later Roman Empire. The premise underlying the following assumptions is that artistic output, whatever its quality, reflects the producing society: that the mosaic picture can best be understood if seen in relation to the image in other media, in the literature, religion, philosophy and popular culture of its own time. The threads of the discussion so far can be pulled together to define the genre 'Orpheus mosaics', the pictorial rules of the depiction. To ask the question 'why Orpheus' among all possible subjects presupposes that a choice was made, that the image was not used randomly, that all subjects were, as well as being decorative, capable of deeper readings, didactic, symbolic, philosophical, where the patron required them to be so.

First should come a definition of the pictorial genre. The designation 'Orpheus mosaic genre' implies limitations beyond which the visual image is transformed into a

picture of something else or loses the force of its specific import. The further implication is that the image had a particular meaning of which patron and artisan would be aware and which was best served by staying within the limits of commonly understood pictorial conventions. For the modern viewer, definition would aid identification in the case of fragmentary mosaics or complete ones where uncertain imagery is claimed to be or disallowed as Orpheus. It would also provide reference for future researchers, since, happily, new mosaics are constantly brought to light. Current discussion of imagery often focusses on the comparison of one mosaic with another without reference to the larger contexts explored in this thesis, resulting in forced and false comparisons. A limitation to the method is the reliance on catalogues, in which, it is shown (Appendix I) that the form in which the data is held provides a powerful positive influence on the perception of 'likeness' in the material. Clearly the mosaics are superficially similar, apparently obeying rules, but equally, as demonstrated, they display many differences. Traditions governing the overall look guaranteed the continuing recognisability of the subject, while pictorial developments produced differences. The term 'genre' is applied here to the single image, 'Orpheus and the Animals'. Strictly speaking the scene belongs in the broader category of 'animal scenes' in Graeco-Roman art and that, it could be argued, is the 'genre', of which Orpheus is one subject. Defining the Orpheus scene thus reveals affinities and deeper structures of significance and function, but the assimilation of the image into Judaeo-Christian iconography and its subsequent transformations indicate that it possessed a complex symbolic life of its own and deserves to stand as an individual genre. Some images of the vanquishing of animals also crossed the divide with the same implication for their innate philosophical value.

Pictorial conventions for Orpheus in other media ensured distinct limits on imagery both as regards medium and time: a vogue for the subject of Orpheus' murder on red-figure vases, fifth century BC, is not repeated, nor is the episode explicitly depicted again; Eurydice's rescue is reserved for funerary

contexts, relief or fresco. To my knowledge the only scene from the myth represented on mosaic is the animal charming. That it of all episodes was chosen is perhaps to be attributed simply to the superb opportunity offered for the display of animals, more than would be seen in arena subjects and in new poses. It is related to the genre of the animal paradise, where the mingling of many kinds of animals acted as a symbol of teeming life, a Golden Age theme of continuing interest to artists Hellenistic to Byzantine. Depending on context the *paradeisos* might evoke the idyllic peace and plenty awaiting the defunct in the afterlife or the Golden Age of peace to come in this world, both a pagan and a Judaeo-Christian image. Many animal-filled pavements graced the naves of eastern churches in late antiquity. Presiding over many of these scenes might be Noah, David or the Good Shepherd, all Christian subjects (ARLA, 283-99). Orpheus might be seen as a precursor and model for these types, especially in the large display mosaics.

In North Africa the motif was closely allied to the hugely popular hunting and arena scenes. The power which Orpheus asserted by virtue of his weakness, the necessity to still savage forces by artistry, not brute force, was celebrated by African mosaicists who placed him amid scenes of animal carnage. The polarity of his pacificity was appreciated at the same time as he represented another, almost magical, form of luring and quietening animals so important to the patrons. In the Greek East Orpheus represented literary and musical arts, and an appeal to the classical past apparently more to the tastes of those patrons. The animal scene predominated in other media, sometimes accompanied by the release of Eurydice in funerary art.

The suggestion of another scene in mosaic at Keynsham, the supposed severed head of Orpheus prophesying, has been demonstrated to be the reflection in a pool of Minerva piping [1]. The oracular head appears only on fifth century BC. vases and coins and later on mirrors and vases, not so far as I am aware, in late Roman art, but cf. Henig in PDNHAS, CVI (1984), 143-6 who sees a head of Orpheus or the Etruscan oracular hero Tages at Frampton.

A picture of Orpheus which showed the singer

and his audience of charmed animals ought to leave no doubt as to the subject, but matters are not so simple. With a damaged mosaic identification may depend on the interpretation of uncertain imagery in the surviving fragments. Given a complete image, the subject should be quite clear, but in some instances the assertion or denial of the presence of the figure of Orpheus is erroneous. Dubious identifications will be examined here to reveal the pictorial rules governing and defining the genre, its characteristics and controlling factors. The rules allowed certain pictorial events, not others. Nevertheless, some motifs occur singly. From these have to be distinguished those motifs relating to Orphean conventions, and those others which reveal the subject not, in fact, to be Orpheus. An example of the former would be the maenad of Antalya and of the latter the tripod on the mosaic known as Los Pajaros, Italica (ill. 83, 84). For an answer one has recourse to the literary and visual traditions of Orpheus which provide an appreciation of the pictorial conventions of mosaic in relation to those in all media. The context provided by pendent and associated imagery and by local repertoires, aids in the definition of the message of the picture, whether Orphean or not. This would include elements of the myth understood by the observer of the mosaic, but not illustrated in it. Everything appearing with Orpheus has to belong to the cultural concept built up over centuries.

The maenad opposite Orpheus at Antalya is an essential of the legend, indicating the fate of the singer. By the late fifth-fourth centuries BC. in vase painting she was often depicted at the edge of a scene of Orpheus singing. She alludes to violence, so often pictured as a hunt or combat in pendent scenes, the antithesis of Orpheus' eirenic presence [2]. The association of Orpheus with Bacchic subjects also provides a place for her, as at Tarsus. The tripod, as it appears, on the Iberian mosaic has no business near him, being without precedent in imagery or myth [3]. Only the obvious, typical motifs appear with Orpheus: his lyre, a rock and a tree show the legendary location; only animals of a character and typology examined above (Ch.10). They are subdued,

either sitting or walking in African mosaics, sometimes running in repertories where hunt iconography was absorbed into the Orphean image. Also present might be female figures of an animal ferocity: maenad, sphinx, Scylla, and other relevant figures in pendent scenes.

Alone, the birds on the Italica mosaic are no indicator of Orpheus' presence, they never occur without the animals, whose savagery held in check was the point of the motif. Orphean birds are all different, an inventory of species to confirm the musician's power to attract all things in the world, whereas the Italica mosaic includes more than one peacock, once with spread tail. The eyed wheel, a warning display unseen with calming Orpheus, was an apotropaic image extensively employed throughout the Empire, here matching the propensity for Iberian mosaic to include such protective charms. The animals too, are always all different, repetition giving the clue to another subject. Italica's central panel is now virtually destroyed. These animals might have appeared. The question of design comes in here, Stern's typology having been adduced to confirm a type I mosaic. [4], but the argument is flawed. If type Ia, Orpheus would be alone in the centre, animals as well as birds would occupy other panels (cf. St.Romain), which is not the case. If type Ib, other scenes and/or animals would appear outside (Cf.Rottweil), again not so. Anyway, figures accompanied by animals are not always Orpheus: Diana, Bacchus and Ganymede all appear among beasts in North African mosaic. The identification of Orpheus depends on the character of the animal entourage. I have argued elsewhere that a supposed Orpheus at Caerwent (central figure lost) was probably Bacchus with Seasons, animals and torch-bearing cupids, these last revealing the other figure [5]. From the baths of Stolac comes a mosaic not previously included in the canon of Orpheus mosaics, belonging to the type Ia group. The usual Orphean beasts, in panels, run around the lost centre. Running beasts are seen in an Orphean repertory combining hunt imagery with the tradition of animals circling the singer (Cf. Withington, Newton St.Loe, Salona, Panik). The location of Stolac in a bath building is specially indicative of Orpheus through his watery associations, rather than another figure.

Returning to Italica, the head, all that remains of the figure, wears neither Phrygian cap, nor wreath, but Apollo's curls and filet. Orpheus in mosaic is never bare-headed, with the one exception of Perugia, where the hair is arrayed in the fashion of Alexander and which in many respects lies outside the pictorial mainstream. That the Italica figure is placed to one side of the panel would not rule out Orpheus. He usually occupies the centre, but this position is not vital, the composition could be modified to include important related material (Cf. Ch.9). However, the position upper right, facing left does not compare with other Orphean images. A high placing is typical of late images where the figure is centralised (Santa Marta, Hanover, Jerusalem). Semi-draped figures of an earlier period face right.

The excavator of Aix (Cf. Ch.9 n.13) looking at the mosaic itself rather than Reinach's line drawing (RPGR 203, 6), never considered it showed Orpheus. The figure is clearly a female lyrist, her costume so different from the conventional dress Orpheus wears as the Thracian musician, or eastern garb of one sort or another. The cloak is usually red, brown or purple, a male garment, or a mantle of the greens and blues of the Greek repertory, but always strong colour. The Aix musician, like Apollo *Kitharoedus* dancing while playing, breaks another mosaic rule, for in the animal charming scene Orpheus is always seated. He only stands in Underworld scenes and is shown dancing on Apulian vases (fig.16). The seated figure, in late depictions in Imperial garb, shows his dominion over nature and the bestial instincts of men by the enthroned posture. The Good Shepherd of Jenah [6], strikes the typical shepherd pose, leaning on a staff, one leg crossed [7]. Only the large number of animals around a central male figure could prompt the identification of Orpheus when it was clearly not so. The only time a *pedum* substitutes for the lyre is in underworld scenes [8]. No musician playing pipes or any wind instrument can be Orpheus [9] since pipe music was inimicable to the heavenly nature of Orpheus who helped souls ascend to the astral plane through the notes of the lyre.

Stern was concerned that the aquatic setting of the Djemila musician and the juxtaposition of a dolphin-riding *genius* and nereid were attributes of Arion, not Orpheus [10]. But Arion should be riding the cetacean, while in fact the musician sits on a specially intruded spit of land, animals behind him. The combination of subjects on this elaborate mosaic, interpreted according to the conventions of Orphean associated imagery, show how completely Orpheus fits in to an aquatic context and is suited to the intent of the major scene. Simplest of all, the figure, with eastern style costume and outstretched arm, is paralleled in several mosaics and two catacomb frescos. The examples above test identification of Orpheus against the pictorial rules of the genre evinced from an analysis of the images of Orpheus in mosaic and other media. The principal pictorial rules for mosaic may be listed as:

1. Orpheus always accompanied by animals, often also birds;
2. all the animals are different (save specific pairs);
3. only subdued beasts, except in later hunt-influenced repertory;
4. birds do not appear without animals;
5. no objects other than rocks and trees accompany Orpheus;
6. the only instrument played is a lyre or kithara;
7. Orpheus always sits;
8. he is usually central, but important related material can affect placing;
9. additional figures and scenes accord with traditional ideas of the dominion of Orpheus, his powers over nature and the gods;
10. the classical Greek Orpheus, naked, or robed and wreathed, in a watery location denotes a secular pagan figure;
11. conventions of costume type, specific colours;
12. Orpheus not bareheaded: wreath or Phrygian bonnet;
13. arrangement within Stern's design typology is a good indicator of Orpheus rather than another subject;
14. the creatures are disposed across the picture plane to convey the concept 'surrounding', either one-point perspective or naive flattened space;

15. the overall message conveyed by the central depiction in combination with pendent and associated scenes must conform to one of a set of variants strictly defined and understood;
16. a figure cannot be called something other than Orpheus (usually Apollo) if it does not obey the genre rules for that other figure. This 'rule' is the most instructive, for all figures obey iconographic conventions of their own, a vocabulary common to each of them which constitutes the figural language.

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The meaning of an Orpheus mosaic must be bound up with its function, though no single meaning covers all the mosaics, nor any one level of understanding of the symbol. It is clear from inscriptions and the locations of the mosaics that while the subject of Orpheus, son of the Muse, might well represent the pleasures of music and poetry to be enjoyed by guests in a reception room, it was, on a deeper level, the very image of rhetoric, reason, regulation and the possession of education, therefore culture. Orpheus, reformer of the rites of Dionysus, was a *theologos*, his song was the creation of the world, the poetry ascribed to him was religious, but he was also emblematic of the arts of man, from high-minded poetry to comedic theatre. At Mytilene in the room adjoining Orpheus are pictured the playwright Menander, a Muse and famous scenes from stage comedies. As Dunbabin says of the African mosaics, Orpheus was, like the Muses, sometimes chosen as an example and model of the owner's culture. However, she warns, there is no way of telling the depth of the culture possessed by such men, of whom there were a great number. Orpheus might express a generic homage to learning and culture in Africa [11], were he was primarily the enchanter of animals, both adjunct and antithesis of popular hunt and amphitheatre scenes. In the Greek east Orpheus the poet was more important than the master of animals. Theatricality in the image of the eastern Orpheus is evidenced in style, which I have elsewhere likened to sixteenth century Italian mannerism, and in iconography. The wearing of the musician's *stola* for example, and the expansive sweep of the arm seen on some of these mosaics would recall familiar gestures of theatrical and musical performance and

especially rhetorical declamation, a capability which marked the cultured man. Here the use of the image to signify a claim to learning on the part of the patron is more overt, but in the Greek east it would not be the matter of the assumption of Hellenic culture it was in Africa.

Several times Orpheus is found in public locations or halls so large as to raise the question of official public gatherings. Orpheus as an embodiment of deep rooted cultural values, his image an appeal to classical culture, might reinforce the sense of belonging to a State strong in its foundations. This was especially important in times when blows to the political structures of the Empire were growing in intensity. It is not possible to date most mosaics closely enough to see exactly how they relate in time to the fragmentation of government in the Empire in the third century. Many mosaics were apparently laid in the Severan period when a message of pleasure and plenty, the enjoyment of the animal spectacle and the evocation of music and poetry pervades the depictions. It would seem that as many were laid later at a period of political turmoil when the message of peace and harmony would be appropriate, though how far political events impinged upon the affairs of those not immediately involved is uncertain. It is always possible that the major political events made no impression on the class of patrons of the Orpheus mosaics, whose lives for the most part may have remained unaffected. However, a certain sympathy between the troubled atmosphere and the message of peace inherent in the imagery can be discerned. A large number of mosaics date to the Tetrarchy and after. Orpheus was always a sign of the restoration or implementation of peace, harmony and order, the creator of concord in a discordant world. The image of Orpheus the peacemaker was sometimes employed as a conscious parallel to the image of the Emperor, who was capable of creating across the whole empire concord and unity amongst its disharmonious elements [12]. Orpheus singing to the charmed circle of animals could be interpreted as an allegory of the *pax romana*. It would not stretch the imagination too far to envisage the choice of subject as responding to strains in the political background.

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Since many Orpheus mosaics date to the period of Diocletian's Christian purges, the question of their being disguised Christian images arises - Orpheus was considered by some a prefiguration of Christ; he was perceived by pagan and Christian alike to be a salvatory figure. If they are such, no hint is given in the iconography nor in the adjacent scenes, as one would expect of a hidden image. If the message was so well hidden, how is the modern observer to know? Mosaics created later, when the patrons were free from the threat of persecution share some visual vocabulary with Christian art, but are not themselves necessarily Christian. Without overt Christian imagery to qualify the image, it is impossible to say what lay in the mind of the patron. The ambiguity of classical forms in late antiquity is exemplified in the Christian mausoleum of Santa Constanza, Rome [13].

The idea of disguising a Christian sentiment behind a pagan image is clever, but is it likely? On the day-to-day level of craft practice in Roman art, convention would be the strongest factor in dictating how and where the Christian Orpheus would appear. Its context was funerary, it was clearly qualified by adjacent biblical imagery and it occurred for the most part locally in and around Rome. Texts witness to the manner in which apologists perceived the powerful pagan figure and converted their impressions to suit Christian thought [14]. Eusebius in the fourth century saw his song as prefiguring the new song of Christ (*Laud. Const.* XIV, 355). It is easy to imagine Christian writers, belonging to the same culture after all, able to move easily between pagan and Christian ideals which had grown close together. The same effect is not true of the visual arts. Distances open between the declarations of Christian texts, the actions of the early church, the effects it thought it had achieved, and the visual evidence. The earliest catacomb paintings date from a time when Clement of Alexandria was railing against the trickery of pagan enchanters amongst whom he counted Orpheus, whom he despised and abhorred. Evidently, notes Stern, Clement's tirade had no effect on the Christians of Rome, or

was unknown to them (1974, 9). In the popular mind Orpheus was a protector, promoting fruitfulness and the general good, an image of reason whose cosmogonic song promoted peace (cf. Ch.4.10). So powerful were the eschatological associations of Orpheus and so strong the convention of depicting him in pagan funerary contexts, that he would naturally enter Christian iconography as a ready made image of the guide and protector of souls.

Of a total of over 300 depictions of Orpheus, Leclerc discussed 24 Christian images of Orpheus, including the Jerusalem mosaic. Stern only considered 10 artefacts to be incontrovertably Christian, followed by P.Prigent [15]. Neither include mosaics. All items are examples of funerary art, of which the iconography reveals that Orpheus and his history was taken by the first Christians as a parable of salvation. The Christian Orpheus is known only for a short period c.220-c.400AD, from Rome and its environs in the catacombs and, in victory stance, on strigillated sarcophagi where the Christian character of the image is denoted by adjacent imagery. Stern's fig.9, from Porto Torres, Sardinia, belongs to the Roman workshop. From outside Italy come a sarcophagus from Cacaens, a Coptic carving and naive relief from Loudon, France [16]. Stern's fig.11 found in Rome may not be Christian: it may be earlier than the others [17]. Orpheus has his usual felines, not Christian sheep, while the end motifs are lions devouring wild asses, typically pagan, where on Christian sarcophagi the defunct appear as philosophers with appropriate attributes, or orants. Christian art, evolved from classical forms, is specific in its vocabulary, unambiguously qualifying Orpheus when he appears.

Because of the funerary connection, doubt as to a Christian dedication might hover over the tomb mosaics, though Augustine tells us Orpheus was still in charge of pagan burial rites in fifth century North Africa (*Civ.Dei*, XVII, 14), nor do they display overt Christian imagery. They are: Cherchel; Constantine, with a motif common in Christian contexts, a stag drinking from a stream (though the afterlife paradise it represents was not an exclusively Christian ideal); Edessa in Syria. This was a thriving

Christian community, but pagan burials were present in equal numbers and no Christian formulae appear in the inscription. Also from the Middle East the Jerusalem Orpheus presents purely pagan imagery reiterating the traditional message, which when the building received a Christian dedication could have been reinterpreted. The ivory *pyxides* carry pagan imagery of the most conventional kind, which did not offend later Christian users. On the other hand, certain mosaics were mutilated (Dunbabin 152, n.81), by people, whether Christian or Muslim is not known, who must have perceived some sort of demonic power in the images. None of these date from the Tetrarchy. Another message might be considered: that the flush of Orpheus mosaics coincident with the Diocletianic purges was precisely to proclaim the orthodox observation of Greek polytheism. At least to the wealthy pagan elite Orpheus symbolised certain of its forms, of which he was the traditional founder figure and reformer (cf.Ch. 4.3, 4.5).

After the edicts of tolerance in the Constantinian period, a Christian Orpheus could have been used openly. However, to my knowledge it was not, a fact which parallels a scarcity, according to Grabar, of extant Christian images from this period (Grabar, 1969, 37-8). One would expect Orpheus to appear as he did in Rome surrounded by Old or New Testament scenes (catacombs) or Christian devout figures (sarcophagi). It is impossible to say whether late mosaic images such as Ptolemais were perceived as specifically Christian. Orpheus is nimbed, a feature later associated with Christian sanctity, but already fourth century pagan deities had received their nimbus, for example: Apollo at Paphos and Venus at Bignor (Ch.9, n.31). At Ptolemais the adjacent figure of seasonal plenty suggests the conventional figure: pagan Orpheus is pictured, numinous, powerfully authoritative. Such a figure would have been acceptable to Christians, who may well have given the image a Christian gloss.

It would not be correct to call any Orpheus depiction from later than AD 250 Christian as is sometimes done. J.B.Friedman makes this assumption and has then to justify the lack of Christian iconographic features. Arguing that since visual

statements were less flexible than words they could retain their symbolic appeal over a long period, he says that artisans, concerned with image rather than word

'could remain relatively aloof from the doctrinal and Christological controversies of the period. Thus while the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon sought to define for all time the relation between the human and divine in the person of Jesus, Christian artisans were still depicting Christ in the aspect of Orpheus. Truly it could be said that in the third, fourth and fifth centuries words and pictures ostensibly representing the same ideas were often straining in opposite directions (1972, 72).

He says 'Christian artisans' when there is no way of knowing their religious beliefs. The account of Claudius, a Christian, called upon to carve a pagan image for Diocletian, which he did, crossing himself all the while, though vivid, does not tell us more than his religious beliefs, nor whether Claudius ever carved an Orpheus, nor, if he did, whether it was for a Christian patron [18]. The image in the catacombs and on sarcophagi need not have been Christ in the aspect of Orpheus, but the divine singer himself, whose realm by ancient right was the underworld and victory over death.

It would not be correct, either, to maintain that Orpheus passed unchanged into Christian art. His iconography was changed both in subtle and overt fashion. On sarcophagi he becomes a victory figure, adopting the pose of Mithras slaying the celestial bull. Instead of gently luring and pacifying animals, the sheep by his raised foot has the place of the vanquished foe. In the catacomb frescos, adjacent imagery, which elucidates the meaning, is biblical, radically altering the message. The importance of adjacent imagery to reading the message of the visual ensemble, has been demonstrated above. Of the six depictions in fresco, four have an audience composed entirely of sheep, tame animals rarely appearing with the pagan Orpheus, while the birds are: dove and eagle. In the Domitilla catacomb of mid to late fourth century date is seen a return to the classical figure enchanting the usual wild beasts in two examples where the Christian character of the *loci* is evident. It might be expected that the earlier representations would remain closer to the

traditional, pagan image. In explanation Stern ventures an opinion of the figure whom he calls Orpheus-Christus, that Christians were hesitant about representing him absolutely identical to his pagan homologue early on, but to mark the difference, suppressed the fierce beasts (1974, 15). Without them the singer, says Stern, is evidently the Saviour who charms by his music the faithful, represented by sheep. He sees a confirmation in the central position of the figure in the decorative scheme.

This supposes that the figure of Orpheus had lost the importance it held in Graeco-Roman culture. The evidence proves the contrary. Appreciation of the wider development of Orphean iconography changes the picture. The numinosity of the pagan depiction more than counterbalanced the Orpheus of Christian art. An example would be the underworld figure of funerary art, carrying a *pedum*, who was the ready made symbol for the Christian guide and protector of souls, imaged as the pastoral animal tamer. Stern's hypothesis does not explore parallels with the underground sanctums of the other eastern mage, Mithras, with whom Orpheus was visually conflated, which confirmed Orpheus' place in that real under-world of the catacombs. Nor does it question how it was that both Orpheus and Christ were both dressed in the same garments and authority of late Imperial iconography. These are pictorial constructs stemming from a discipline of art with its own conventions independent of theological arguments.

The problematic 'straining in opposite directions' detected by Friedman in images he assumes to be Christian, falls into place if we accept that most late Orpheus depictions are as pagan as they appear. Christian apologists might reconcile the potent pagan figure with their religious philosophy, but there is no support for the assumption that all late images were certainly Christian. The fourth century Orpheus mosaic of Rome has a sheep and ram, but at the same time deliberately evokes classicism with its nude figure and Nilotic decoration. Others with Christian influenced imagery betray no hint of such thought in their expression. It is interesting to note that A.Grabar, in his scholarly

work on the origins of Christian iconography, makes no mention at all of Orpheus, who was a potent emblem of late aristocratic paganism as well as enjoying a persistent role in the world of superstition and magic. Even in Christian art Orpheus appears as himself, an allegory for Christian ideals, not Christ disguised. Ultimately we do not know if on some occasions a completely pagan Orpheus might have been interpreted as the Christian messianic figure by a Christian observer.

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Another question raised in regard to Orpheus is whether the image can be associated with an Orphic cult. In this case a definition of 'Orphic' is required, one applicable to the late Empire. The problematical nature of what is known as Orphism: the system taught in the Orphic mysteries, lies outside the scope of this work. Whatever its character, many scholars have devoted their energies to resolving the question [19]. Linforth declared, in perhaps too rigorously exclusive a fashion, that there was no such thing [20], that the assumption made by Guthrie and others of the widespread existence of an Orphic religion with its body of followers, Orpheus its high priest, was erroneous, not substantiated by any evidence nor borne out by close reading of the texts. Other scholars, too, doubted the validity of an exclusive, esoteric cult, questioning the definition of Orphic and Orphism [21], by-passing the intricacies of what West calls 'the pseudo-problem of the supposed Orphic religion' (p.1). Eliade distinguished a movement, at once initiatory and popular, in which sacred texts played a large part (1982, 185). What was called 'Orphic' by the ancients is now generally held to have consisted first of a Theogony, the creation of the gods and all matter from Chaos; a body of literature ascribed to Orpheus' authorship, including hymns, metaphysical and esoteric poems, the formation of an acceptable liturgical form of the excesses of the myth and ancient mysteries of Dionysus; purificatory rituals. The followers of these ritual forms were known as 'Orphici'. Perhaps a way of life was

involved. The designation, however is stretched to cover a wide variety of cults from many regions, across many centuries. There is no evidence for a cult of Orpheus himself. He was poet and hierophant of the rite according to Clement of Alexandria. Whatever was orthodox in the performance of mysteries was ascribed to Orpheus. Only two sects have been identified which might be called Orphic (West, 3), one from Olbia on the Black sea (near Odessa) in the fifth century BC. Another from Tarentum, S. Italy, in the second half of the fourth century BC, would comprise the users of Underworld vases. These appear to be the only works of art which can be associated with a sect. What the term 'Orphic' meant in fourth century AD Sicily or the provinces of Britain remains unknown.

The question whether any Orpheus mosaic belonged to a pagan religious community is important, but not easy to answer categorically. No Orphic sects are known from the time when they were laid, though the extant Orphic hymns are known to have been composed in the Imperial period, the *Orphic Argonautica* in late antiquity (West, 1) [22]. The next question is whether any mosaics reveal characteristics associated with Orphic theology as understood. Mosaics which might be considered are: Littlecote, with Orpheus as the central subject, and a conventional depiction at Palermo I in combination with the divinities mosaic. The Sparta Orpheus in its odd room may be added.

The Littlecote Orpheus is housed in a building separate from the domestic ranges of the villa. The imagery is reflective of Orphic eschatology, alluding to Dionysus' murder by the Titans and his rebirth [23] and shows the epiphany of the god in syncretic form, all under the rule of Orpheus. Such iconography, new to Orpheus mosaics, differs radically from the formulaic presentations used elsewhere and thus alerts us to the new message it bears. In these conditions the suggestion of a sacerdotal function for the edifice is not far fetched, perhaps providing a sanctum for the performance of mysteries the form of which might have been Orphic. It is possible, however, that the designer expressed what might have been the conventional pagan theology of late antiquity, syncretic and

convoluted as it was, (cf Macrobius, Saturnalia, probably recording popular knowledge) in a display which appears to us illustrative of esoteric learning. It was fashionable in late antiquity to ascribe texts and rituals to Orpheus, a 'device for conferring antiquity and authority' (West p.3). His name was used for poems claiming to reveal divine truth, he and everything over which he had charge embodied the truth of Greek, not Christian, religion and culture. Perhaps to call such religious practices Orphic is no more than saying they were pagan, of late antiquity. Again, the imagery is not cryptic (cf. Walters, 1984, 438), but uses conventional forms in a novel combination. The iconography would reveal its message to those fluent in the conventions of classical imagery and conversant with the syncretic currents of late antique art, of which the cult pictured in the Kornmarkt mosaic of Trier is representative. The cycle of Nature, of which the birth, growth, death and rebirth of Dionysus was a mystical symbol, was not itself an arcane concept, but one expressed in more conventional fashion in several Orpheus mosaics (Seasons, chariot race). Dionysus as the leader of the seasons was a popular subject in art, occurring several times in the British provinces. The programme as it appears, in a building hastily erected c.360, suits the picture of wealthy, influential patrons displaying their allegiance to the Emperor Julian and his venerable Greek religion through their calculated choice of imagery. The renewal of Dionysus, the implication of a return to the Golden Age, applies just as well to the hope of a regeneration of Hellenic religion and philosophy under the apostate Emperor.

At Palermo a conventional Orpheus is pictured in a room en suite with one with a scheme designated Orphic by Levi. Its complex iconography includes riding gods, the loves of Jupiter, winds, nereids, fish. In the Orphic exegesis (Eliade II, 189) Jupiter in his many forms made love 'in the air' and so created the world. A journey of the soul, transcendence, is indicated in the sacred marriages, the wafting of the soul to the sacred Isles by the Winds, escorted by nereids and the gods and heroes in heaven (they ride their animal attributes). At the centre a bare space where an altar

may have stood is upheld by *telamones*. Orpheus belongs in this mystical ensemble, for here the capability to carry the soul to heaven on the notes of his lyre is evoked by the adjacent placing of his image [24].

The presence which pervades Orphean imagery and which lies behind so much of the meaning is that of the god Dionysus/Bacchus. Any appearance of Orpheus as a priest or mage would be in the service of the god whose orgiastic, potentially chaotic rites he regulated with Apollonian rationale. This god was the force within the animal kingdom, the life of plants, Nature itself, over which Orpheus had powers of enchantment. Pan, maenads, centaurs and satyrs appear regularly with Orpheus, more so later on as if to reinforce an opposition to Christianity. Orpheus was traditionally the terrestrial embodiment of the heavenly Apollo, radiating light, reason, law. The arts of rhetoric, poetry, the music of the spheres derived from Apollo. As well as theatre, Dionysus ruled the performance of religious rites, characteristically theatrical in effect. The imagery of the mosaics exhibits these oppositions of light and dark, from the tamed ferocity of the beasts, to the implicit domain of Orpheus regulating the impending chaos of Nature, bringing the benefits of civilization.

This was his role in religion, but he also signified the delights of music and poetry, he was the epitome of culture, a theologian and regulator of rites. His well known ability to draw all things with his song gave him a further power, the control of natural forces, the weather, evil spirits. The image of Orpheus thus functioned as a prophylactic. He is frequently seen with images of fruitfulness and harvest, fostering the impression of an ensemble designed to promote fertility, centred on the powerful figure in touch with cosmic forces. The potency of this figure may be recognised in the mutilation suffered by the Oudna Orpheus, where the face has been destroyed [25]. This image represents the Greek type, from a bath complex, and had no original magical intent, but later, Christians or Muslims destroyed it. The eyes of the figure, like the eyes on the peacock's tail, another apotropaic symbol, were the

source of its power - presumably considered evil by Christian or Muslim viewers (Dunbabin, 152, n.81 on other mythological figures similarly treated). Another Orpheus suffering the same fate was at Sakiet (Thirion, 159, 176). The African representation belonged to the genre of animal scenes where Orpheus functioned both to point up the contrast to the violent arena scenes and to act as a calming influence on the powers conjured by the depiction itself (see Ch.10). In this sense it acted as a protective figure. Testimony to his power to work magical spells comes from classical Greek literature, Euripedes' (*Cyclops*, 646, *Alcestis*, 962), from Pliny (*NH*, XXX, 7) through to the extraordinarily detailed description in the *Orphic Argonautica* of the fourth century AD (941-1019) of a spell for conjuration of the gods and spirits. With a mind to the difference between text and picture outlined above, there is little likelihood of Orpheus mosaics belonging directly to this pervasive thread of magic. However, the laurel garlands arrayed round the depiction, with their protective and purificatory associations, may act like the numerous sprays of lucky millet scattered through African mosaic (Cf. Dunbabin 170-2).

Complementary evidence of Orpheus as a protective image comes from analogous depictions. One of the applied arts with a traditional relationship to mosaic is woven or sewn tapestry. Both decorated the same architectural areas. None of Orpheus are known in the larger tapestries, but several of the *orbiculi*, small, circular woven pictures sewn onto garments, carry depictions of Orpheus (Ch.2, n.60). Although some of these have been recovered from graves, mosaics and paintings tell us *orbiculi* were worn on the everyday clothes of the well-to-do. Whether the picture of Orpheus was considered more appropriate for the afterlife than for the present is not certain. Grabar (1969, 99) makes the point that Christians took to ornamenting their garments with prophylactic images of biblical subjects, a usage stemming from the pagan custom which had a similar intent. The image of Orpheus on finger rings provided a protective function for the wearer. Certainly in antiquity it was widespread practice to protect the person with some image

considered effective to ward off evil. No doubt Orpheus, with his well known ability to divert harm, ensuring a safe passage through life, promoting good fortune, would figure among the suitable range of subjects. Orpheus on mosaic as a protector is most evident at Brading where the image is placed on the potentially dangerous threshold, where evil spirits were thought to congregate. Coincidentally this mosaic resembles an *orbiculum* in having a circular frame with sketchy spandrel imagery. Almost all the British Orpheus mosaics are circular, raising the question as to whether the circular design simply reiterates the local fashion or if the scheme itself includes protective elements.

Leaving aside the decorative qualities of the circle, its symbolism in relation to prophylactic imagery and to the historical and social background may be considered on a speculative basis. The circular frame has the effect of increasing the numinous quality of any representation within it. When this is one with a known apotropaic effect, such as Bellerophon, the victorious charioteer, Medusa (and Orpheus may be included), the effect is increased. Medusa appears at the centre of a dazzling spiral pattern (*Inv. Sousse 57.274, pl.LXVII*) intended to catch the evil spirits and lead them to the middle to be held and destroyed by the Gorgon's stony stare. The image of Orpheus in his charmed circle of fierce animals had the potential to catch and mollify the evil spirits lurking in the room it decorated. The circles of a concentric design, like the elaborate patterns in which Medusa was sometimes set, have the effect of drawing powers to the centre (like water to a plug-hole), where animal-charmer Orpheus lures and disarms the dark forces.

The relation of such floor designs to those used for domes perhaps indicates the need to concretise the associations of universal order presented in the circles of celestial hierarchies above. Orpheus as the central focus represents order and universality on the terrestrial plane, civilization ruling Nature. Vault designs are most evident where the conventional architectural references are depicted: Littlecote has scallop-shell apses with

finials, Horkstow's Titans and Merida's winged *genii* issuing from acanthus, act as *telamones* in the spandrels. The circle, especially in a concentric design, is a mandala form which has the symbolic property of safety and wholeness, often coming to the fore when events in the life of the individual or state have been torn apart and are disharmonious [26]. We see these concentric circular designs in mosaic emerge after the crises in government of the third century and in the one region which seems to have been prosperous and able to provide relative stability and a safe haven for refugees fleeing barbarian incursions into the Continent, the fourth century provinces of Britain. Constantius' 'restoration' after the revolt of Carausius and Allectus was followed by a rash of building and expansion (Salway 329). Wealthy families emigrating to Britain may well have brought mosaicists in their train [27].

Various impulses might account for the popularity of concentric schemes for Orpheus mosaics in Britain in the late third to fourth century. One would be expediency, for example the ease with which it could be accommodated to fit any size frame without necessitating complex subdivisions of the area. The circular panel and circular, subdivided designs were popular in Britain for other subjects (Neal, 1981, 31-2), Orpheus one among many, however Orpheus' traditional eirenic role as much as local fashion continued to play a part in the British convention of providing a circular frame for his image. The convention prevailed long after the immediate sense of peace attendant on the 'restoration' period although the strict concentric schemes can be associated with the decade following (Barton Farm, Woodchester, Withington). The circular design is not unique to Britain. Forms of it occur at Salona, Merida, Volubilis and Ptolemais. The singularity lies in the predominance of this design over any other in the provinces of fourth century Britain.

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Finally, what can be deduced about the patrons? Who were they, what might their needs have been which were answered by the image of Orpheus? No single character can describe the late Roman patron choosing the image of Orpheus, a figure of import pervasive of every level of society, every time and place [28]. The mosaics represent the choice of the affluent man. Only the wealthy could commission what were often large and elaborate pavements in a suite of similarly rich floors, sometimes using glass and enamel tesserae. The *emblema* at Poljanice is constructed entirely of glass paste, though the style is crude. The image was popular, not in itself arcane or learned, indeed it was common to the extent of banality, but was deemed suitable for the proclamation of status (names are blazoned across the picture at Paphos and Oudna), and for use in prestigious contexts. In African mosaic Orpheus may on occasion have been the badge of Greek culture for men eager to show their acquisition of it. In other instances the image may represent an alternative display of animals to the arena pictures, commissioned by men involved in connected trades who wished to show tamed beasts, or to invoke supernatural powers of protection on the proceedings lavishly depicted elsewhere. Patrons may have been cultured, or were pretending to the culture which Orpheus signified, displaying their learning, or just the knowledge that learning, rhetoric and poetry were the hallmark of the cultivated man.

Perhaps they were only wealthy in relation to their milieu, where the only available artisans were of lesser quality, such as at Brading, Poljanice, the border fortress town of Carnuntum. The installation of this sign of the cultured condition was perhaps more important to some than obtaining an artistically refined depiction. Certainly such examples are schematic, with few creatures, a statement, not a display of animals.

The combination of Orpheus with imagery pertaining to fruitfulness, prosperity, a safe harvest from land and sea, may be associated with the aspirations of wealthy landowners, merchants and ship owners: Woodchester, Lepcis Magna, La Chebba, Djemila. The same imagery might represent a more generalised aspiration for a fruitful and safe life protected by Orpheus. Some

patrons might have been making a show of their loyalty to the establishment, the state, through its traditional representatives; perhaps they were members of the Imperial bureaucracy, or close to the throne, the senatorial aristocracy clinging to traditional religion and their classical heritage even when Christianity was in the ascendant, almost certainly the educated upper classes: Palermo I, Brading, Horkstow, Littlecote, El Pesquero. Another order of patronage would be public in those places where the chamber may be interpreted as having an official character: Horkstow, Seleucia, Miletus, Saragossa, Arnal, Jerusalem, although there may have been private funding from wealthy municipal aristocrats. Orpheus would signify the Golden Age peace, eagerly sought, once to be found in the classical past, and present harmonious concord in the Empire, the *pax romana*, the regulated order of the Establishment. The Orpheus mosaics of Saragossa, Jerusalem, Arnal, have a religious connotation, in my view dedicated to the Greek gods rather than Christian, though Christians may have re-dedicated the buildings at a later date. Patrons asking for Orpheus on mosaics destined for burial chambers would have thought of him in his traditional role of divine musician, who safeguarded the defunct in the pagan afterworld.

Some who put Orpheus in their reception rooms saw him as an elevated motif, a representative of esoteric philosophies, of a higher spirituality, of the heavenly realm to which they aspired, pouring out the music of the spheres; some were men who acknowledged him simply as the embodiment of the truth of Greek religion. Others saw a figure embedded in ancient superstitions, for Orpheus was continually associated with Magas and magical practices from the time of Plato to the fifth century AD at least. Some employed the image for its protective properties, perceiving Orpheus as a power to avert the potential harm of chaotic nature, harmonising its discords, a provider of bounty who would ensure prosperity and an unscathed passage through life. Some men perhaps thought of Orpheus only as the poet, bringer of harmony, appropriate to decorate a room for quiet relaxation, or, with Orpheus as patron of the art of music, a room for concerts, musical soirées.

None of these perceptions can be attached with any certainty to a particular image; one can only interpret in some cases the content of associated imagery, the location of the pavement, the social background prevailing in the region at the time, to suggest one reading against another. The villa at Woodchester covered a vast area, much of which remains to be excavated. It was built on such a substantial scale and so grandly symmetrical, at its centre the domed chamber housing the Great Pavement, that its original appearance can only be described as palatial. Its decoration was clearly a prestigious undertaking. Its context was a province, *Britannia Prima*, which has yielded evidence of a considerable affluence, centred on Cirencester and Dorchester in the expansive architectural complexes of other villas, eg. Hinton St.Mary, Littlecote, Frampton. Woodchester may be the most grandiose of these undertakings, but may yet be no more than the most exuberant expression of the wealth and confidence of the 'landed gentry' at this time. Perhaps the owners were influential landowners, belonging to the municipal aristocracy, grown rich on the profits of the wool trade. The villa complex included many buildings and yards apparently dedicated to rural activities in which wool production no doubt played an important part. The place is certainly not solely a farm, but even now the royal country *residences* have their own home farms.

Were the owners merchants connected with the sea-borne trade from the eastern Mediterranean which made Corinium more important than London in the fourth century [29]. Or was Woodchester a palace? Was the owner a member of the senatorial aristocracy, or of even higher status? Perhaps he was a high-ranking member of the Imperial bureaucracy acting in Britain, maybe even the governor of the province [30]. For the central, public room, where the most important personages, not only local dignitaries, but officials of Imperial government and prestigious, perhaps princely visitors from abroad would be received, the patron chose to represent himself, his learning, his dignity and status with an image of Orpheus. This figure epitomised the heritage of classical culture,

Greek polytheism rather than Christianity, harmony and prosperity. To choose Orpheus and his grand parade of subdued animals as the focal image of this magnificent chamber was a statement by which the patron tied himself to Rome yet extolled the solidity, safety and wealth of certain structures of society in fourth century Britain.

Such importance attached to the image, its link to centres of power, its fortuitous and prophylactic qualities, may help to explain the prevalence of Orpheus as a theme for mosaic, relative to the size of the country, in fourth century Britain. It is one of a few special subjects, Bellerophon is another, which found favour in a late antique, provincial repertory condensed to a few significant images which were pressed to serve more elevated ends than decoration. We see the same use of Orpheus in important locations whose imagery is associated with the pagan establishment at Brading, Littlecote and Horkstow.

In late antiquity one image, that of Orpheus enchanting the animals, crystallised a complex archetype. Whatever reason the patrons had for choosing the subject, surely none would be totally unaware of other aspects of the legendary figure's multivalent persona, the magician, prophet, the salvatory, pacific, concordant Orpheus, the divinely inspired, yet tragic musician, hierophant and poet of the rites, culture hero, tamer of the excesses of the chaotic Dionysus, counterpart of rational Apollo, bringer of harmonious peace.

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NOTES

1. R.Stupperich, Britannia XI (1980), 289-301. Perhaps the ensuing contest between Apollo and Marsyas accompanied it in the scheme.
2. This telling contrast is seen on the ivory *pyxides*: W.F.Volbach, Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters, 3rd. ed. (1976) no.91, pl.50; no.92, pl.51.

3. The suggestion that the strange configuration to the left was a tripod was made by J.Lancha in a personal communication. Cf. Reinach RSGR I, 251: 954 Apollo with tripod.
4. J.M.Alvarez-Martinez, 'Mosaicos Romanos', Actas A.Balil, (1990) 31-2.
5. I.Jesnick, Mosaic 17 (1990) 7-13.
6. M.H.Chehab, 'Mosaïques de Liban', Bull.du Musée de Bèyrouth xiv, (1957) 55-6, pl.XXXI. and pp.64-73.
7. Cf. Miniature, pastoral scene, Vatican Virgil, Cod.Vat.lat. 3867, fol.44, Grabar, (1969), pl.I; Brit.Mus. silverware, bowl with decorated rim: Carthage Treasure M & LA AF 3726.
8. Ostia fresco, Gruppe 1175, fig.1; terracotta Tunisia, Panyagua, (1973) no.149, fig.20.
9. Lamps, flautist with animals, DACL XII, 2752, 17; Horn-player, Knole relief, Panyagua (1973) no.156.
10. H.Stern, Le calendrier de 354 (1953), 278. and n.4.
11. Dunbabin, 136 and n.32, cf. Virgil and Muses, Inv.Sousse 57.104.
12. Stern (1980) 162 and fig.16, a gem of Civil war period. P.Rinuy, 'L'imagerie d'Orphée dans l'antiquité' RAMAGE 4, (1986) 311.
13. W.Dorigo, Late Roman Painting, pl.24, figs.166, 167; Grabar (1969), 34, fig.76.
14. Discussed by Sister Murray in BAR S100, Rebirth and Afterlife, (1981). J.B.Friedman, Orpheus in the Middle Ages (1970).
15. P.Prigent, 'Orphée dans l'iconographie chrétienne', Rev. d'hist.et phil.rel. (1984), 205-221.
16. H.Stern (1974) fig.10; DACL XII, 'Orphée', 2748, no.12, fig.9244; ibid IX, 'Loudon', 2545, fig.7201. Metal casket decoration from Hungary, Hungarian National Mus. Inv.no. 64.1903.19-24 and 67.126.1. O.and animals in medallion, labarum adjacent, biblical scenes also part of same decorative scheme. This item brought to my notice too late to include in the main body of the discussion.
17. Pesce dates earlier, c.238-44, see Sister Murray (1981) 151-2, n.30.
18. E.R.Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, IX, i, 22, quoted J.Friedman (1970), 76. See n.31, below.
19. A.Boulanger, Orphée: rapports de l'orphisme et du christianisme (1925) esp.17-67; M.P.Nilsson, 'Early Orphism and Kindred Religious Movements', HThR. 28, (1935) 181-231; A.J.Festugiere 'Les Mysteres de Dionysus' Rev. bibl., 44, (1935) 372ff; idem, REG 49 (1936) 306-310; W.K.Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion (1935); A.D.Nock Orphism or Popular Philosophy, HThR XXXIII, (1940) 301-315; I.M.Linforth, The Arts of Orpheus (1941)

- H.Jeanmaire, Dionysus, histoire du culte de Bacchus (1951);
L.Moulinier, Orphée et l'Orphisme a l'époque classique (1955);
M.Eliade, A History of Religious Ideas II, (1982) 180-202 and
482ff for critical bibliography. M.L.West The Orphic Poems
(1983).
20. A.D.Nock, Classical Weekly, XXXV, no.14, Feb. 1942. 161-163.
21. E.R.Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational (1951) 147ff;
West, 1-3.
22. The tablet of Caecilia Secundina, one of the so-called Orphic
gold leaves, from outside Rome is dated 2nd.C. AD. G.Zuntz,
Persephone (1971); G.Murray in J.Harrison. Prolegomena,
Appendix, 672, VII.
23. B.Walters, Littlecote, 2nd Interim Report 1979 & 80, 9; idem
CIMA III, (1984) 436-7.
24. CF Macrobius, Somnium Scipionis, IV, 7-8. Commentary on the
Dream of Scipio, trans. W.H.Stahl (1952) 195.
25. P.Gaukler, MonPiot, iii, (1896), 217, fig 12, pl.II.
26. Mandalas appear at times of crisis. They promote calm and
harmony. E.Gombrich, The Sense of Order (1984) 246-7, gives
Jung's definition and his own comments. He sees 'degrees of
order as potential metaphors of inner states'.
27. D.J.Smith in A.L.F.Rivet The Roman Villa in Britain, (1969),
n.4, 114; K.Branigan 'Gauls in Gloucestershire?' TBGAS, (1974),
83-95. S.Applebaum in 'Rural Settlements in Roman Britain' CBA
Research Report 7, (1966), 104.
28. Patrons have been characterised as men, but in some cases women
must have been responsible for choice of imagery. What, if any,
difference might this have made? Pendent imagery alluding to
fruitfulness and safety perhaps. The documented iconographic
programmes of the intellectual women of the Renaissance, for
example Isabelle d'Este, seem no different in kind from those
of their male contemporaries. However, at a less exalted level,
then, and in antiquity, perhaps a whole sphere of influence has
been overlooked.
29. Evidence for Mediterranean trade: 4th-5thC. pottery from North
Africa found extensively in those areas. Pers. comm. B.Walters.
30. Rise of wool manufacture: R.G.Collingwood, J.N.L.Myres, Roman
Britain and English Settlement, (1937), 239-40; VCH Wilts. I,
2, 455.
31. Goodenough does not cite an original source, but:
Sitzungsberichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, X
(1853) 115-126, which has not so far been available. The point
here is the use made by Friedman of Goodenough's version.

CONCLUSION

In the language of Graeco-Roman art, the image of Orpheus takes its place as though a phrase in a spoken tongue. I have explored every word of the phrase, the sentence in which it was placed, the pattern of paragraphs which those sentences form. By these means I have been able to tease from its syntactic web the meaning of a single word in that phrase: the image of Orpheus in Roman mosaic. As with words, there was no fixed interpretation, but a complex of related, nuanced meanings, changing with time, place and immediate circumstance. As the single element is meaningless without the framework of linguistic structure, so the picture of Orpheus in mosaic is best understood first in relation to the history of the visual depiction of all episodes of the myth, then against the development of the animal-charming scene in all media. Such a process provides the close context for examination of the pictorial structure of the mosaics. Individual Orpheus mosaics are better understood when compared with examples of other subjects in their own medium, and with other artefacts depicting Orpheus which exhibit stylistic features belonging to the same local repertoires, than they would be compared with one another on the basis of superficial affinities of design.

The distinction between the African and eastern composition of type II panels has long been recognised and is complemented here by the revelation of two figure styles, originating from western and eastern centres of influence, the naturalistic and stylised repertoires. These are different in kind, meaning and time span; they overlapped regionally, the eastern repertoires well represented in western locales along the great east-west routes of

communication. Much about the means by which the dissemination of imagery was effected remains unknown or conjectural. The movement of artisans following work around the Empire, however, cannot be doubted.

The development of the image and meaning of Orpheus in media other than mosaic has been a principal theme of this thesis. It has offered the means of defining the place of the mosaic image, and represents a complementary understanding that all figures in antique art were part of a greater visual language. What limits the depiction of Orpheus at the same time defines any other figure associated with him. Figures and scenes being subject to limiting conventions, appreciation of one is dependent on knowledge of the rules applying to all the others. To understand Orpheus it was necessary to enter into the codes of antique art. First the preconceptions of the late twentieth century viewer were to be put aside. Accustomed to fragmented images jumping from subject to subject, much familiar imagery is to us apparently devoid of content, with the deeper symbolic levels unappreciated. We expect the same of antique imagery. It is not unusual to be accused of reading too much into it. Put the other way around, might we not be overlooking the many layers of meaning inherent not only there, but in our own visual surrounds? The content of Roman art might be esoteric or mundane, but is to us as valuable when it reveals the desire to decorate a room in a relaxing manner on one level, or on another, the presence of an esoteric sect.

How could patron and artisan between them first conceive and then construct in stone chips the picture of a singer with animals, which was at the same time stereotypical, often bland, yet functioned as an important archetype of creativity, culture and religion? To this end the conception of Orpheus in the minds of the contemporary observer, the patrons, the Roman citizens or the artisans working at each end of the empire, has been considered. Eventually something of the character of antique Roman imagery revealed itself, its pictorial logic, traditions and the perception of its symbols. Orpheus mosaics are, by virtue of their

medium, not fine, but decorative art. While in a few cases the execution is of a high standard, for the most part they are frankly second rate artistically. The message of the imagery should be read in a different light to that of fine art objects. Nevertheless, although mosaics were functional items, their imagery was not neutral, but lent an ambience of one sort or another to the rooms which they decorated.

The image of Orpheus belonged to a compendium of mythic images constituting the figural and symbolic language of Graeco-Roman picture-making, where each image was inextricably linked to every other one. Mosaic was a form of that language. In particular, the Orpheus mosaics were a phenomenon of the late Roman Empire, using a pictorial language expressive of the aspirations of late antique society.

The importance of the part played by pendent and associated motifs, qualifying the central, formulaic picture to give each image its particular meaning, cannot be overemphasised. Such motifs act in the same way for Orpheus in other media. Without this subsidiary imagery, and without a relationship to other figures in Graeco-Roman art, Orpheus by himself could signify anything - nothing. The modern observer, following the procedure adopted here, should read that associated imagery with particular care, in combination with individual features of the iconography. The character of the animal audience, the style in which the figures are presented, location and historic background, all have a part to play. Each mosaic, distinguished from the others by the minutiae of imagery and iconographic detail, diversity of rendition and sense, has something different to offer.

The mosaic image served many functions according to the personal aspirations of the patrons responding to their cultural milieu, so a single, concise conclusion as to its place in Roman society is impossible to reach. The subject of the antique Orpheus is vast. It has only been possible here to sketch in some themes besides iconography, topics such as the literary, religious, social and historic manifestations of the legendary

figure, and its popularity; each represents a different area of its perception. The two parts of the thesis have encompassed first, this idea, the concept of the figure in Graeco-Roman culture and its visualisation; second, a close pictorial study of the mosaics. In the first part an attempt was made to penetrate the nebulous cloud of ideas cloaking the figure, which had accrued to it over the thousand years from the sixth century BC to the sixth AD. A process of deconstruction was effected by accomodating the various aspects of the multivalent personality under convenient headings. Thus it could be shown how many opportunities existed for the men of all epochs and from every strata of society to take Orpheus as a badge of their own aspirations. In the late Roman period his image symbolised the essence of *romanitas* rooted in Greek culture, peace and stability; the arts: music, poetry, rhetoric, the skills of the cultivated man. Orpheus, whose song told of the creation of the universe, and who in ancient times had instituted religious rites and regulated the Bacchic cult, in late antiquity symbolised the survival of Greek religion. At the same time, the image could act for some as a functioning object, a prophylactic and promoter of prosperity. So important was Orpheus as a numinous figure of pagan religiosity, with power over nature and knowledge of the afterlife, on all levels from esotericism to superstition, that he was absorbed into Judeo-Christian philosophy. He was considered an acceptable moral exemplar by Christian apologists, just as he was by pagan philosophers, and was employed in Christian funerary imagery where his eternal victory over death was portrayed and his ability to shepherd the souls of the faithful.

The delight taken by modern viewers in the spectacular display of animals in the best mosaics cannot be far different than it was for the Roman observer, though the allusion to their gory demise in the arena would not give us a thrill. Nor would we take the same pleasure in an inept rendering, while he might see the beauty of the idea however badly realised the image. Much of the appreciation of the picture of Orpheus lay in extrapolating from it the poetry, morality and higher spirituality this image of concord

represented while at the same time it offered the enjoyment of re-telling the myth it illustrated, reminded observers of arena displays, or acted as a comforting protection against evil spirits. The fruitful working of the image in the mind of the antique observer was the measure of its success, not its appearance.

Texts in which Orpheus appears, lyric poetry, histories, epics, Philostratus' description, Christian apologia, cannot be taken as direct influences upon the formation of visual imagery, obeying literary conventions of their own, but were complementary manifestations describing a charismatic persona which continues to exert a fascination.

The ambition fuelling this research, to understand the unique group of Orpheus mosaics from Roman Britain has been fulfilled. Each mosaic was discussed where a particular point of its iconography was pertinent to the argument. In this way the place occupied in the corpus by the British mosaics has been demonstrated. They are not all alike, though with one exception they were set in the same circular frame, but belong individually in repertorial groups other than the single unifying category of Romano-British mosaics that has hitherto been employed to describe them. Salient aspects of their iconography have been revealed here to contribute to their discussion.

The search began with the Great Pavement of Woodchester. Even in its fragmentary state, it amongst all the Orpheus mosaics of the Empire, with its circle of subdued beasts, its heraldic fox and peacock, the powerful surge of the acanthus waves from which Oceanus rears up, the languorous naiads, bathed in the blue water of their pools, who pour fresh streams from their urns, the dazzling surround of geometric patterns, represents a supreme artistic and symbolic achievement of the artists of the Roman world. It remains so, and it remains hidden.

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Ill. 1:
Orpheus? and two
Sirens.
Terracotta.
c. 310 BC.



Ill. 2: The death of Orpheus at the hands of
the Thracian women.
Attic vase. c.470-460 BC.



Ill. 3 (top): Oracular head of Orpheus. Scribe. Apollo.
Stemless cup. Late 5th C. BC.

Ill. 4 (below): Oracular head of Orpheus, lower left. Scribe.
Male and female nude attendants.
Bronze mirror. Louvre. End 4th C. BC.



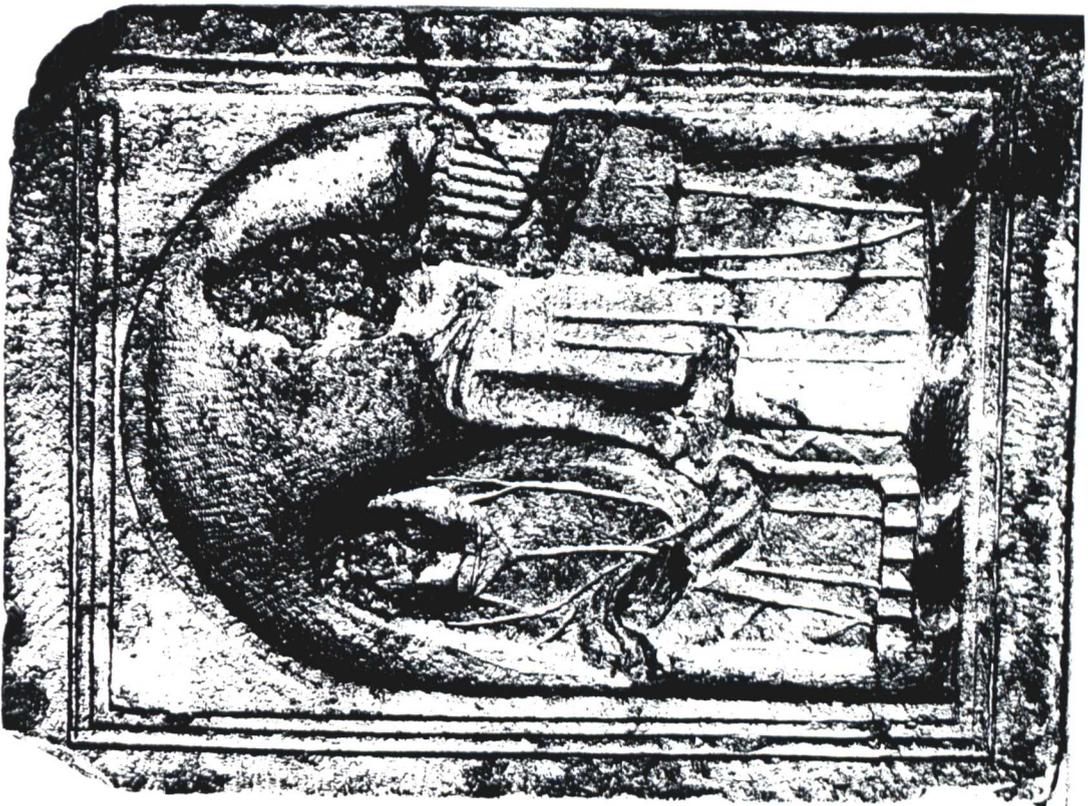
Ill. 5: Orpheus sings to Thracian warriors.
Attic pelike.
c.430 BC.



Ill. 6: Orpheus sings. Satyr, erotic scene.
South Etruscan oenochoe.
4th C. BC.

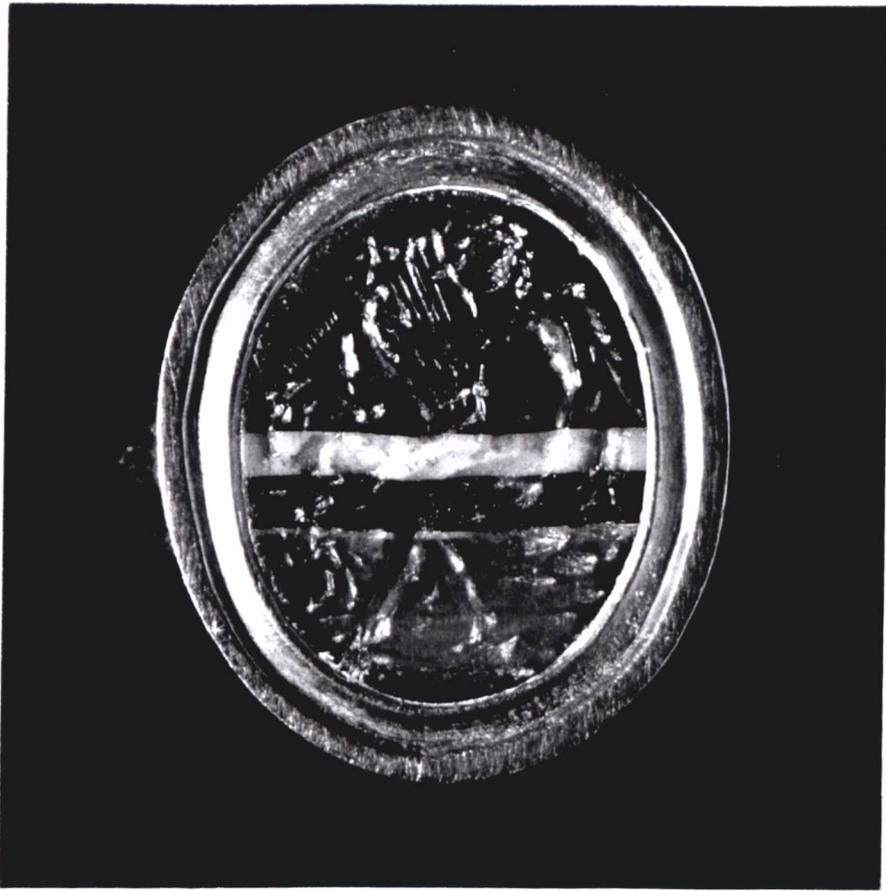


Ill. 7: The Berlin Vase.
Orpheus entrances Thracian warriors
with his music and song.
Column krater, Magna Graecia.
c.440 BC.



Ill. 8 (top): Hermes, Eurydice, Orpheus. Marble stele. c.420-410 BC.

Ill. 9 (below): Orpheus and Eurydice. Funerary stele. 3rd C. AD.



Ill. 10 (top): Orpheus.
Engraved sardonyx. c.160BC.

Fig. 3 (below).

Ill. 11:
Impression of
clay mould.
Trier.
4th C. AD.

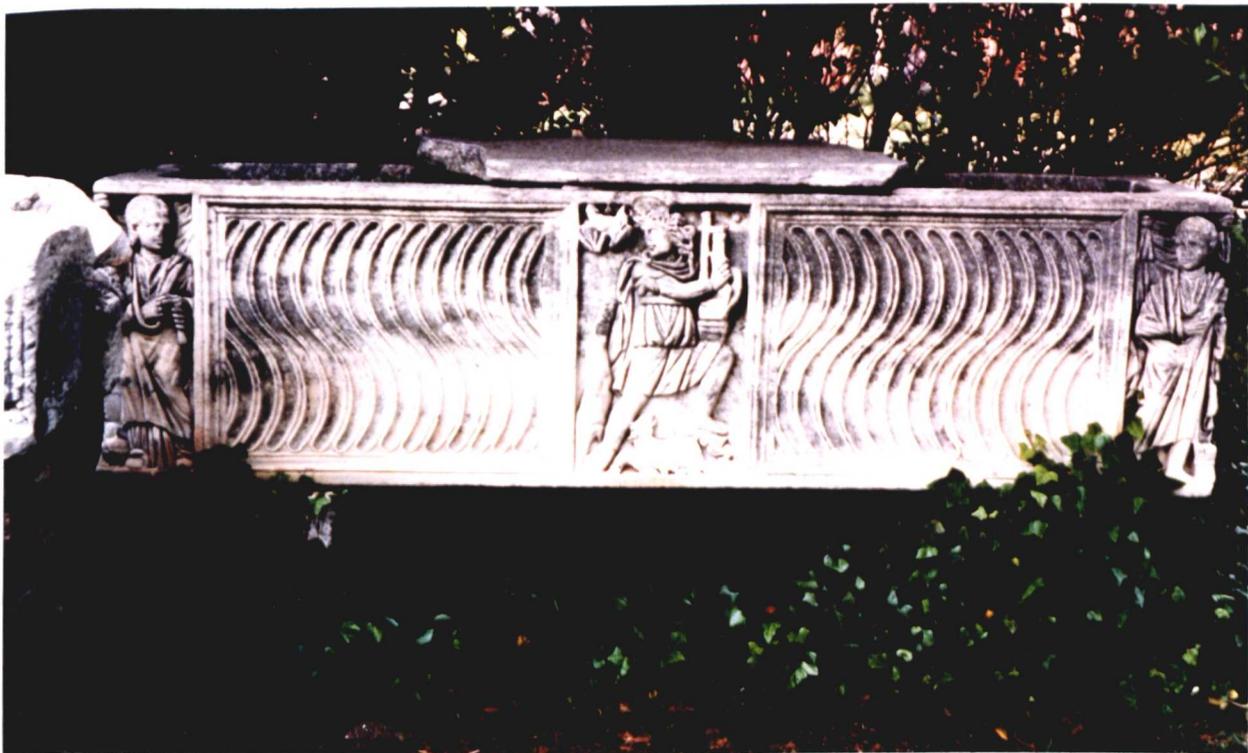
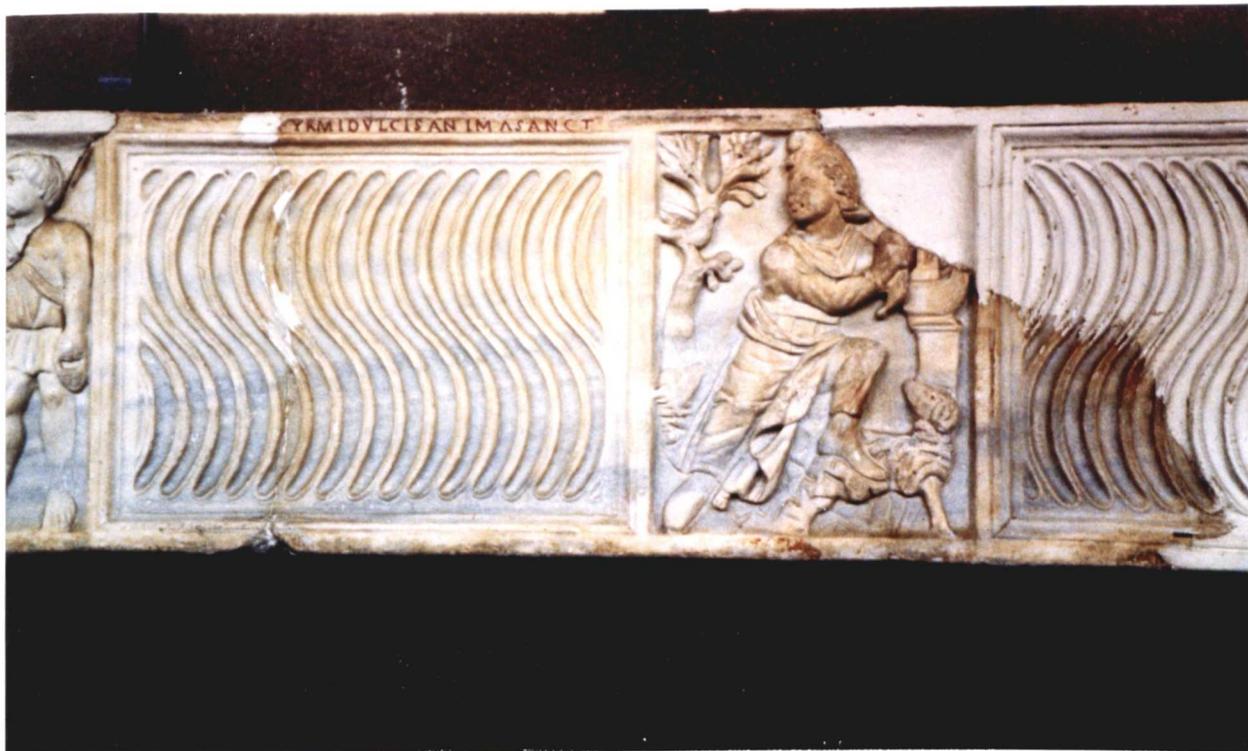




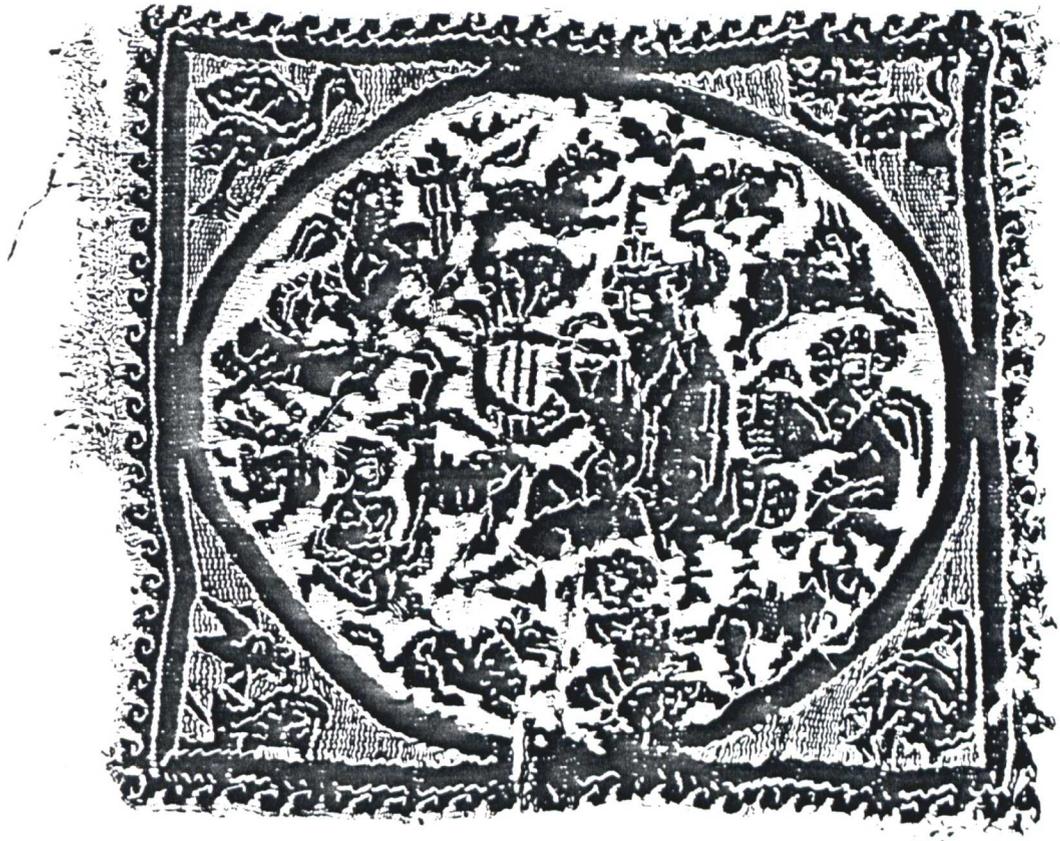
Ill. 12a-b: Catacomb of Domitilla II. Fresco. 350-360 AD. 12a
a: Orpheus lunette.
b: whole chamber.



12b.



- Ill. 13: Victorious Orpheus in Thracian dress. (top)
Strigillated sarcophagus. Vatican. 3rd-4th C. AD.
- Ill. 14: Victorious Orpheus in Phrygian dress. (below)
Strigillated sarcophagus. Ostia. 3rd-4th C. AD.



Ill. 15: Orpheus with animals, erotes.
Coptic textile orbiculum.
5th-6th C. AD.

Ill. 16:
Orpheus with monkey
and star. Woodcut.
Bronze ring,
impression.
Late 4th C. AD.





Fig. 10



Ill. 17: Thracian Orpheus, animals, snake-in-tree.
Glass paste gem imitating amethyst.
Reverse print. 4th C. AD.



Ill. 18: Orpheus greets the defunct at the edge of the Underworld.

Apulian krater.
3rd C. BC.

Ill. 19:

Apollo, Muse, swan
and hind.

Bronze mirror.
4th C. BC. Louvre.



Ill. 20:

Apollo and griffin
with Marsyas, Artemis
and divinities.

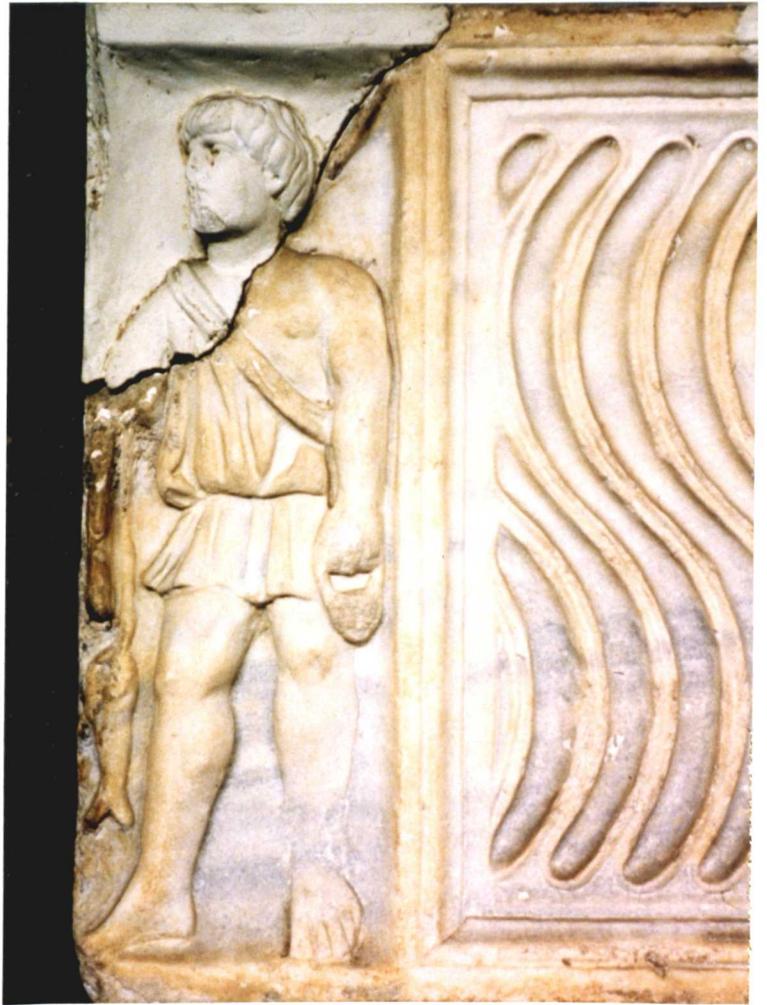
Sarcophagus.
3rd C. AD.



Ill. 21:

The fisherman. End-figure of Christian sarcophagus (ill.13).

Vatican. 3rd-4th C. AD.



Ill. 22:

Sacral-idyllic landscape, 'Otherworld' scene. Fisherman, lower right.

Stucco relief. c.20 BC.





Footings. Ill. 24 (top): Oudna Orpheus. 3rd. C. AD.

Ill. 25 (below): Sakiet Orpheus. 4th C. AD.



Ill. 26:
Decursio, column base.
Late 2nd. C. AD.



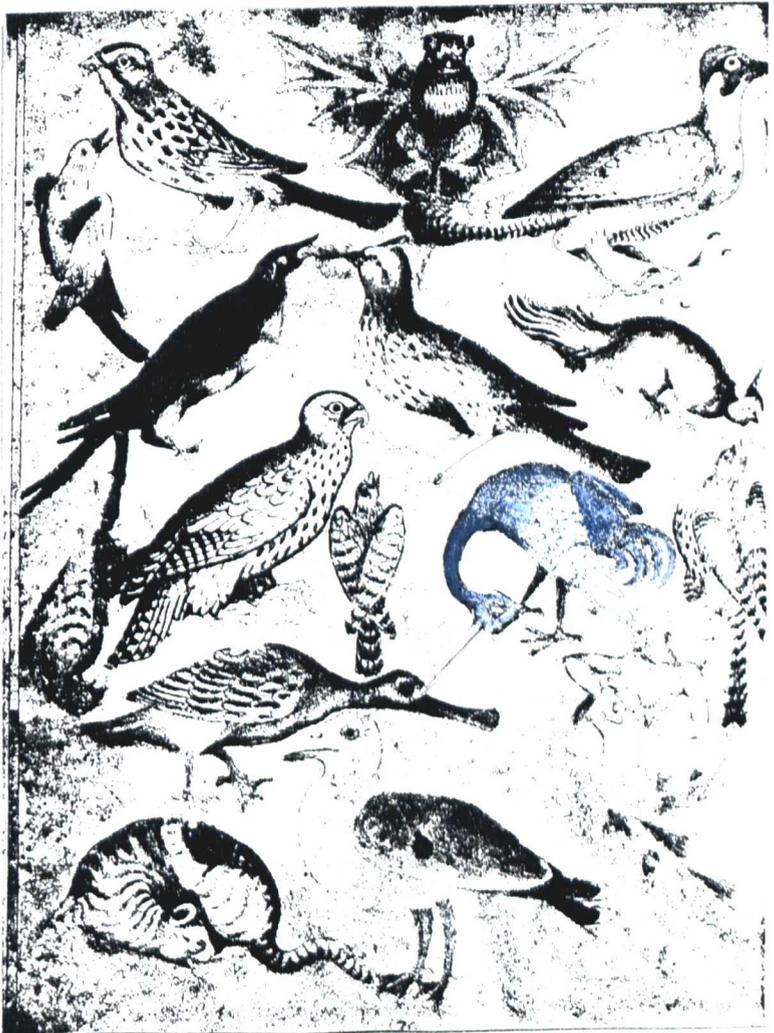
Ill. 27:
Fight in the
amphitheatre of Pompeii.
Fresco.
59-79 AD.



Ill. 28: Stylised awning pattern, centre of Orpheus mosaic.
Horkstow. Late 4th C. AD.



Ill. 29:
Scratching bird.
Woodchester.
Mosaic.
4th C. AD.



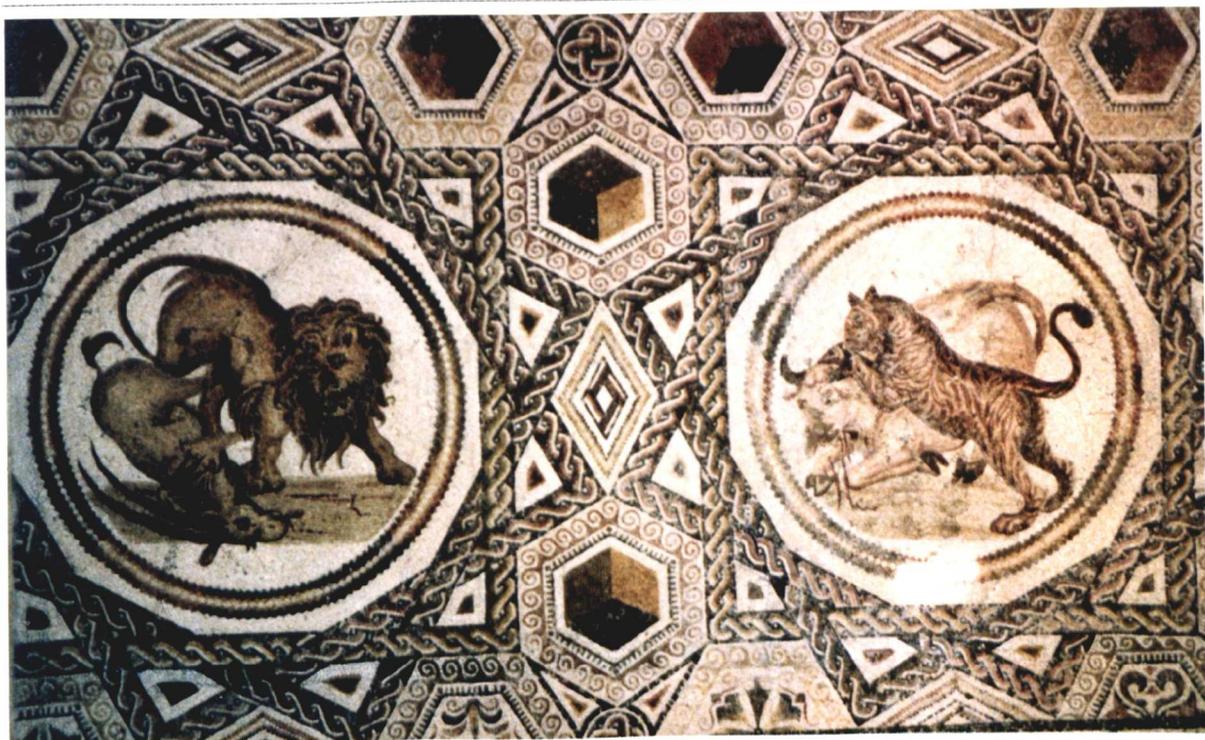
Ill. 30:
Scratching bird.
Sketch book page,
manuscript.
14th C. AD.



Ill. 31: Naiad with vase. Woodchester Orpheus mosaic.

Ill. 32: Acanthus scroll. Woodchester Orpheus mosaic.

4th C. AD.



Ill. 33:

Animal combats in
the amphitheatre.

African mosaic.
c.280-300 AD.



Ill. 34:

Animal catalogue,
amphitheatre beasts.

African mosaic.
c.250-275 AD.

Ill. 35:
Green leopard.
Dionysus mosaic,
Cologne.
3rd C. AD.



Ill. 36: Triumph of Dionysus. NB green leopard.
African mosaic. c.200-210 AD.

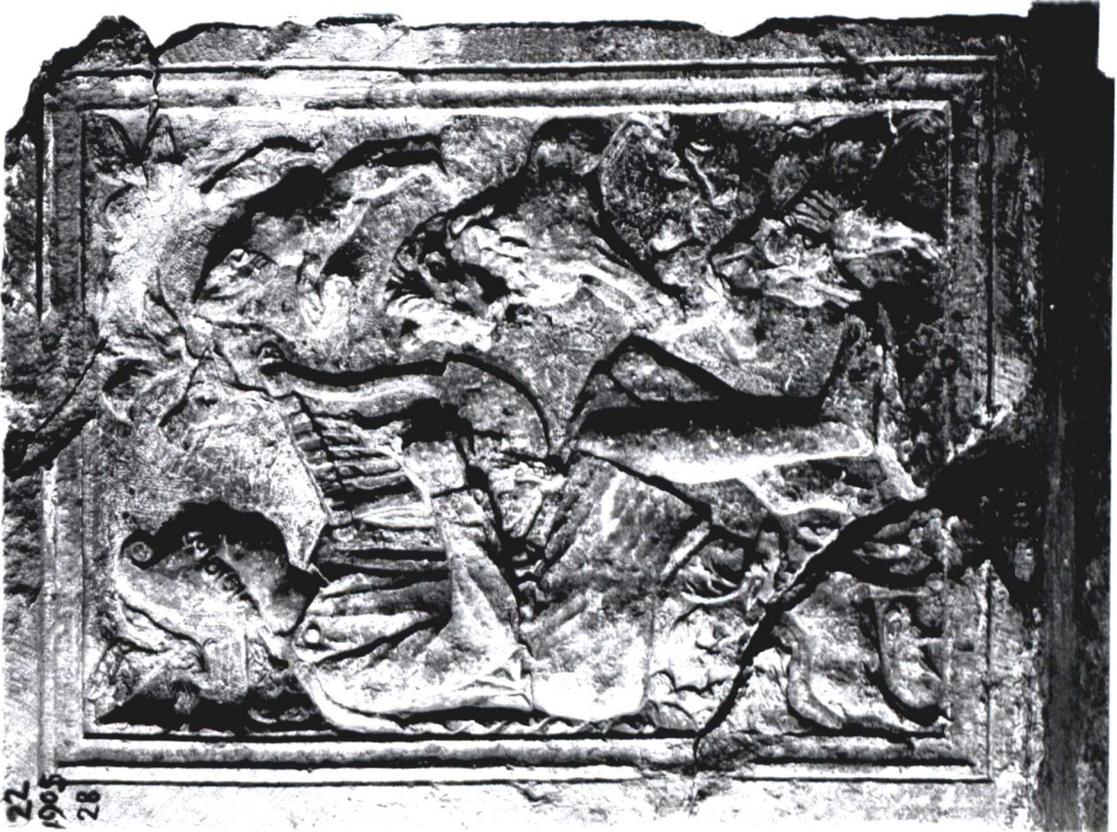




Ill. 37: Leopard. Orpheus mosaic, El Djem. End 2nd C. AD.



Ill. 38: Diana, patron of venatio. African mosaic. Late 3rd C. AD.

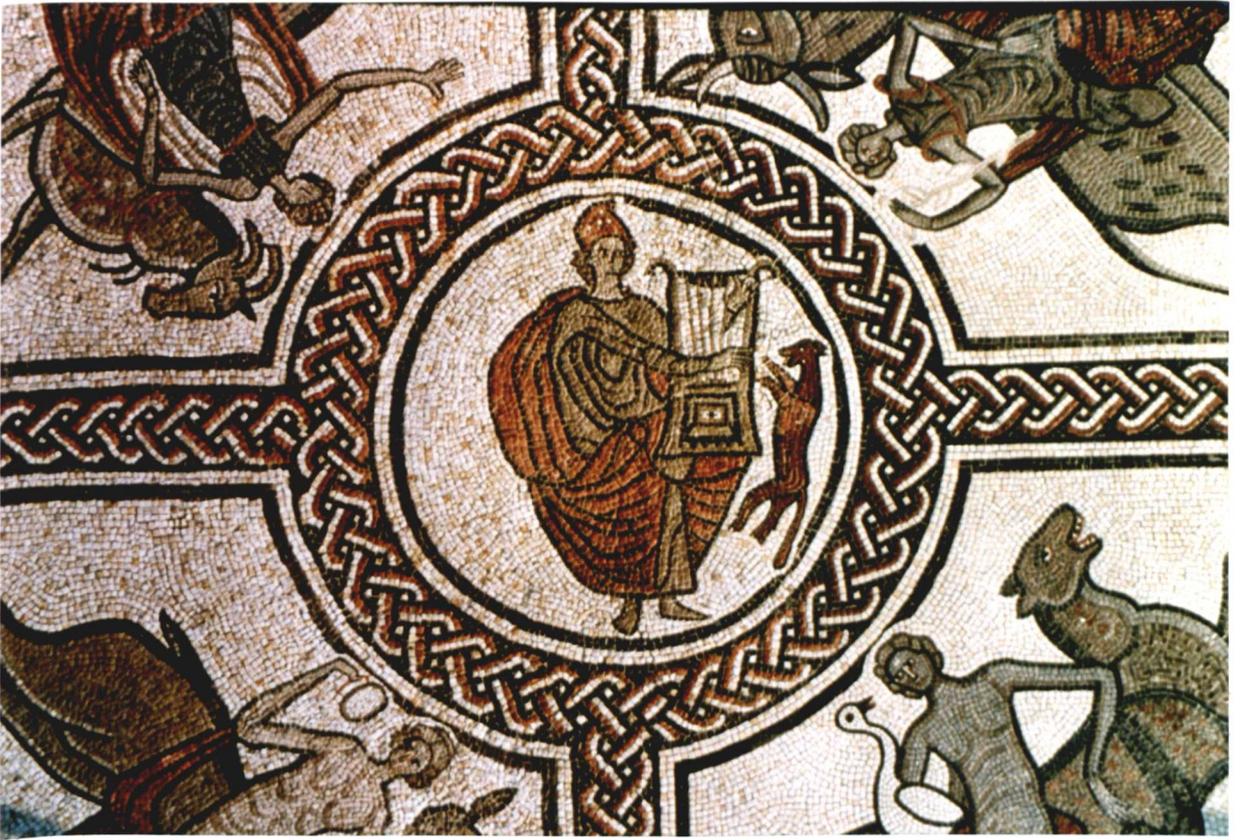


Ill. 39 (top): Orpheus, Perugia mosaic. Detail. c.150 AD.
Ill. 40 (below): Orpheus and animals. Intercisa stele.



Ill. 41 (top): Orpheus, Cagliari. Mosaic. 3rd-4th C. AD.

Ill. 42 (below): Orpheus, La Chebba, detail. 3rd-4th C. AD.



Ill. 44: Orpheus, Littlecote, detail. c.360 AD.



Ill. 45: Orpheus, Barton Farm, detail - cap with stars. c.300 AD.

Ill. 46:
Orpheus, Oudna,
detail.



Ill. 47:
Orpheus, Volubilis,
detail.



Ill. 48:

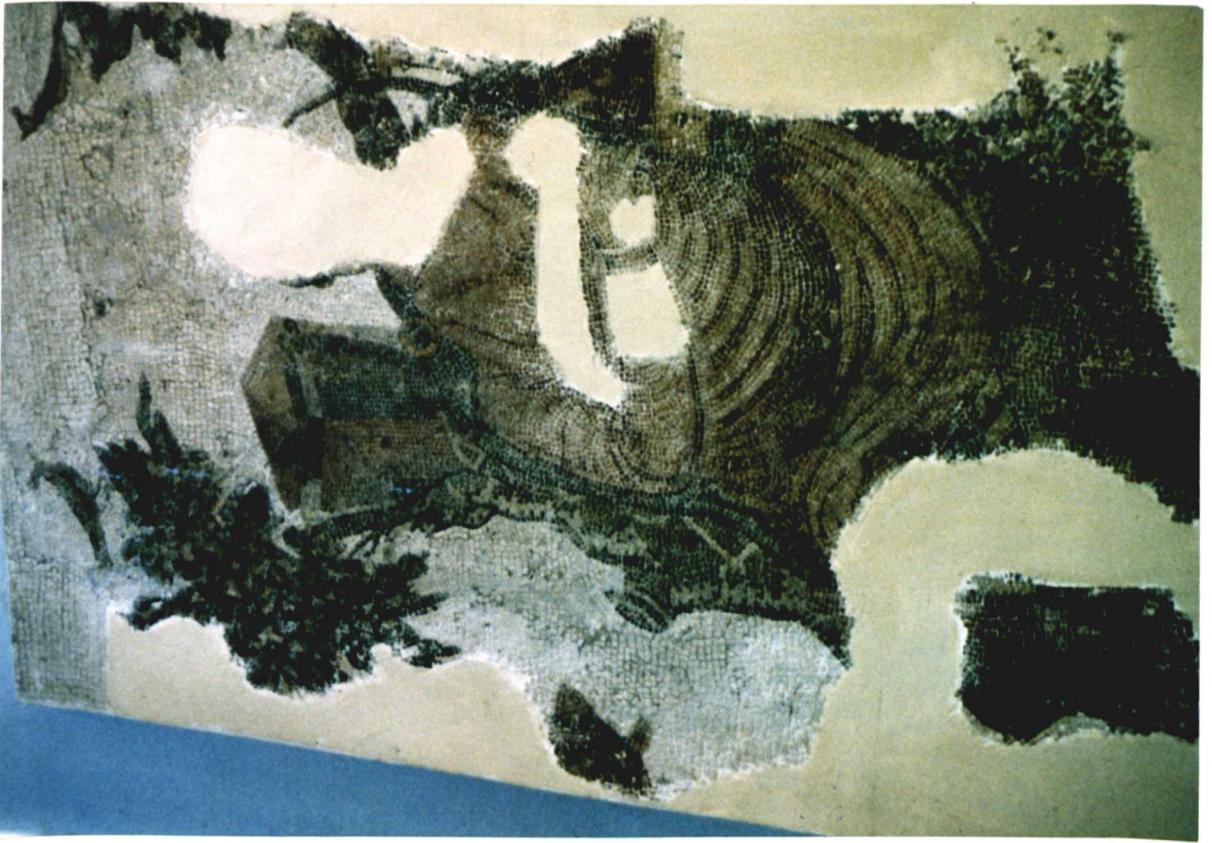
Orpheus, Tarsus,
detail.
Yellow tunic,
blue undertunic
and leggings.



Ill. 49:

Orpheus, Vienne,
detail.
Blue tunic and
cloak, yellow
undertunic and
leggings.





Ill. 50: Orpheus, Sakiyet, detail. 4th C. AD (top)

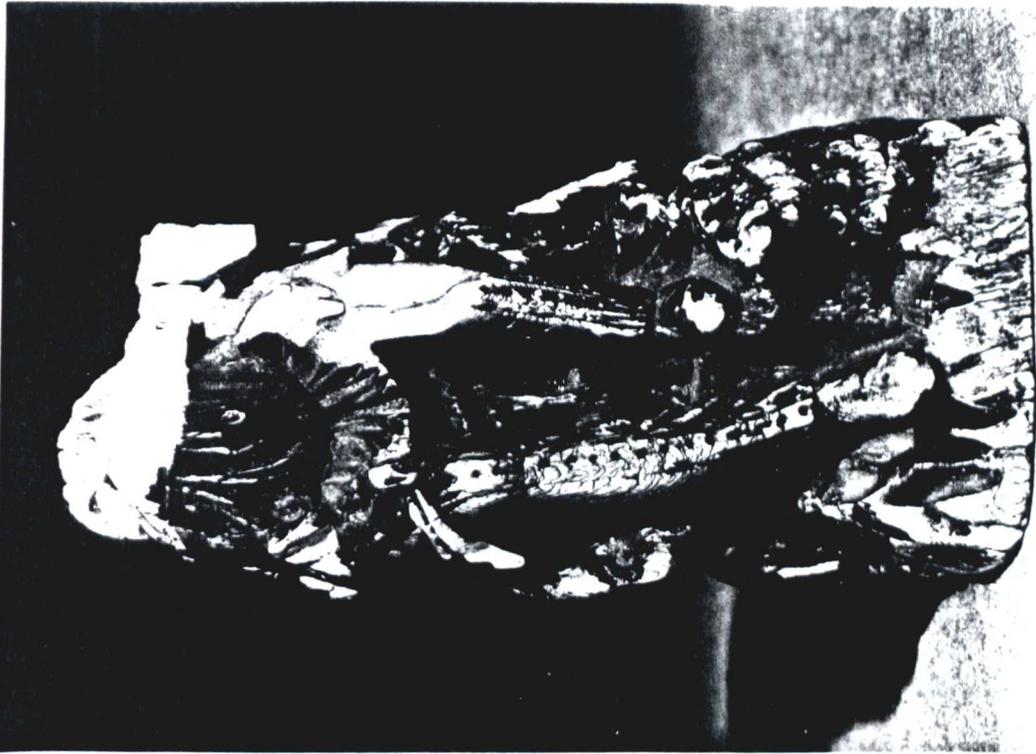
Ill. 51: Orpheus, Piazza Armerina, detail. 4th C. AD. (below)



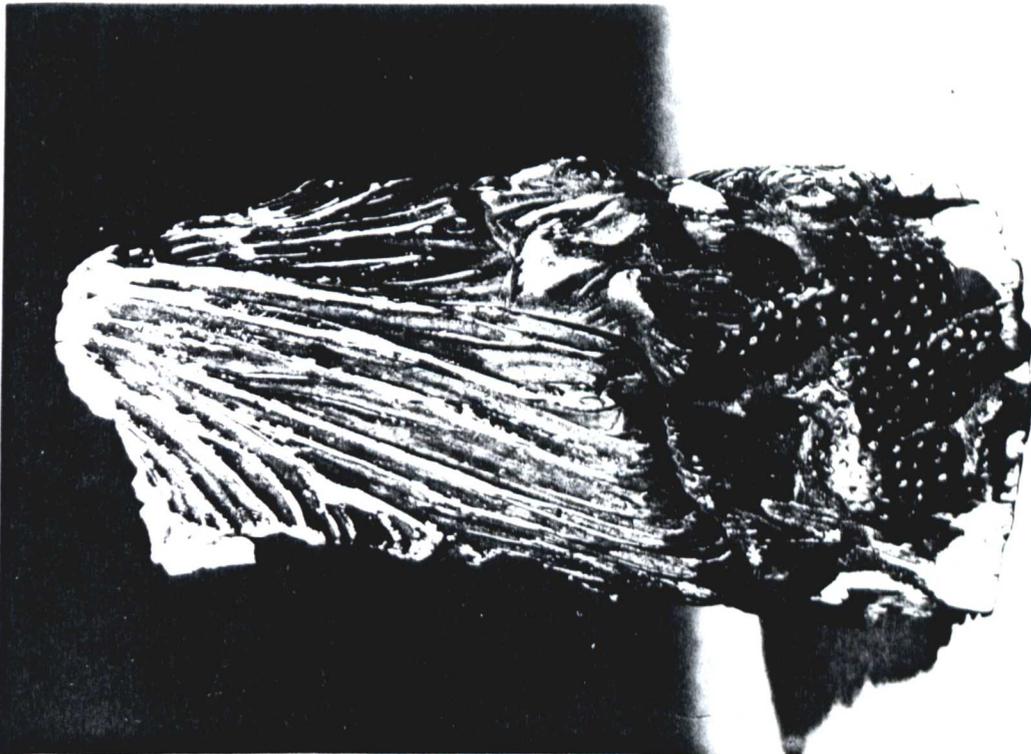
Ill. 52: Orpheus and fox. Centre, Barton Farm. c.300 AD.



Fig. 18: Catacomb painting. 4th C. AD.



Ill. 53a-b: Orpheus, ivory figurine. 4th C. AD.
Top: front, leggings with decorative detail, Phrygian.
Below: back, cloak, leopard.





Ill. 54 (right): Chahba, elaborate Phrygian cap.

Ill. 55 (above): El Djem, Orpheus.

Ill. 56:
Animal combats in
the amphitheatre.
African mosaic.
c.280-300 AD.



Ill. 57:
Amphitheatre scene.
Bacchus with lizard
brings luck.
African mosaic.
After 350 AD.



Ill. 58



Ill. 59



Ill. 58: Browsing deer, Cagliari Orpheus mosaic.

Ill. 59: Sarcophagus with mongoose and cobra fight (bottom centre), Rome.



Ill. 60 (above): Hippo and pangolin. Large beasts. Piazza Armerina Orpheus.

Ill. 61 (below): Peacock and small creatures. Piazza Armerina Orpheus mosaic. c.325 AD



Ill. 62 (top): Enigmatic animals, Volubilis Orpheus.

Ill. 63 (below): Birds in trees, Volubilis.



Ill. 64a-b: Barton Farm, birds.

Top: Goose, crane.
Below: Swan, guinea fowl.



Ill. 65: Leopard, rosette spots, Woodchester Orpheus.

Ill. 66: Leopard, scallop pattern, Barton Farm Orpheus.

Ill. 67a:

Griffin with human
bait.
Great Hunt mosaic,
Piazza Armerina.
Early 4th C. AD.



Ill. 67b:

Griffin,
Woodchester Orpheus.
Early 4th C. AD.



Ill. 68a:

Fox, wolf, jackal
beneath griffin.

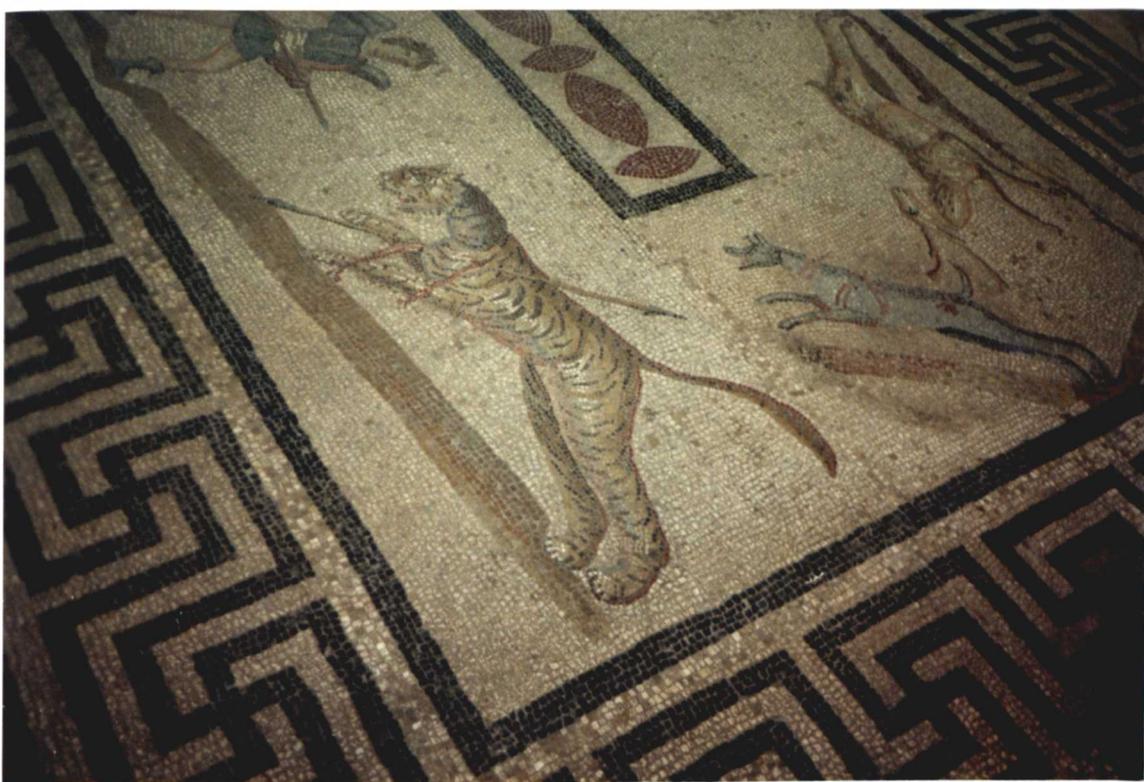
Piazza Armerina
Orpheus.



Ill. 68b:

Jackal.
Piazza Armerina
Orpheus.





Ill. 69: Hunting dog and speared tiger. Venatio panel, Miletus Orpheus. c.230 AD.

Ill. 70: Boar pursued by hound. Withington Orpheus. 4th C. AD.

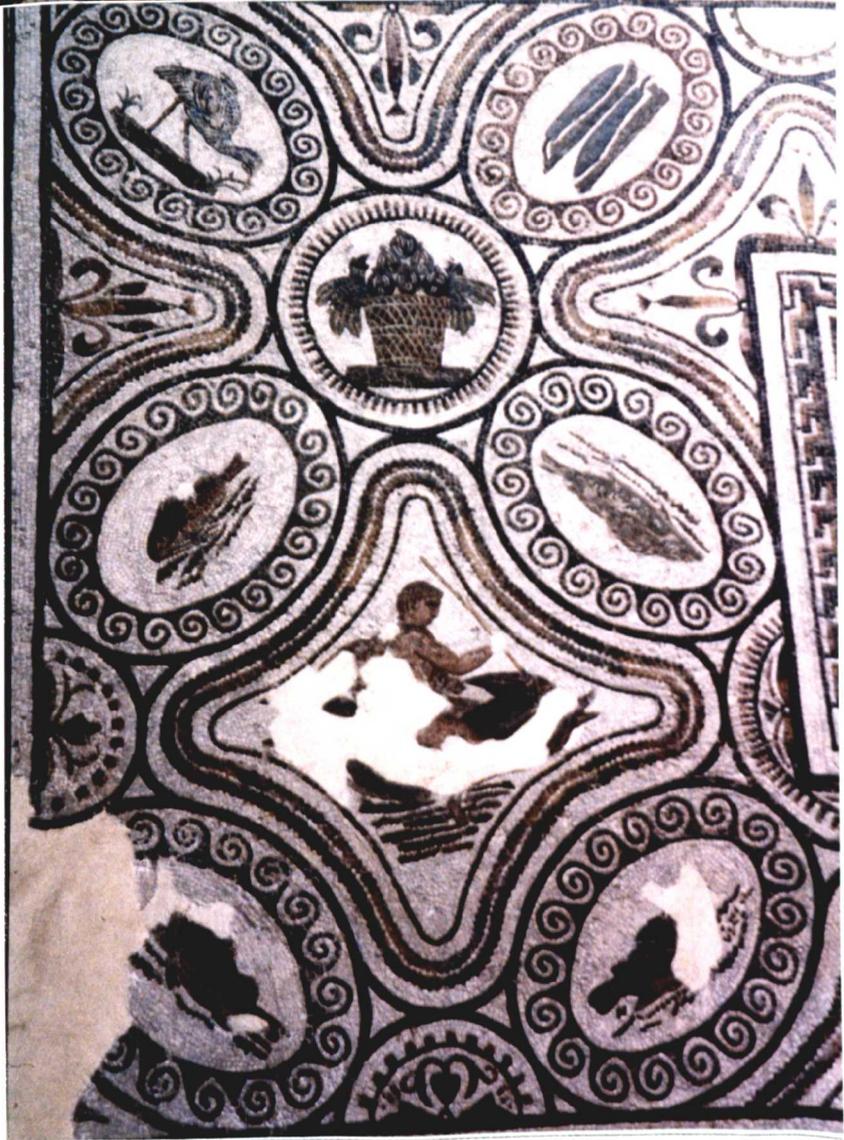


Ill. 71: Monkey. Volubilis Orpheus. (above)

Ill. 72: Monkey. Oudna Orpheus. (below)



Ill. 73:
Fishing scene.
Lepcis Magna
Orpheus.



Ill. 74:
Dolphin-rider.
La Chebba
Orpheus.



Ill. 75 (top): Oceanus/Neptune panel, Withington Orpheus.

Ill. 76 (below): Europa. Sparta. Room adjacent to Orpheus.
c.300 AD.



Ill. 77a: Orpheus and vintagers. Bronze casket fitting.

Ill. 77b: Seasons. Bronze casket fitting. Both 4th-5th C. AD.

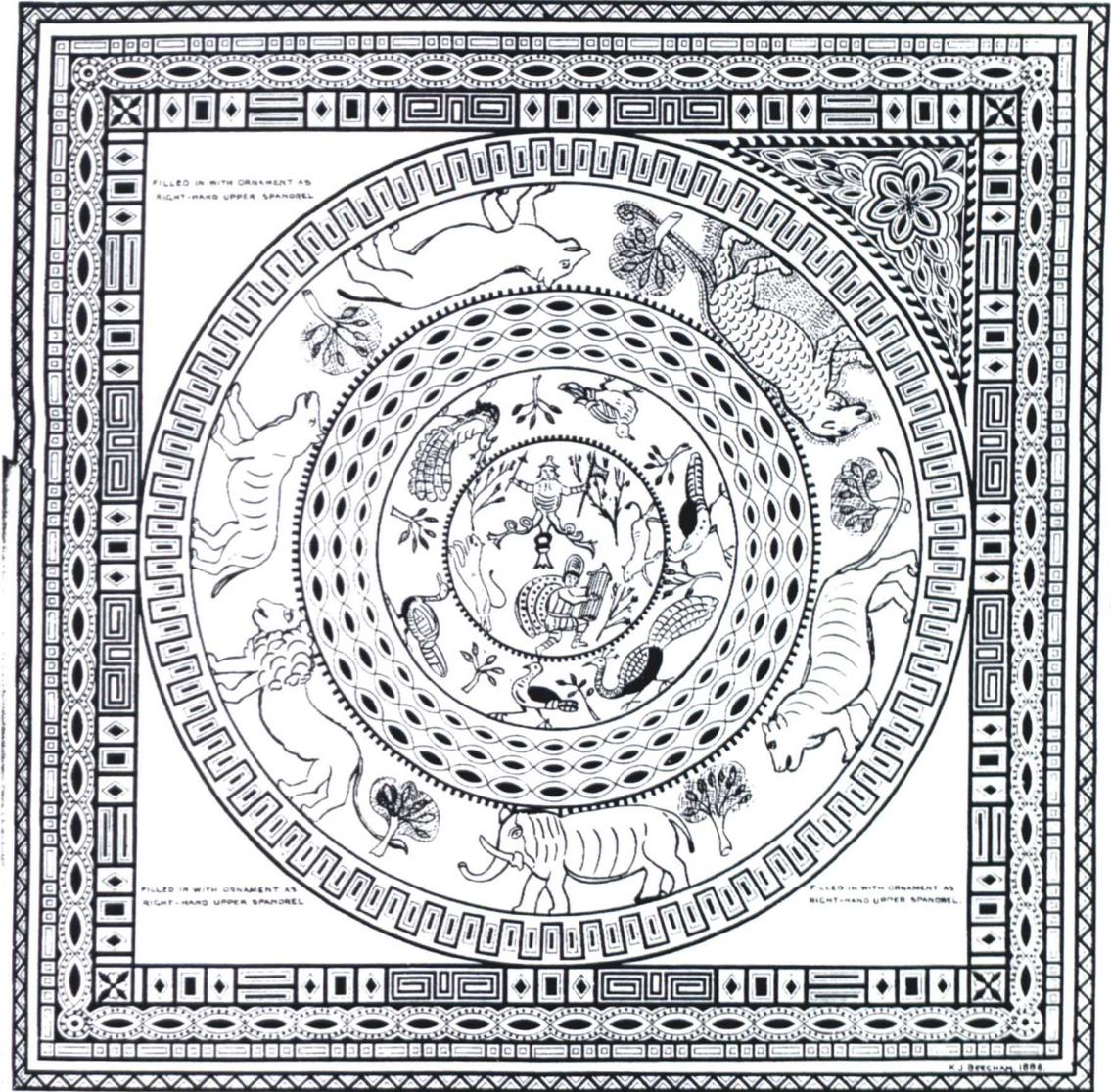


Ill. 78: Persephone on goat. Littlecote Orpheus. c.360 AD.

Ill. 79: Venatio panel, Miletus Orpheus. c.230 AD.



Ill. 80: Hercules feasted in the house of Admetus.
Alcestis at the mouth of the tomb (right).
Cos, Orpheus mosaic (Cos II). 3rd C. AD.



TESSELATED PAVEMENT DISCOVERED AT N° 93, DYER STREET, CIRENCESTER. A.D. 1820.

Ill. 81: Dyer Street (Cirencester) drawing.

Ill. 82:
Vintaging and
marine motifs.
Mosaic with
Horkstow
Orpheus.
Late 4th C. AD.



Fig. 33:
Silenus with
satyr.
Merida I Orpheus





Ill. 83a: 'Los Pajaros', Italica. Apollo, right, tripod far left.

Ill. 83b: Detail. Head of Apollo.