

IRMGARD KRISELEIT, **Antike Mosaiken. Altes Museum, Pergamonmuseum.** Mit Photographien von Johannes Laurentius. Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 2000. 60 Seiten, 59 Farb-, 14 Schwarzweiß-Abbildungen.

PETER HOFFMANN, JOACHIM HUPE und KARIN GOERTHER, **Katalog der römischen Mosaik aus Trier und dem Umland.** Mit Zeichnungen von Lambert Dahm. Trierer Grabungen und Forschungen, Band 16. Selbstverlag des Rheinischen Landesmuseums Trier, Trier 1999. 240 Seiten, 122 Tafeln.

Current scholarship on ancient mosaics has yielded a wealth of new publications, reflecting the breadth of research in this field of art, and greatly enhancing readers' appreciation of individual monuments. Geographically, this research extends over all regions of the Greek and Roman world, and the standards of publication are very high. It has become customary to present excellent color illustrations of mosaics, displaying their rich polychromy, and also to document these works of art within their archaeological and architectural context. New discoveries constantly supplement the repertoire of known pavements, as one learns from the international colloquia sponsored by AIEMA, the Association Internationale pour l'Étude de la Mosaïque Antique, and held every four years. (The most recent meeting took place in Rome in November, 2001.) It is against this background of varied and intense scholarly activity that we shall evaluate the two books in the present review. They catalogue mosaics from museums in both Berlin and Trier and from the region surrounding the latter city.

Of the two volumes, the more compact in size yet broader in historical scope is the book by I. Kriseleit, devoted to mosaics kept in two collections in Berlin, those of the Altes Museum and the Pergamon Museum. The book is intended for a general audience while also providing valuable information to specialists and outstanding photographs. Following the short introduction, which traces the evolution of mosaic art from antecedents in the Bronze Age to the Early Christian era, is a catalogue of eighteen mosaics in varying states of preservation. They originated at sites stretching from Italy to the eastern Mediterranean and range in date from the Hellenistic period to the Late Roman era. These works entered the museums under a variety of circumstances and were collected over a couple of centuries. Several mosaics underwent repeated restorations, and there is even included one forgery along with the other, genuine works of art. The author meticulously documented the history of each pavement, in some cases supplying excavation photographs of mosaics while *in situ*. The entire text is illustrated with superb color pictures by J. Laurentius, and there are several excellent reconstruction drawings. Each entry offers essential technical information, a thorough description and visual analysis, and pertinent bibliography. A highly selective general bibliography on mosaics concludes the volume.

This book allows the reader to survey several historical phases of ancient mosaic art through outstanding examples from several widely scattered archaeological sites. The earliest works include several pavements originating in the Hellenistic era, or made as copies of Hellenistic works. Among these is the magnificent panel representing a combat between centaurs and wild felines that takes place in a rocky landscape and was found at Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli (Kat. 2); it is now in the Altes Museum. Having already killed a lion, a male centaur avenges the death of his female companion, mauled by a tiger. The emotional expressions of the figures, as well as the superb illusionism of the entire scene, make this a "painting in stone," executed in the refined technique of *opus vermiculatum*. It either derives from a Hellenistic model or was created in that period and later transferred to the imperial palace, where it decorated a *triclinium*. From the same archaeological site also comes a fragment of the border surrounding another fine *emblemata*, that depicting doves drinking from a golden bowl (Kat. 3; the doves panel itself is kept in the Capitoline Museum in Rome). This mosaic is generally considered to be a Roman copy of a Hellenistic original attributed to an artist named Sosos of Pergamon. Elegant palmettes and flowers, shown on a dark ground and framed by polychrome beads, formed the border. In a separate article, M. Donderer suggested that the mosaic found in Tivoli is in fact the Hellenistic original, an interpretation that remains to be proven (cf. M. DONDERER, "Das kapitolinische Taubenmosaik – Original des Sosos?" Röm. Mitt. 98, 1991, 189–197).

Finally, among works of the same general period in the Altes Museum, we note a fragment of the "Barberini Mosaic," the large pavement ornamenting one part of the Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste (modern Palestrina) and depicting a broad Nilotic landscape (Kat. 1). This pavement, lifted from its original setting

in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and transported to Rome, has had a checkered history, with one fragment eventually making its way into the Prussian royal collection in Berlin. It is the scene of an outdoor banquet conducted in a pergola on the Nile. The published photograph enables one to enjoy the details of this picturesque vignette and to detect its restored parts. Kriseleit states that the latest retouching of this fragment confirmed its authenticity, whereas a copy of the same scene was incorporated into the reassembled mosaic in Praeneste.

The nearby Pergamon Museum also contains pavements of Hellenistic date, which come from the royal palace, specifically Palace V, at Pergamon and are assigned by the author to the first half to mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE. These pavements were recently re-examined by Ö BINGÖL in his book *Malerei und Mosaik der Antike in der Türkei* (Mainz 1997) 81–87. One mosaic, found in the Altargemach presumably devoted to the cult of Dionysos Kathegemon, is especially admired for its colorful image of a parrot perched on a pedestal that casts a shadow. Above and below this panel were fruit-laden garlands tied by ribbons and pecked at by birds, and other *emblemata* were also included in the complete mosaic. When one compares an excavation photograph of this pavement with the mosaic as it appears today, one realizes how much of the original floor has been lost (cf. pp. 24–25). Moreover, the pavement's central part is likely to undergo a new reconstruction, due to fresh archaeological evidence gained from re-opening the excavation site.

A special feature of the Pergamene mosaics is their rich borders, of which we cite one example, that surrounding the "Mosaic of Hephaestion" (Kat. 5). Its name comes from the artist's signature, written in Greek on a curled piece of papyrus that is rendered illusionistically. Regrettably, there is no detailed photograph of this part of the mosaic, for which one has to turn instead to the book by BINGÖL (*op. cit.*, Taf. 11) or to W. RADT, Pergamon. *Geschichte und Bauten einer antiken Metropole* (Darmstadt 1999) Abb. 21. The rest of the pavement field is missing, but a significant portion of the border survives. In addition to several geometric frames, there appears a lush floral frieze, whose rhythmic scrolls are seen against a black ground. The naturalism of the plants, including flowers, spiral shoots, and bunches of grapes, is astonishing, and small Erotes and a grasshopper further enliven the scrolls. Tiny lead strips were used by the mosaicist to accentuate the forms' contours, a technique with numerous parallels in other Hellenistic mosaics, including a different example from Pergamon (Kat. 6, with an excellent illustration).

Among the numerous mosaics of Roman Imperial date kept in the Pergamon Museum, those from Asia Minor and the Near East hold particular interest, because of their iconographic and stylistic features. A fine example is the well preserved pavement from a private house in Miletos, made to decorate a *triclinium* and representing Orpheus and the animals in its central carpet; it dates to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Kat. 8). A U-shaped margin with a simple geometric pattern, used for the placement of dining couches, frames the figural carpet. The mythical musician, who wears a handsome green tunic (partially made of glass tesserae) and a

Phrygian cap, is flanked by a few animals, while several other creatures tamed by his music fill panels placed around him. A second figural carpet in the same pavement depicts Erotes hunting wild felines – an image of violence contrasted with the tranquil lyre-player and his faunal entourage.

Two other mosaics from the Eastern Empire are noteworthy for their visual content and arrangement. One is a fragmentary pavement from Gerasa in Jordan, of the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> or beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, which combined a scholarly subject with images of the Seasons and the Dionysiac milieu (Kat. 9). Several parallel friezes depicting the wine god and members of his *thiasos* occupied the mosaic field, around which ran a wide border with garlands supported by nude youths and containing busts of the Muses and famous ancient Greek authors, all of whom were identified by name. In addition, busts of the Seasons filled the pavement's corners. Overall, this mosaic symbolized social values cherished by aristocratic patrons – happiness and the enjoyment of life (patronized by Dionysos and the Seasons) and literary and cultural attainment (represented by Classical writers and the Muses). This mosaic, moreover, has had an unfortunate history, having been broken into fragments at the time of excavation, with some parts coming directly to Germany and others migrating to Orange, Texas, and elsewhere. In addition to the bibliography on the mosaic cited by Kriseleit, one may consult M. PICCIRILLO, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman 1992) 272; 282–283, with good illustrations.

A composition or design similar to the previous work was used in another outstanding pavement of the Roman era in Berlin, namely, the "Provinces Mosaic" (Kat. 13). It comes from ancient Seleukia on the Euphrates in southeastern Turkey, a site referred to as Belkis-Seleukia by the author and also called Zeugma by archaeologists today. The mosaic in Berlin, which contained both a mythological central panel and an elaborate figural border, was discovered in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, preceding the sensational mosaic finds of more recent date made at the same site by the team of D. Kennedy and the combined Franco-Turkish expedition. At the center of the 'Provinces Mosaic' was a large panel featuring the triumphant Poseidon in a quadriga, seen in frontal view. Around this field extended two large frames, the inner of which (according to Kriseleit's reconstruction) showed acanthus scrolls inhabited by hunting Erotes and their prey, as well as male and female heads enveloped by leaves. By contrast, the outer border displayed numerous female busts symbolizing the provinces of the Roman Empire, each with her name inscribed in Greek and wearing a mural crown. K. Parlasca, who first published this mosaic, reversed the order of the frames, placing the provinces next to the panel with Poseidon. The mosaic as a whole forms an imperial allegory, exalting the Roman political system through its combination of triumphal imagery and geographic personifications. Stylistically and iconographically, this mosaic displays similarities to several other mosaics excavated at Zeugma, and like them, it probably dates to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE. We can also compare this work of art to a mosaic representing the goddess Roma and female busts of Africa and other provinces, which was found at El Jem

in Tunisia (H. SLIM, *Sols d'Afrique romaine* [Paris 1995] 24–34). It dates to the same general period as the previous pavement. Altogether, the group of mosaics in the two museums in Berlin forms a representative ensemble of superior quality.

The second volume in this review, concerning Roman mosaics from Trier and its vicinity, has a more concentrated focus than the first book, aiming to document the pavements from one particular region of the Empire. It is a splendid publication, forming part of the growing scientific corpora of mosaics from many different countries that have developed over the past forty years. At the same time, this book is a successor to the earlier volume on Roman mosaics of Germany by K. PARLASCA (*Die römischen Mosaiken in Deutschland* [Berlin 1959]), which took a more comprehensive view of its subject and was not intended as a systematic catalogue, like the present work. Trier was the single most important center of mosaic production in Germany, a fact which inspired the holding of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Mosaic Colloquium of AIEMA there in 1984.

This volume comprises well over 200 mosaics from the city of Trier and from sites in the surrounding area. The documentation is exemplary, and the authors have carefully traced the history of each example, culling archaeological journals and excavation reports, and reproducing architectural plans that show the original location of mosaics wherever possible. In addition, the illustrations are excellent, including many drawings and abundant black-and-white and color photographs. As in the book by I. Kriseleit, there also are excavation photos of pavements to compare with individual mosaics as they appear today. In this second volume, the various phases of restoration of mosaics are clearly indicated, allowing readers to distinguish the original parts of works of art from later additions. One compliments the Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier for the concerted effort it has made to preserve the many pavements in its collection and to display them to advantage. Finally, we note the inclusion of several maps to locate the exact findspots of mosaics within Trier itself and in the outlying region.

A very useful introduction (written primarily by K. Goethert) reviews the nearly two centuries of investigation and scholarship about mosaics at Trier, and the successive phases of their restoration and conservation. Some examples are known only through verbal descriptions or were lost after their discovery, and others have undergone repeated changes or repairs, with the most advanced techniques employed today for their consolidation and presentation. Especially valuable for studying these alterations and for reconstructing fragmentary works is the series of drawings prepared by L. Dahm. The introduction also discusses several aspects of the entire group of mosaics from the Trier region. These include the evidence for wall and ceiling mosaics as well as ornamental pavements; the various criteria used for dating the examples; how mosaic art evolved in this part of Germany over a few centuries, beginning with influences from Italy and Gaul (there are accompanying chronological tables); and the distinctive stylistic features of mosaics from the Trier area. A major contribution of this part of the book is the catalogue of decorative mo-

tifs compiled by Goethert. All of the different geometric and floral motifs are classified, described, and illustrated by examples taken from individual mosaics, and the history of their use is summarized in a few charts. This catalogue nicely complements G. HELLENKEMPER SALIES'S analysis of geometric patterns in Roman mosaics, published in the *Bonner Jahrbücher* 174, 1974, 1–178.

The ensuing catalogue of mosaics, written by P. Hoffmann and J. Hupe, consists of works spanning primarily the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries CE and arranged topographically within Trier and outside the city. In the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, tessellated mosaics became common at Trier, and repetitive geometric designs of a type originating in Italy were popular. An example is a black-and-white pattern of intersecting circles forming quatrefoils, which composes a mosaic carpet coming from the "Procurators' Palace" at Trier; the border is made of staggered rows of stepped triangles (Kat. 79). A completely different design from the same period, found at the same location in Trier and reflecting artistic models from the Rhône valley, displays a large circle-in-square pattern. The circle encloses a honeycomb made of hexagons and contains the head of Medusa in its central compartment (Kat. 76). The color scheme combines black and white with red and yellow, and single large rosettes of varied form fill the panels around the center. Craters with escaping plant scrolls occupy the pavement's corners, and a row of waves frames the mosaic field. The overall effect is light and airy. One other foreign-influenced design of 2<sup>nd</sup>-century date exhibits a field of solid black tesserae punctuated at regular intervals by light-colored marble *crustae* of lozenge shape; a large polychrome panel of hexagonal form, with birds and fishes as well as a Medusa head, occupies the mosaic's center (Kat. 148). The contrast of elements in this floor, which comes from the Weberbach area in Trier, is visually pleasing.

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, Trier enjoyed its richest period of mosaic art, when figural designs were especially fashionable. Many of these are centrally arranged and organized by a continuous guilloche band, which shapes individual panels and joins a guilloche border surrounding the field. There often are multiple bands of ornament around single compartments and multiple borders framing the entire carpet. An outstanding example is the "Mosaic of Polydus," found in an area where imperial baths were to be built in Constantinian times, and itself dating to the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century (Kat. 161). Within an eight-pointed star, made of two interlaced guilloche squares, appears a victorious charioteer named POLYDVS, who is seen frontally in a quadriga. An octagon made of guilloche encloses the star, and several borders executed in dentils, double guilloche, and polychrome meander frame the field. A Vor Teppich or smaller geometric carpet precedes the main part of the floor. The total ornamental effect is sumptuous. A somewhat more restrained version of this style appears in the "Charioteers Mosaic" from the Ostallee in Trier, and is dated by the authors to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Kat. 108). In this case, four octagonal panels containing victorious charioteers are arranged in outward-facing pairs, and a bust of Victoria punctuates the center of the design. A continuous guilloche band divides the field, and trian-

gles enclosing other smaller triangles fill the corners (the same motif occurs in the previous example). There also are multiple borders, and the *Vorteppich* is largely destroyed today.

Other 3<sup>rd</sup>-century mosaics from Trier have imagery alluding to the intellectual life or mythological themes, and in both their design and decorative features, these pavements reflect local artistic tradition. An example is the celebrated “Monnus Mosaic” from the *Ostallee* of the city, which paved a large reception room with an apse and is dated to the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century by the authors (Kat. 103). The nine principal panels, arranged in a wreath-like pattern of octagons, contained representations of ancient authors and thinkers accompanied individually by Muses. (Note the same theme in the mosaic from *Gerasa*, now kept in Berlin and mentioned above.) In the badly damaged central octagon appeared Homer, Calliope, and a personification of Genius, as well as the signature of the mosaicist, Monnus. Busts of other ancient writers, in addition to theatrical masks and figures symbolizing the Seasons and Months, filled secondary panels. In between are lozenges with rosette ornaments, several of which take the form of paired, heart-shaped volutes with dart points (no. 81 in the catalogue of motifs). Moreover, the apsidal part of the Monnus Mosaic showed a floral design framed by a row of pelta-wheels with a Solomon knot (motif 75a1). In a different pavement, the “Dionysos Mosaic” of mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century date from *Olewiger Straße* in Trier, the main carpet has figural motifs or Dionysiac emblems in all of the secondary compartments around a central medallion with Dionysos and Aridane, whereas a repetitive design of paired, outward-facing peltae filled the *Vorteppich* (Kat. 100). Each pelta bears a small cross on its central point (motif 74d).

The purely geometric floors of this same period from Trier and its vicinity also display a recognizable local style. This includes a pavement from the *Südallee* in Trier that has a bold circular design outlined in guilloche and inscribed in a guilloche square (Kat. 135). The circle’s additional frames of dentils and polychrome meander are typical of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, and they enclose several scallop-like sections and a large central rosette, with lotuses and heart-shaped petals among its elements (motif 77b). Outside the city, the villa at *Fließem* has yielded a series of geometric pavements of 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 3<sup>rd</sup>-century date with a rich variety of patterns. Among these are a design of paired, outward-facing peltae (finely contrasted with a central carpet that has an angular lozenge pattern; Kat. 186), and a pattern of large quatrefoils and small circles, forming curvilinear hexagons in the intervals (Kat. 188; 189). The sober treatment of these latter examples, both dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and lacking guilloche bands, differs from the more elaborate rendering of the same pattern seen in a 3<sup>rd</sup>-century mosaic from *Böhmerstraße* in Trier, which includes guilloche and dentils (Kat. 21).

Various trends can be followed in 4<sup>th</sup>-century mosaics from Trier, which include several works of art decorating the imperial Basilica and adjacent structures. Among the fragmentary pavements from this complex is a tendency to create geometric carpets framed by an elaborate guilloche border, and in a few instances, the field

has a repetitive, all-over pattern (Kat. 12; 13; 15). By contrast, the wall of the Basilica apse displayed a design of blue and green plant scrolls on a gold ground, all executed in glass tesserae (Kat. 11). A favored type of design elsewhere in Trier during the 4<sup>th</sup> century is a pattern of lozenge-stars, sometimes shaped around a cross, and tangent to variously shaped panels that may contain figural motifs, as in examples from *Hettnerstraße*, *Johannisstraße*, and *Simeonstraße* (Kat. 43; 56; 124). Another very dense arrangement, seen in a mosaic from *Johann-Philipp-Straße*, showed poised octagons with flanking squares organized around a central eight-pointed star, with lozenges placed in the intervals (Kat. 58). At least one octagon enclosed a figure of Hercules, and a great variety of geometric motifs and rosettes filled the design’s smaller panels. Finally, from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century comes the fascinating “Mysteries Mosaic,” also discovered in *Johann-Philipp-Straße*, whose imagery reflects a pagan cult influenced by Egyptian belief about divine birth from an egg (an interpretation by K. Parlasca; Kat. 63). In the center of the mosaic appears a mythological group focused on an egg placed on altar and containing tiny figures of Castor, Pollux, and Helen, identified by name. The eagle of Jupiter appears above the altar, and Leda and Agamemnon stand alongside. Numerous other figures representing members of the local cult at Trier fill panels around the central scene.

In sum, this book is an excellent research tool for specialists, which should also satisfy those with a more general interest in mosaics. Besides a few small errors of description of individual pavements, one only regrets that the iconographic commentary of some works is not developed more fully. Nevertheless, wherever there are differences of opinion about the dating of mosaics, these are always clearly indicated. The authors have very successfully achieved their goal of presenting the mosaics of Trier and its environs to scholars and facilitating future research on this subject. This volume and the one dealing with pavements in Berlin form two substantial additions to the literature on ancient mosaics.

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